

# All Age Autism Strategy

Priorities check in for the delivery plan project

A survey was actioned via newsletter and social media to check in with people on the priorities for the **All Ages Autism Strategy Delivery Plan**. Were they still the same overarching themes and priorities we heard through the Autism strategy consultation?

We asked people to rate the themes and priorities based on **what is important to them** (top 3) and what they would like commissioners to focus on first in Rotherham



# Overarching Themes arising from Voice in All age Autism Strategy Engagement Oct 2023

**Health Inequalities.** *(Access to services, including mental health)*

**Voice of Individual.** *(Not feeling heard/ listened to by services)*

**Community Inclusion.** *(Feeling isolated in local neighbourhood)*



# Original Priorities from All age Autism Strategy Engagement – Oct 2023

- Autism Diagnosis Experience
- Mental health / Emotional wellbeing
- Information and advice
- Education
- Employment & Volunteering
- Housing
- Social care
- Physical health
- Hospital Admissions
- Unpaid carers
- Criminal Justice system

# Participants

- Given the timescales, the survey was sent out internally to the RPFL community via a RANSS newsletter, shared on the RANSS and RPCF Facebook pages, advertised on the RANSS website and shared internally with staff to share with the neurodivergent people they encounter.
- We asked people to complete this by the end of March with a view to feedback the results to commissioners in April 2025. The survey was live for 4 weeks.
- **54 people completed the survey**
- **80% of those that participated identified as autistic**
- **25 people identified as autistic, 18 identified as both autistic and ADHD**
- **3 people identified as ADHD (one of these shared they are also a parent/carer of autistic and ADHD children)**
- **8 people identified as parent/carers of a neurodivergent person**

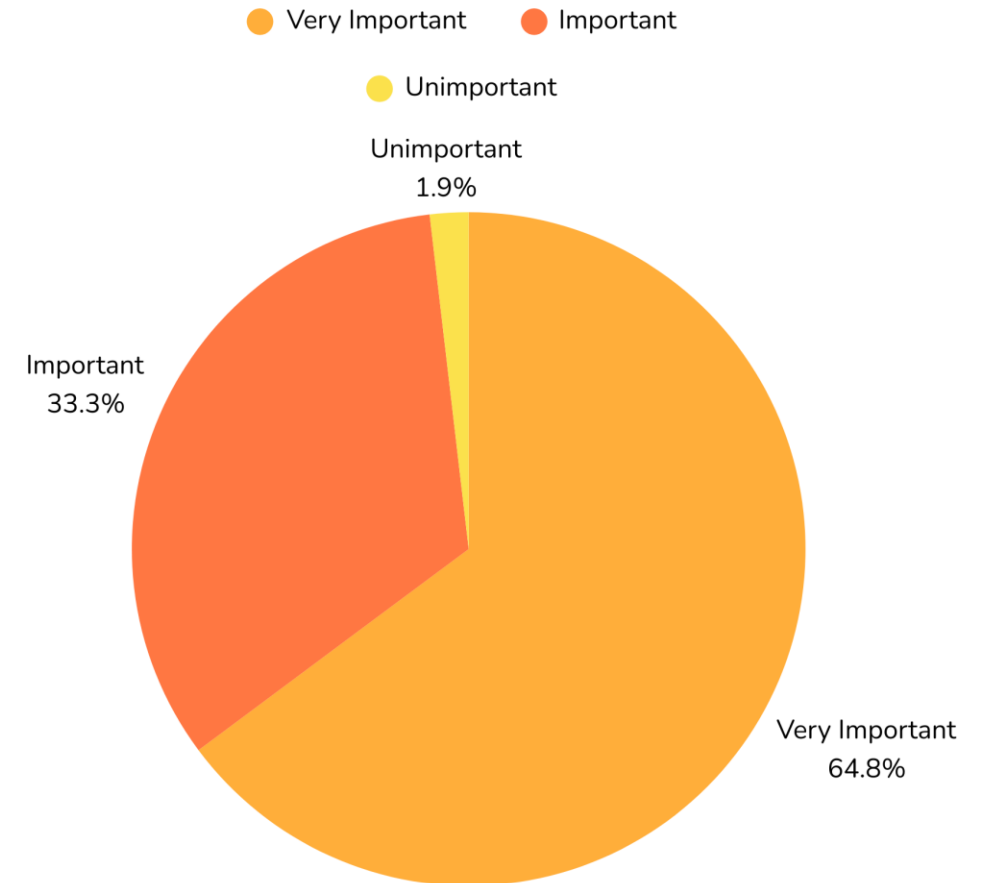
# Overarching Themes

- We asked people to rate the three overarching themes on their importance
- We asked them to rate each of them as "Very Important" "Important" "Unimportant" and "Uncertain of the Importance"
- The results show that all three of these themes are still important to the community and the numbers are very close, however **"Voice of Individual" came out as the most important, followed by "Health Inequalities" in second place and "Community Inclusion" in third**
- The next slides show details of each theme's rating

# 1. Voice of Individual

Out of the 54 participants:

- 35 said this was **Very Important**
- 18 said this was **Important**
- 1 said this was **Unimportant**
- No one said they were **Uncertain of the Importance**

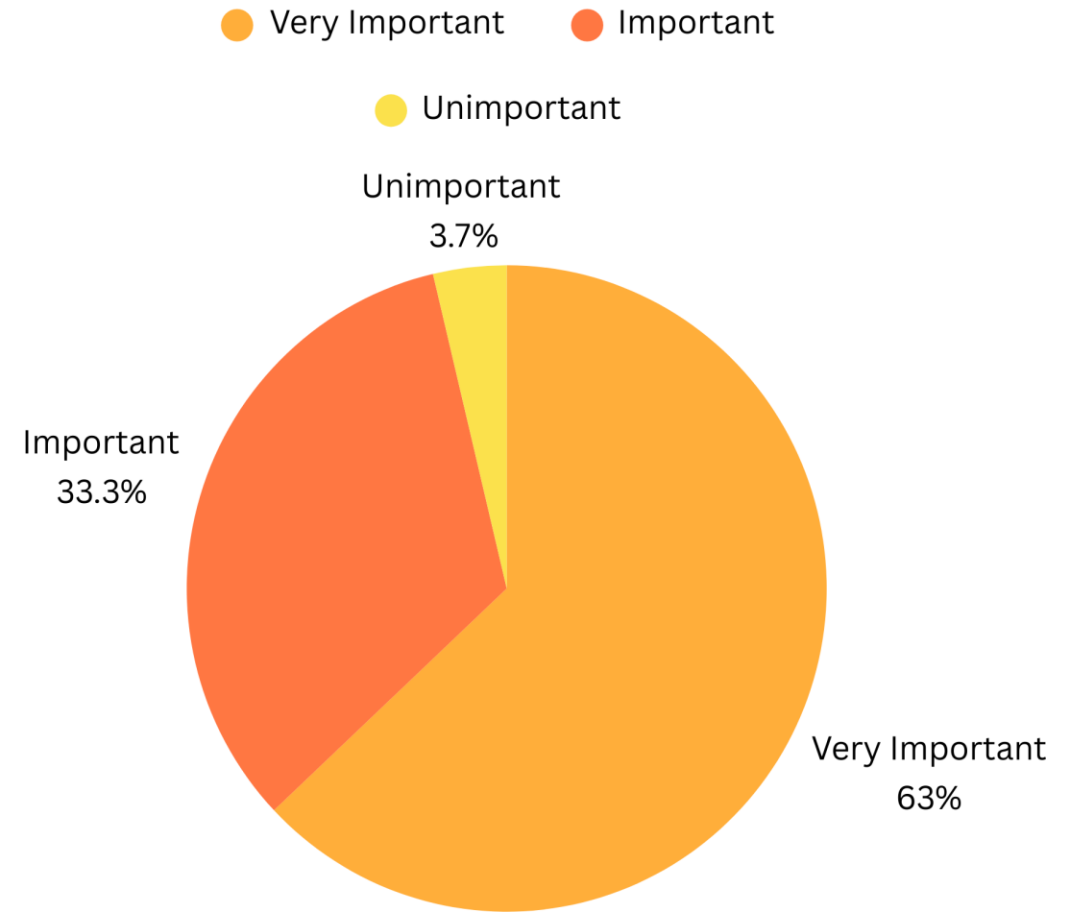


**Voice of Individual**

## 2. Health inequalities

Out of the 54 participants:

- 34 said this was **Very Important**
- 18 said this was **Important**
- 2 said this was **Unimportant**
- No one said they were **Uncertain of the Importance**

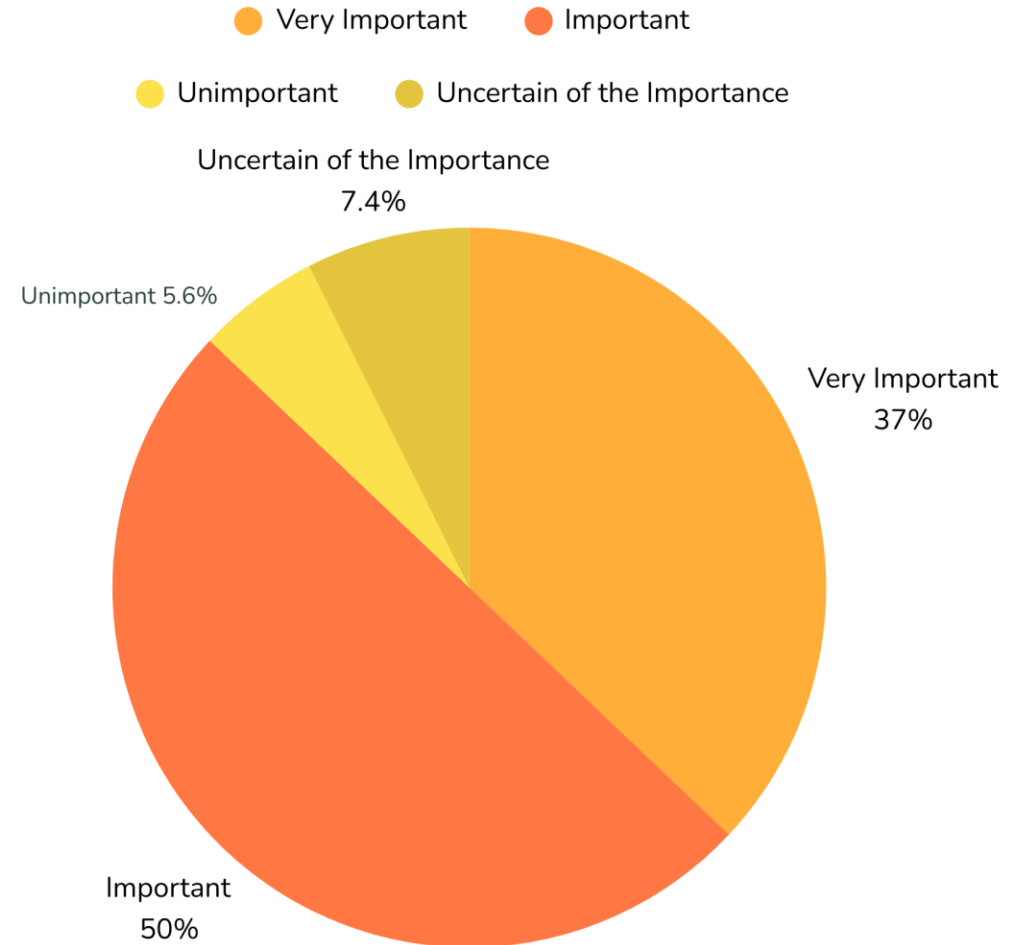


**Health Inequalities**

# 3. Community Inclusion

Out of the 54 participants:

- 20 said this was **Very Important**
- 27 said this was **Important**
- 3 said this was **Unimportant**
- 4 said they were **Uncertain of the Importance**

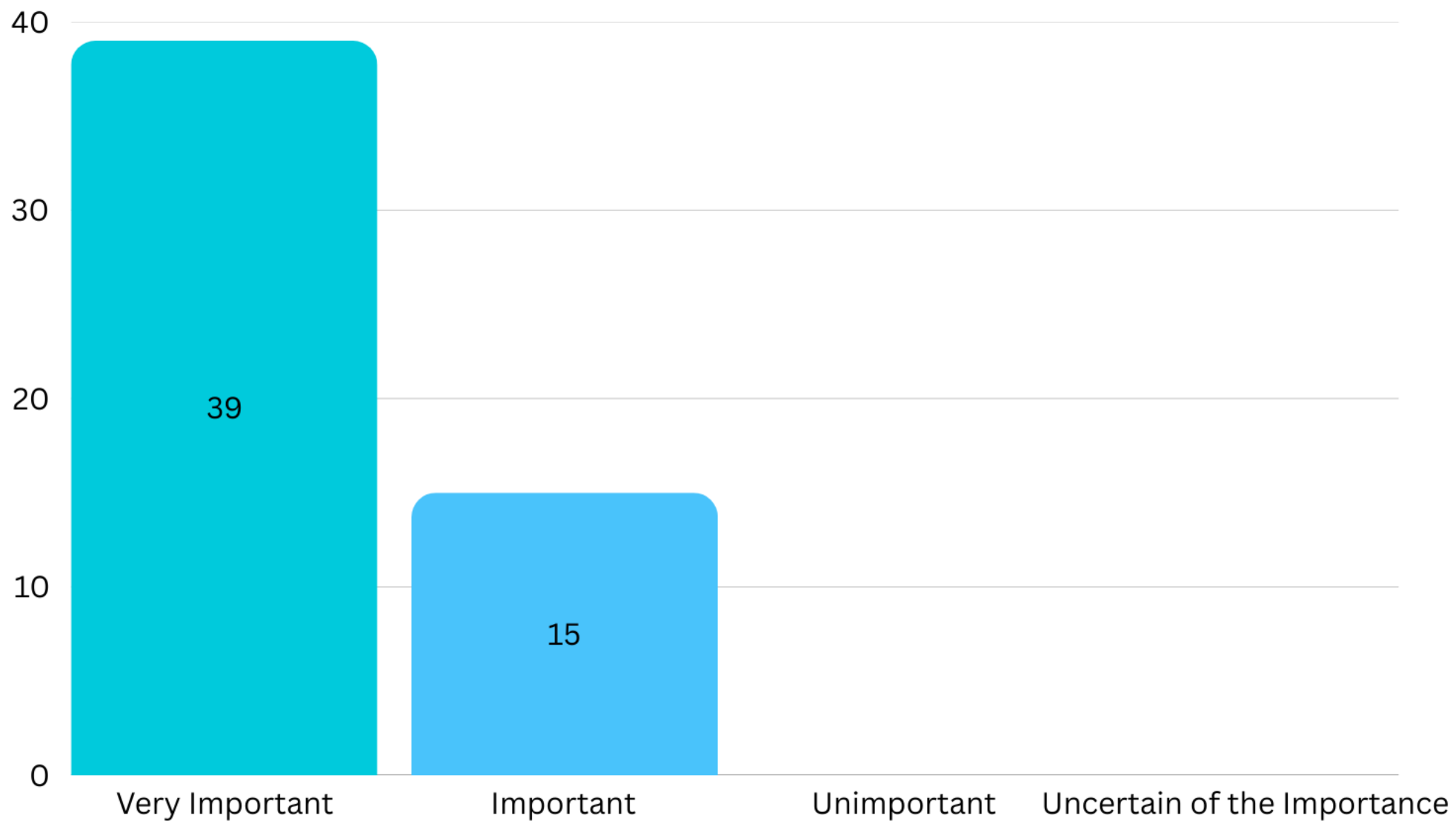


**Community Inclusion**

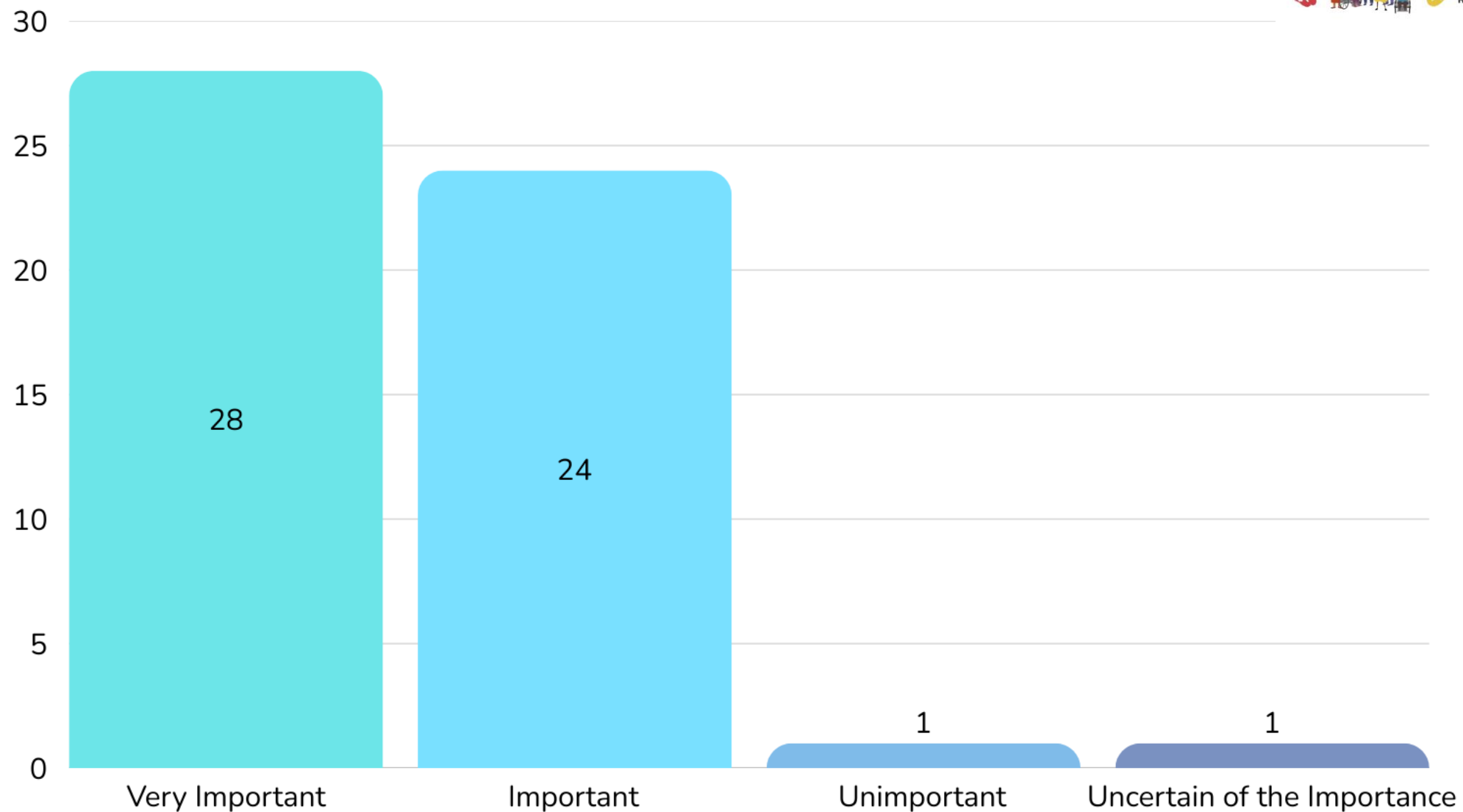
# Priorities

- There were 11 priorities arising from voice in the All Age Autism Strategy
- We asked people to rate each priority based on how important they are for them personally. The scale indicated "Very Important", "Important", "Unimportant", "Uncertain of the Importance"
- We also asked people to then tell us the three most important priorities to them
- **In both sections the areas considered most important were Mental Health/Emotional Wellbeing, Information & Advice and Autism Diagnosis Process**
- The next slides show the ratings for each priority

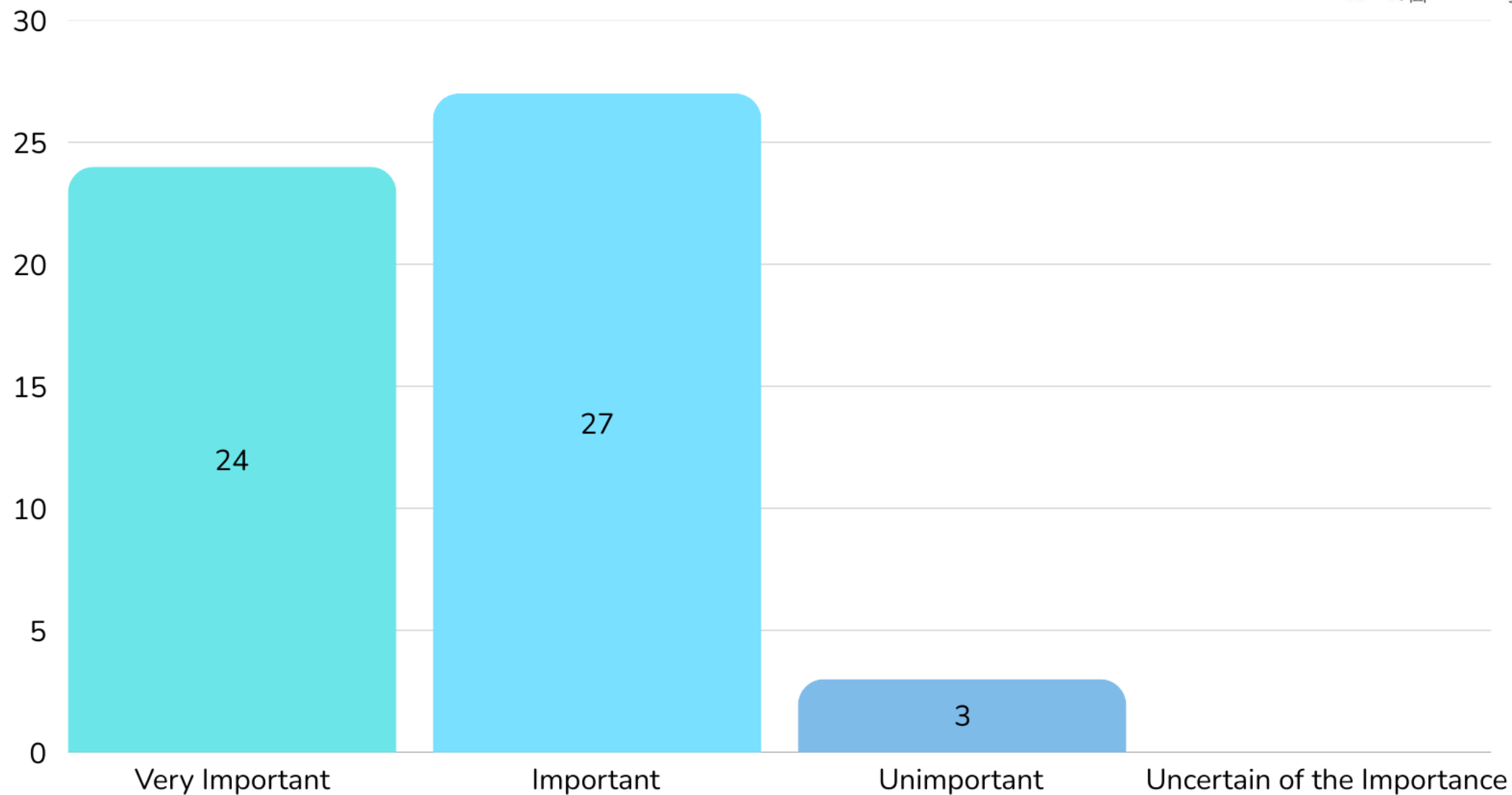
# Mental Health/Emotional Wellbeing



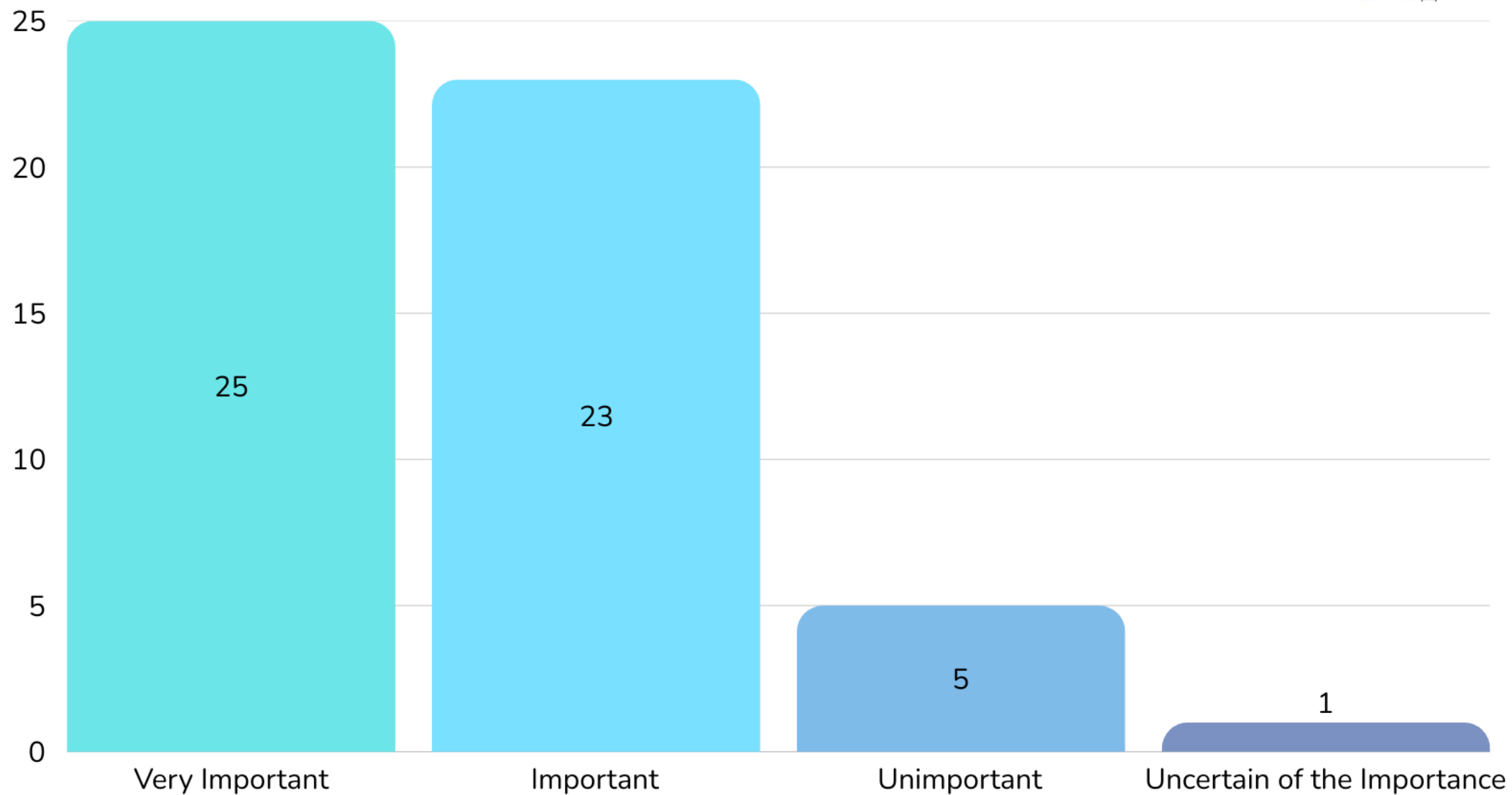
## Information & Advice



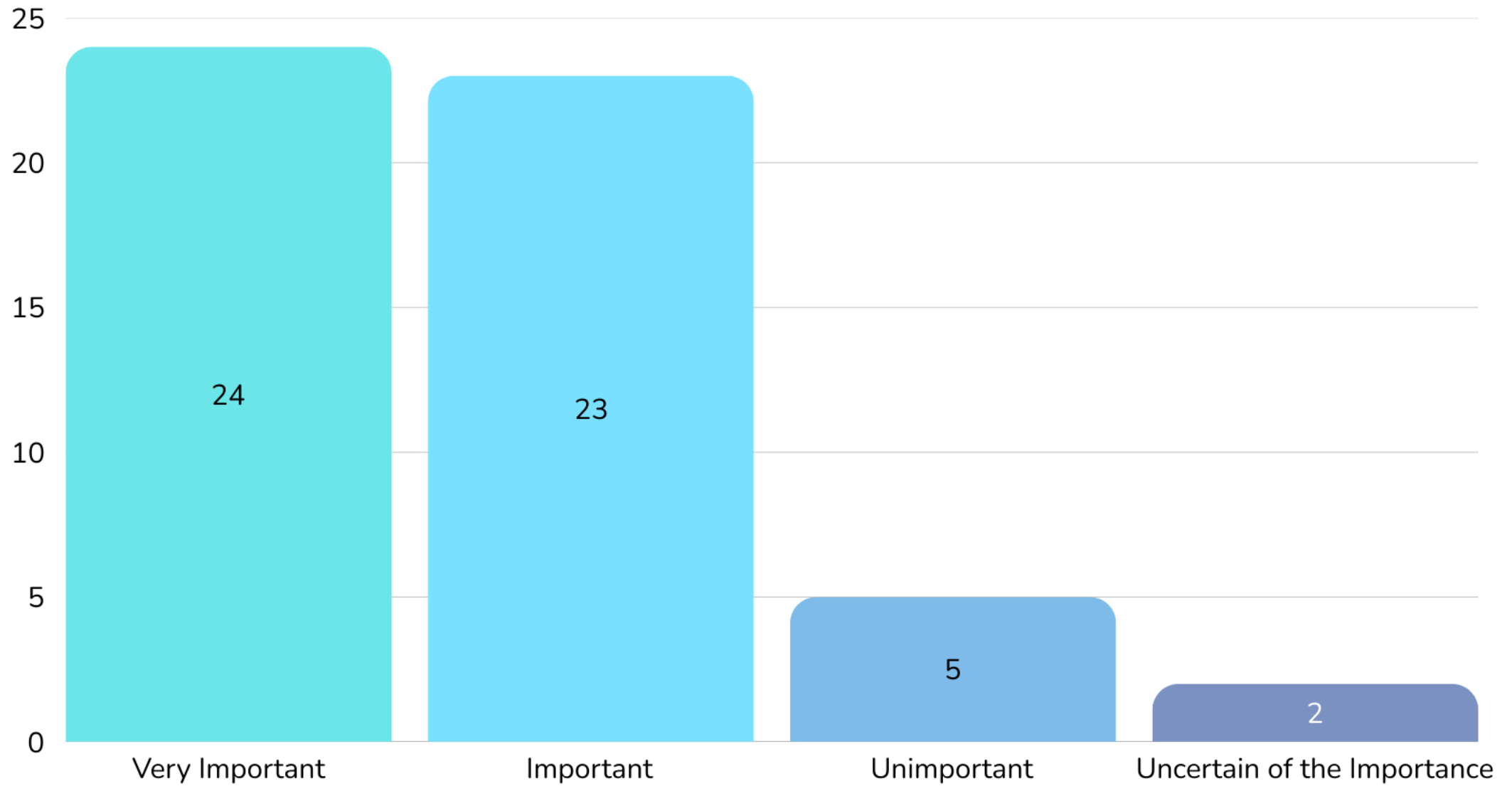
# Autism Diagnosis Process



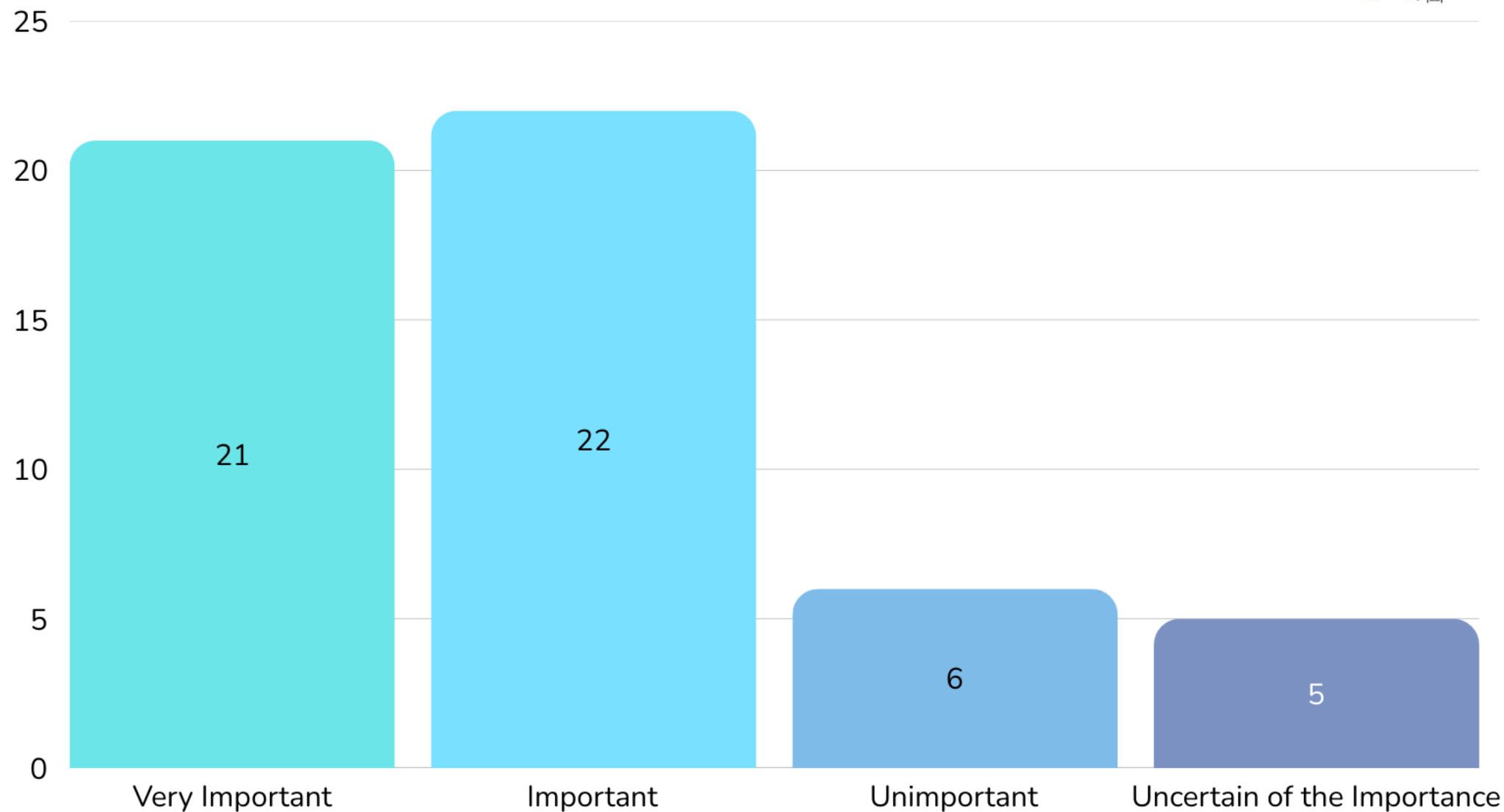
# Education



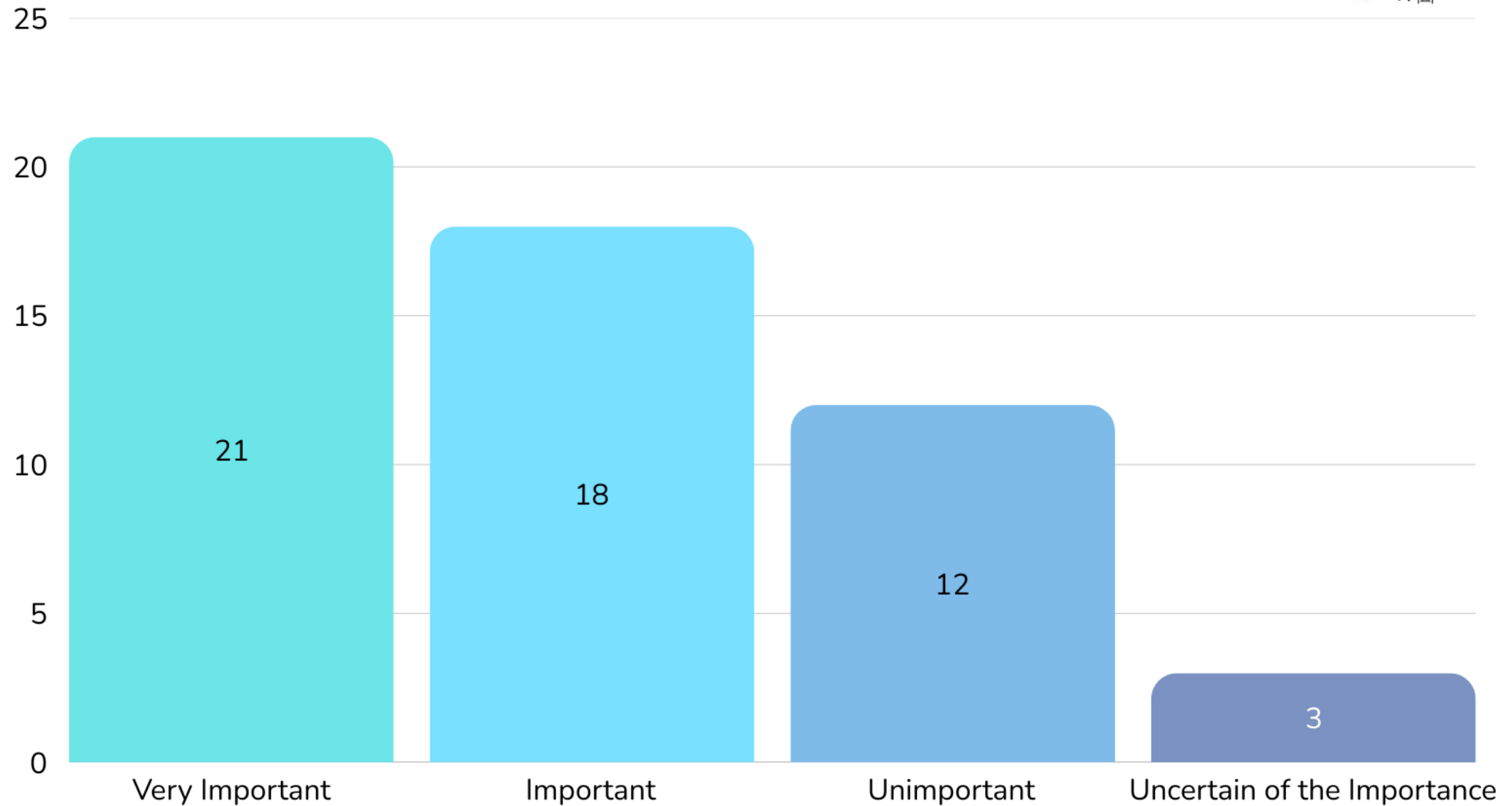
# Physical Health



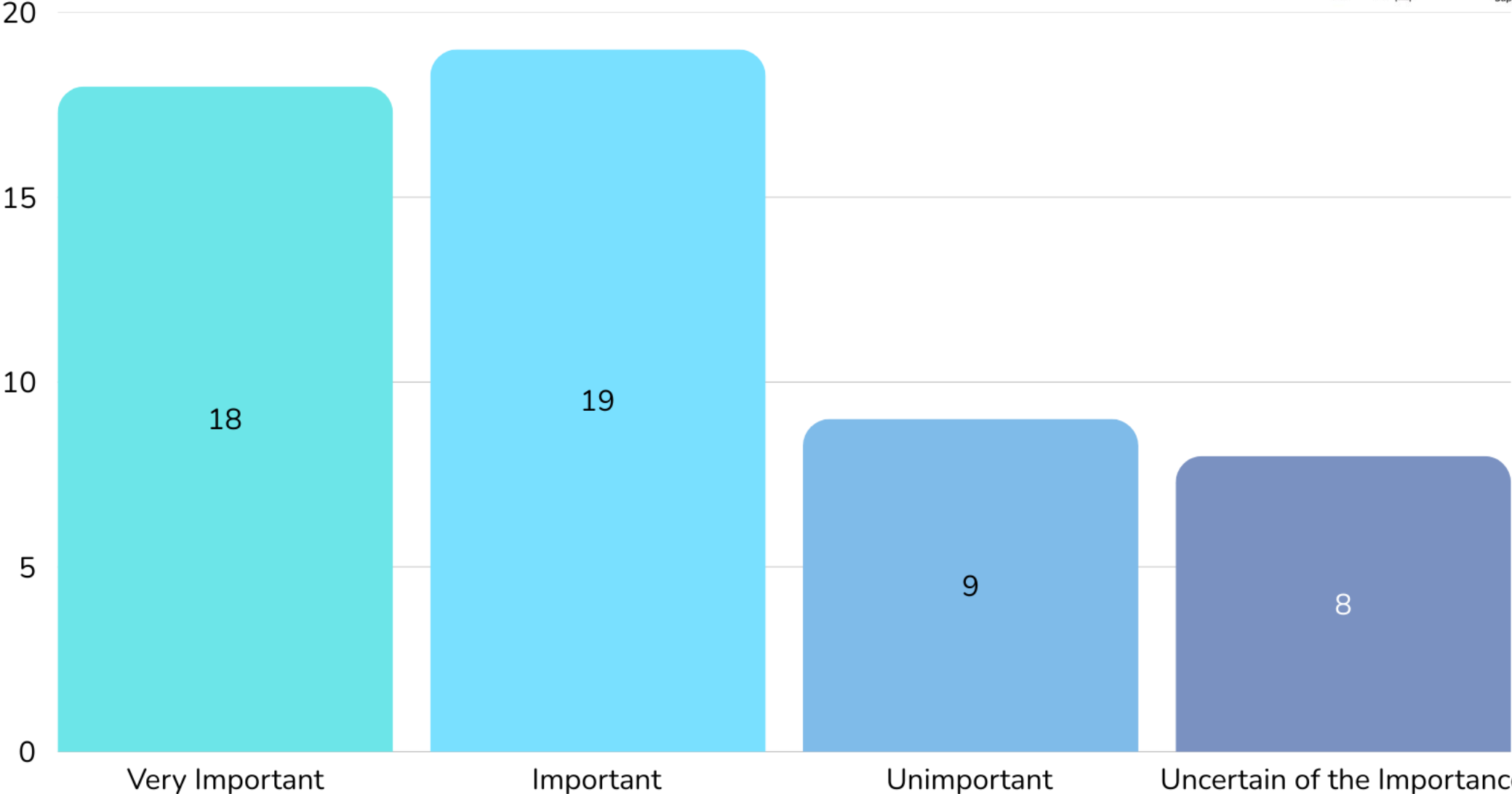
# Employment & Volunteering



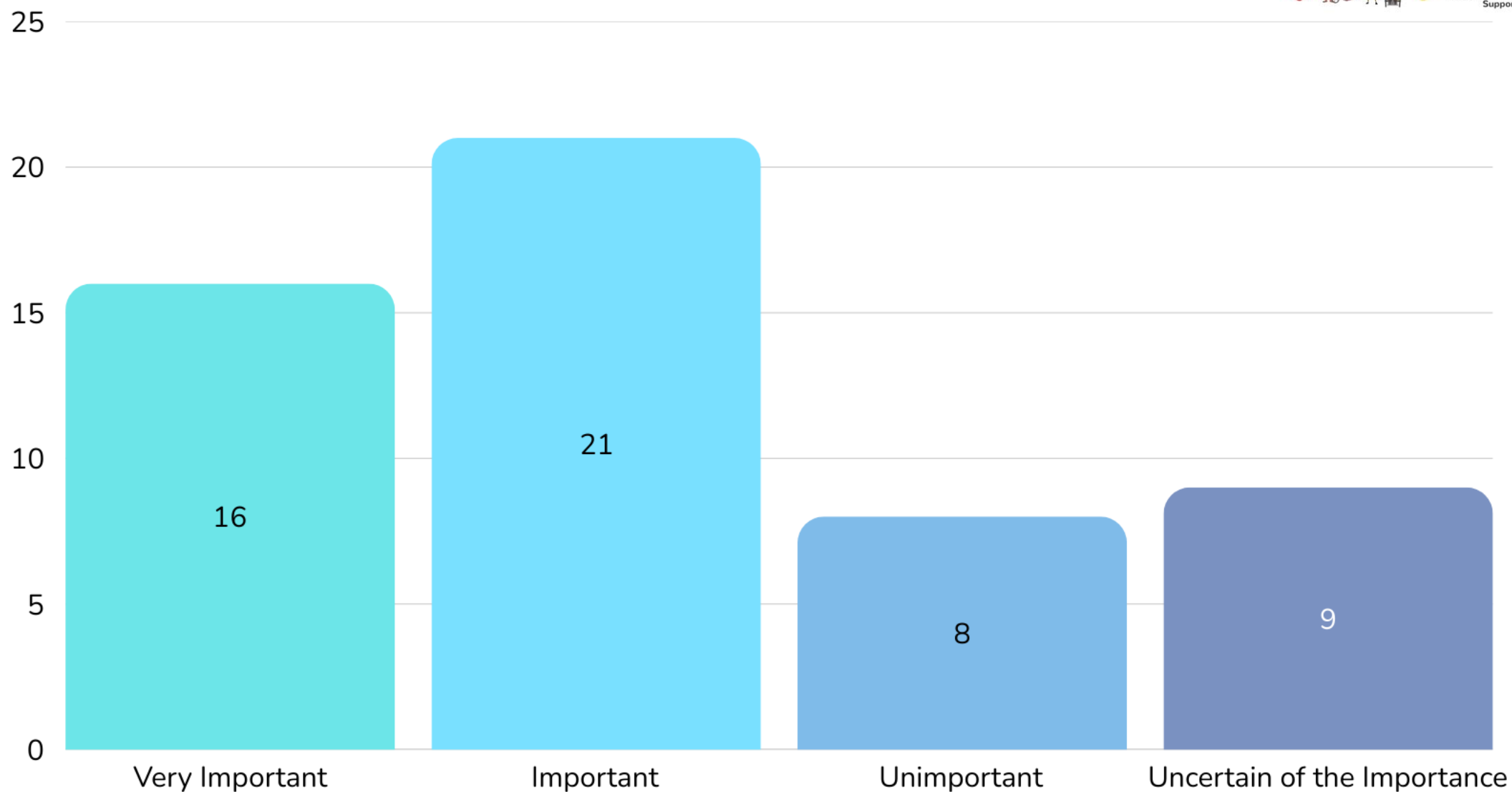
# Housing



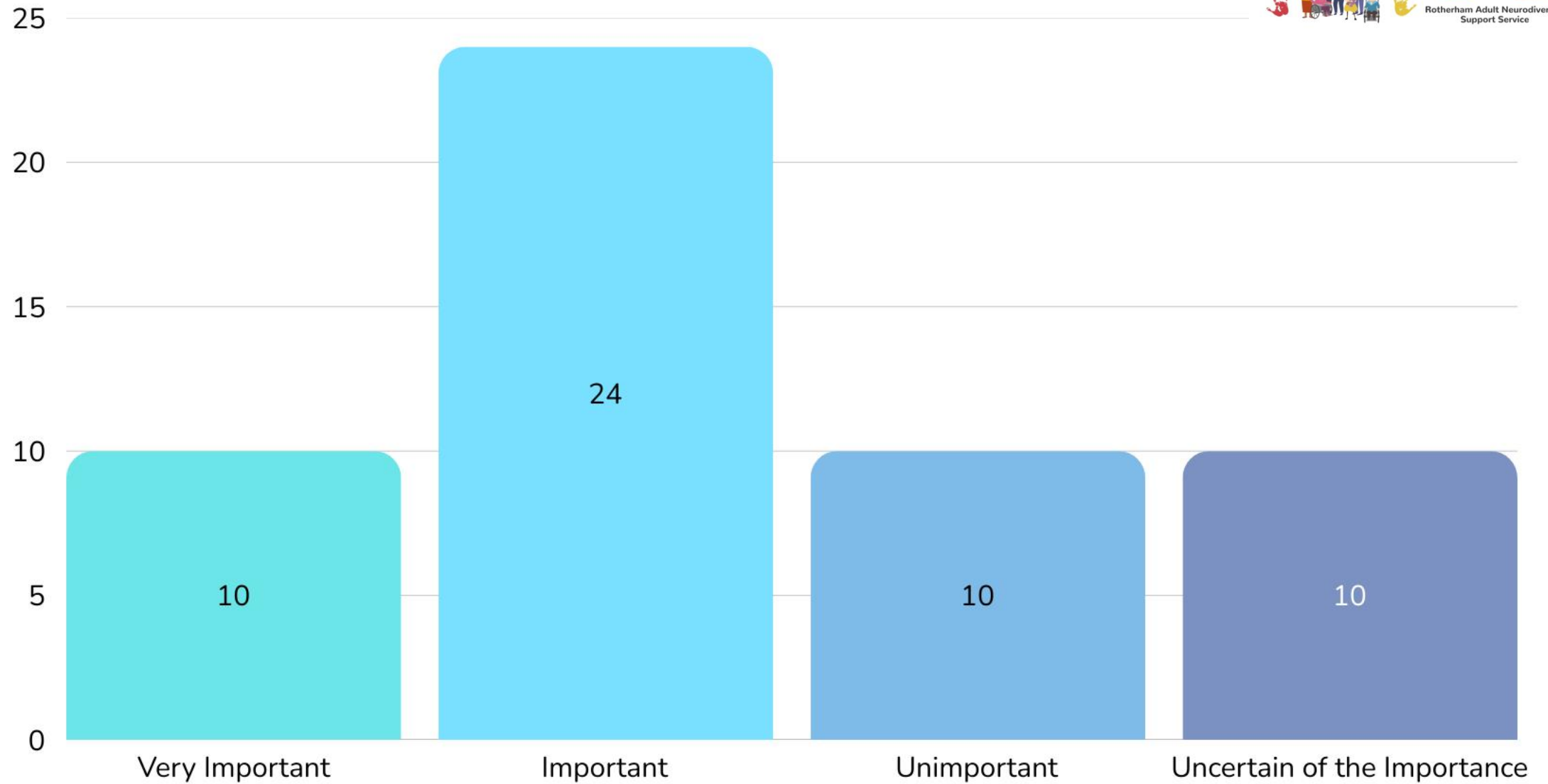
# Social Care



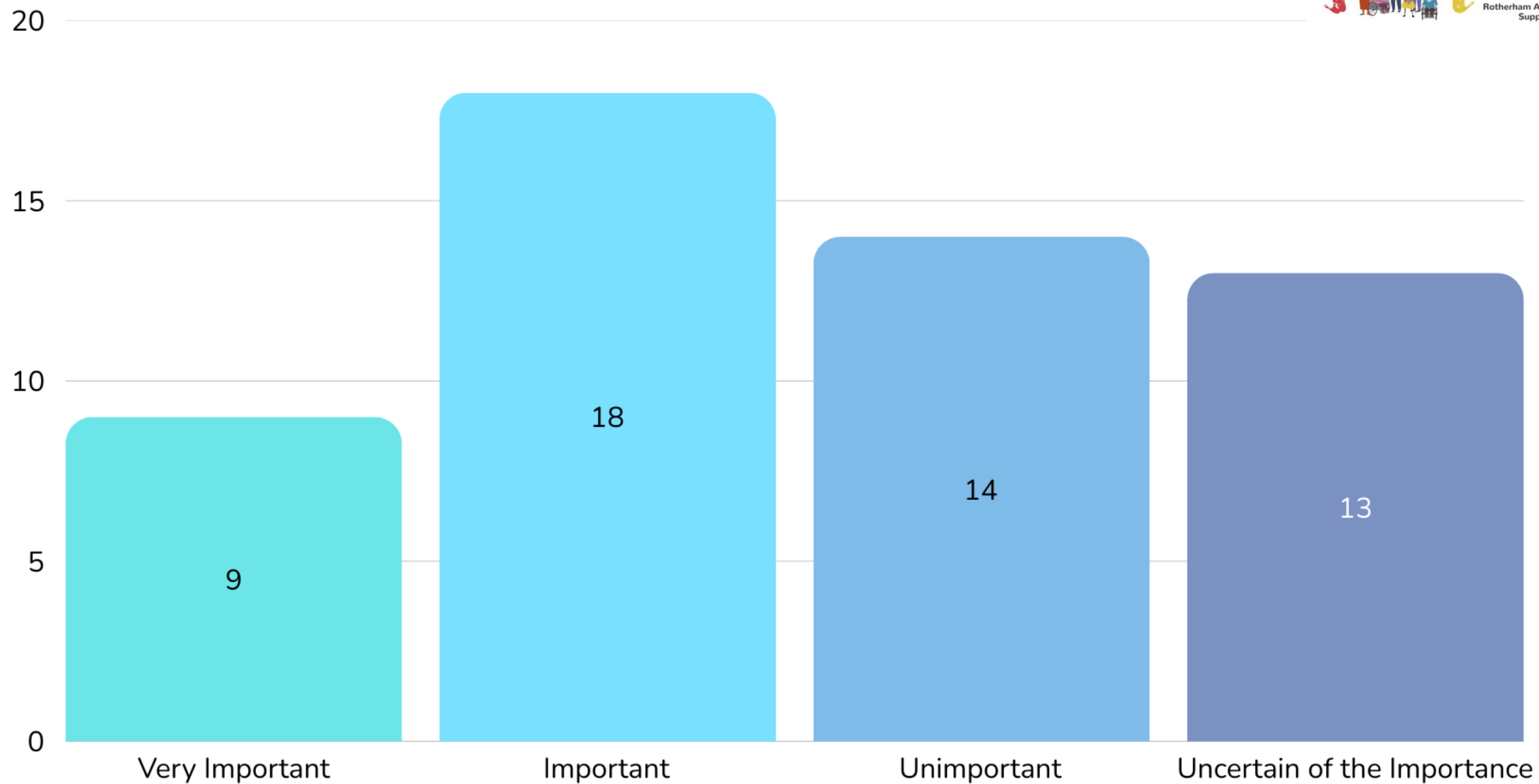
# Hospital Admissions



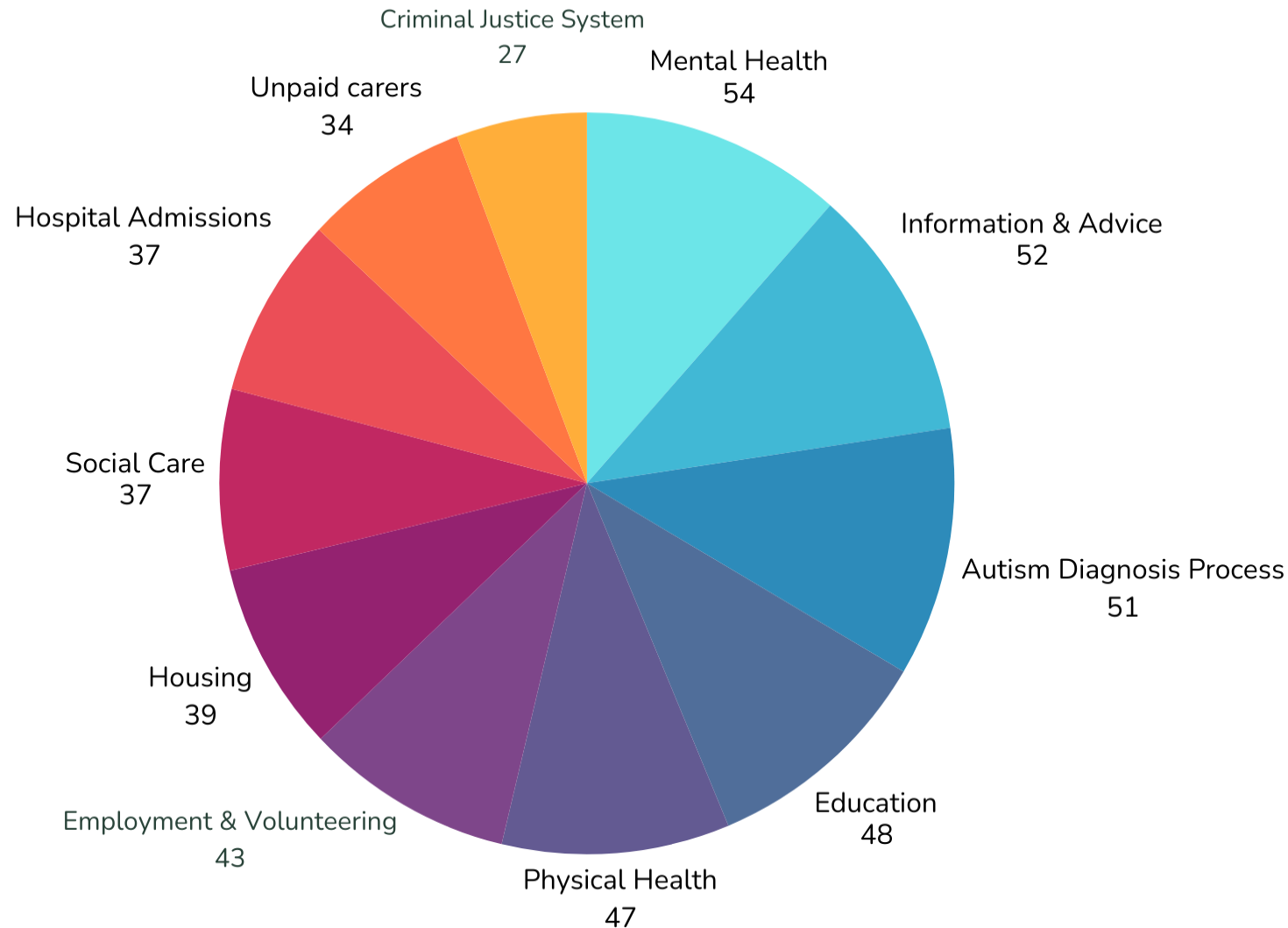
# Unpaid Carers



# Criminal Justice System



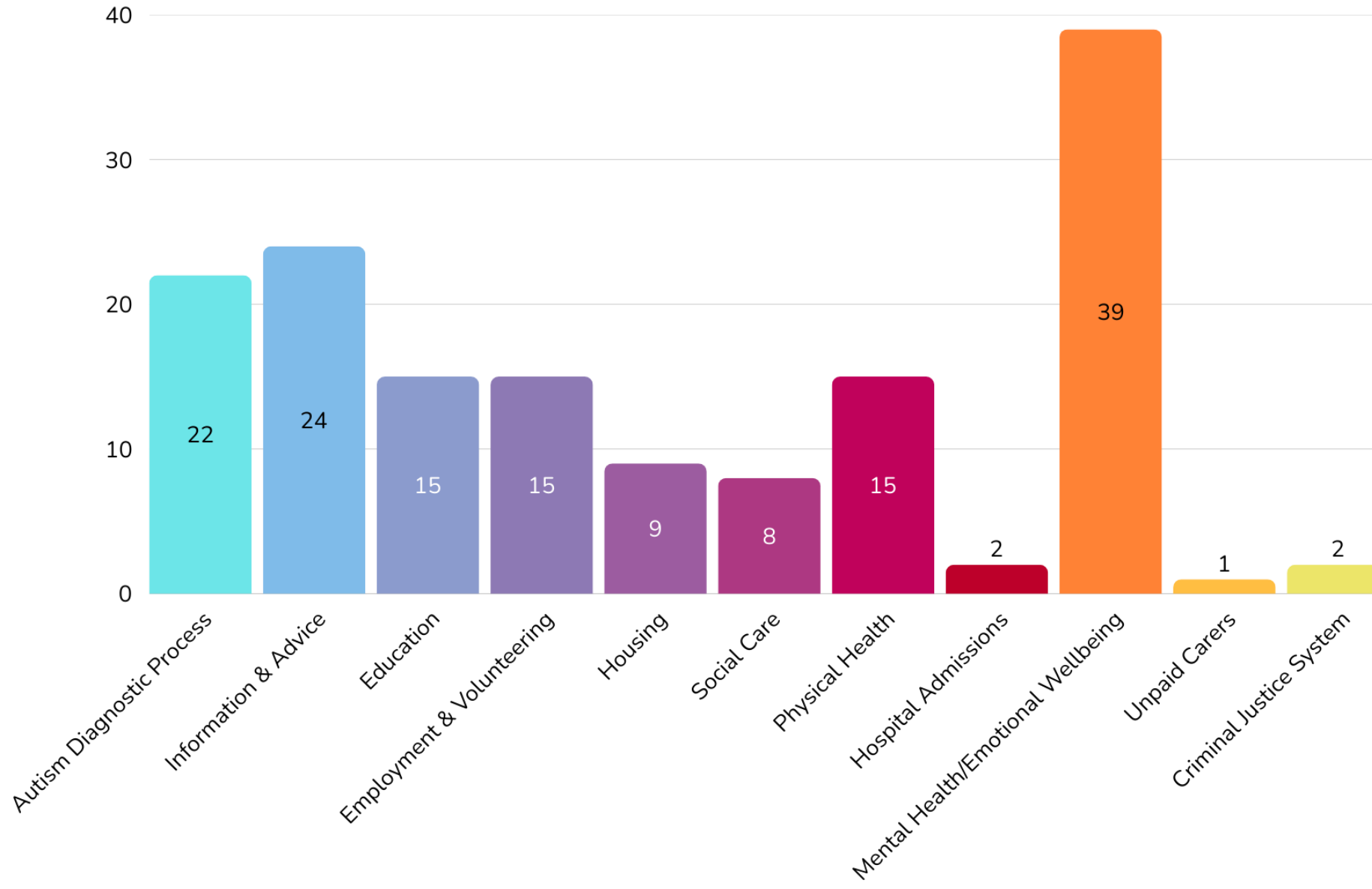
# Number of participants who rated each priority as either "Very Important" or "Important"



# Participants' "Top 3"

- Participants were then asked to tell us the three priorities which are most important to them. We asked them to think about the areas they consider most important and want to be focused on first in the delivery plan
- Participants were given the opportunity to select up to three, but did not have to select the full amount; some people selected just their one priority
- 47 participants chose three options
- 4 participants chose two options
- 3 participants chose one option
- The next slide shows a chart with the number of participants who chose each priority in their top three

# This chart shows how many participants included each priority in their "Top 3"



# Voice of Participants

- Participants were given the opportunity to share any other comments with us when completing the survey
- 16 participants shared additional information with us that is important to them
- The following slides include what they have shared and if they identify as autistic, autistic & ADHD, ADHD or parent/carer

“

“Training for employers, health service personnel (not just Oliver McGowan as I still think this doesn't highlight the needs of autistic adults without LD's very well and I think people would miss or not recognise needs as they see people as not needing support/ able to advocate for themselves (in a socially acceptable way) and likely to be misunderstanding of meltdowns in that group.”

Identifies as autistic

”

“To be educated and find purpose and belonging is most important to me”

“

”

Identifies as autistic

“

“To remember that Rotherham covers a wide area and not just focusing services mainly in central Rotherham”

Identifies as autistic

”

“Help for knock on effects such as hoarding.  
Opportunities to engage in specialist enriching  
activities - not just gaming, but music, crafting.  
The education system is just not built to support  
the number of children that have a diagnosis.  
Parents are being told an EHCP can be a  
negative thing to have.

“Public sector employment is good at putting in  
reasonable adjustments but there needs to be  
more support for neurodivergent people in the  
private sector.

It doesn't let you put two options on the one  
below, but I have an ADHD diagnosis and all  
three of my children are autistic/ADHD.”

Identifies as ADHD & Parent/Carer

“Ability to communicate  
outside norms eg bsl”

Identifies as autistic  
& ADHD

“Waiting list are to long  
and there is not enough  
help or support available  
at all.”

Identifies as autistic & ADHD

“It’s daft that you can only select three there all important, education is equally important as the ones I have marked”

Identifies as autistic & ADHD

“Maybe waiting times for an assessment. I am currently self diagnosed and on the waiting list which I have been on for 14 months so far. Maybe updates to reassure that we haven't been forgotten about would be beneficial.”

Identifies as autistic

“Being a public transport user can be hard sometimes.”

Identifies as autistic & ADHD

“Nutrition and wellbeing education for neurodiverse people which takes into account sensory eating issues and interoception and living independently. There appears to be a lack of understanding from medical staff / including local nhs projects like health wave. We need ASD/ADHD trained professionals in both Social and medical care. One of doctors I saw recently had not even heard of autistic burnout???”

Identifies as autistic

“Information and help needs to be there, we have to fight for things in our daily life, but help such as advocacy services, and information about help out there is rare, we need to make this fight fairer, easier so more of us have the capacity to win the fight for things we should have as human beings. We need more neurodiverse people within organisations like the council to speak up for us, fix systems from the inside, and we need to know where to go for help, and for someone to fight for us, not against us all the time.”

Identifies as autistic & ADHD

“I don't consider that existing support for late-diagnosed individuals is appropriate, especially those who had no post-diagnostic support at the time. Mental health services are so arbitrary and already hard enough to navigate without being rationed to brief interventions.

Is there any understanding of neurodivergence in the elderly population? I supported my 90yo aunt, undiagnosed of course, whose needs weren't really understood by always-changing GPs; endless distress navigating care, horrid.

By the way, I couldn't tell what 'Hospital Admission' refers to. Is it negotiating RDGH, the Hallamshire etc., or admission under section of the MH Act?”

Identifies as ADHD

“The lack of health social activities like say a disability keep fit is criminal . There are under resourced health buildings like badsley more lane in the evenings which could facilitate this”

Identifies as parent/carer

“Any material or advice available that has been quality assured, to explain differences to young people/peers. I want to make sure I'm giving the information in the best way.”

Identifies as parent/carer

“Employment services and opportunities”

Identifies as autistic & ADHD

“Support for adults”  
Identifies as autistic

# Analysis



- **Mental Health/Emotional Wellbeing is the primary focus from the consultation as the priority in the Delivery Plan**
- 2nd and 3rd priorities are **Information & Advice** and the **Autism Diagnosis Process**
- Following these priorities in order are Education, Physical Health, Employment & Volunteering, Housing, Social Care, Hospital Admissions, Unpaid Carers and the Criminal Justice System
- The four priorities that have scored lower than the rest also score highest for "Uncertain of the Importance" so these topics may need clarifying and revisiting

# Conclusion

- Delivery plan for the strategy:
- Yr 1: Feb 25 to December 25 - [Delivery Plan for All Age Autism Strategy Draft Plan.docx](#)
- Action plan with Focus on top 3 priorities as individual workstreams, incorporating 3 overarching themes in all.
- Continue to gather voice via specific "Voice & Influence" groups for adults, parents and young people, along with visiting partner groups, offering opportunity for people to share their voice one to one and online for those not able to attend groups.
- Restructure local area Autism Partnership board with relevant services to action the priorities /ownership of plan