

Retirement and Health Poll

NPR

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Harvard School of Public Health

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The Retirement Experiences of Retirees and the Expectations of Pre-Retirees

Retirees' Assessment of Life in Retirement Compared to Life Before: Overall & Top 5 Positive Aspects of It

% of retirees saying life or each aspect of it is "better", "about the same", or "worse" in retirement than it was in the 5 years before retirement

Life (all in all) since retirement (retirees n=755)



Your stress in life (retirees n=346)



Your relationship with your family (retirees n=363)



Your relationship with your spouse/partner (married/partnered retirees n=179)



Doing the activities you like to do (sports, hobbies, volunteering) (retirees n=361)



The healthfulness of your diet (retirees n=370)



■ **Better**
■ **About the Same**
■ **Worse**

Expectations vs. Reality: Major Differences Between Pre-Retirees and Retirees

% of pre-retirees saying each of the following will be worse than now (pre-retirees) vs. % of retirees saying it is worse than the five years before retirement (retirees)

Life overall (pre-retirees n=409, retirees n=755)



Your health (pre-retirees n=194, retirees n=392)



Financial ability to live comfortably during retirement (pre-retirees n=409, retirees n=755)



The overall exercise that you get (pre-retirees n=181, retirees n=355)



Traveling to places you want to go (pre-retirees n=198, retirees n=362)



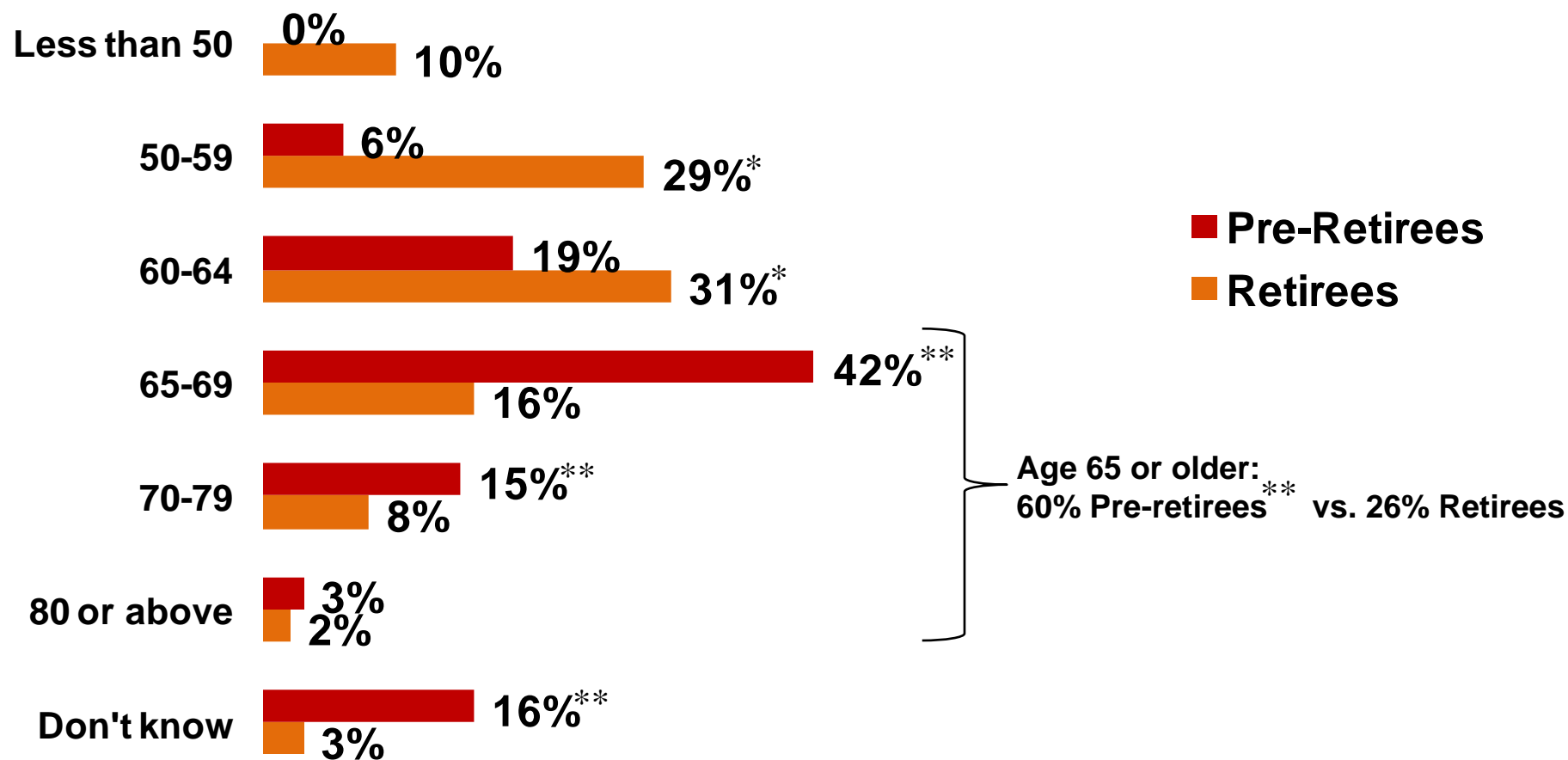
*Statistically significantly greater than pre-retirees

Perspectives on the Timing of Retirement

Expectations vs. Reality: Retirement Age

Pre-retirees: At what age do you expect to retire (or partly retire, for those who never expect to completely retire)?

Retirees: At what age did you party or completely retire?



*Statistically significantly greater than pre-retirees

**Statistically significantly greater than retirees

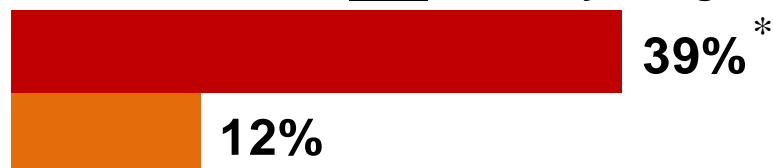
Retiring Later: Now vs. Expectations in their 40's

*The Age People Did or Plan to Retire Now
As Compared to They Age They Thought They Would Retire When they Were in their 40's*

Plan to Retire/ Retired at the same age or younger than they thought they would



Plan to Retire/ Retired later than they thought they would



Don't know



*Statistically significantly greater than pre-retirees

**Statistically significantly greater than retirees

Primary Reason for Retiring/Planning to Retire Late

*% among those who think they will retire/retired later than they expected to in their 40s
(pre-retirees n=157, retirees n=100)*

You do not feel you can afford to retire financially



You enjoy working



■ **Pre-Retirees**

■ **Retirees**

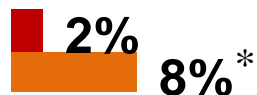
You want to get the health benefits that come with a job



You do not want to be bored



You want to make a difference



Some other reason



*Statistically significantly greater than pre-retirees

**Statistically significantly greater than retirees

Primary Reasons for Never Fully or Even Partly Retiring

% among all non-retired people (n=447)

Never expect to retire (partly or fully)



% among people who will never retire at all and those who never plan to fully retire (n=64)

You do not feel you can afford to retire financially



You enjoy working



You do not want to be bored



You want to make a difference



You want to get the health benefits that come with a job



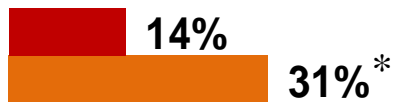
Some other reason



Expectations vs. Reality: Annual Income for Living Comfortably in Retirement

What annual income do you think you need for you and your family to live comfortably in retirement?

Less than \$35,000



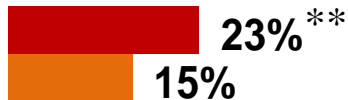
\$35,000 to less than \$50,000



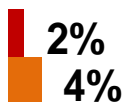
\$50,000 to less than \$75,000



\$75,000 or more



Don't know



■ Pre-Retirees ■ Retirees

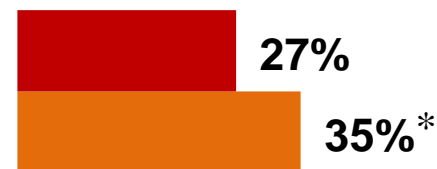
**\$35K or more:
81% Pre-retirees**
vs. 63% Retirees**

Do (you think) you and your family (will have) currently have this annual income?

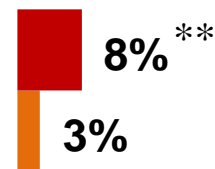
Yes, will have/currently have this income



No, will not have/do not have this income



Don't know/refused if have this income



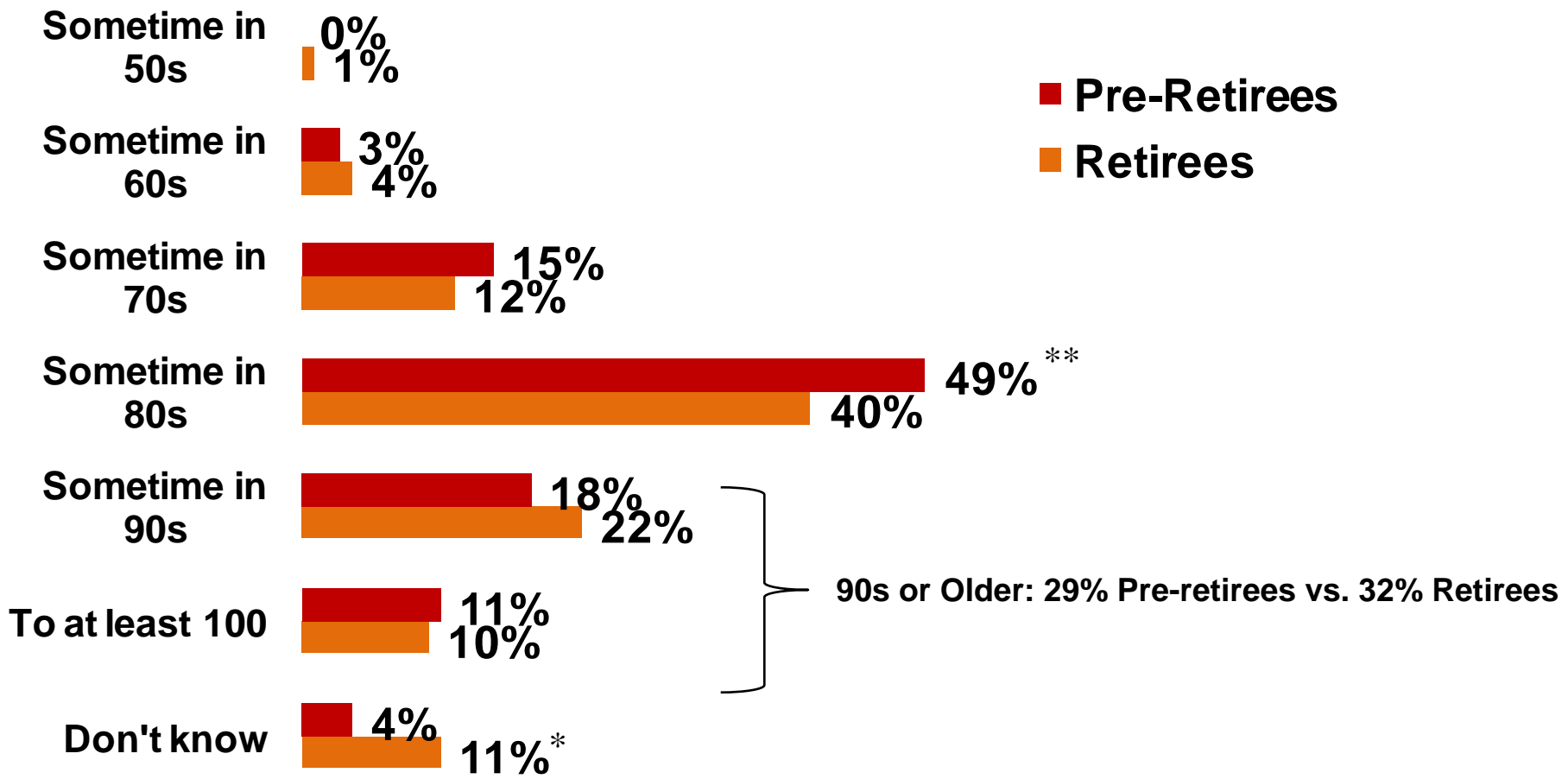
*Statistically significantly greater than pre-retirees

**Statistically significantly greater than retirees

Steps Taken to Stay Healthy in Retirement

Expectations About Life Expectancy

How long do you expect to live (to what age)?

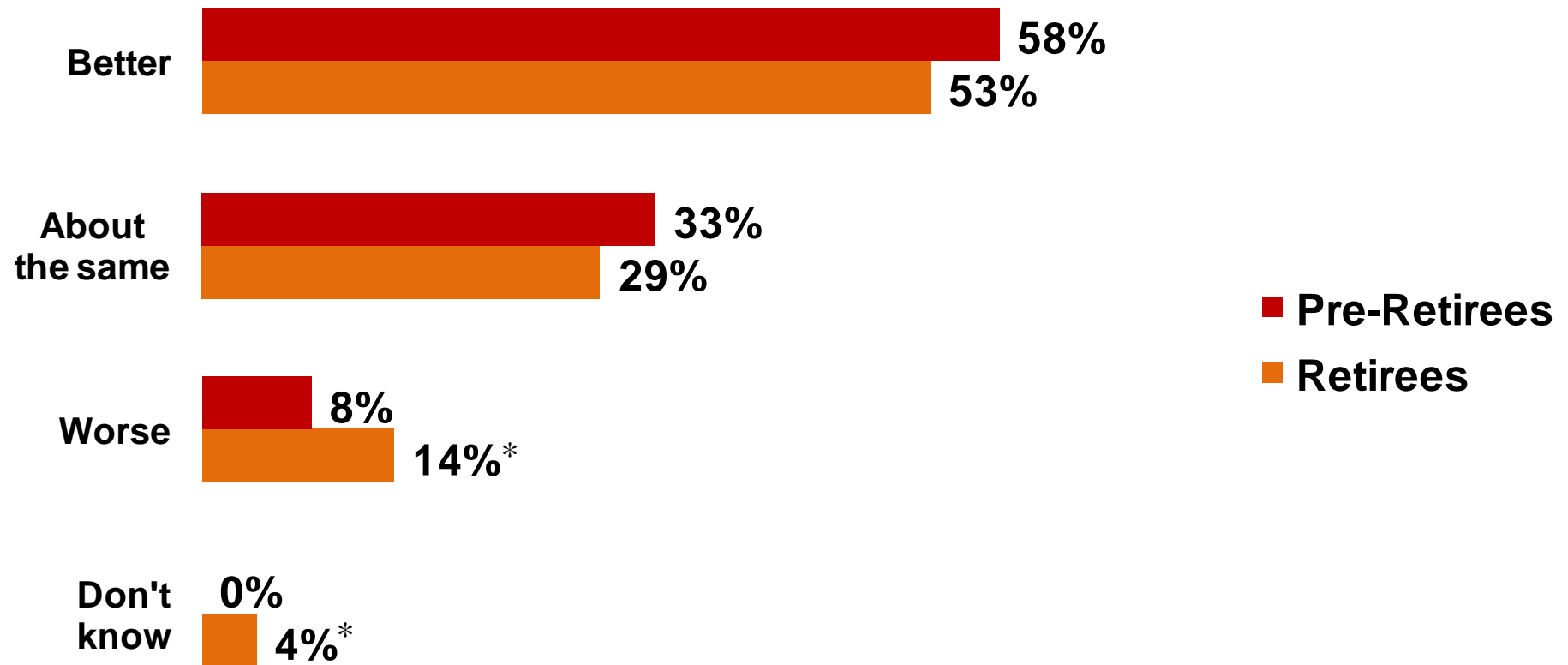


*Statistically significantly greater than pre-retirees

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Health in Retirement Compared to Your Parents' Generation

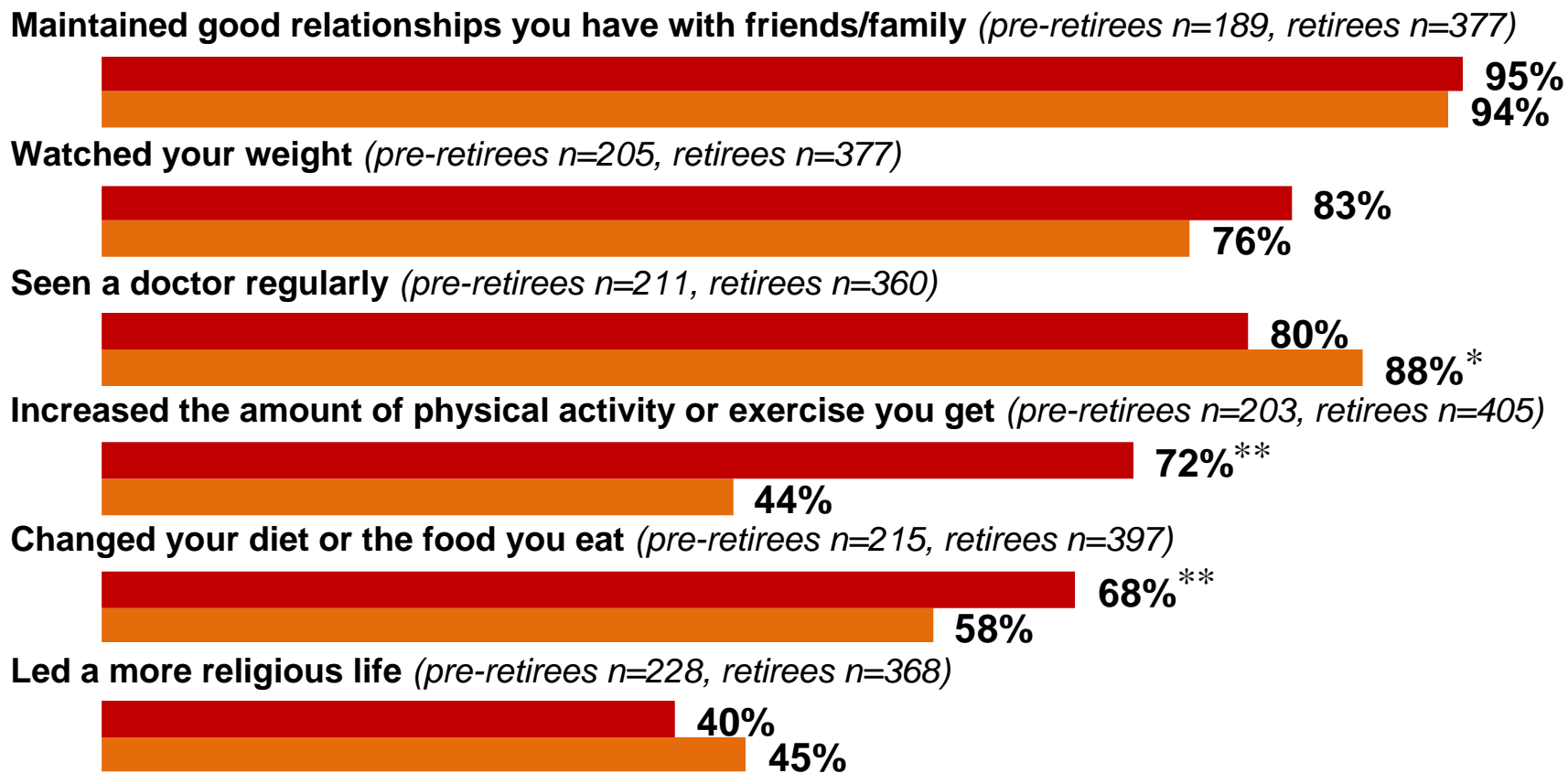
Do you expect your overall health during your retirement to be better, worse or about the same as compared to the overall health of people of your parents' generation during their retirement?



*Statistically significantly greater than pre-retirees

Staying Healthy During Retirement

Which of the following have you (already) done in order to stay healthy when you retire (during your retirement)?



■ Pre-Retirees ■ Retirees

*Statistically significantly greater than pre-retirees

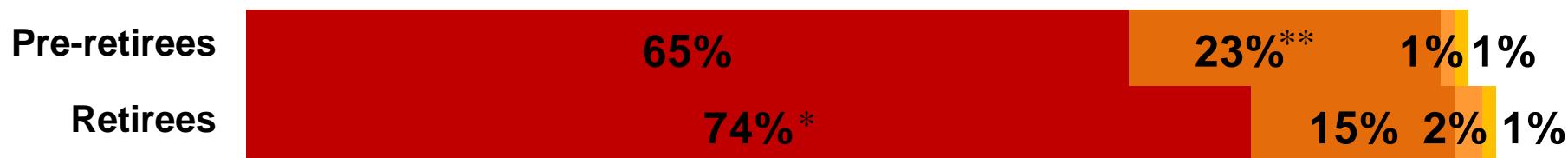
**Statistically significantly greater than retirees

Views on the Roles of Medicare and Medicaid in Retirement

Importance of Medicare and Medicaid

% saying they Medicare/Medicaid is or they expect Medicare/Medicaid will be important for them personally during their retirement

Importance of Medicare



Importance of Medicaid



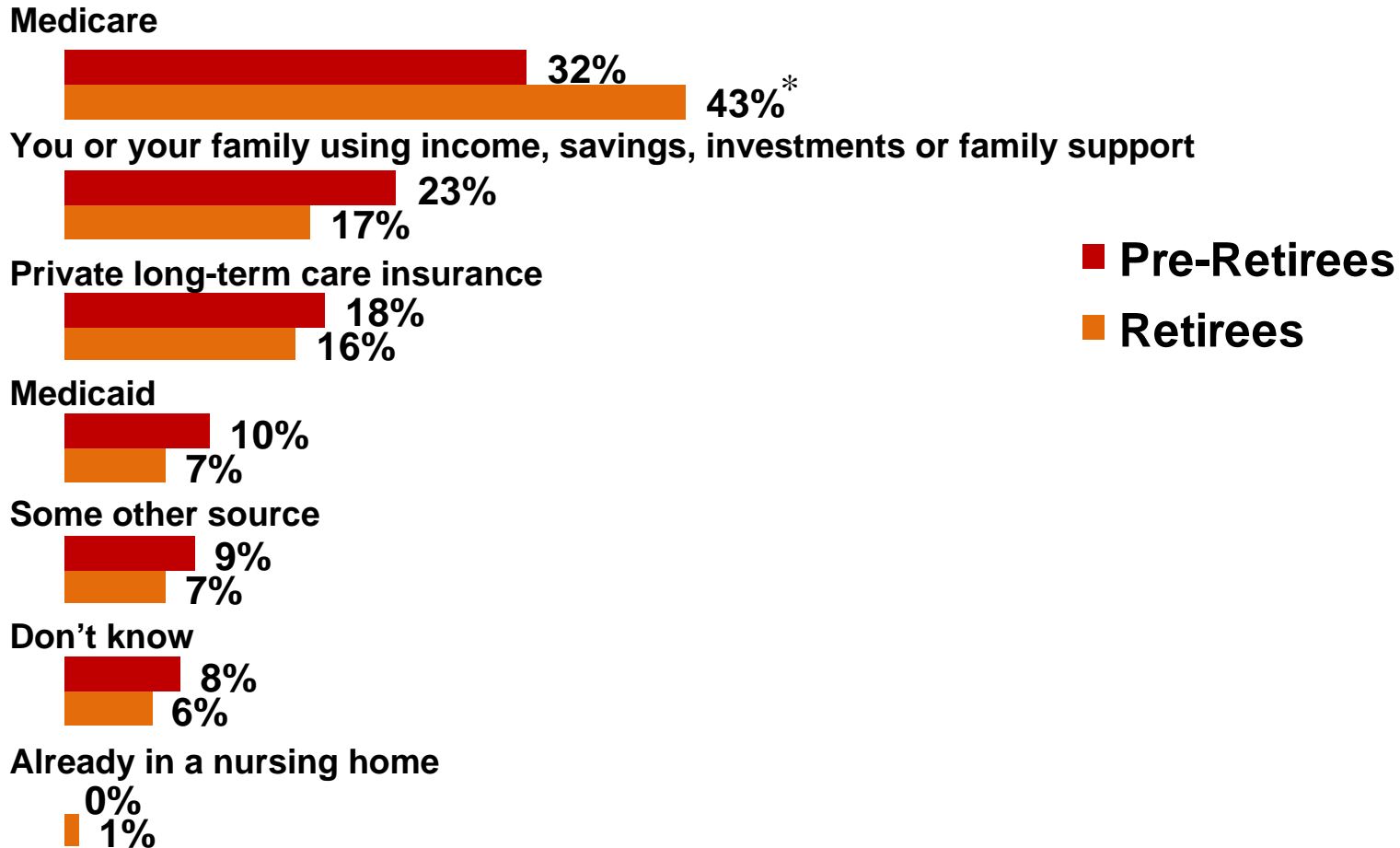
■ Very important
 ■ Somewhat important
 ■ Not very important
 ■ Not at all important

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Beliefs About How Long-Term Nursing Home Care Would Be Paid

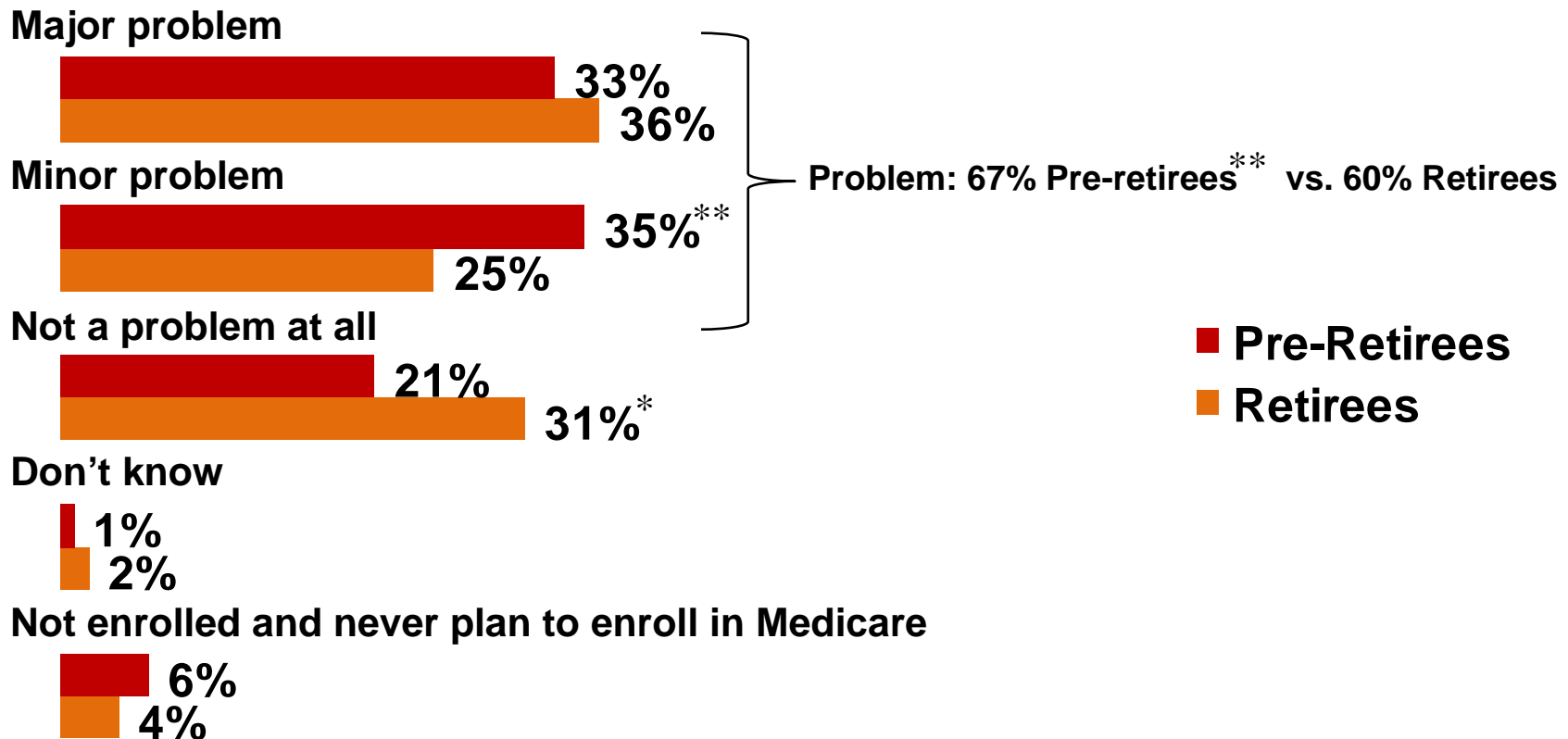
If you (or your spouse/partner) were to need care in a nursing home for three months (100 days) or more, how would the majority of the costs be paid?



*Statistically significantly greater than pre-retirees

Problems with Waiting Two Additional Years Before Receiving Benefits: Medicare

If you had been/were asked to wait two years longer before receiving Medicare benefits, would that have been/be a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem at all for you and your family?

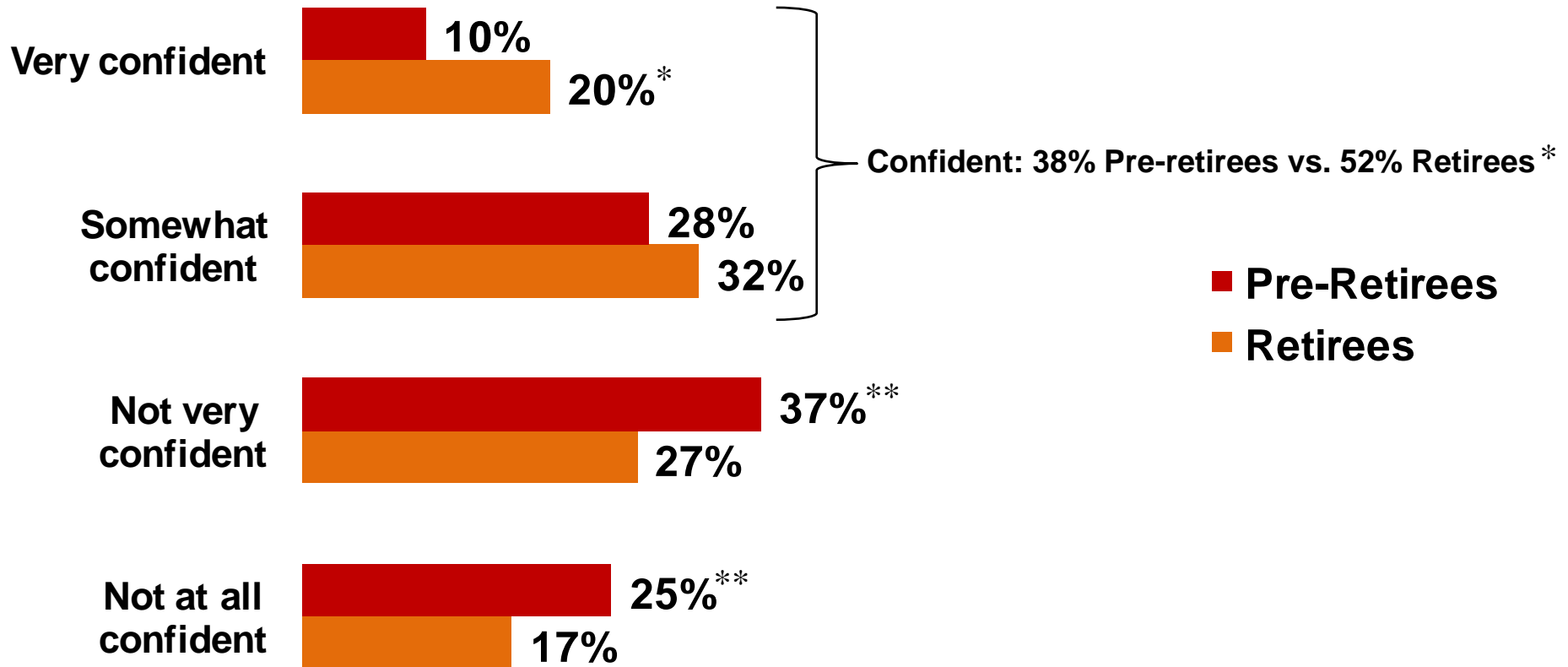


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Confidence in Medicare

How confident are you that Medicare will continue to provide benefits of at least equal value to benefits received by retirees today through the end of your retirement?



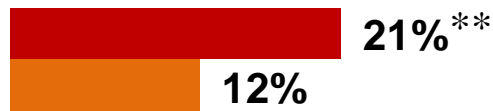
*Statistically significantly greater than pre-retirees

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Government Changes to Medicare to Control the Costs of the Program

% saying they think the government should...

Completely overhaul Medicare to control the cost of the program



Make major changes to Medicare but not completely overhaul it



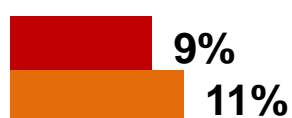
Make minor changes to Medicare



Not try to control the costs of Medicare



Don't know



Overhaul or major change:
47% Pre-retirees**
vs. 32% Retirees

■ Pre-Retirees
■ Retirees

*Statistically significantly greater than pre-retirees

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Pre-Retirees: Likelihood that Each of These Problems Will Happen During Retirement

Will have trouble paying health care insurance premiums (*pre-retirees n=227*)



Will have trouble paying for long-term care* if you (or your spouse/partner) need it (*pre-retirees n=252*)



Will have trouble paying overall medical bills for you (or your spouse/partner) (*pre-retirees n=228*)



Will have trouble paying for the drugs you (or your spouse/partner) need (*pre-retirees n=235*)



Will have trouble finding high quality care (*pre-retirees n=234*)



Will have trouble seeing the doctor of your choice (*pre-retirees n=234*)



Will have trouble affording preventive services you (or your spouse/partner) need (*pre-retirees n=222*)



■ Very likely ■ Somewhat likely

*Note: Long-term care, such as care in a nursing home, assisted living, or home care

Retirees: Problems That Have Happened Since They Retired

Have had trouble paying for the drugs you (or your spouse/partner) need *(retirees n=439)*



Have had trouble paying health care insurance premiums *(retirees n=449)*



Have had trouble paying overall medical bills for you (or your spouse/partner) *(retirees n=432)*



Have had trouble paying for long-term care* if you (or your spouse/partner) need it *(retirees n=434)*



Have had trouble affording preventive services you (or your spouse/partner) need *(retirees n=406)*



Have had trouble seeing the doctor of your choice *(retirees n=439)*



Have had trouble finding high quality care *(retirees n=432)*



*Note: Long-term care, such as care in a nursing home, assisted living, or home care

Perceptions of What Makes a Community a Healthy Place for Retired People

Community Factors That Are 'Very Important' in Helping Retired People Stay Healthy

Retired people in some communities are healthier than others. How important do you think each of the following things is in helping retired people stay healthy?

Clean air and water (pre-retirees n=194, retirees n=375)



Low crime rate (pre-retirees n=178, retirees n=360)



Access to affordable fresh fruits and vegetables (pre-retirees n=184, retirees n=350)



Access to high quality doctors and hospitals (pre-retirees n=201, retirees n=350)



Access to outdoor space for walking, jogging, and sports (pre-retirees n=191, retirees n=347)



Access to pharmacies or drug stores (pre-retirees n=197, retirees n=348)



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Concerns about Being Admitted to a Nursing Home During Retirement

Top Worries About Nursing Homes

% saying they would be very or somewhat worried about each

Being in an institutional environment that is not as comfortable as a home



The cleanliness of the facility



Having too few nurses to provide the care you needed



The quality of health care provided



Having limited privacy



Spending all your time around people who are very sick



Fraud and waste by managers of nursing homes



■ Very worried

■ Somewhat worried

**Statistically significantly greater than retirees