

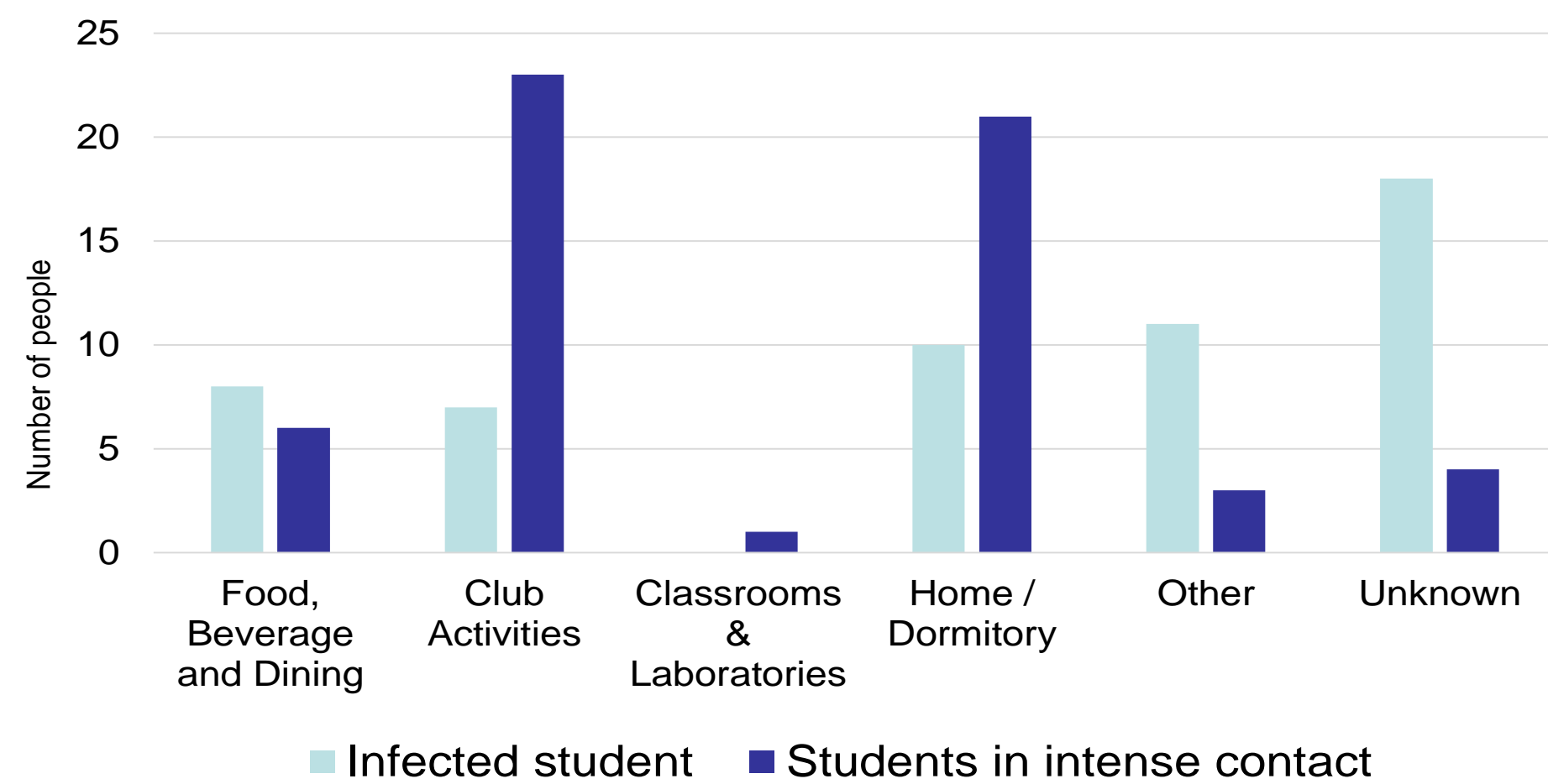
Study Reveals Psychological Support Required for University Students Acquainted with COVID-19 Patients

Kwansei Gakuin Educational Foundation Health Care Center and Clinic in Japan.

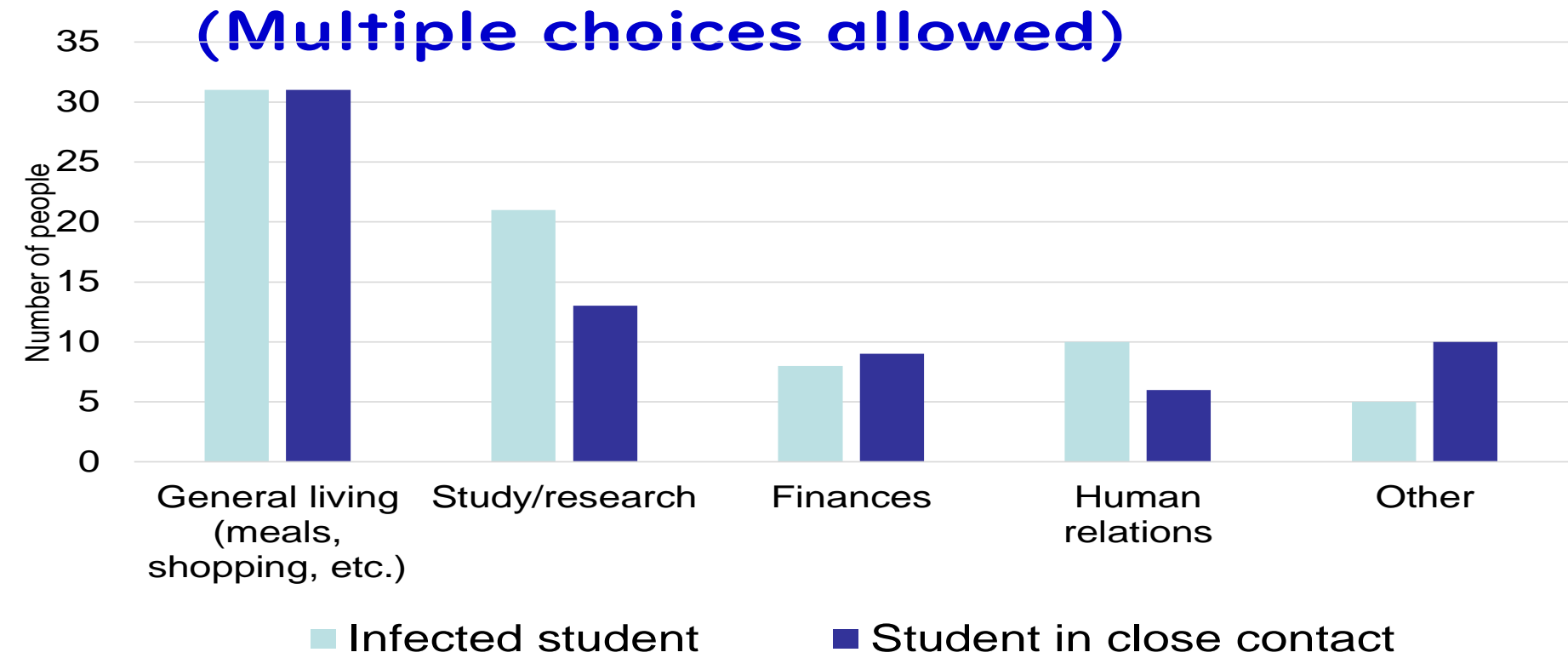
Yukito Shimizu M.D., Ph.D. Hiroshi Sato M.D., Ph.D.
Hironori Ueda M.D., Ph.D.



6. Infection route (Multiple choices allowed)



10. What were your concerns in your daily life when you were infected or a close contact? (Multiple choices allowed)



1. Objective

It is not clear what kind of support is needed for college students who are convinced to have had intense contact with COVID-19 patients.

In this study, we report on the psychological support they need.

2. Definition of “close contact with COVID-19 patients” in Japan

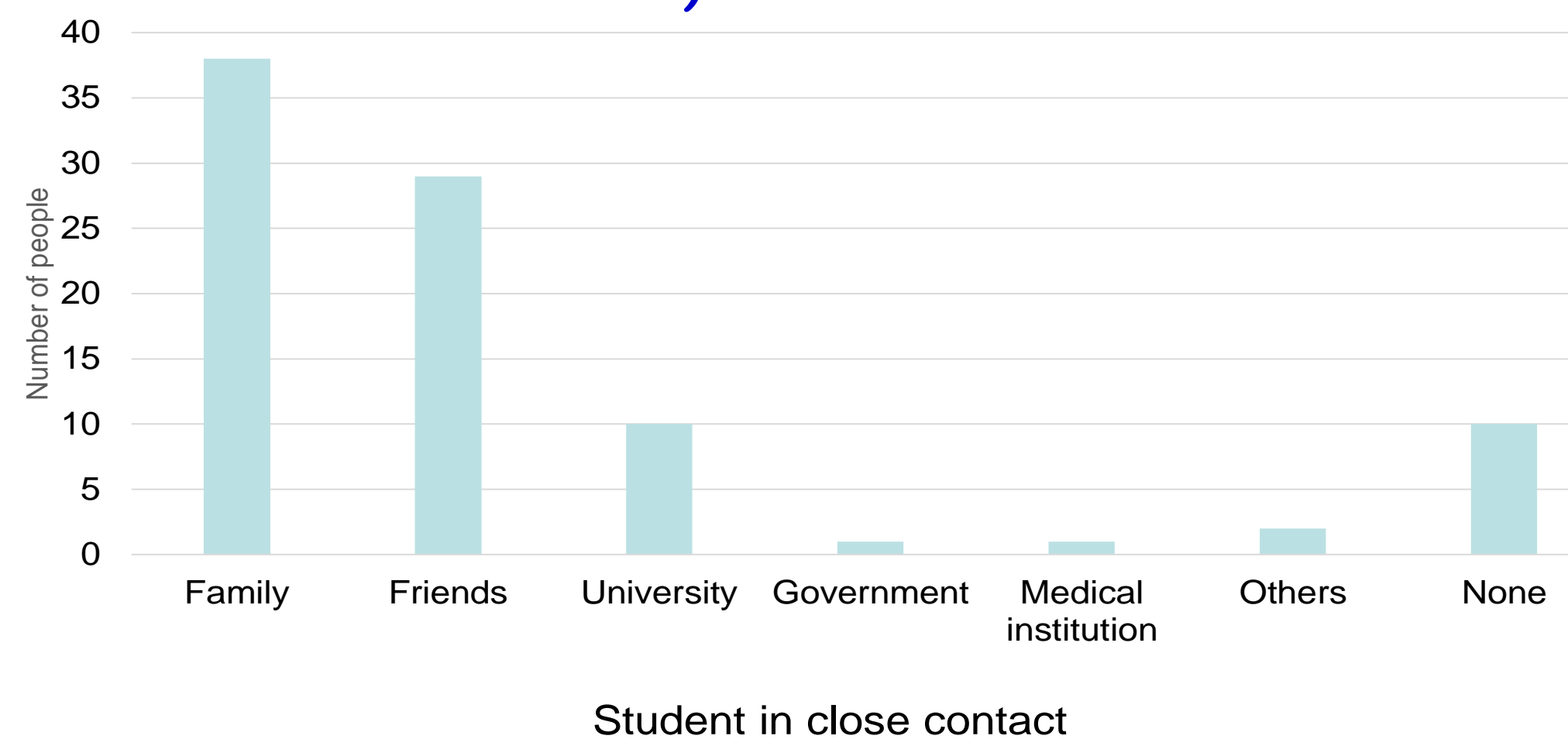
A person who has been in contact with a person who has tested positive for the disease for a certain period of time is called a “close contact person.” The period of time referred to here is 2 days prior to the appearance of symptoms for those with symptoms, and 2 days prior to the time of specimen collection for those without symptoms.

During this period, a person who meets any of the following conditions is defined as a “person with whom the person has had a close contact”:

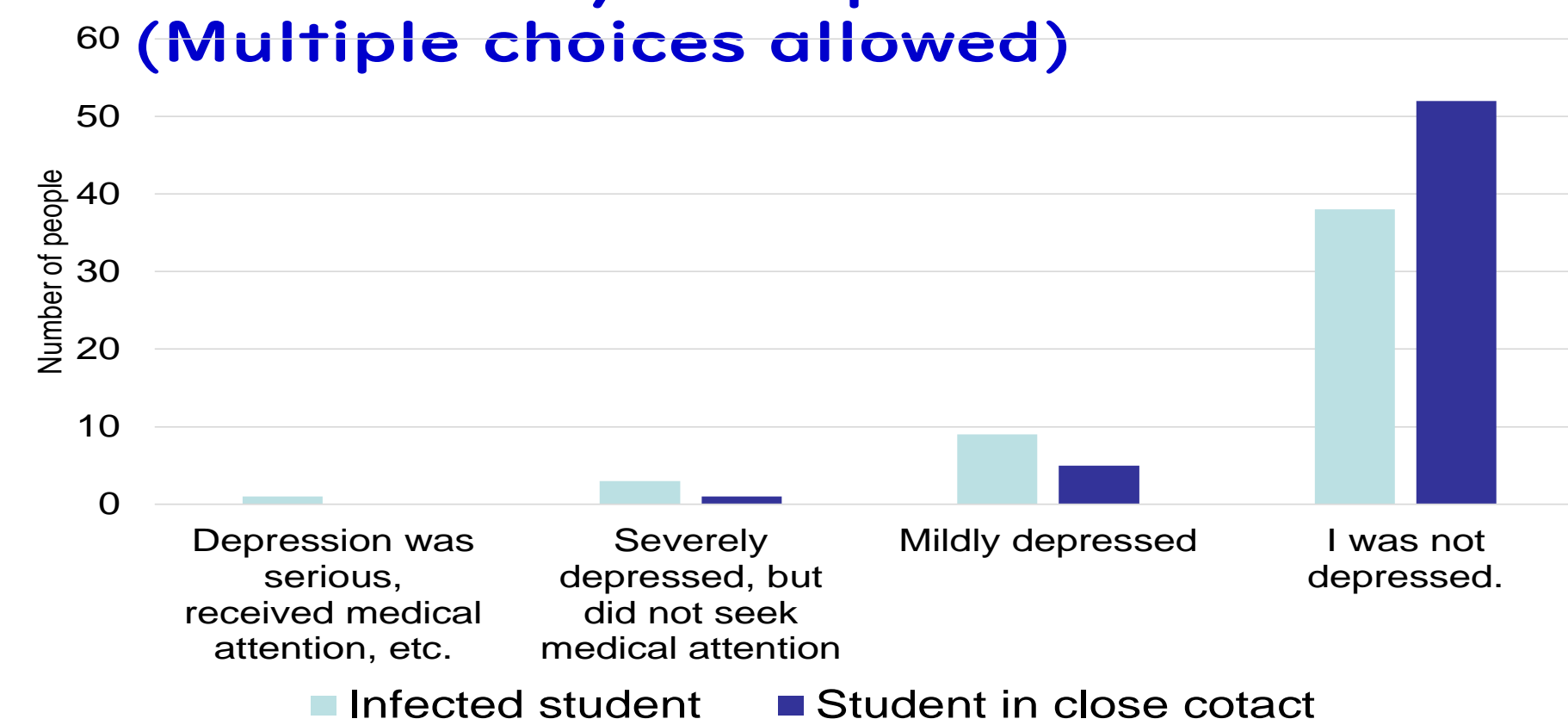
- People who live with a positive person.
- Persons who had prolonged contact with a positive person (including in a car, on an airplane, etc.). (In principle, passengers on international flights must be within two rows in front of or behind the positive person, and passengers on domestic flights must be within 2 m of the positive person.)
- Persons who examined, nursed, or cared for a patient (confirmed case) without proper infection protection.
- Persons who are likely to have been in direct contact with contaminants such as airway secretions or body fluids of a positive person.
- Persons who had contact with a positive person within 1 m for more than 15 minutes without a mask.



7. Who supported you during your home isolation due to close contact? (Multiple choices allowed)



11. What is the degree of depression at the time of infection or close contact and how did you respond to it? (Multiple choices allowed)



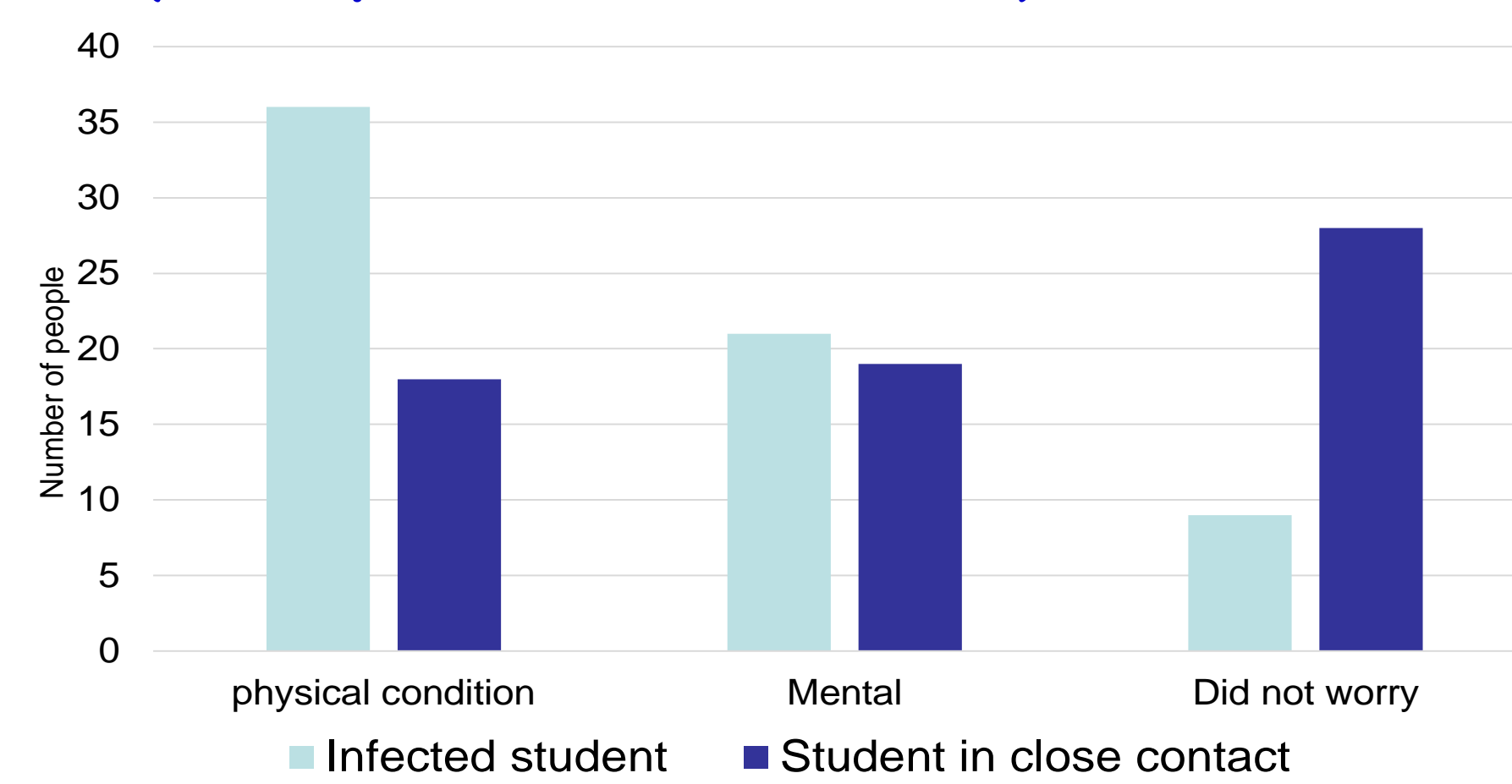
3. Requires 2 weeks of home stay from the last day of close contact

How to spend the period of health observation (stay at home)

- Please refrain from taking unnecessary trips out of the house. Please consider using mail orders or home delivery services. If you have no choice but to go out, please take infection control measures such as wearing a mask and practicing hand hygiene, and avoid contact with people.
- Please refrain from commuting to work or school. Telecommuting and remote teaching are acceptable.
- Do not use public transportation (trains, buses, cabs, airplanes, etc. used by an unspecified number of people).
- Please check your temperature and symptoms twice daily (morning and evening). Please pay attention to symptoms such as fever, cough, breathlessness, and strong fatigue, and if you see any of these symptoms, please contact us in advance and visit a prefecture-designated medical treatment and examination institution.



8. What were you worried about when you were infected or had a close contact? (Multiple choices allowed)



4. Methods

Students who were infected with COVID-19 (group A) and those who were classified as heavy contacts (group B) enrolled at Kwansei Gakuin University were asked to complete an online, unadministered questionnaire.

The data were compiled from the responses received by September 25, 2021 (approximately by the time of the Delta outbreak).

Data were collected from responses received by September 25, 2021 (approximately by the time of the Delta outbreak).

This survey was approved (KG-IRB-20-06) by the Kwansei Gakuin University Ethics Committee for Human Subjects in Medicine.

5. Results

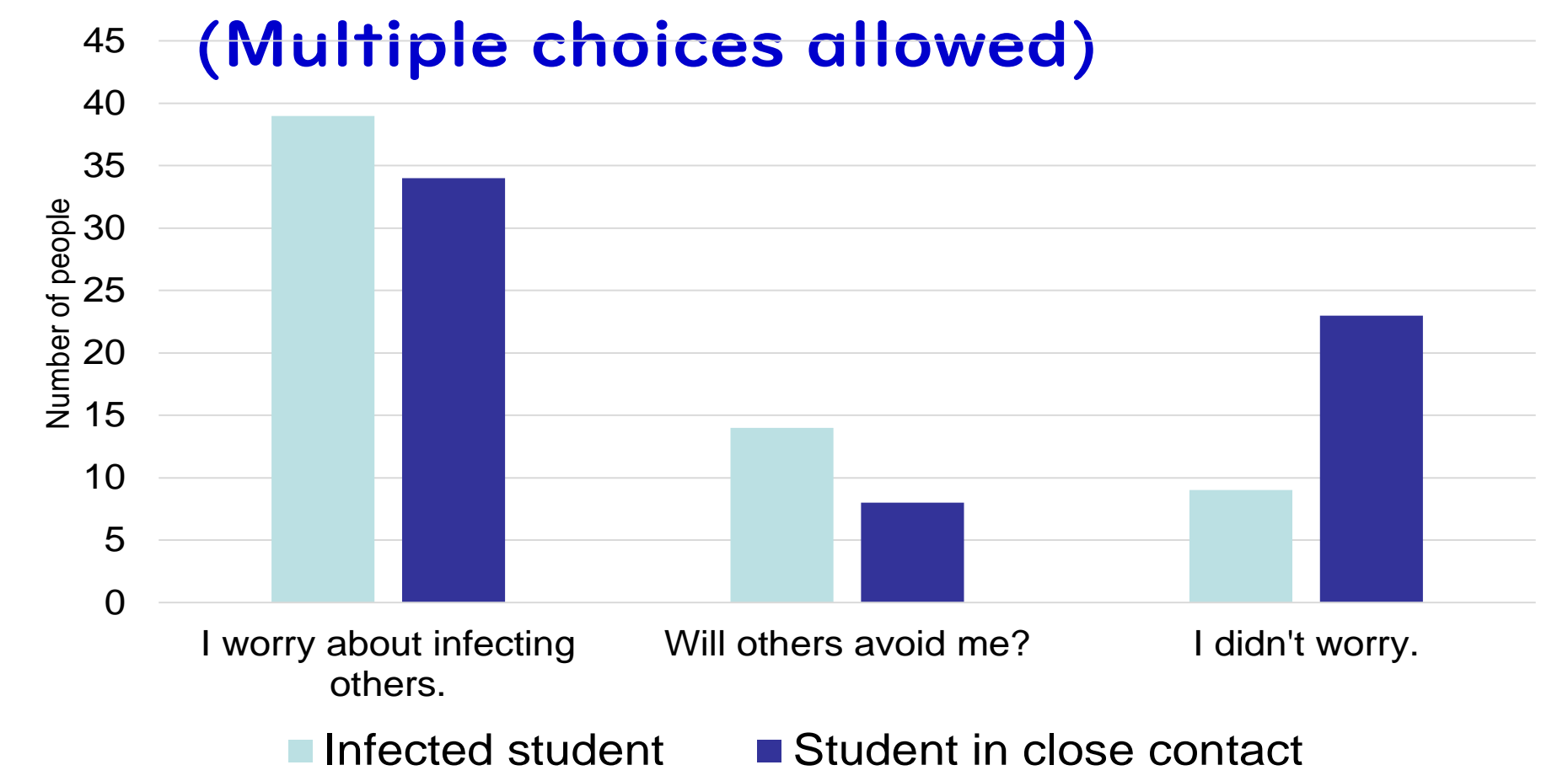
The number of infected persons was 357, and the number of persons in close contact was 573.

The number of valid responses and response rate were 50 cases in group A (14.0%) and 55 cases in group B (9.6%).

The following graphs show the results.



9. What were your concerns about your relationships with others when you were infected or a close contact? (Multiple choices allowed)



Conclusion

- The most common places of contact for close contact students were club activities and the family home.
- In only one case was a medical facility supportive of the close contact student.
- Close contact students are concerned about becoming mentally ill to the same degree as infected students.
- Close contact students are as concerned about passing the infection on to others as infected students.
- The student in close contact is as worried about their daily life as the infected student.
- The close contact student is as depressed as the infected student.
- Close contact students want the same support as the infected students for 2 weeks after the end of voluntary quarantine.

We found that students who have had close contact with covid-19 patients need the same psychological support as students infected with covid-19.