

# Initial Impact and Operational Response of Radiation Oncology Practices to the COVID-19 Pandemic in the United States, Europe, and Latin America

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# Disclosures



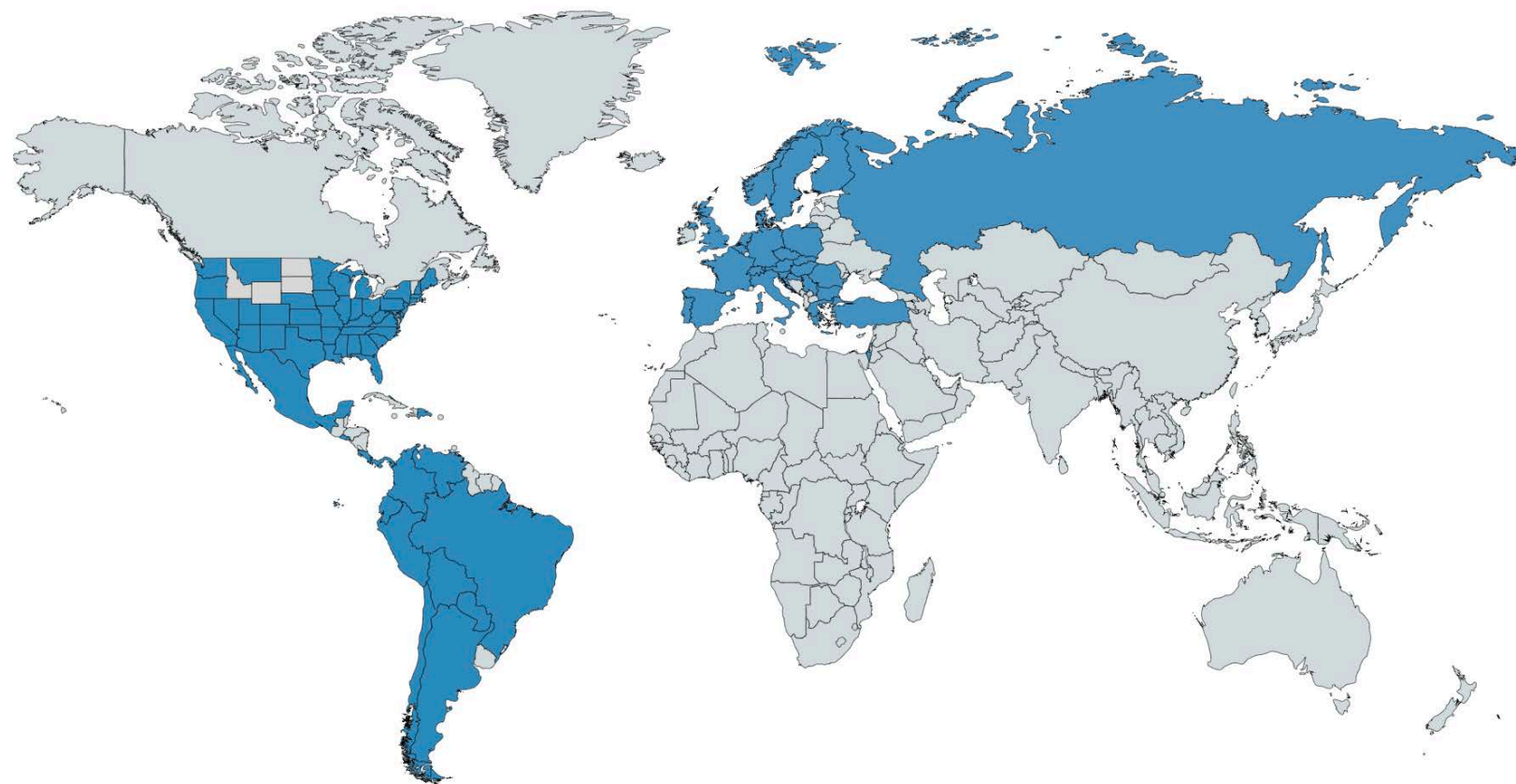
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# Background & Method

- The COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly changed practice patterns in medicine around the world. The full impact on radiation oncology is unknown.
- We surveyed radiation oncology practice leaders from the United States, Europe and Latin America to gauge initial impact and immediate operational responses to the pandemic.
- Surveys were administered April 16 - May 30, 2020 by the American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO; US survey), the European Society for Radiotherapy and Oncology (ESTRO; European survey), and Rayos Contra Cancer (Latin American survey)
- 474 of 1,246 practice leaders responded → 38% response rate

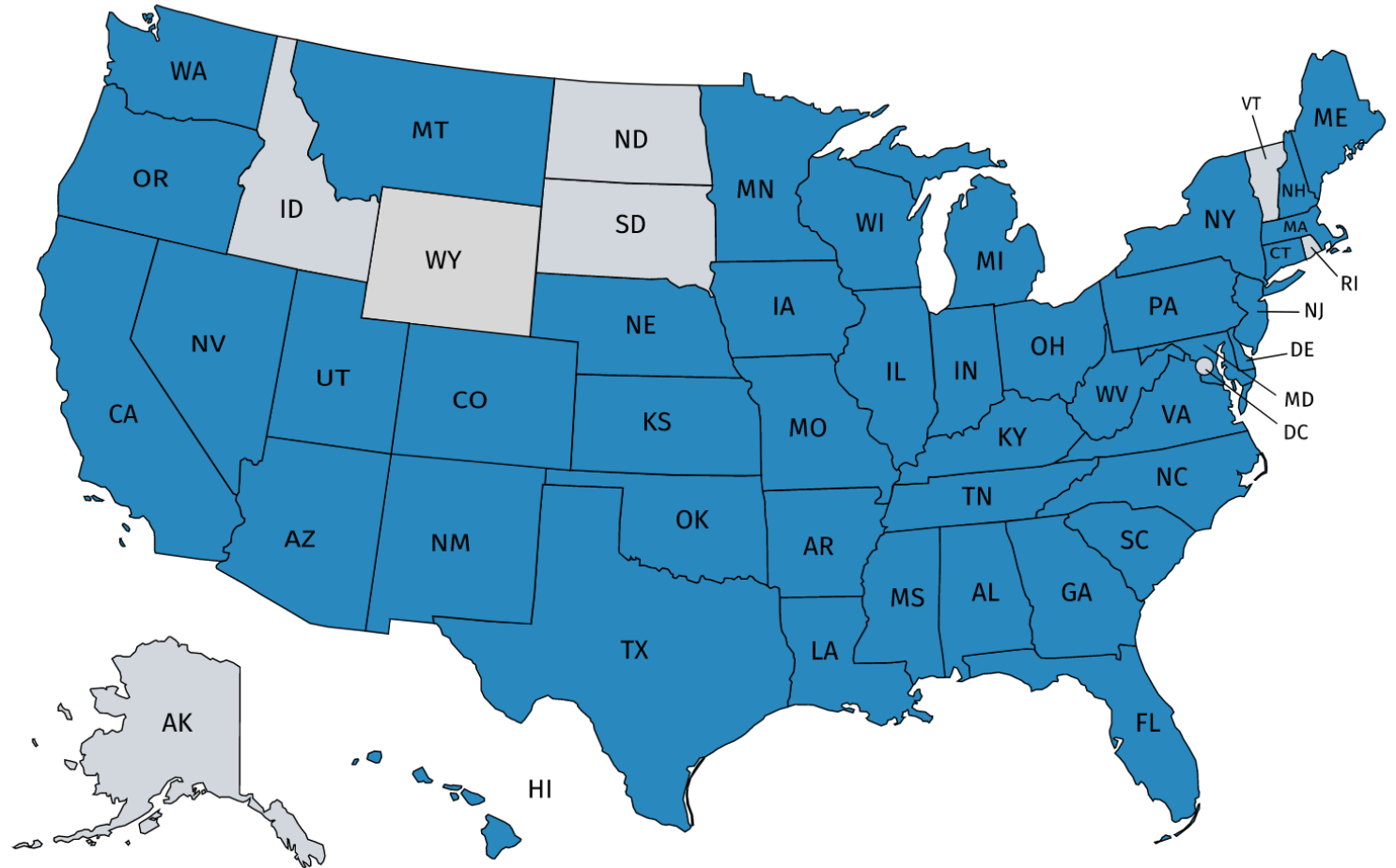
**45**  
nations  
represented



# USA

222/517 (43%) practices

43 states



# Europe

139/500 (28%) practices

29 nations



# Latin America

115/229 (50%) practices

15 nations



# Clinics Stayed Open

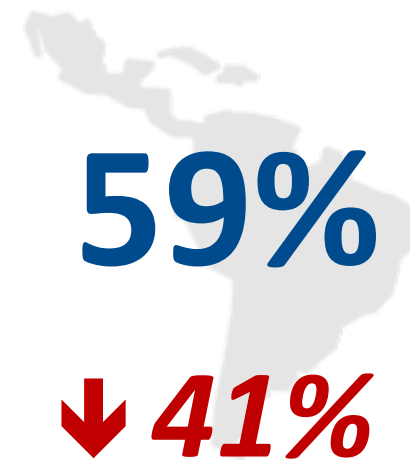
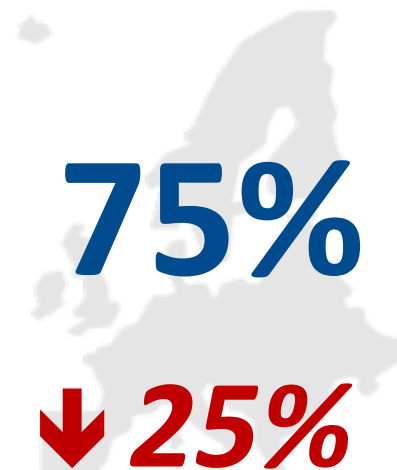
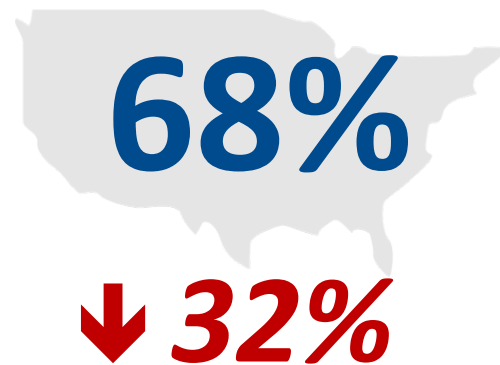
- Nearly all radiation therapy practices reported uninterrupted operation in the early months of the pandemic.





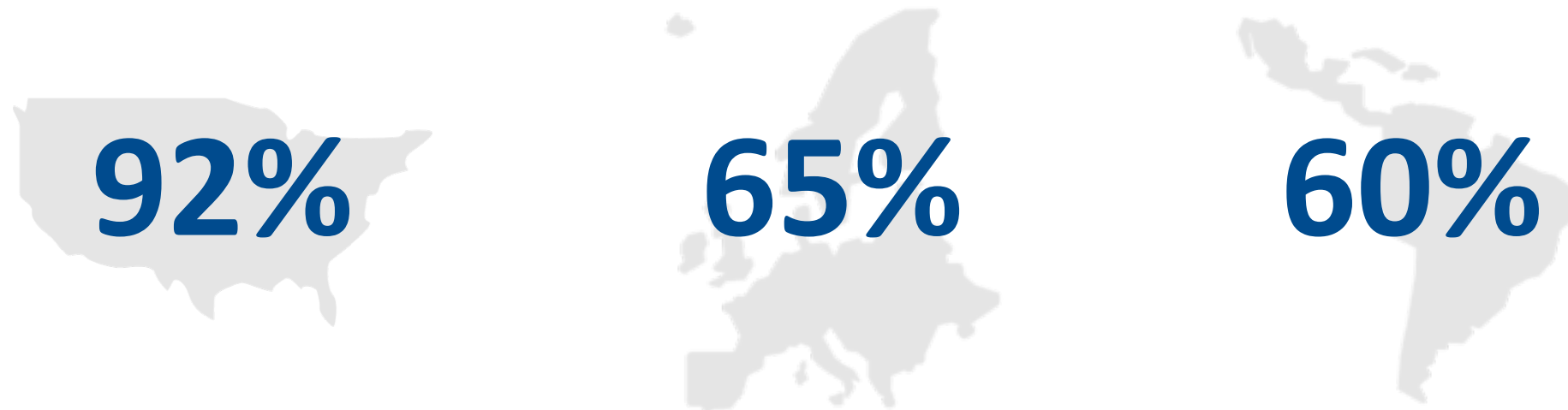
# Patient Volumes Dropped

Average treatment volumes were reduced from pre-pandemic levels by varying degrees.



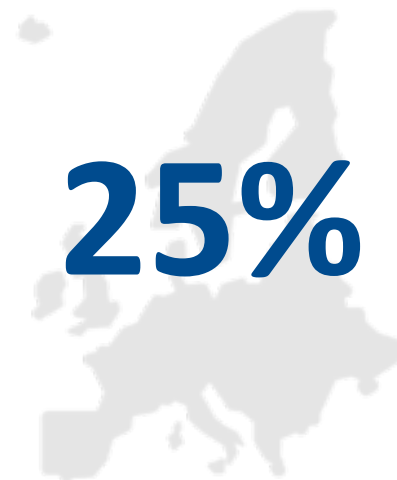
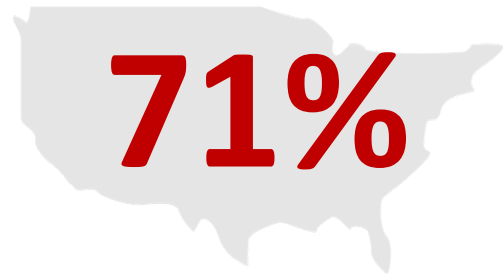
# Treatment Postponed for Low-Risk Disease

Postponement of radiation therapy for **low-risk patients** was widely adopted across centers.



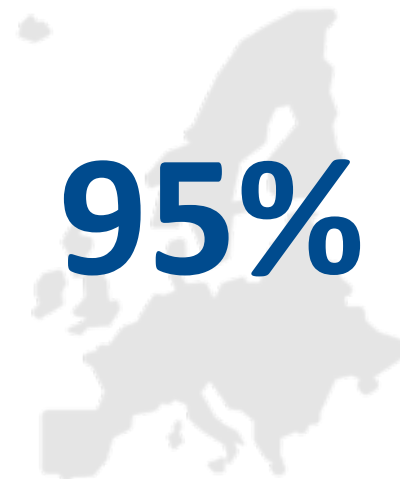
# Practice Revenues Fell

Many practices estimated reductions in revenue **greater than 20%** due to the pandemic.



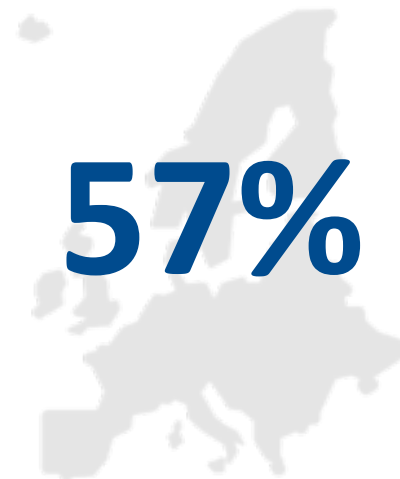
# Widespread Adoption of Safety Protocols

Nearly all practices implemented new formal safety procedures to protect patients and staff from infections.



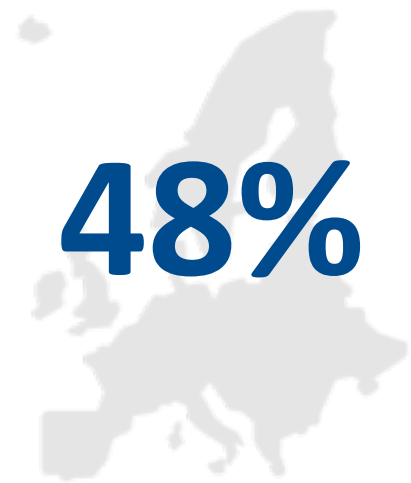
# Practices Experienced Staffing Shortages

Staffing shortages were reported across centers:



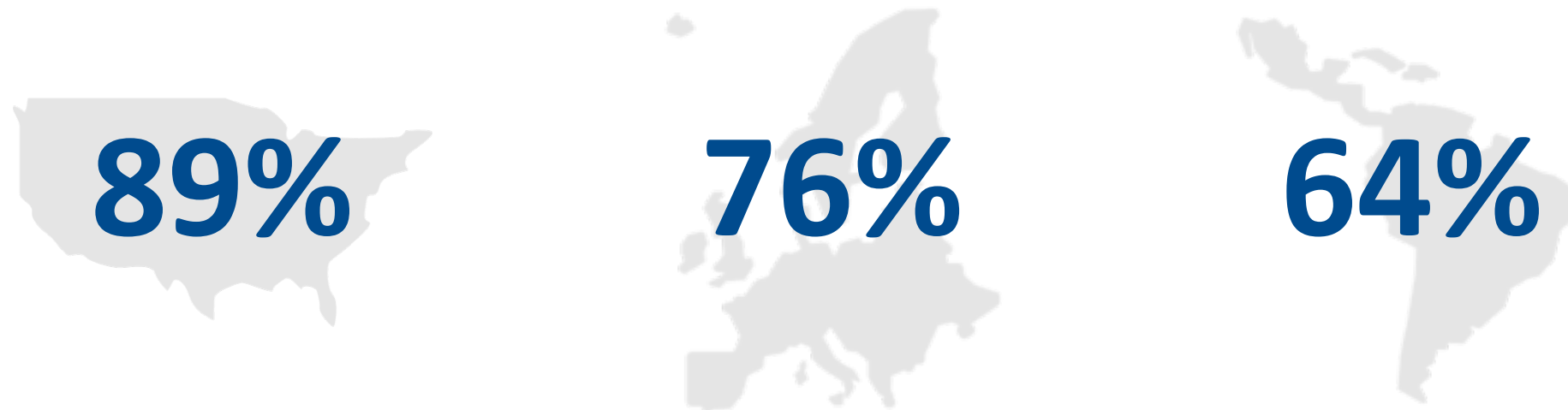
# Practices Experienced PPE Shortages

PPE shortages were reported across centers:



# Practices Adopted Telemedicine

First-time adoption of telemedicine programs was widespread:



# Conclusions

- Surveyed impact of the early COVID-19 pandemic on radiation oncology practices across the US, Europe, and Latin America was substantial.
- Despite staffing shortfalls, safety supply deficits, and financial instability, **practices across these regions demonstrated resilience**, quickly adopting safety recommendations and leveraging new telemedicine programs to facilitate prioritized treatment continuity.
- Treatment access policies reflected rapidly published international guidelines to delay treatment for low-risk diagnoses.
- Patients with higher risk disease continued to receive **uninterrupted access** to cancer care.



# Publications

International Journal of  
Radiation Oncology  
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Radiotherapy and Oncology 150 (2020) 40–42

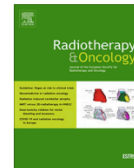


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COVID-19 Rapid Letter

Effect of COVID-19 pandemic on practice in European radiation oncology centers <sup>☆</sup>



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Daniel Victor Wakefield <sup>f,g</sup>, Umberto Ricardi <sup>h</sup>

OPERATIONS AND ECONOMICS IN A PANDEMIC

Initial Impact and Operational Responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic by American Radiation Oncology Practices



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COVID's Impact on Radiation Oncology: A Latin American Survey Study



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