

**Hospital Emergency Code
Standardization Survey**

**SURVEY
REPORT**

CALIFORNIA HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

September 2011

2011 Hospital Emergency Code Standardization Survey

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2011 Hospital Emergency Code Standardization Survey

Survey Introduction

While most healthcare facilities use some form of emergency code system to discreetly relay urgent information to hospital personnel during emergency incidents, the application of specific codes are not always consistent between facilities. This lack of standardization increases the potential for confusion or misinformation during critical times.

Standardizing hospital emergency codes can benefit hospital employees, patients, and visitors by reducing confusion and allowing staff to appropriately respond to emergency incidents (such as natural disasters or terrorist events.)

In August 2009, the California Hospital Association (in partnership with the regional hospital associations) surveyed over 260 California healthcare facilities to assess statewide hospital emergency code usage.

A follow up survey was conducted in August 2011; 240 California hospitals responded to the survey (107 in the Hospital Association of Southern California area, 109 in the Hospital Council of Northern and Central California area and 24 in the Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties area).

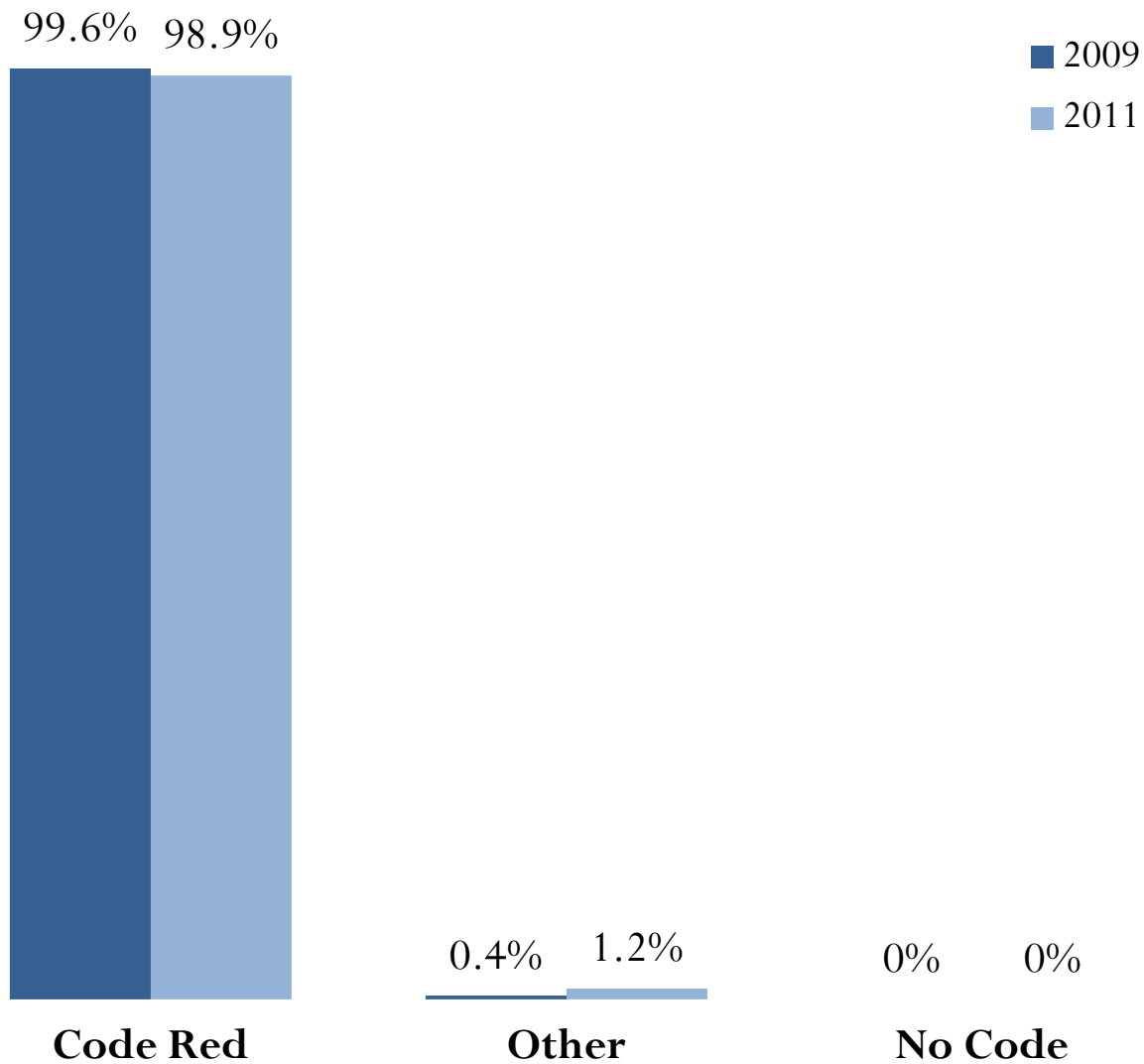
This report provides analysis of 2011 survey data and the results reveal changes and trends in emergency code usage when compared to the 2009 survey report. The final results of these surveys illustrate ongoing progress in hospital emergency code implementation among California healthcare facilities.

SECTION 1:
Statewide Cumulative
Survey Results

240 California hospitals responded to the survey

FIRE

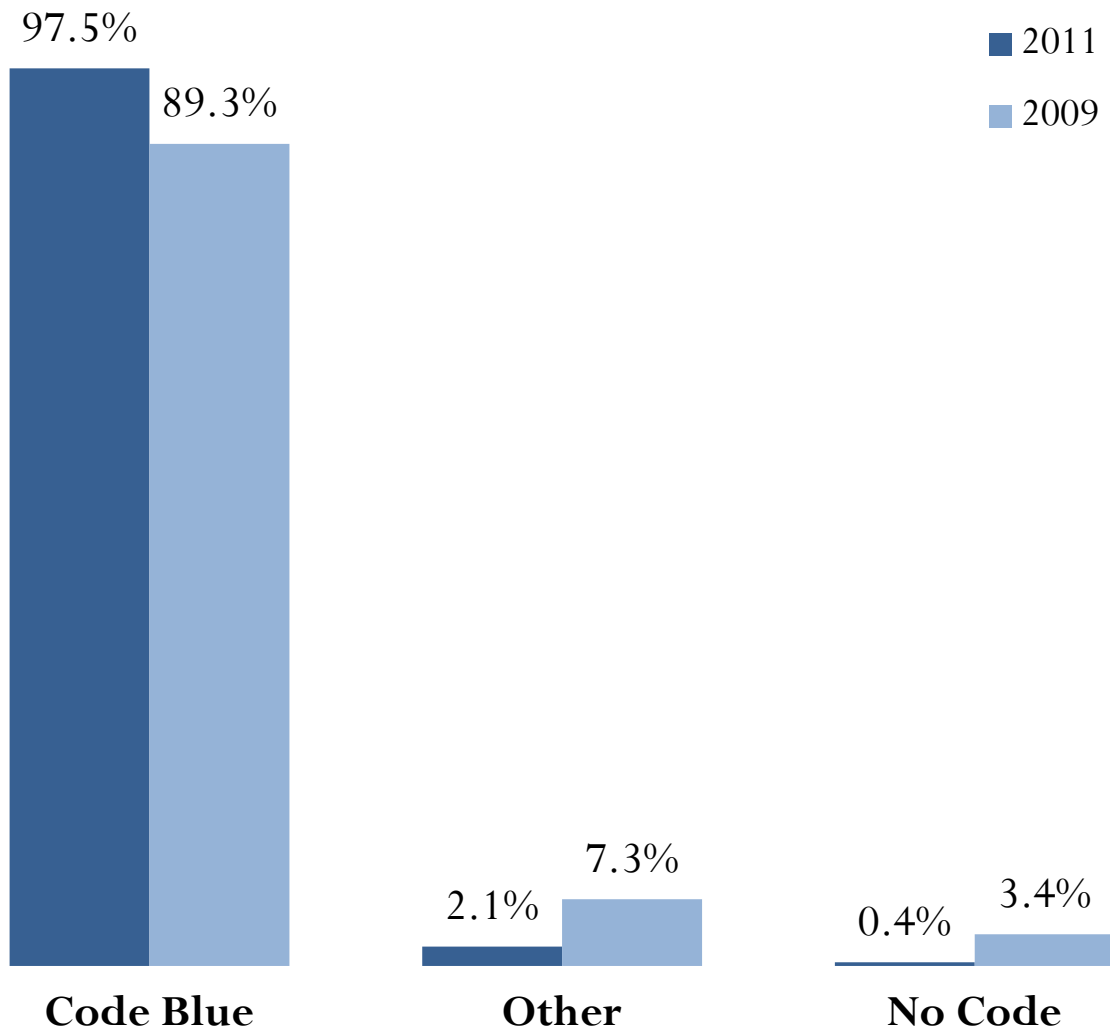
As in 2009, nearly all hospitals surveyed reported use of CODE RED to announce fire. All survey respondents (in both 2009 and 2011) reported use of an emergency code for fire incidents:



Only one other code was reported on the survey for fire alerts: 1 hospital reported use of CODE FIRESTONE.

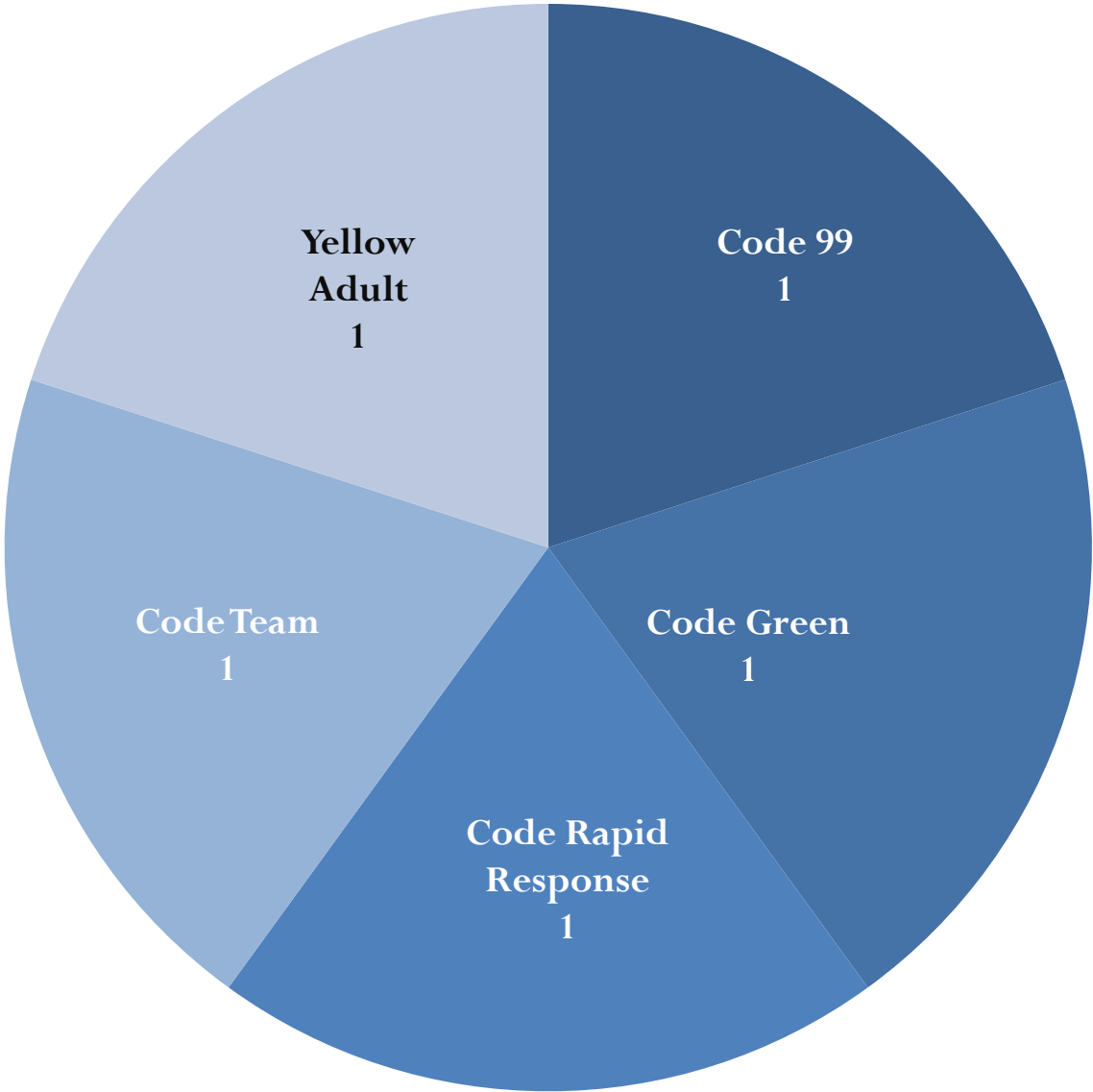
MEDICAL EMERGENCY - ADULT

2011 survey data shows growth in the number of California hospitals using CODE BLUE for Adult Medical Emergencies. According to survey data, usage of this code has increased from 89.3% in 2009 to 97.5% in 2011. The recent survey data also shows that nearly all hospitals have adopted an emergency code for this type of event:



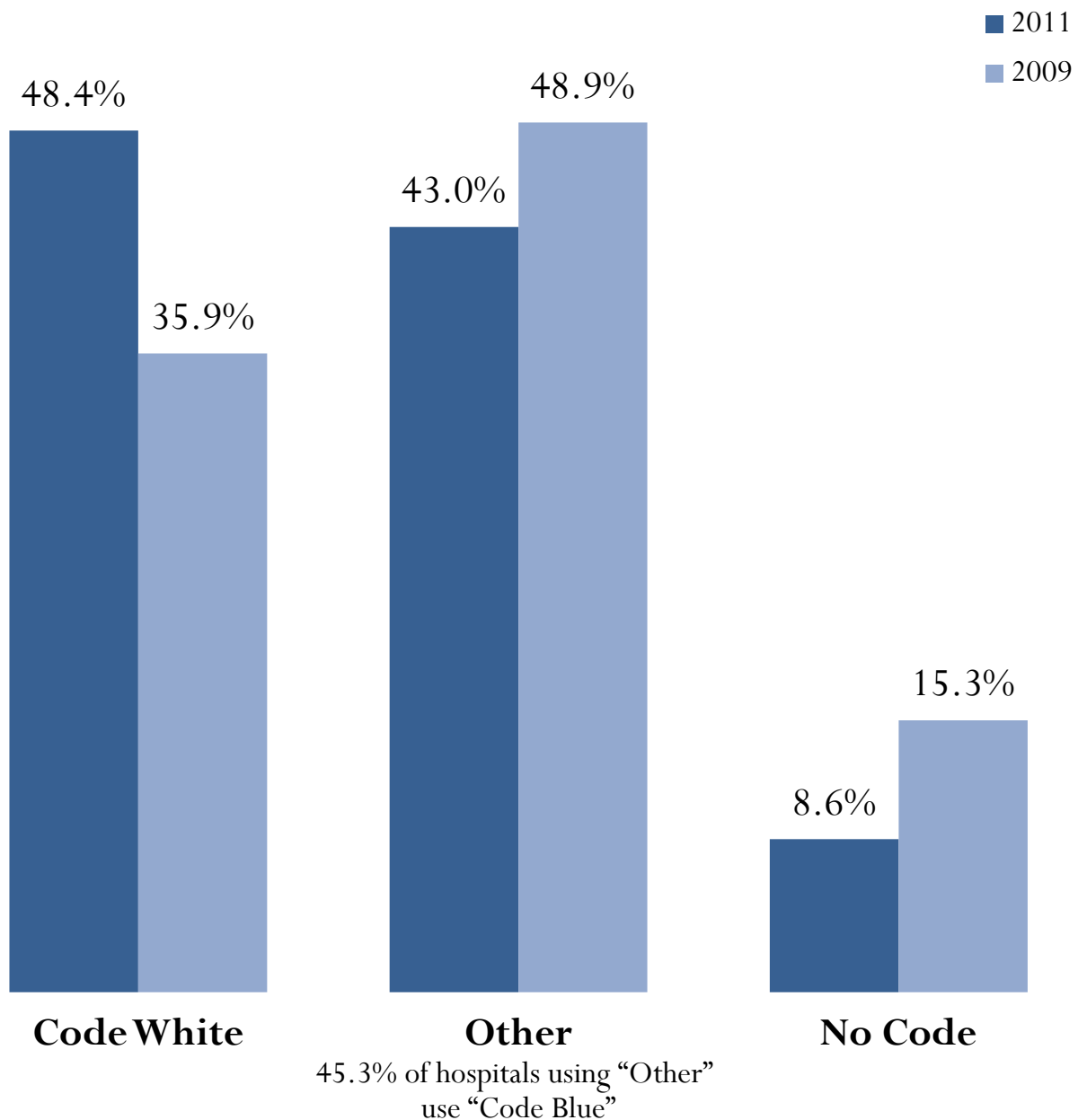
MEDICAL EMERGENCY - ADULT

Other codes used in California hospitals to alert adult medical emergencies (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



MEDICAL EMERGENCY - PEDIATRIC

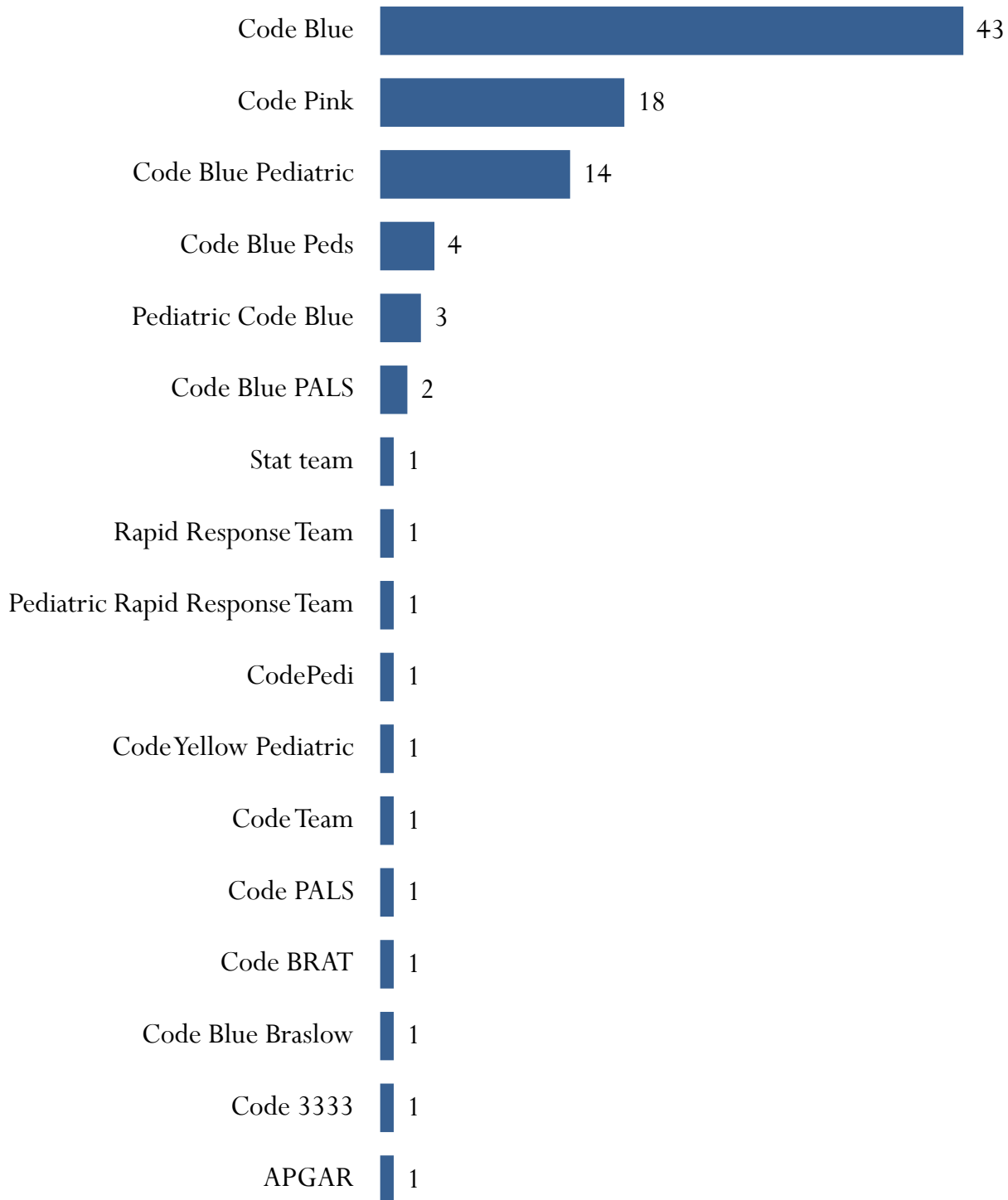
Recent survey data show an increased number of California hospitals are using CODE WHITE to announce Pediatric Medical Emergencies. The 2011 data shows a clear shift away from other codes, with a 12.5% increase in CODE WHITE usage since 2009:



Non-applicable survey responses have been excluded from this category.

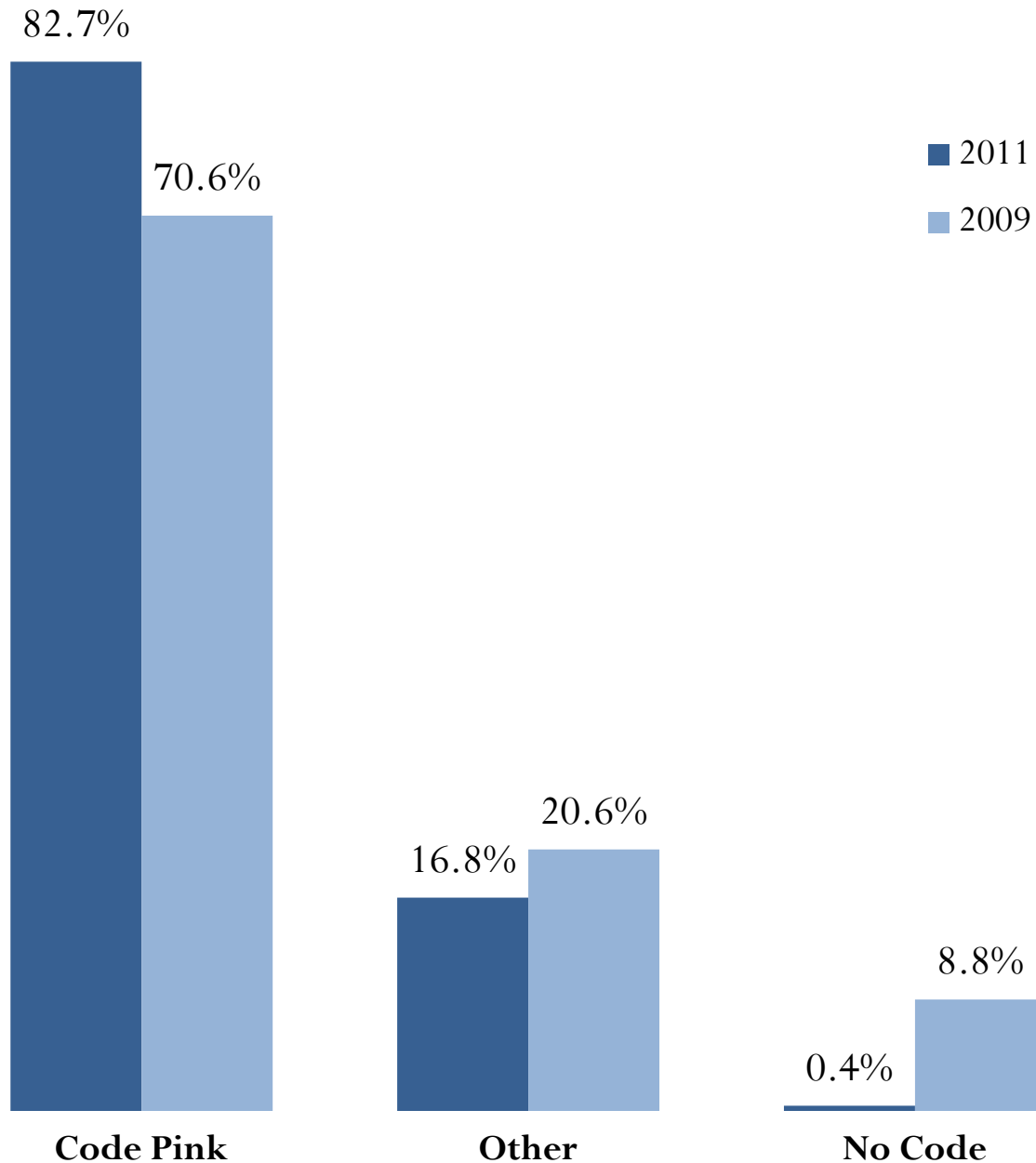
MEDICAL EMERGENCY - PEDIATRIC

Other codes used in California hospitals to alert pediatric medical emergencies (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



INFANT ABDUCTION

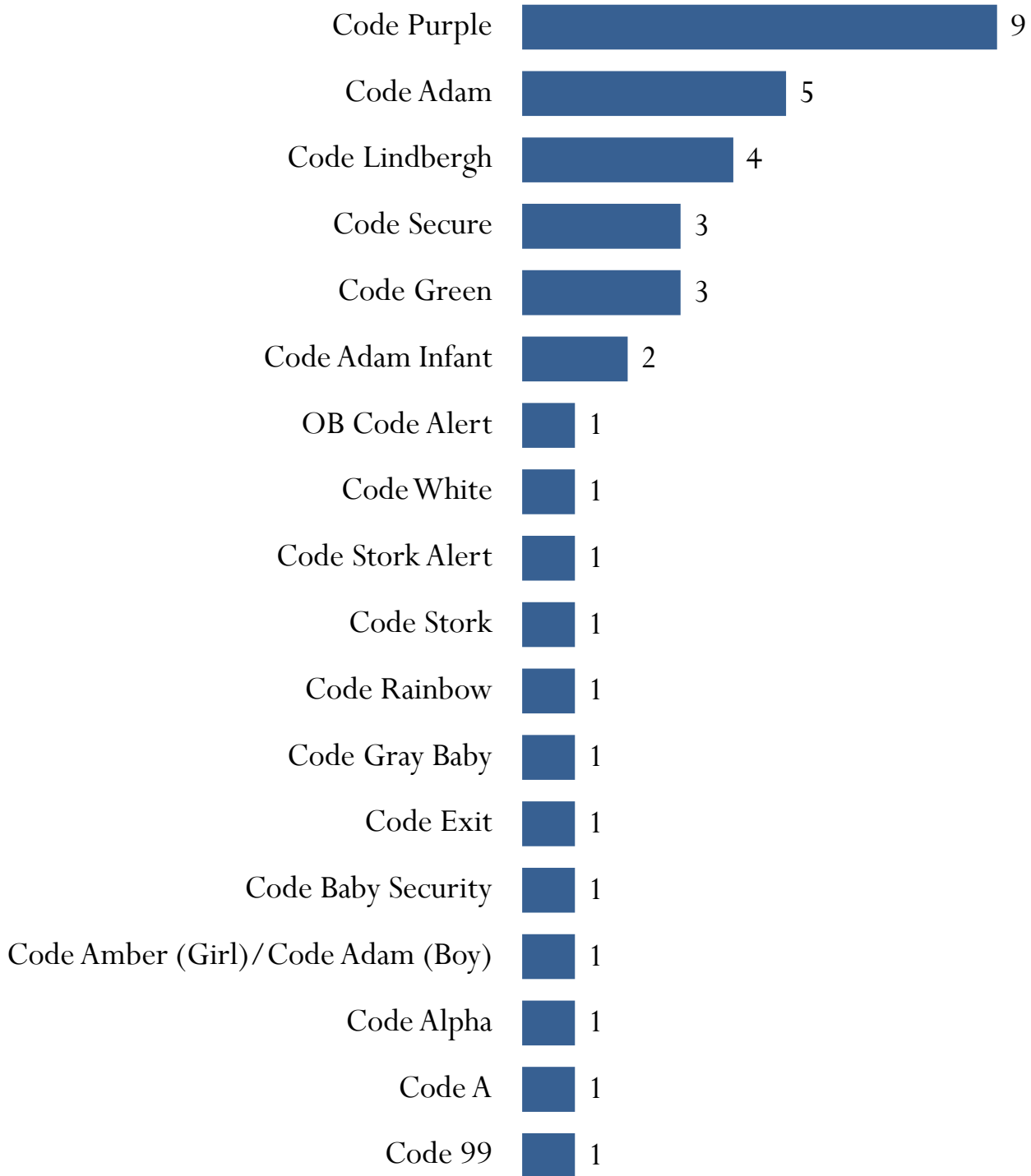
While survey results show the strong use of CODE PINK for infant abduction alerts, it is important to note the increase in the number of hospitals who have implemented any emergency code for this event type of event since 2009:



Non-applicable survey responses have been excluded from this category.

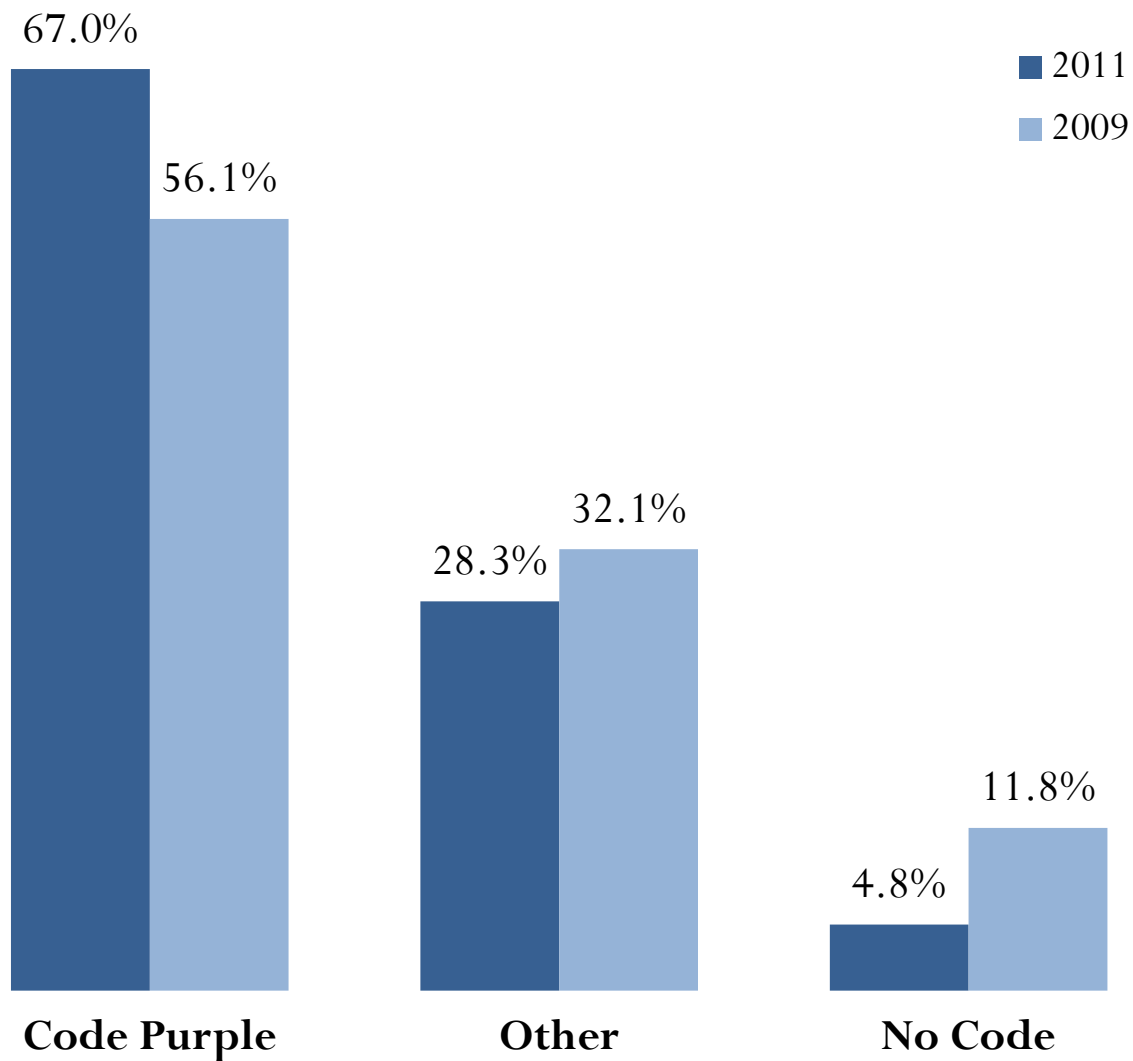
INFANT ABDUCTION

Other codes used in California hospitals to alert infant abductions (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



CHILD ABDUCTION

CODE PURPLE continues to be the prevailing alert used for child abduction events. In comparing 2011 data to 2009, shifts towards usage of CODE PURPLE are evident; more hospitals are recognizing the importance of adopting a child abduction emergency code:

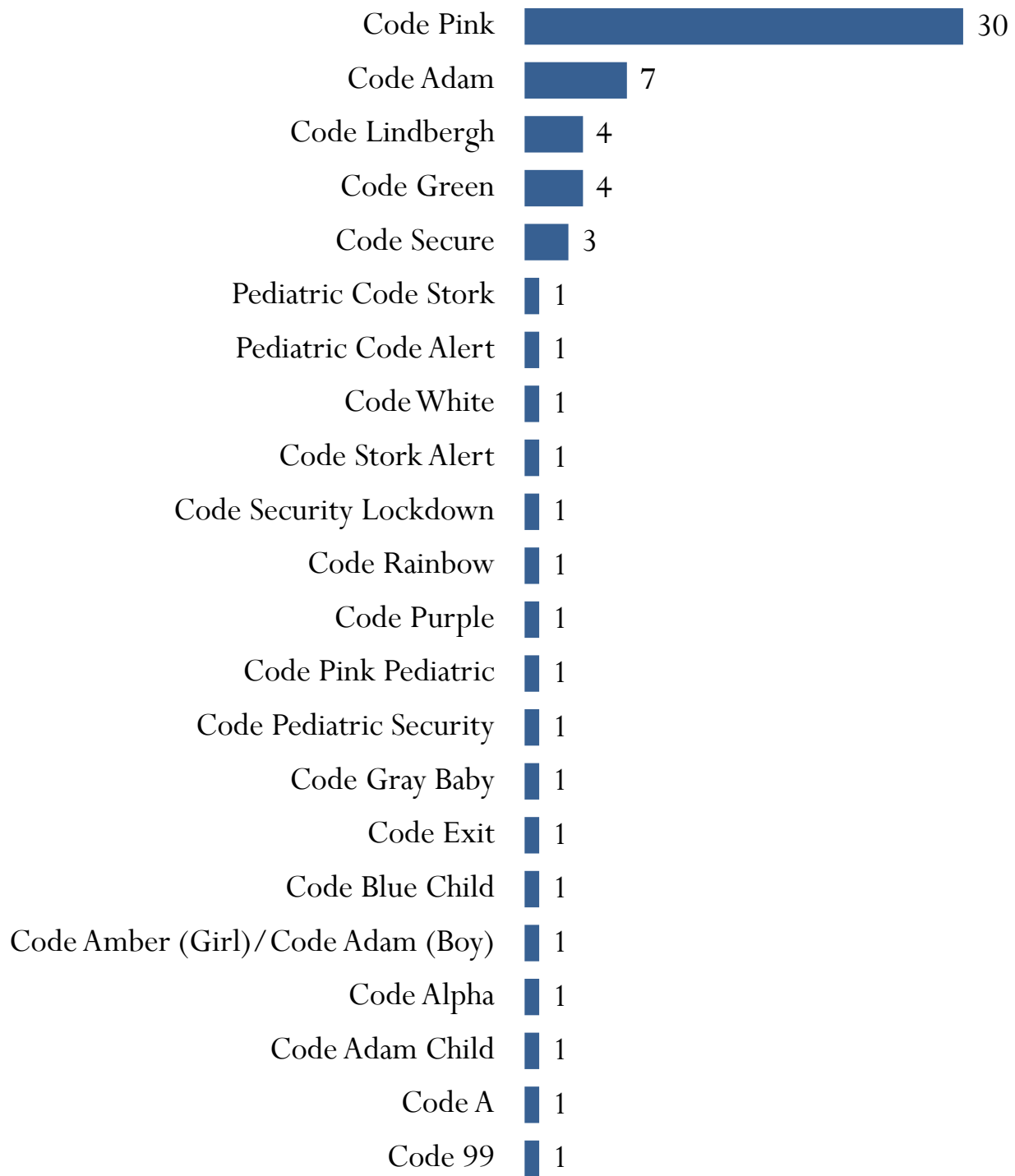


46.2% of hospitals using "Other" use "Code Pink"

Non-applicable survey responses have been excluded from this category.

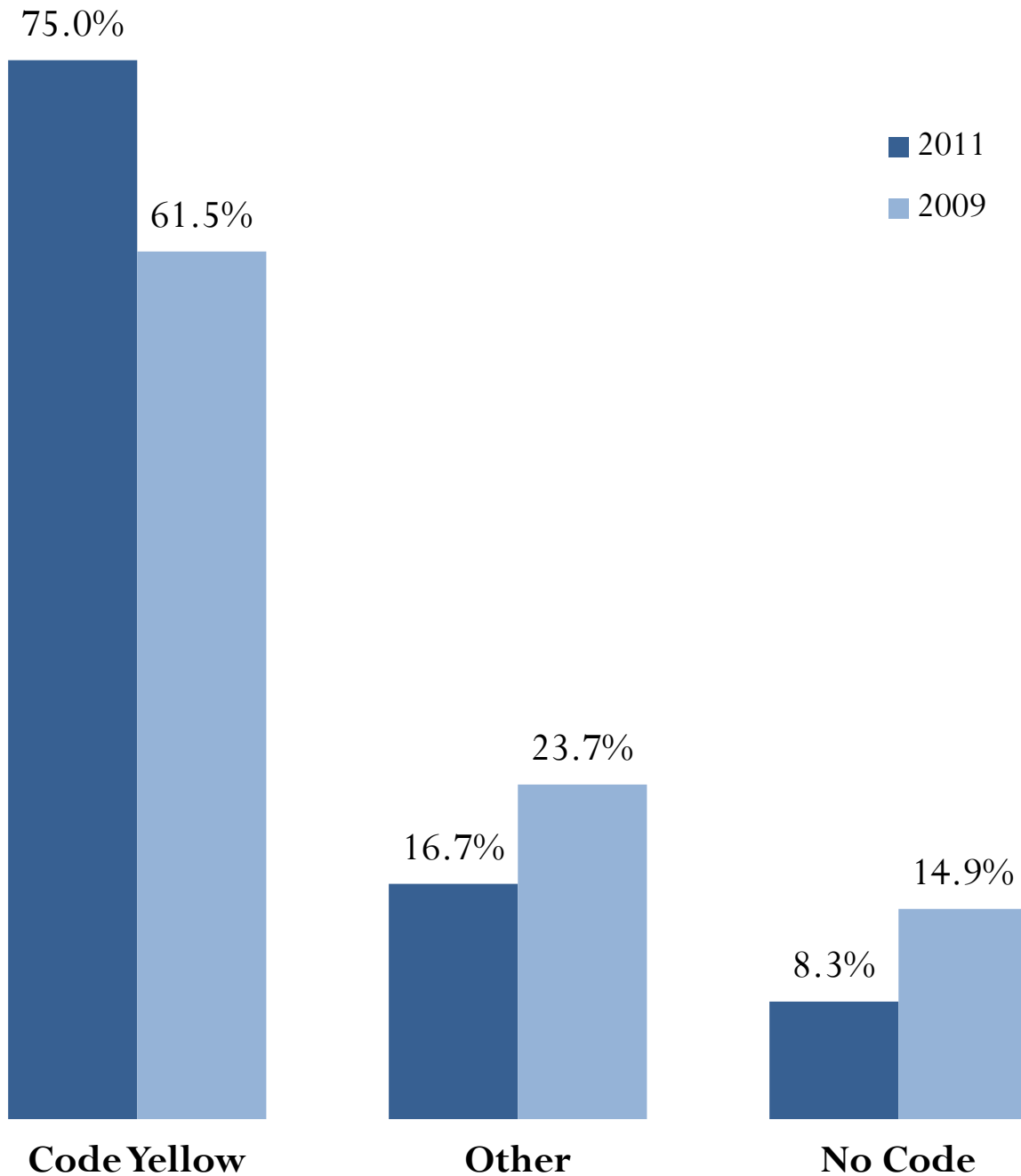
CHILD ABDUCTION

Other codes used in California hospitals to alert child abductions (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



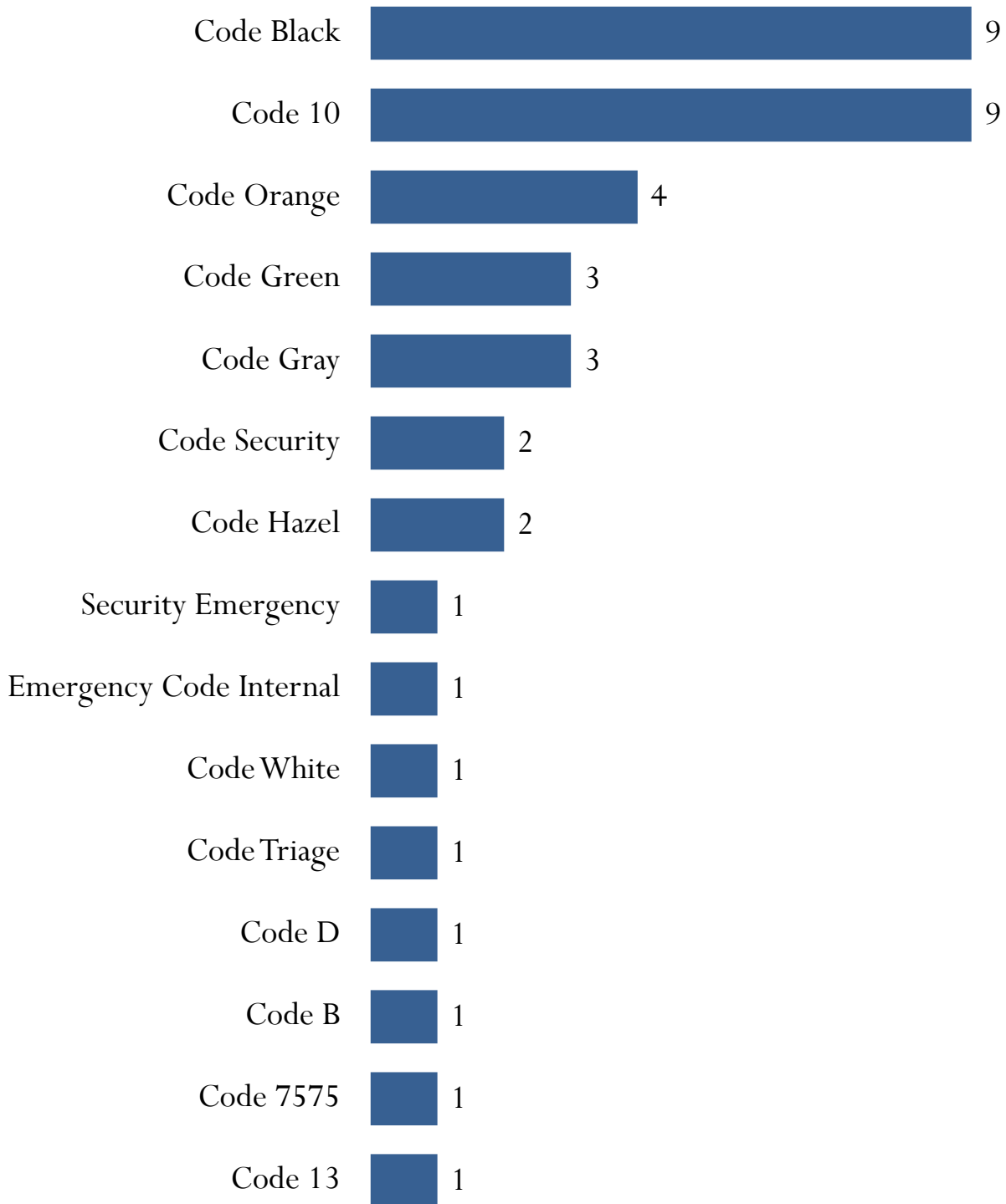
BOMB THREAT

3 out of 4 hospitals in California are using CODE YELLOW to announce bomb threat alerts. The recent data shows that more hospitals have adopted bomb threat code or have moved away from usage of other codes since 2009:



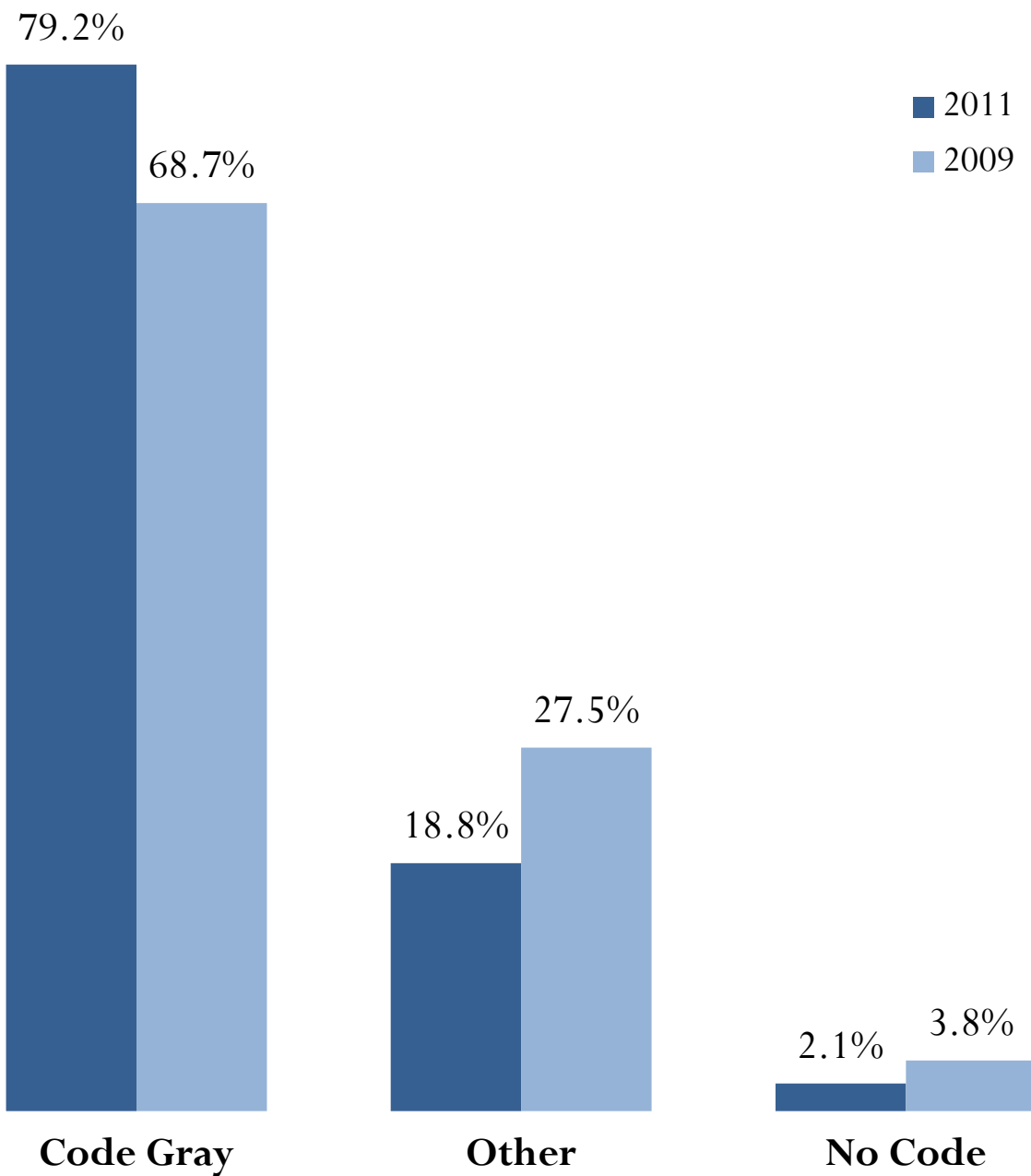
BOMB THREAT

Other codes used in California hospitals to alert bomb threat (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



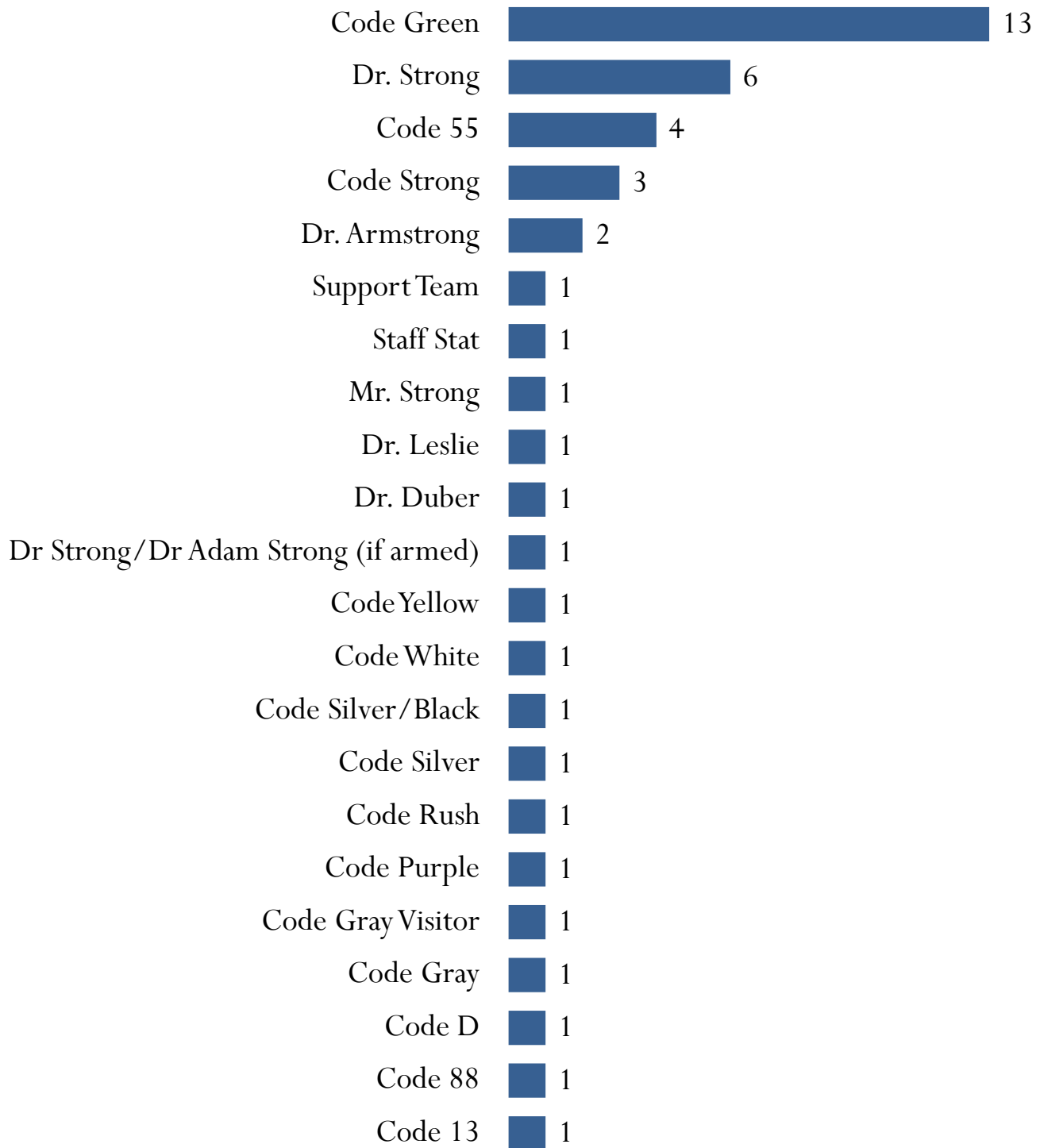
COMBATIVE PERSON

The 2011 survey results demonstrate a clear shift towards usage of CODE GRAY by California hospitals. Since 2009, there has been 10% growth in the number of hospitals favoring usage of CODE GRAY over use of other codes for this event:



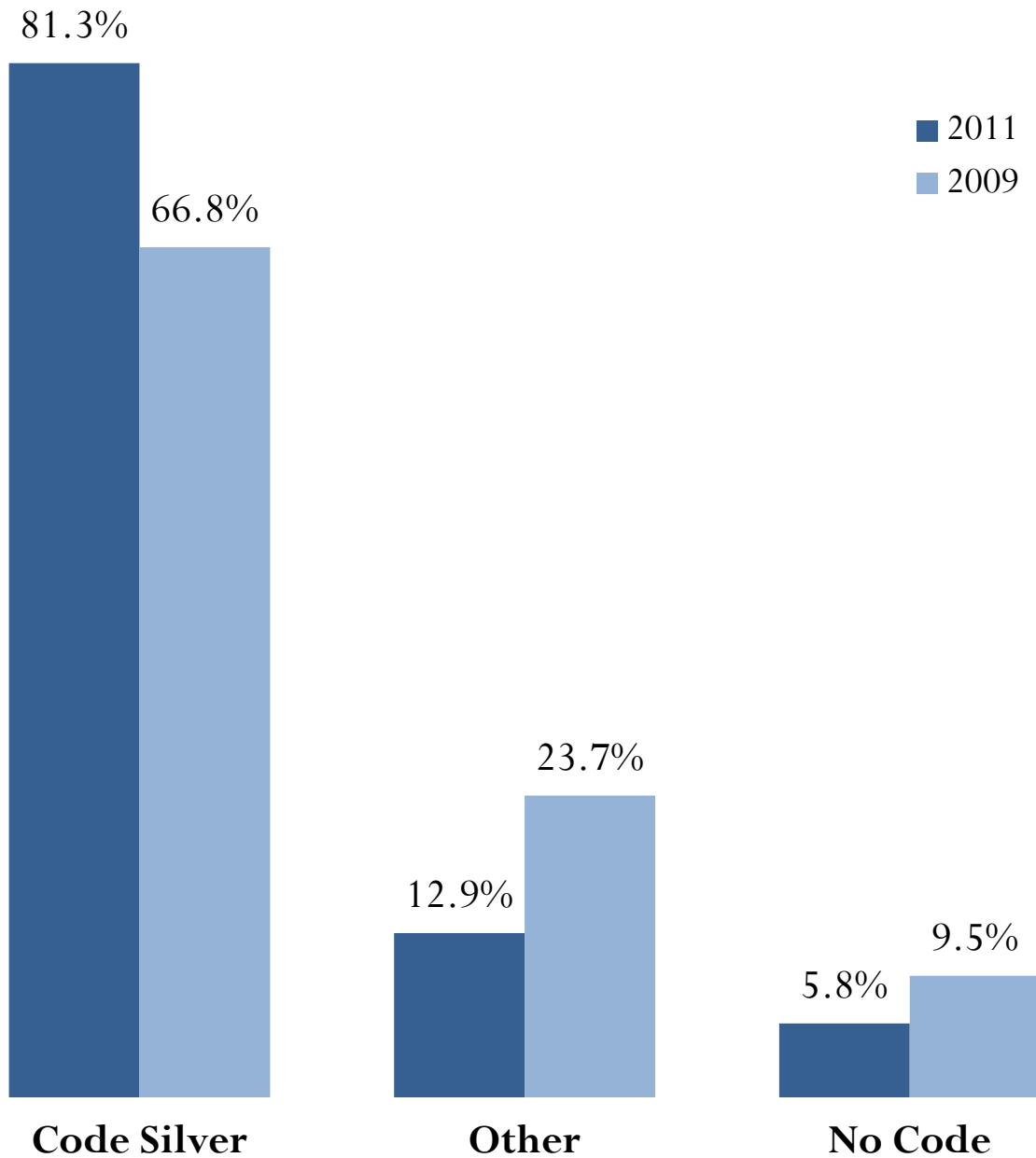
COMBATIVE PERSON

Other codes used in California hospitals to alert of situations involving a combative person (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



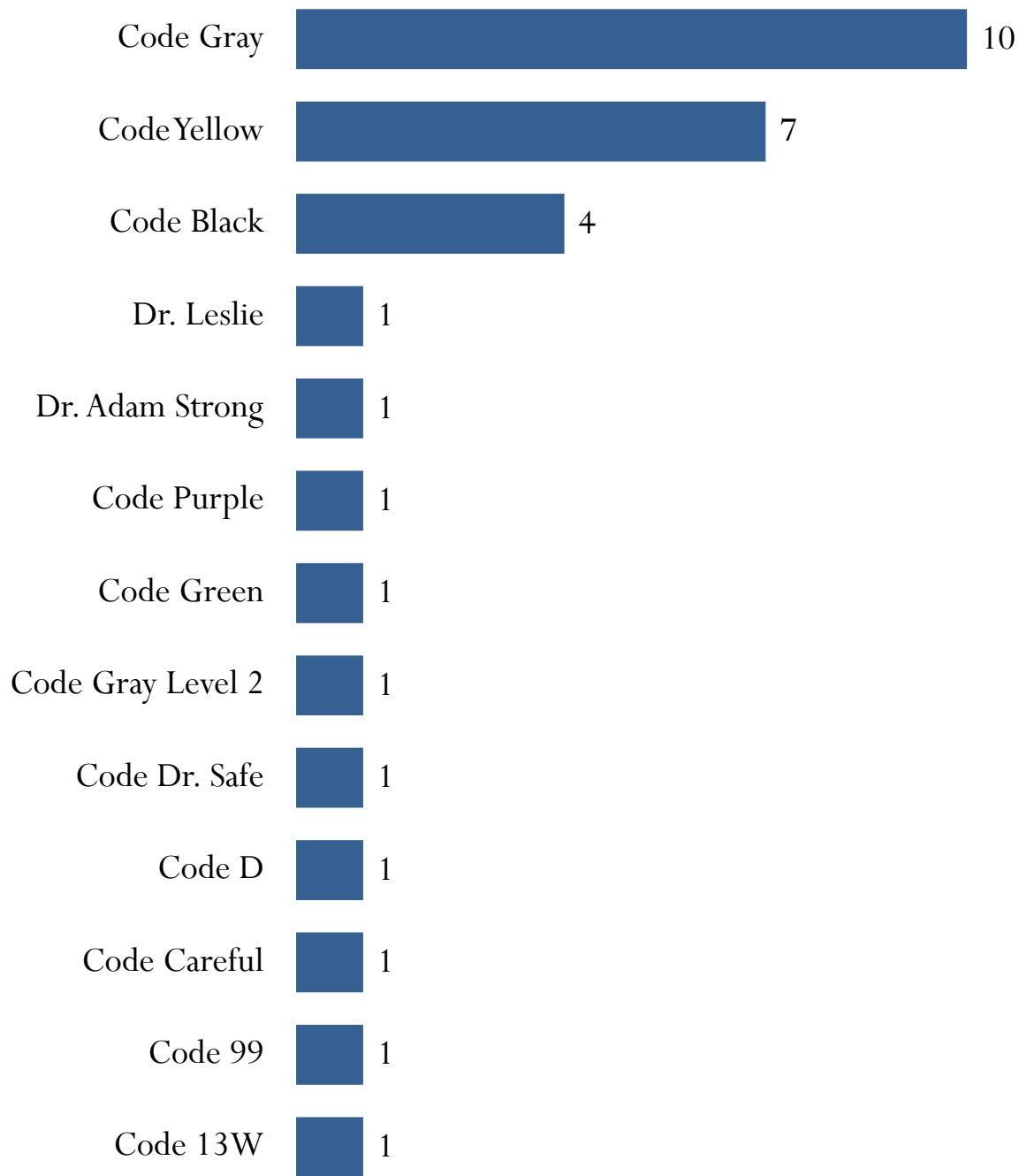
PERSON WITH A WEAPON and/or ACTIVE SHOOTER and/or HOSTAGE SITUATION

The 2011 survey data reveals a strong increase in the acceptance of CODE SILVER since 2009. The increase in usage of CODE SILVER combined with the decrease in usage of other codes illustrates this trend:



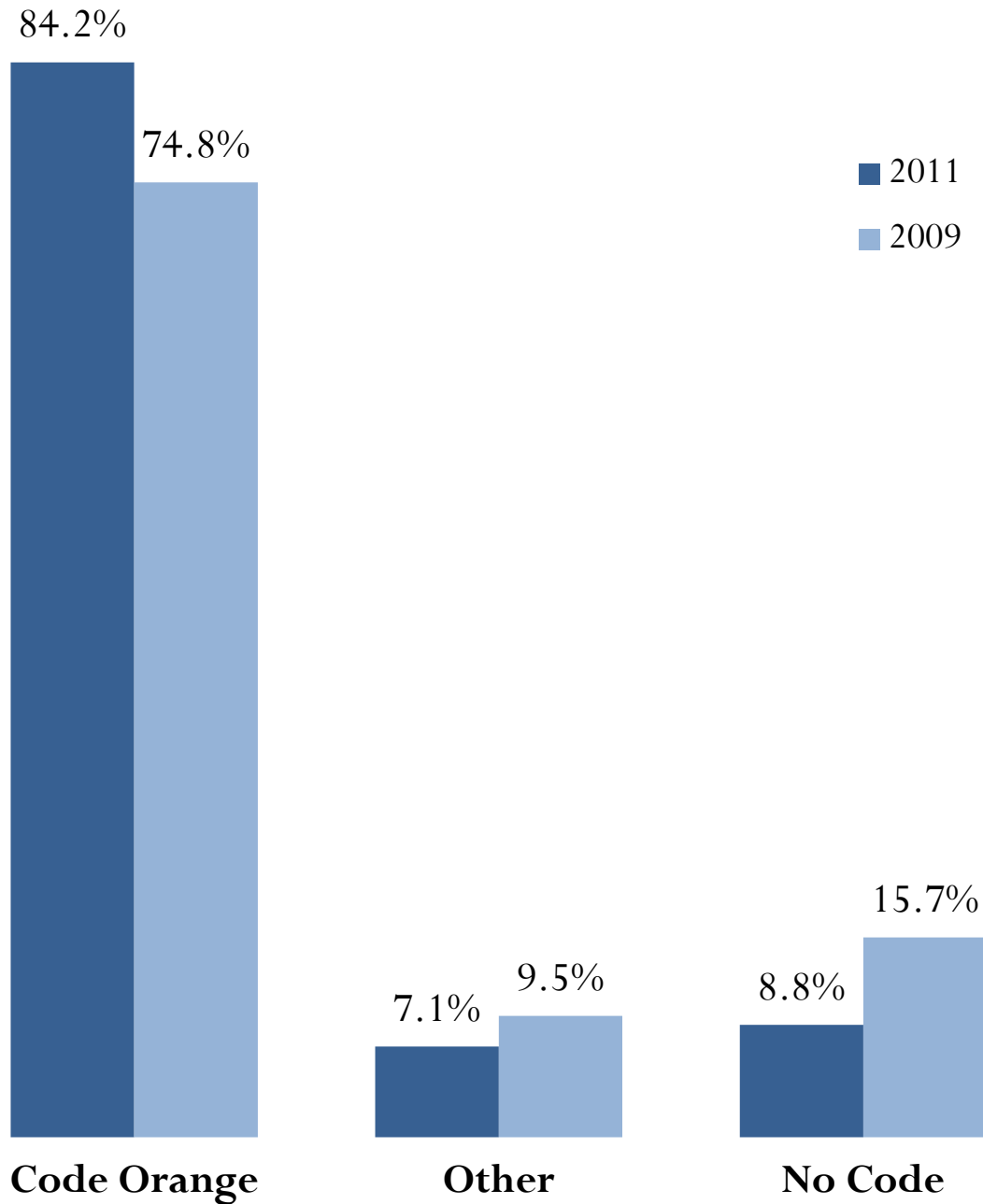
PERSON WITH A WEAPON and/or ACTIVE SHOOTER and/or HOSTAGE SITUATION

Other codes used in California hospitals to alert of person with a weapon or hostage situation (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



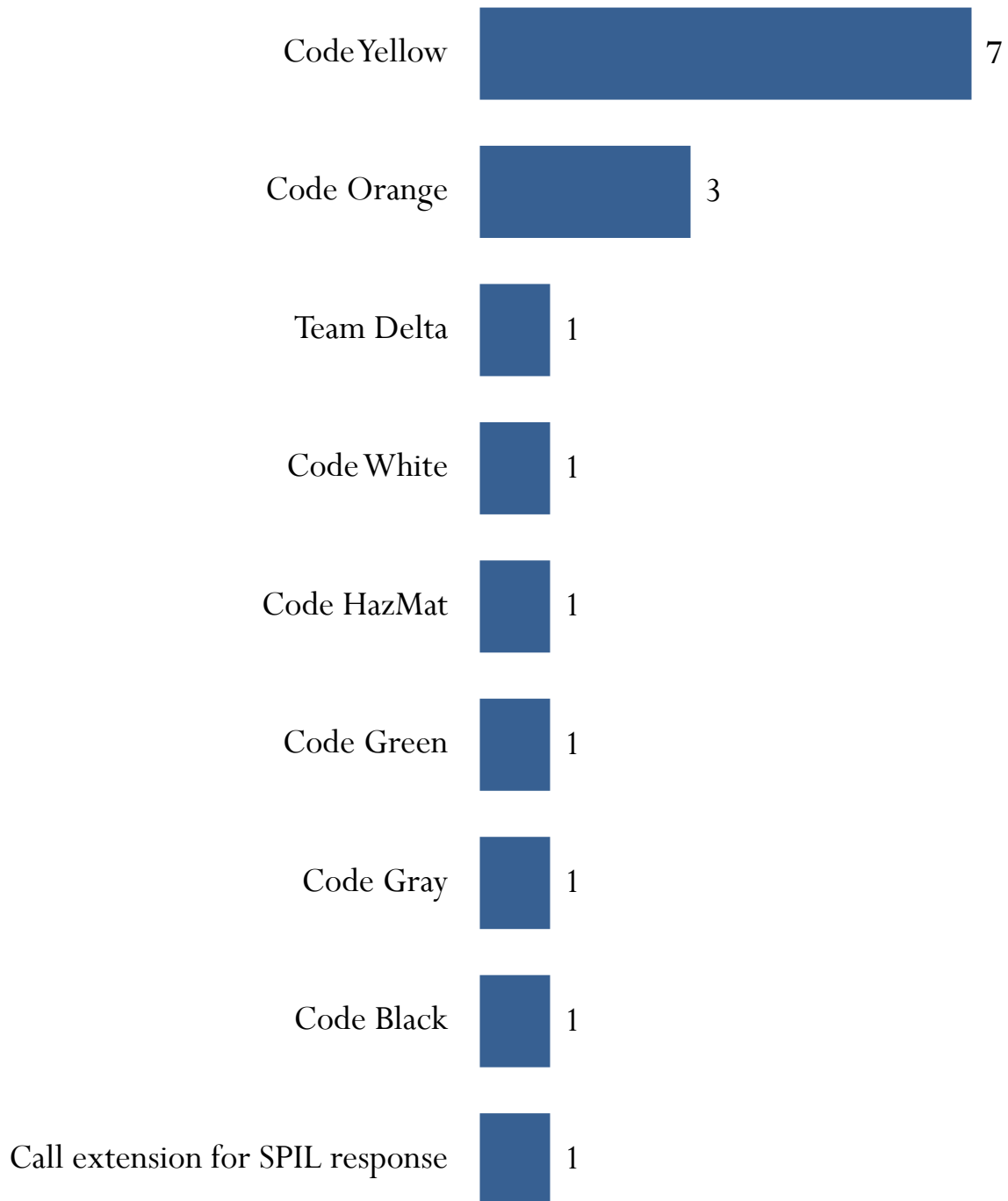
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SPILL

CODE ORANGE continues to be widely used within hospitals to alert hazardous materials spills—the 2011 survey data shows continued acceptance of this code with increased usage of CODE ORANGE when compared to 2009 survey data.



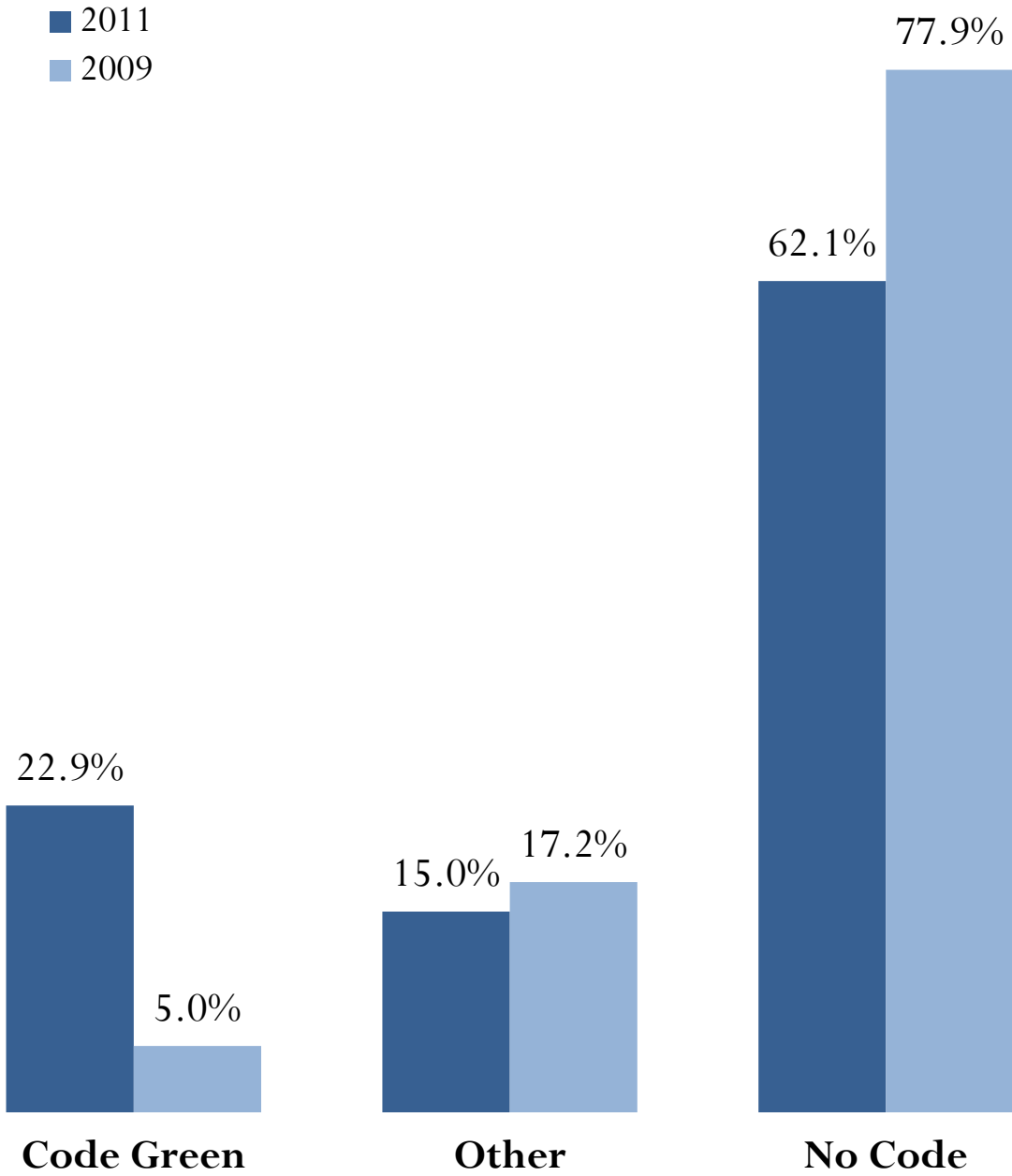
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SPILL

Other codes used in California hospitals to alert of hazardous material spills (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



PATIENT ELOPEMENT

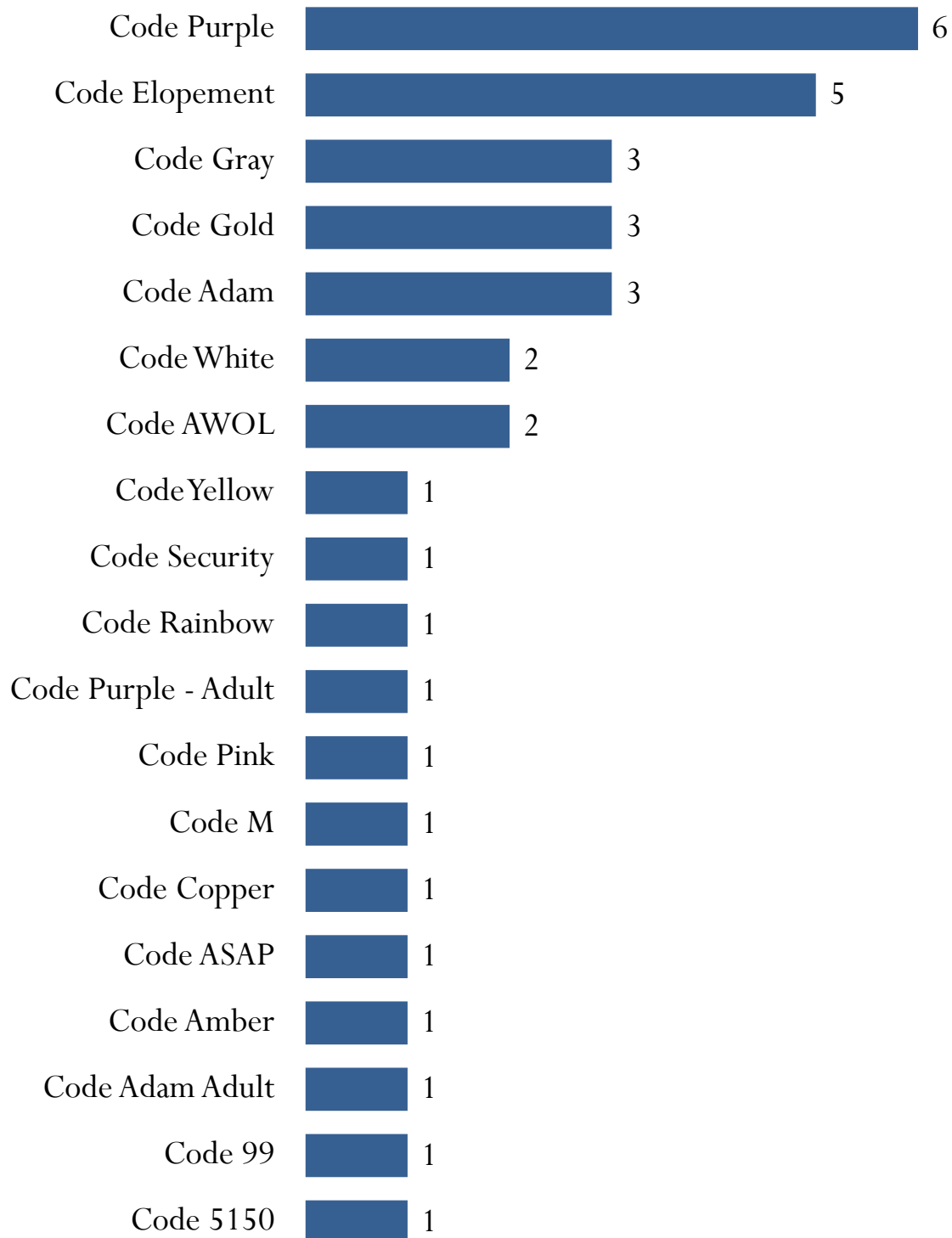
While the majority of California hospitals do not use an emergency code for patient elopement, the overall trend shows that the number of hospital using CODE GREEN has quadrupled between 2009 and 2011.



Code Green was added in 2009

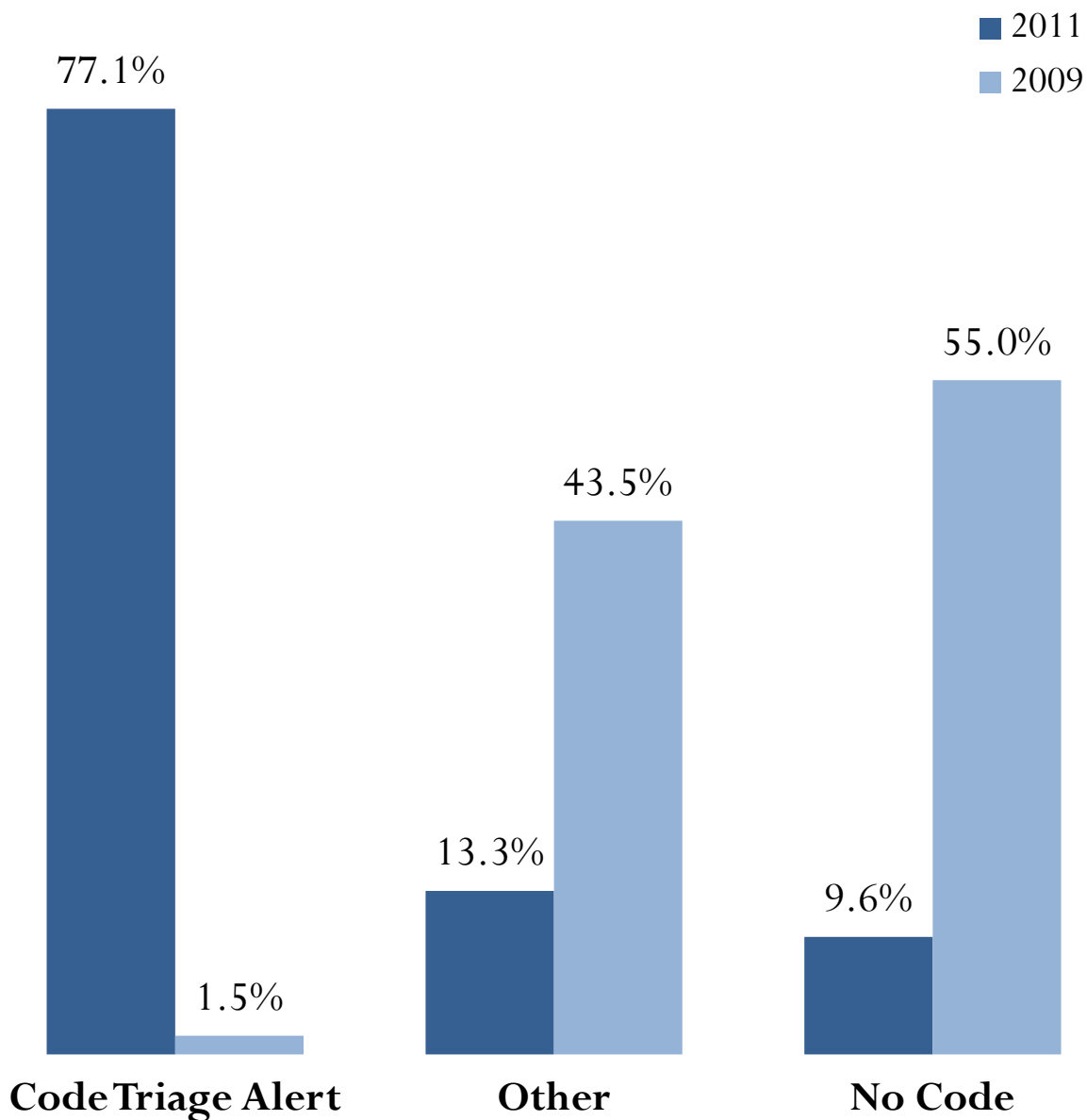
PATIENT ELOPEMENT

Other codes used in California hospitals to alert of patient elopement (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



EMERGENCY ALERT

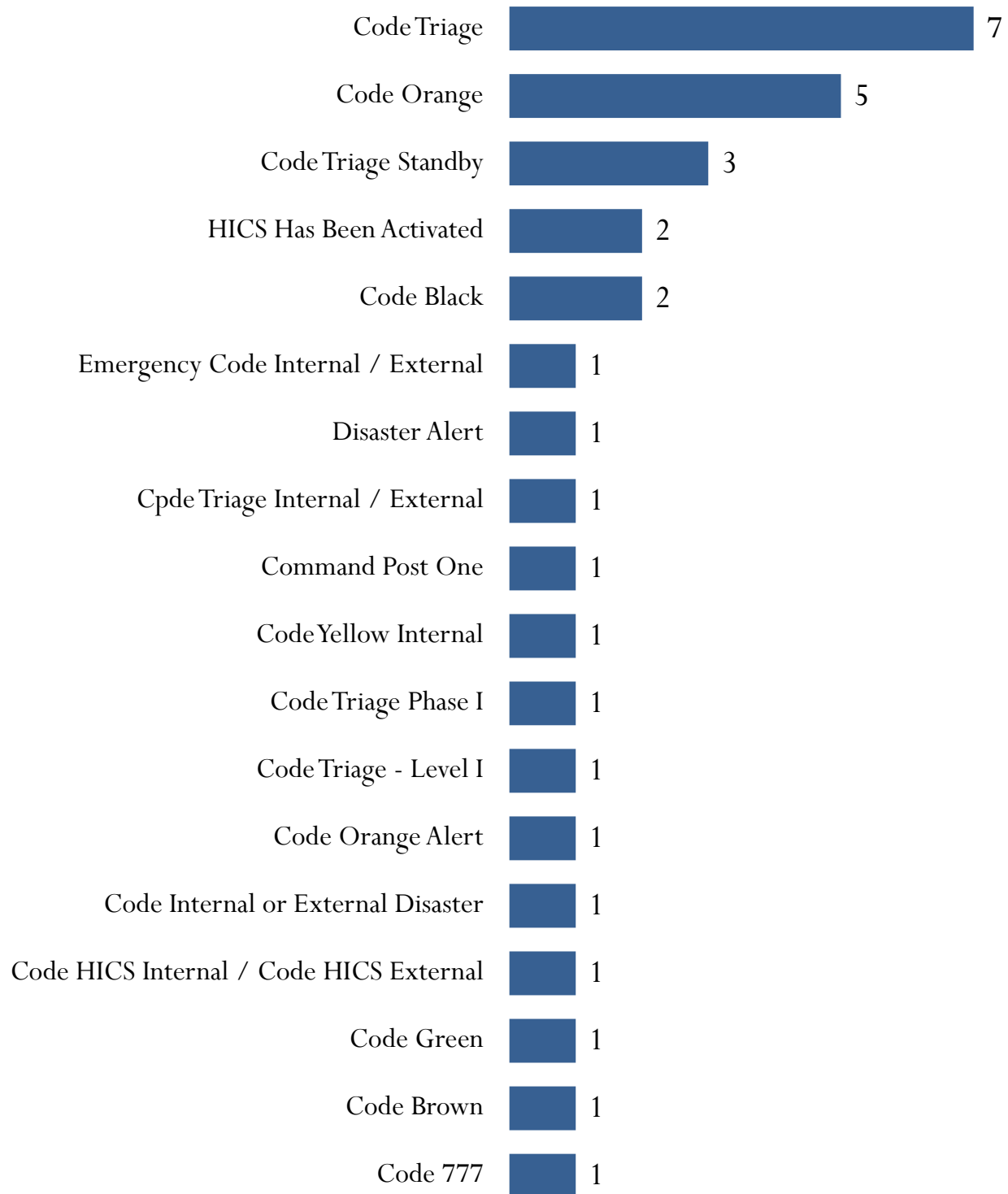
While the 2009 survey revealed that most California hospitals had not adopted an emergency code for a general emergency alert, the 2011 survey data shows exceptional progress in emergency alert code implementation. Usage of CODE TRIAGE ALERT has increased from 1.5% to 77.1% between 2009 and 2011:



Code Triage Alert was added in 2009

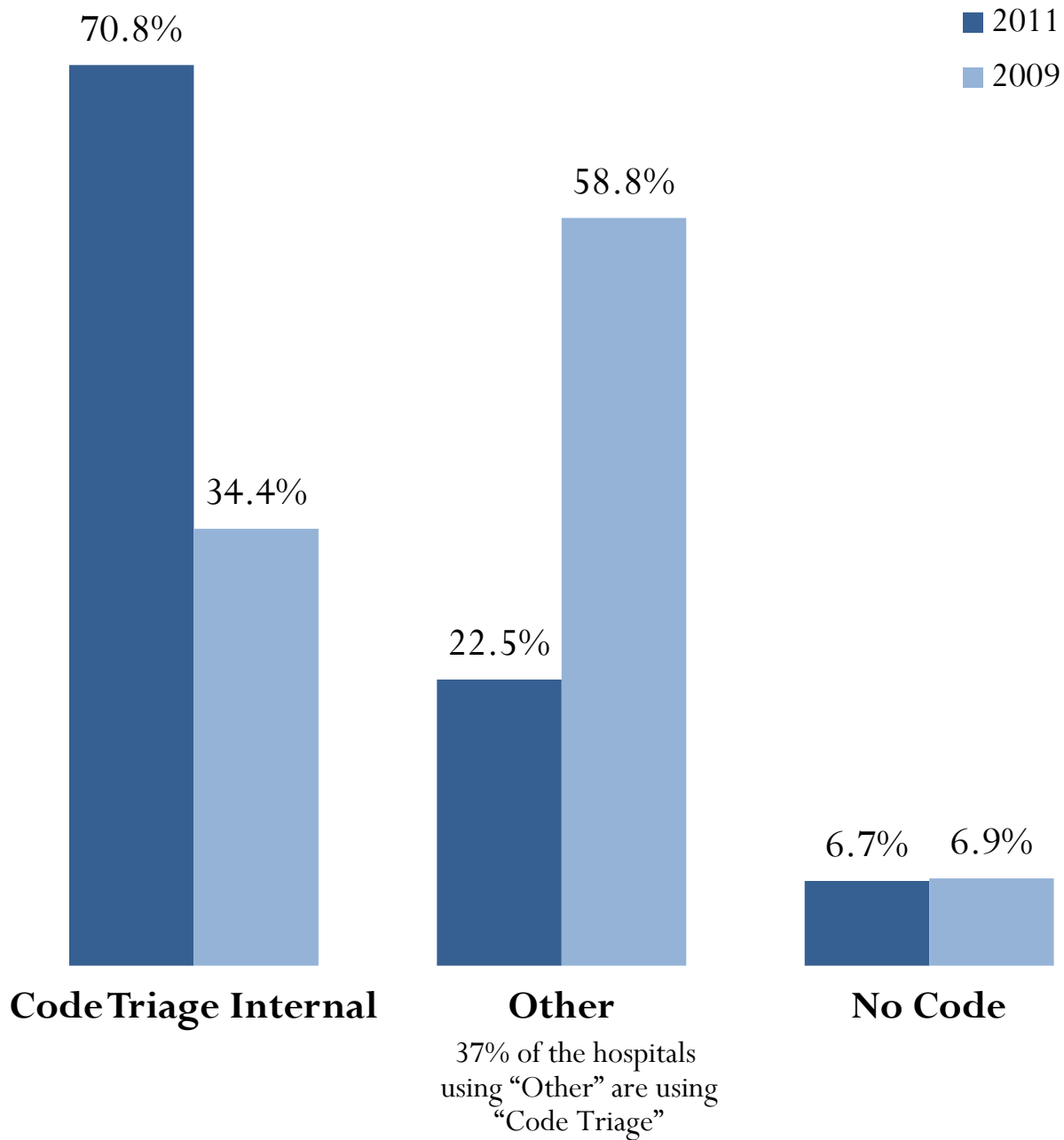
EMERGENCY ALERT

Other codes used in California hospitals to report an emergency alert (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



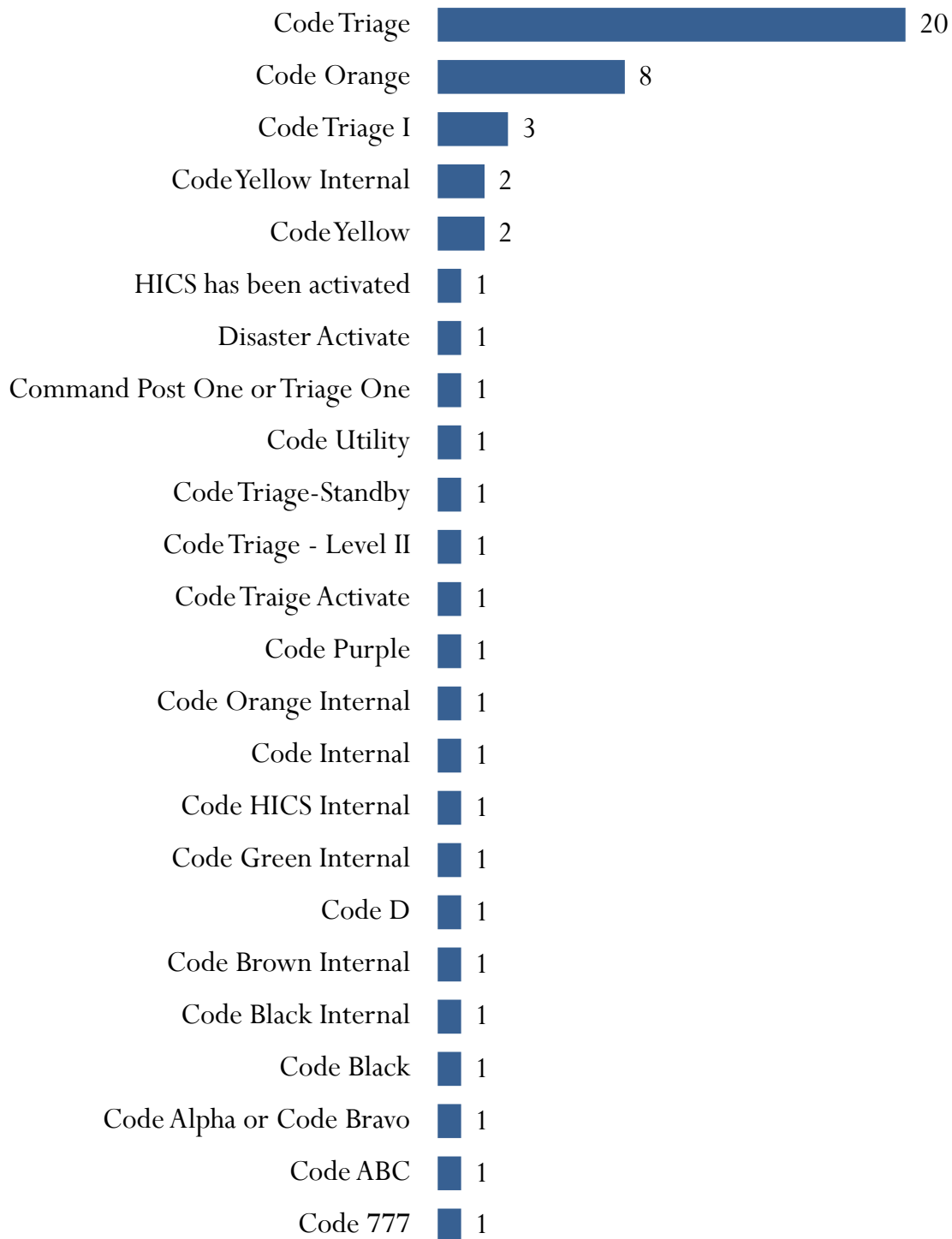
INTERNAL EMERGENCY

Current survey data reveals usage of CODE TRIAGE INTERNAL becoming widely accepted for use in internal emergency alerts; implementation of this code has more than doubled since 2009, while use of alternate codes for internal emergencies realized substantial declines.



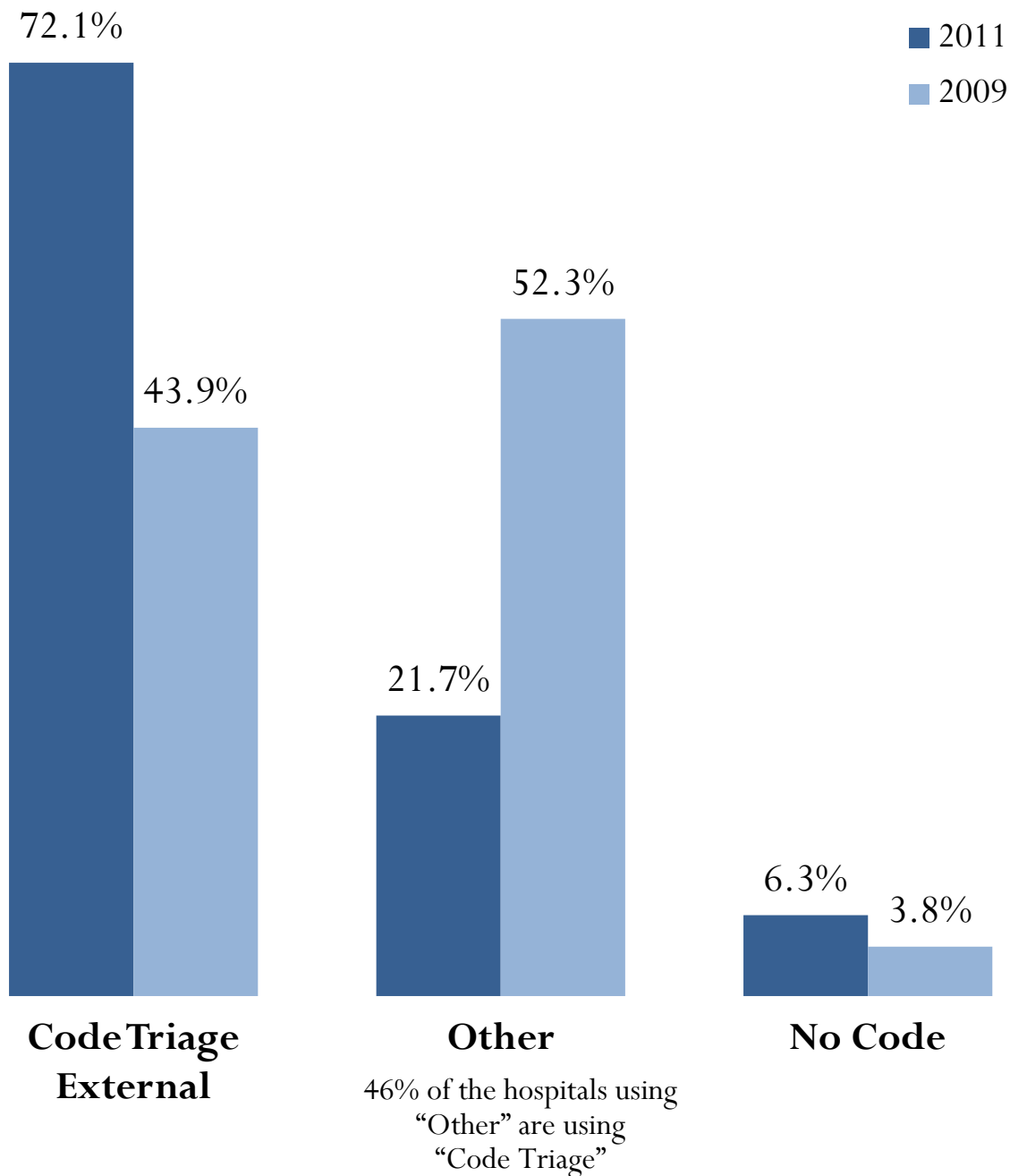
INTERNAL EMERGENCY

Other codes used in California hospitals to report internal emergencies (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



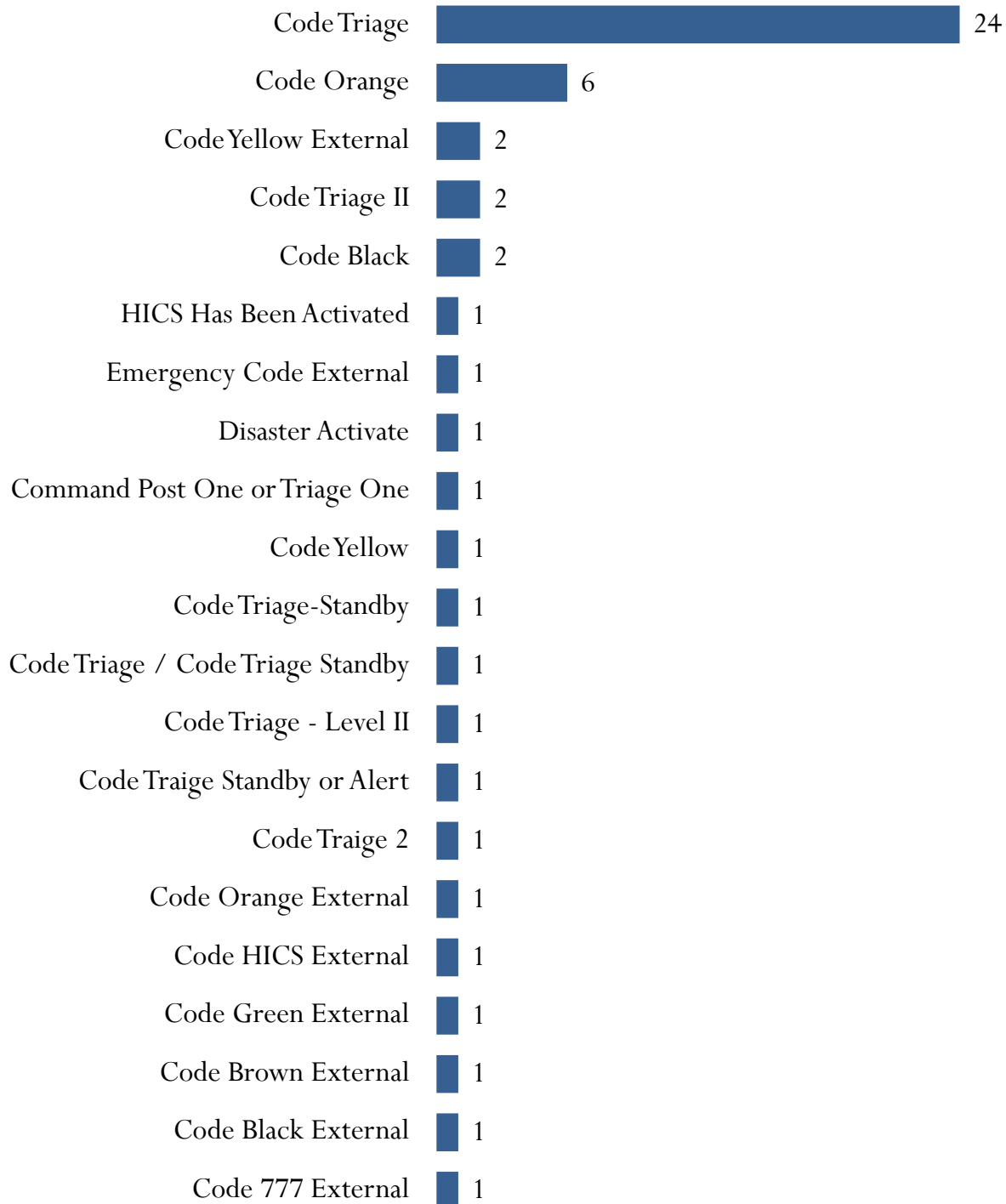
EXTERNAL EMERGENCY

Implementation of CODE TRIAGE EXTERNAL to reference external emergencies has become broadly adopted by California hospitals; usage of this code increased by nearly one third between 2009 and 2011. Not surprisingly, there has been a substantial decrease in the usage of alternate codes for external emergencies during the same period.



EXTERNAL EMERGENCY

Other codes used in California hospitals to report external emergencies (shown by count of hospitals using each code):

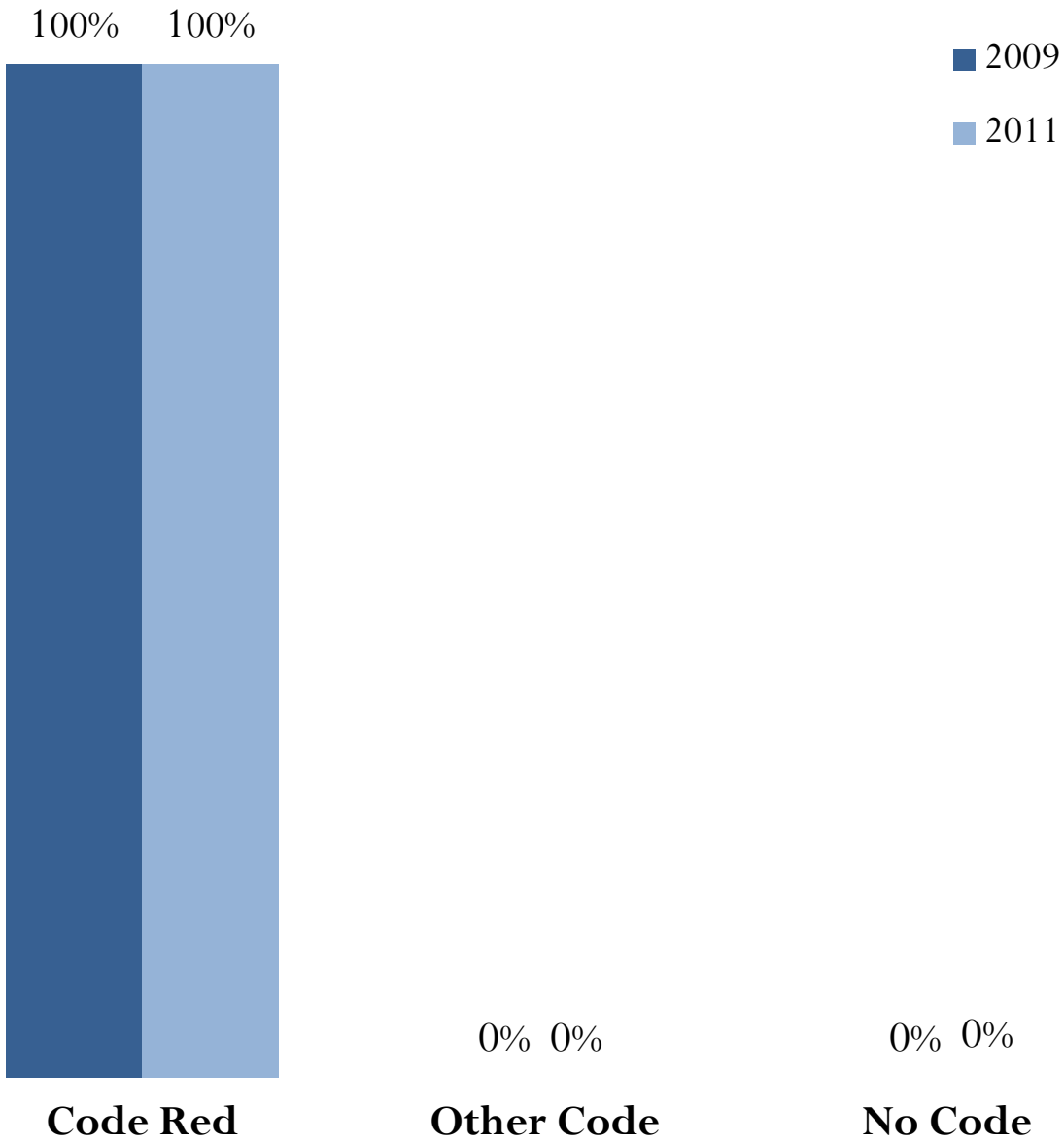


SECTION II:
**Hospital Association
of Southern California (HASC)**

107 HASC hospitals responded to the survey

Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

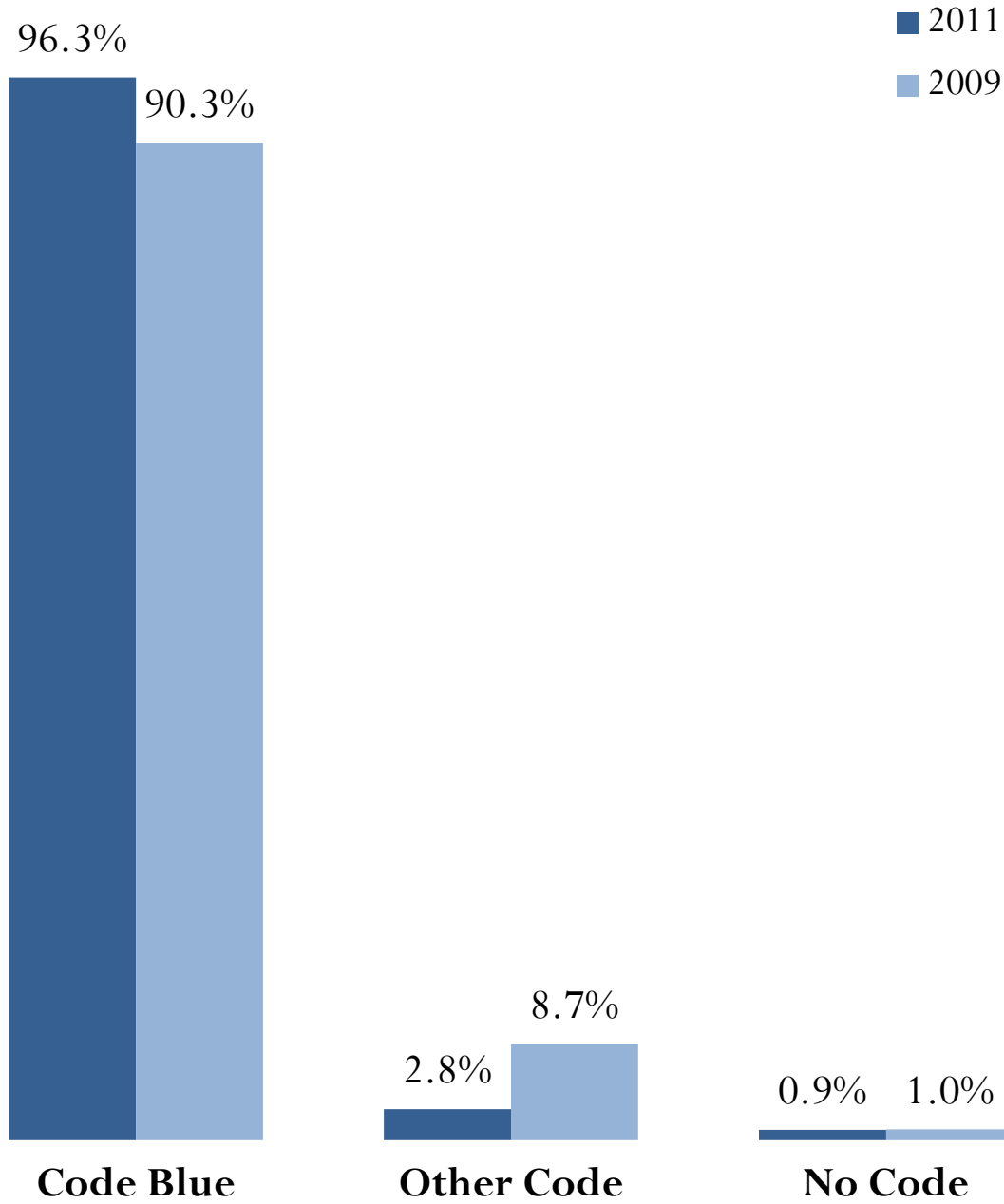
FIRE



Other than CODE RED, no other codes were reported in use

Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

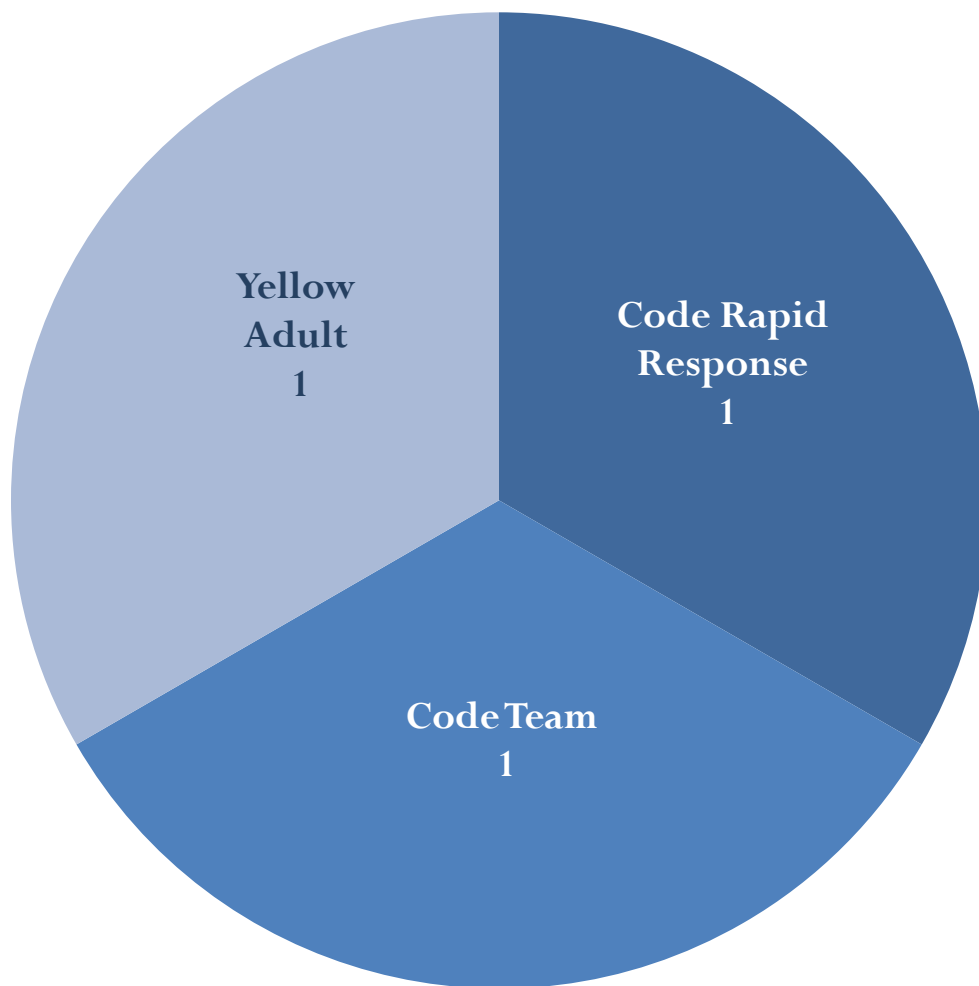
MEDICAL EMERGENCY – ADULT



Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

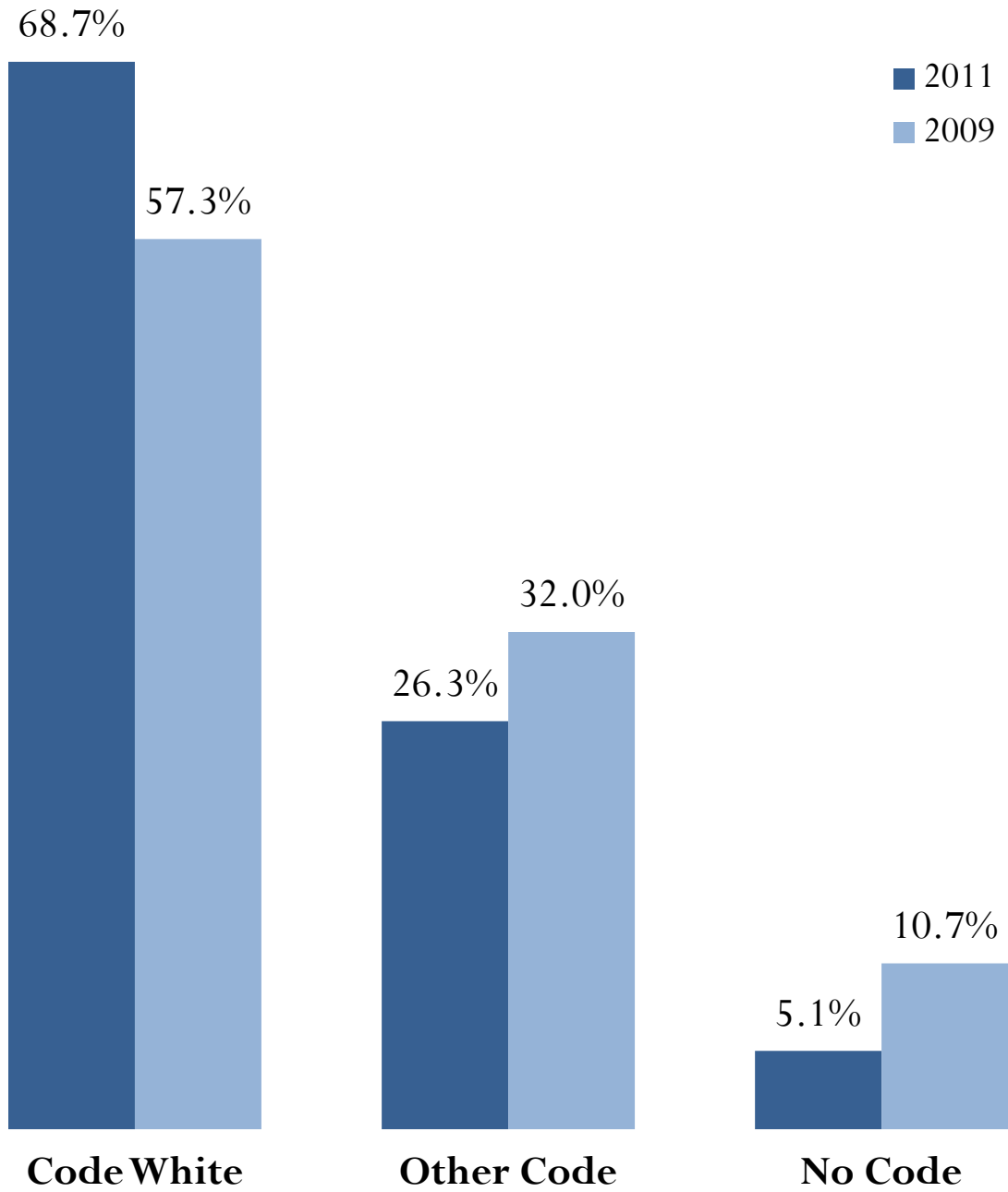
MEDICAL EMERGENCY – ADULT

Other codes reported for adult medical emergency situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

MEDICAL EMERGENCY – PEDIATRIC



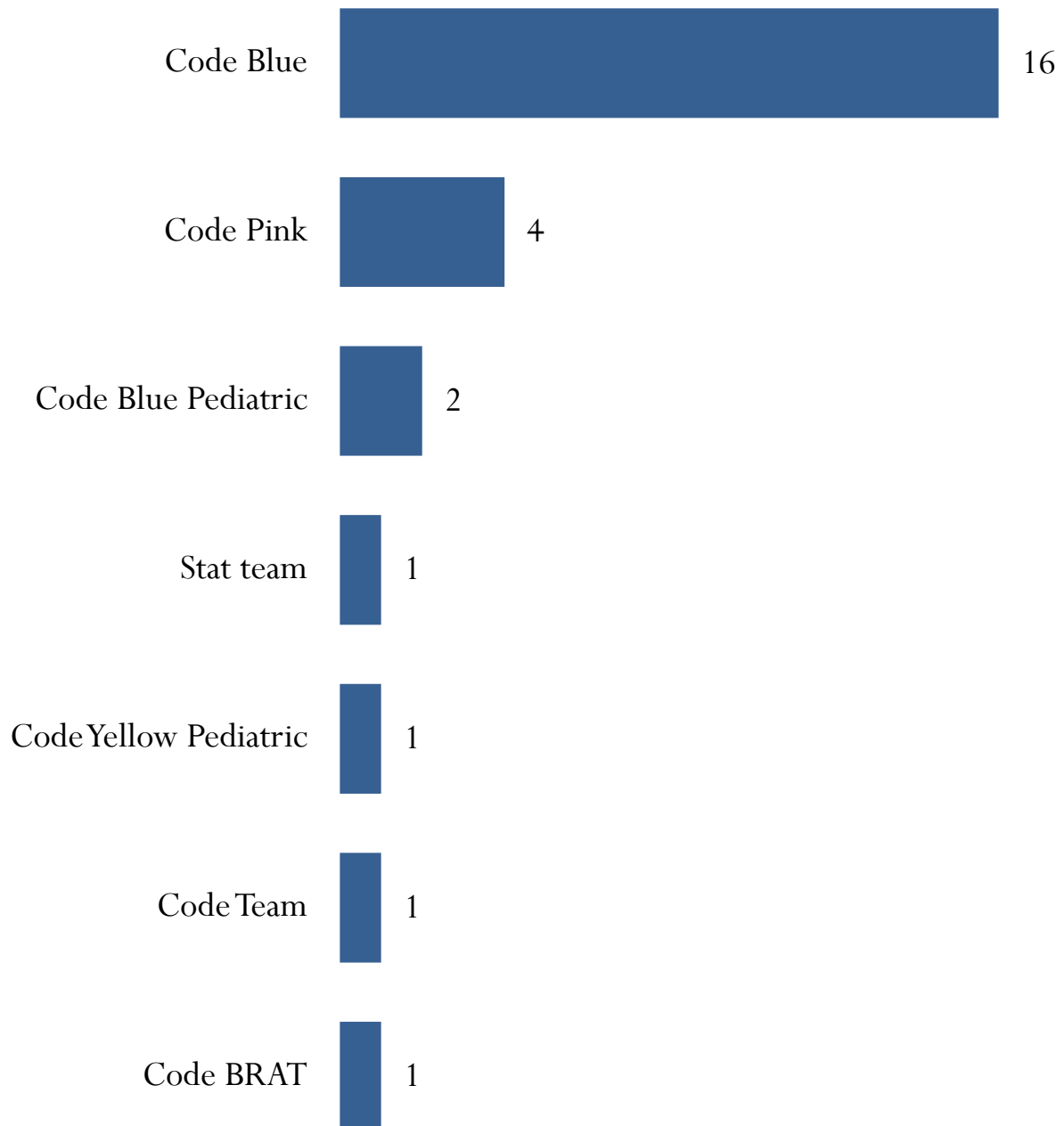
61.5% of hospitals using “Other”
use “Code Blue”

Non-applicable survey responses have been excluded from this category.

Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

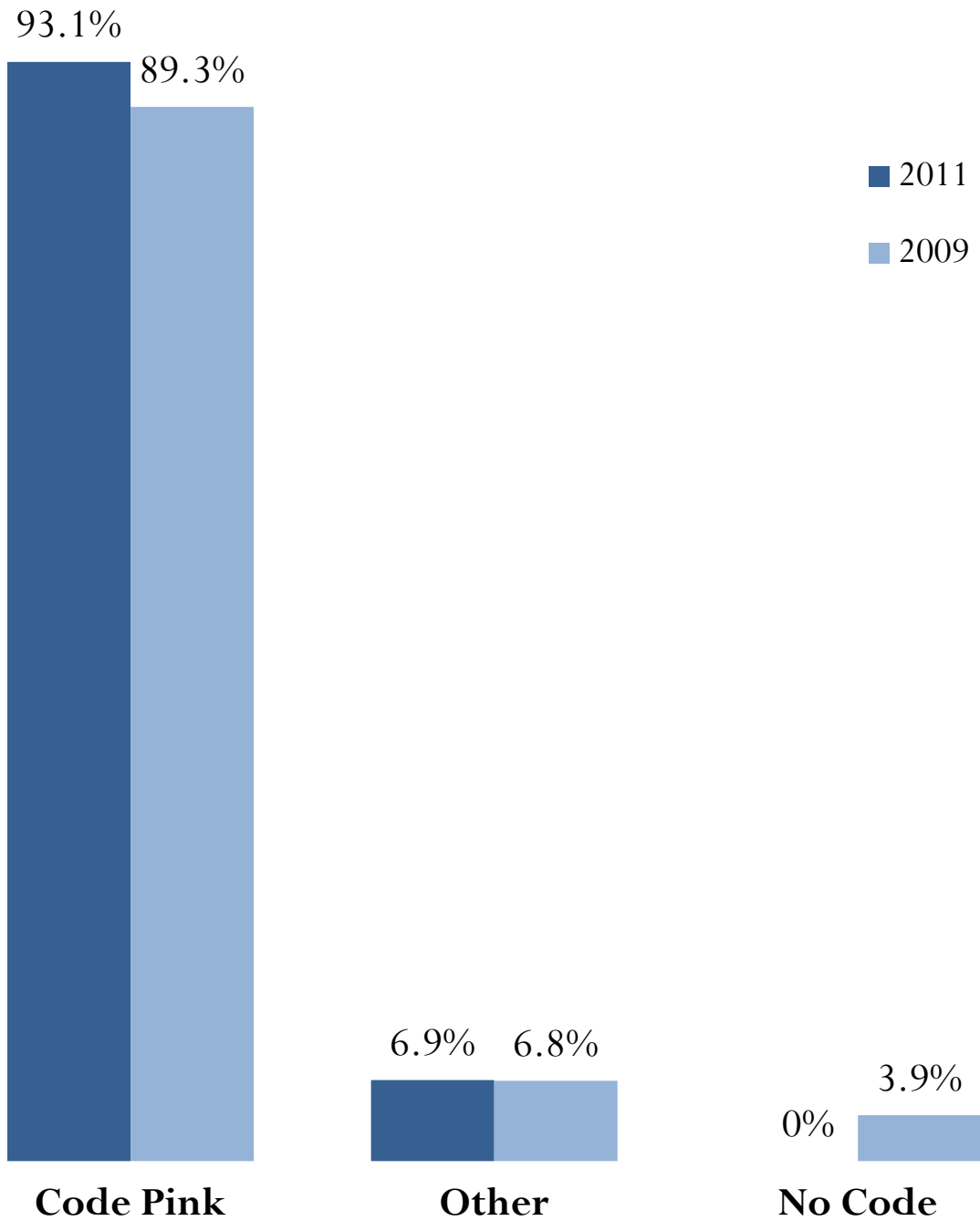
MEDICAL EMERGENCY – PEDIATRIC

Other codes reported for pediatric medical emergency situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

INFANT ABDUCTION

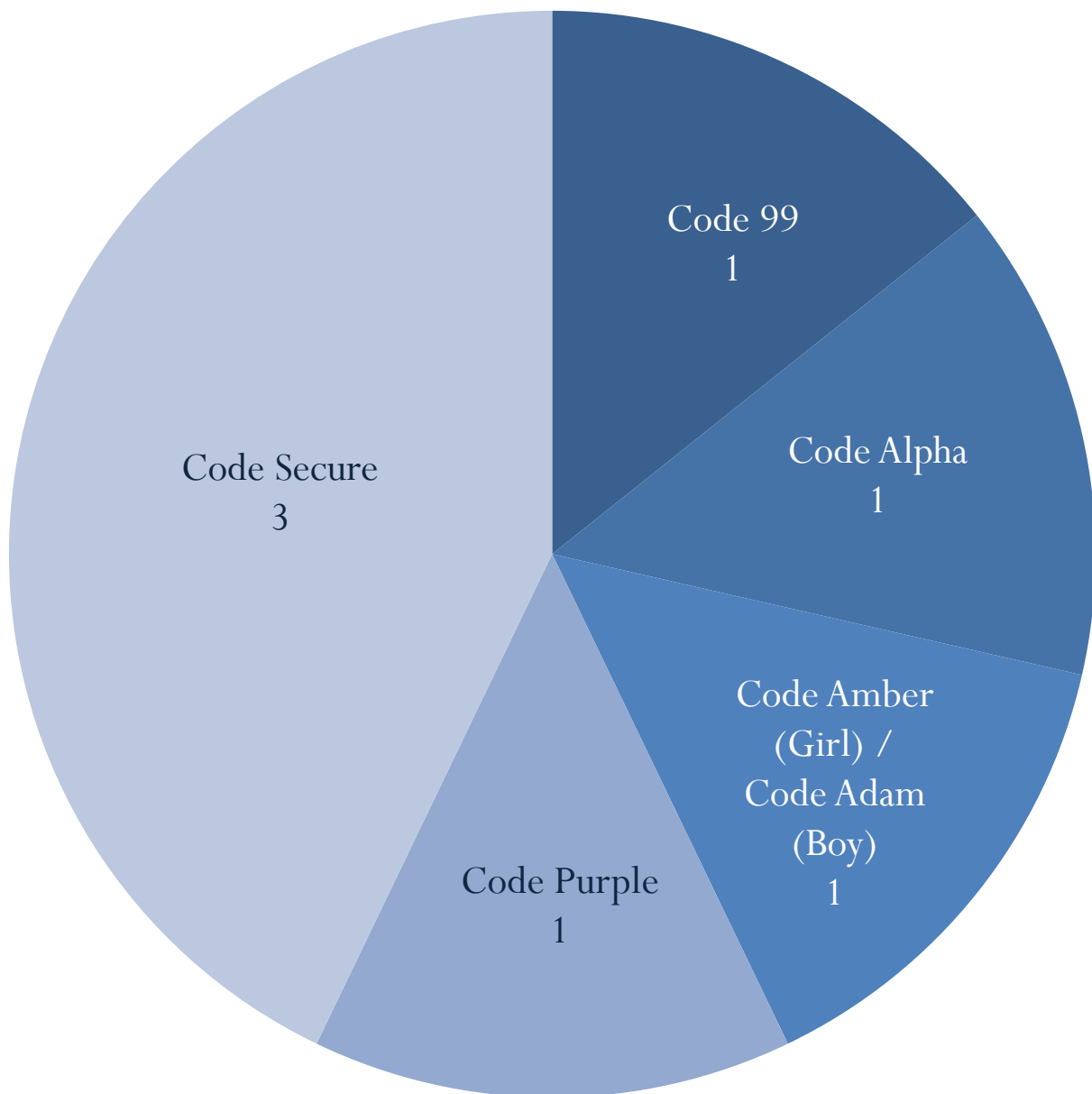


Non-applicable survey responses have been excluded from this category.

Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

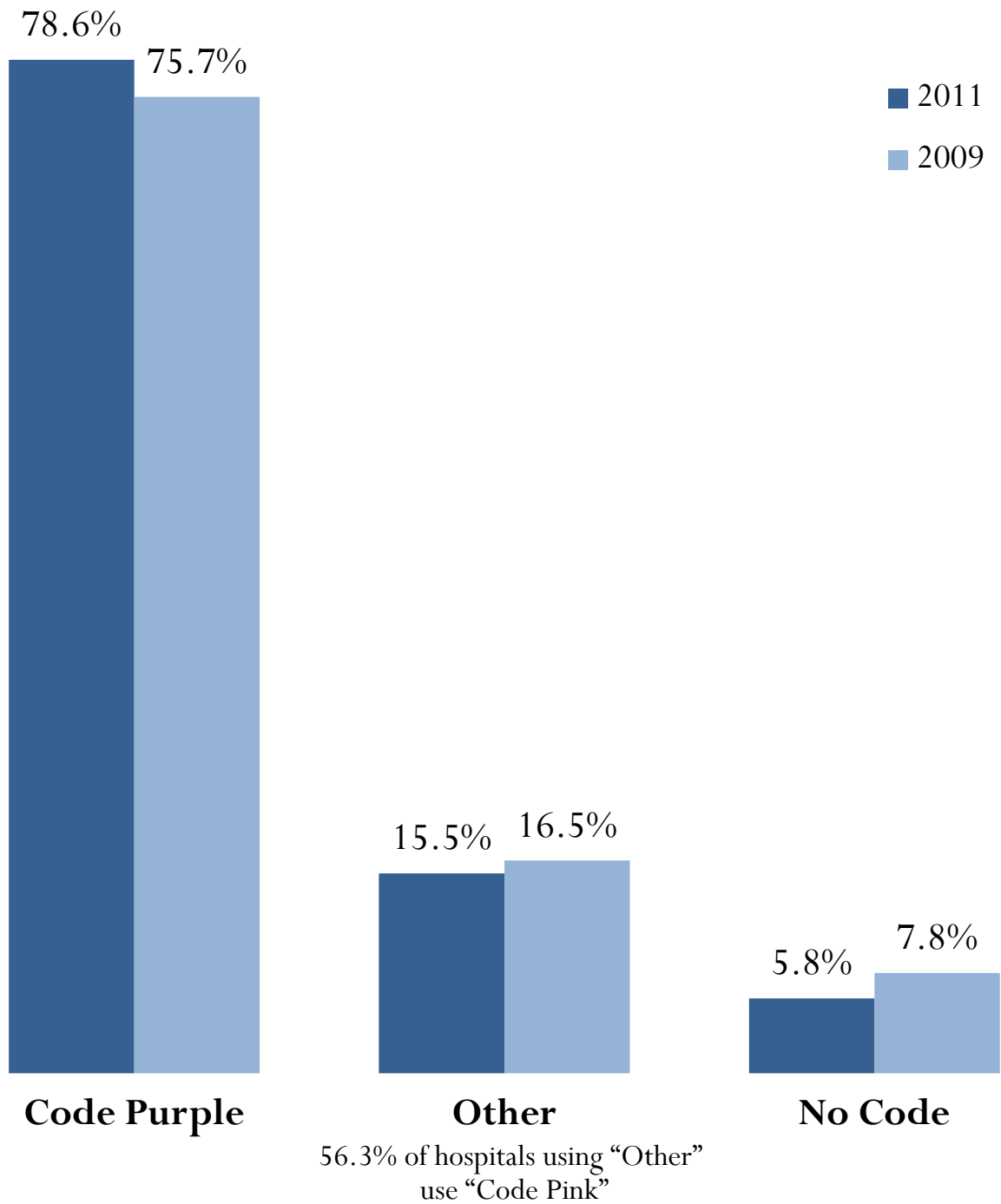
INFANT ABDUCTION

Other codes reported in use for infant abduction situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

CHILD ABDUCTION

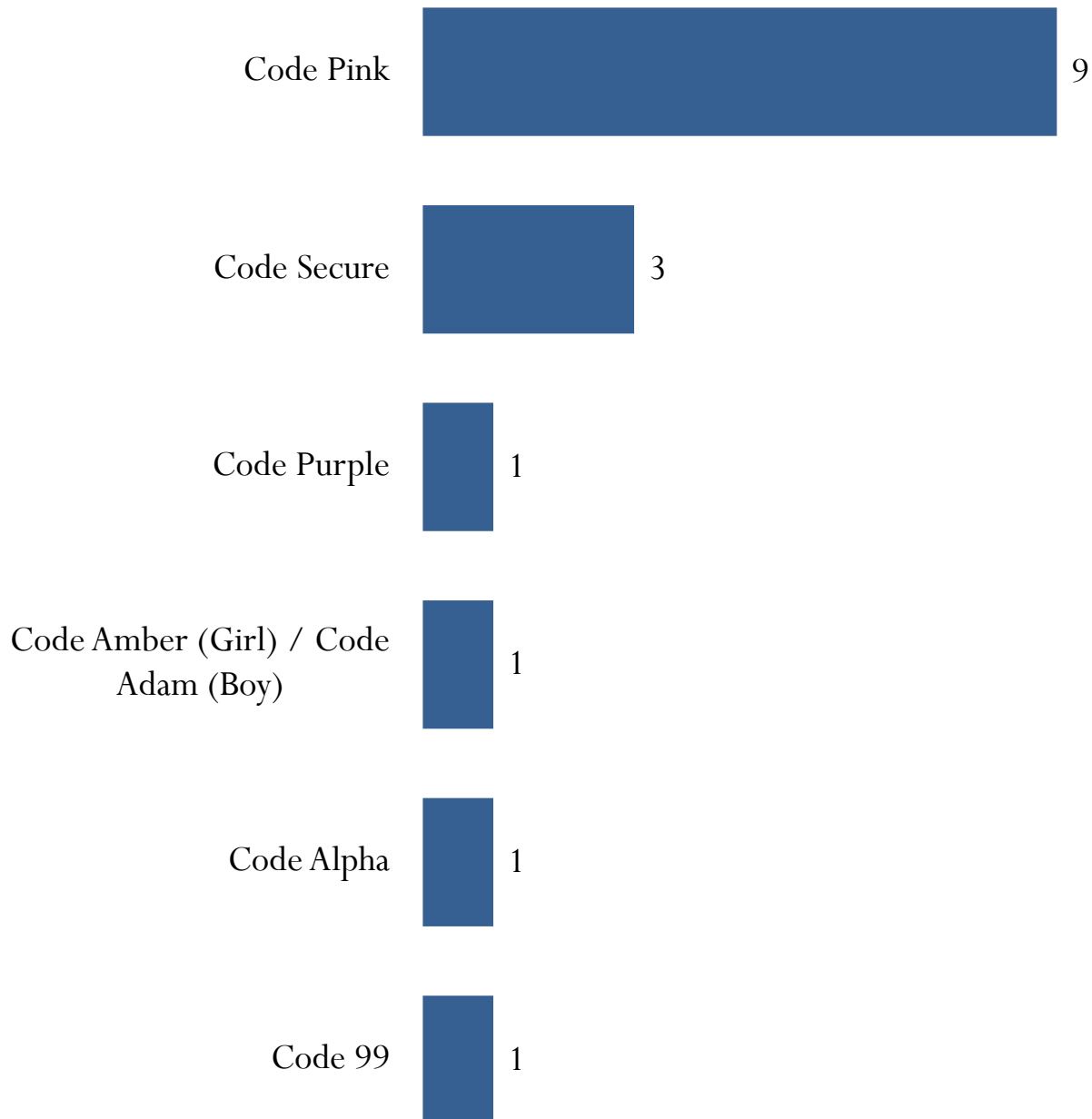


Non-applicable survey responses have been excluded from this category.

Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

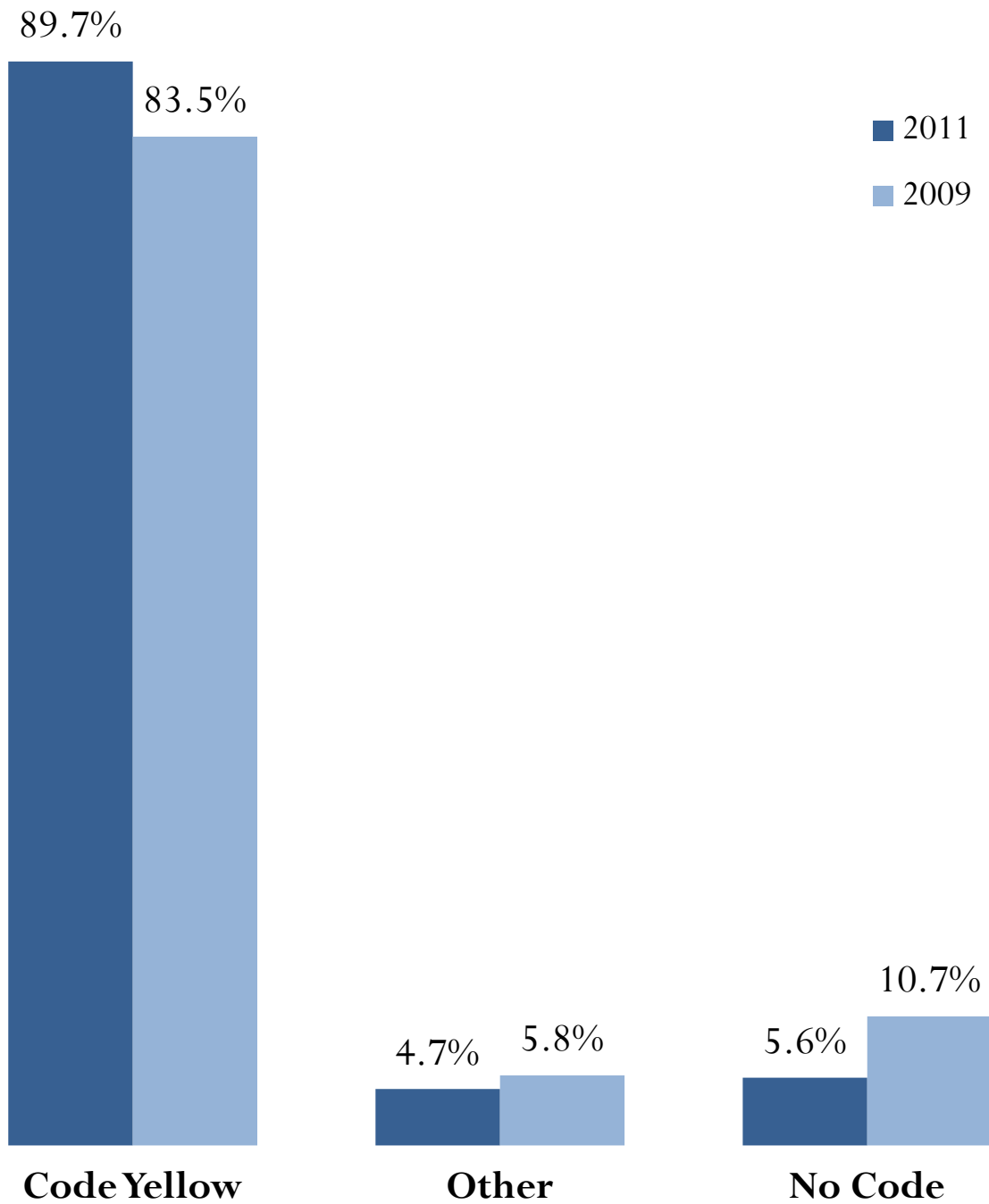
CHILD ABDUCTION

Other codes reported in use for child abduction situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

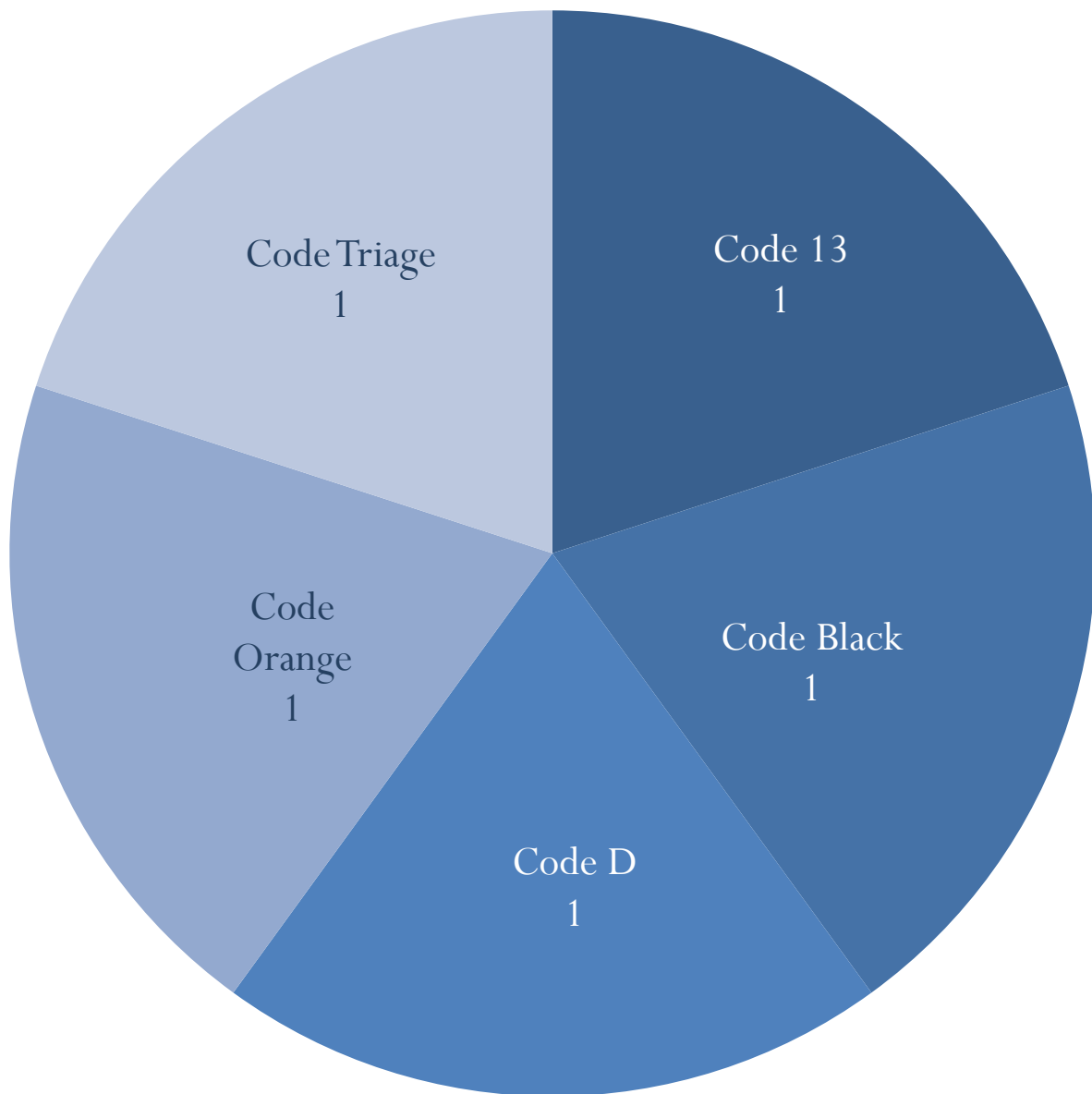
BOMB THREAT



Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

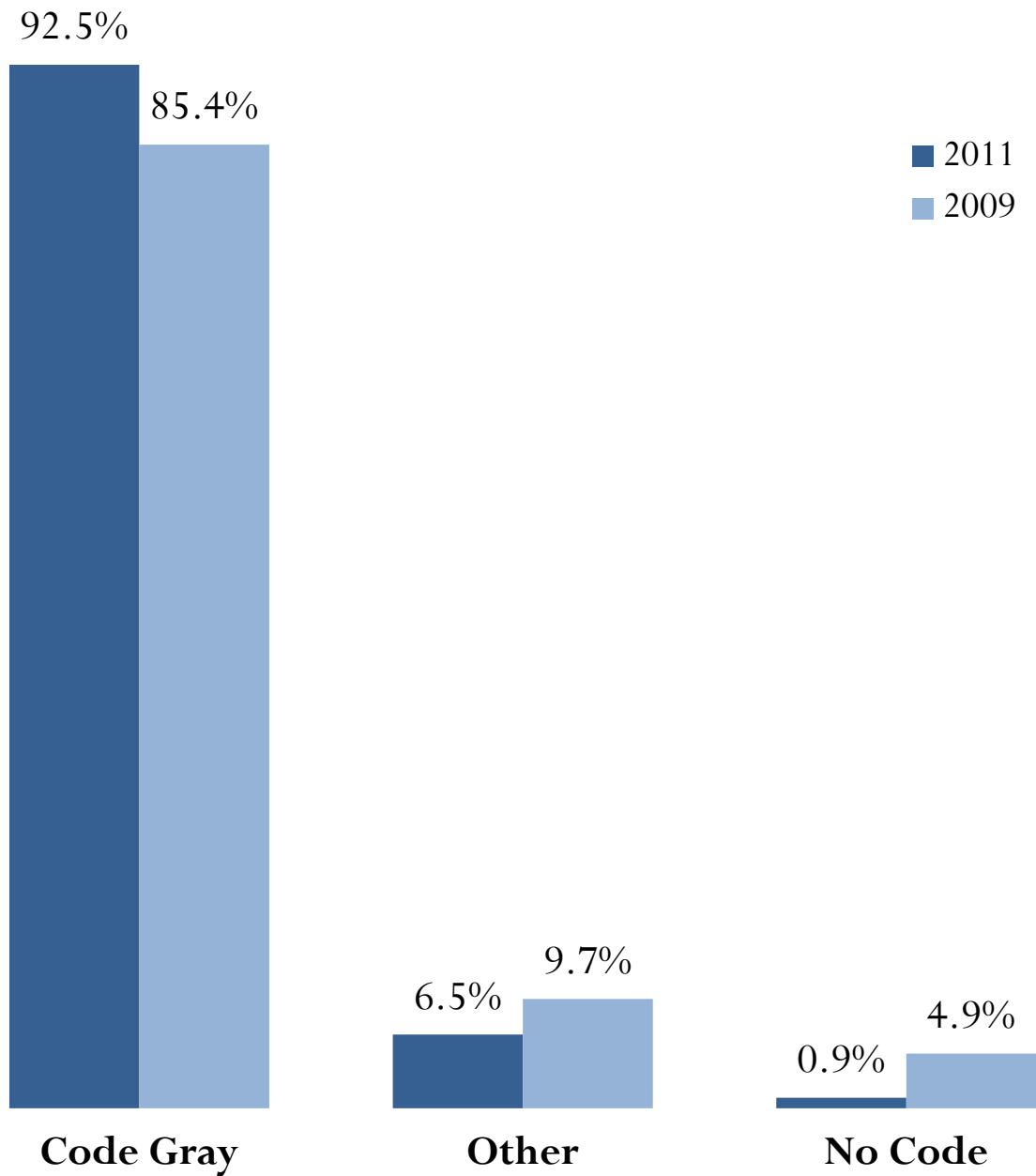
BOMB THREAT

Other codes reported in use for bomb threat situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

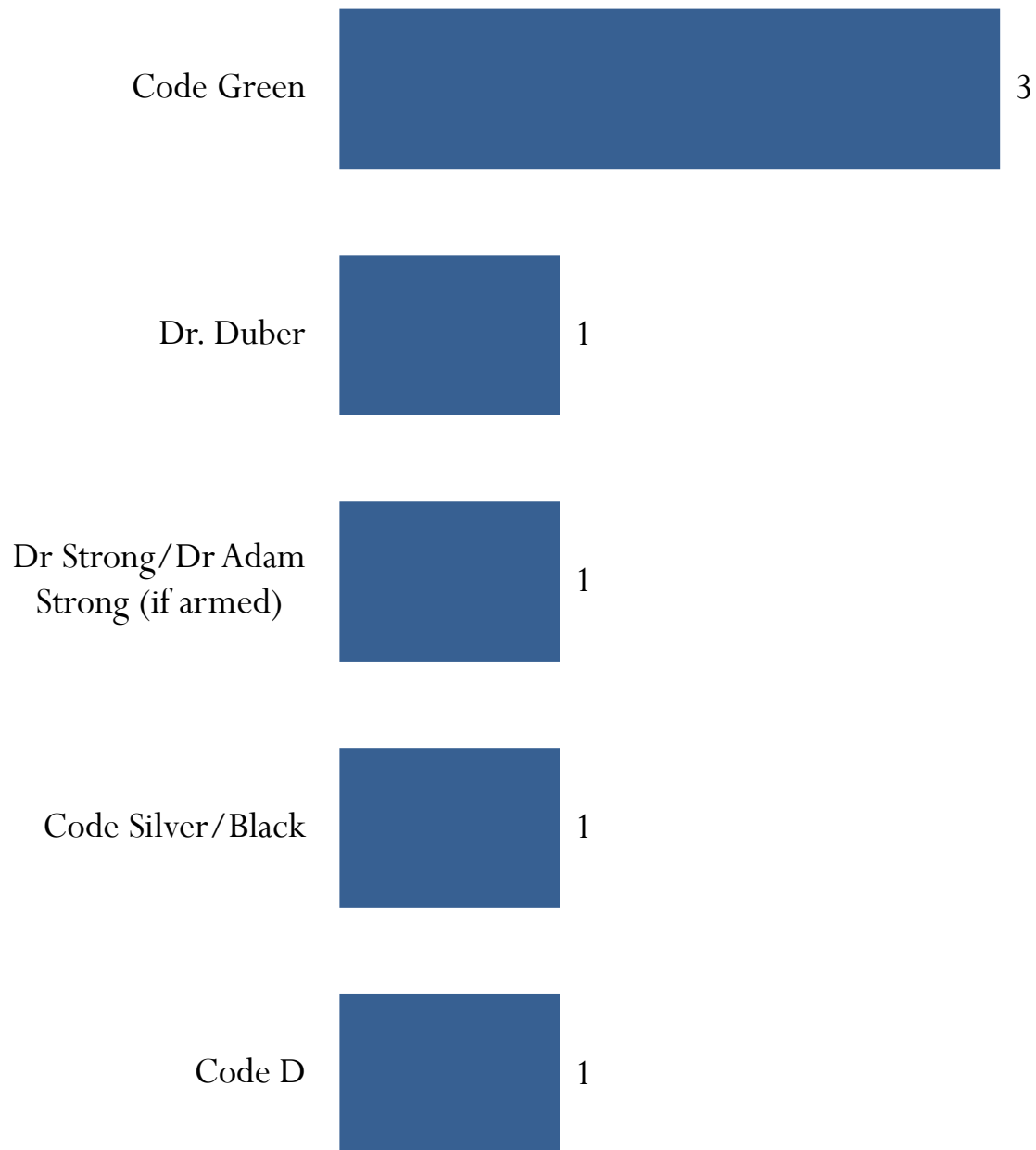
COMBATIVE PERSON



Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

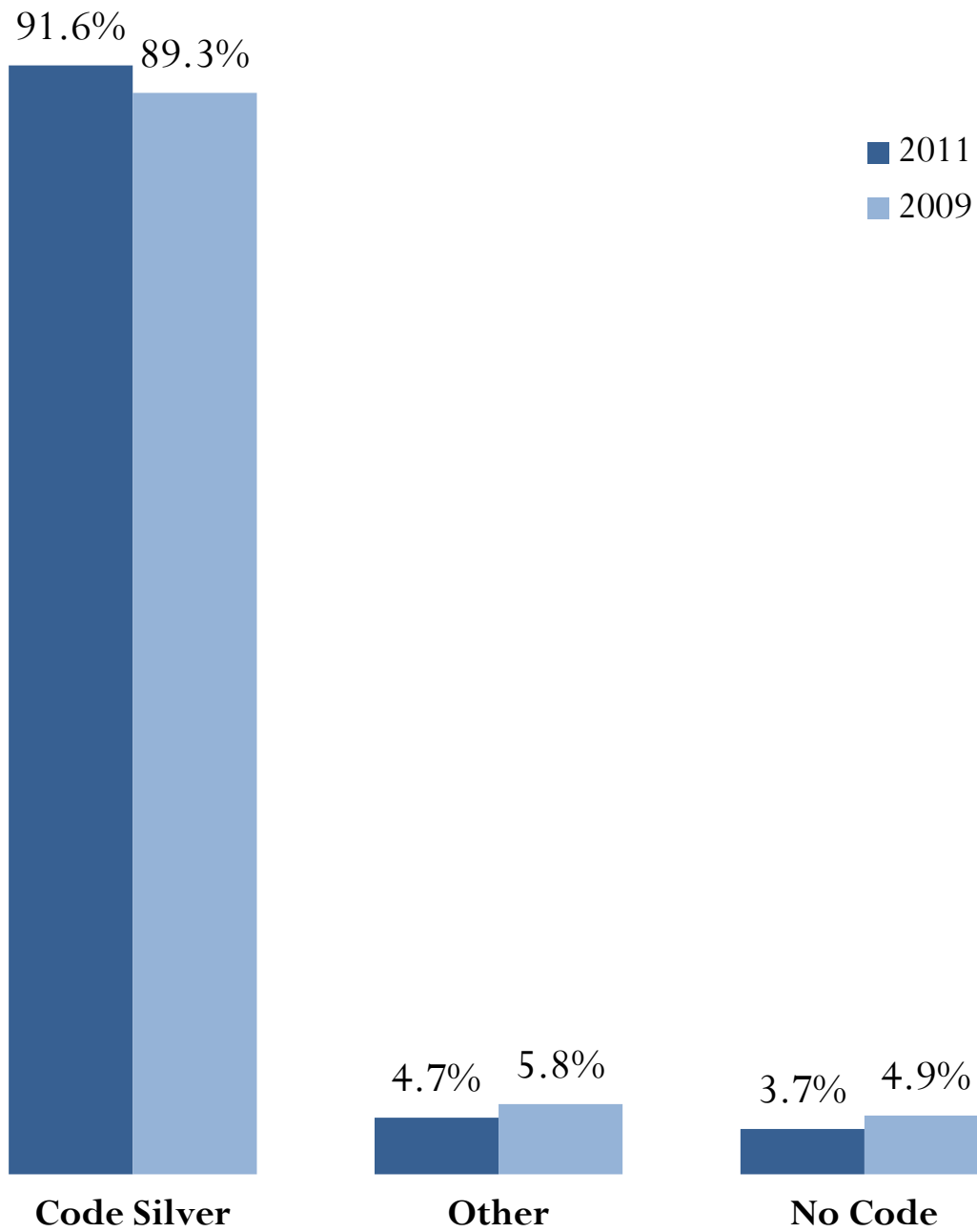
COMBATIVE PERSON

Other codes reported in use for situations involving a combative person (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

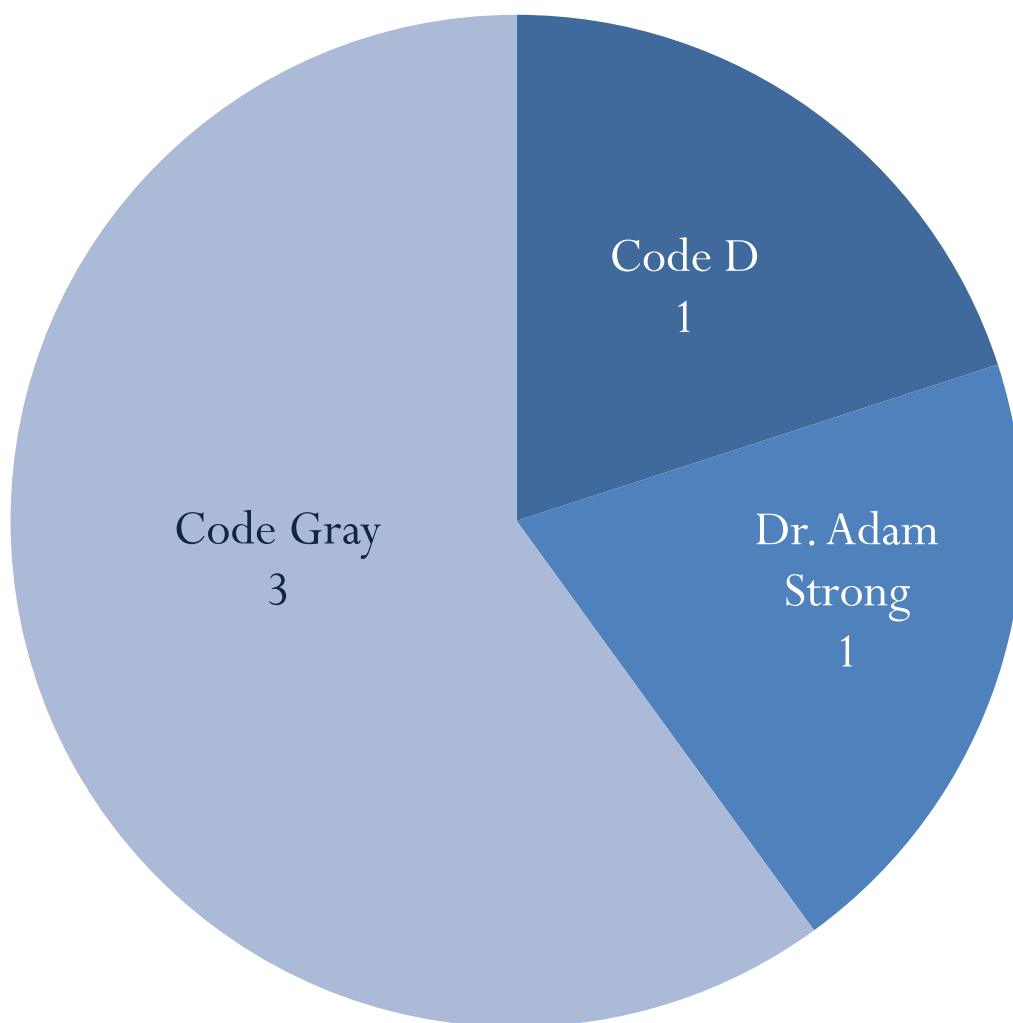
PERSON WITH A WEAPON and/or ACTIVE SHOOTER and/or HOSTAGE SITUATION



Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

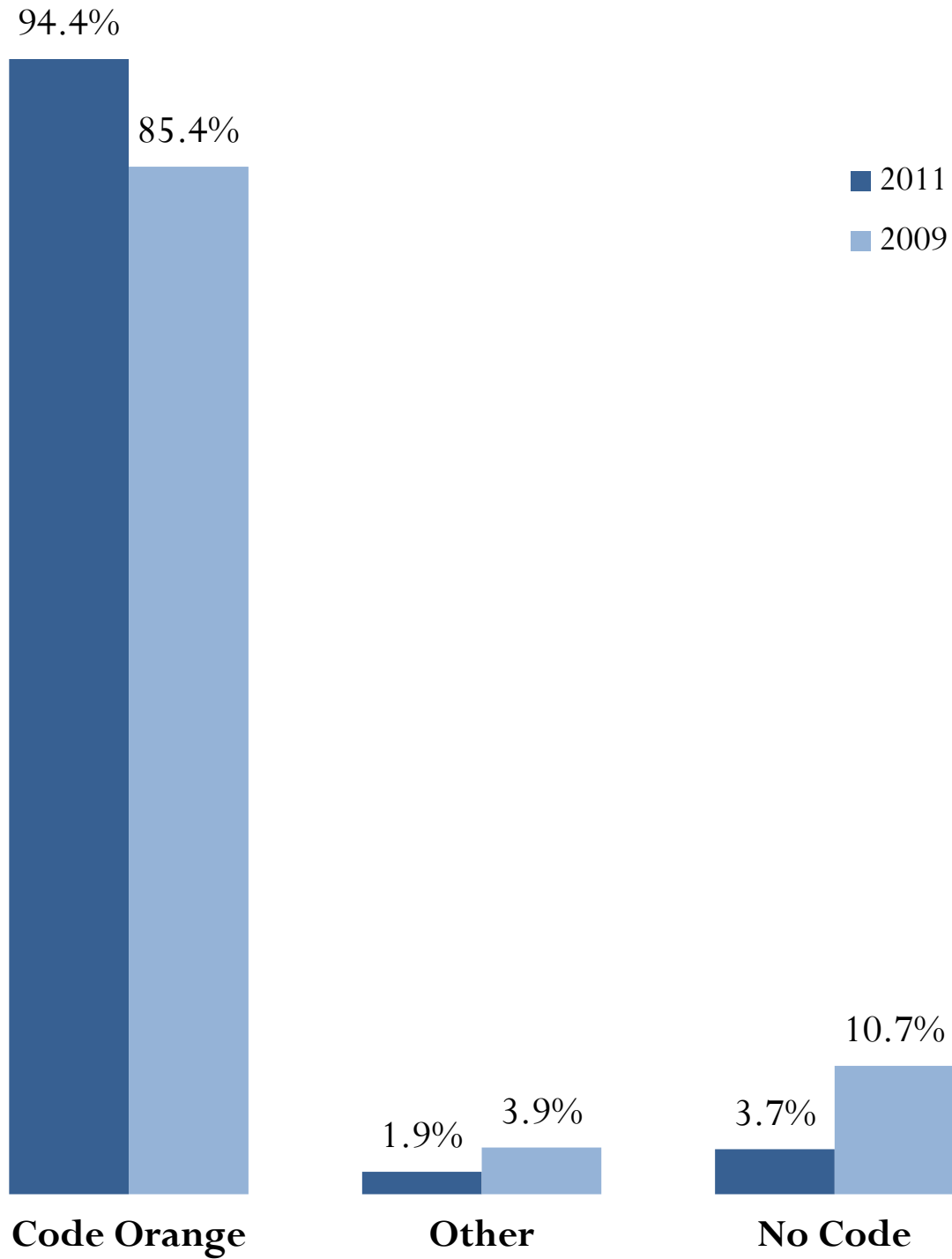
PERSON WITH A WEAPON and/or ACTIVE SHOOTER and/or HOSTAGE SITUATION

Other codes reported in use for person with a weapon or hostage situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

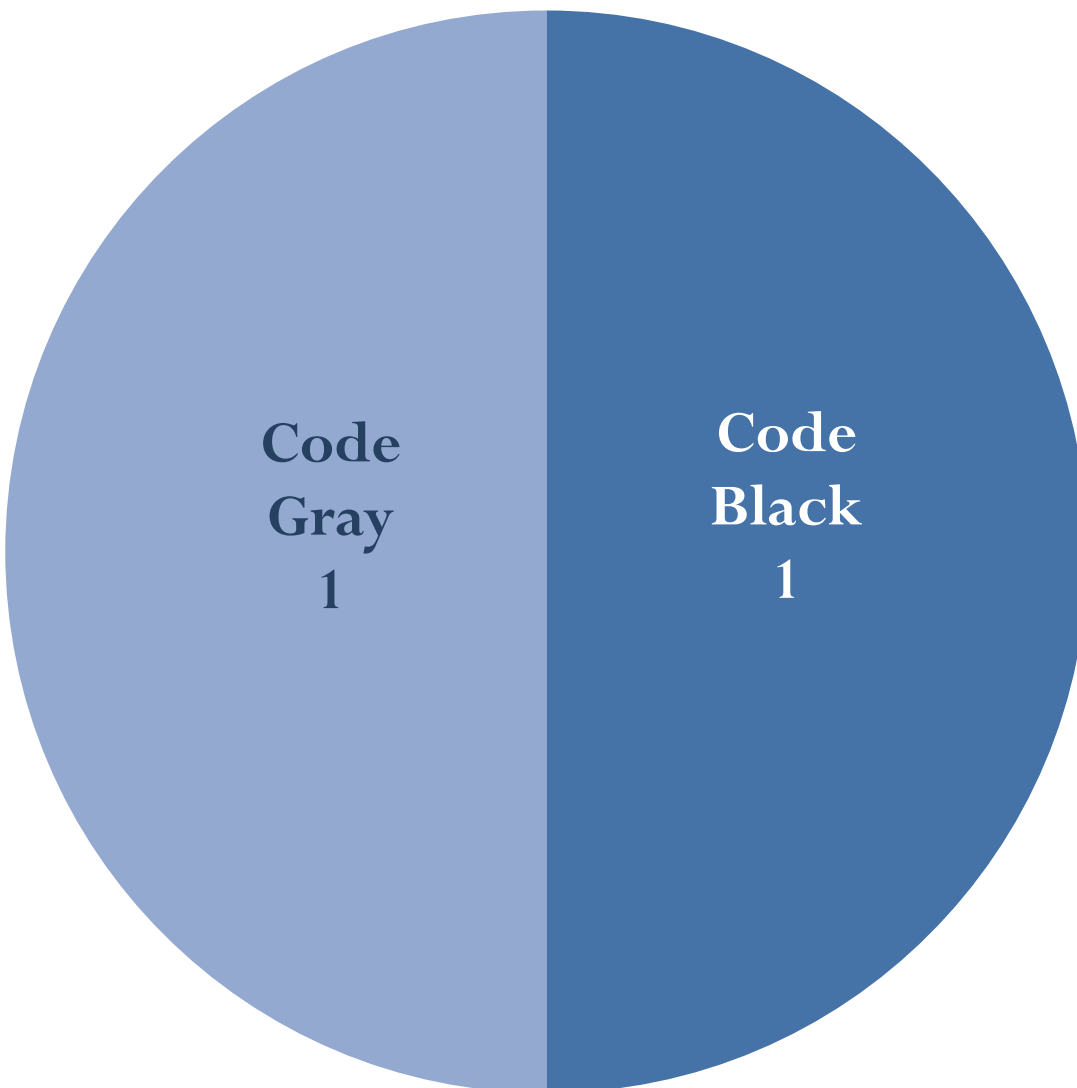
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS



Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

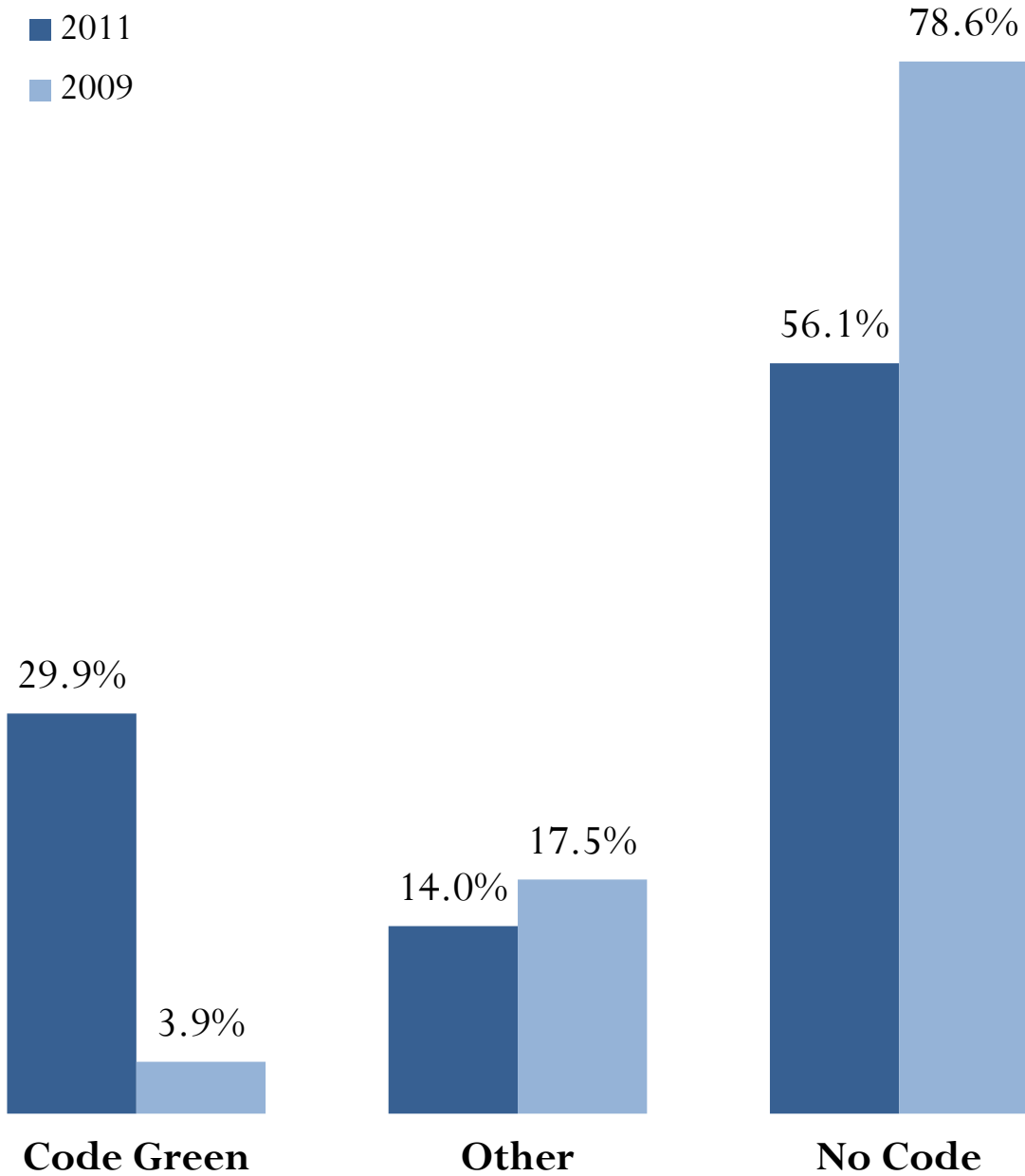
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Other codes reported in use for hazardous material situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

PATIENT ELOPEMENT

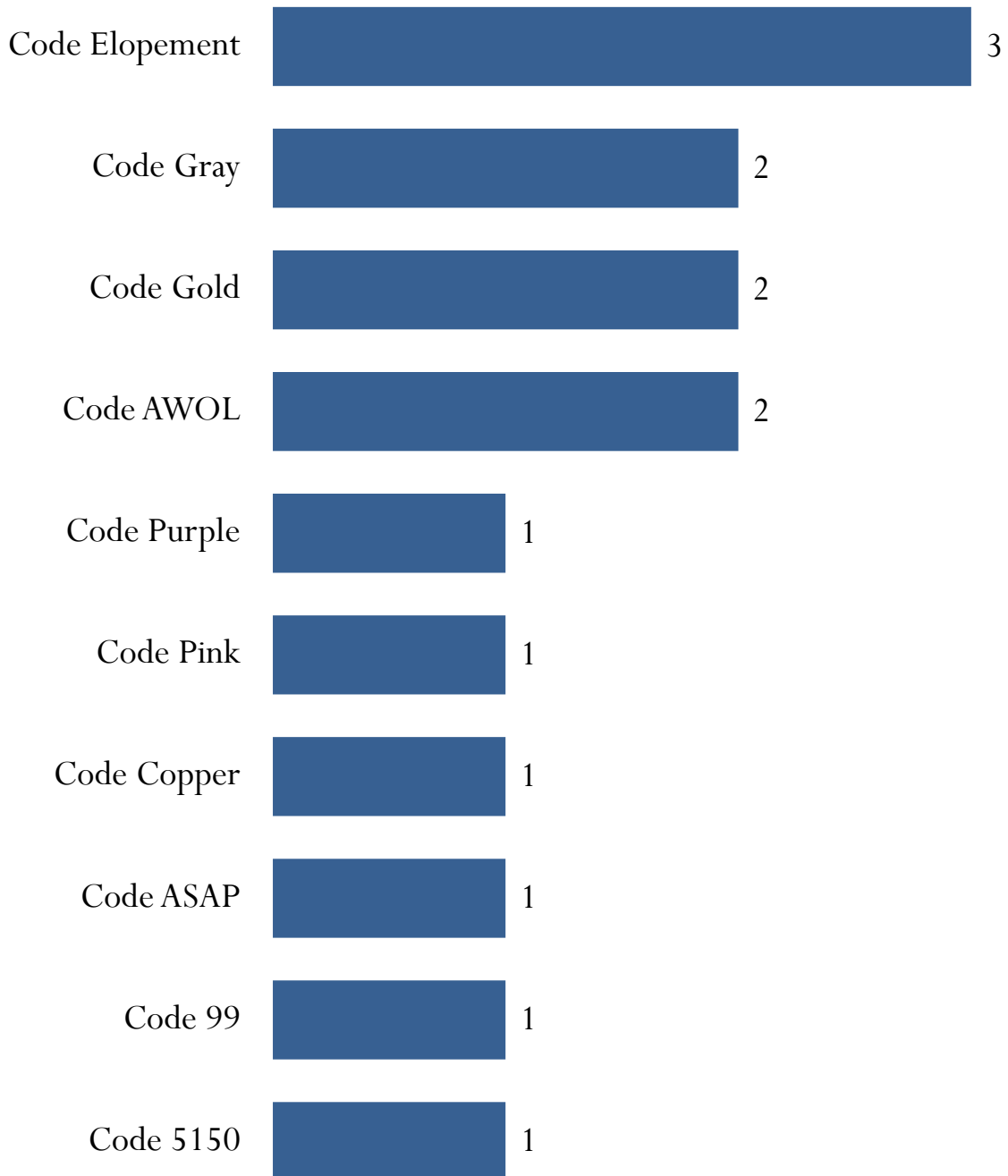


Code Green was added in 2009

Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

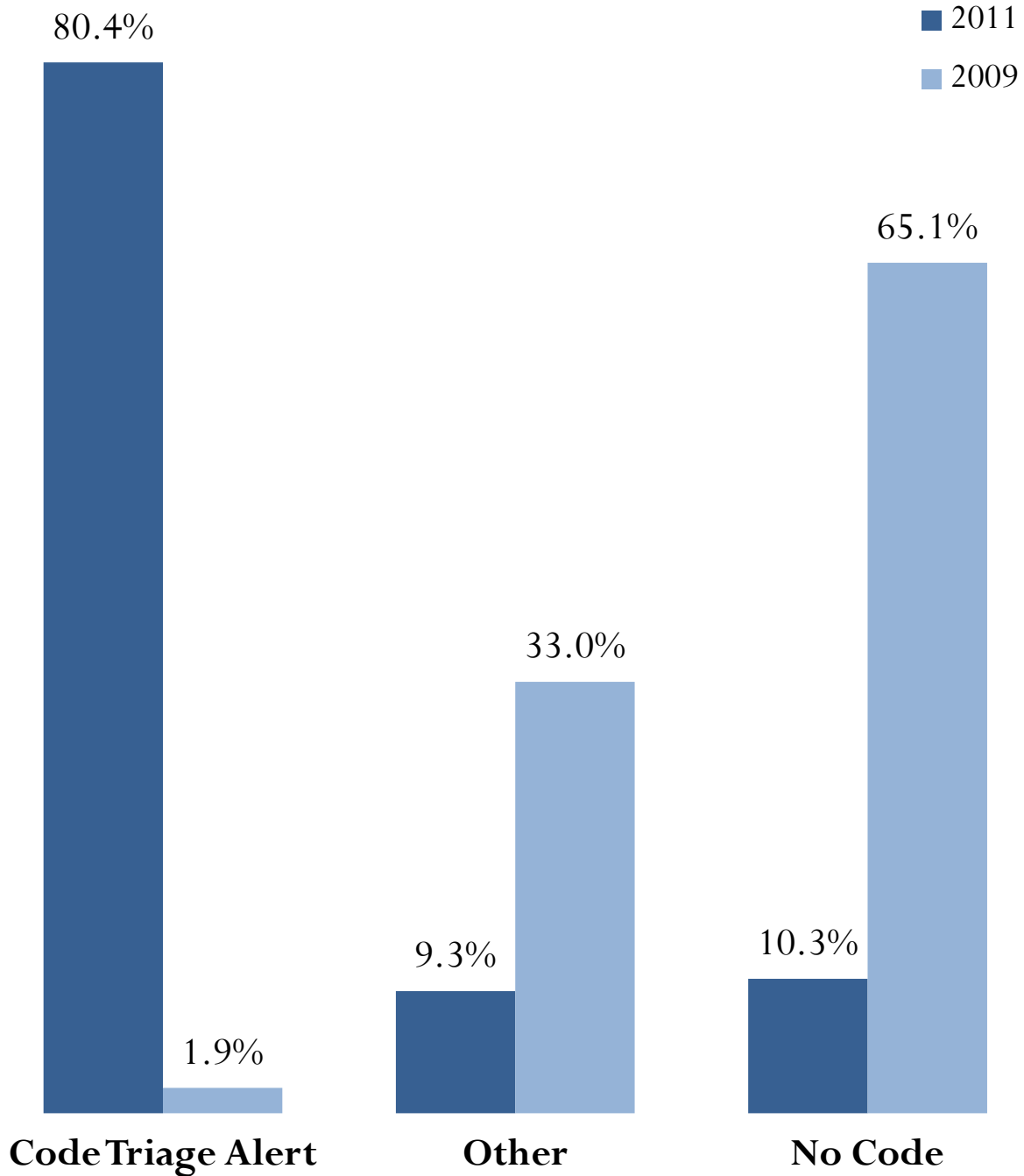
PATIENT ELOPEMENT

Other codes reported in use for patient elopement situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

EMERGENCY ALERT

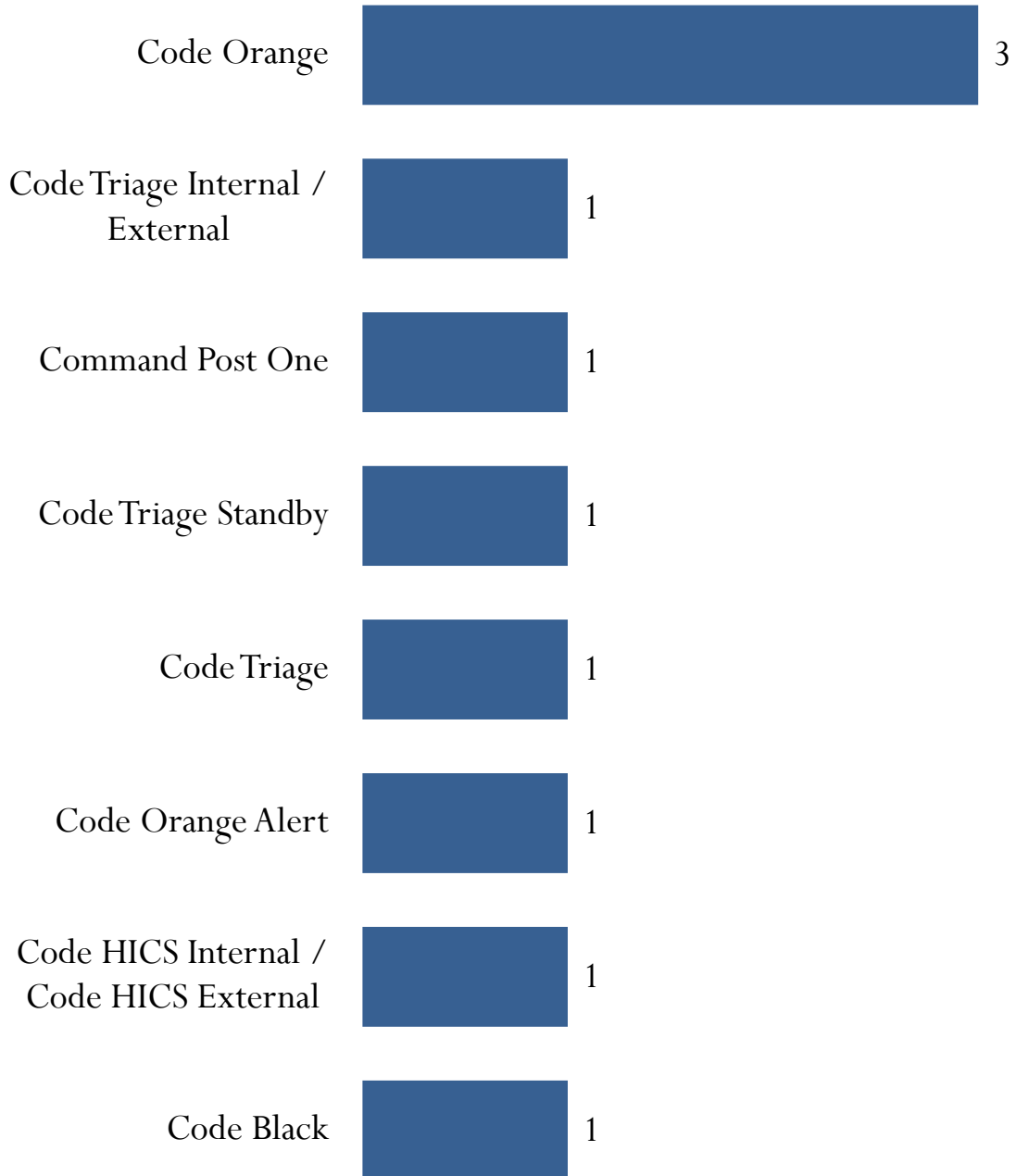


Code Triage Alert was added in 2009

Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

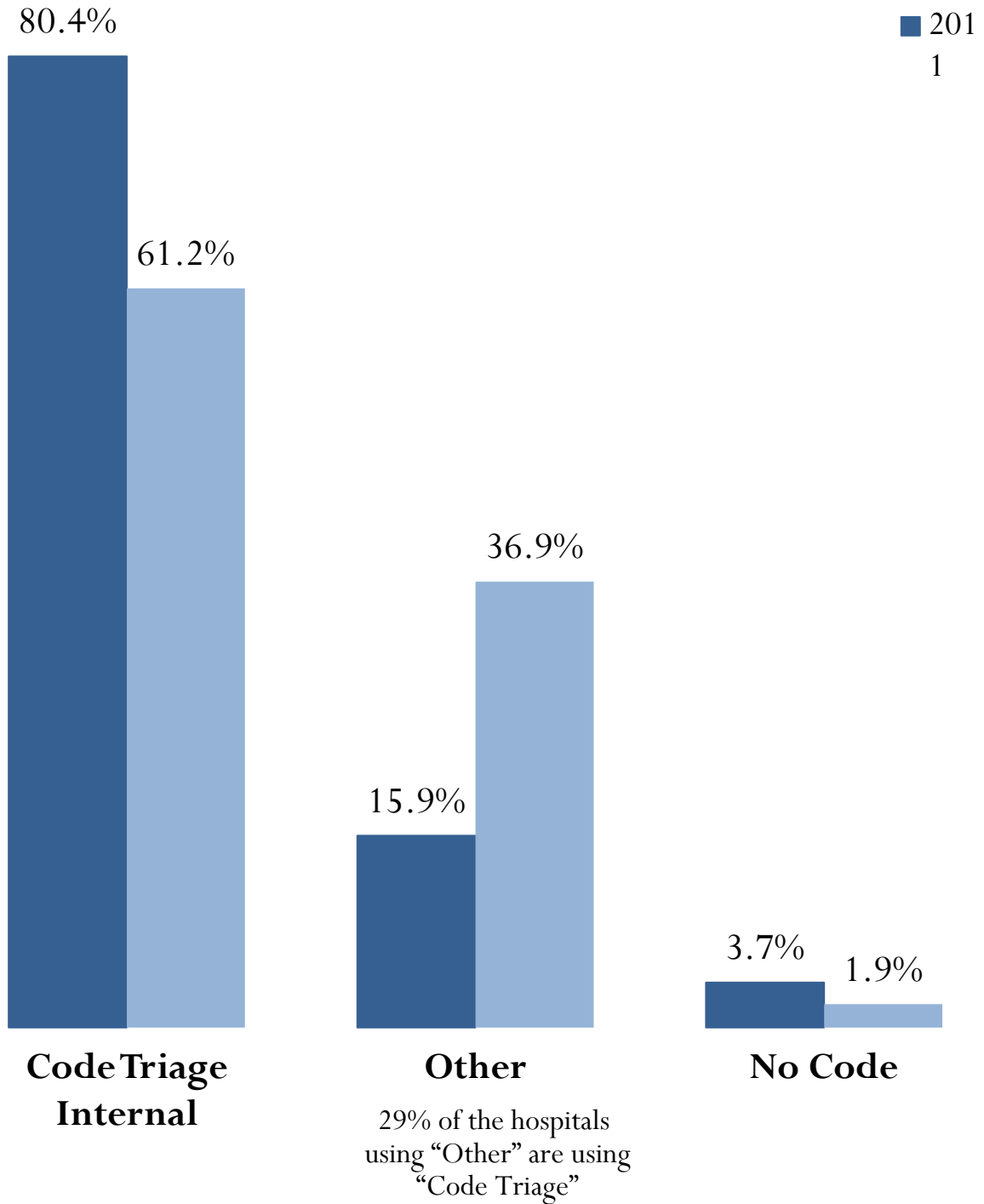
EMERGENCY ALERT

Other codes reported in use for emergency alert situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

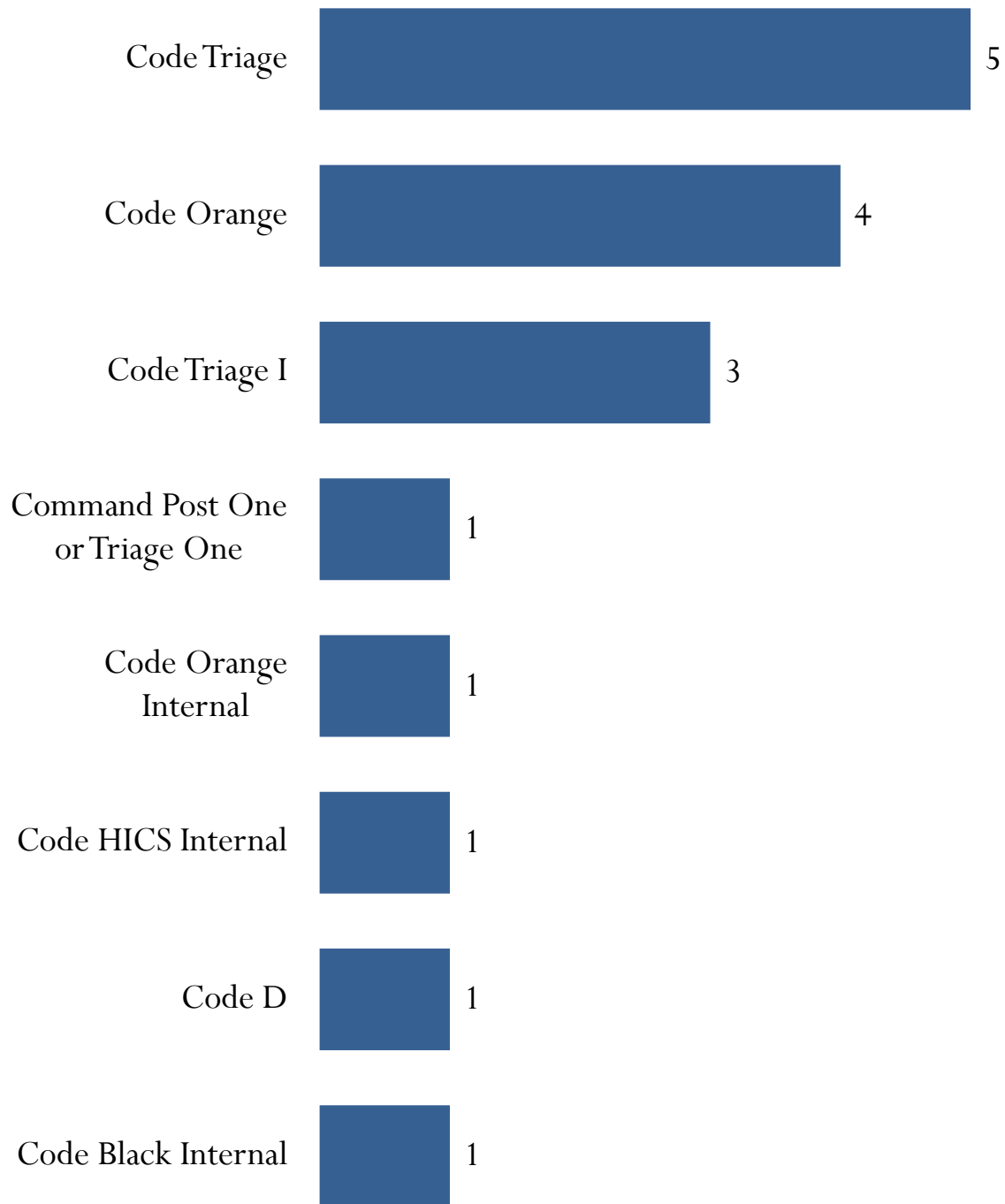
INTERNAL EMERGENCY



Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

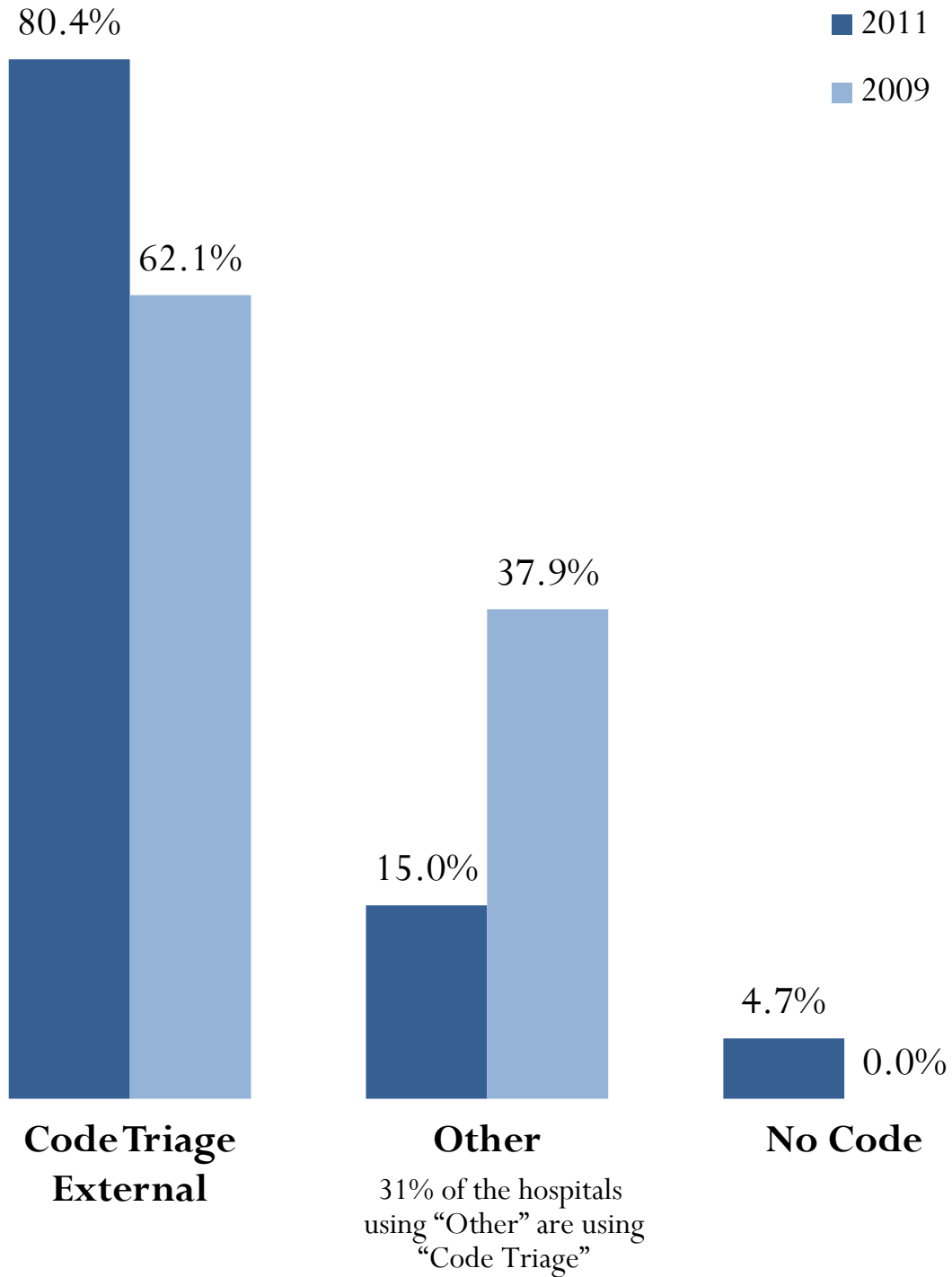
INTERNAL EMERGENCY

Other codes reported in use for internal emergency situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

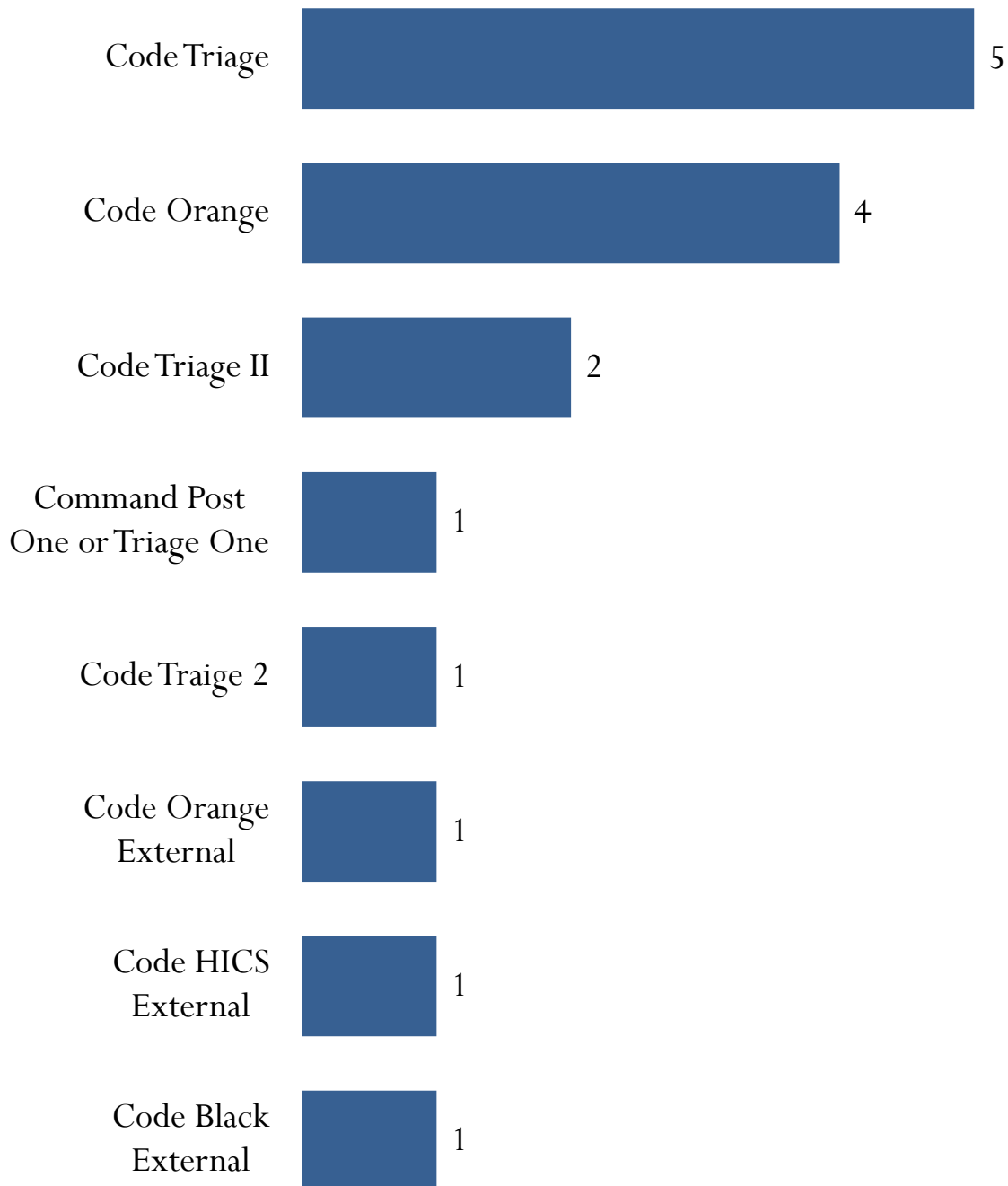
EXTERNAL EMERGENCY



Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC)

EXTERNAL EMERGENCY

Other codes reported in use for external emergency situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):

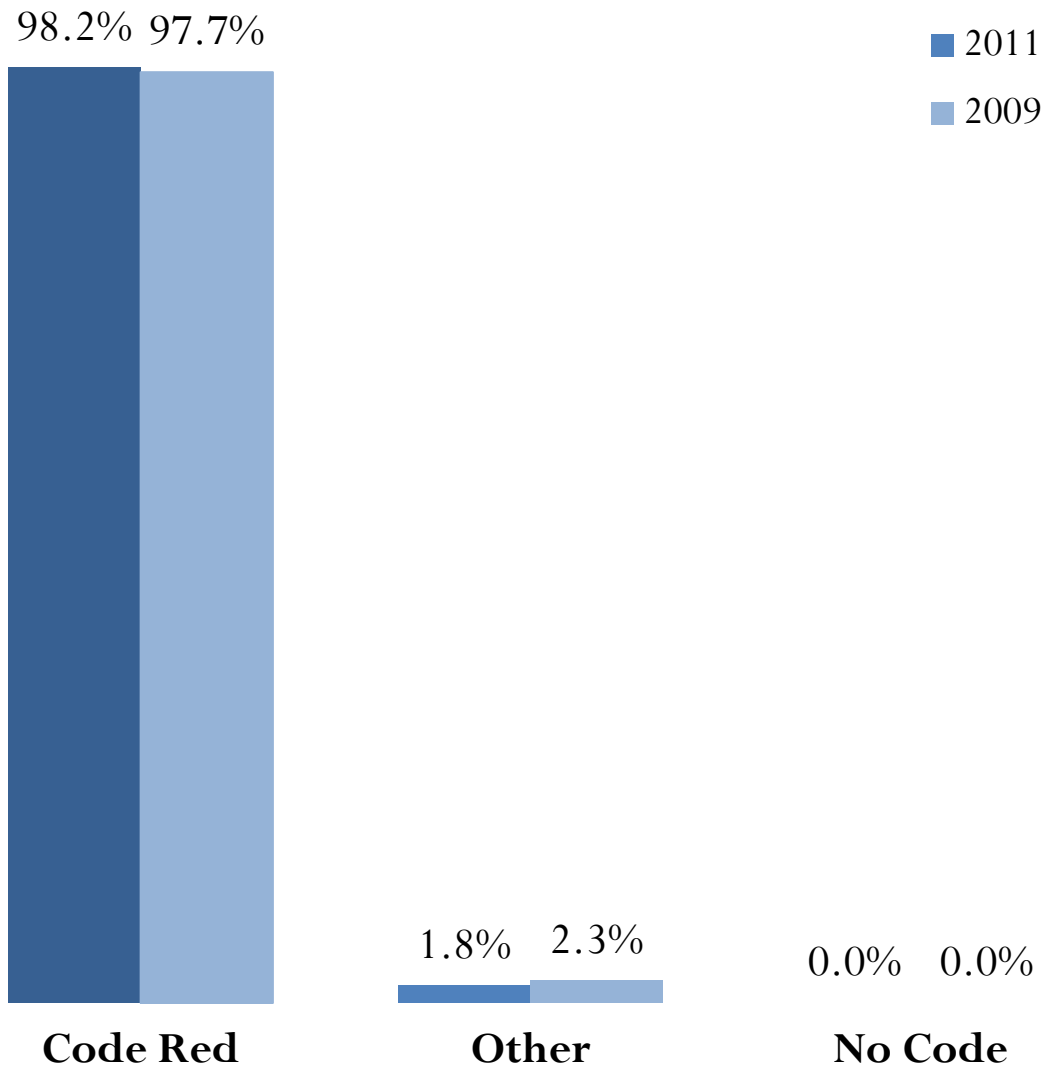


SECTION III:
**Hospital Council of
Northern and Central California
(HCNCC)**

109 HCNCC hospitals responded to the survey

Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

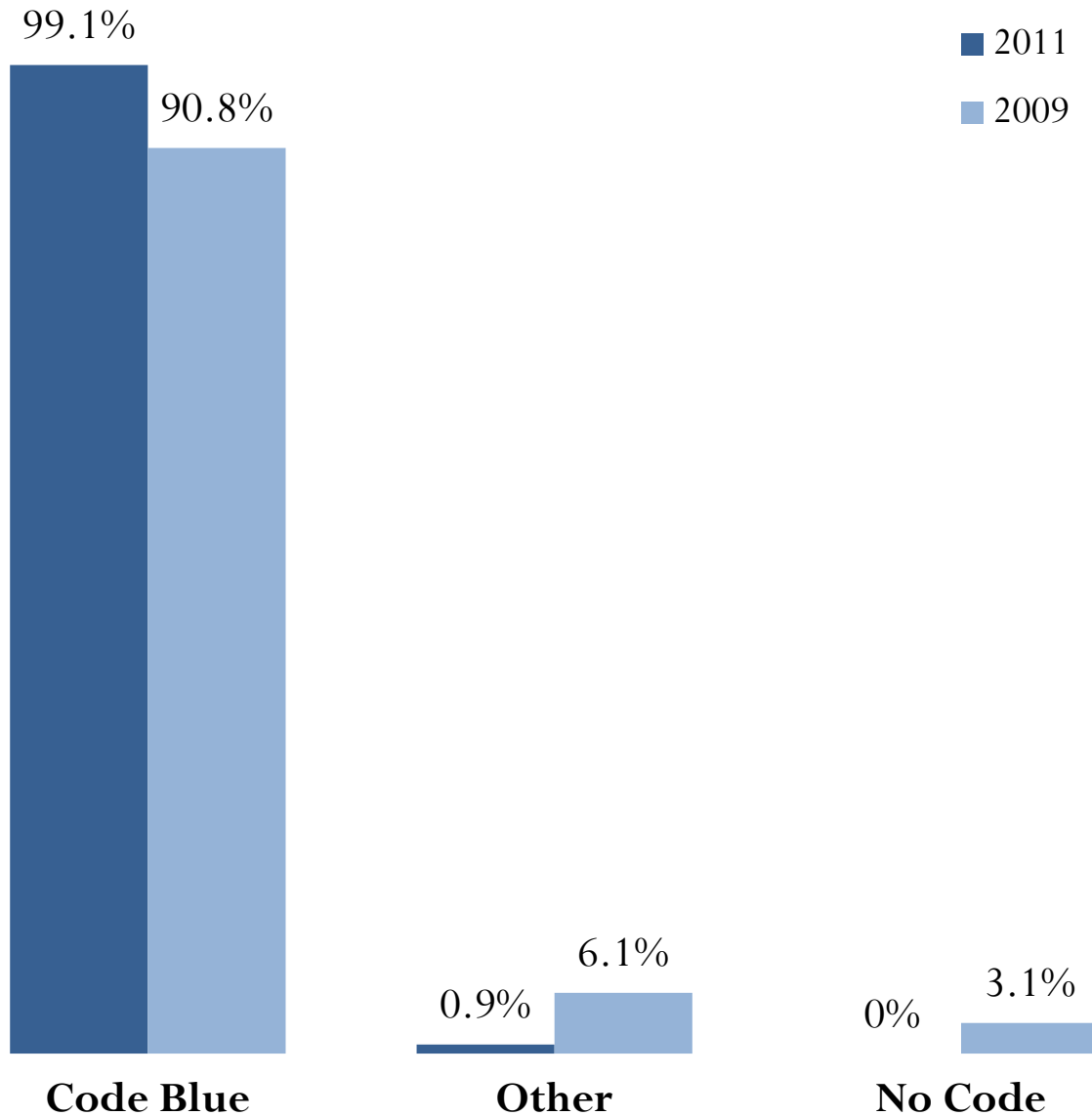
FIRE



Only one other code was reported on the survey for fire alerts: 2 hospitals reported use of Dr. Firestone.

Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

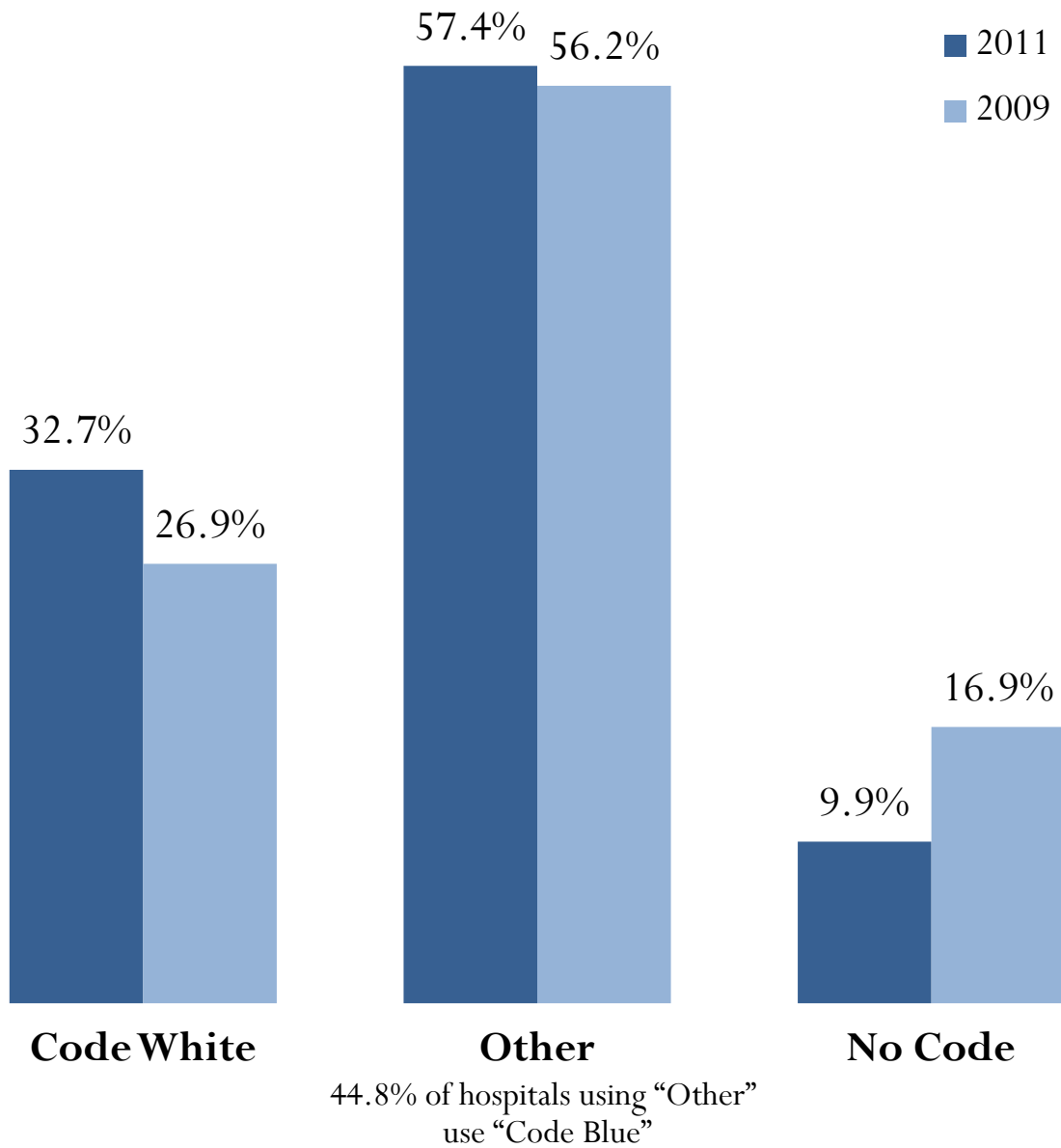
MEDICAL EMERGENCY - ADULT



Only one other code was reported on the survey for adult medical emergencies: 1 hospital reported use of CODE 99

Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

MEDICAL EMERGENCY - PEDIATRIC

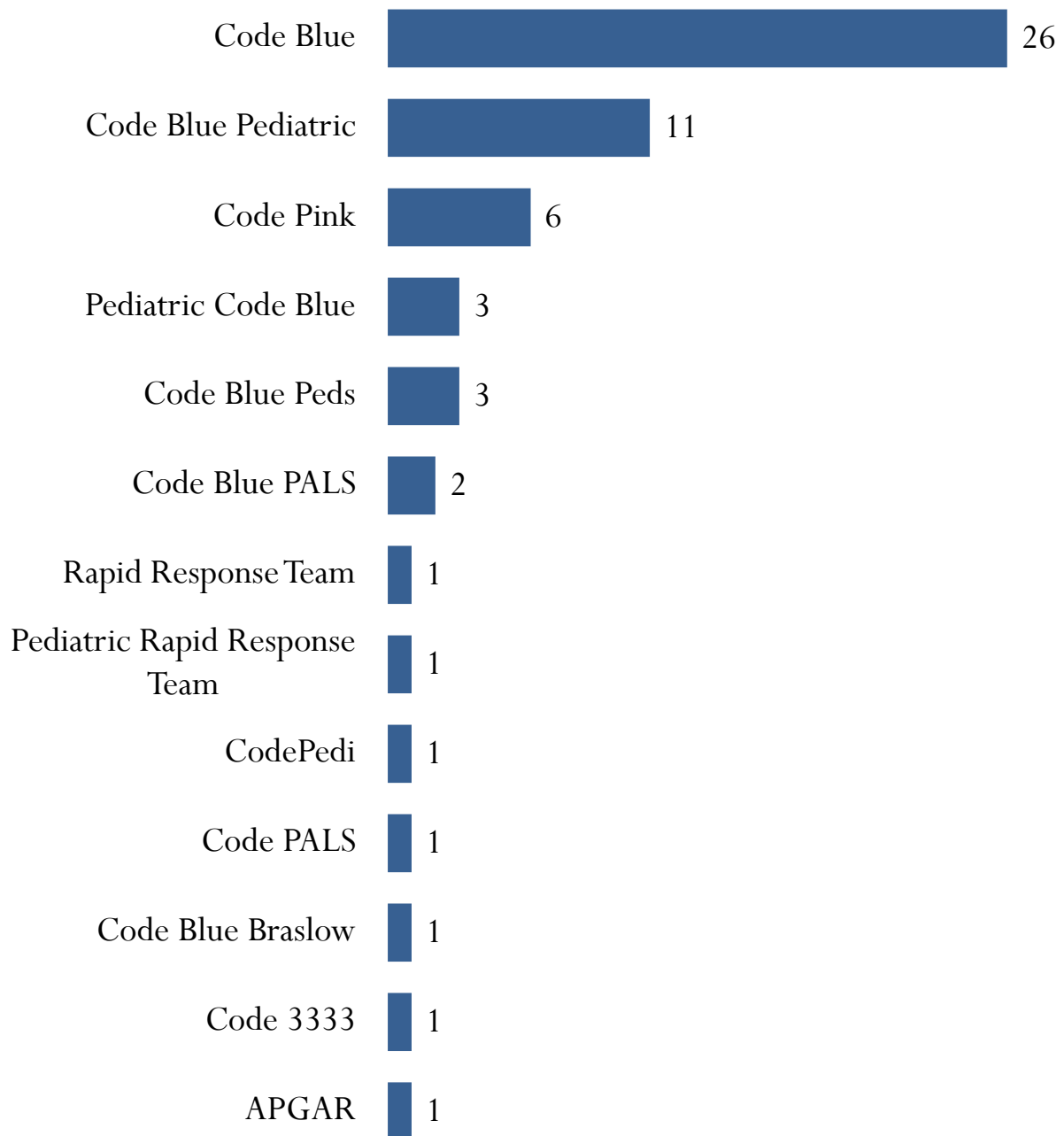


Non-applicable survey responses have been excluded from this category.

Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

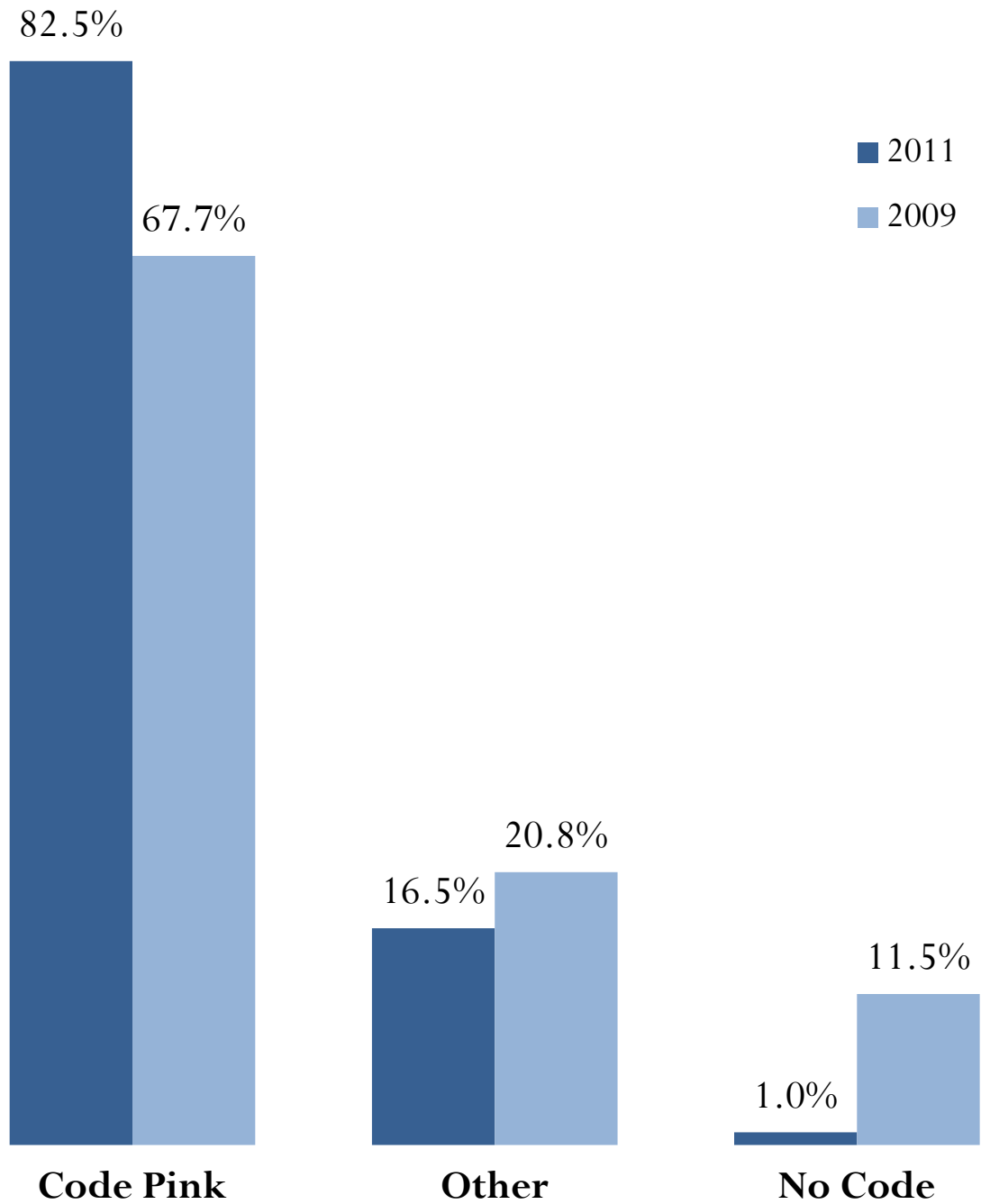
MEDICAL EMERGENCY - PEDIATRIC

Other codes reported in use for pediatric medical emergency situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

INFANT ABDUCTION

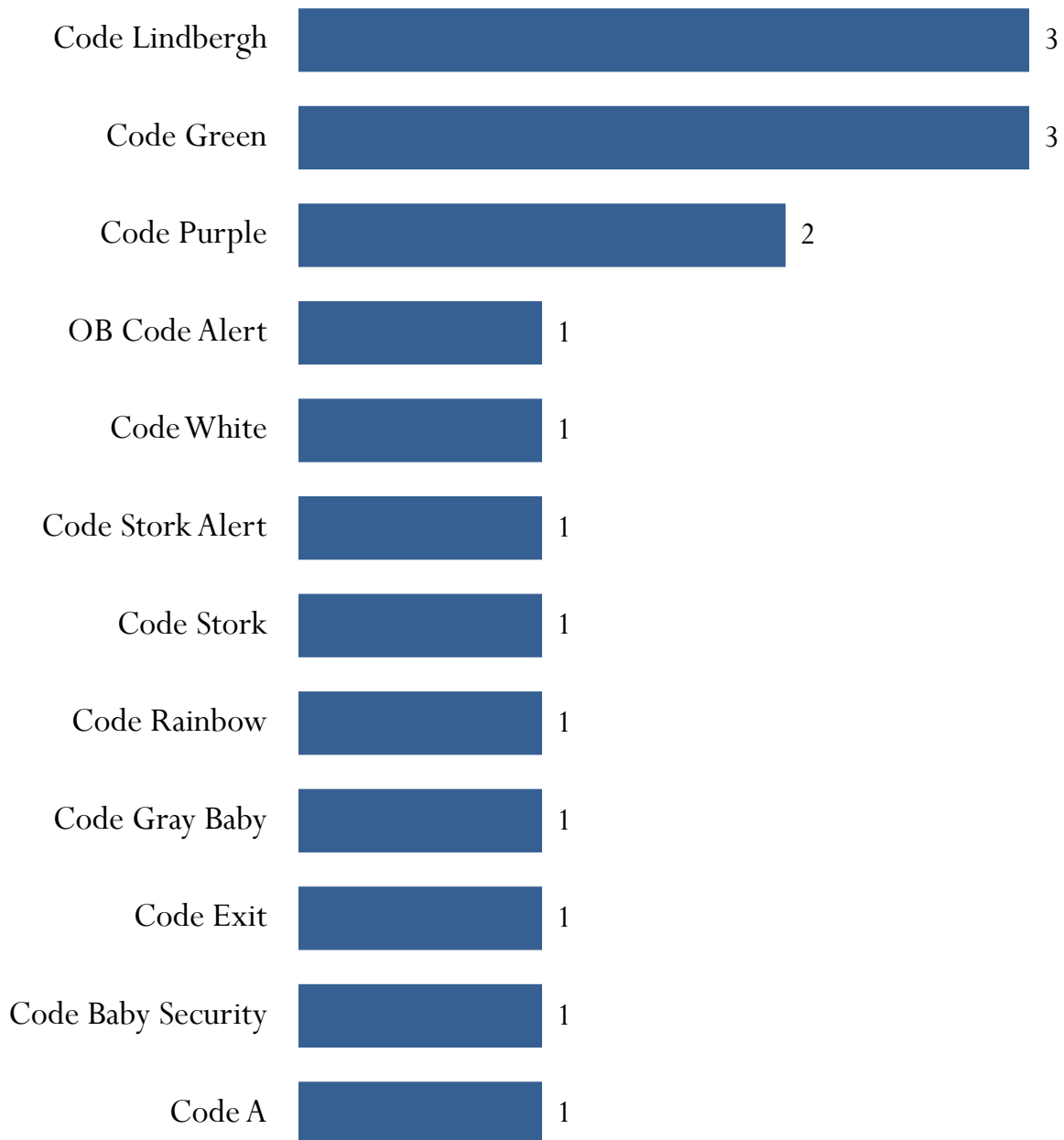


Non-applicable survey responses have been excluded from this category.

Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

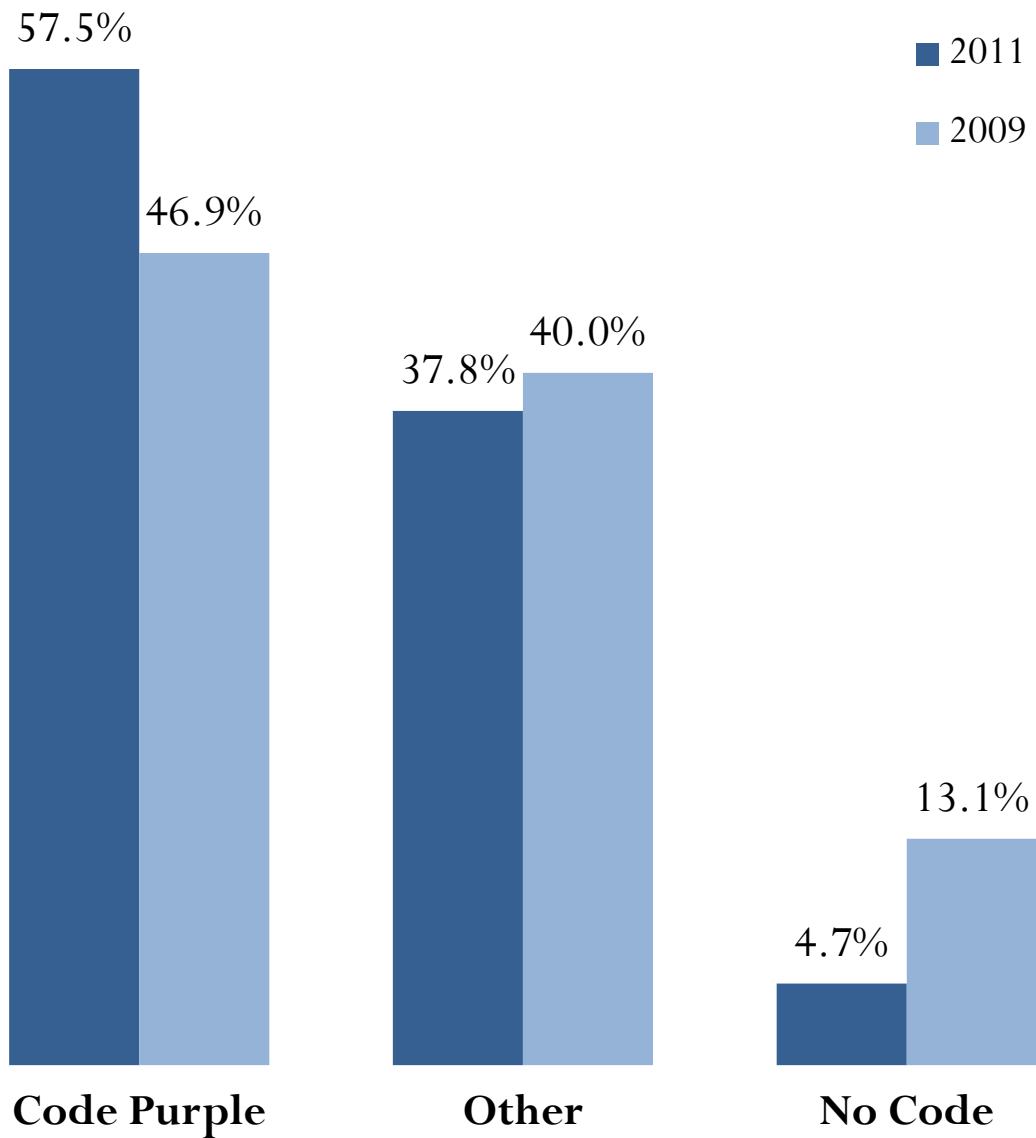
INFANT ABDUCTION

Other codes reported in use for infant abduction situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

CHILD ABDUCTION



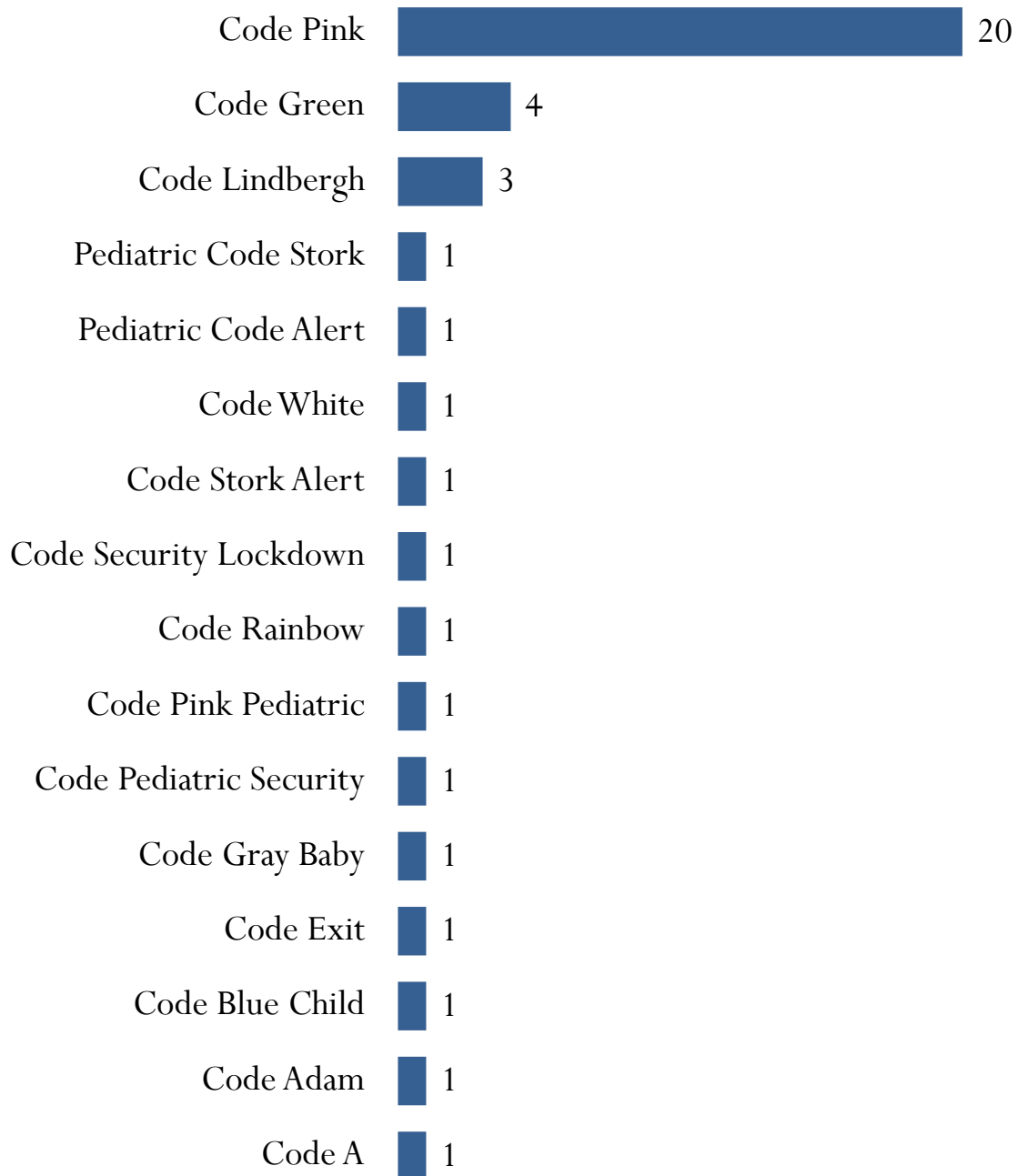
50% of hospitals using "Other" use "Code Pink"

Non-applicable survey responses have been excluded from this category.

Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

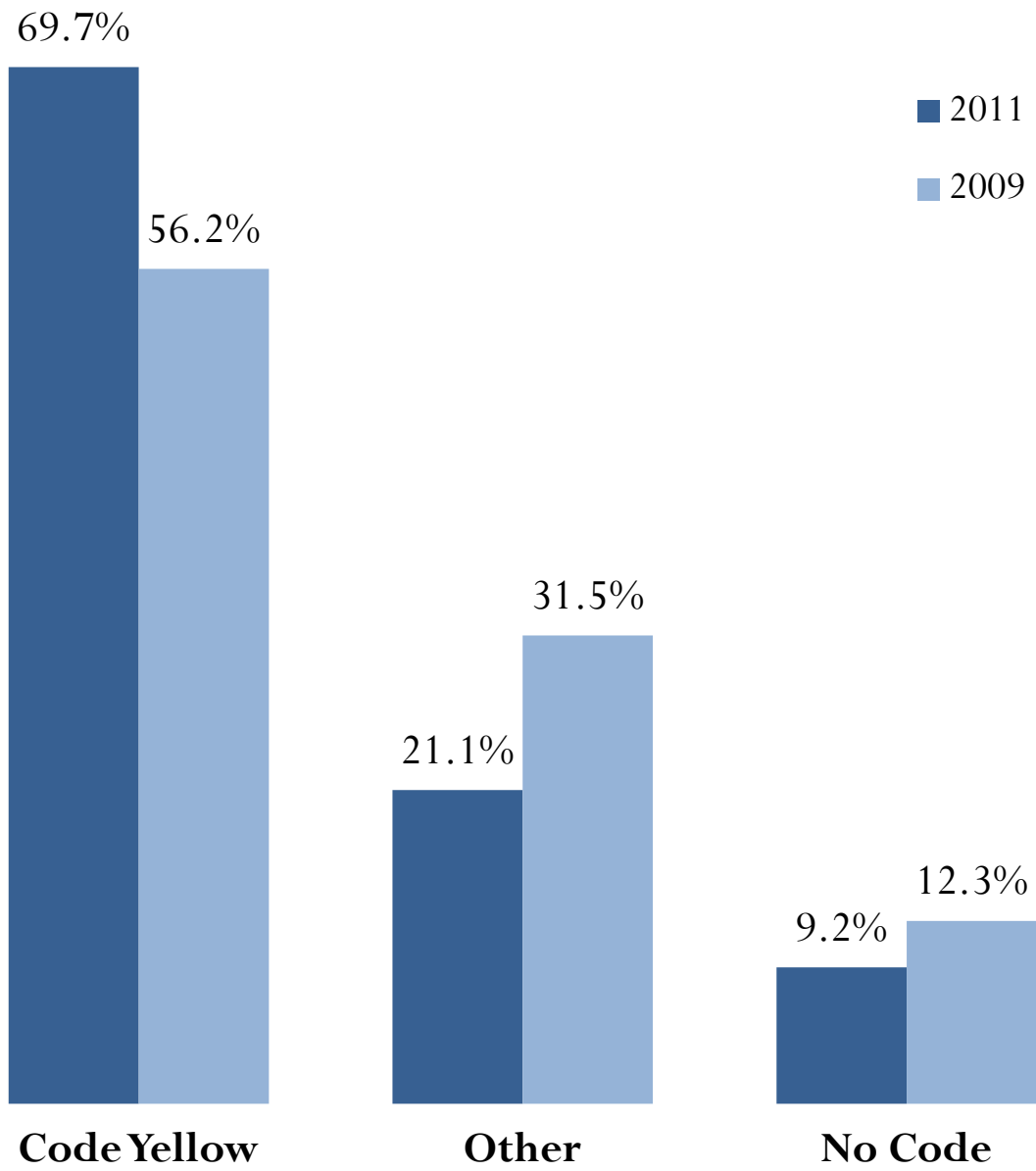
CHILD ABDUCTION

Other codes reported in use for child abduction situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

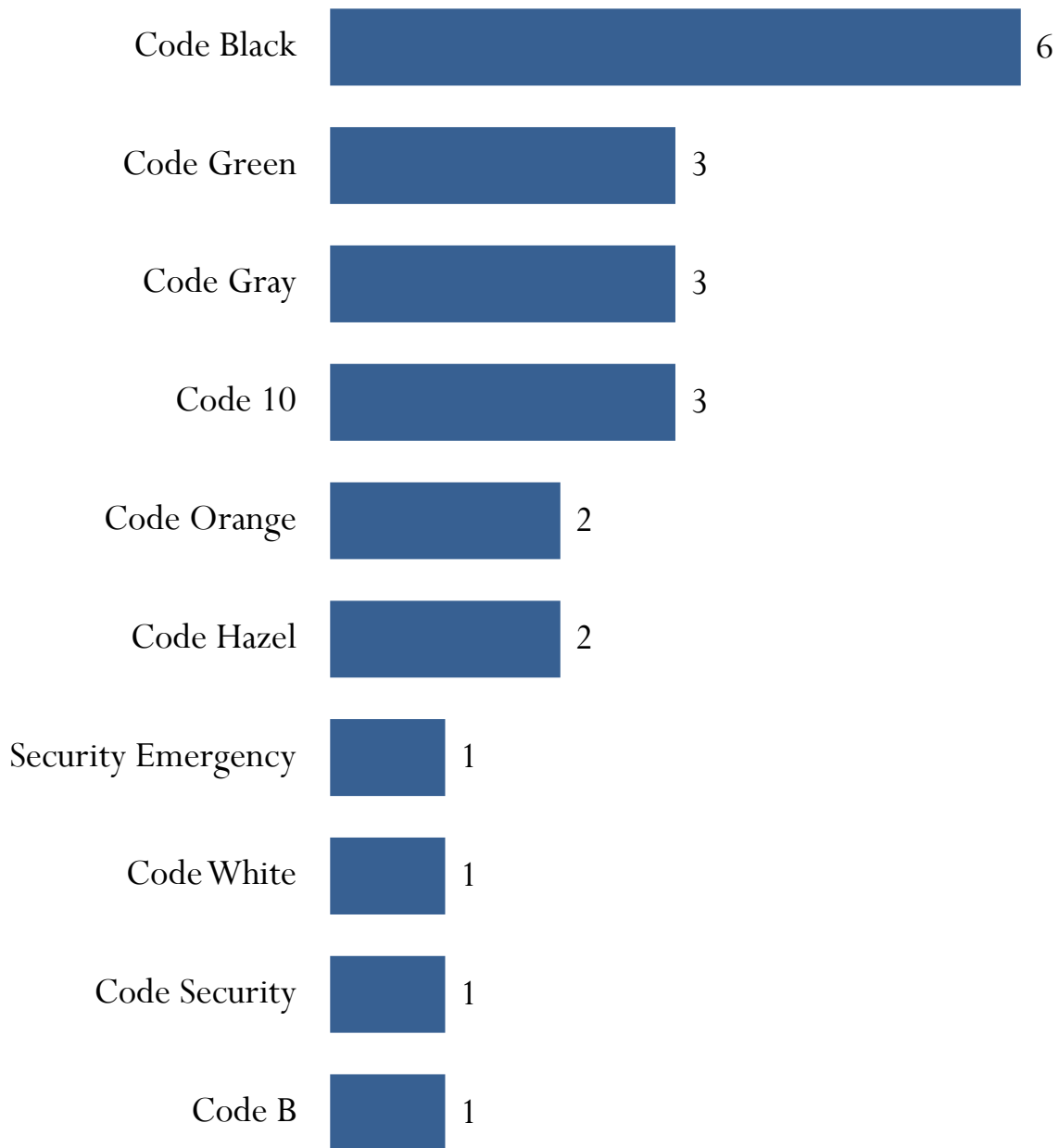
BOMB THREAT



Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

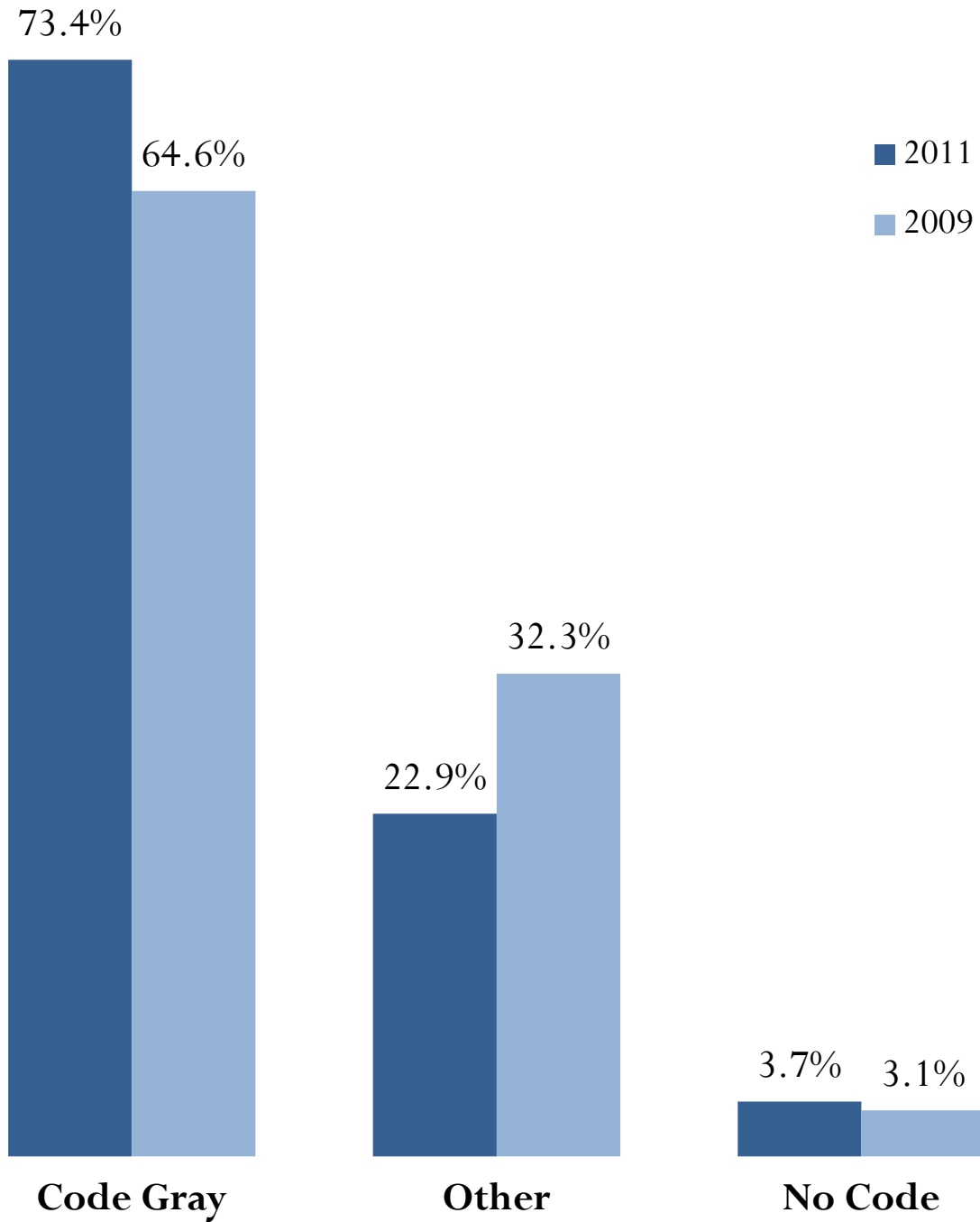
BOMB THREAT

Other codes reported in use for bomb threat situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

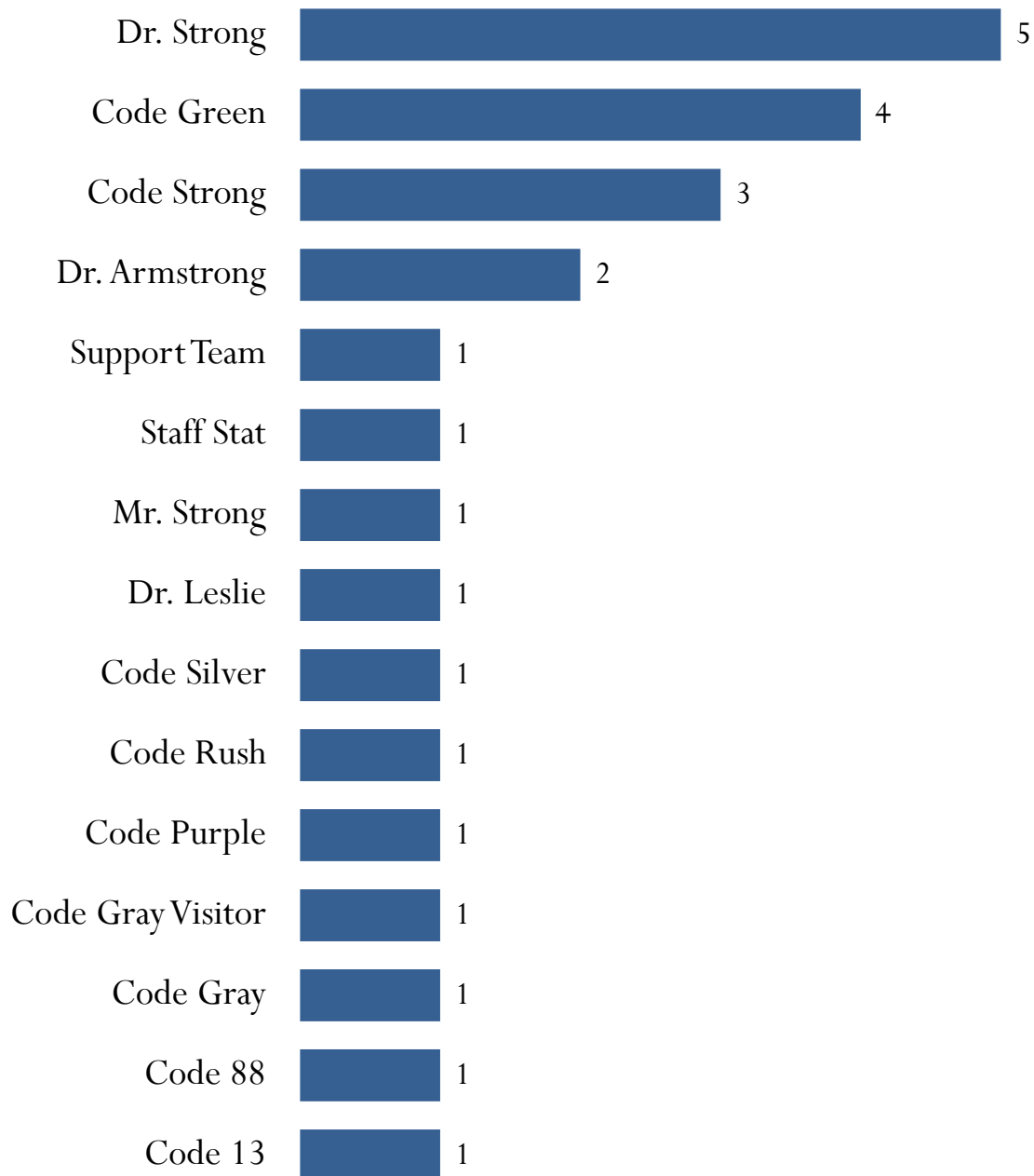
COMBATIVE PERSON



Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

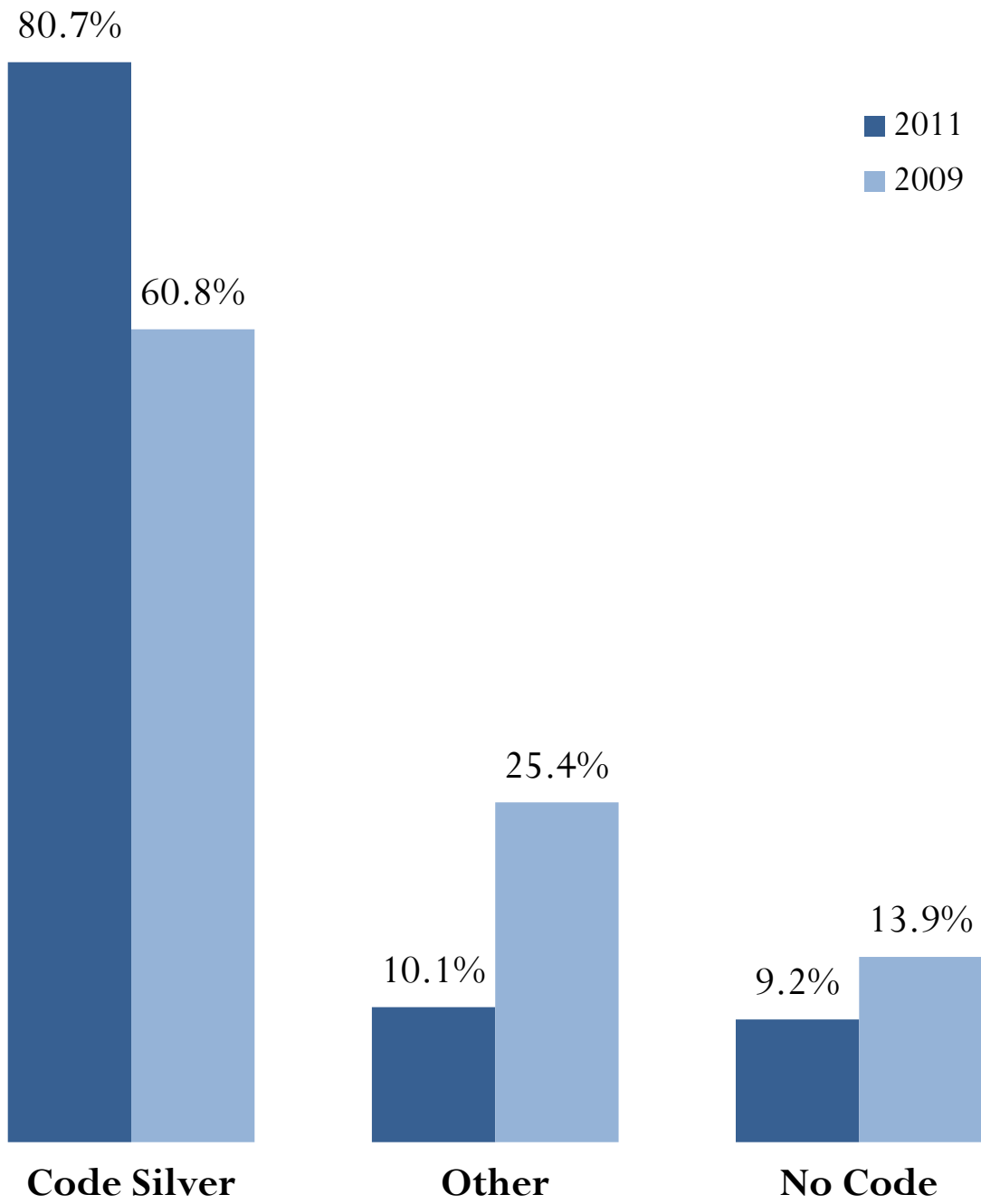
COMBATIVE PERSON

Other codes reported in use for situations involving a combative person (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

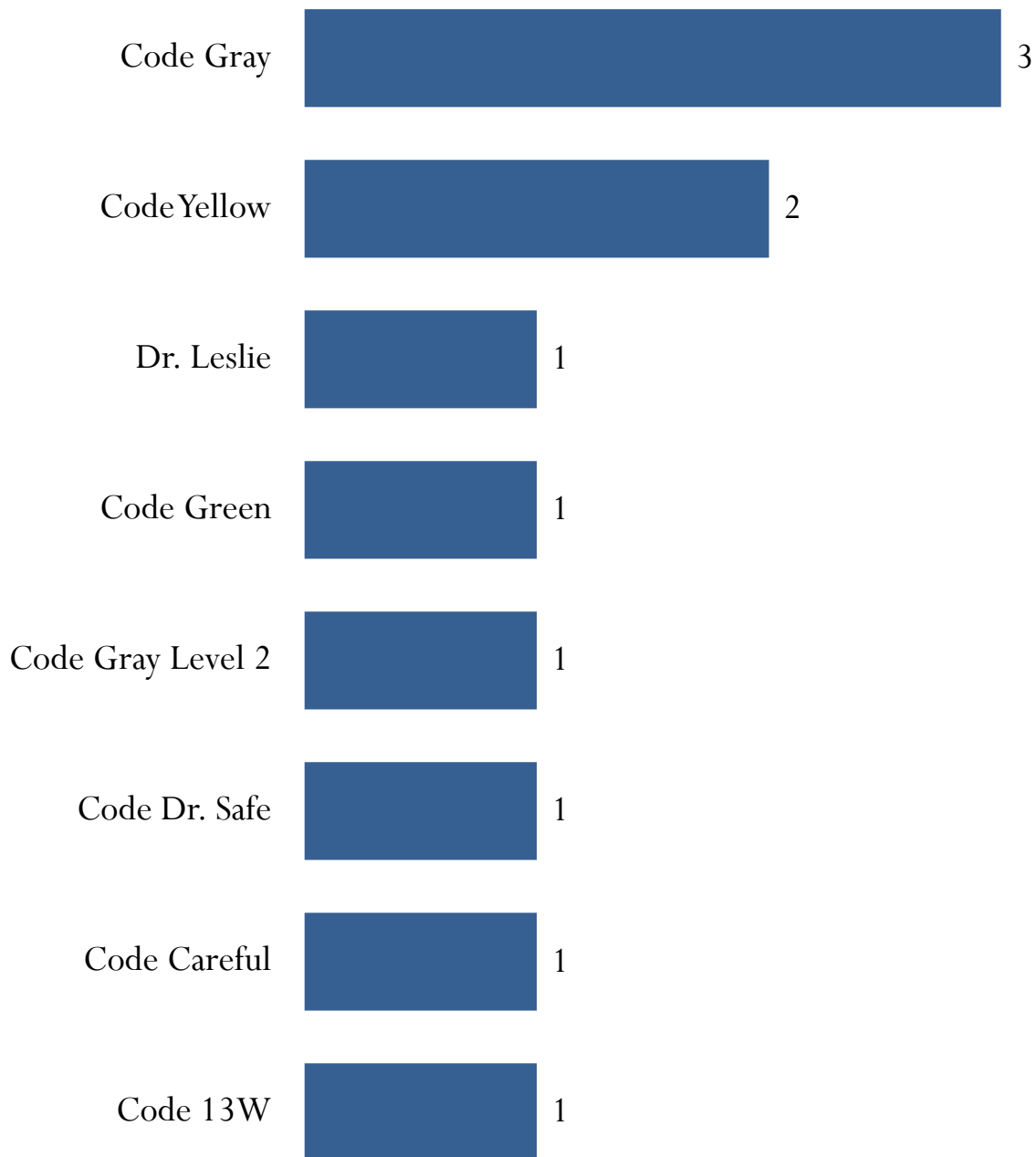
PERSON WITH A WEAPON and/or ACTIVE SHOOTER and/or HOSTAGE SITUATION



Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

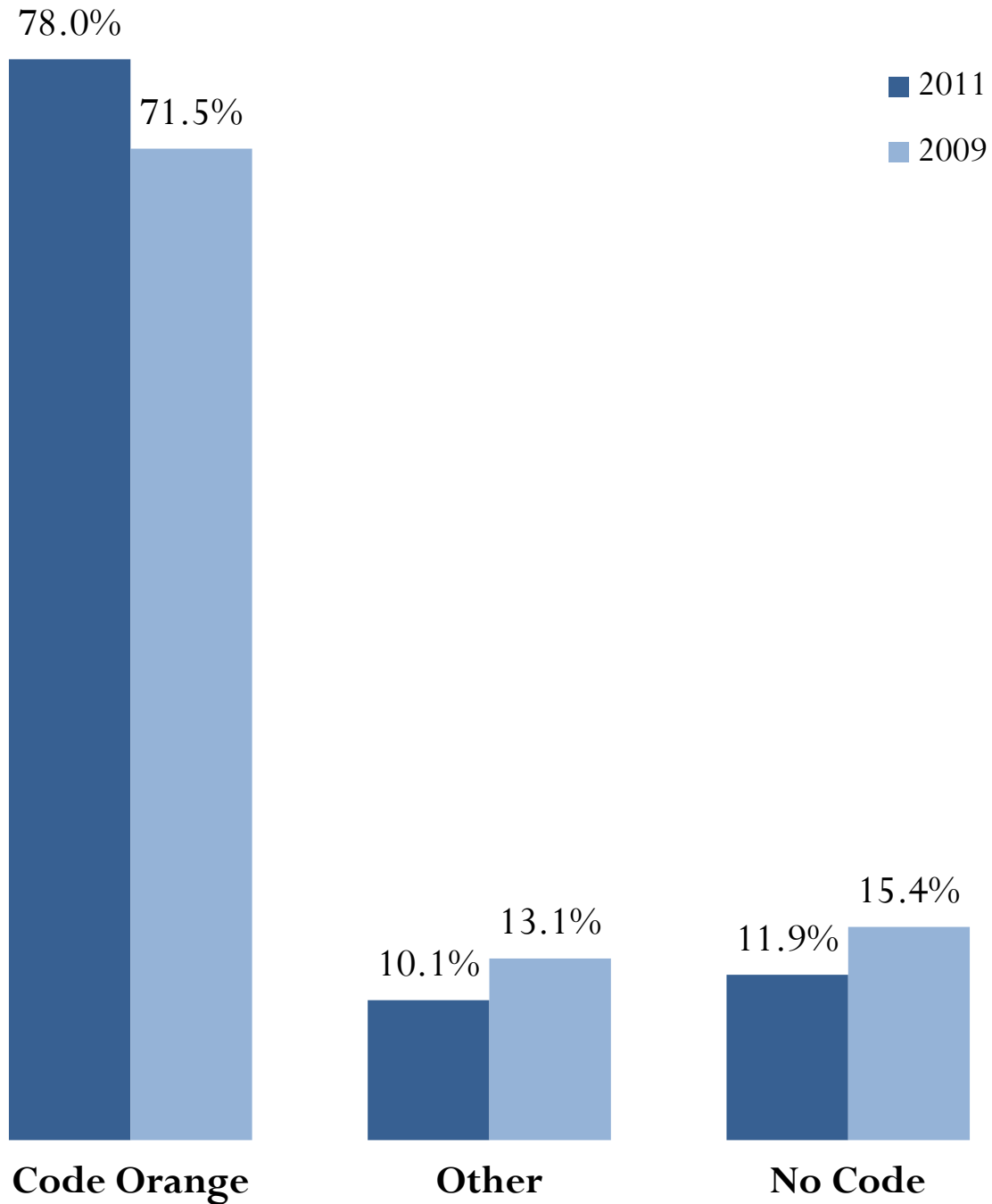
PERSON WITH A WEAPON and/or ACTIVE SHOOTER and/or HOSTAGE SITUATION

Other codes reported in use in person with a weapon/hostage situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

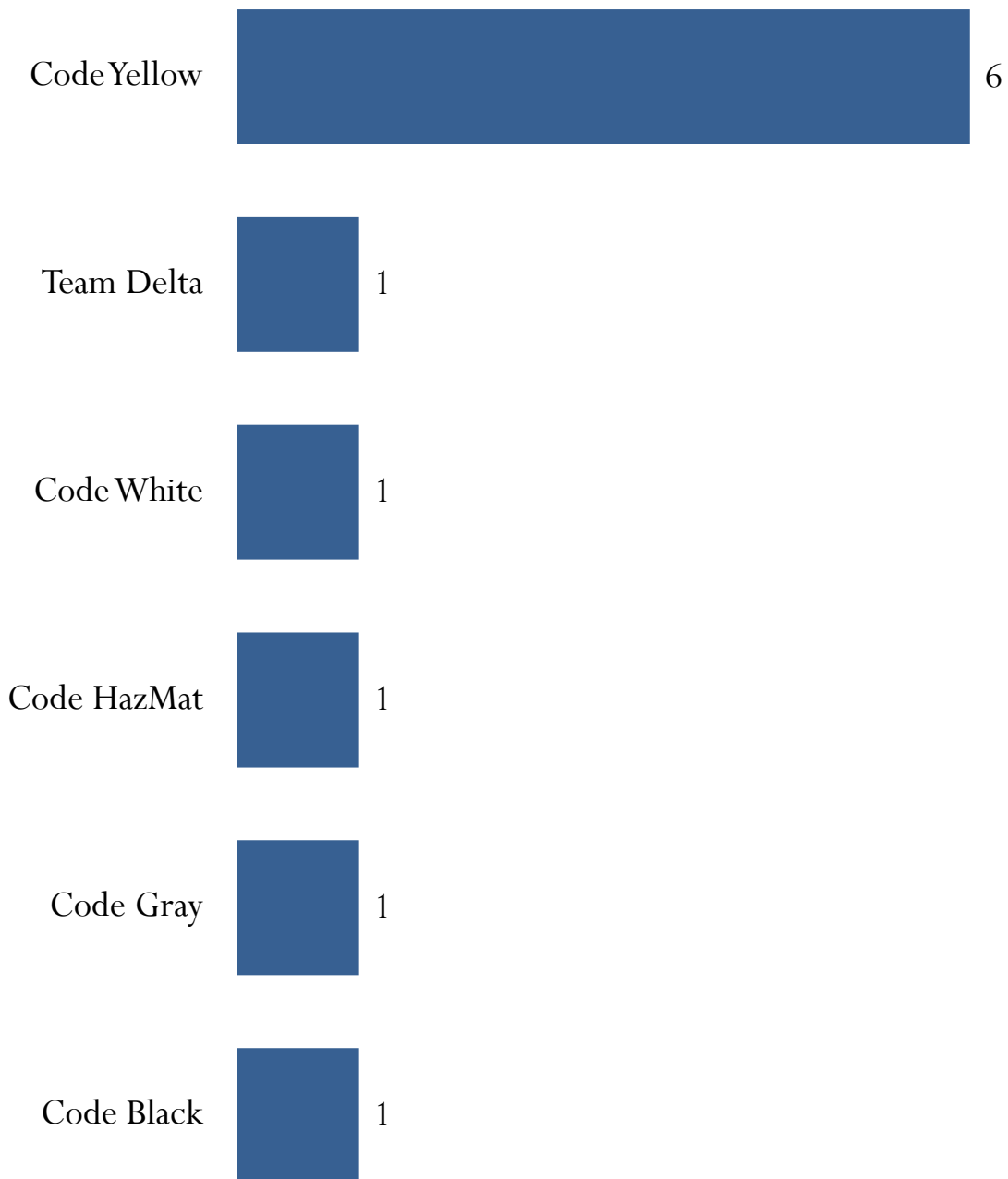
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SPILL



Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

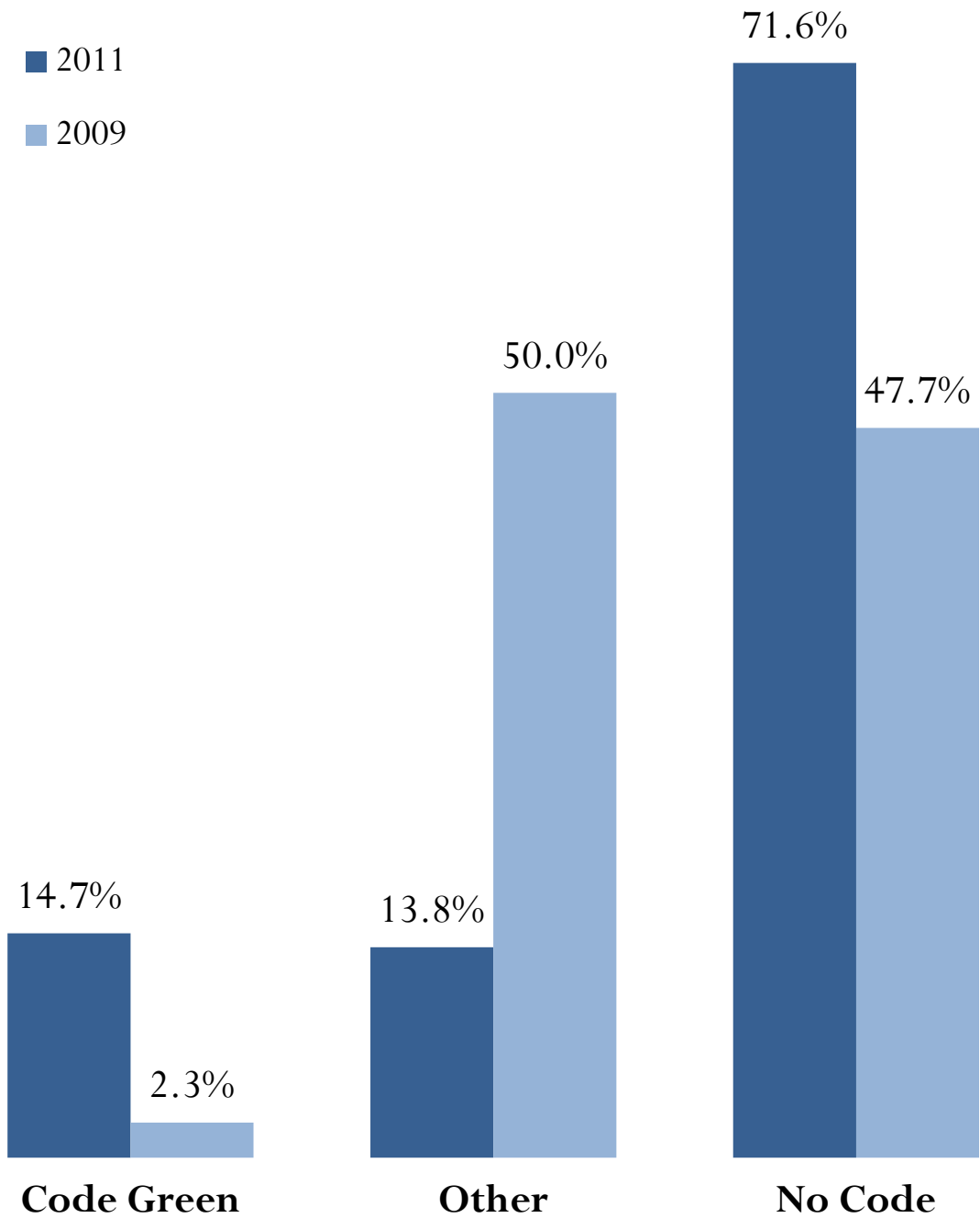
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SPILL

Other codes reported in use for hazardous material spill situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

PATIENT ELOPEMENT

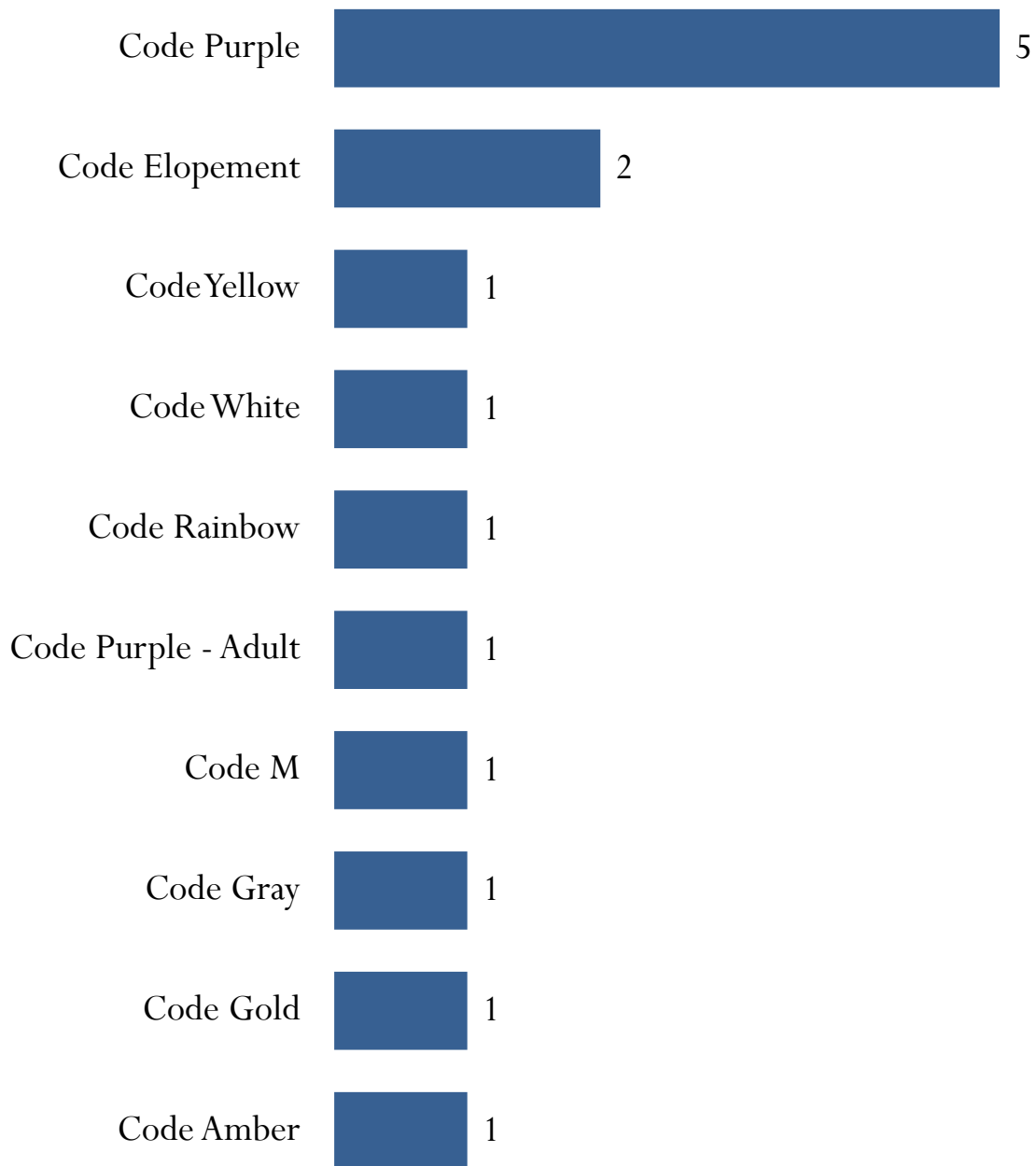


Code Green was added in 2009

Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

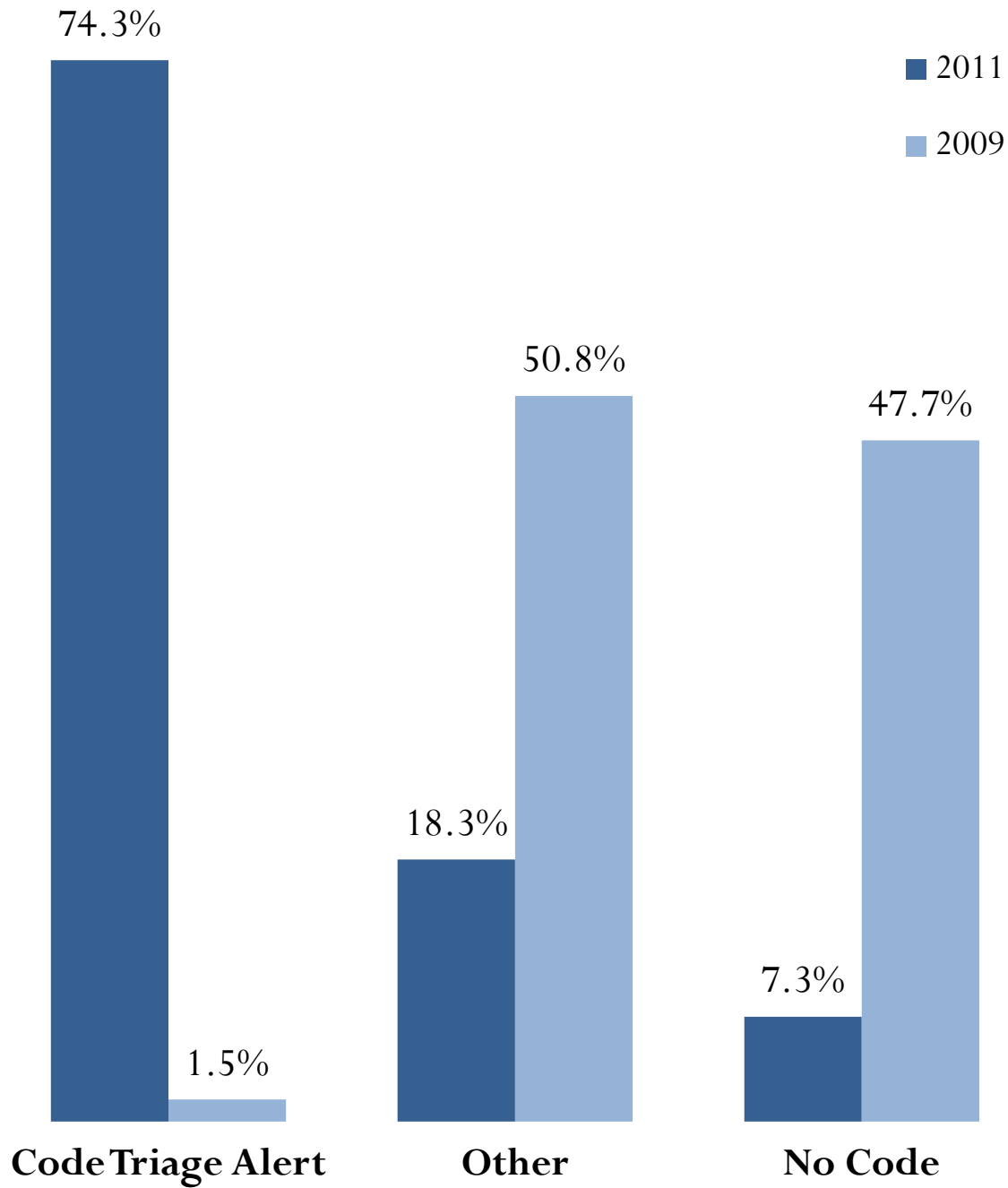
PATIENT ELOPEMENT

Other codes reported in use for patient elopement situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

EMERGENCY ALERT

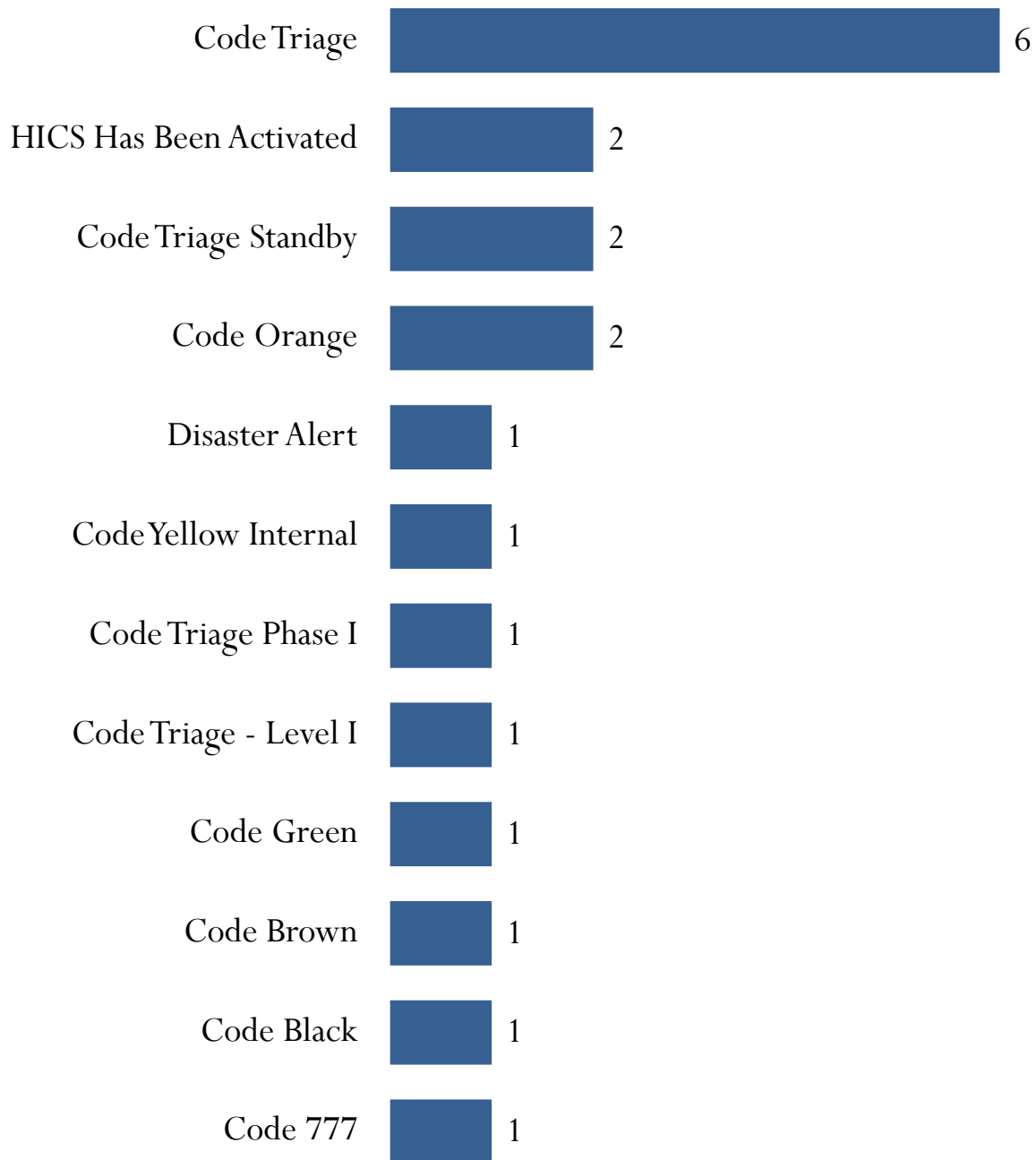


Code Triage Alert was added in 2009

Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

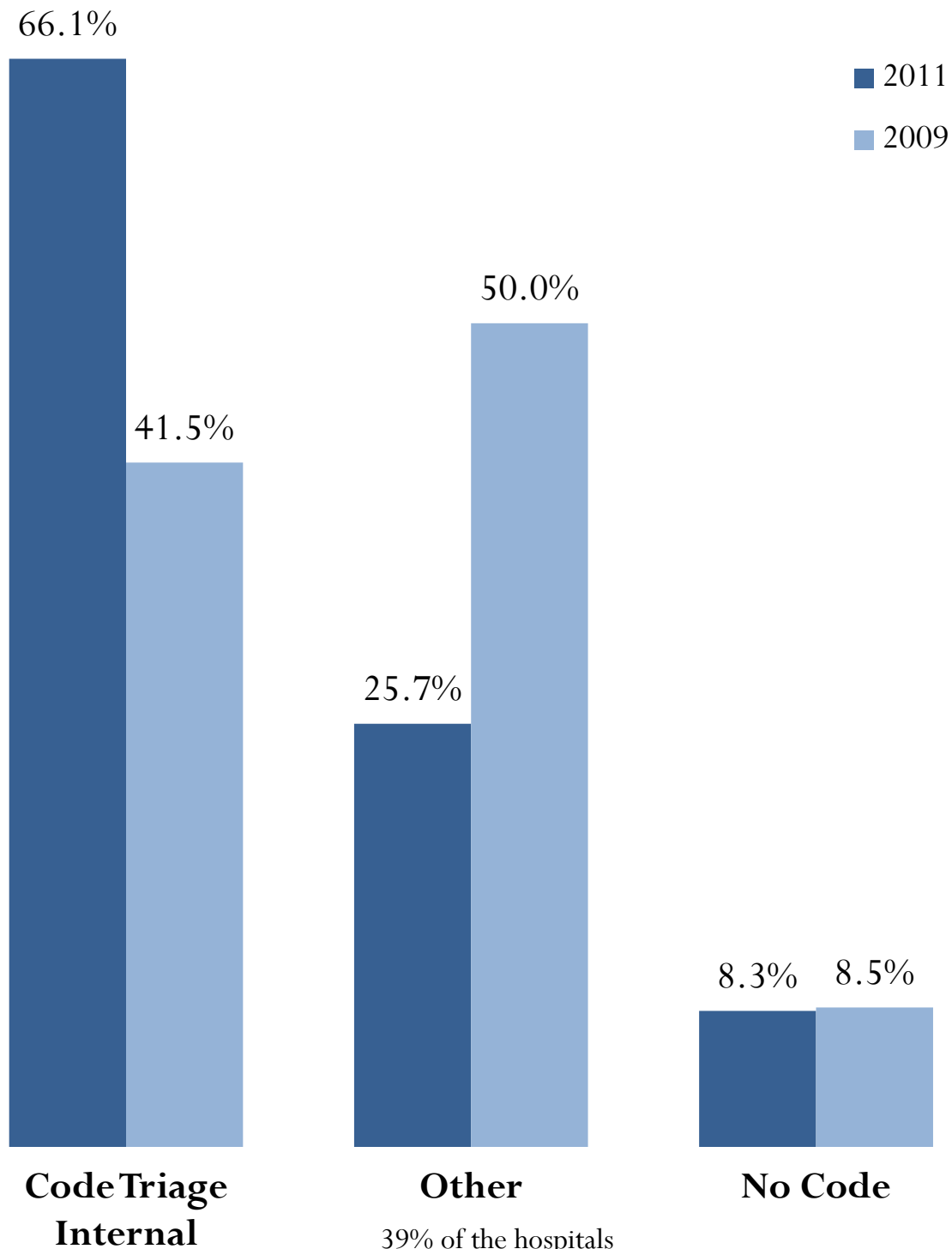
EMERGENCY ALERT

Other codes reported in use for hazardous material spill situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

INTERNAL EMERGENCY

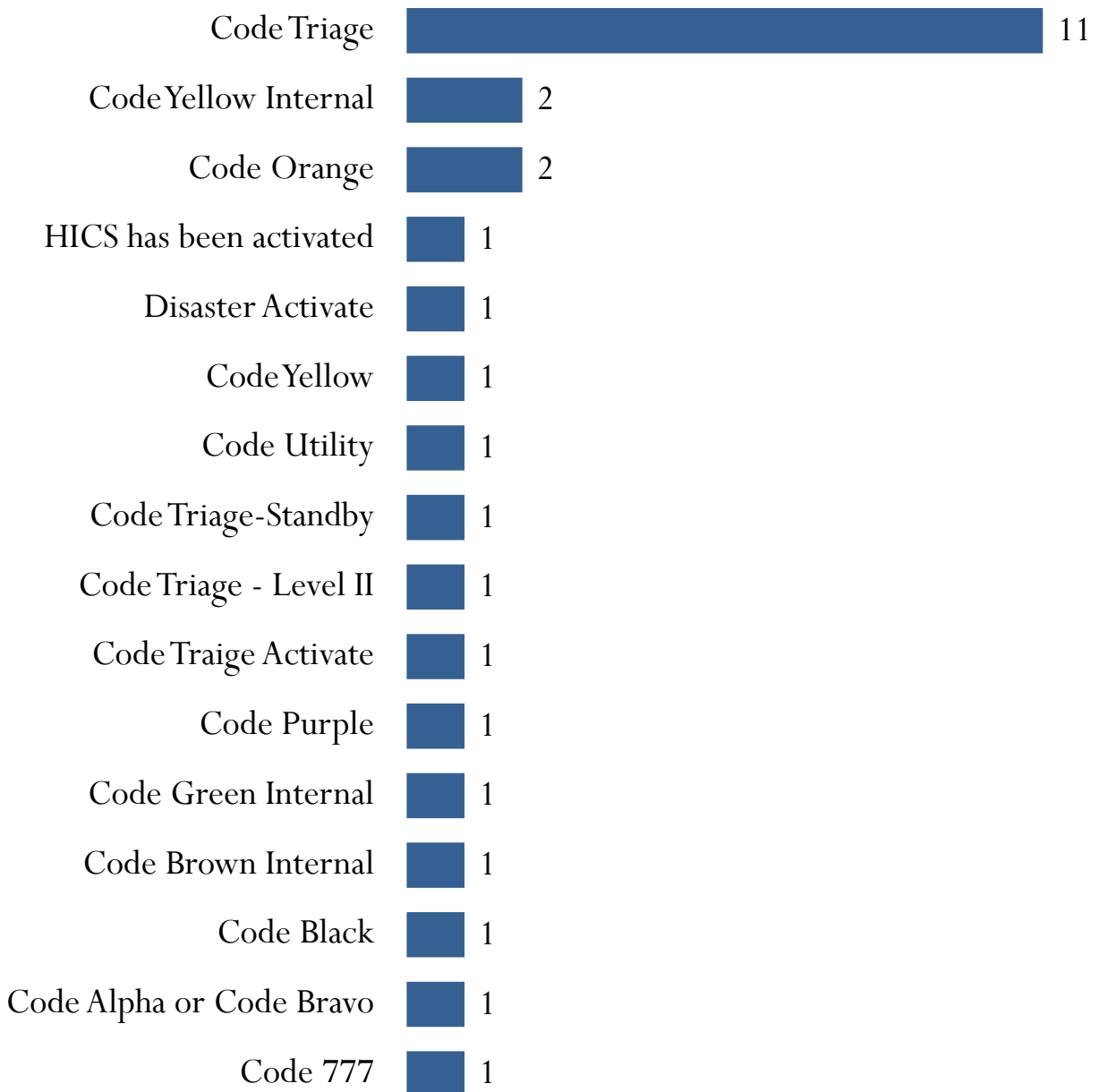


39% of the hospitals using "Other" are using "Code Triage"

Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

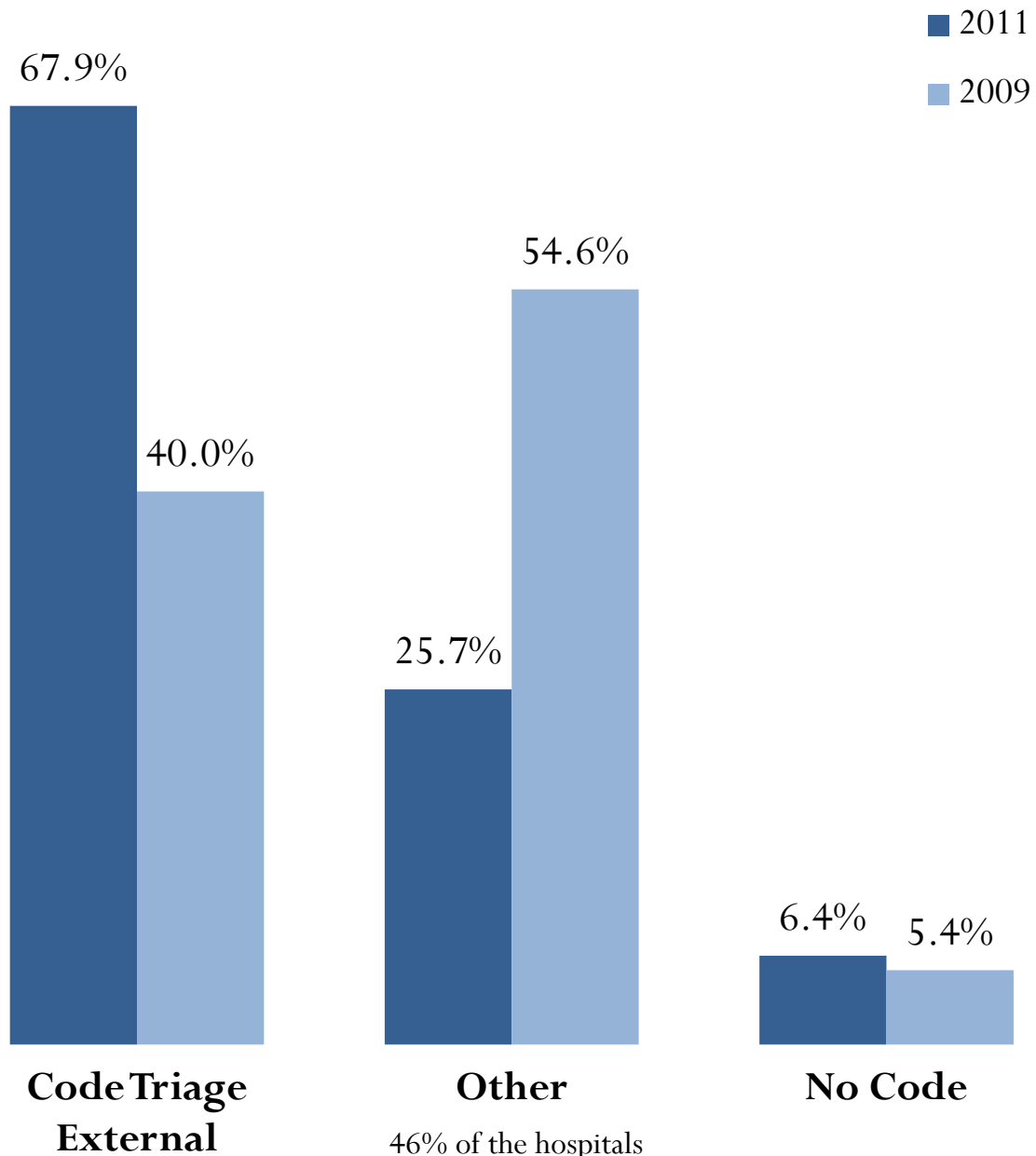
INTERNAL EMERGENCY

Other codes reported in use for internal emergency situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

EXTERNAL EMERGENCY

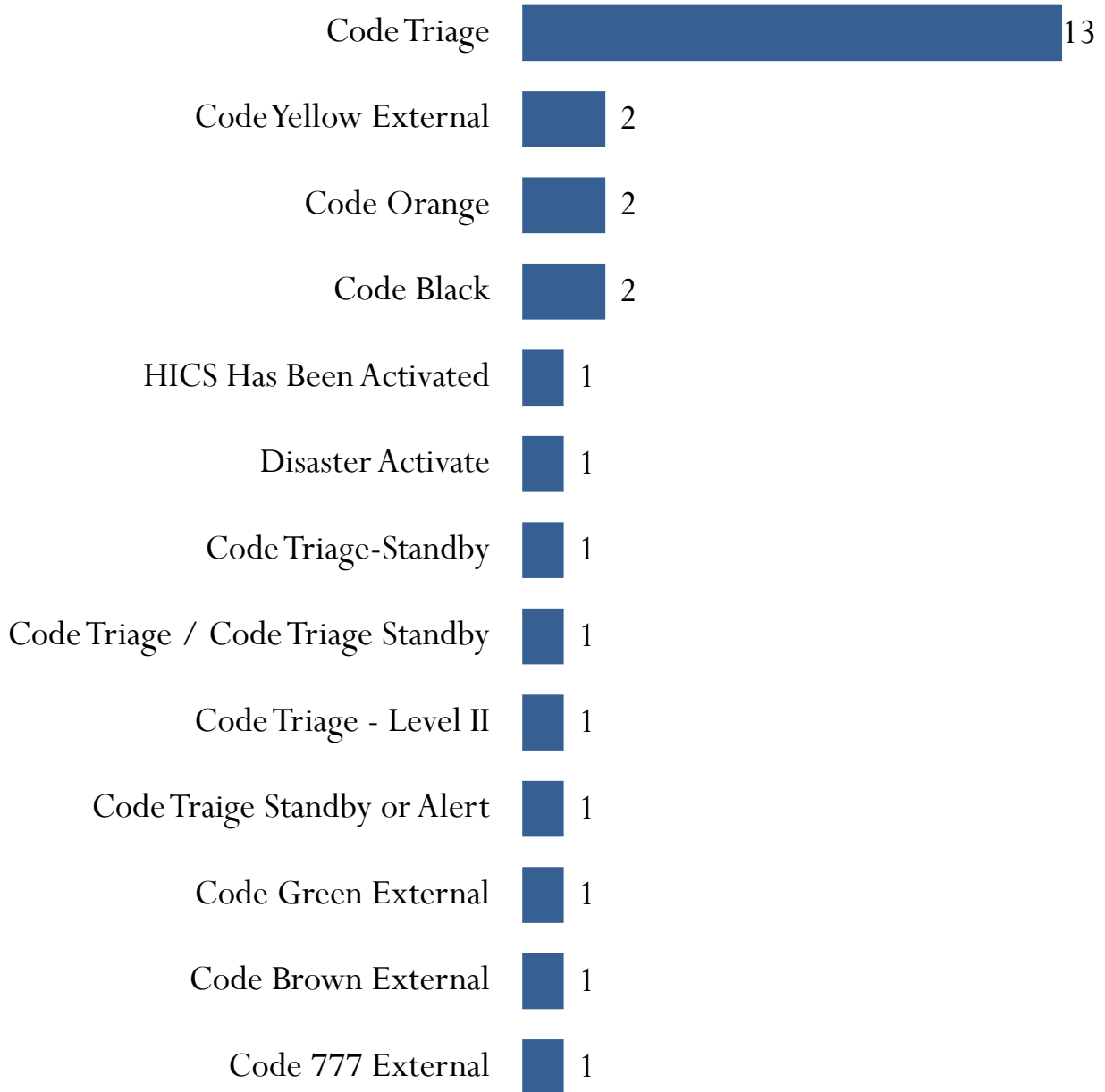


46% of the hospitals using "Other" are using "Code Triage"

Hospital Council of Northern and Central California (HCNCC)

EXTERNAL EMERGENCY

Other codes reported in use for external emergency situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):

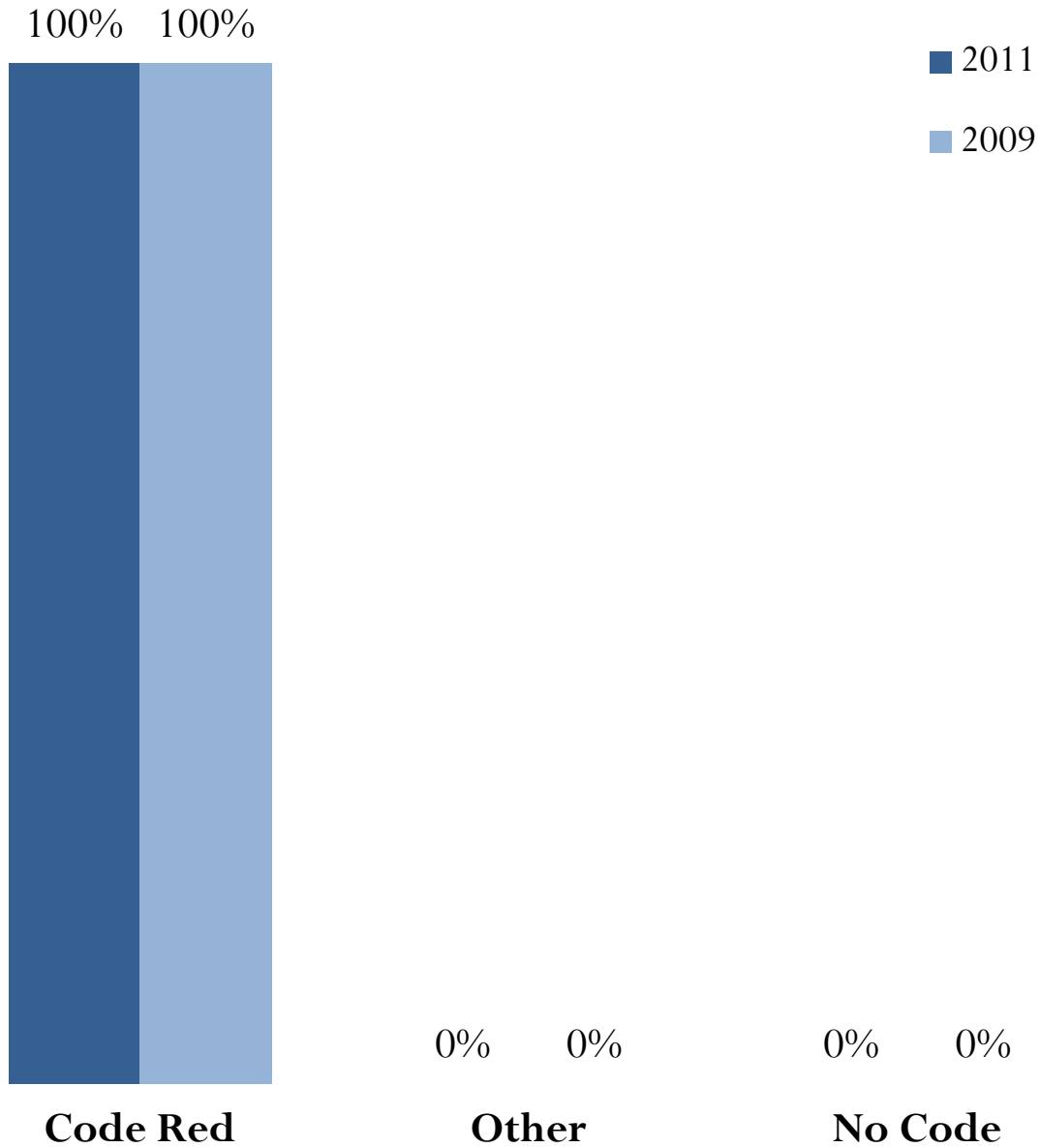


SECTION IV:
**Hospital Association of San Diego
and Imperial Counties
(HASDIC)**

24 HASDIC hospitals responded to the survey

Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

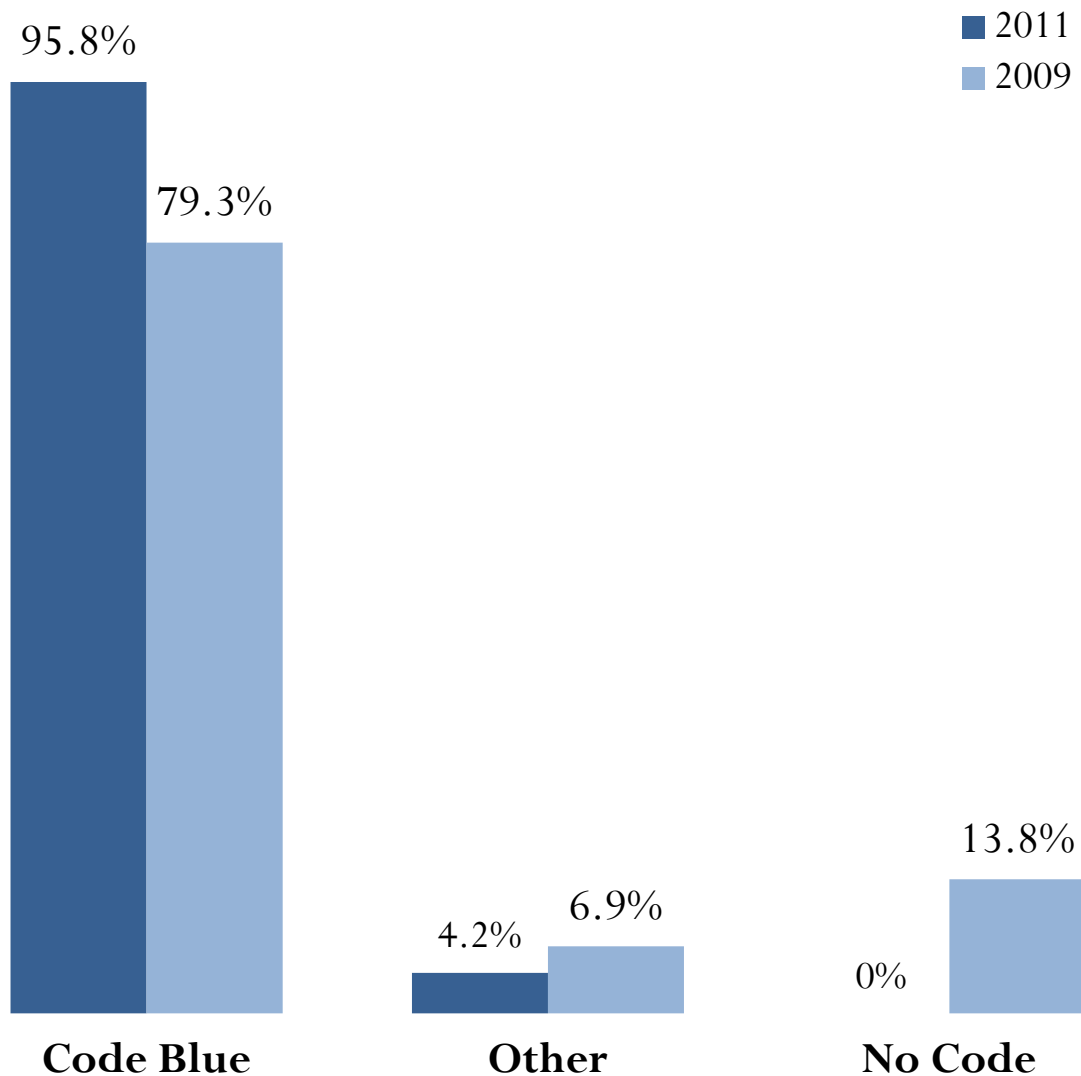
FIRE



No other codes were reported in use for fire alerts

Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

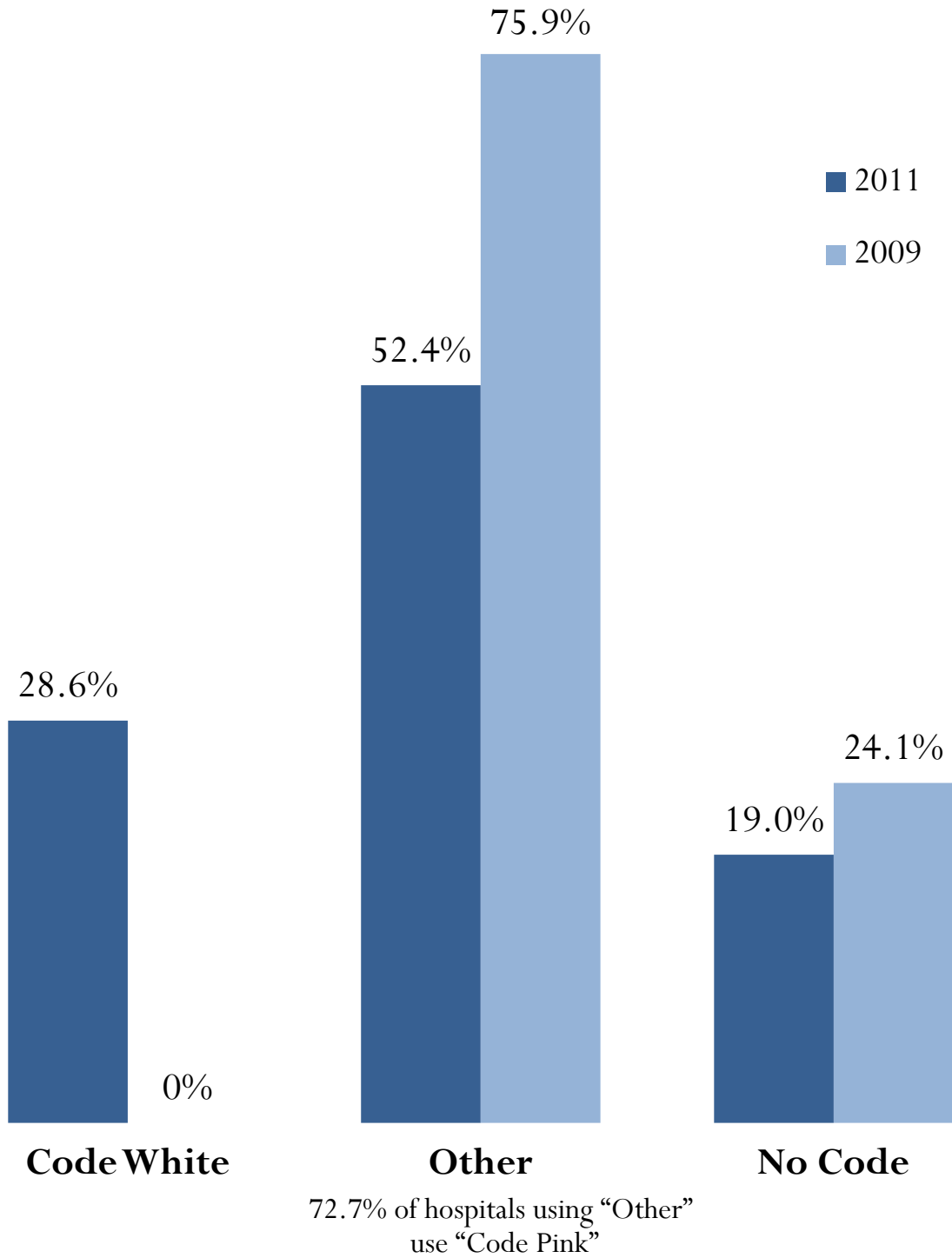
MEDICAL EMERGENCY - ADULT



Only one other code was reported in use for adult medical emergencies: 1 hospital reported use of CODE GREEN.

Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

MEDICAL EMERGENCY - PEDIATRIC



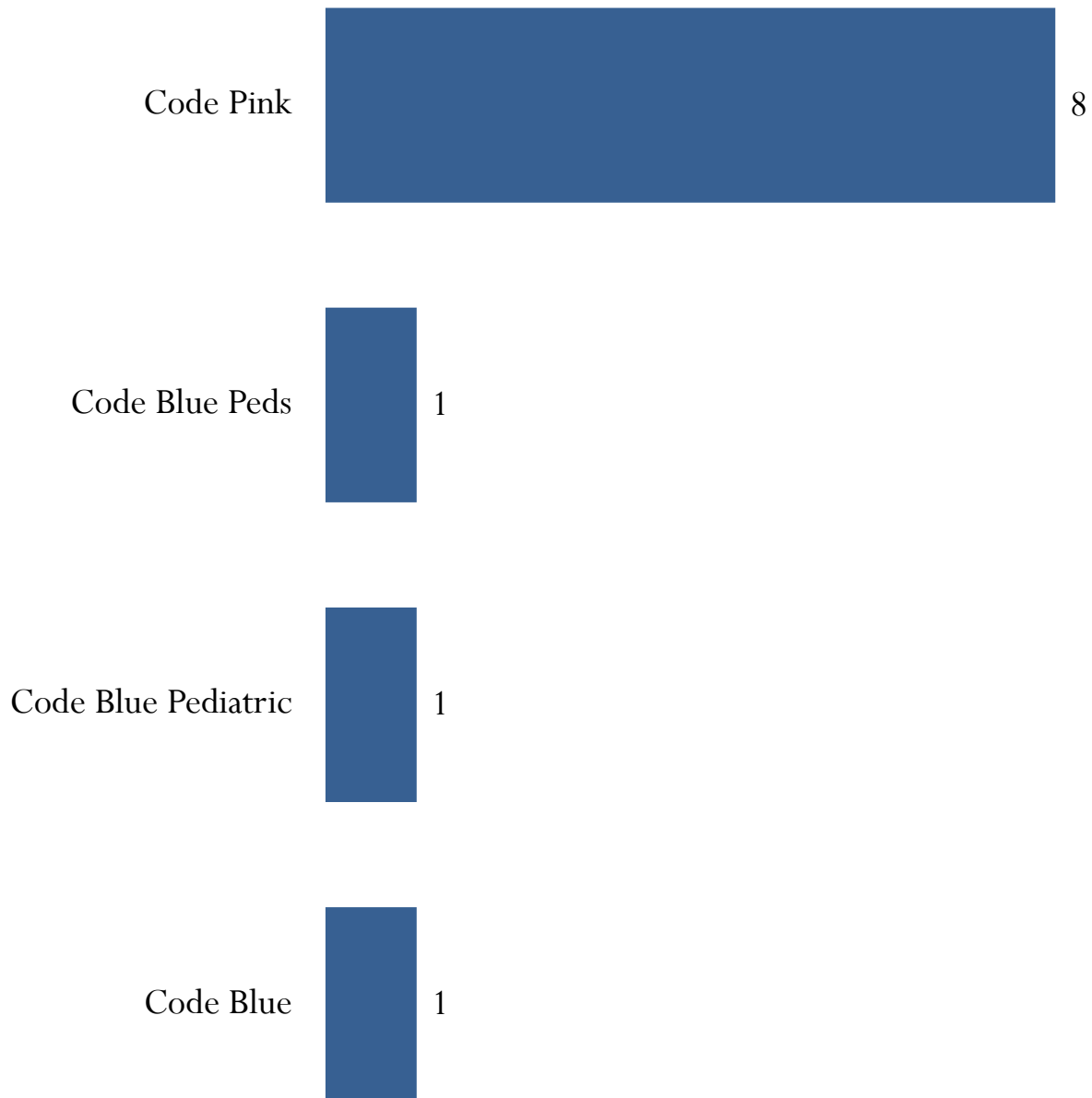
2011 Hospital Emergency Code Standardization Survey

Non-applicable survey responses have been excluded from this category.

Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

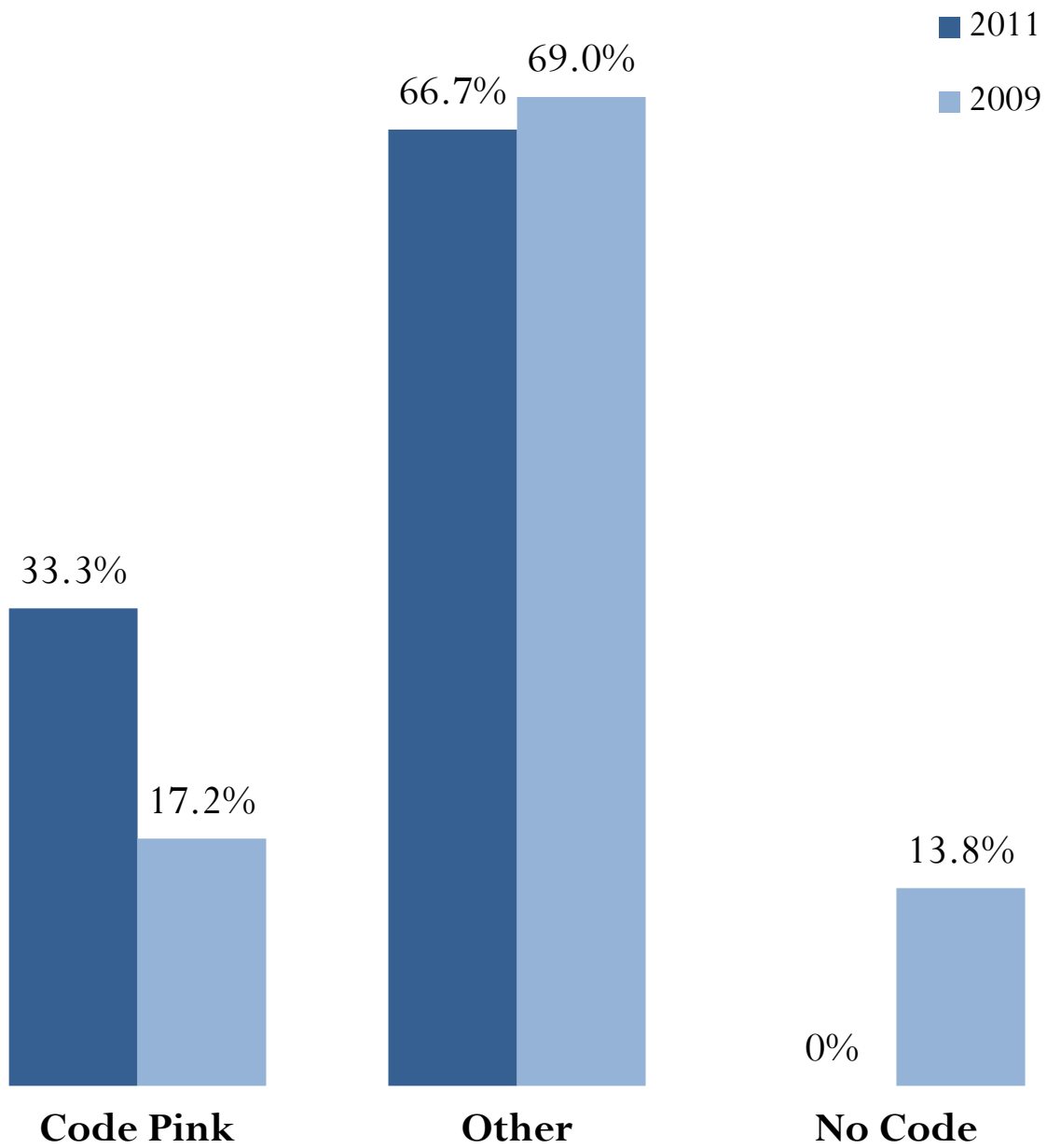
MEDICAL EMERGENCY – PEDIATRIC

Other codes reported in use for pediatric medical emergency situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

INFANT ABDUCTION

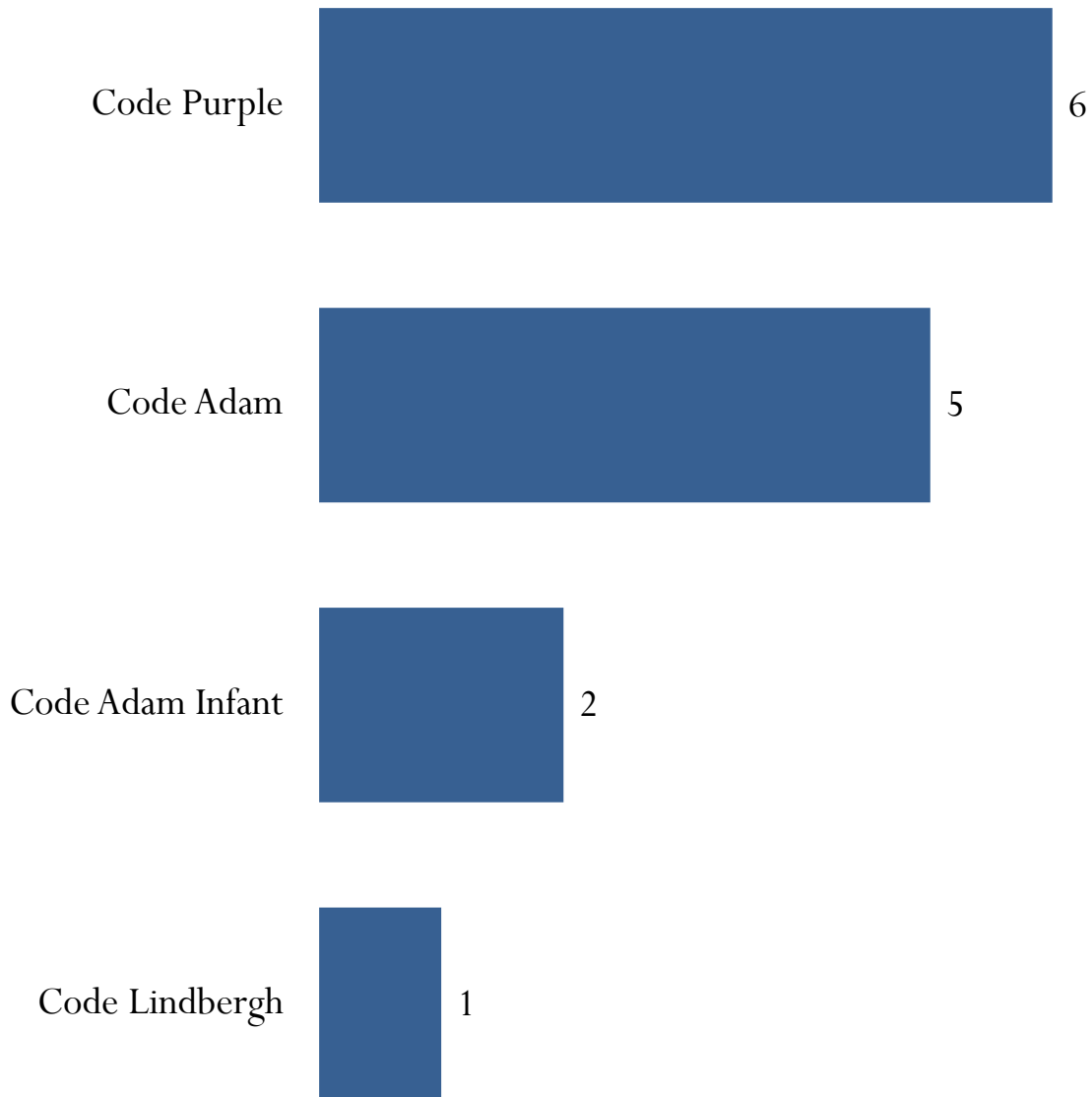


Non-applicable survey responses have been excluded from this category.

Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

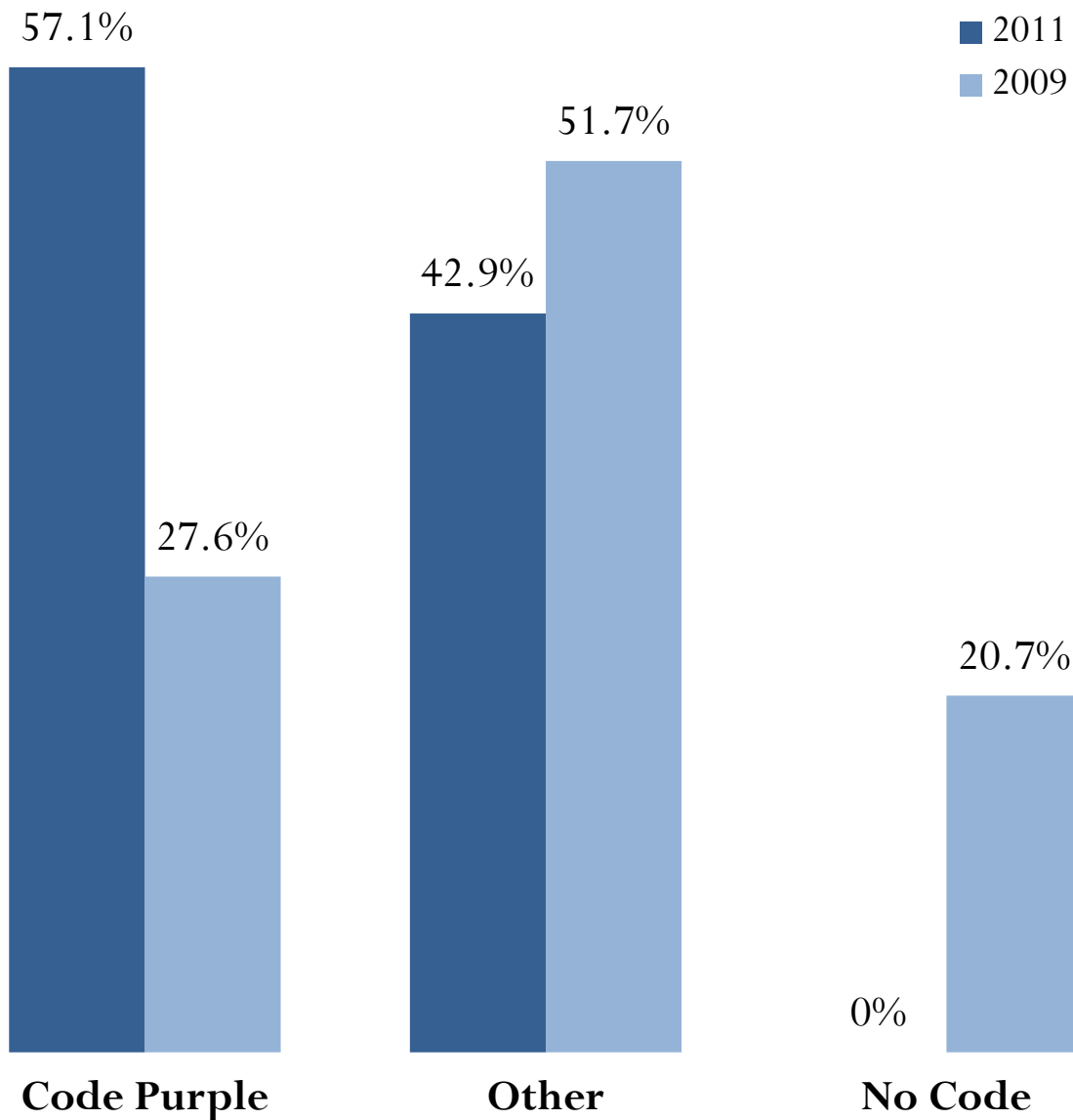
INFANT ABDUCTION

Other codes reported in use for infant abduction situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

CHILD ABDUCTION



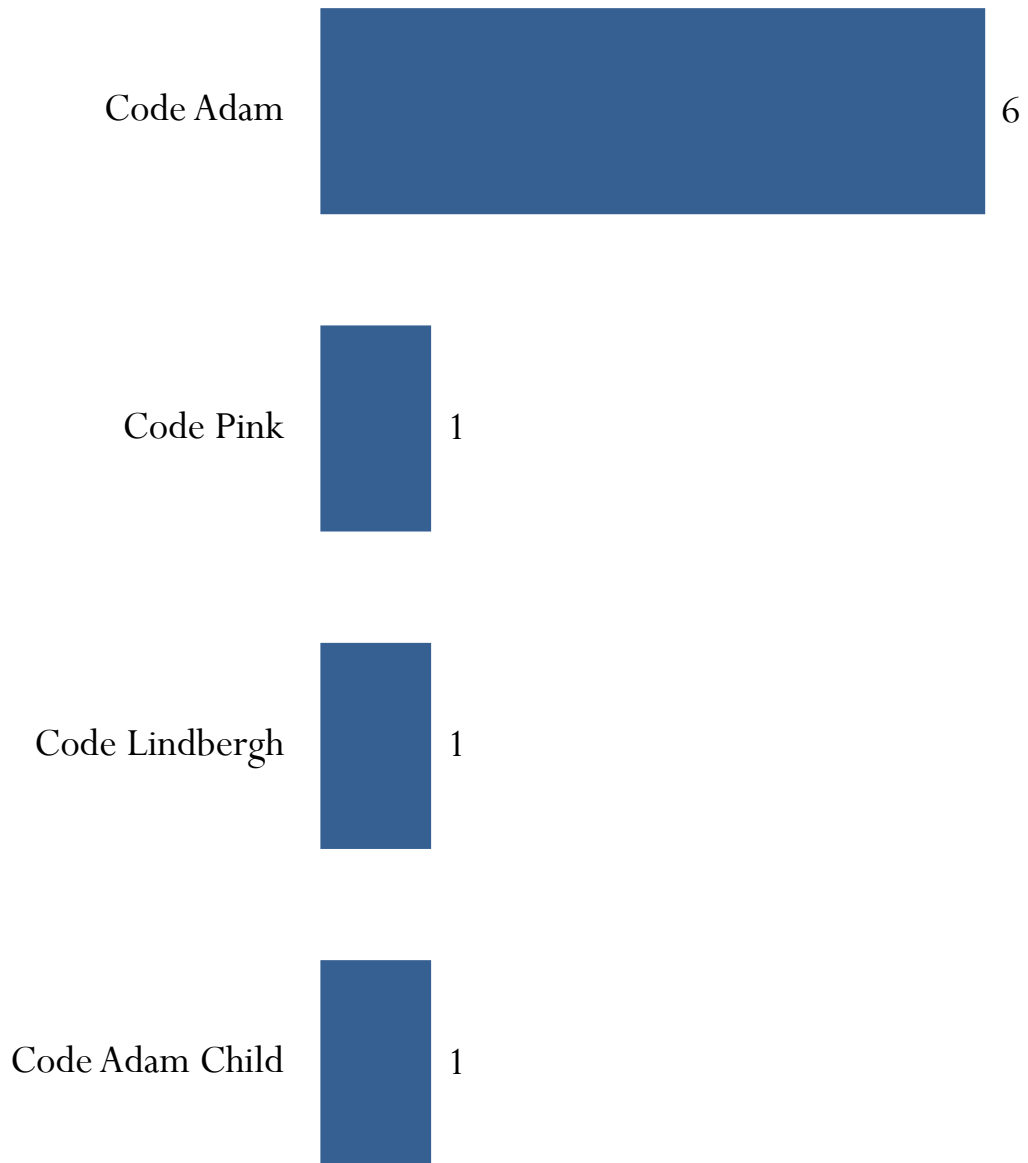
75% of hospitals using "Other" use "Code Adam"

Non-applicable survey responses have been excluded from this category.

Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

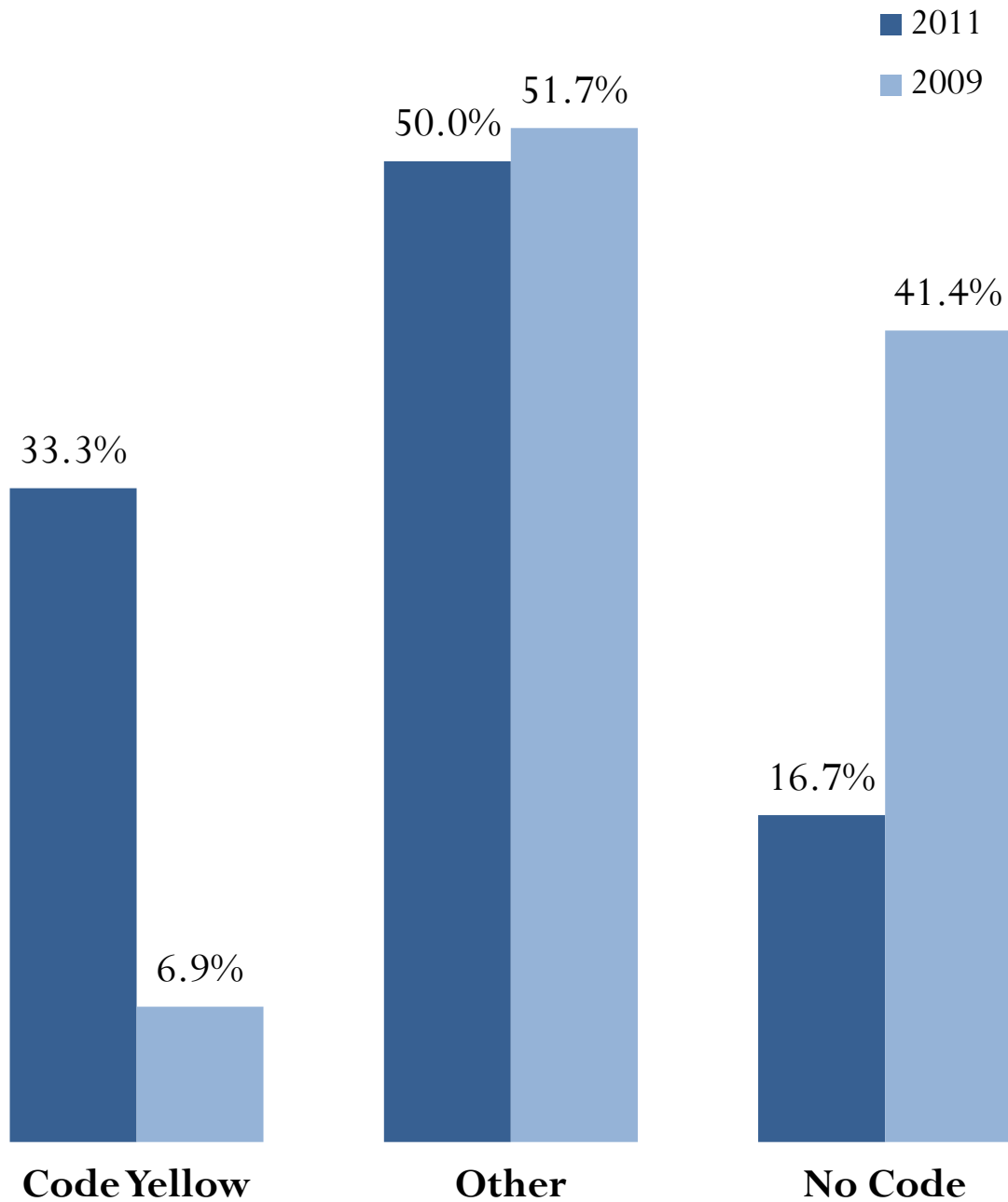
CHILD ABDUCTION

Other codes reported in use for child abduction situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

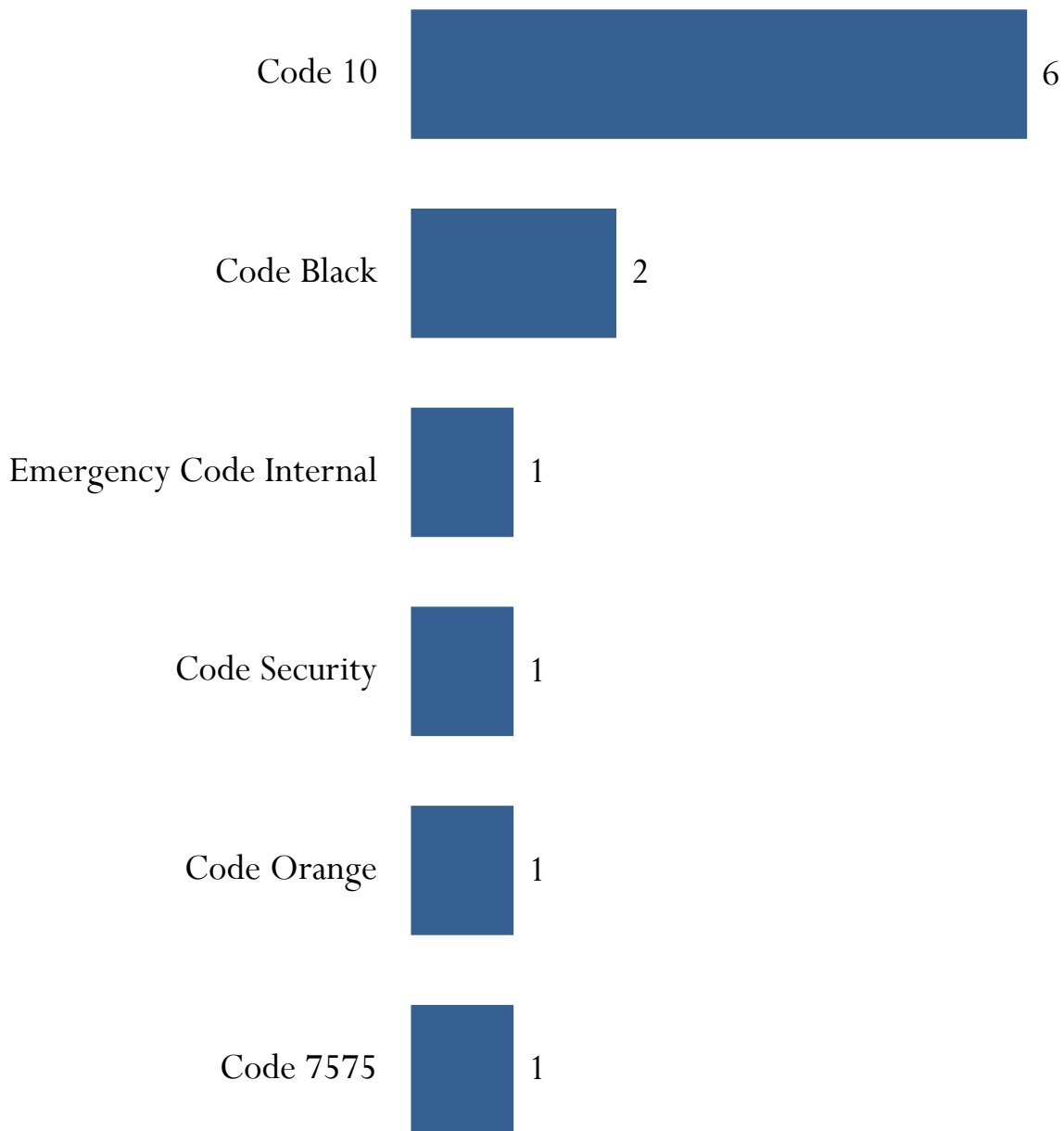
BOMB THREAT



Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

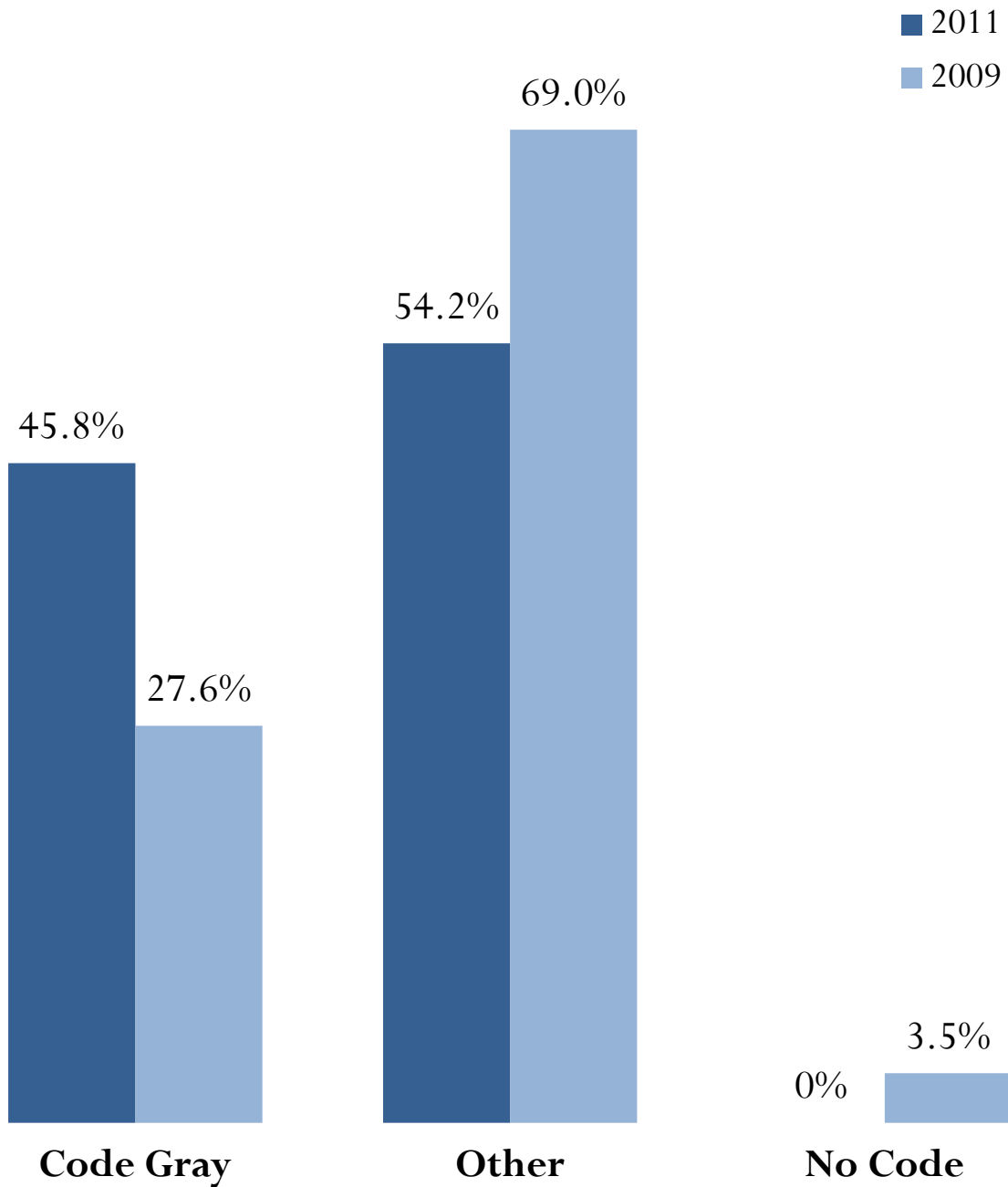
BOMB THREAT

Other codes reported in use for bomb threat situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

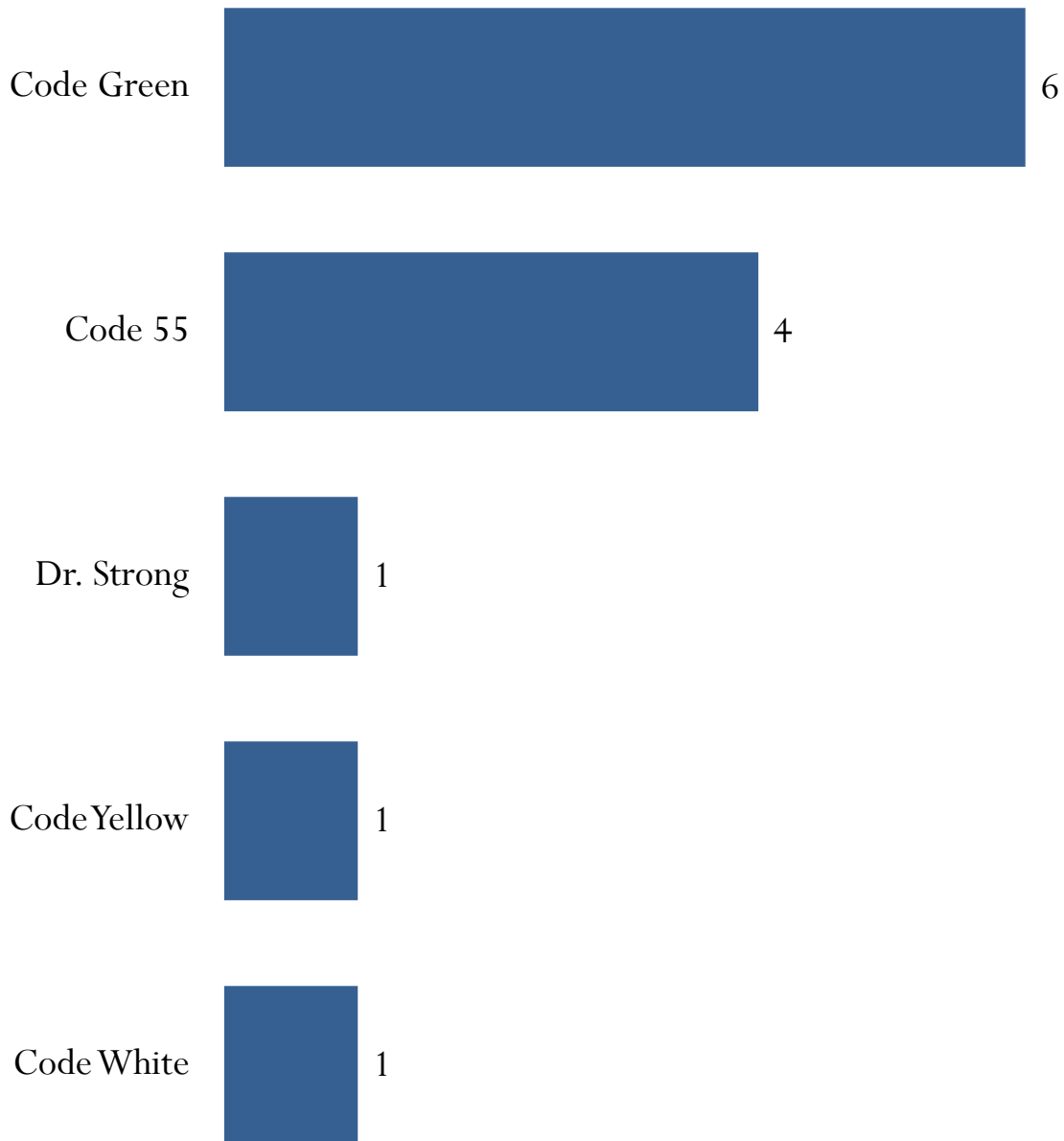
COMBATIVE PERSON



Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

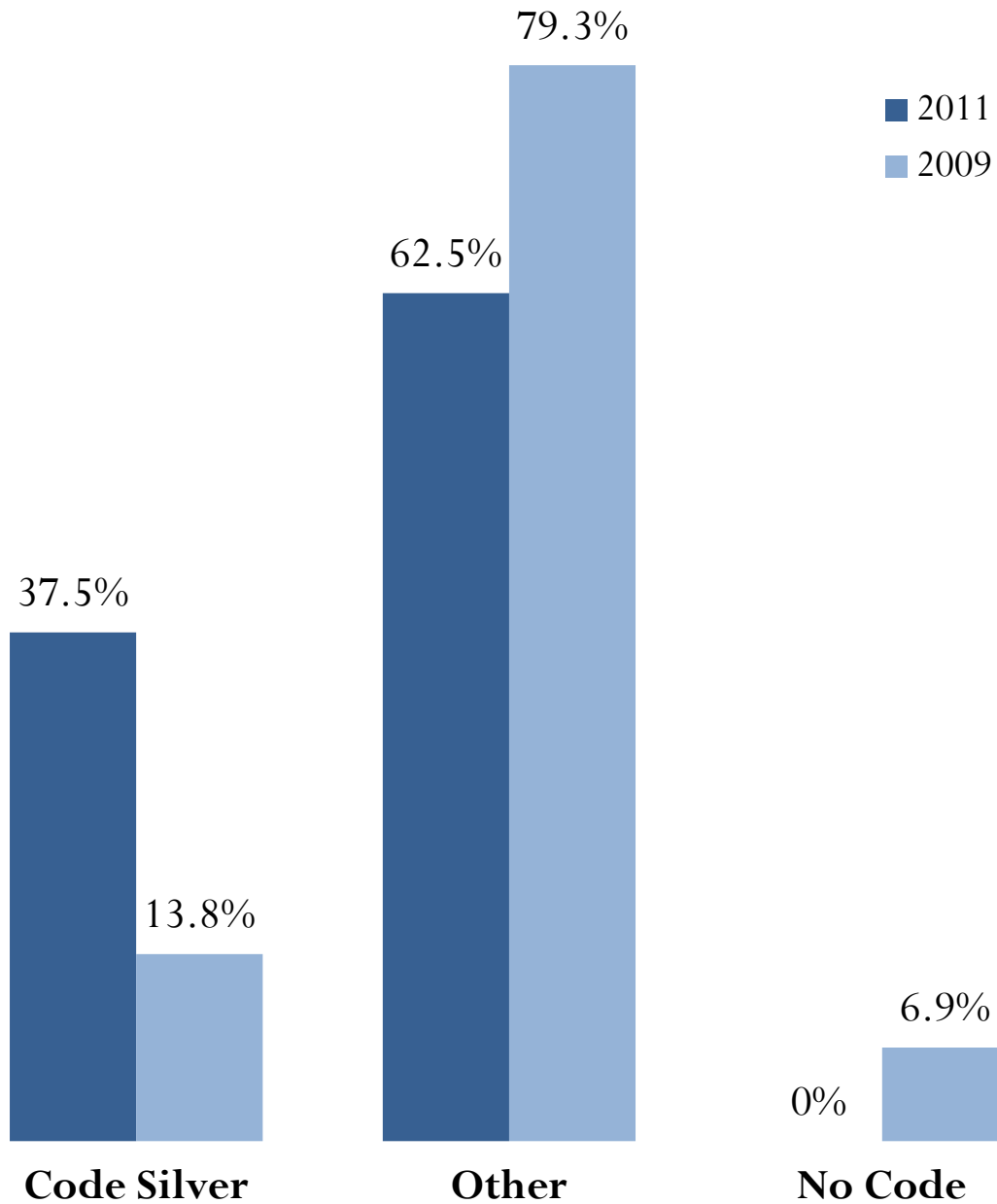
COMBATIVE PERSON

Other codes reported in use for situations involving a combative person (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

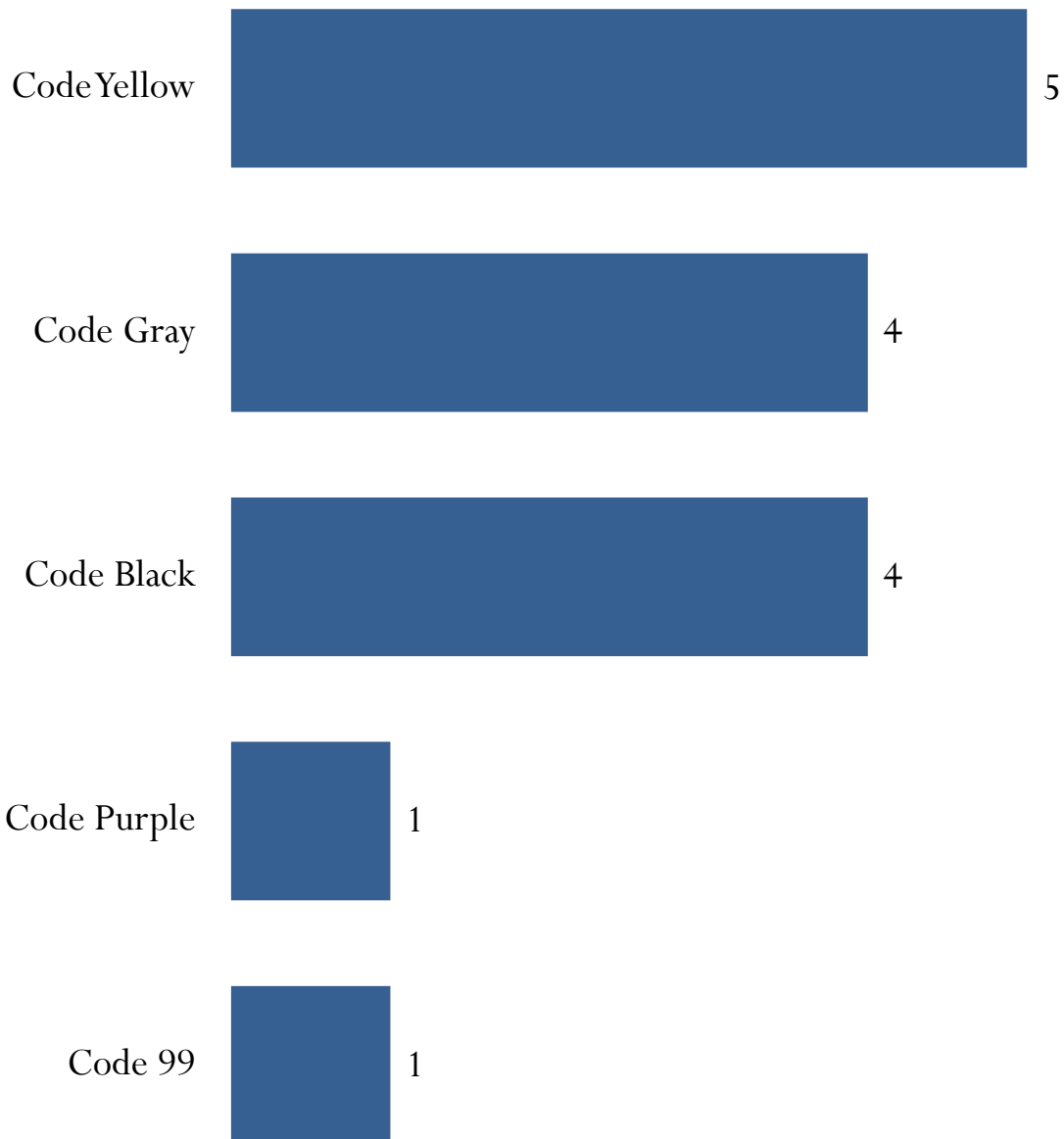
PERSON WITH A WEAPON and/or ACTIVE SHOOTER and/or HOSTAGE SITUATION



Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

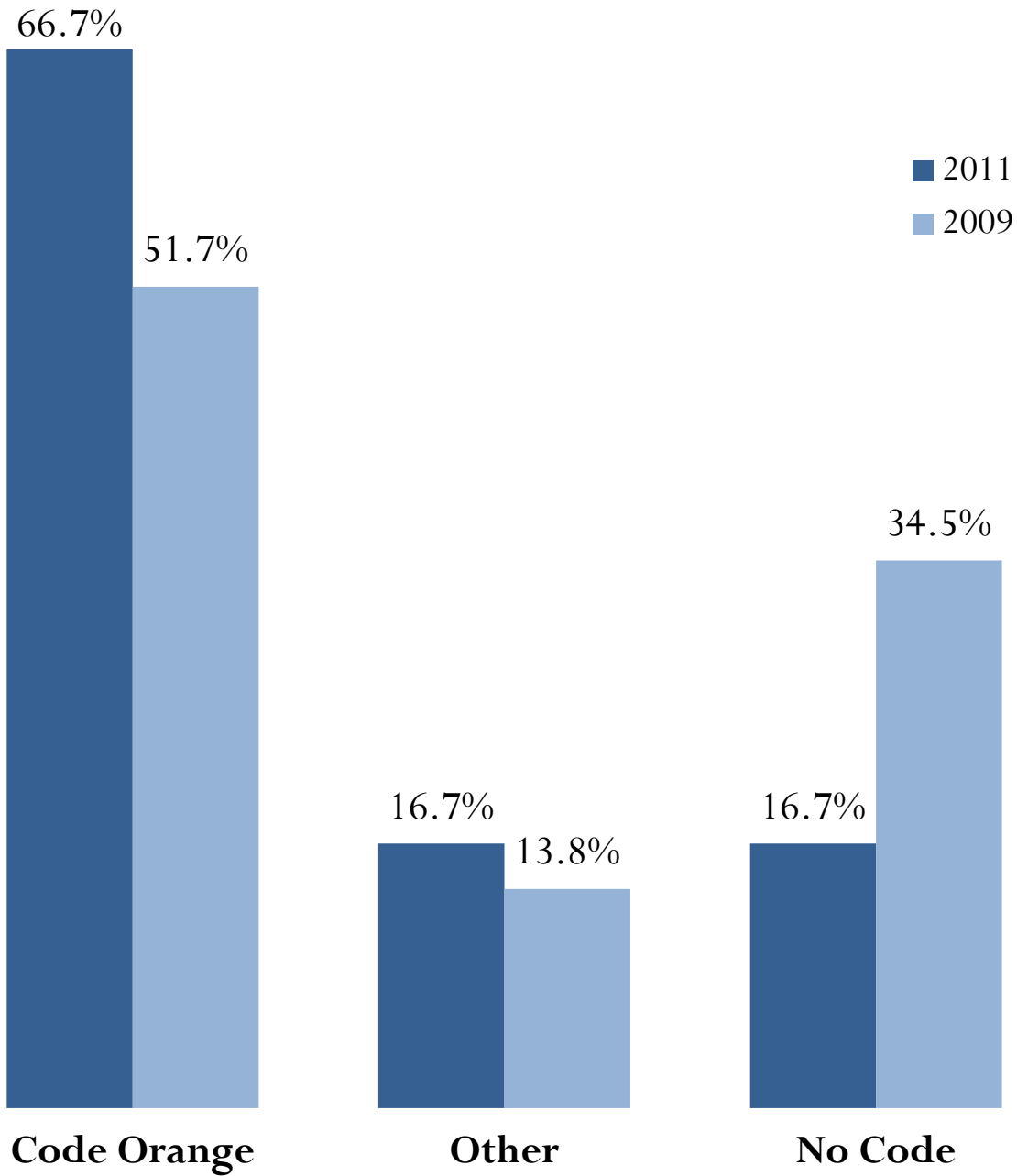
PERSON WITH A WEAPON and/or ACTIVE SHOOTER and/or HOSTAGE SITUATION

Other codes reported in use for a person with a weapon / hostage situation (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

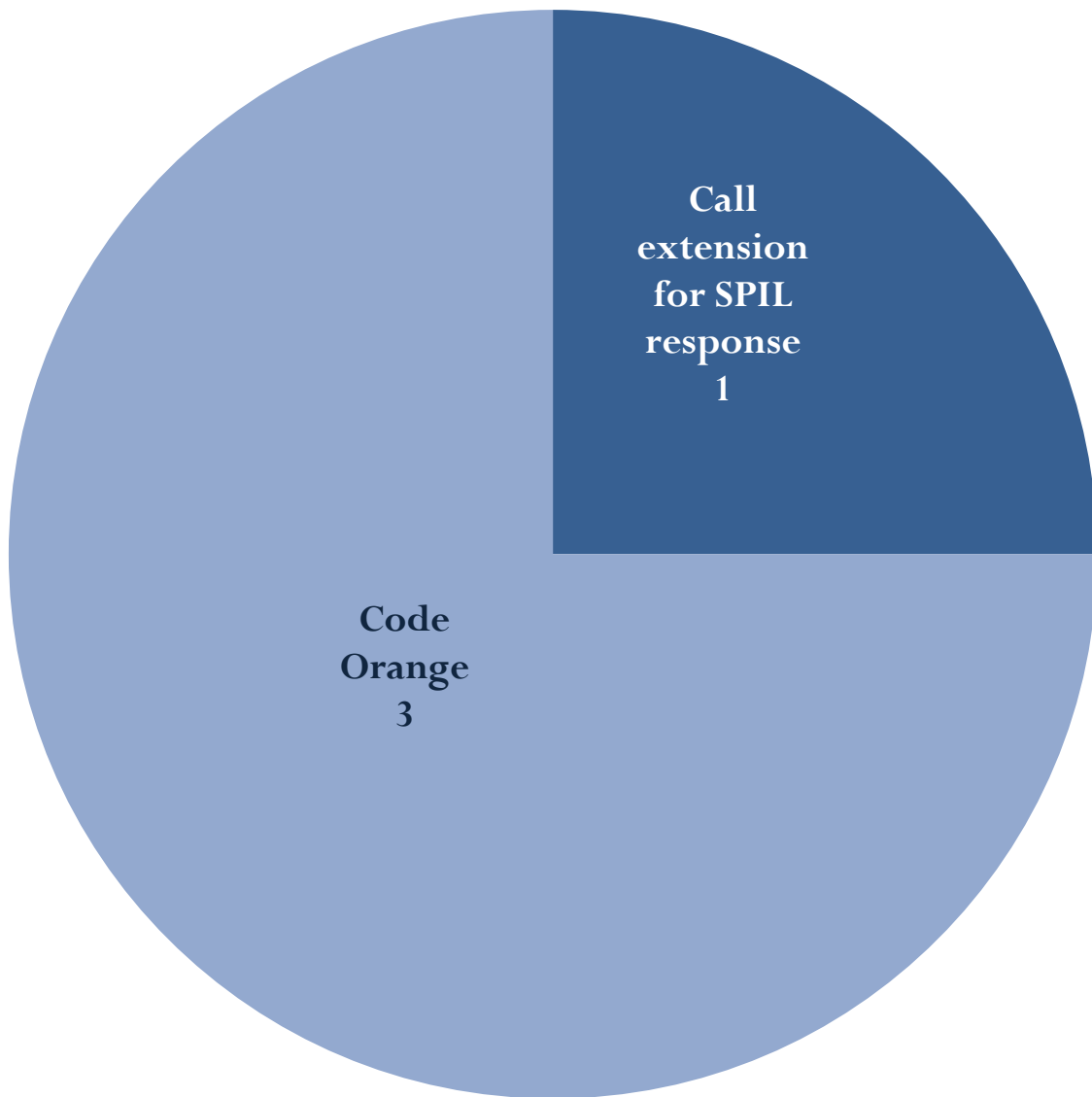
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SPILL



Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

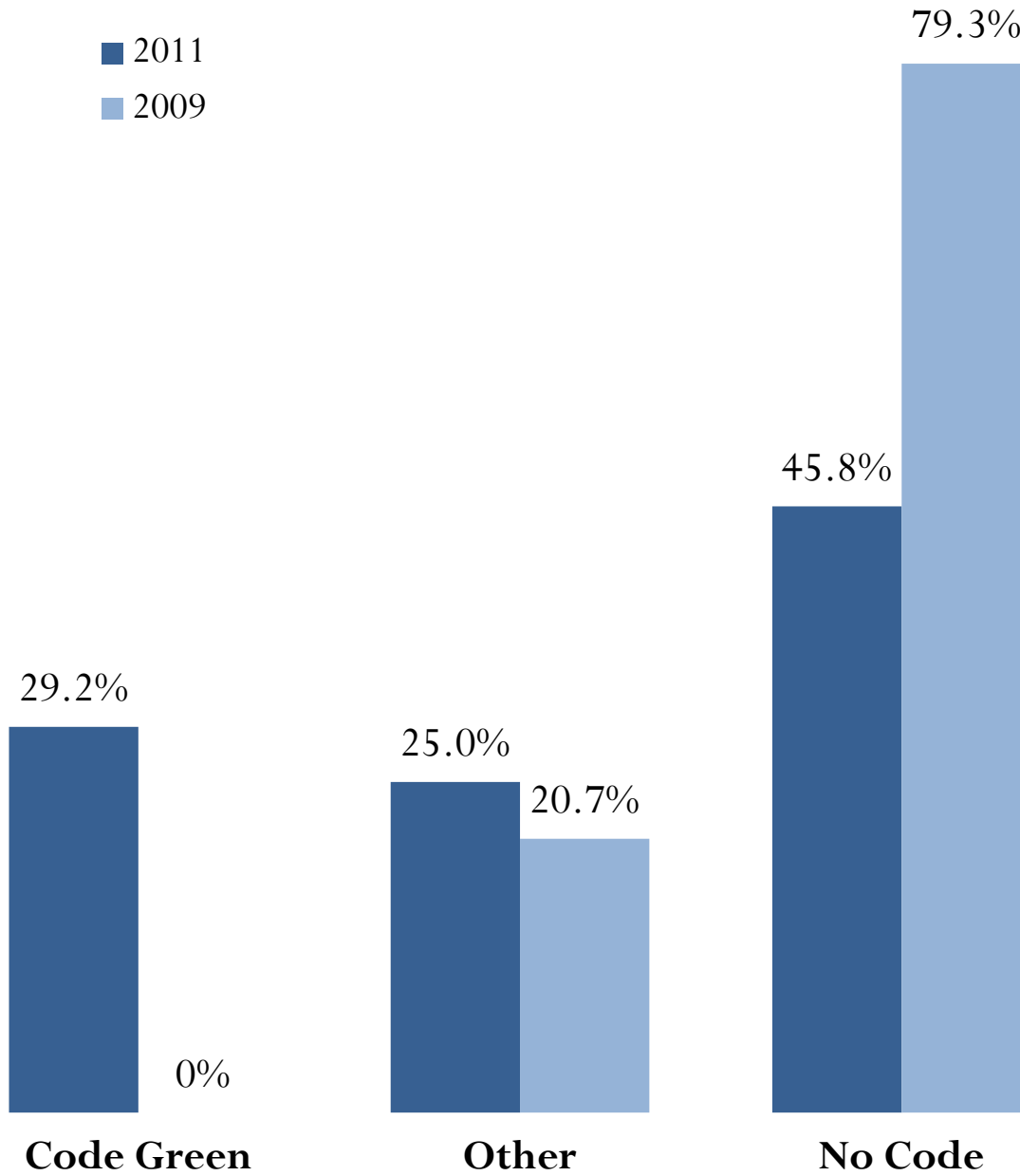
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SPILL

Other codes reported in use for hazardous spill situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

PATIENT ELOPEMENT

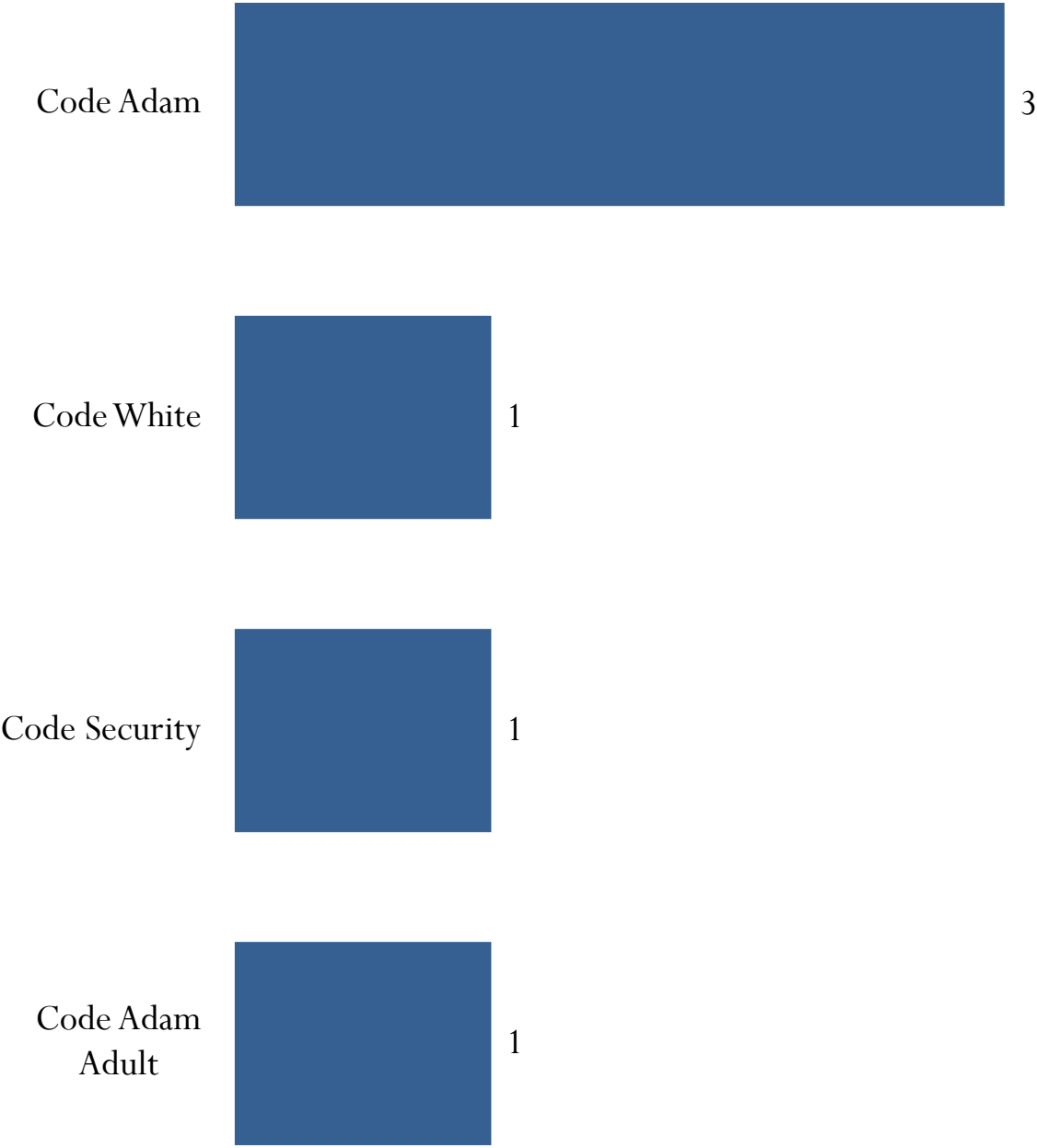


Code Green was added in 2009

Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

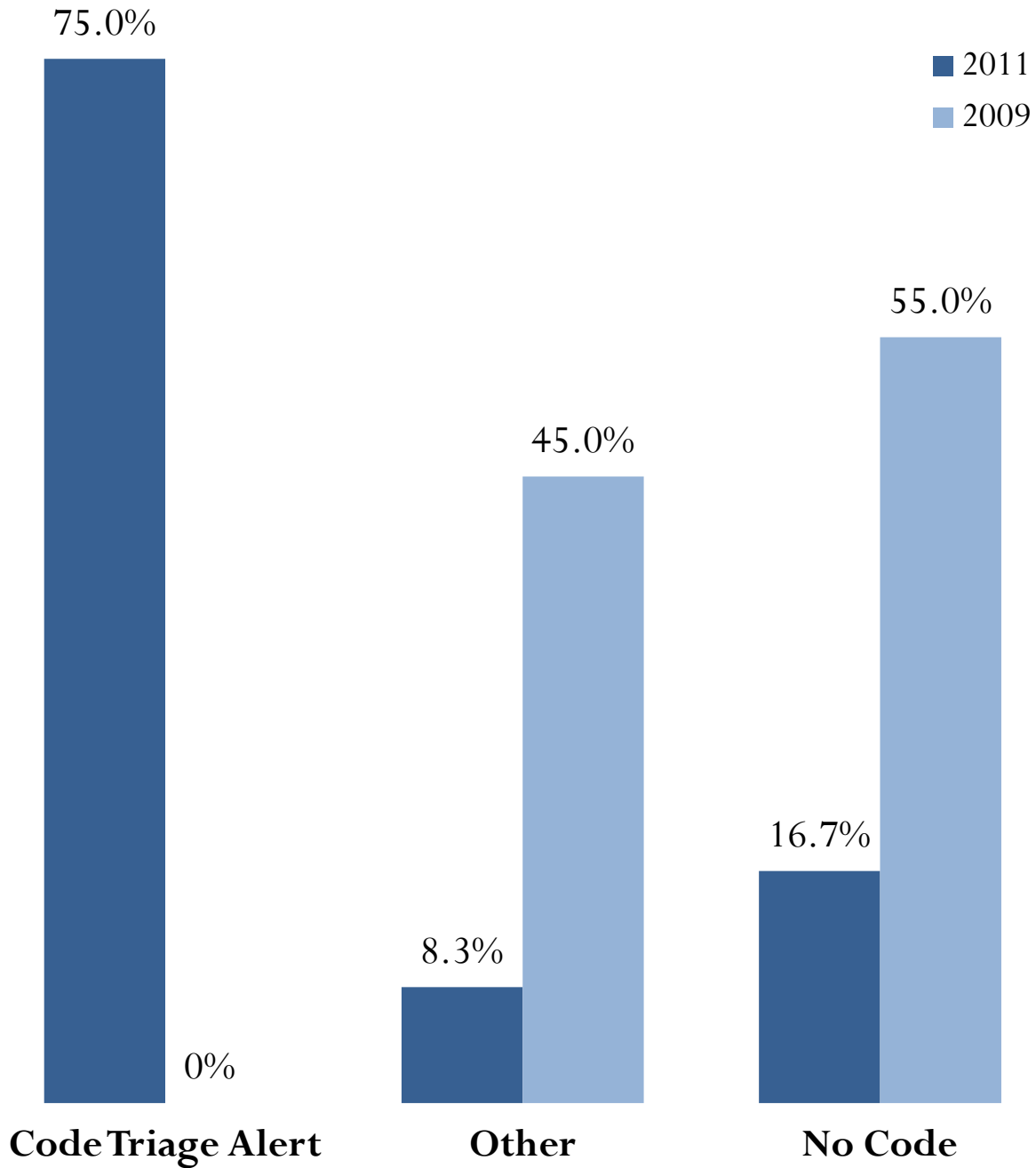
PATIENT ELOPEMENT

Other codes reported in use for patient elopement situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

EMERGENCY ALERT

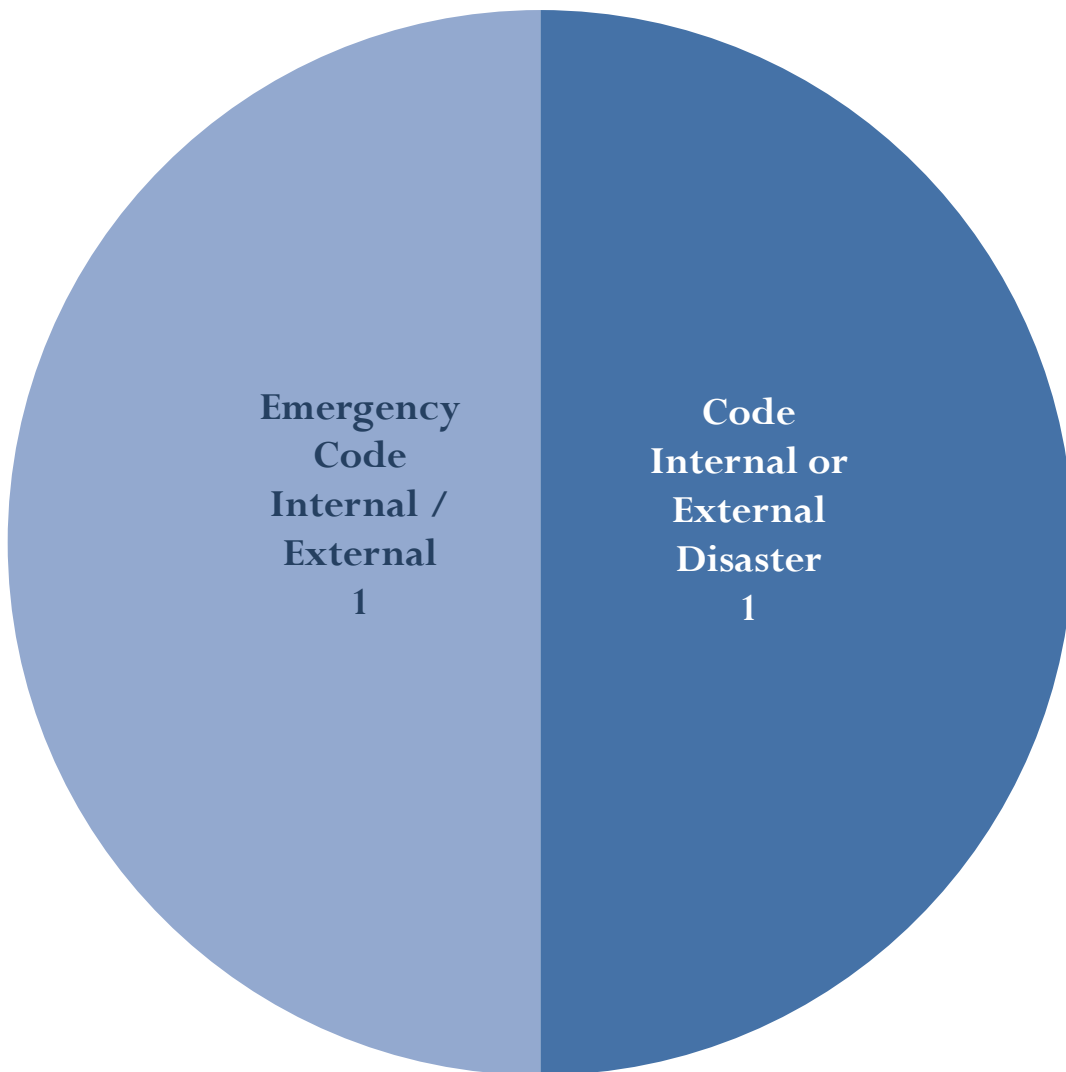


Code Triage Alert was added in 2009

Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

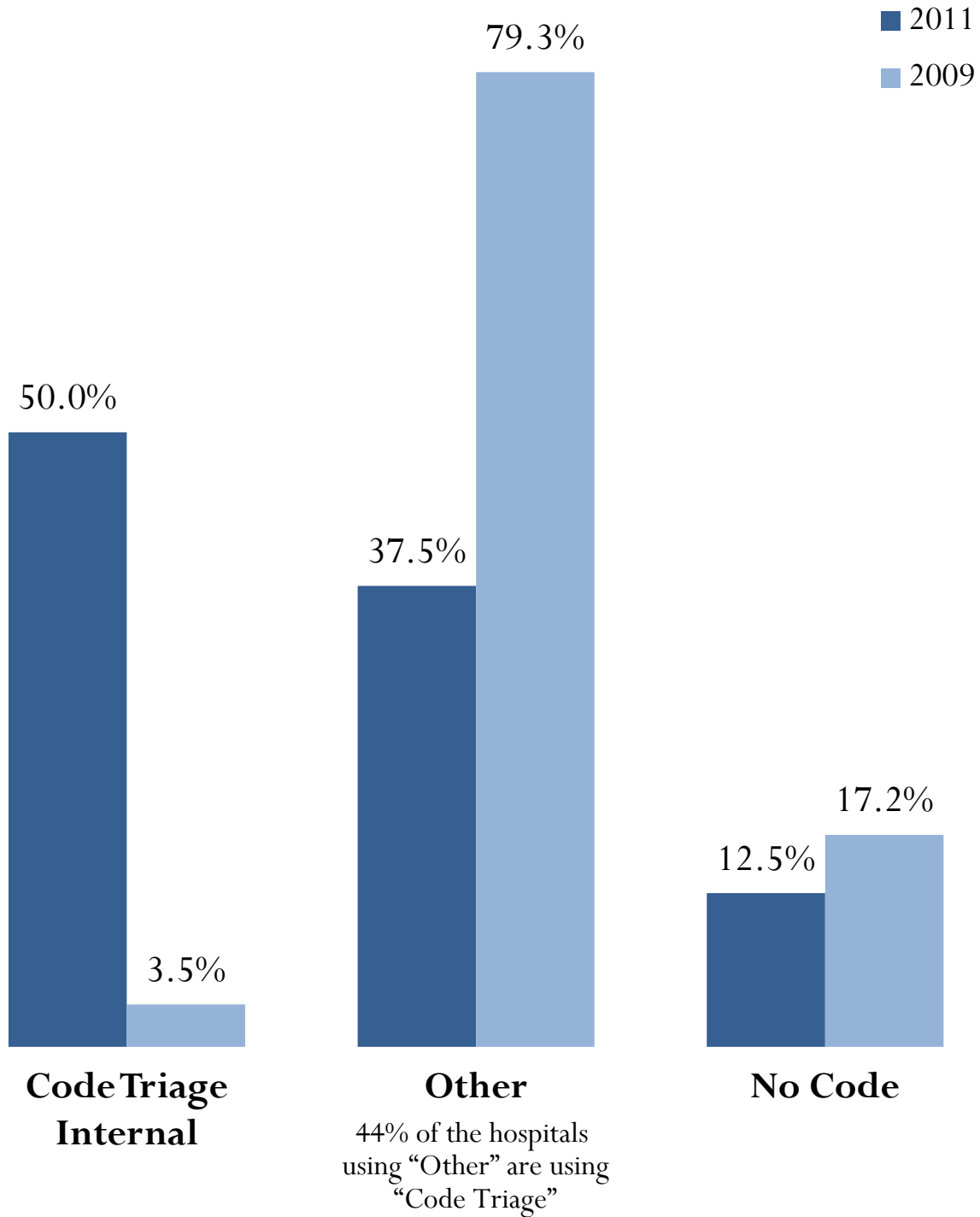
EMERGENCY ALERT

Other codes reported in use for emergency alert situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

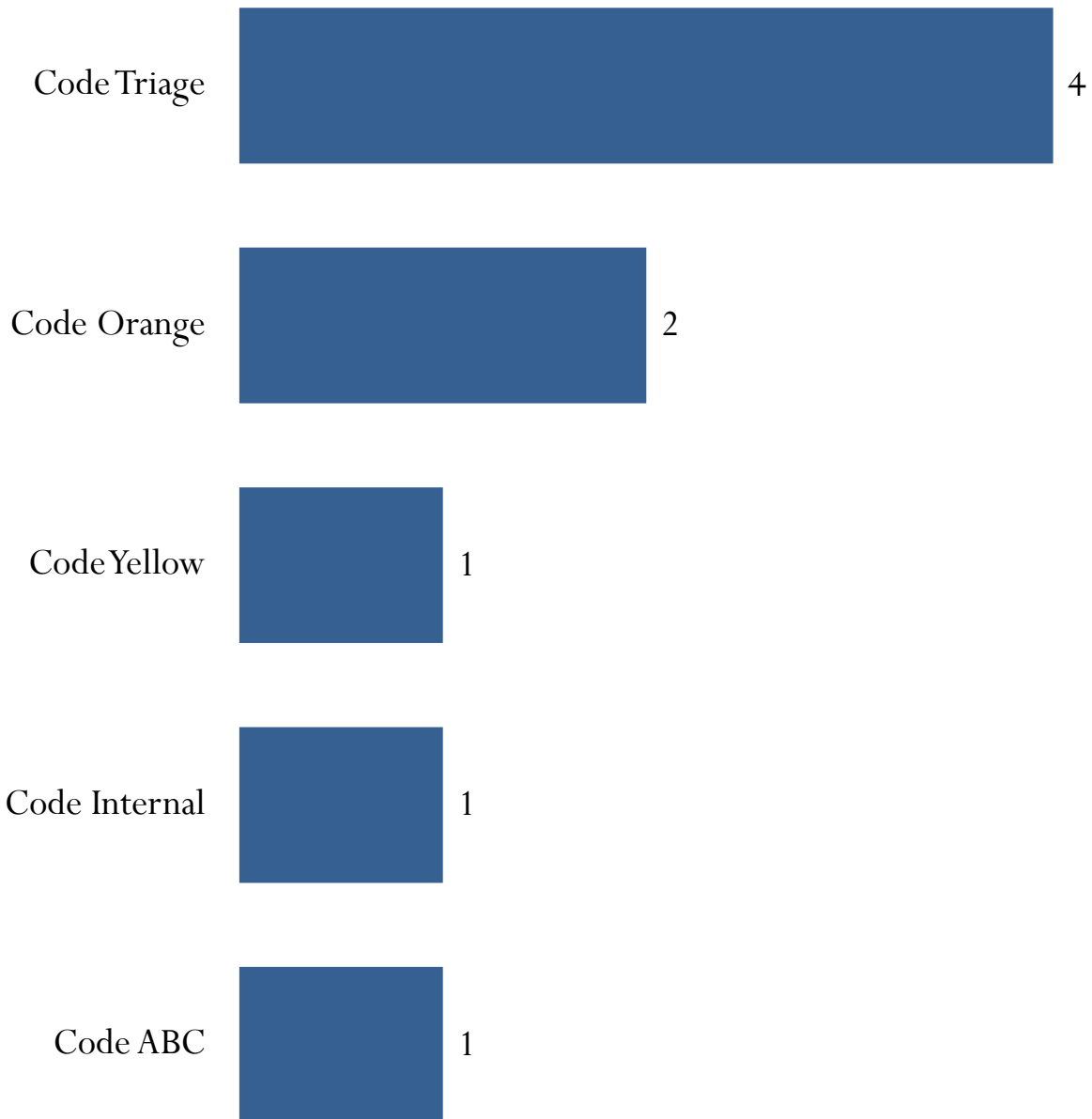
INTERNAL EMERGENCY



Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

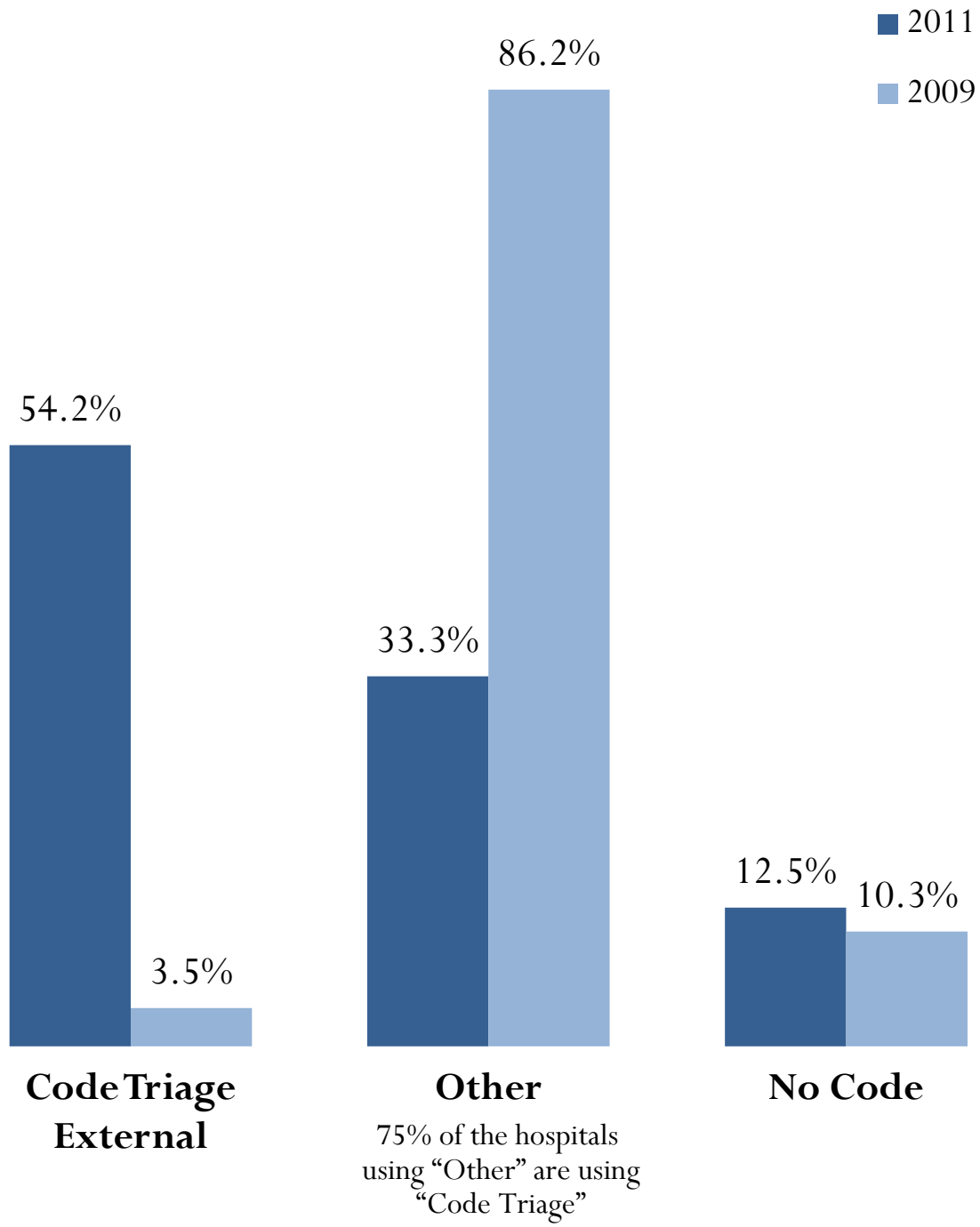
INTERNAL EMERGENCY

Other codes reported in use for internal emergency situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):



Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

EXTERNAL EMERGENCY



Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC)

EXTERNAL EMERGENCY

Other codes reported in use for external emergency situations (shown by count of hospitals using each code):

