

WALK WITH EASE IN MONTANA

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<https://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/arthritis>

BACKGROUND

The Montana Arthritis Program (MAP) collaborates with sites across the state to offer the Walk with Ease program to decrease pain, increase physical activity and improve flexibility and function for people living with arthritis.

WALK WITH EASE

- Six-week program offered in three formats:
 - Group (*led by an instructor*)
 - Self-directed (*by oneself*)
 - Hybrid (*led by instructor and self-directed*)
- A primary goal of the program is to walk three or more days a week.
- Partners include city, local and state government, senior centers and employers.

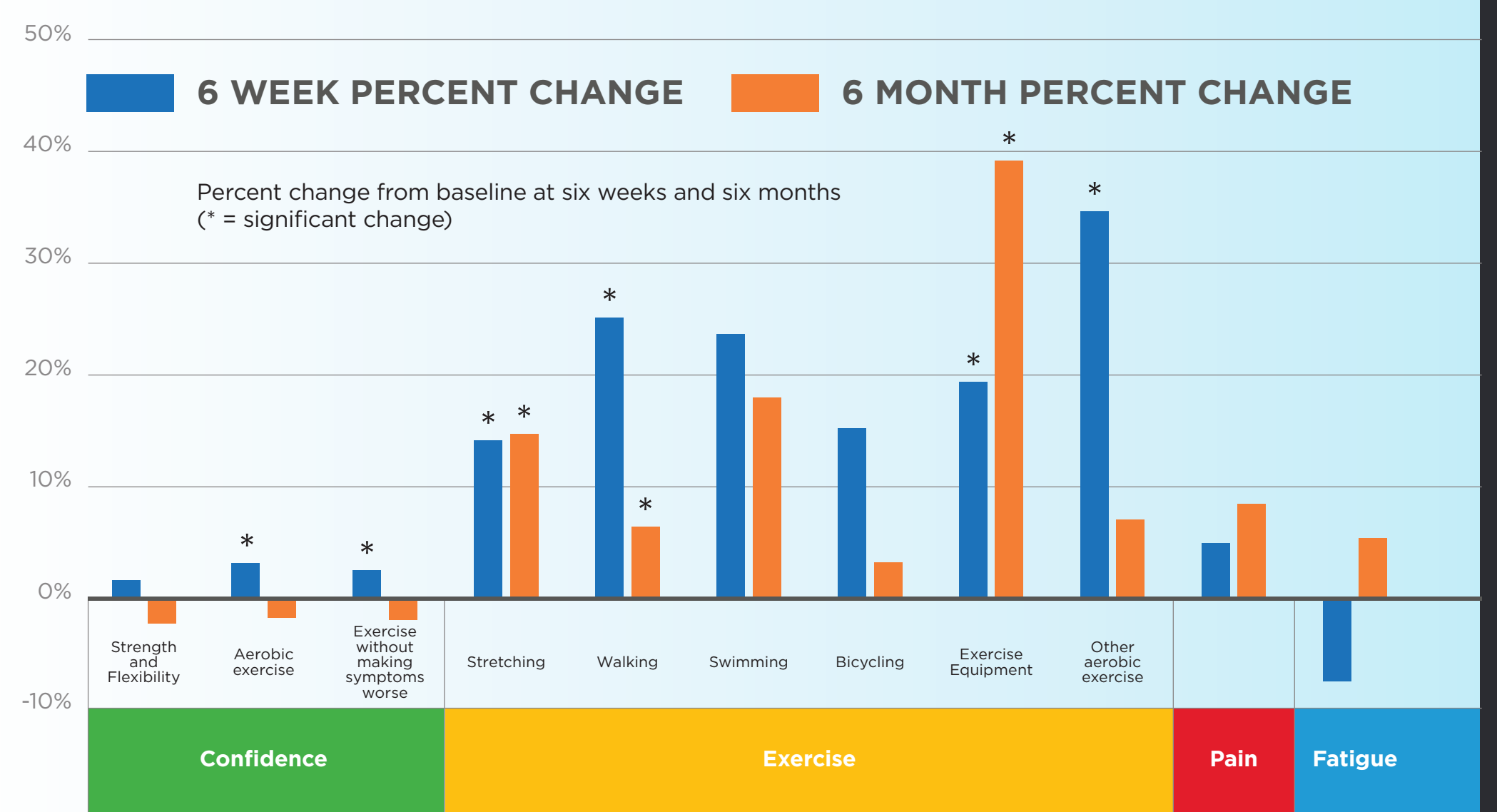


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METHODS

- The MAP uses an online database to collect data, participant demographics and workshop information.
- The participants complete a pre-test (baseline), post-test and a six month follow up survey assessing: self-efficacy (confidence), exercise behaviors, pain/fatigue and physical limitations.

PERCENT CHANGE IN WALK WITH EASE OUTCOMES



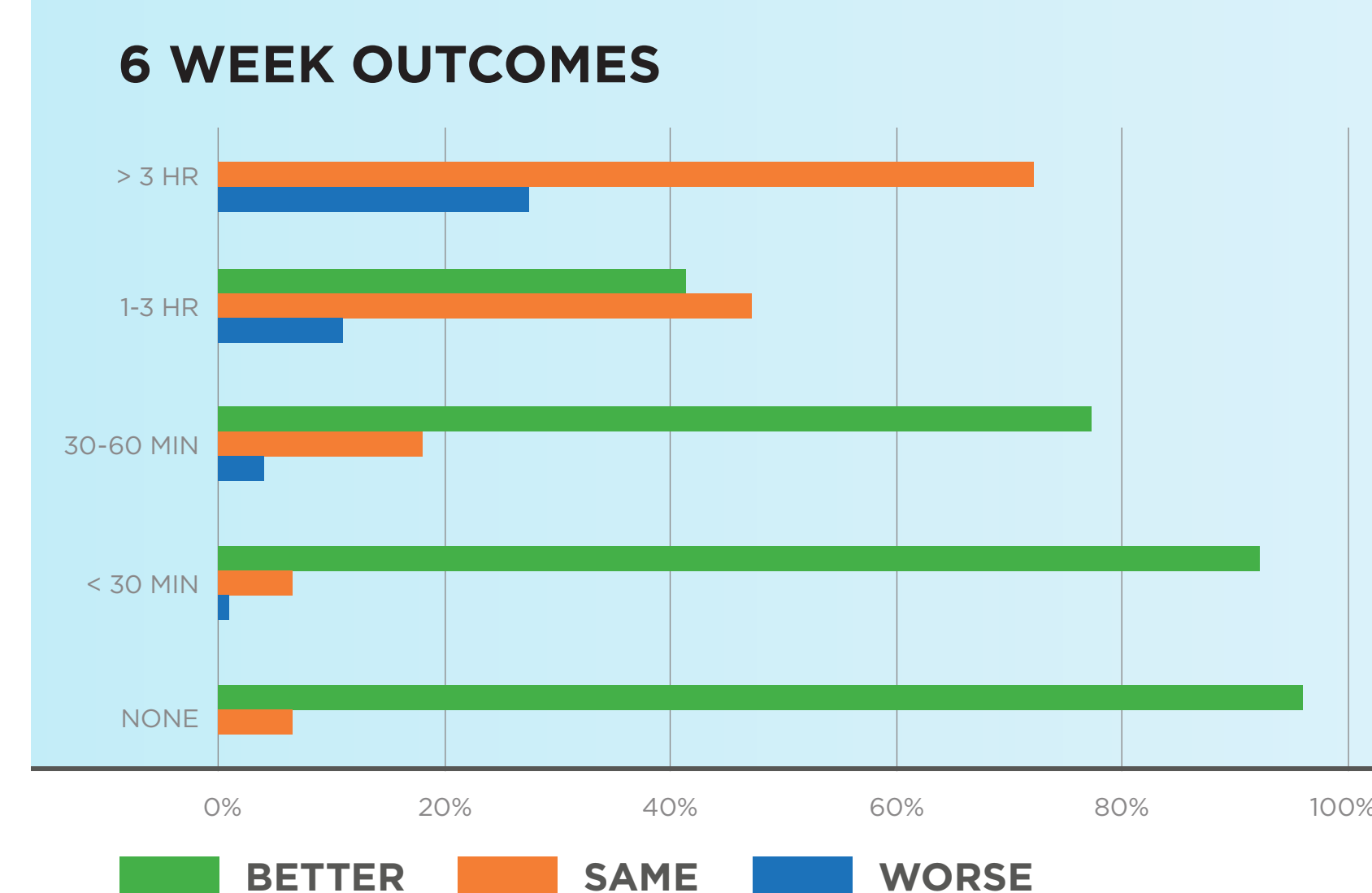
Percent change from baseline is calculated from the post survey minus the baseline divided by the original level. Positive changes in confidence and exercise are desired health outcomes, whereas positive changes in discomfort are undesired.

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THE WALK WITH EASE HAS SEEN A DRAMATIC INCREASE IN ANNUAL PARTICIPATION FROM 125 PARTICIPANTS (2013) TO 1,925 PARTICIPANTS (2017).

RESULTS

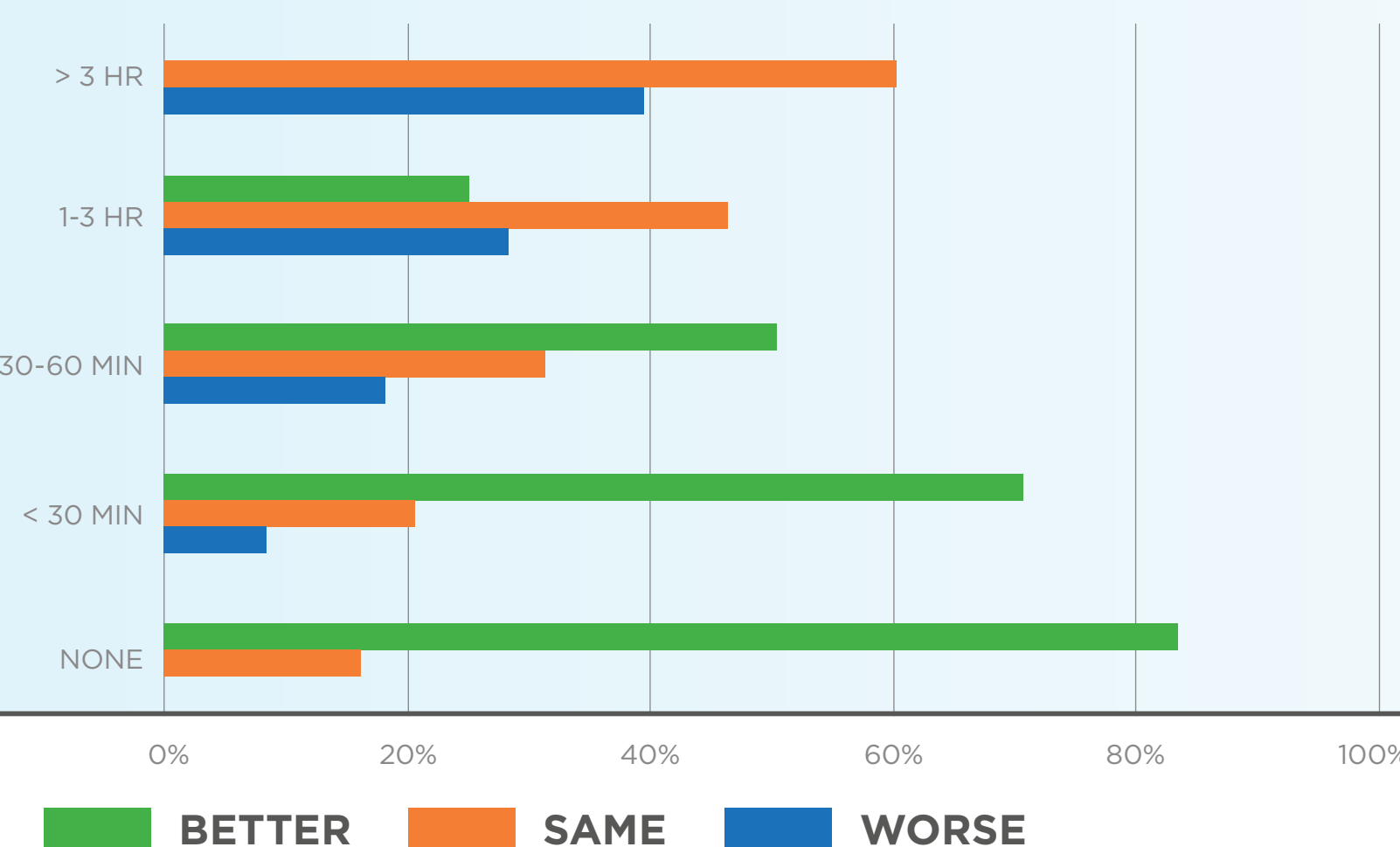
Six-week and six-month outcomes showed increased improvement in exercise levels.



Among those who didn't record any walking at the outset and responded to the six-week survey, 97% reported walking. Among those who walked less than 30 minutes per week at the start, 93% showed an increase by six weeks. Among those who walked 30-60 minutes, 80% improved to over an hour by week six. For those who walked 1-3 hours, at six weeks 42% increased to more than three hours, 47% maintained their level, and only 11% decreased to less than an hour a week. Seventy-two percent of those walking over three hours per week at the start could maintain that highest level at six weeks.

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6 MONTH OUTCOMES



At six months, the improvements were not as impressive as at six weeks, but still somewhat sustained. Eighty-four percent of the non-walkers at the start were walking at six months. Sixty-eight percent of those who started walking less than 30 minutes per week increased their walking levels at six months. Fifty percent of those walking 30-60 minutes at the start increased to over an hour at six months and only 18% fell below 30 minutes. For those walking 1-3 hours at the start about half maintained that level with the other half mostly split between increasing or decreasing. Sixty-one percent of the advanced walkers maintained that level at six months.

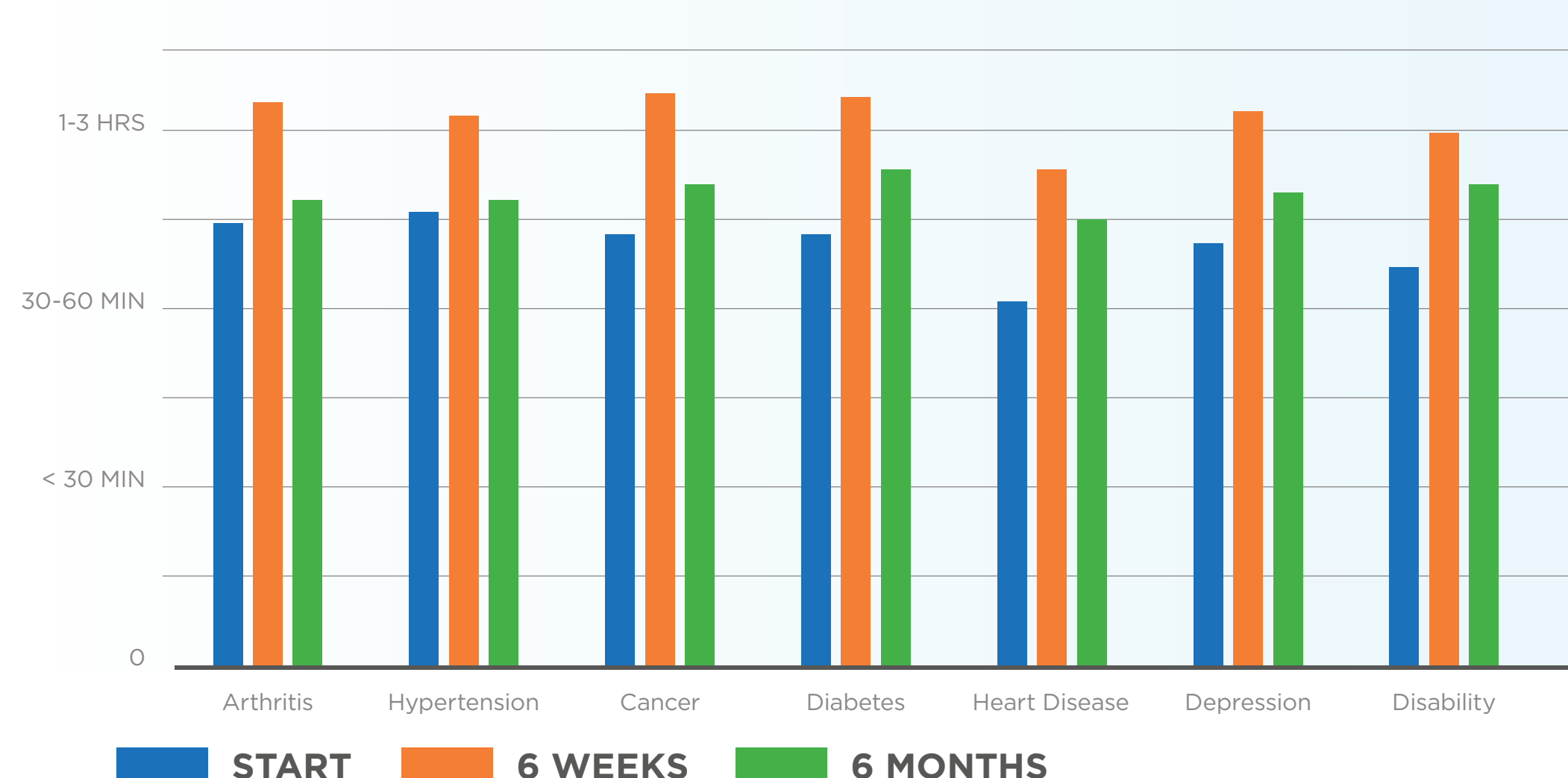


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DISCUSSION

- Participation in the Walk With Ease program in Montana has shown improved walking outcomes for those living with and without arthritis.
- Literature additionally supports the program's finding in that "there is evidence of the effectiveness of regular physical activity in the prevention of chronic diseases including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, hypertension, obesity, depression and osteoporosis" (Warburton et al., 2006).

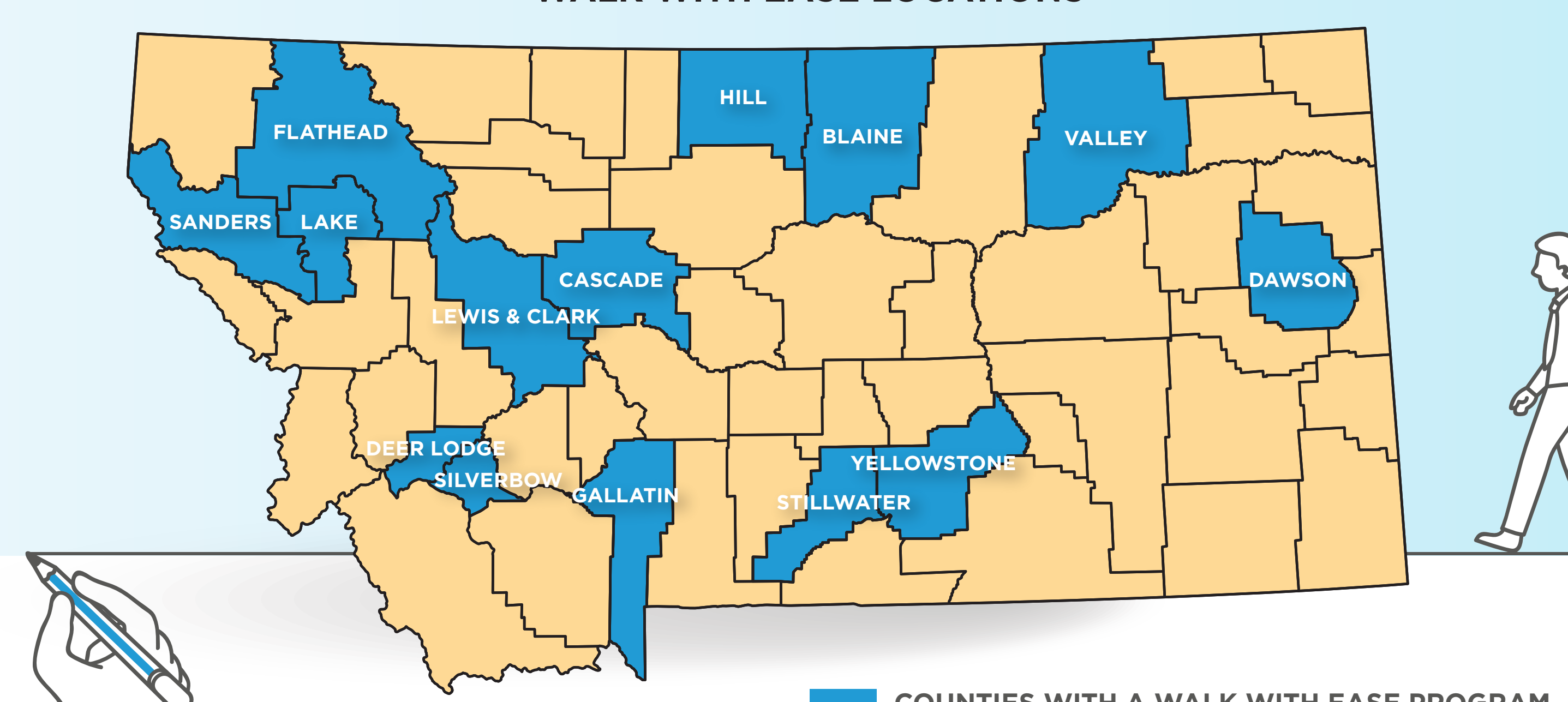
CHRONIC DISEASE WALKING OUTCOMES



Warburton, D.E.R., Nicol, C. W., & Bredin, S.S.D., (2006). Health benefits of physical activity: the evidence. CMAJ, 174(6), 801-809.

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WALK WITH EASE LOCATIONS



Map displaying all the current (2018) counties offering the Walk with Ease program.

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WALK WITH EASE AS A WORKSITE WELLNESS PROGRAM

The MAP has found great success in their partnership with the State of Montana Health Care and Benefits Division (HCBD) to offer Walk With Ease.

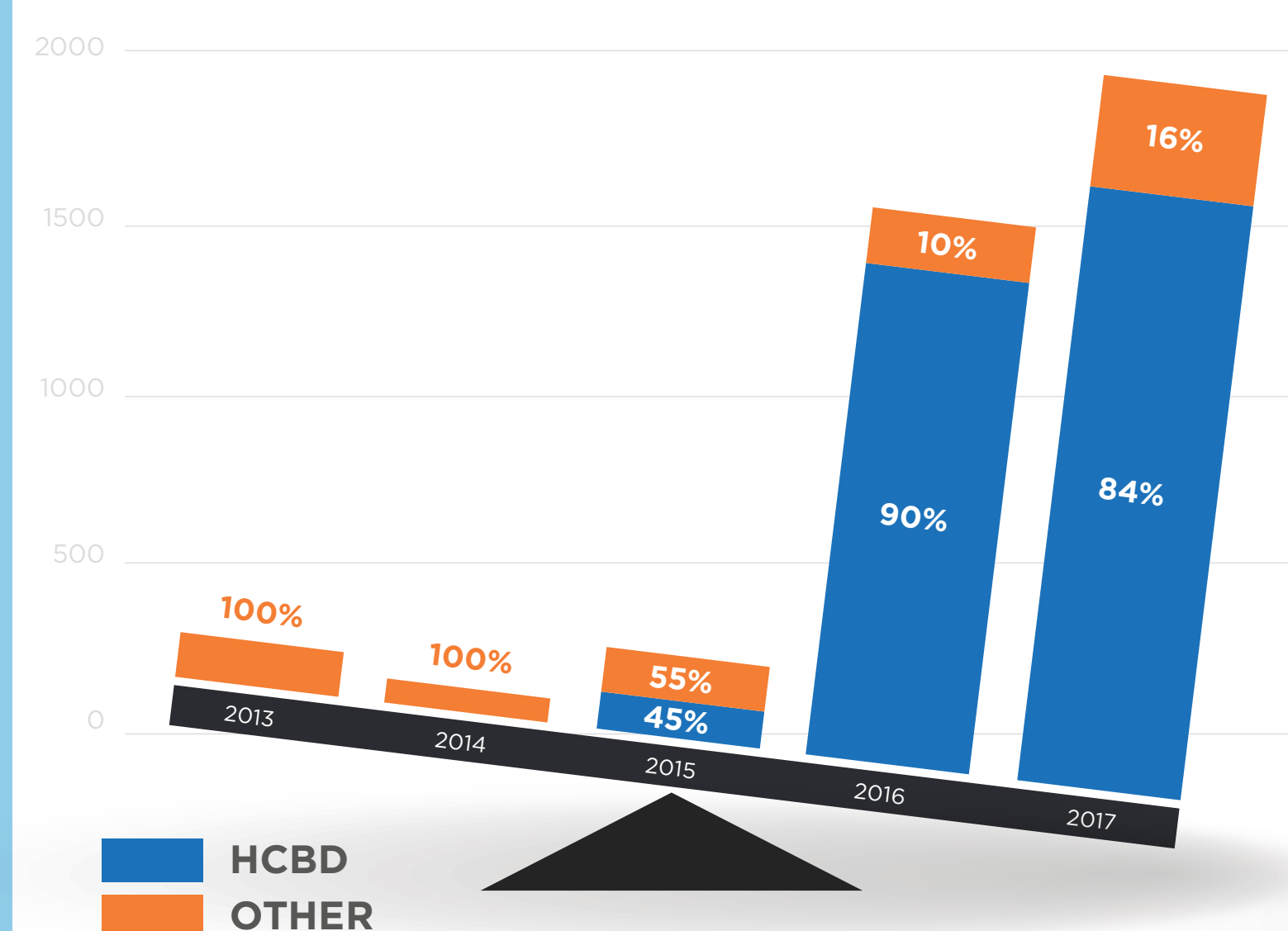
PARTNERSHIP OUTCOMES

- Heightened awareness of Walk with Ease as a worksite wellness program.
- Increased numbers—accounting for 80 percent of the total 3,840 participants.
- Improved participant health outcomes—consistent with general participant data (i.e., improved physical activity, self-confidence, etc.).

GOING FORWARD

The goal of the program is to continue to expand partnerships and sites offering Walk With Ease.

WALK WITH EASE PARTICIPANTS BY PROGRAM

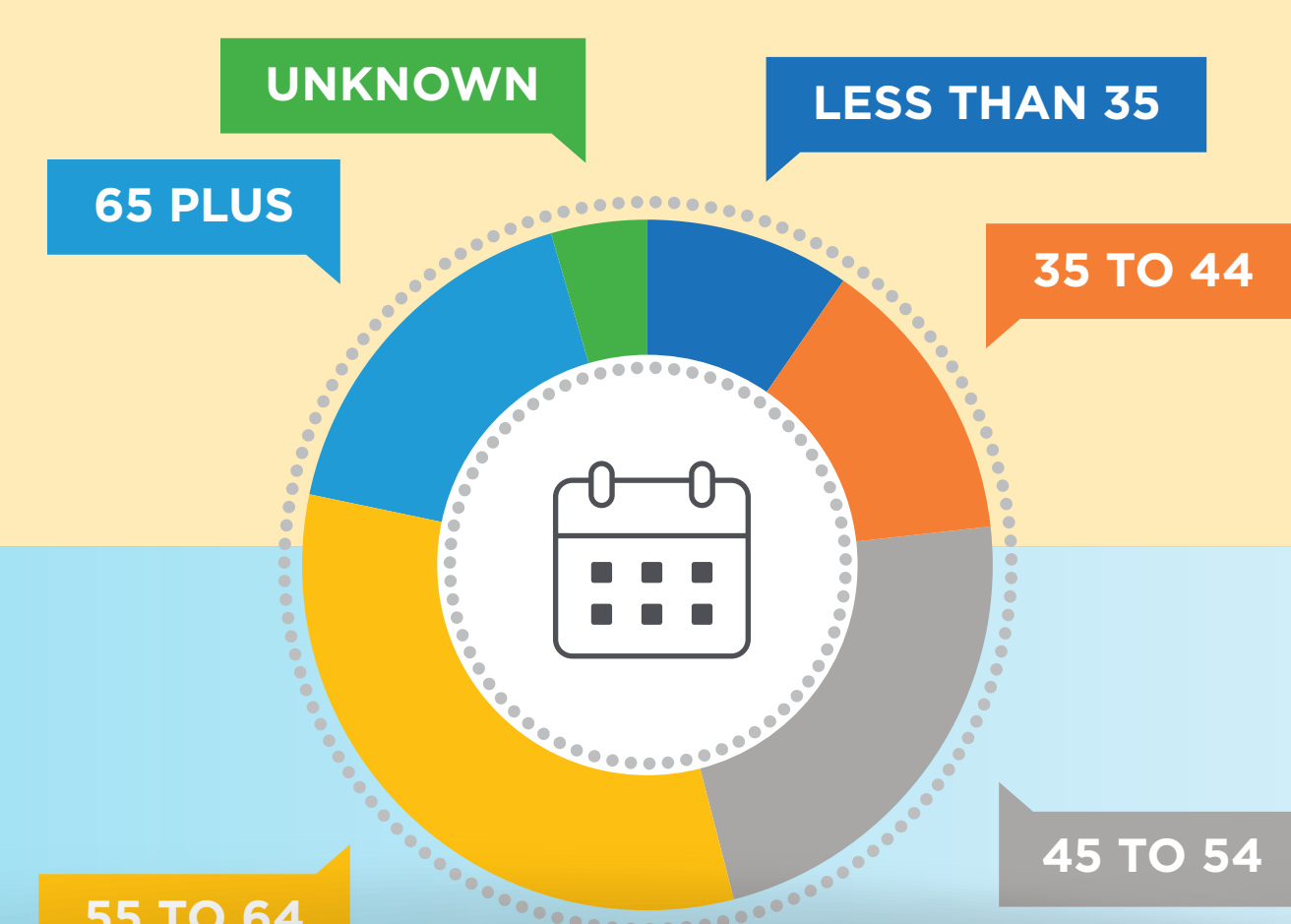


Those participating in Walk with Ease from 2013-2017—comparison of HCBD members v. "other" Montana Arthritis Program partner/site.

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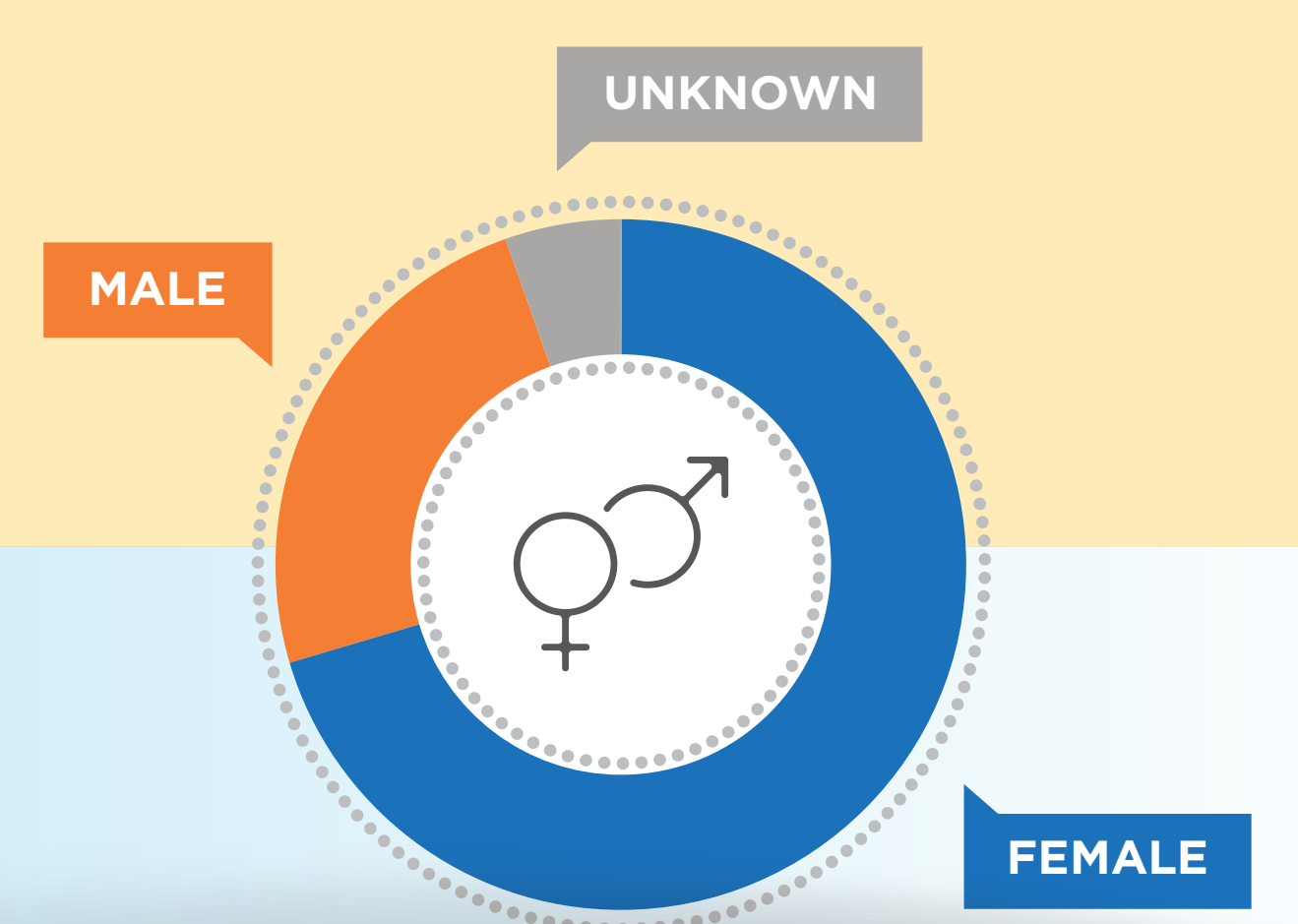
WALK WITH EASE PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

AGE DISTRIBUTION



Age distribution of those participating in Walk with Ease from 2013-2017.

GENDER



Identified gender of those who participated in Walk with Ease from 2013-2017.