

# *Epi-X*

## The Epidemic Information Exchange

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### Secure Communications During Public Health Emergencies

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# What is *Epi-X*?

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- *Epi-X* is CDC's only secure, privileged, moderated method of communication
- *Epi-X* was launched in December 2000
  - Report & respond to disease outbreaks (24/7)
  - Provide a secure, moderated, multi-directional method of communication
  - Limit membership to key public health personnel
  - Provide targeted content
  - Notify users about routine & emergent events



# *Epi-X Postings*

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- Reports of illness that suggest an ongoing or imminent health threat
- Contain provisional or complete information
- Standard reports
- Alerts
- EPI-AID Requests
- EPI-AID Trip Reports
- Human Subjects Review (HSR)
- EPI-AID Trip Reports



# *Epi-X Profile*

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- *Epi-X* had 2,577 users as of 1/6/2004
- 68% non-CDC users
  - State and local public health agencies
  - Other Federal agencies
  - International
- Over 3,450 posted reports



# *Epi-X* Use During SARS and Monkeypox

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- We assessed the use of *Epi-X* during the monkeypox and SARS public health emergencies by evaluating postings made during these two outbreaks.



# Methods

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- *Epi-X* report archives were searched for all reports containing the following terms
  - Monkeypox, monkey
  - SARS, chlamydia, atypical pneumonia and severe acute respiratory syndrome
- Variables collected included
  - Date of each report
  - Source of report
  - Type of report



# Methods

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- Dates of *Epi-X* postings were compared to news reports available to the public during the same time period by searching 3 online news sources
  - NYTimes.com
  - CNN.com
  - USAToday.com



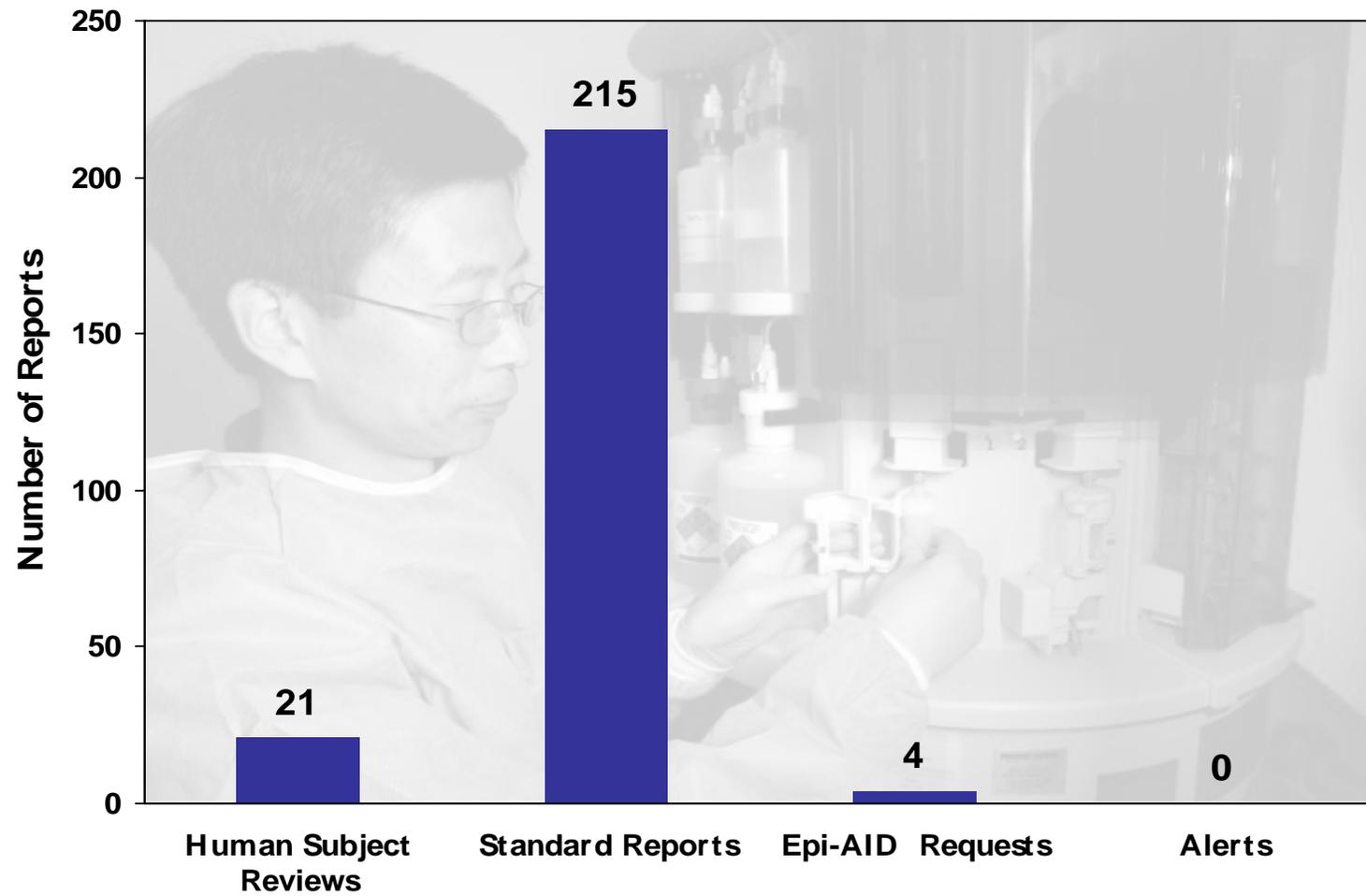
# Results - SARS

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- 240 SARS reports were posted
- Dates ranged from 2/12-10/12/2003
- SARS report types included:
  - 215 standard reports (3 were duplicates)
  - 21 human subjects review reports, and
  - 4 Epi-Aids
  - 0 Alerts
  - 0 Trip Reports



**SARS Reports on Epi-X by Type of Report**  
**Figure 1**



# Results - SARS

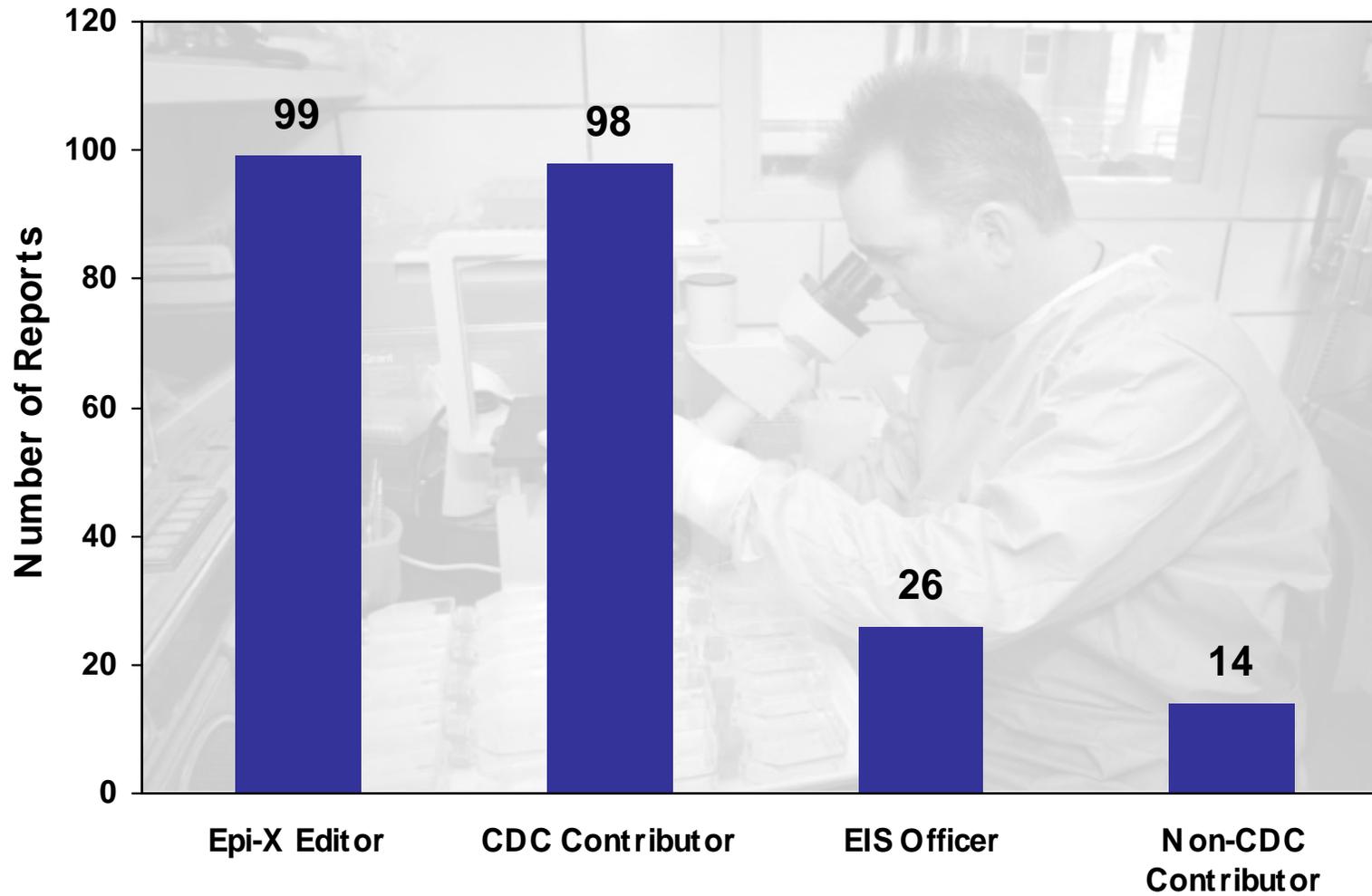
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- Of the 237 SARS standard reports
  - 99 (42%) submitted by *Epi-X*, 82 (83%) of these originated from WHO
  - 98 (41%) submitted by other CDC sources, of which 64 (65%) were advance reports of US SARS case counts
  - 26 (11%) submitted by EIS officers
  - 7 (3%) submitted by state and local health departments
  - 5 (2%) submitted by Health Canada
  - 2 (1%) from other sources



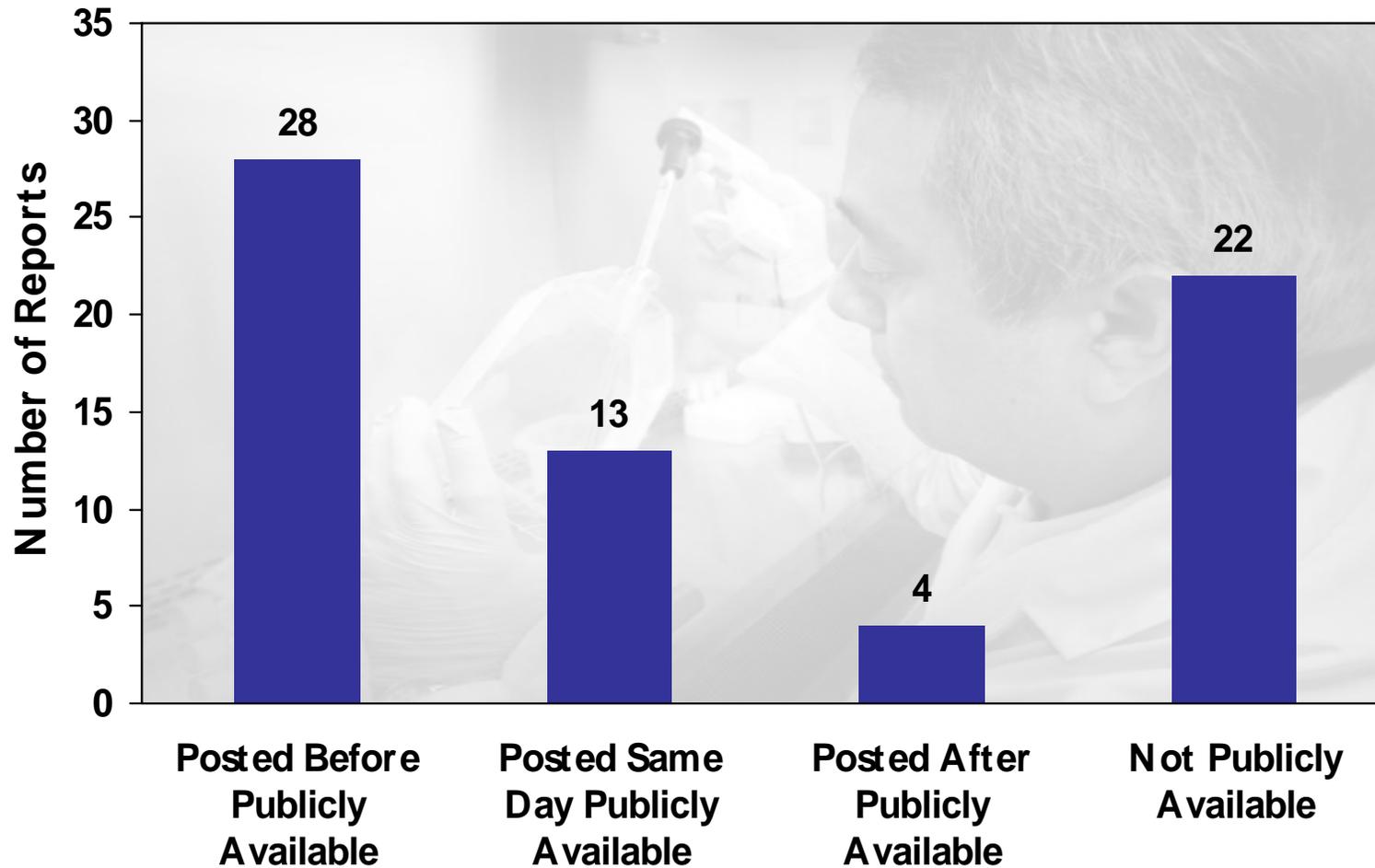
## SARS Reports on *Epi-X* by Contributor

Figure 2



# Timeframe for Posting SARS Reports on *Epi-X* (Excluding WHO Releases and Case Counts)

Figure 3



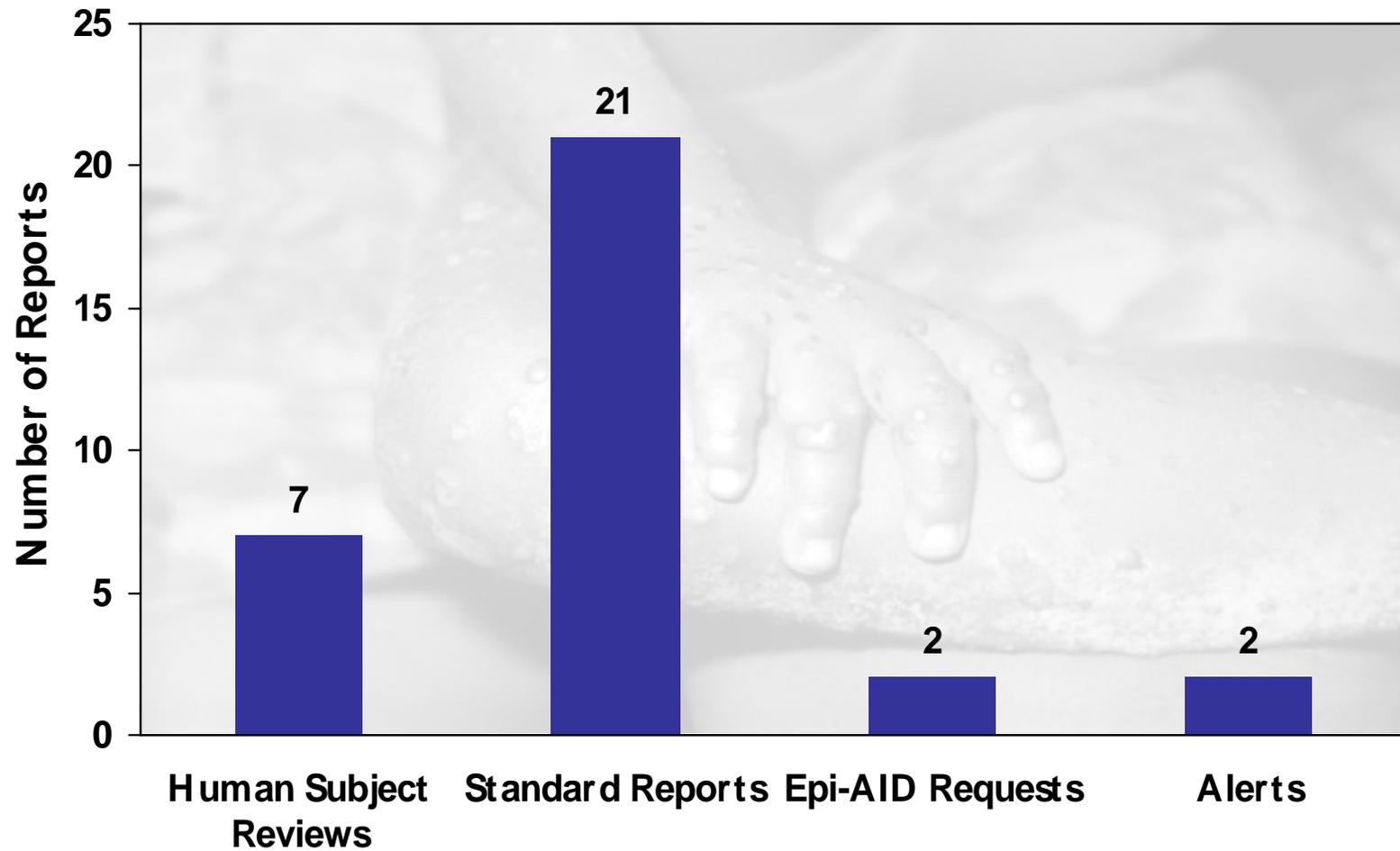
# Results - Monkeypox

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- 32 monkeypox reports were posted
- Dates ranged from 6/7 – 9/2/2003
- Monkeypox report types included:
  - 21 standard reports
  - 7 Human Subjects Review reports
  - 2 Epi-Aids
  - 2 Alerts
  - 0 Trip Reports



**Monkeypox Reports on *Epi-X* by Type of Report**  
**Figure 4**



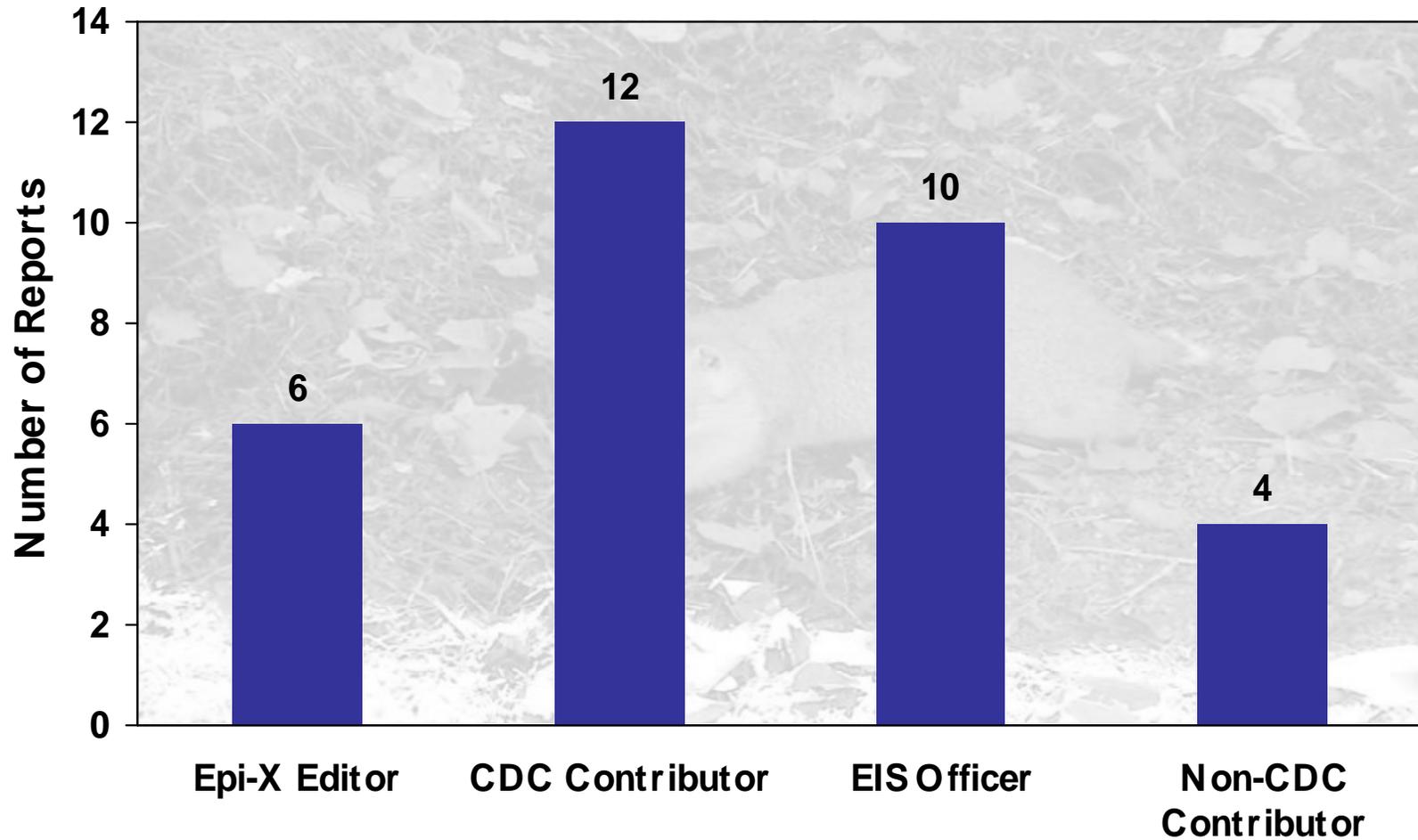
# Results - Monkeypox

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- The two alerts were to request input from state epidemiologists in development of policies and guidelines
- Half of the reports from CDC were guidelines and recommendations for interventions



**Monkeypox Reports on Epi-X by Contributor**  
**Figure 5**



# Results – Monkeypox

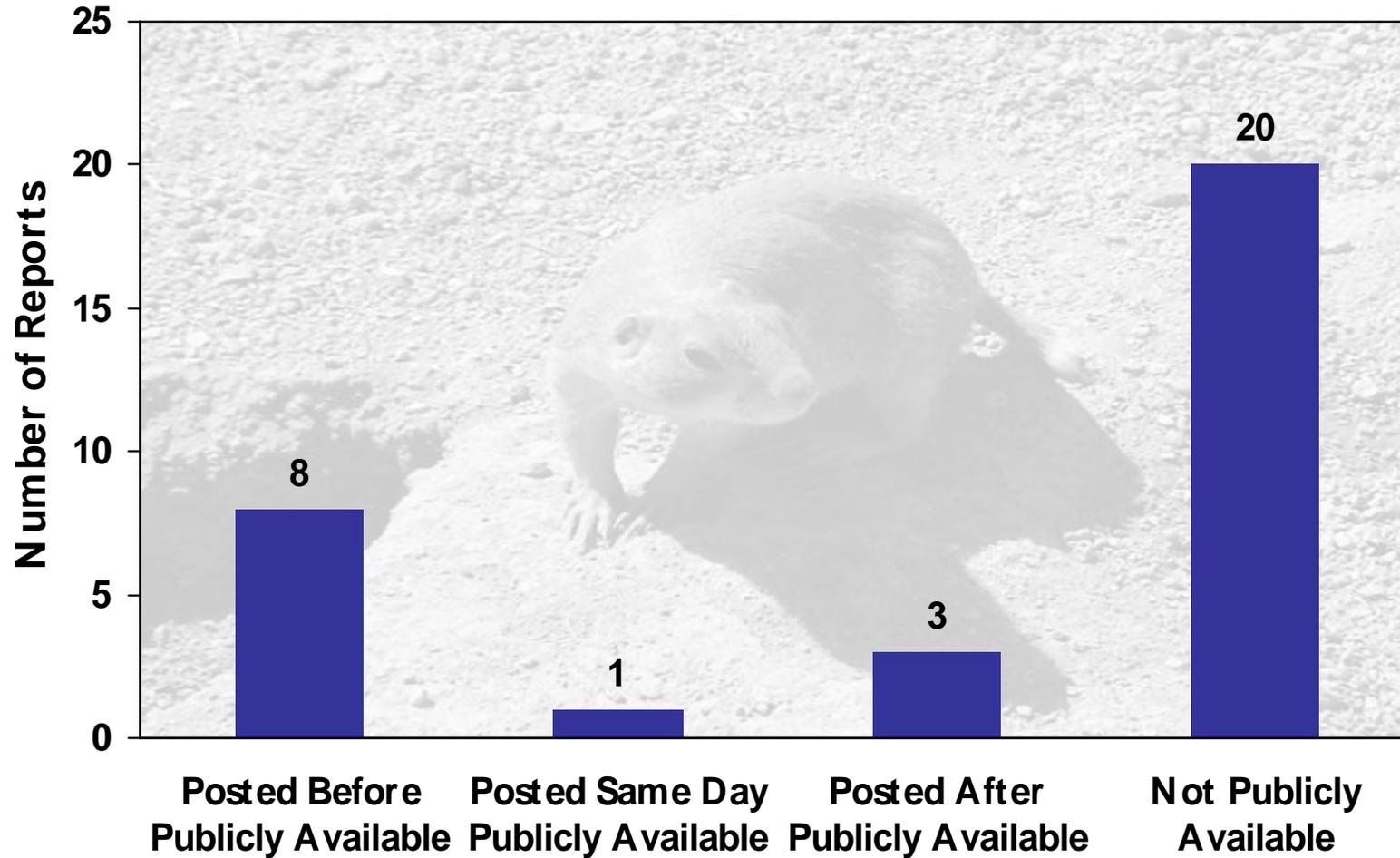
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- Twenty of 32 (63%) of monkeypox reports were **not** available outside of *Epi-X*
- Of 12 reports with publicly available information, 8 were posted before, 1 on the same day, and 3 after becoming publicly available



# Timeframe for Posting Monkeypox Reports on *Epi-X*

## Figure 6



# Limitations

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- Use of additional sources to collect information on public availability could have identified more public reports
- Don't know how information was used once it was received



# Conclusions

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- *Epi-X* provided timely, pertinent information during 2 major public health outbreaks
- *Epi-X* is an integral part of CDC's emergency communications plan
  - To exchange critical information
  - To obtain input from key public health officials
  - To improve public health response
  - To enhance decision making during emergencies
- *Epi-X* is a proven valuable tool uniting public health officials nationwide working on emergent and rapidly changing health issues



# To Contact *Epi-X*

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- Help desk
  - [Epixhelp@cdc.gov](mailto:Epixhelp@cdc.gov)
  - 877-GET-EPIX (877-438-3749)
- Editor on call pager
  - 888-259-0341

