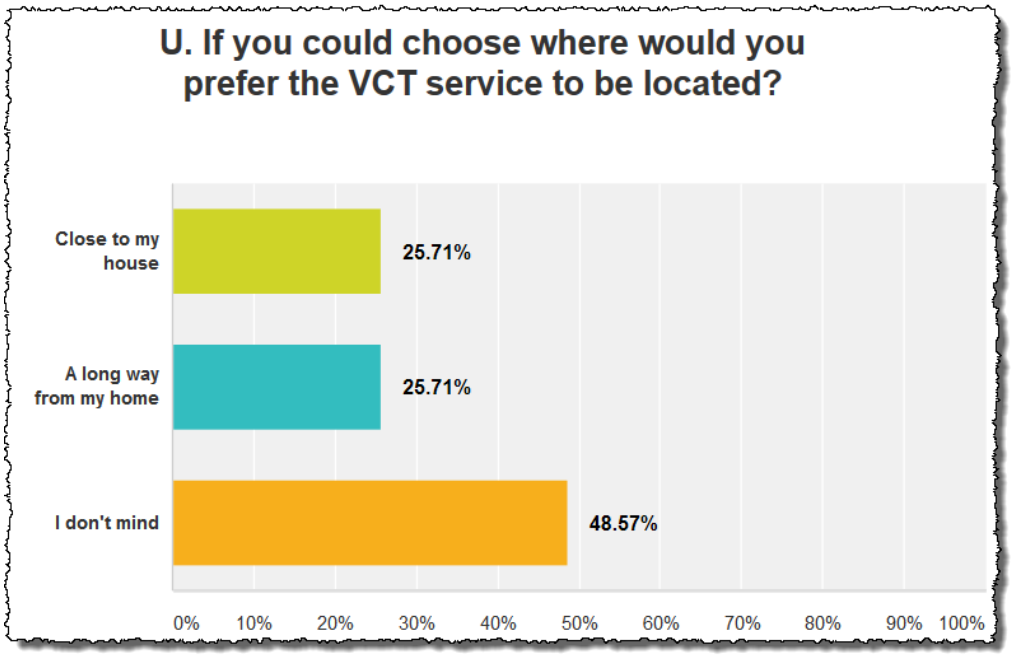
Questions to help interpret quantitative data

At inFocus we recommend using four simple questions when interpreting quantitative data in a chart, graph or table. We have included these questions to the right, along with examples of how to answer each question from an organisation running a HIV voluntary counselling and testing clinic.

We go into more detail on the steps to the right in our Impact measurement and management (IMM): Builder eLearning course:

Click here to view the course

inFocus



1 If you had to give an overall description of what is happening what would you say? Can you see any themes or patterns in the data?

e.g. around half of the respondents did not mind where the VCT service is located (49%) although there were a significant number of respondents who both wanted the VCT service to be located close to their house (26%) and a long way from their home (26%).

2 Are there any exceptions in the responses/anything that stands out?

e.g. we found it interesting that a significant number of respondents wanted the service to be located a long way from home.

3 Is this what you expected? Does this confirm or contradict our assumptions?

e.g. we were not expecting that a significant number of respondents wanted the service to be located a long way from home, we assume that this is because of the desire for greater anonymity in visiting the VCT service away from the client's communities.

4 What else would you like to know? What information would help you to understand the data further?

e.g. we would be interested to know more about why respondents wanted the service to be a long way from home and whether our assumptions above in question 3 were correct in relation to this.