

# TELUS Mental Health Index.

United States of America | November 2023



# Table of contents

1.	What you need to know for November 2023	3
2.	The Mental Health Index	5
	Mental health risk	6
	Mental Health Index sub-scores	7
	Anxiety	8
	Isolation	9
	Work productivity	10
	Managers compared to non-managers	11
	Mental health by gender and age	12
	Mental health by employment status	
	Emergency savings	

3. The Mental Health Index

by region
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Spotlight	16
Perception of co-workers	16
Kind vs. Hostile	17
Team-focused vs. Self-focused	18
Hard-working vs. Lazy	19
Trustworthy vs. Untrustworthy	20
Engaged vs. Apathetic	21
Accountable vs. Blaming	22
Adaptable vs. Rigid	23
Workplace recognition and trust	24
Work location and career advancement	28
Sleep	30
Primary emotion	33

# 6. Overview of the TELUS

5.

Mental Health Index	34
Methodology	34
Calculations	34
Additional data and analyses	34

# What you need to know for November 2023.

- 1. The number of workers with a high mental health risk is only slightly lower now than it was early in the pandemic.
- At 70.6, the mental health of workers is nearly unchanged from the previous month
- 23 percent of workers have a high mental health risk,
  41 percent have a moderate mental health risk, and
  36 percent have a low mental health risk
- Depression, work productivity, isolation, and financial risk sub-scores declined from October to November; anxiety and isolation continue to be the lowest mental health sub-scores for the 19th consecutive month
- The mental health score improved in the Northeast while scores in other regions declined compared to October 2023
- The mental health score of managers declined while the score for non-managers improved from October 2023
- Labourers have a lower mental health score than service industry and office workers

- 2. Generally, workers have positive perceptions of their co-workers; however, among workers who do not, mental health scores are significantly lower.
- The mental health score of 26 percent of workers who perceive co-workers as untrustworthy is at least 14 points lower than workers who perceive co-workers as trustworthy
- The mental health score of 20 percent of workers who perceive co-workers as hostile is at least 15 points lower than workers who perceive co-workers as kind
- The mental health score of 31 percent of workers who perceive co-workers as apathetic is at least 15 points lower than workers who perceive co-workers as engaged
- The mental health score of 31 percent of workers who perceive co-workers as blaming is at least 13 points lower than workers who perceive co-workers as accountable
- The mental health score of 32 percent of workers who perceive co-workers as rigid is at least 13 points lower than workers who perceive co-workers as adaptable
- The mental health score of 40 percent of workers who perceive co-workers as self-focused is at least 13 points lower than workers who perceive co-workers as team-focused



believe willingness to be in office will be a factor when considering promotions or raises

do not believe, or are unsure, the organization is utilizing their full abilities



dissatisfied with their sleep say worry about work contributes to sleep problems perceive their co-workers as untrustworthy



- The mental health score of 30 percent of workers who perceive co-workers as lazy is at least 12 points lower than workers who perceive co-workers as hard-working
- 3. Two-thirds of workers believe their organization is utilizing their full abilities.
- 20 percent do not believe their organization is utilizing their full abilities; 14 percent are unsure
- 18 percent do not feel recognized for their contribution to their organization; 16 percent are unsure
- 15 percent do not believe there is mutual trust between employees and management; 16 percent are unsure
- Nearly half of office/desk workers believe that a willingness to come into the office more frequently is/will be a factor when they, or others, are being considered for promotions, projects, or raises

- 4. More than one-quarter of workers are dissatisfied with their quality of sleep.
- 55 percent of workers say worry about personal issues contributes to their sleep issues
- 30 percent of workers say worry about work contributes to their sleep issues
- Women are more likely than men to say personal issues contributes to sleep problems





# The Mental Health Index.

#### The overall Mental Health Index (MHI) for November 2023 is 70.6.

The mental health of workers in the United States is nearly unchanged from the previous month.







## Mental health risk.

In November 2023, 23 percent of workers in the United States have a high mental health risk, 41 percent have a moderate mental health risk, and 36 percent have a low mental health risk. More than three years since the launch of the Index in April 2020, there has been little reduction (four percent) in high-risk workers.



Approximately 30 percent of workers in the high-risk group report diagnosed anxiety or depression, seven percent report diagnosed anxiety or depression in the moderate-risk group, and one percent of workers in the low-risk group report diagnosed anxiety or depression.



#### Mental Health Index sub-scores.

For 19 months, the lowest Mental Health Index sub-score continues to be anxiety (64.1). Isolation (66.9), depression (70.2), work productivity (70.3), optimism (71.5), and financial risk (73.8) follow. General psychological health (77.7) continues to be the most favourable mental health measure in November 2023.

- Anxiety and isolation have been the lowest mental health sub-scores for 19 consecutive months
- Depression, work productivity, isolation, and financial risk sub-scores declined from the prior month
- With a modest (0.2-point) improvement, general psychological health remains the strongest sub-score in November 2023

Mental Health Index Sub-scores	November 2023	October 2023
Anxiety	64.1	63.9
Isolation	66.9	67.5
Depression	70.2	70.6
Work productivity	70.3	70.5
Optimism	71.5	71.4
Financial risk	73.8	74.4
Psychological health	77.7	77.5





7

# Anxiety

The anxiety sub-score has shown an increasing trend since the launch of the Index in April 2020. Anxiety scores stabilized between April 2023 and June 2023, followed by a series of fluctuations through October. In November 2023, the anxiety score improved modestly; however, it continues to be the lowest across all mental health sub-scores for the 19th consecutive month.





## Isolation

Isolation sub-scores have fluctuated since the launch of index in April 2020. Following a significant increase in January 2023 wherein the isolation sub-score reached its peak, the isolation score has varied considerably. In November 2023, the isolation score declined nearly one point and remains the second lowest mental health sub-score for the 19th consecutive month.





# Work productivity

The work productivity sub-score measures the impact of mental health on work productivity and goals.

Despite alternating periods of increases and decreases, the work productivity sub-score has generally shown improvement since the launch of the MHI in April 2020. After reaching its peak in January 2023, the work productivity score has generally declined through September 2023. In November 2023, the work productivity score declined modestly from the prior month.





#### Managers compared to non-managers.

From January 2021 to May 2022, the mental health scores of managers have typically been lower than non-managers and lower than the overall American average. Since June 2022, managers have maintained a better mental health score than non-managers. In November 2023, the mental health score of managers (70.8) declined yet remains higher than non-managers (70.5) and the national average (70.6).





## Mental health by gender and age.

- Since the launch of the MHI, women have had significantly lower mental health scores than men. In November 2023, the mental health score of women is (68.4) compared to (72.9) for men
- Since April 2020, mental health scores have improved with age
- Differences in mental health scores between workers with and without children have been reported since the launch of the Index in April 2020. Three and a half years later, this pattern continues with a lower score for workers with at least one child (66.2) than workers without children (72.2)

## Mental health by employment status.

- Overall, three percent of respondents are unemployed<sup>1</sup> seven percent report reduced hours or reduced salary
- Workers reporting reduced salary compared to the prior month have the lowest mental health score (57.9), followed by workers reporting fewer hours than the prior month (62.0), individuals not currently employed (69.1), and workers with no change to salary or hours (71.3)
- Labourers have a lower mental health score (65.3) than service industry (70.6) and office workers (71.7)
- Managers have a higher mental health score (70.8) than non-managers (70.5)
- Respondents working for companies with more than 10,000 employees have the highest mental health score (72.9)
- Respondents working for companies with 51-100 employees have the lowest mental health score (68.4)



#### **Emergency savings**

• Workers without emergency savings continue to experience a lower score in mental health (52.8) than the overall group (70.6). Workers with emergency savings have a mental health score of 76.0

1 MHI respondents who have been employed in the past six months are included in the poll.



# The Mental Health Index by region.

From August 2021 to November 2022, the mental health scores in all regions of the United States followed a declining trend. Since February 2022, fluctuations have been observed in scores. Following a notable improvement in all regions in January 2023, the mental health of workers in all regions declined sharply in February 2023 and rebounded in March. Scores have fluctuated from April to October 2023. In November 2023, the mental health scores in all regions apart from the Northeast declined compared to the prior month.

- The mental health score in the Northeast (72.2) remains the strongest for the third consecutive month with a modest (0.5-point) increase
- Followed by a modest (0.4-point) decrease, the mental health score in the South (69.7) remains the lowest for the sixth consecutive month







Employment status	Nov. 2023	Oct. 2023
Employed (no change in hours/salary)	71.3	71.4
Employed (fewer hours compared to last month)	62.0	61.3
Employed (reduced salary compared to last month)	57.9	62.2
Not currently employed	69.1	68.8
Age group	Nov. 2023	Oct. 2023
Age 20-29	58.4	59.5
Age 30-39	64.0	62.3
Age 40-49	66.4	66.8
Age 50-59	69.7	71.1
Age 60-69	77.3	77.7
Number of children	Nov. 2023	Oct. 2023
No children in household	72.2	72.5
1 child	66.0	66.2
2 children	66.6	65.1
3 children or more	65.6	65.6

Region	Nov. 2023	Oct. 2023
Northeast	72.2	71.7
Midwest	70.2	70.8
South	69.7	70.1
West	70.5	70.7
Gender	Nov. 2023	Oct. 2023
Men	72.9	73.1
Women	68.4	68.5
Household income	Nov. 2023	Oct. 2023
<\$30K/annum	59.8	60.1
\$30K to <\$60K/annum	65.3	65.2
\$60K to <\$100K	70.7	70.7
\$100K to <\$150K	73.4	73.4
\$150K or more	77.7	78.7

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Employer size	Nov. 2023	Oct. 2023
Self-employed/sole proprietor	69.1	71.0
2-50 employees	70.6	71.1
51-100 employees	68.4	68.2
101-500 employees	71.0	70.3
501-1,000 employees	69.1	69.7
1,001-5,000 employees	71.8	71.5
5,001-10,000 employees	69.7	70.1
More than 10,000 employees	72.9	72.1
Manager	Nov. 2023	Oct. 2023
Manager	70.8	71.6
Non-manager	70.5	70.1
Work environment	Nov. 2023	Oct. 2023
Labour	65.3	66.7
Office/desk	71.7	71.8
Service	70.6	70.5

Numbers highlighted in pink are the lowest/worst scores in the group. Numbers highlighted in green are the highest/best scores in the group.

# The Mental Health Index by industry.

Employees working in Information and Cultural Industries have the lowest mental health score (60.4) in November 2023, followed by workers in Food Services (63.6), and Management of Companies and Enterprises (64.1).

Respondents working in Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (75.9), Public Administration (74.7), and Real Estate, Rental and Leasing (73.1) have the highest mental health scores this month.

Changes from the prior month are shown in the table.



Industry	November 2023	October 2023	Change
Food Services	63.6	59.1	4.5
Construction	71.4	69.0	2.4
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	67.3	66.0	1.4
Management of Companies and Enterprises	64.1	62.8	1.3
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	75.9	74.8	1.1
Other	69.6	68.8	0.8
Educational Services	73.0	72.2	0.8
Accommodation	68.1	67.6	0.6
Technology	72.0	71.7	0.3
Transportation and Warehousing	69.1	69.2	-0.1
Manufacturing	72.3	72.7	-0.3
Retail Trade	67.7	68.1	-0.4
Public Administration	74.7	75.1	-0.5
Administrative and Support services	64.7	65.2	-0.5
Information and Cultural Industries	60.4	61.7	-1.3
Health Care and Social Assistance	69.6	71.0	-1.4
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	73.1	74.5	-1.4
Finance and Insurance	72.9	74.6	-1.8
Media and Telecommunications	66.8	68.9	-2.1
Other services (except Public Administration)	70.7	73.1	-2.4
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	65.7	69.9	-4.2
Wholesale Trade	71.8	76.9	-5.1
Utilities	65.2	71.0	-5.7



# Spotlight

# Perception of co-workers.

Workers were asked to rate their perception of co-workers across seven descriptive areas on a scale from one to five, with opposite connotations. In the analysis, the opposite connotations were categorized based on what is commonly considered positive or negative.

While the majority of workers perceive their co-workers more positively, a large proportion perceive inconsistency or more negative traits:

- 40 percent perceive their co-workers as self-focused
- 32 percent perceive their co-workers as rigid
- 31 percent perceive their co-workers as blaming
- 31 percent perceive their co-workers as apathetic
- 30 percent perceive their co-workers as lazy
- 26 percent perceive their co-workers as untrustworthy
- 20 percent perceive their co-workers as hostile

Workers who perceive co-workers as trustworthy have a mental health score nearly 20 points higher than workers who see co-workers as untrustworthy.



#### The seven areas are:

Descriptor	Negative	Positive
1	Hostile	Kind
2	Self-focused	Team-focused
3	Lazy	Hard-working
4	Untrustworthy	Trustworthy
5	Apathetic	Engaged
6	Blaming	Accountable
7	Rigid	Adaptable



#### Detailed findings:

# Kind vs. Hostile.

- Four in five (80 percent) score their co-workers four or five, perceiving them as kind and 20 percent perceive inconsistency or hostility
- The mental health score of workers scoring their co-workers a five (kind) (77.9), is more than 15 points higher than workers scoring their co-workers a one (hostile) (62.7), and more than seven points higher than the national average (70.6)



#### Perception of co-workers: Kind vs. Hostile



#### MHI score by "Perception of co-workers: Kind vs. Hostile"





## Team-focused vs. Self-focused.

- Three in five (60 percent) score their co-workers four or five, perceiving them as team-focused and 40 percent perceive inconsistency or self-focused
- The mental health score of workers scoring their co-workers a five (team-focused) (79.7), is nearly 18 points higher than workers scoring their co-workers a one (self-focused) (61.9), and more than nine points higher than the national average (70.6)



#### Perception of co-workers: Team-focused vs. Self-focused



#### MHI score by "Perception of co-workers: Team-focused vs. Self-focused"





# Hard-working vs. Lazy.

- Seven in ten (70 percent) score their co-workers four or five, perceiving them as hard-working and 30 percent perceive inconsistency or laziness
- The mental health score of workers scoring their co-workers a five (hard-working) (77.2), is more than 18 points higher than workers scoring their co-workers a one (lazy) (58.7), and nearly seven points higher than the national average (70.6)

#### Perception of co-workers: Hard-working vs. Lazy



#### MHI score by "Perception of co-workers: Hard-working vs. Lazy"







# Trustworthy vs Untrustworthy.

- More than seven in ten (74 percent) score their co-workers four or five, perceiving them as trustworthy, and 26 percent perceive inconsistency or untrustworthiness
- The mental health score of workers scoring their co-workers a five (trustworthy) (77.7), is nearly 20 points higher than workers scoring their co-workers a one (not trustworthy) (57.9), and seven points higher than the national average (70.6)

#### Perception of co-workers: Trustworthy vs. Untrustworthy



#### MHI score by "Perception of co-workers: Trustworthy vs. Untrustworthy"







# Engaged vs. Apathetic.

- Nearly seven in ten (69 percent) score their co-workers four or five, perceiving them as engaged, and 31 percent perceive inconsistency or apathy
- The mental health score of workers scoring their co-workers a five (engaged) (78.6), is 20 points higher than workers scoring their co-workers a one (apathetic) (58.7), and eight points higher than the national average (70.6)



#### Perception of co-workers: Engaged vs. Apathetic



#### MHI score by "Perception of co-workers: Engaged vs. Apathetic"





## Accountable vs. Blaming.

- Nearly seven in ten (69 percent) score their co-workers four or five, perceiving them as accountable, and 31 percent perceive inconsistency or a tendency to blame
- The mental health score of workers scoring their co-workers a five (accountable) (78.0), is more than 18 points higher than workers scoring their co-workers a one (blaming) (59.6), and more than seven points higher than the national average (70.6)

#### Perception of co-workers: Accountable vs. Blaming



#### MHI score by "Perception of co-workers: Accountable vs. Blaming"







# Adaptable vs. Rigid.

- Seven in ten (70 percent) score their co-workers four or five, perceiving them as adaptable, and 30 percent perceive inconsistency or rigidity
- The mental health score of workers scoring their co-workers a five (adaptable) (78.1), is nearly 20 points higher than workers scoring their co-workers a one (rigid) (58.6), and more than seven points higher than the national average (70.6)

#### Perception of co-workers: Adaptable vs. Rigid



#### MHI score by "Perception of co-workers: Adaptable vs. Rigid"







# Workplace recognition and trust.

While 88 percent of workers understand how their work contributes to the purpose or mission of their organization, only 66 percent report being recognized for their contributions and 65 percent believe the organization is utilizing their full abilities.

Understanding how their work contributes to their organization's purpose has the strongest relationship to mental health scores, with workers who understand how their work contributes to their organization's purpose having a mental health score 17.5 points higher than workers who do not.

Seven in ten (70 percent) feel there is trust between employees and management and this group has a mental health score more than 10 points higher than 30 percent of workers who do not feel mutual trust.

#### **Detailed findings:**

Workers were asked whether they understand how their work contributes towards their organization's purpose or mission.

- Nearly nine in ten (88 percent) understand how their work contributes to their organization's purpose or mission; this group has the highest/best mental health score (72.6), more than two points higher than the national average (70.6)
- Over one in ten (12 percent) either disagree, or are unsure; this group has the lowest/worst mental health score, more than 17 points lower than workers who agree and more than 15 points lower than the national average (70.6)



#### I understand how my work contributes to my organization's purpose or mission



#### MHI score by "I understand how my work contributes to my organization's purpose or mission"





Workers were asked whether they feel recognized for their contributions to their organization.

- Two-thirds (66 percent) feel recognized for their contributions to their organization; this group has the highest/best mental health score (75.4), nearly five points higher than the national average (70.6)
- Nearly one in five (18 percent) do not feel recognized for their contributions to their organization; this group has the lowest/worst mental health score (60.3), 15 points lower than workers who agree and more than 10 points lower than the national average (70.6)
- Non-managers are 70 percent more likely than managers to disagree about feeling recognized for their contributions to their organization





#### MHI score by "I feel recognized for my contribution to my organization"







Workers were asked whether they believe their organization is utilizing their full abilities.

- Nearly two-thirds (65 percent) believe their organization is utilizing their full abilities; this group has the highest/best mental health score (75.4), nearly five points higher than the national average (70.6)
- One in five (20 percent) do not believe their organization is utilizing their full abilities; this group has the lowest/worst **mental health** score (61.5), nearly 14 points lower than workers who believe their organization is utilizing their full abilities, and more than nine points lower than the national average (70.6)



#### In my current role, I believe the organization is utilizing my full abilities



#### MHI score by "In my current role, I believe the organization is utilizing my full abilities"





Workers were asked whether there is mutual trust between employees and management.

- Seven in ten (70 percent) agree there is mutual trust between employees and management; this group has the highest/best mental health score (74.1), more than three points higher than the national average (70.6)
- Nearly one in six (15 percent) disagree there is mutual trust between employees and management; this group has the lowest/worst mental health score (61.8), more than 12 points below workers who agree (74.1) and nearly nine points below the national average (70.6)
- Workers who disagree there is mutual trust between employees and management have the lowest/worst isolation score (56.6), more than 14 points below workers who agree (70.9)



#### At my workplace, there is mutual trust between employees and management



#### MHI score by "At my workplace, there is mutual trust between employees and management"



#### Isolation score by "At my workplace, there is mutual trust between employees and management"





# Work location and career advancement.

Excluding those who cannot work remotely, the highest proportion of workers work from home by choice (17 percent). This group has the second highest/best mental health score (71.8), slightly lower than 17 percent working a hybrid model (72.0), and nearly two points higher than 16 percent working full-time at the jobsite due to company policy (70.0).

Nearly half (47 percent) of workers believe that a willingness to come into the office more frequently is/will be a factor when considering people for promotion/projects/raises. Managers are 70 percent more likely than non-managers to believe this is the case.

#### **Detailed findings:**

Workers were asked about their location of work.

- Seventeen percent work from home by choice, 17 percent work a hybrid model (jobsite and home), and 16 percent work from a jobsite because of company policy
- The highest/best mental health score (72.0) is among 17 percent working a hybrid model, more than one point higher than the national average (70.6)
- Six percent work from home because there isn't another option; the mental health score of this group is the lowest/ worst (63.8), nearly seven points lower than the national average (70.6)

#### Where are you currently working?



#### MHI score by "Where are you currently working?"





Office/desk workers were asked whether they believe a willingness to come into the office more frequently is/will be a factor when considering people for promotion/ projects/raises.

- Nearly half (47 percent) agree that a willingness to come into the office more frequently is/will be a factor when considering people for promotion/projects/raises
- More than one-quarter (26 percent) disagree that a willingness to come into the office more frequently is/will be a factor when considering people for promotion/ projects/raises
- Managers are 70 percent more likely than non-managers to agree that a willingness to come into the office more frequently is/will be a factor when considering people for promotion/projects/raises



At my company, I believe a willingness to come into the office more frequently is/will be a factor when considering people for promotions/projects/raises



MHI score by "At my company, I believe a willingness to come into the office more frequently is/will be a factor when considering people for promotions/projects/raises"





# Sleep

Two in five workers (40 percent) are not fully satisfied with the quality of their sleep, and 55 percent indicate that worry about personal issues contributes most to their disrupted sleep.

The worst/lowest mental health score (49.1) is among the 30 percent of workers reporting that worry about work is the most significant factor contributing to sleep issues; this score is more than 21 points lower than the national average (70.6).

The majority of workers (57 percent) do not do anything to address their sleep issues.

#### **Detailed findings:**

Workers were asked how satisfied they are with the quality of sleep they get.

- Three in five (60 percent) are satisfied with the quality of sleep they get; this group has the highest/best mental health score (76.9), more than six points higher than the national average (70.6)
- The lowest/worst mental health score (59.0) is among 26 percent of workers dissatisfied with the quality of sleep they get, nearly 18 points lower than workers satisfied with the quality of their sleep, and nearly 12 points lower than the national average (70.6)



#### Overall, how satisfied are you with the quality of sleep you get?



#### MHI score by "How satisfied are you with the quality of sleep you get?"





Workers dissatisfied with their sleep were asked about the factors that contribute to their sleep issues.

- More than half (55 percent) report that worry about personal issues is the factor that contributes most to their sleep issues, 30 percent report worry about work, and 13 percent report apnea as the factor that contributes most to their sleep issues
- The lowest/worst mental health score (49.1) is among 30 percent reporting worry about work as the most significant factor contributing to sleep issues; this score is more than 21 points lower than the national average (70.6)
- Women are 70 percent more likely than men to have sleep issues due to worry about personal issues

#### What factors contribute to your sleep issues?



#### MHI score by "What factors contribute to your sleep issues?"





Workers were asked whether they use sleep aids or do anything else to help with sleep.

- More than half (57 percent) do not do anything; this group has the highest/best mental health score (74.6) score, four points higher than the national average (70.6)
- One in six (16 percent) take melatonin supplements,
   15 percent use white noise, and 11 percent take nonprescription drugs to help with sleep
- The lowest/worst mental health score (58.0) is among seven percent of workers using prescription medication to help with sleep, nearly 13 points lower than the national average (70.6)

#### Do you use sleep aids or do anything else to help with sleep?



#### MHI score by "Do you use sleep aids or do anything else to help with sleep?"





# Primary emotion

Nearly one-third of workers (31 percent) report they experience a negative emotion most of the time (anger, apathy/indifference, disbelief, frustration, helplessness/hopelessness, worry/anxiety).

Workers were asked the primary emotion they are feeling most of the time.

- Nearly seven in ten (68 percent) report a positive emotion (calm, gratitude, happiness, and productive) and 31 percent report a negative emotion (anger, apathy/indifference, disbelief, frustration, helplessness/hopelessness, worry/anxiety)
- The most common positive emotion is calm (35 percent) whereas the most commonly reported negative emotion is worry/anxiety (14 percent)





#### MHI score by positive and negative emotions





# Overview of the TELUS Mental Health Index.

The mental health and wellbeing of a population is essential to overall health and work productivity. The Mental Health Index provides a measure of the current mental health status of employed adults. The increases and decreases in the MHI are intended to predict cost and productivity risks and inform the need for investment in mental health support by business and government.

## The Mental Health Index report has two parts:

- 1. The overall Mental Health Index (MHI).
- 2. A spotlight section that reflects the specific impact of current issues in the community.

# Methodology

Data for this report is collected through an online survey of 5,000 people who live in the United States and are currently employed or who were employed within the prior six months. Participants are selected to be representative of the age, gender, industry, and geographic distribution in the United States. Respondents are asked to consider the prior two weeks when answering each question. Data for the current report was collected between November 6 and November 14, 2023.

#### Calculations

To create the Mental Health Index, a response scoring system is applied to turn individual responses into point values. Higher point values are associated with better mental health and less mental health risk. The sum of scores is divided by the total number of possible points to generate a score out of 100. The raw score is the mathematical mean of the individual scores. Distribution of scores is defined according to the following scale: **Distressed 0 - 49 Strained 50-79 Optimal 80 - 100** 

# Additional data and analyses.

Demographic breakdowns of sub-scores, and specific cross-correlational and custom analyses, are available upon request. Benchmarking against the national results or any sub-group is available upon request. Contact MHI@telushealth.com







www.telushealth.com

