



# TELUS Mental Health Index.

Canada | December 2024

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# What you need to know for December 2024.

More than one in three workers have a high mental health risk, with anxiety and isolation remaining the **lowest mental health sub-scores** for nearly three years.

- At 63.5, the mental health of workers is nearly unchanged from November
- 36 per cent of workers have a high mental health risk, 41 per cent have a moderate mental health risk, and 23 per cent have a low mental health risk
- Anxiety, depression, work productivity, and isolation sub-scores have declined from November
- Anxiety and isolation remain the lowest mental health sub-scores for nearly three years
- Mental health scores have declined in British Columbia, Manitoba, and the Maritimes, whereas scores in other provinces have improved from August
- The mental health score of managers continues to be higher than the score of non-managers
- Labourers continue to have a lower mental health score than service industry and office workers



Fewer than half of workers are satisfied with their employer's mental health coverage; three-quarters **believe it is important for their employer** to provide generous/comprehensive mental health benefits.

- 45 per cent of workers are satisfied with their employer's coverage for mental health services
- 12 per cent of workers are dissatisfied with their employer's coverage for mental health services; this group has a mental health score more than 16 points lower than satisfied workers and nearly 13 points lower than the national average
- Women are nearly twice as likely as men to be dissatisfied with their employer's mental health coverage
- 40 per cent of workers say that if their employer reduced mental health benefits, it would somewhat impact their ability to pay for services
- 17 per cent of workers say that if their employer reduced mental health benefits, they would not be able to afford services beyond what is covered
- Younger workers (under 40), women, and parents are more likely to have experienced stigma related to treatment for mental health



Among workers taking prescription medication, more than one in five struggles with affordability.

- 66 per cent of workers indicate that they always follow their prescribed medication dosage and schedule
- 29 per cent of workers mostly follow their prescribed medication dosage and schedule
- Of 33 per cent of workers who don't always adhere to their prescribed medication regimen, 12 per cent cite affordability as the reason. This group's mental health score is nearly 24 points lower than the Canadian average
- 18 per cent of workers say the cost of their prescription medication is sometimes a financial strain; a further 3 per cent say it is a significant financial burden

Workers who rarely or never engage in social interactions have a mental health score 16 points lower than workers who engage daily or several times per week and 12 points lower than the Canadian average.

- 60 per cent of workers engage in social interactions daily or several times per week; 23 per cent of workers engage in social interactions weekly
- 17 per cent of workers rarely/never engage in social interactions
- 32 per cent of workers would prefer more social contact
- Mental health scores are higher among workers who communicate through video, telephone, or in-person compared with workers using text-based communication such as emails and text messaging

Parents and younger workers (under 40) are at least twice as likely to be taking Ozempic or another semaglutide medication for weight loss; these groups are also more likely to use vitamins or supplements for mood/mental health support.

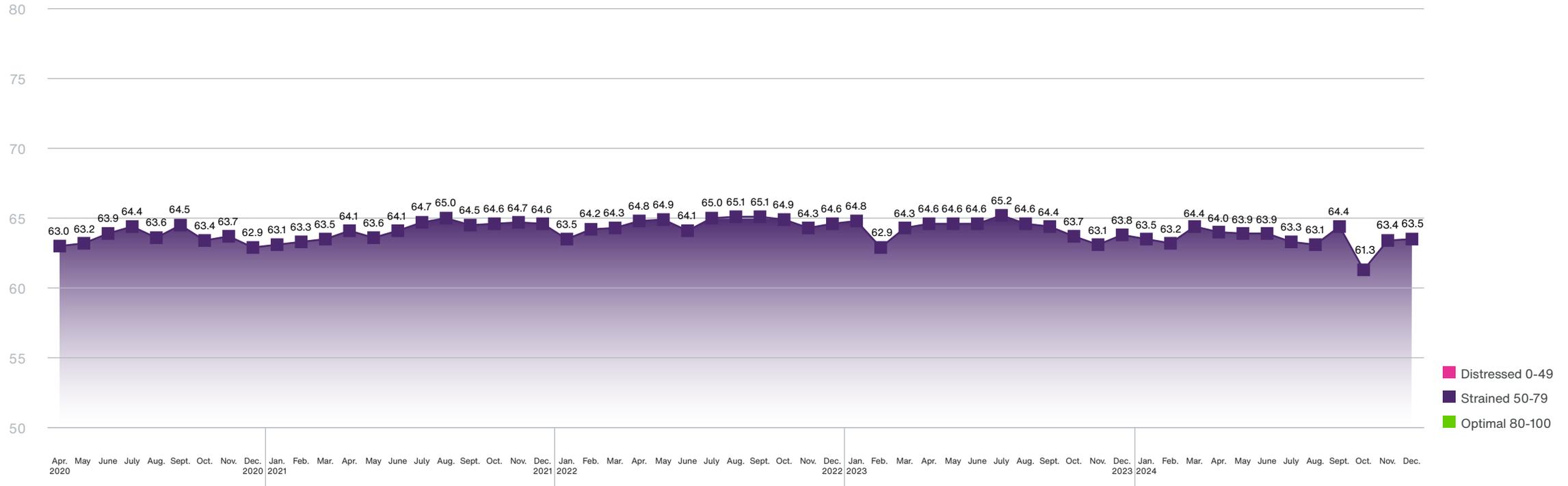
- 52 per cent of workers don't know whether their employer covers the cost of weight loss medications, but 34 per cent would support their employer covering this cost
- 65 per cent of workers take vitamins or supplements regularly
- 43 per cent of workers use vitamins or supplements to top up on nutrients that are lacking in their diets
- 16 per cent of workers use vitamins or supplements for sleep support
- 16 per cent of workers use vitamins or supplements for mood/mental health support

# The Mental Health Index.

MHI Current Month December 2024	November 2024
63.5	63.4

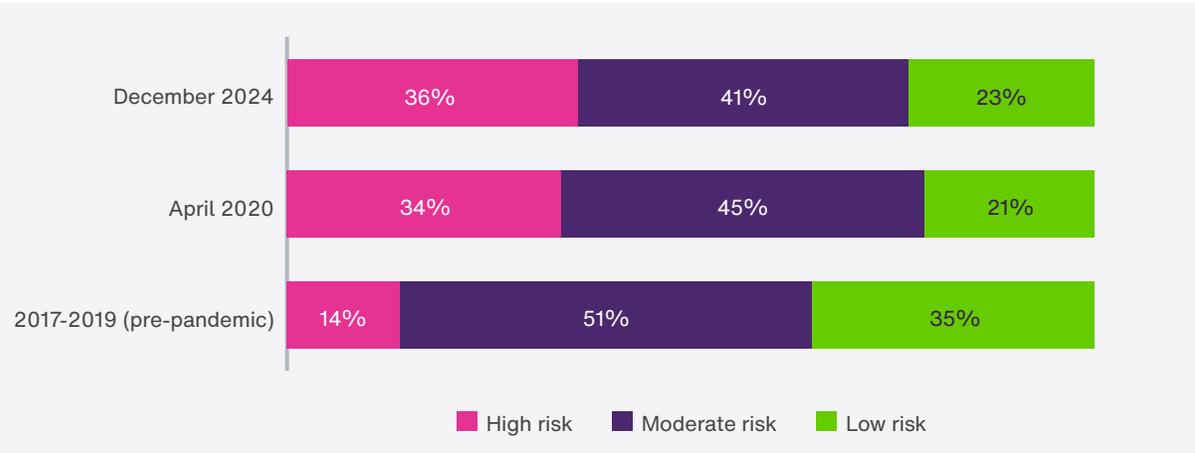
The overall Mental Health Index (MHI) for December 2024 is 63.5.

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



## Mental health risk.

In December 2024, 36 per cent of workers have a high mental health risk, 41 per cent have a moderate mental health risk, and 23 per cent have a low mental health risk. Nearly five years after the launch of the MHI in April 2020, the proportion of workers with a high mental health risk has increased by two per cent.



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

## Mental Health Index sub-scores.

For nearly three years, anxiety (56.8) has been the lowest Mental Health Index sub-score. Isolation (59.1), depression (61.6), work productivity (62.7), optimism (65.9), and financial risk (66.7) follow. General psychological health (71.5) remains the most favourable mental health measure in December 2024.

- Anxiety and isolation have been the lowest mental health sub-scores for nearly three years
- Anxiety, depression, work productivity, and isolation sub-scores have declined from the prior month

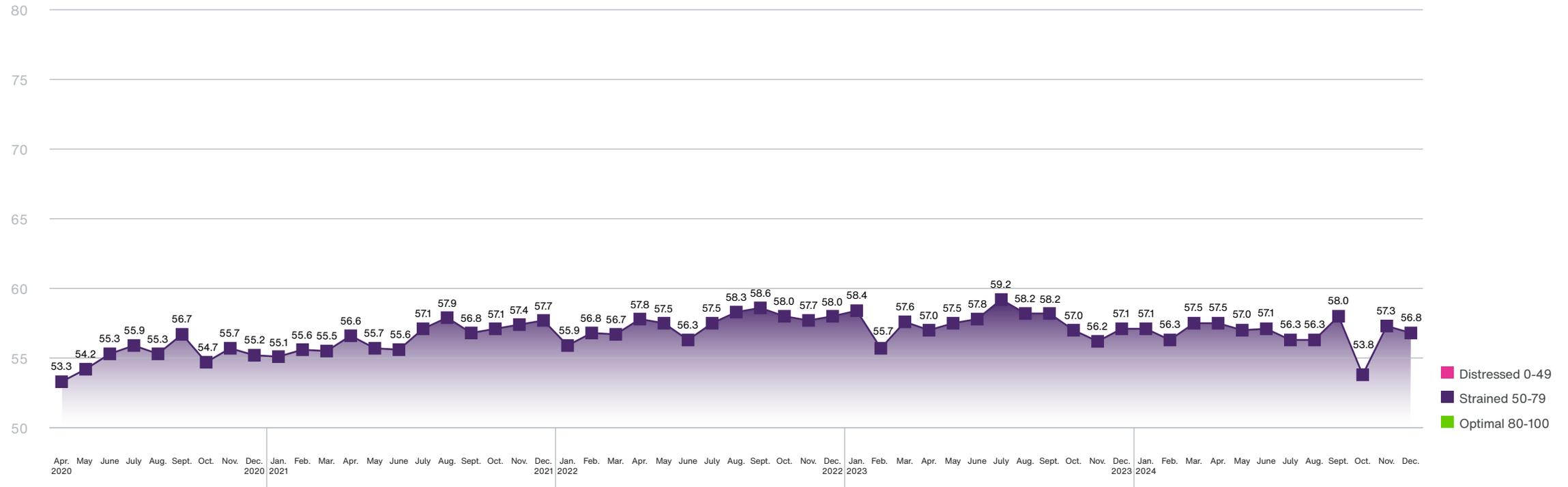
Mental Health Index Sub-scores	December 2024	November 2024
Anxiety	56.8	57.3
Isolation	59.1	59.5
Depression	61.6	61.8
Work productivity	62.7	63.1
Optimism	65.9	65.0
Financial risk	66.7	66.6
Psychological health	71.5	71.2



## Anxiety

Workers were asked whether they often feel unsettled and nervous.

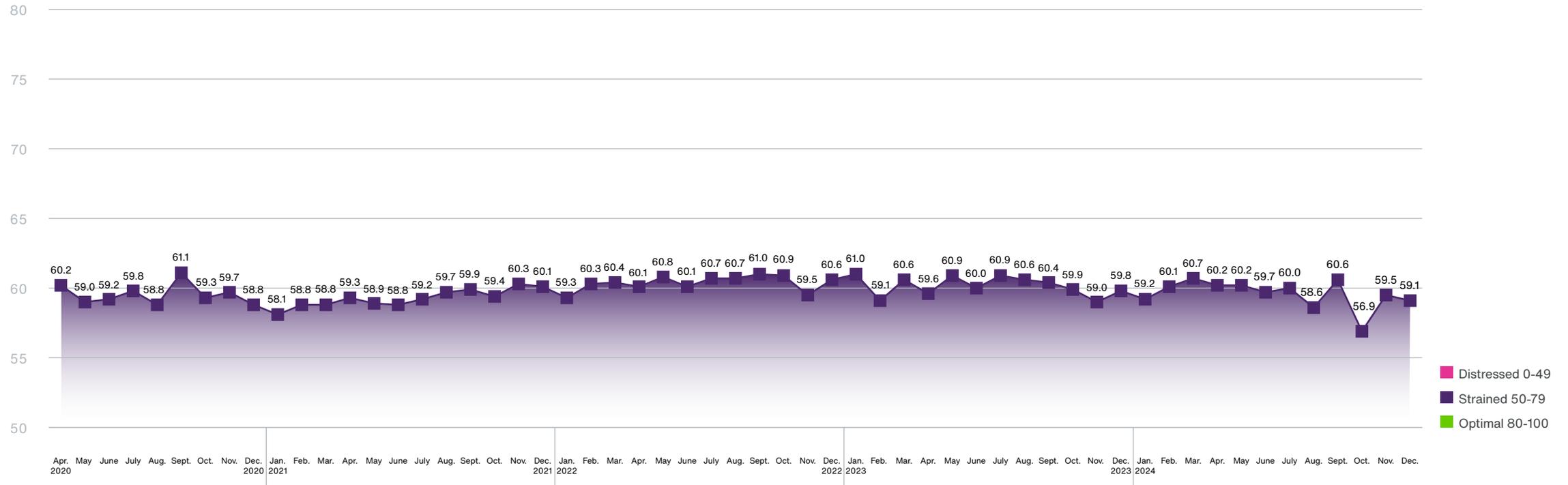
After peaking in July 2023, the anxiety sub-score declined through October 2024; however, a notable turnaround was observed in November with a significant 3.5-point increase. The anxiety sub-score has declined modestly in December and remains the lowest among all mental health sub-scores for nearly three years.



## Isolation

Workers were asked whether they often feel alone.

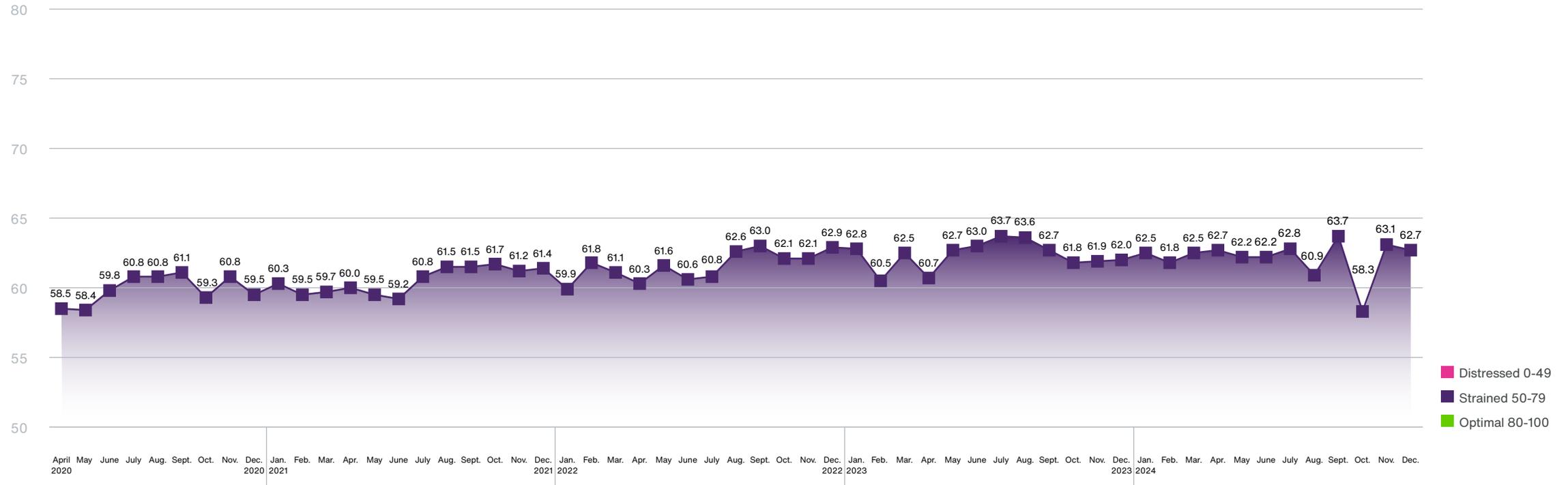
The isolation sub-score gradually improved despite fluctuating periods from April 2020 to October 2022. Ongoing volatility with no clear trend was observed from November 2022 through September 2024. After falling to its lowest point in October 2024, the isolation sub-score rebounded in November. The isolation sub-score declines in December and remains the second-lowest mental health sub-score for nearly three years.



## Work productivity

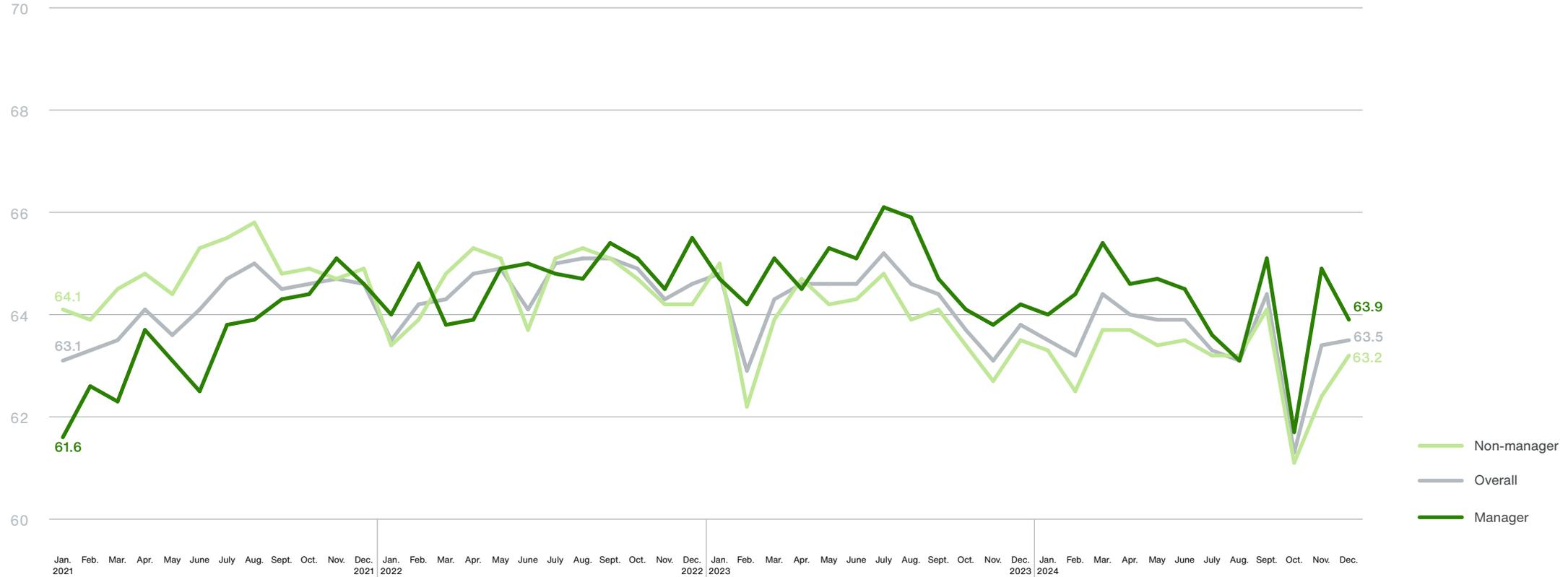
The work productivity sub-score measures the impact of mental health on work productivity and goals.

Overall, the impact of mental health on work productivity has shown general improvement, suggesting that the adverse effects of mental health on work productivity have slowly decreased. After peaking in July 2023, the work productivity score declined through August 2024. In October 2024, a significant 5.4-point reduction was recorded, bringing the score to its lowest point since the launch of the MHI in April 2020. However, like other sub-scores, the work productivity score rebounded with a 4.8-point increase in November, followed by a modest decline in December 2024.



## Managers compared to non-managers.

From January to October 2021, managers in Canada had lower mental health scores than both non-managers and the Canadian average. Between November 2021 and January 2023, the mental health scores of managers and non-managers converged. In February 2023, non-managers experienced a significant decline in their mental health, and since then, managers have had higher scores than non-managers. In December 2024, the mental health score of managers has declined, yet it continues to be higher than the score for non-managers and the national average.



## Mental health by gender and age.

- Since the launch of the MHI, women have had significantly lower mental health scores than men. In December 2024, the mental health score of women is 61.0 compared to 66.0 for men
- Since April 2020, mental health scores have improved with age
- Differences in mental health scores between workers with and without minor children have been reported since the launch of the MHI in April 2020. Nearly five years later, this pattern continues with a lower score for workers with at least one child (60.3) than workers without children (64.9)

## Mental health by employment status.

- Overall, four per cent of respondents are unemployed<sup>1</sup> and eight per cent report reduced hours or reduced salary
- Workers reporting reduced salary compared to the previous month have the lowest mental health score (46.9), followed by workers reporting fewer hours than the last month (55.2), respondents not currently employed (60.5), and workers with no change to salary or hours (64.4).
- Labourers have a lower mental health score (62.6) than service industry (63.2) and office workers (64.0)
- Managers have a higher mental health score (63.9) than non-managers (63.2)
- Self-employed/sole proprietors have the highest mental health score (65.8)
- Respondents working for companies with 51-100 employees have the lowest mental health score (60.9)



## Emergency savings

- Workers without emergency savings continue to experience a lower mental health score (47.2) than the overall group 63.5. Workers with emergency savings have a mental health score of 69.7

<sup>1</sup> MHI respondents employed in the past six months are included in the poll.

## The Mental Health Index by province.

In December 2024, mental health scores in British Columbia, Manitoba, and the Maritimes have declined whereas scores in other provinces have improved from November 2024.

- The Maritimes has the lowest mental health score (60.8) in December, down 2.4 points from November
- Saskatchewan has seen the most significant improvement and has the highest mental health score (66.6) in December, up 2.1 points from November



Province	December 2024	November 2024	Change
Saskatchewan	66.6	64.5	2.1
Quebec	63.3	62.1	1.2
Newfoundland and Labrador	66.1	65.6	0.5
Alberta	62.7	62.4	0.3
Ontario	63.6	63.5	0.1
British Columbia	63.9	64.0	-0.1
Manitoba	64.7	65.3	-0.6
The Maritimes	60.8	63.2	-2.4

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

Employment status	Dec. 2024	Nov. 2024
Employed (no change in hours/salary)	64.4	64.3
Employed (fewer hours compared to last month)	55.2	52.9
Employed (reduced salary compared to last month)	46.9	51.2
Not currently employed	60.5	64.4

Age group	Dec. 2024	Nov. 2024
Age 20-29	55.1	52.1
Age 30-39	57.7	57.0
Age 40-49	59.6	60.6
Age 50-59	64.3	65.0
Age 60-69	73.0	73.1

Number of children	Dec. 2024	Nov. 2024
No children in household	64.9	64.7
1 child	60.4	59.8
2 children	60.5	61.8
3 children or more	59.7	61.5

Gender	Dec. 2024	Nov. 2024
Men	66.0	66.4
Women	61.0	60.8

Household income/annum	Dec. 2024	Nov. 2024
<\$30K	53.9	54.5
\$30K to <\$60K	59.2	59.3
\$60K to <\$100K	62.4	61.7
\$100K to <\$150K	65.8	66.0
\$150K or more	69.3	69.2

Employer size	Dec. 2024	Nov. 2024
Self-employed/sole proprietor	65.8	65.8
2-50 employees	63.5	64.2
51-100 employees	60.9	59.5
101-500 employees	63.0	63.7
501-1,000 employees	61.6	58.7
1,001-5,000 employees	63.7	65.4
5,001-10,000 employees	62.6	62.1
More than 10,000 employees	65.2	64.7

Manager	Dec. 2024	Nov. 2024
Manager	63.9	64.9
Non-manager	63.2	62.4

Work environment	Dec. 2024	Nov. 2024
Labour	62.6	63.6
Office/desk	64.0	63.9
Service	63.2	62.3

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.

Workers in Food Services have the lowest mental health score (55.6), followed by workers in Administrative and Support services (55.7), and Utilities (56.1).

Workers in the Automotive Industry (72.3), Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (67.8), and Manufacturing (67.2) have the highest mental health scores this month.



Industry	December 2024	November 2024	Change
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	64.1	60.9	3.2
Wholesale Trade	65.6	62.9	2.7
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	61.8	59.1	2.7
Administrative and Support services	55.7	53.3	2.4
Other services (except Public Administration)	65.7	63.8	1.9
Automotive Industry	72.3	70.4	1.9
Manufacturing	67.2	65.8	1.4
Educational Services	65.6	64.2	1.4
Health Care and Social Assistance	61.5	60.5	1.0
Finance and Insurance	63.7	62.9	0.8
Public Administration	66.5	65.7	0.8
Technology	64.8	64.5	0.3
Construction	63.5	63.6	-0.1
Warehousing	60.2	60.4	-0.2
Retail Trade	62.7	63.1	-0.4
Other	61.9	62.8	-0.9
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	67.8	69.0	-1.2
Transportation	66.2	67.4	-1.2
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	64.9	66.2	-1.3
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	66.7	68.2	-1.5
Food Services	55.6	58.8	-3.2
Media and Telecommunications	58.2	62.6	-4.4
Accommodation	60.3	65.0	-4.7
Management of Companies and Enterprises	62.2	68.3	-6.1
Utilities	56.1	63.0	-6.9
Information and Cultural Industries	57.6	65.7	-8.1

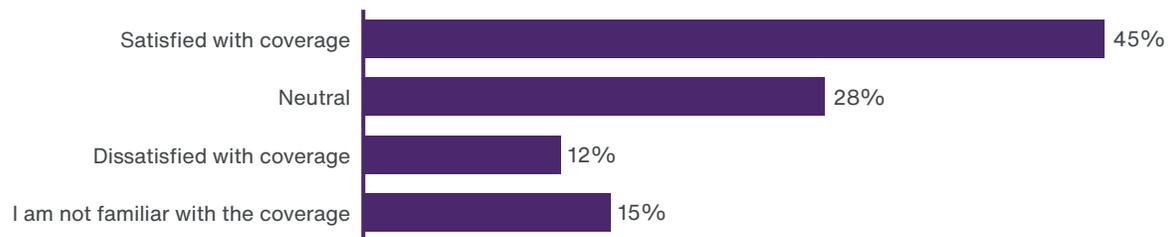
# Spotlight

## Employer coverage for mental health support.

**Fewer than half of workers are satisfied with their employer’s mental health coverage.**

- Nearly half (45 per cent) of workers are satisfied with their employer’s coverage for mental health services; this group has the highest mental health score (67.3), nearly four points higher than the national average (63.5)
- More than one in ten (12 per cent) are dissatisfied with their employer’s coverage for mental health services; this group has the lowest mental health score (50.9), more than 16 points lower than satisfied workers (67.3) and nearly 13 points lower than the national average (63.5)
- Women are nearly twice as likely as men to be dissatisfied with their employer’s coverage for mental health services

How satisfied are you with the coverage for mental health services provided by your employer?



MHI score by “How satisfied are you with the coverage for mental health services provided by your employer?”



**Three-quarters of workers believe it is important for their employer to provide generous/comprehensive mental health benefits.**

- The mental health score (62.9) of 75 per cent of workers reporting that it is important for their employer to provide generous/comprehensive mental health benefits is nearly 12 points lower than workers who say it is not important (74.6)



**How important is it to you that your employer provides generous/comprehensive mental health benefits?**



**MHI score by “How important is it to you that your employer provides generous/comprehensive mental health benefits?”**



**Nearly three in five workers depend on employer benefits to afford mental health care.**

- More than two in five (44 per cent) workers say a reduction in benefits would not impact their use of mental health services; this group has the highest mental health score (71.0), more than seven points higher than the national average (63.5)
- Workers over 50 are 60 per cent more likely to say that a reduction in benefits would not impact their use of or ability to pay for mental health services
- Two in five (40 per cent) say a reduction in benefits would somewhat impact their ability to pay for mental health services, and 17 per cent would not be able to afford mental health services beyond what is covered should their employer reduce benefits
- The mental health score of 17 per cent of workers who would not be able to afford mental health services beyond what is covered (53.7) is nearly 10 points lower than the national average (63.5)

**If your employer reduced mental health benefits, how much would it impact your use of services?**



**MHI score by “If your employer reduced mental health benefits, how much would it impact your use of services”**



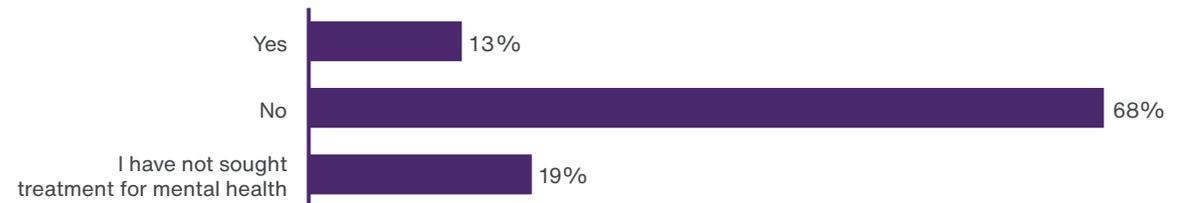
## Mental health treatment stigma.

**Younger workers, women, and parents are more likely to have experienced stigma related to treatment for mental health.**

- Nearly seven in ten (68 per cent) workers have never experienced stigma related to treatment for mental health; this group has a mental health score (66.3) nearly three points higher than the national average (63.5)
- Nearly one in seven (13 per cent) have experienced stigma related to treatment for mental health; this group has the lowest mental health score (45.1), more than 21 points lower than workers who have never experienced stigma related to treatment for mental health (66.3) and more than 18 points lower than the national average (63.5)
- Workers under 40 are nearly two and a half times more likely than workers over 50 to have experienced stigma related to treatment for mental health
- Women are 60 per cent more likely than men to have experienced stigma related to treatment for mental health
- Parents are 50 per cent more likely than non-parents to have experienced stigma related to treatment for mental health
- Workers over 50 are 60 per cent more likely than workers under 40 to have not sought treatment for mental health
- Non-parents are 50 per cent more likely than parents to have not sought treatment for mental health



### Have you ever experienced stigma related to treatment for mental health?



### MHI score by “Have you ever experienced stigma related to treatment for mental health?”



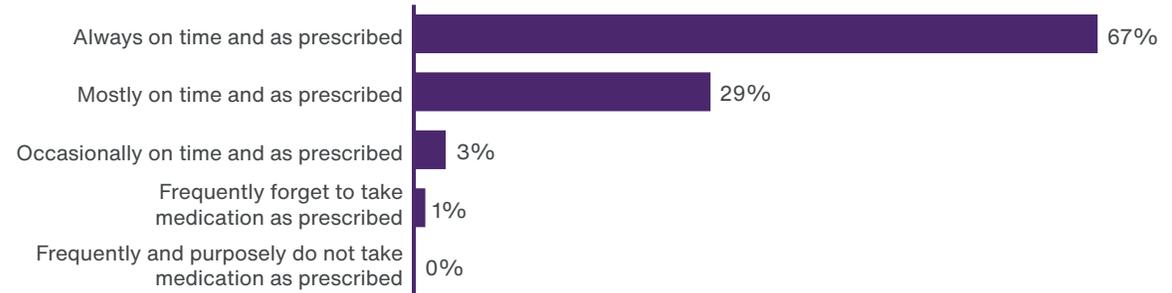
# Medication adherence

Among 47 per cent of workers taking prescription medication, only two-thirds always follow the prescribed dosage and schedule.

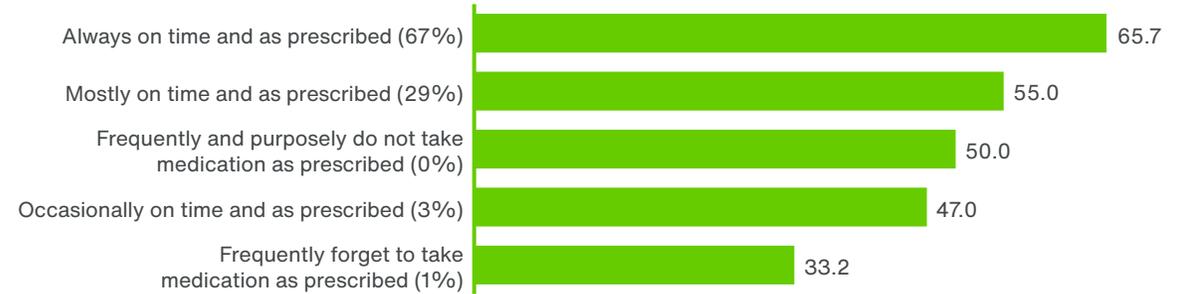
- The mental health score of workers who always take their medication on time and as prescribed (65.7) is more than two points higher than the national average (63.5)
- Workers over 50 are 40 per cent more likely than workers under 40 to always take medication on time and as prescribed



How consistently do you follow the prescribed dosage and schedule of your medication(s)?



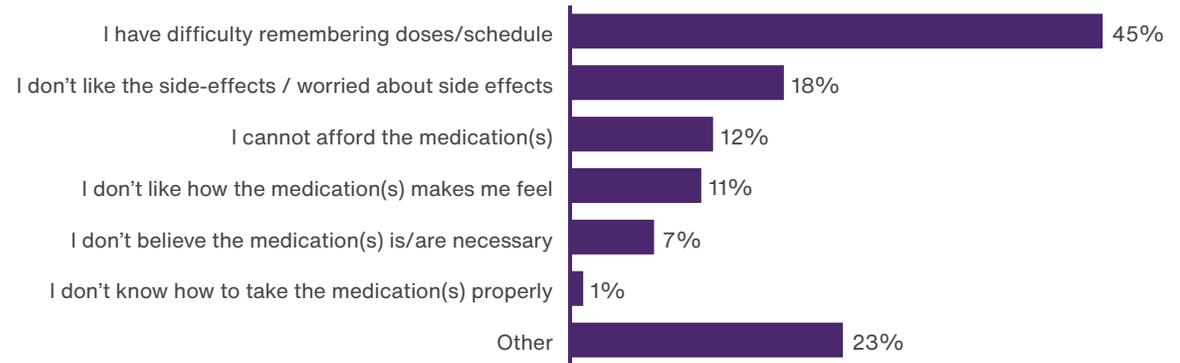
MHI score by “How consistently do you follow the prescribed dosage and schedule of your medication(s)?”



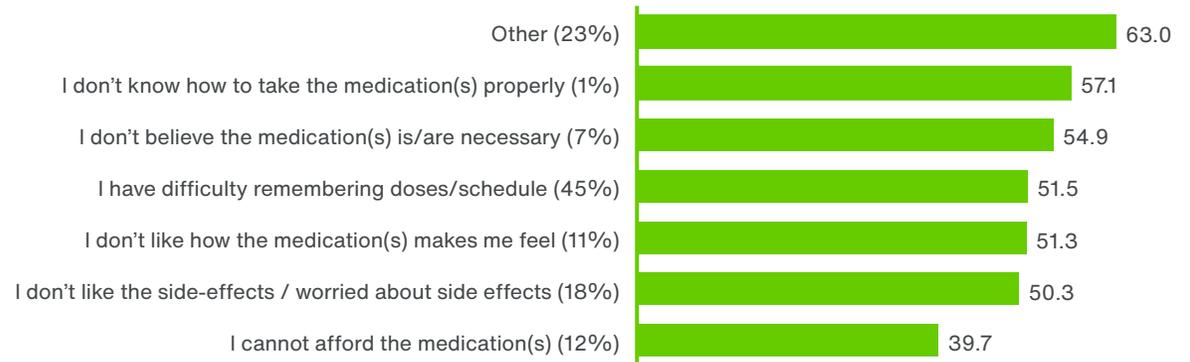
Of the 33 per cent of workers who don't always adhere to their prescribed medication regimen, 12 per cent cite affordability as the reason. This group's mental health score is nearly 24 points below the Canadian average.

- Nearly half (45 per cent) have difficulty remembering their prescription dosage/schedule, 18 per cent don't like the side effects or are worried about the side effects of their medication, 12 per cent cannot afford the medication(s), 11 per cent don't like how the medication(s) make them feel, and seven per cent don't believe the medication(s) is/are necessary
- The lowest mental health score (39.7), 24 points lower than the national average (63.5), is among 12 per cent of workers who say they don't follow the prescribed dosage and schedule because they cannot afford their medication(s)

### Why don't you follow the prescribed dosage and schedule?



### MHI score by "Why don't you follow the prescribed dosage and schedule?"

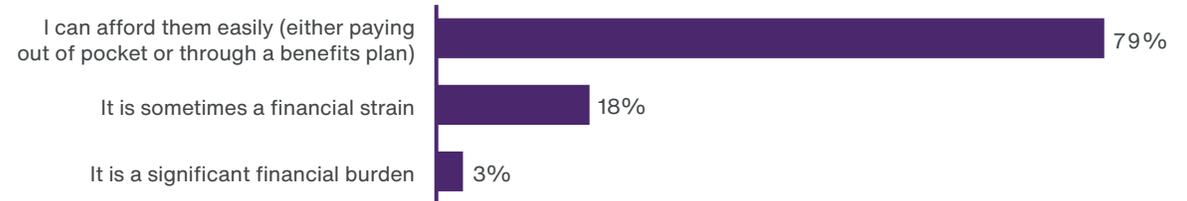


**Among 47 per cent of workers taking prescription medication, more than one in five struggles with affordability.**

- Nearly four in five (79 per cent) workers can easily afford the cost of their medications either by paying out of pocket or through a benefits plan; this group has the highest mental health score (65.7), more than two points higher than the national average (63.5)
- Parents are 60 per cent more likely than non-parents to report that they can easily afford the cost of their medications
- Eighteen per cent say that the cost of their medications is sometimes a financial strain and three per cent say their medication is a significant financial burden. These groups have significantly lower mental health scores (48.0 and 39.0 respectively) than workers who can easily afford the cost of their medications (65.7) and the national average (63.5)
- Workers under 40 and workers with annual household income less than \$100,000 are twice as likely to say that the cost of their medications is sometimes a financial strain



**How do you typically manage the cost of your medication(s)?**



**MHI score by “How do you typically manage the cost of your medication(s)?”**

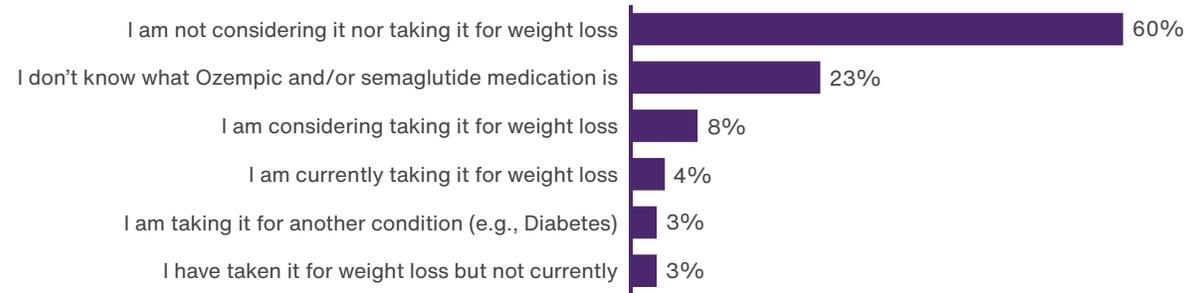


## Weight loss medication use, vitamins and supplements.

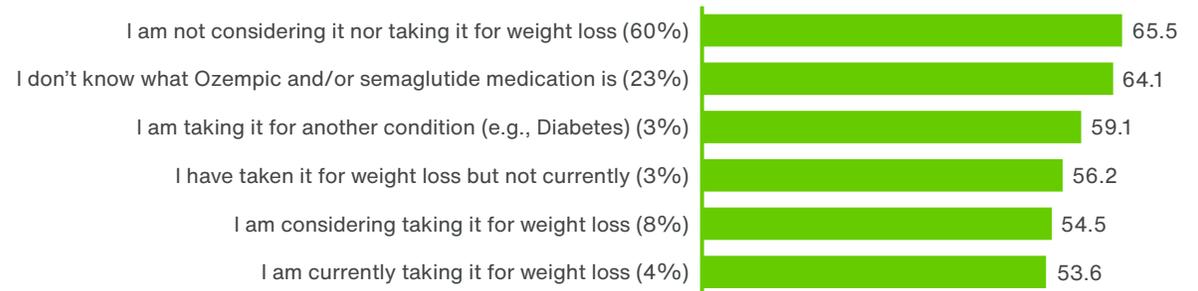
Parents and younger workers are at least twice as likely to be currently taking Ozempic, Wegovy, or another semaglutide medication for weight loss.

- The lowest mental health score (53.6) is among four per cent of workers who are currently taking Ozempic, Wegovy, or another semaglutide medication for weight loss, 12 points lower than workers who are neither considering nor taking it for weight loss (65.5) and 10 points lower than the national average (63.5)
- Parents are two and a half times more likely than non-parents to be currently taking or considering taking Ozempic, Wegovy, or another semaglutide medication for weight loss
- Workers under 40 are twice as likely as workers over 50 to be currently taking Ozempic, Wegovy, or another semaglutide medication for weight loss

Are you currently taking or considering Ozempic, Wegovy, or another semaglutide medication for weight loss?



MHI score by “Are you currently taking or considering Ozempic, Wegovy, or another semaglutide medication for weight loss?”



More than half of workers don't know whether their employer covers the cost of weight loss medications.



Does your employer cover the cost of Ozempic or other semaglutide medications for weight loss?



MHI score by "Does your employer cover the cost of Ozempic or other semaglutide medications for weight loss?"

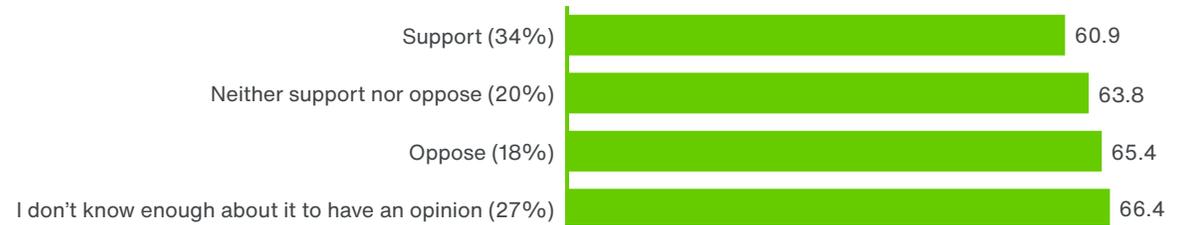


More than one-third of workers would support their employer covering the cost of weight loss medications.

Would you support your employer covering the cost of Ozempic or other semaglutide medications for weight loss?



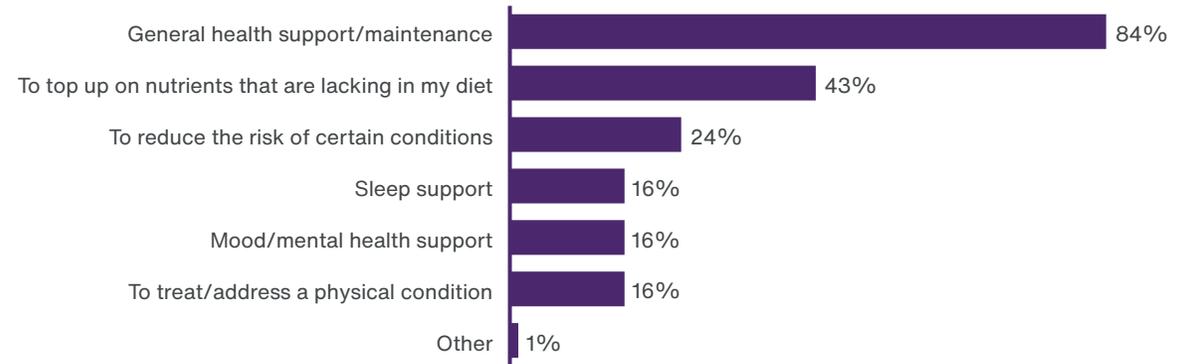
MHI score by “Would you support your employer covering the cost of Ozempic or other semaglutide medications for weight loss?”



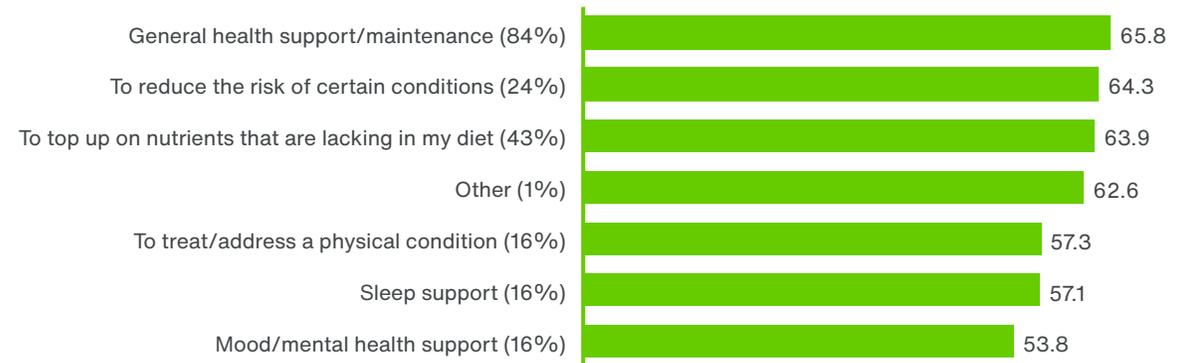
**Younger workers and parents are more likely to use vitamins or supplements for mood/mental health support.**

- Among 65 per cent of workers taking vitamins or supplements regularly, more than four in five (84 per cent) use them for general health support/maintenance, 43 per cent use them to top up on nutrients that are lacking in their diet, 24 per cent use them to reduce the risk of certain conditions, 16 per cent use them for sleep support, and 16 per cent use vitamins or supplements to treat/address a physical condition
- Workers over 50 are 80 per cent more likely than workers under 40 to use vitamins or supplements to reduce the risk of certain conditions
- The lowest mental health score (53.8) is among 16 per cent of workers using vitamins or supplements for mood/mental health support, nearly 10 points lower than the national average (63.5)
- Workers under 40 are 80 per cent more likely than workers over 50 to use vitamins or supplements for mood/mental health support
- Parents are 40 per cent more likely than non-parents to use vitamins or supplements for mood/mental health support

**Reasons for use of vitamins or supplements**



**MHI score by “Reasons for use of vitamins or supplements”**



## Relationships and social wellbeing.

Nearly three-quarters of workers describe the quality of their personal relationships as positive.

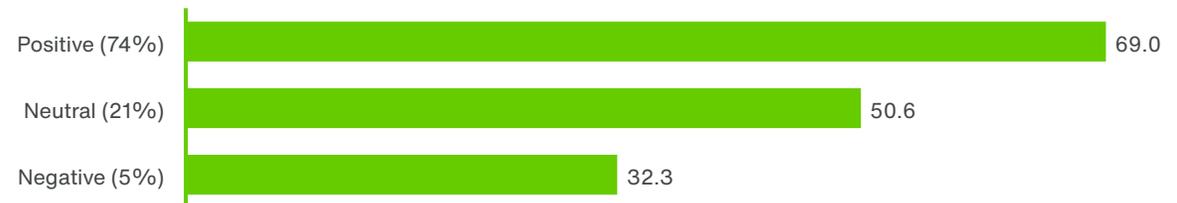
- Nearly three-quarters (74 per cent) of workers describe the quality of their personal relationships as positive; this group has the highest mental health score (69.0), more than five points higher than the national average (63.5)
- The lowest mental health score (32.3) is among five per cent of workers who rate the quality of their personal relationships as negative, nearly 37 points lower than workers reporting positive personal relationships (69.0), and more than 31 points lower than the national average (63.5)
- Workers with an annual household income less than \$60,000 are two and a half times more likely than workers with an annual household income greater than \$100,00 to report the quality of their personal relationships as negative



In general, how would you describe the quality of your personal relationships?



MHI score by “In general, how would you describe the quality of your personal relationships?”

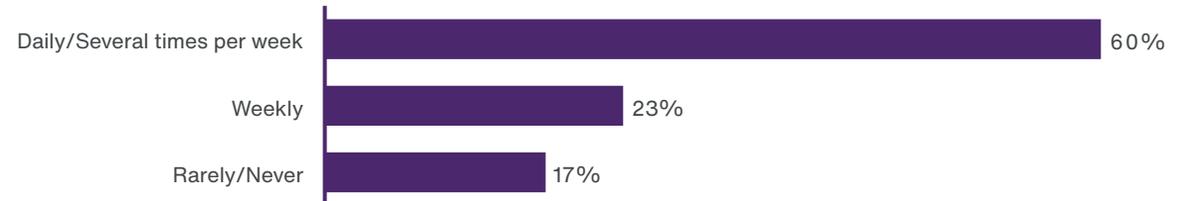


**Workers who rarely or never engage in social interactions have a mental health score 16 points lower than workers who engage daily or several times per week and 12 points lower than the Canadian average.**

- Three in five (60 per cent) workers report engaging in social interactions daily or several times per week; this group has the highest mental health score (67.7), more than four points higher than the national average (63.5)
- Seventeen per cent rarely or never engage in social interactions; this group has the lowest mental health score (51.5), more than 16 points lower than workers engaging in social interactions daily or several times per week (67.7), and 12 points lower than the national average (63.5)



#### How often do you engage in social interactions?



#### MHI score by “How often do you engage in social interactions?”

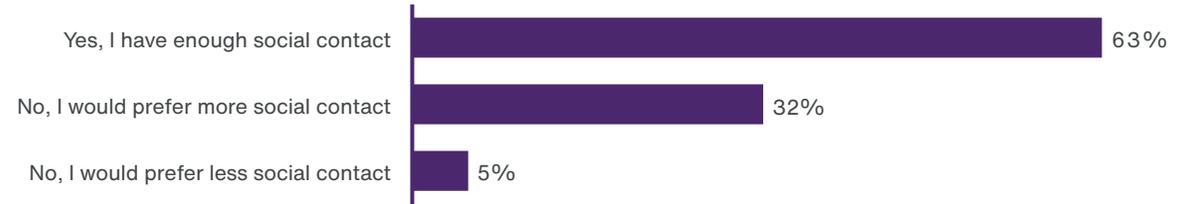


**Workers satisfied with the amount of social contact they have display the highest mental health scores.**

- More than three in five (63 per cent) workers are satisfied with the amount of social contact they have; this group has the highest mental health score (70.0), more than six points higher than the national average (63.5)
- Nearly one-third (32 per cent) would prefer more social contact; this group has a mental health score (52.5) more than 17 points lower than satisfied workers (70.0), and 11 points lower than the national average (63.5)



**Are you satisfied with the amount of social contact you have at this point in your life?**



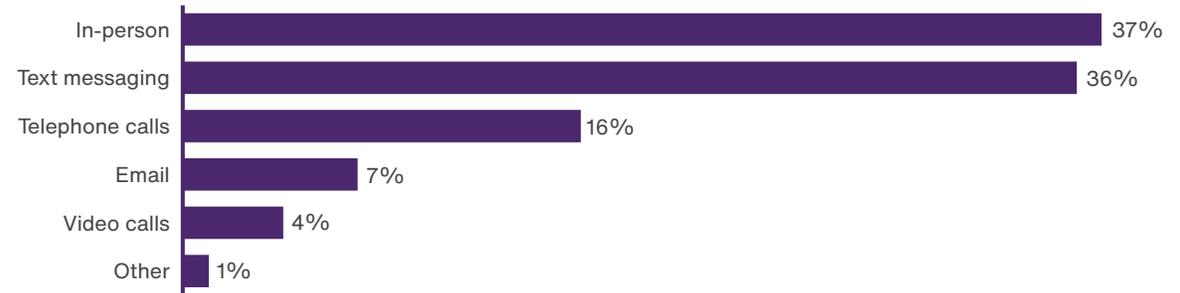
**MHI score by “Are you satisfied with the amount of social contact you have at this point in your life?”**



**In-person communication and text messaging are preferred for keeping in touch with friends and family.**

- Nearly two in five (37 per cent) workers prefer in-person communication most when communicating with friends or family, 36 per cent prefer text messaging, 16 per cent prefer telephone calls, and seven per cent prefer email
- The highest mental health score (67.7) is among thirty-seven per cent who prefer in-person communication with friends and family, more than four points higher than the national average (63.5)
- Workers under 40 are 60 per cent more likely than workers over 50 to prefer text messaging when communicating with friends and family

**Which method do you prefer most when communicating with friends or family?**



**MHI score by “Which method do you prefer most when communicating with friends or family?”**



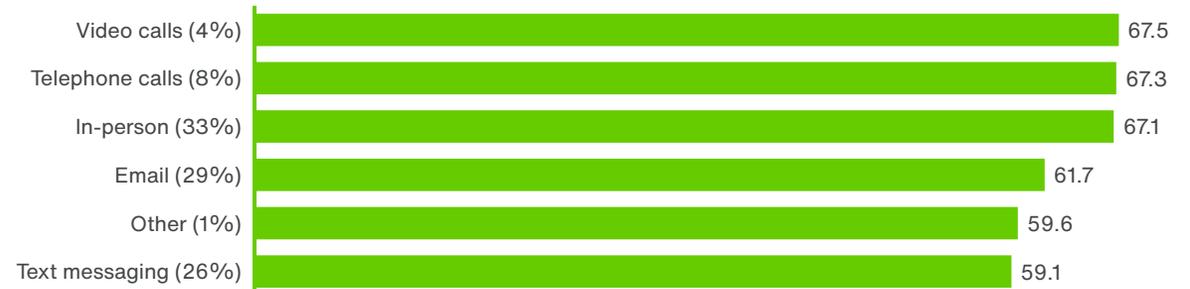
**Mental health scores are noticeably higher among workers who communicate through video, telephone, or in-person compared with workers using text-based communication such as emails and text messaging.**

One-third (33 per cent) of workers prefer in-person communication most when communicating with colleagues, 29 per cent prefer email, 26 per cent prefer text messaging, and eight per cent prefer telephone calls

### Which method do you prefer most when communicating with work colleagues?



### MHI score by “Which method do you prefer most when communicating with work colleagues?”



# Overview of the TELUS Mental Health Index.

The mental health and wellbeing of a population are essential to overall health and work productivity. The Mental Health Index measures the current mental health status of employed adults. 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 3,000 people who live in Canada and are currently employed or who were employed within the prior six months. Participants are selected to represent the age, gender, industry, and geographic distribution in Canada. Respondents are asked to consider the previous two weeks when answering each question. Data for the current report was collected between December 6 and December 19, 2024.

## Calculations

A response scoring system, turning individual responses into point values, is used to create the Mental Health Index. 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. The 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 also available upon request. Contact [MHI@telushealth.com](mailto:MHI@telushealth.com)





[www.telushealth.com](http://www.telushealth.com)

