



# TELUS Mental Health Index.

Canada | February 2024

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# What you need to know for February 2024.

More than one-third of workers in Canada have a high mental health risk.

- At 63.2, the mental health of workers has declined and is in line with lows seen during the pandemic
- 35 per cent of workers have a high mental health risk, 42 per cent have a moderate mental health risk, and 23 per cent have a low mental health risk
- All mental health sub-scores, apart from optimism and isolation, have declined from January to February; anxiety and isolation have been the lowest mental health sub-scores for 22 consecutive months
- Mental health scores improved in Alberta and Saskatchewan, whereas scores in other provinces have declined from January 2024
- The mental health of managers has improved modestly while the mental health score of non-managers has declined for the second consecutive month
- Labourers continue to have a lower mental health score than service industry and office workers



Nearly two-thirds of workers say they are not performing at their optimal level; younger workers want better support from managers.

- 23 per cent want better support from their manager; this group has a mental health score (55.8) nearly 15 points lower than workers reporting they are performing at their optimal level
- Workers under 40 are 65 per cent more likely to report needing better support from their manager and their co-workers to perform better at work
- 21 per cent of workers report needing better resources, tools, or technology, 19 per cent need training (skills or education), 19 per cent need control over how they do they work, and 17 per cent need better support from their co-workers to improve work performance
- More than half (56 per cent) consider the quality of work as the most important performance indicator, which is nearly three times more significant than both customer satisfaction and work volume



### Nearly 4 in 10 workers believe they spend too much time working.

- 38 per cent of workers believe that they spend too much time working; another 18 per cent are unsure
- Among workers reporting they spend too much time working, 52 per cent work for more than 40 hours per week
- Workers under 40 are 60 per cent more likely than workers over 50 to feel they spend too much time working
- 57 per cent of workers are satisfied with the amount of time they have to spend on things they enjoy doing; the mental health of this group (70.1) is 17 points higher than the score of workers who are dissatisfied (52.3) and seven points higher than the Canadian average (63.2)

Younger workers are more than twice as likely to report having a mental health condition.

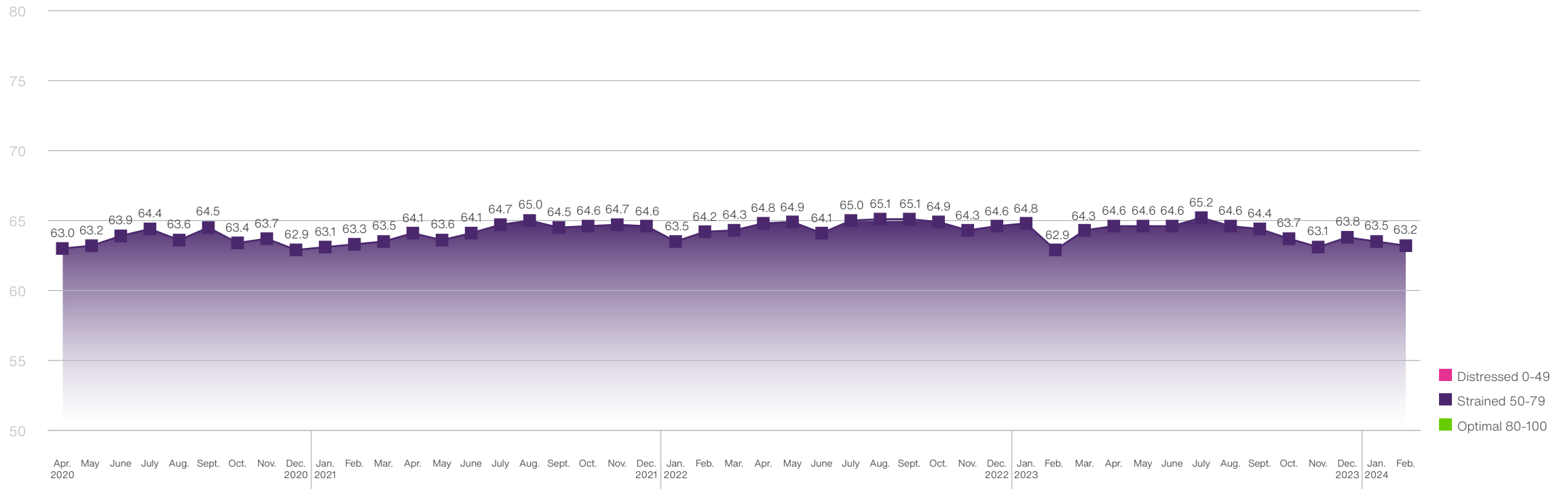
- Nearly two in five (39 per cent) workers report having chronic physical, cognitive, emotional, psychological, or mental health issues
- Nearly one-in five (19 per cent) report long-term emotional, psychological, or mental health conditions; the mental health score of this group (41.6) is nearly 30 points lower than workers reporting no long-term difficulties (71.2) and nearly 22 points lower than the Canadian average (63.2)
- Younger workers (under 40) are three times more likely than workers over 50 to spend money on their mental health

# The Mental Health Index.

The overall Mental Health Index (MHI) for February 2024 is 63.2.

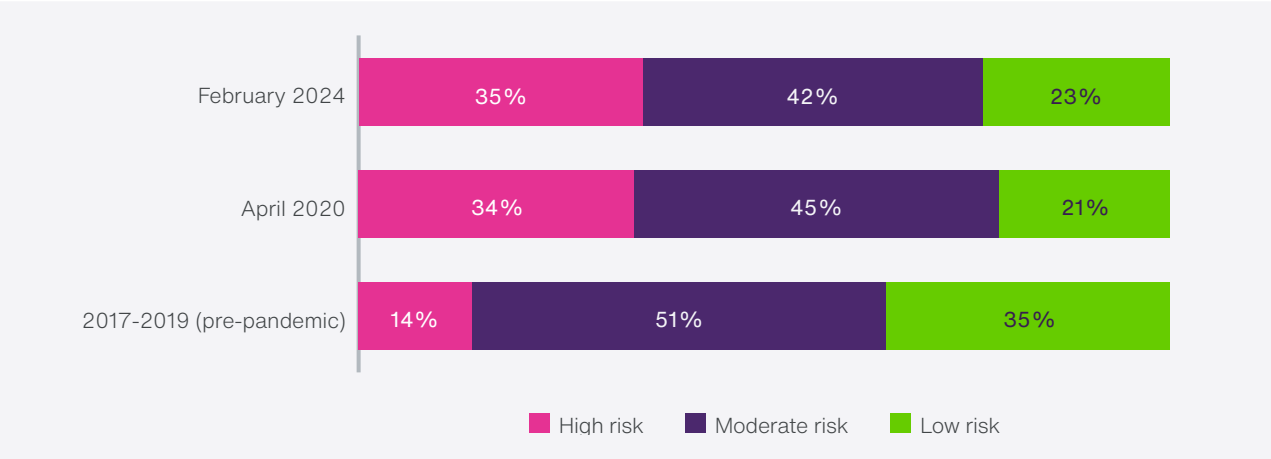
The mental health of workers in Canada continues to decline and is in line with lows seen during the pandemic.

MHI Current Month February 2024	January 2024
63.2	63.5



### Mental health risk.

In February 2024, 35 per cent of workers in Canada have a high mental health risk, 42 per cent have a moderate mental health risk, and 23 per cent have a low mental health risk. Nearly four years since the launch of the MHI in April 2020, there is a one per cent increase in high-risk workers and a two per cent increase in low-risk workers.



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 two years, the lowest Mental Health Index sub-score continues to be anxiety (56.3). Isolation (60.1), depression (61.7), work productivity (61.8), optimism (65.4), and financial risk (65.8) follow. General psychological health (70.7) continues to be the most favourable mental health measure in February 2024.

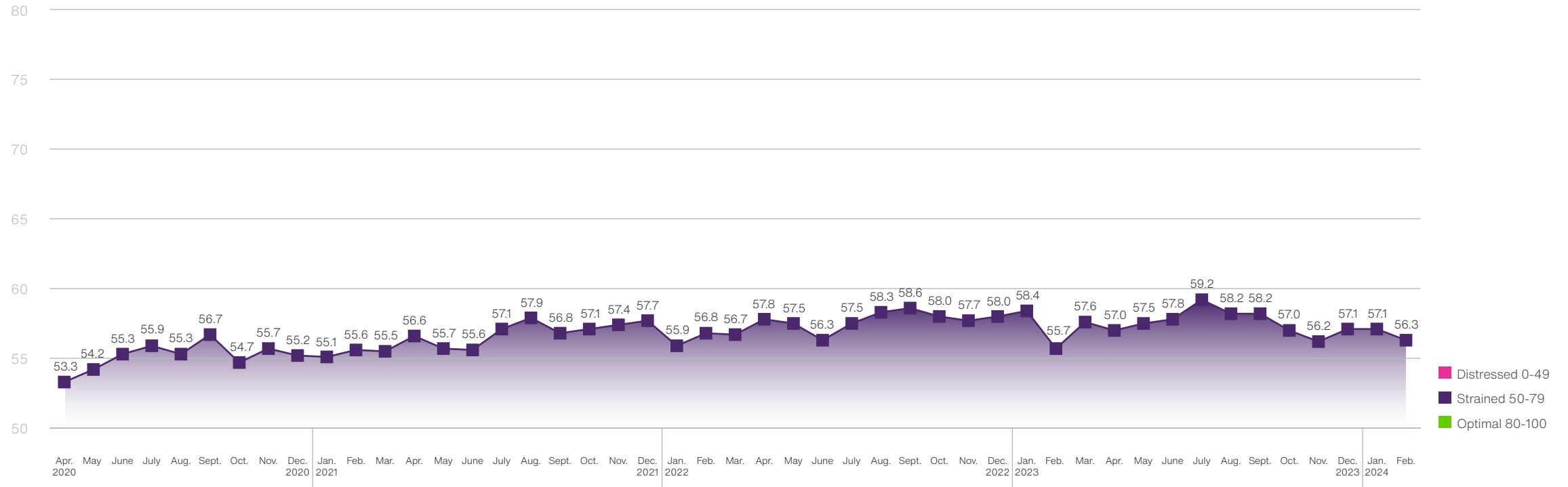
- Anxiety and isolation have been the lowest mental health sub-scores for 22 consecutive months
- All mental health sub-scores, apart from optimism and isolation, have declined from the prior month

Mental Health Index Sub-scores	February 2024	January 2023
Anxiety	56.3	57.1
Isolation	60.1	59.2
Depression	61.7	62.5
Work productivity	61.8	62.5
Optimism	65.4	65.1
Financial risk	65.8	67.1
Psychological health	70.7	71.2



## Anxiety

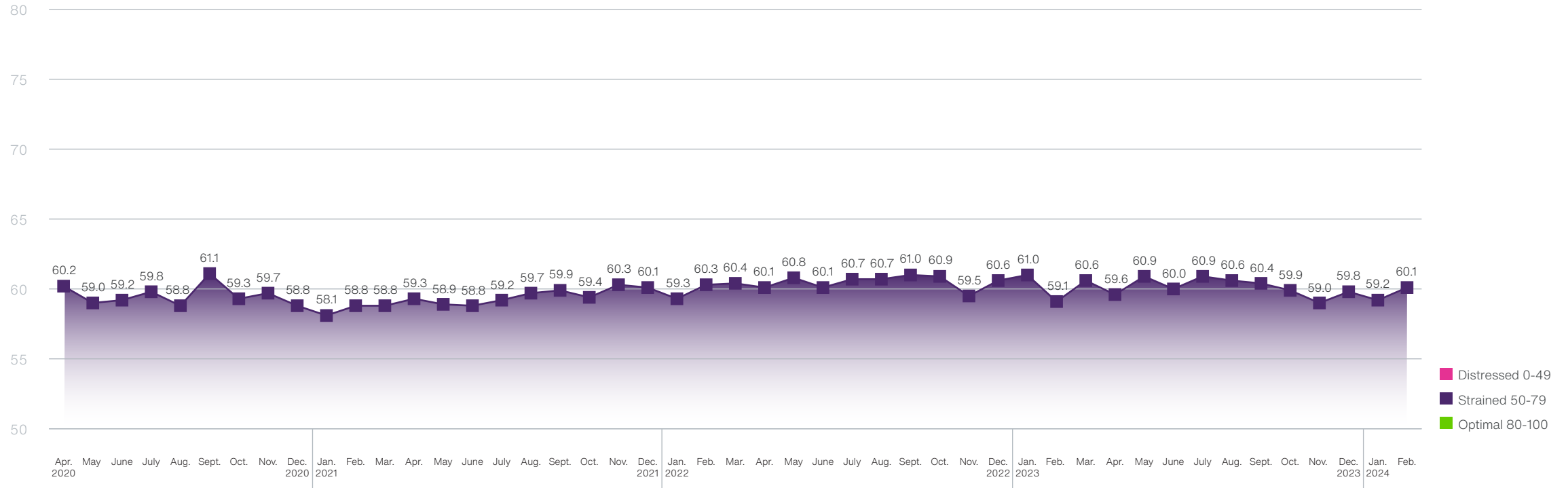
Since reaching its peak in July 2023, the anxiety sub-score has generally declined through February. At 56.3, the anxiety sub-score is approaching lows seen during the pandemic and continues to be the lowest of all mental health sub-scores for the 22nd consecutive month.





## Isolation

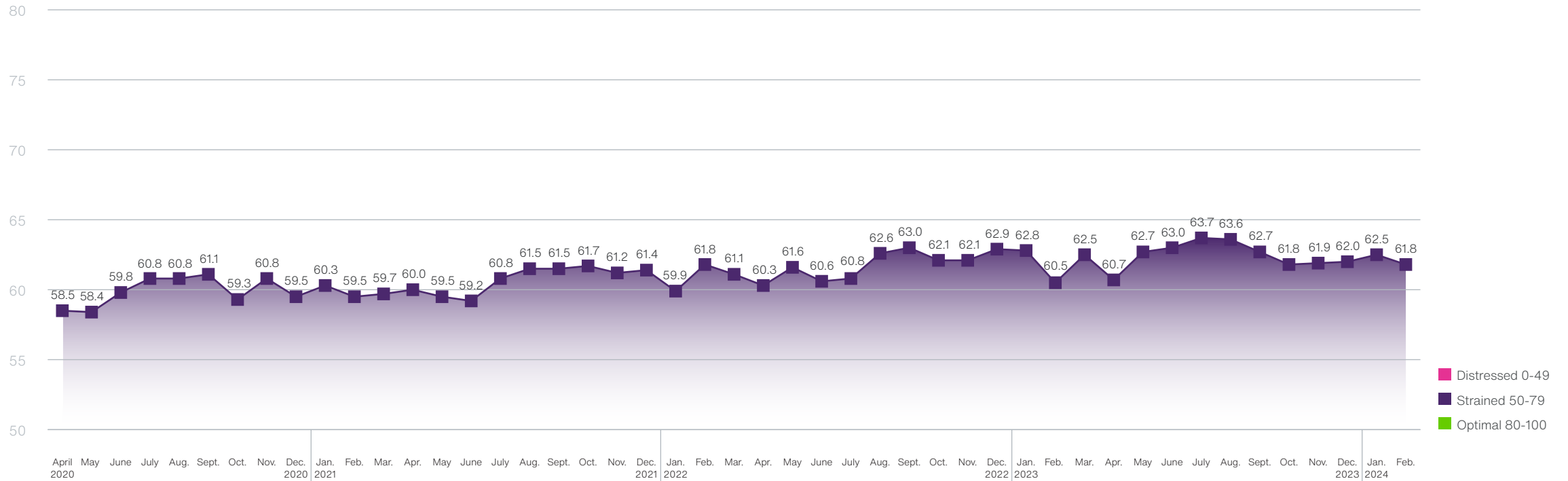
Since reaching its lowest point in January 2021, the isolation sub-score slowly improved through September 2022. Since November 2022, isolation scores have fluctuated with multiple periods of increases and declines. In February 2024, the isolation score has improved nearly one point from January, yet it continues to be the second lowest mental health sub-score for the 22nd consecutive month.



## Work productivity

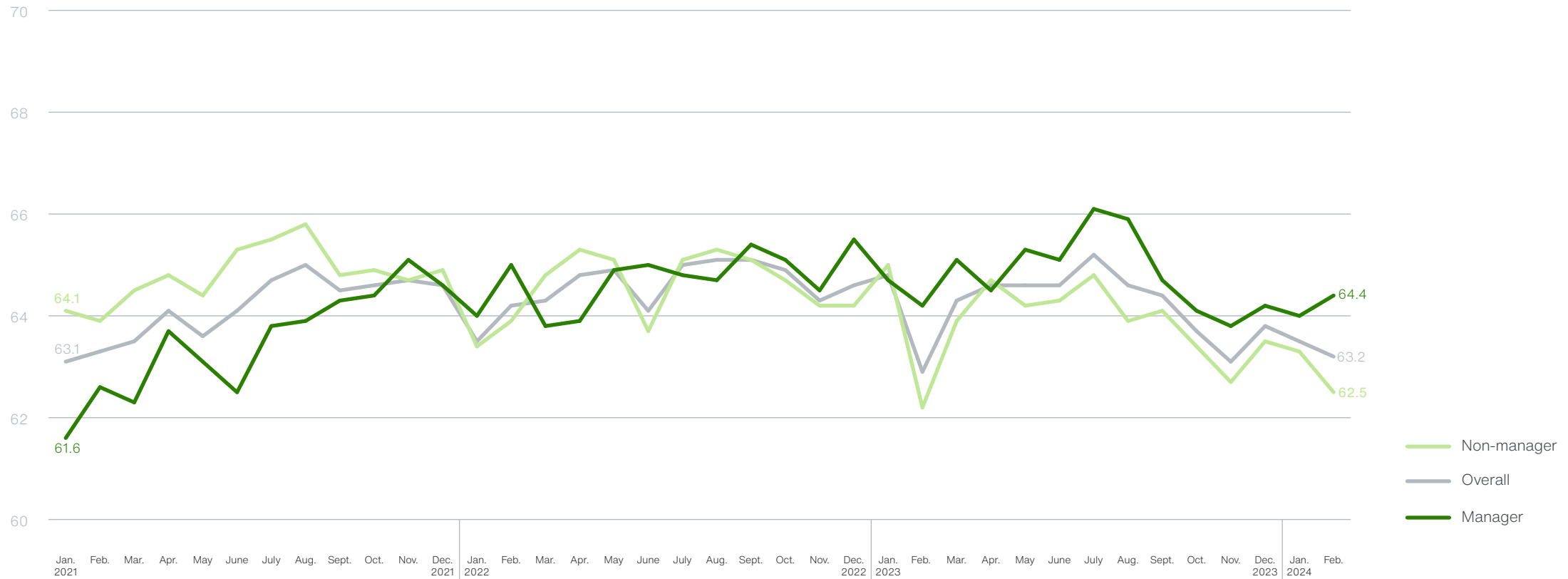
The work productivity sub-score measures the impact of mental health on work productivity and goals.

Overall, the impact of mental health on work productivity has shown general improvement suggesting that the negative impact of mental health on work productivity has slowly decreased. Similar to other sub-scores, after reaching its peak in July 2023, the work productivity score has declined through February 2024, despite a modest improvement in January 2024.



## Managers compared to non-managers.

From January to October 2021, the mental health scores of managers were lower than scores of non-managers and lower than Canadian averages. From November 2021 to January 2023, managers and non-managers have reported similar mental health scores; however, in February 2023 a significant decline in the mental health scores of non-managers was observed. Since February 2023, the mental health scores of managers have typically been higher than the scores of non-managers. In February 2024, the mental health score of managers has improved modestly while the mental health score of non-managers has declined for the second consecutive month.



## Mental health by gender and age.

- Since the launch of the MHI, women have had significantly lower mental health scores than men. In February 2024, the mental health score of women is 60.6 compared to 65.8 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 four years later, this pattern continues with a lower mental health score for workers with at least one child (60.6) than workers without children (64.5)

## Mental health by employment status.

- Overall, four per cent of respondents are unemployed<sup>1</sup> and 10 per cent report reduced hours or reduced salary
- Workers reporting reduced salary compared to the prior month have the lowest mental health score (45.8), followed by workers reporting fewer hours than the prior month (54.6), workers with no change to salary or hours (64.3), and respondents not currently employed (64.6)
- Labourers have a lower mental health score (62.5) than service industry (62.7) and office workers (63.6)
- Managers have a higher mental health score (64.4) than non-managers (62.5)
- Respondents working for companies with 1,001-5,000 employees have the highest mental health score (65.1)
- Respondents working for companies with 501-1,000 employees have the lowest mental health score (60.6)



## Emergency savings

- Workers without emergency savings continue to experience a lower mental health score (47.9) than the overall group (63.2). Workers with emergency savings have a mental health score of 69.3

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

## The Mental Health Index by province.

In February 2024, the mental health scores in Alberta and Saskatchewan have improved while scores in other provinces have declined from January 2024.

- With a significant 4.3-points decline from January, the Maritimes (60.2) has the lowest mental health score in February 2024
- With a modest 1.1-point increase, Saskatchewan continues to have the highest mental health score (65.6)
- The greatest improvement in mental health is in Alberta (63.9), up 2.5 points from January 2024



Province	February 2024	January 2024	Change
Alberta	63.9	61.4	2.5
Saskatchewan	65.6	64.5	1.1
Ontario	63.4	63.6	-0.2
British Columbia	63.3	63.5	-0.2
Newfoundland and Labrador	63.7	65.9	-2.2
Quebec	61.6	63.8	-2.2
Manitoba	64.8	67.3	-2.5
The Maritimes	60.2	64.5	-4.3

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

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

Employment status	Feb. 2024	Jan. 2024
Employed (no change in hours/salary)	64.3	64.7
Employed (fewer hours compared to last month)	54.6	55.2
Employed (reduced salary compared to last month)	45.8	48.8
Not currently employed	64.6	63.6

Age group	Feb. 2024	Jan. 2024
Age 20-29	54.7	52.1
Age 30-39	58.4	58.3
Age 40-49	60.0	61.4
Age 50-59	64.9	64.8
Age 60-69	73.0	72.9

Number of children	Feb. 2024	Jan. 2024
No children in household	64.5	65.3
1 child	60.4	60.4
2 children	60.2	59.1
3 children or more	63.5	55.3

Gender	Feb. 2024	Jan. 2024
Men	65.8	66.3
Women	60.6	61.0

Household income /annum	Feb. 2024	Jan. 2024
<\$30K	52.2	52.9
\$30K to <\$60K	59.4	59.6
\$60K to <\$100K	62.1	63.1
\$100K to <\$150K	66.1	65.7
\$150K or more	68.9	70.3

Employer size	Feb. 2024	Jan. 2024
Self-employed/sole proprietor	63.5	66.7
2-50 employees	62.6	63.8
51-100 employees	62.2	61.4
101-500 employees	63.6	62.5
501-1,000 employees	60.6	61.3
1,001-5,000 employees	65.1	66.5
5,001-10,000 employees	62.6	62.0
More than 10,000 employees	64.4	63.4

Manager	Feb. 2024	Jan. 2024
Manager	64.4	64.0
Non-manager	62.5	63.3

Work environment	Feb. 2024	Jan. 2024
Labour	62.5	63.1
Office/desk	63.6	64.5
Service	62.7	62.1

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 Administrative and Support services have the lowest mental health score (56.2), followed by workers in Warehousing (58.0) and Food Services (58.0).

Workers in the Automotive Industry (67.2), Manufacturing (67.0), and Utilities (66.7) have the highest mental health scores this month.



Industry	February 2024	January 2024	Change
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	61.5	57.8	3.7
Food Services	58.0	56.2	1.8
Other services (except Public Administration)	66.6	64.8	1.8
Finance and Insurance	65.7	64.3	1.4
Retail Trade	62.1	60.8	1.3
Other	63.0	61.8	1.1
Management of Companies and Enterprises	65.8	64.8	1.0
Health Care and Social Assistance	60.8	59.9	0.9
Utilities	66.7	66.1	0.6
Wholesale Trade	63.4	62.8	0.6
Public Administration	66.2	65.6	0.6
Transportation	66.1	66.1	0.0
Administrative and Support services	56.2	56.6	-0.4
Construction	64.1	64.6	-0.5
Educational Services	64.4	65.1	-0.7
Warehousing	58.0	59.2	-1.2
Technology	62.4	63.9	-1.5
Manufacturing	67.0	68.6	-1.6
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	62.4	64.4	-1.9
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	65.8	69.9	-4.1
Media and Telecommunications	59.5	63.7	-4.2
Automotive Industry	67.2	71.5	-4.3
Accommodation	60.3	64.9	-4.6
Information and Cultural Industries	58.6	63.7	-5.1
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	65.2	71.5	-6.4
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	62.4	69.0	-6.6

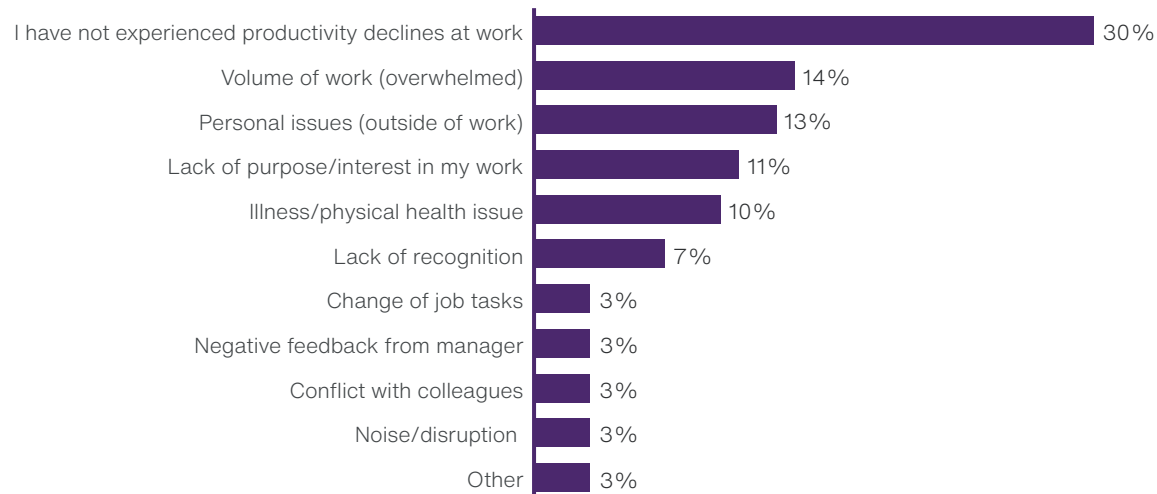
# Spotlight

## Work productivity and performance.

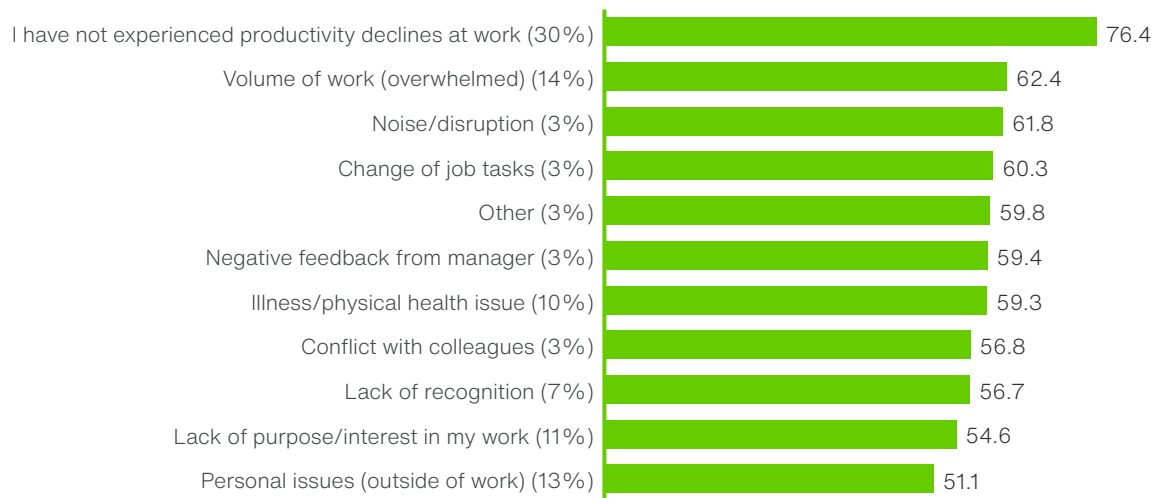
Seventy per cent of workers indicate a recent decline in work productivity and provide the reason for the decline:

- One in seven (14 per cent) report that volume of work (causing feelings of being overwhelmed) is the main reason for a significant productivity decline, 13 per cent report personal issues, 11 per cent report lack of purpose or interest in their work, and 10 per cent report illness/physical health issues as the main reason for productivity decline
- Workers under 40 are 60 per cent more likely than workers over 50 to report that a lack of purpose or interest in work is the main reason for a productivity decline
- The lowest mental health score (51.1) is among 13 per cent reporting that personal issues are the main reason for productivity decline, more than 25 points lower than workers not reporting a productivity decline (76.4) and 12 points lower than the national average (63.2)
- Nearly one-third (30 per cent) have not experienced a significant productivity decline at work; this group has the highest/best mental health score (76.4), more than 13 points higher than the national average (63.2)

### Reason for significant decline in productivity at work



### MHI score by “Reason for significant decline in productivity at work”

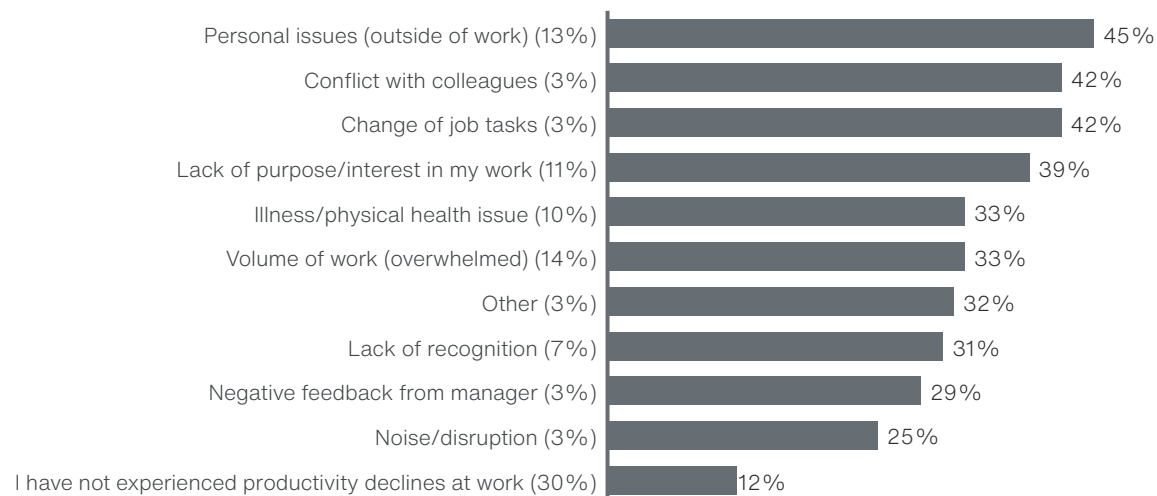






- Workers reporting a productivity decline because of personal issues are most likely to report their mental health is negatively impacting their work productivity (45 per cent), followed by workers reporting conflict with colleagues (42 per cent), and workers reporting a productivity decline because of change of job tasks (42 per cent)
- Workers over 50 are two and a half times more likely than workers under 40 to report not having experienced a productivity decline at work
- Non-parents are 60 per cent more likely than parents to report not having experienced a productivity decline at work

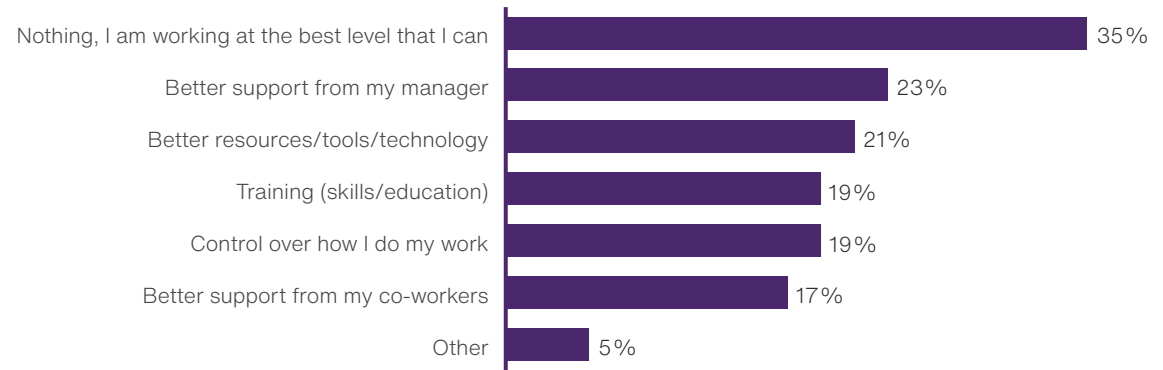
**Percentage reporting their mental health negatively affects their work productivity by “Reason for significant decline in productivity at work”**



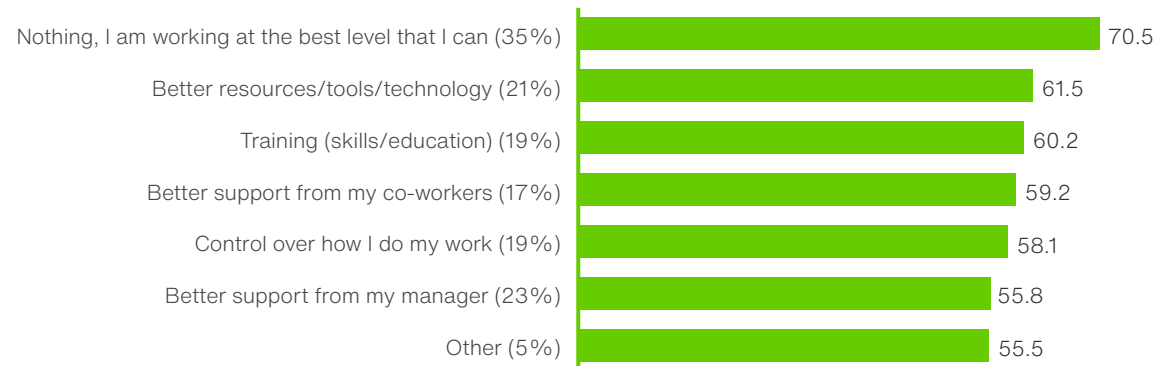
**Workers were asked what they would need to perform better at work.**

- Nearly one-quarter (23 per cent) report needing better support from their manager, 21 per cent need better resources, tools, or technology, 19 per cent need training, 19 per cent need control over how they do their work, and 17 per cent need better support from their co-workers to perform better at work
- Twenty-three per cent of workers needing better support from their manager have a mental health score (55.8) nearly 15 points lower than workers reporting that they are working at the best level they can (70.5)
- Workers under 40 are 65 per cent more likely than workers over 50 to report needing better support from their managers and their co-workers to perform better at work
- More than one-third (35 per cent) believe they are working at the best level they can, needing nothing to perform better at work; this group has the highest/best mental health score (70.5), more than seven points higher than the national average (63.2)
- Workers over 50 are nearly three times more likely than workers under 40 to report they are working at the best level they can, needing nothing to perform better at work
- Non-managers are 40 per cent more likely than managers to believe they do not need anything to perform better at work

**What would you need to perform better at work?**



**MHI score by “What would you need to perform better at work?”**

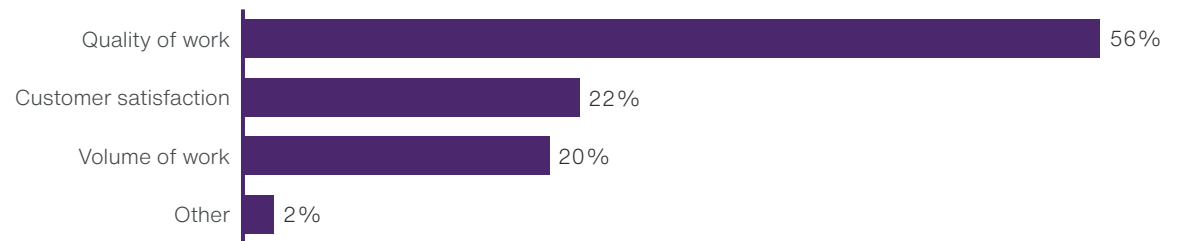


**Workers were asked what they believe is the most important indicator of their performance according to their employer.**

- More than half (56 per cent) believe that quality of work is the most important indicator of performance according to their employer; this group has the highest/best mental health score (64.8), nearly two points higher than the national average (63.2)
- More than one in five (22 per cent) believe that customer satisfaction is the most important indicator of performance; the mental health score of this group (64.4) is modestly higher than the national average (63.2)
- The lowest/worst mental health score (58.0) is among 20 per cent who believe that volume of work is the most important indicator of performance according to their employer, more than five points lower than the national average (63.2)



**Most important indicator of performance**



**MHI score by “Most important indicator of performance”**

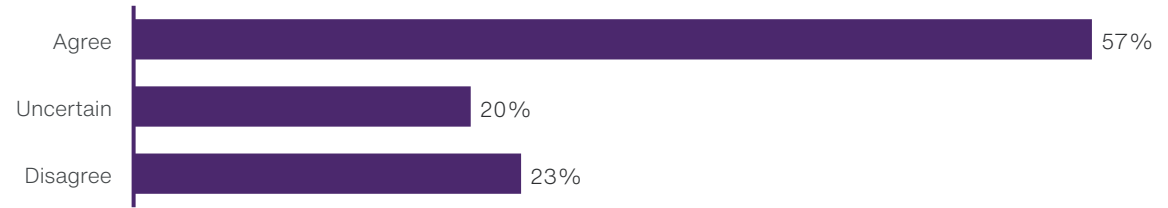


## Work and leisure time.

Workers were asked whether they are satisfied with the amount of time they have to spend on things they enjoy doing.

- Nearly three in five (57 per cent) are satisfied with the amount of time they have to spend on things they enjoy doing; this group has the highest/best mental health score (70.1) seven points higher than the national average (63.2)
- More than two in five (43 per cent) are either unsure or dissatisfied with the amount of time they have to spend on things they enjoy doing; this group has the lowest/worst mental health score, at least 14 points lower than workers who are satisfied and at least seven points lower than the national average (63.2)
- Workers reporting that they are not satisfied with the amount of time they have to spend on things they enjoy doing are 40 per cent more likely to report working more than 40 hours per week than workers reporting they are satisfied

### I am satisfied with the amount of time I have to spend on things I enjoy doing



### MHI score by “I am satisfied with the amount of time I have to spend on things I enjoy doing”



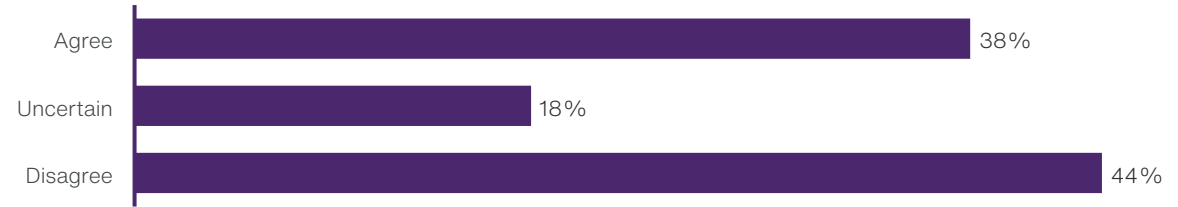
### Percentage who report working more than 40 hours per week by “I am satisfied with the amount of time I have to spend on things I enjoy doing”



**Workers were asked whether they feel they spend too much time working.**

- Nearly two in five (38 per cent) feel they spend too much time working; this group has the lowest/worst mental health score (56.6), more than 13 points lower than workers who feel they do not spend too much time working (70.0) and nearly seven points lower than the national average (63.2)
- Workers under 40 are 60 per cent more likely than workers over 50 to feel they spend too much time working
- Managers are 50 per cent more likely than non-managers to feel they spend too much time working
- Workers reporting that they spend too much time working are more than twice as likely to report they work more than 40 hours per week than workers not feeling that they spend too much time working
- More than two in five (44 per cent) report not spending too much time working; this group has the highest/best mental health score (70.0), nearly seven points higher than the national average (63.2)

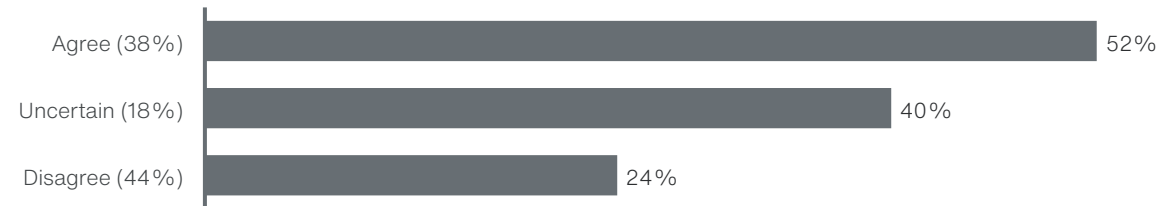
**I feel that I spend too much time working**



**MHI score by “I feel that I spend too much time working”**



**Percentage who report working more than 40 hours per week by “I feel that I spend too much time working”**

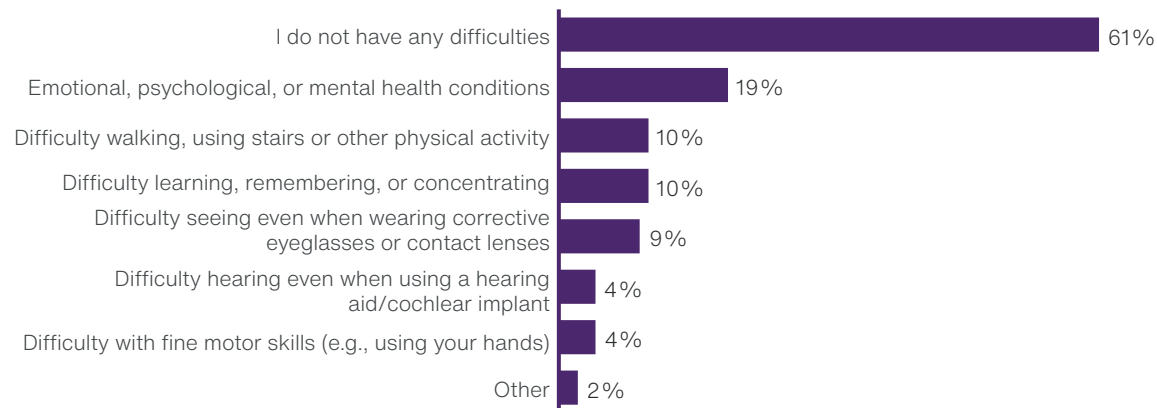


## Chronic issues

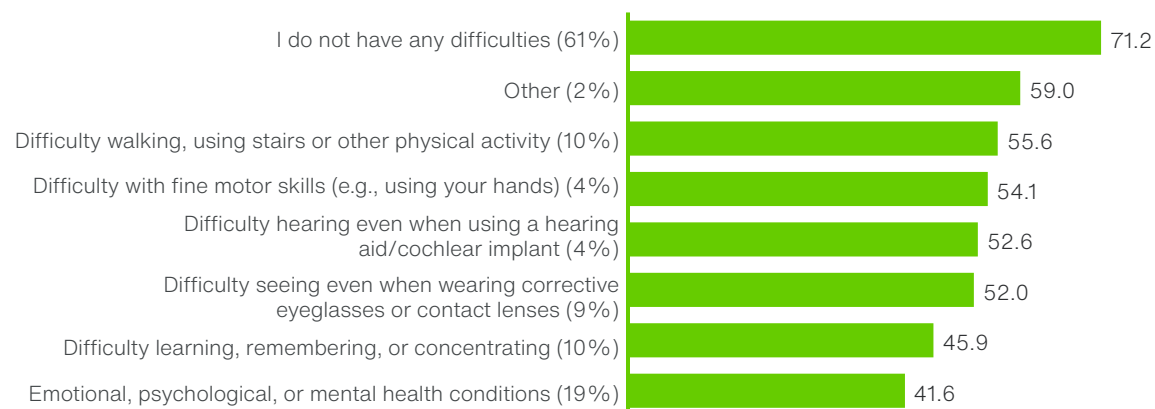
Workers were asked whether they have any difficulties that are lasting or are expected to last more than six months.

- Nearly one in five (19 per cent) report long-term emotional, psychological, or mental health conditions; this group has the lowest/worst mental health score (41.6), nearly 30 points lower than workers reporting no long-term difficulties (71.2) and nearly 22 points lower than the national average (63.2)
- Workers under 40 are two and a half times more likely than workers over 50 to report having emotional, psychological, or mental health conditions
- Women are 50 per cent more likely than men to report having emotional, psychological, or mental health conditions
- More than three in five (61 per cent) do not have any long-term difficulties; this group has the highest/best mental health score (71.2), eight points higher than the national average (63.2)

### Do you have any long-term difficulties?



### MHI score by “Do you have any long-term difficulties?”

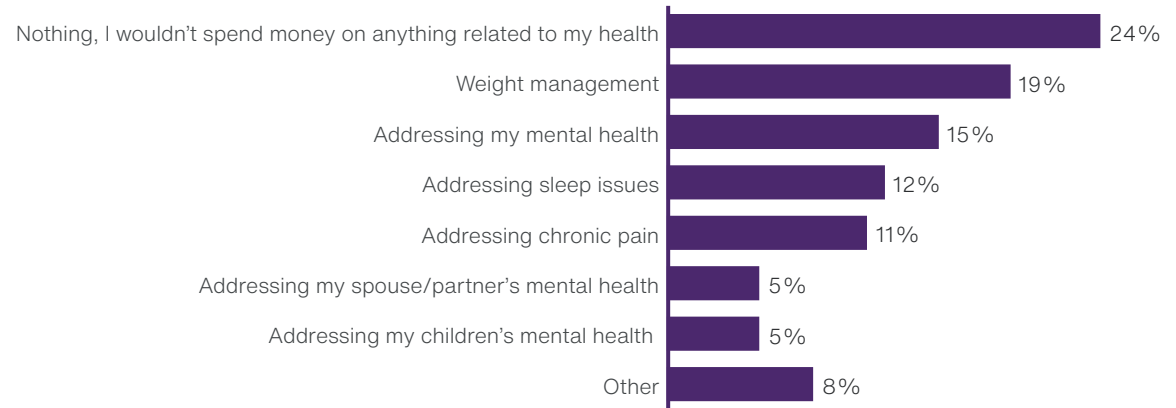


## Investing in health.

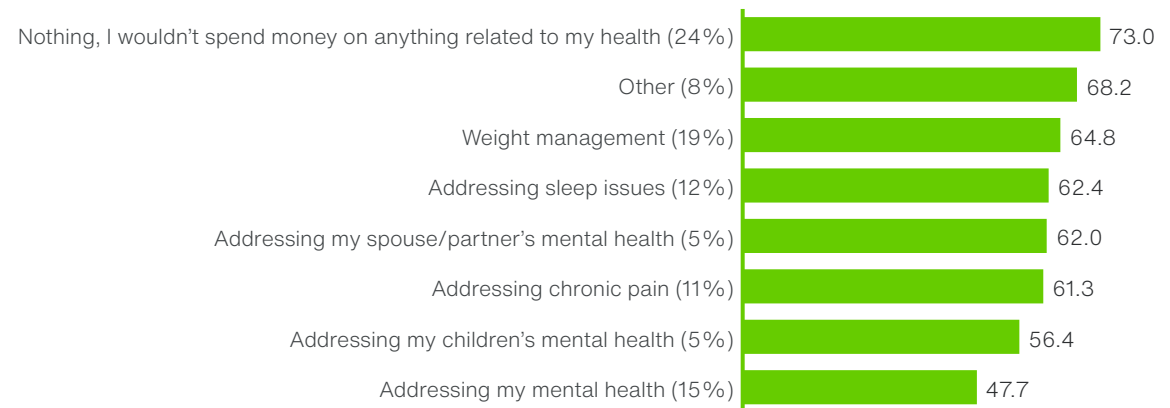
Workers were asked how they would spend \$1,000 if they had to spend it on their health.

- Nearly one in five (19 per cent) would spend \$1,000 on weight management, 15 per cent would spend it on their mental health, 12 per cent would spend it on addressing sleep issues, and 11 per cent would spend it on addressing chronic pain
- The lowest/worst mental health score (47.7) is among 15 per cent of workers who would spend \$1,000 on their mental health, more than 25 points lower than workers who would not spend \$1,000 on anything related to their health (73.0) and more than 15 points lower than the national average (63.2)
- Workers under 40 are three times more likely than workers over 50 to spend the money on their mental health
- Nearly one-quarter (24 per cent) would not spend on anything related to their health; this group has the highest/best mental health score (73.0), nearly 10 points higher than the national average (63.2)
- Non-parents are 40 per cent more likely than parents to report they would not spend on anything related to their health
- Workers over 50 are 70 per cent more likely than workers under 40 to report they would not spend on anything related to their health

### If you had \$1,000 to spend on your health, what would you spend it on?



### MHI score by "If you had \$1,000 to spend on your health, what would you spend it on?"



# 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 3,000 people who live in Canada 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 Canada. Respondents are asked to consider the prior two weeks when answering each question. Data for the current report was collected between February 7 and February 9, 2024.

## 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](mailto:MHI@telushealth.com)







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

