



TELUS Mental Health Index.

Special report on Physical Health.

Australia | September 2024

 **TELUS**® Health

Table of contents

1. What you need to know for September 2024	3
2. The Mental Health Index	7
Mental health risk.	8
Mental Health Index sub-scores.....	9
Anxiety	10
Isolation.....	11
Work productivity	12
Mental health by gender and age	13
Mental health by employment status.....	13
Emergency savings.....	13
3. The Mental Health Index by region	14
4. The Mental Health Index by industry	16
5. Spotlight	17
The relationship between MHI scores and productivity	17
The impact of health conditions on MHI scores and productivity	18
Dietary habits	21
Physical wellbeing.....	23
Pinpointing the drivers of feeling unwell	31
Improving health and wellbeing	32
Employer support for wellbeing	37
Experience with healthcare	39
6. Overview of the TELUS Mental Health Index	40
Methodology.....	40
Calculations	40
Additional data and analyses.....	40

What you need to know for September 2024.

The mental health of workers in Australia has declined to the lowest point since August 2020.

- At 61.1, the mental health of workers has declined 1.4 points from April 2024
- 39 per cent of workers have a high mental health risk, 41 per cent have a moderate mental health risk, and 20 per cent have a low mental health risk
- All mental health sub-scores have declined from the previous period; the depression sub-score has declined most significantly, down 2.3 points from April 2024
- Anxiety and isolation continue to be the lowest mental health sub-scores for more than two years
- Mental health scores have declined in all regions apart from New South Wales compared to April 2024
- The mental health score of managers has declined and is modestly lower than the score for non-managers
- Labourers continue to have a lower mental health score than service industry and office workers
- Nearly one-third (32 per cent) of workers have a mental health score of 50 or lower. The productivity loss of this group is nearly three times the number of lost workdays as 20 per cent of workers with a mental health score of 80 or higher

More than half of workers adhere to a healthy diet, with workers without emergency savings more likely to report unhealthy eating. The mental health score of workers reporting unhealthy eating is 22 points lower than workers reporting healthy eating.

- 51 per cent of workers report following a healthy diet
- Eight per cent of workers report following an unhealthy diet; the mental health score of this group is nearly 22 points lower than workers reporting a healthy diet and nearly 16 points lower than the national average
- Workers without emergency savings are 60 per cent more likely than workers with emergency savings to report an unhealthy diet
- Workers with an annual household income less than \$100,000 are 40 per cent more likely than workers with an annual household income greater than \$100,000 to report an unhealthy diet



Workers with diagnosed mental health conditions experience the most significant productivity losses. Mental health conditions are disproportionately reported among younger workers (under 40) and workers without emergency savings.

- 21 per cent of workers report an anxiety diagnosis, 15 per cent report a depression diagnosis
- 11 per cent report a cardiovascular or circulation diagnosis
- 10 per cent report a diagnosed sleep disorder
- Workers diagnosed with a mental health condition other than anxiety or depression experience the most significant productivity loss (67.7 working days per year) and have a mental health score more than 24 points lower than workers with no diagnosed health conditions and nearly 16 points lower than the national average
- Workers diagnosed with depression lose 65.5 working days of productivity per year and have the lowest mental health score, more than 28 points lower than workers with no diagnosed health conditions and nearly 20 points lower than the national average
- Workers diagnosed with anxiety lose 61.1 working days of productivity per year and have a mental health score more than 24 points lower than workers with no diagnosed health conditions and 16 points lower than the national average
- Workers without emergency savings are three times more likely to report being diagnosed with anxiety and depression
- Workers under 40 are more than twice as likely as workers over 50 to report being diagnosed with anxiety and depression

In this report, **productivity loss** refers to workdays lost per year because of physical health issues and/or emotional or mental health challenges. Some productivity fluctuation is inevitable as employees naturally experience varying levels of efficiency throughout their workday.



Workers reporting low interest

in improving their health and wellbeing lose nearly five more weeks of productivity annually than workers reporting high interest in improving their health and wellbeing.

Physical fitness and sleep quality are top priorities for self-improvement.

- 62 per cent report high interest in improving their health and wellbeing
- Workers reporting high interest in improving their health and wellbeing have a productivity loss of 40.9 working days per year compared to 63.9 working days per year among workers reporting low interest in improving their health and wellbeing
- 55 per cent of workers want to improve their physical fitness
- 51 per cent want to improve their sleep quality
- 38 per cent want to improve their stress level
- 37 per cent want to improve their diet and nutrition
- 18 per cent want to improve pain management

Maintaining or losing weight, improving physical fitness and reducing the risk of disease and are the **primary motivators** for participating in physical activity.

- 32 per cent report that maintaining a healthy weight or losing weight is their biggest motivator for participating in physical activity outside of work
- 19 per cent report improving physical fitness/stamina is their biggest motivator
- 15 per cent report reducing the risk of disease/longevity is their biggest motivator
- 12 per cent report stress reduction is their biggest motivator
- Workers under 40 are nearly twice as likely as workers over 50 to report stress reduction as the biggest motivator for participating in physical activity

Workers dissatisfied with their physical health have a mental health score 23 points lower than satisfied workers and lose an additional 19 working days in productivity annually compared to satisfied workers.

- 52 per cent of workers are satisfied with their physical health
- 20 per cent of workers are dissatisfied with their physical health; the mental health score of this group is more than 23 points lower than workers who are satisfied with their physical health and nearly 15 points lower than the national average
- Workers who are satisfied with their physical health have a productivity loss of 38.3 working days per year compared to 57.6 working days per year among workers who are dissatisfied with their physical health
- 52 per cent of workers sometimes engage in physical activity
- 38 per cent of workers often engage in physical activity
- 10 per cent of workers never engage in physical activity; this group loses 14 additional working days of productivity annually and has a mental health score nearly 15 points lower than workers who often engage in physical activity



Mental health scores are **strongly correlated** with productivity. Workers with lower mental health scores experience greater productivity loss, while those with higher scores experience less productivity loss.



Workers rating **poor employer support** for their physical wellbeing have a mental health score 13 points lower than workers reporting excellent support and lose an additional 30 working days in productivity annually.

- 28 per cent rate employer support for physical wellbeing as very good/excellent; the mental health score of this group is at least ten points higher than workers rating employer support as poor and at least three points higher than the national average
- 27 per cent rate employer support for mental wellbeing as very good/excellent; the mental health score of this group is at least 15 points higher than workers rating employer support as poor and at least six points higher than the national average
- Productivity losses increase as the employer's rating for support declines:
 - workers rating employer support for physical wellbeing as excellent lose 26.3 working days per year in productivity compared to 56.6 working days per year in productivity loss among workers rating employer support as poor
 - workers rating employer support for mental wellbeing as excellent lose 28.4 working days per year in productivity compared to 58.4 working days per year in productivity loss among workers rating employer support as poor

Nearly one in five workers report **a negative experience** with the healthcare system, with women and workers without emergency savings bearing a disproportionately higher rate of negative encounters compared to their counterparts.

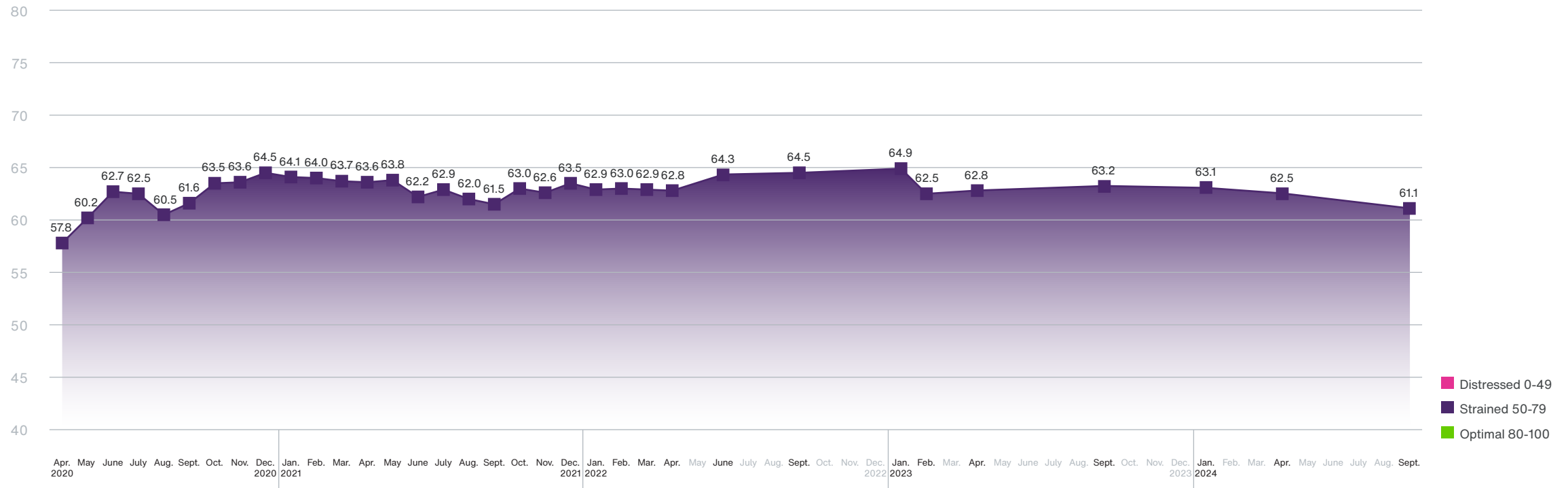
- 61 per cent report a positive experience with the healthcare system
- 17 per cent report a negative experience with the healthcare system; the mental health score of this group is 16 points lower than workers reporting a positive experience and 11 points lower than the national average
- Workers without emergency savings are nearly twice as likely as workers with emergency savings to report a negative experience with the healthcare system
- Women are 50 per cent more likely than men to report a negative experience with the healthcare system

The Mental Health Index.

MHI Current Month September 2024	April 2024
61.1	62.5

The overall Mental Health Index (MHI) for September 2024 is 61.1.

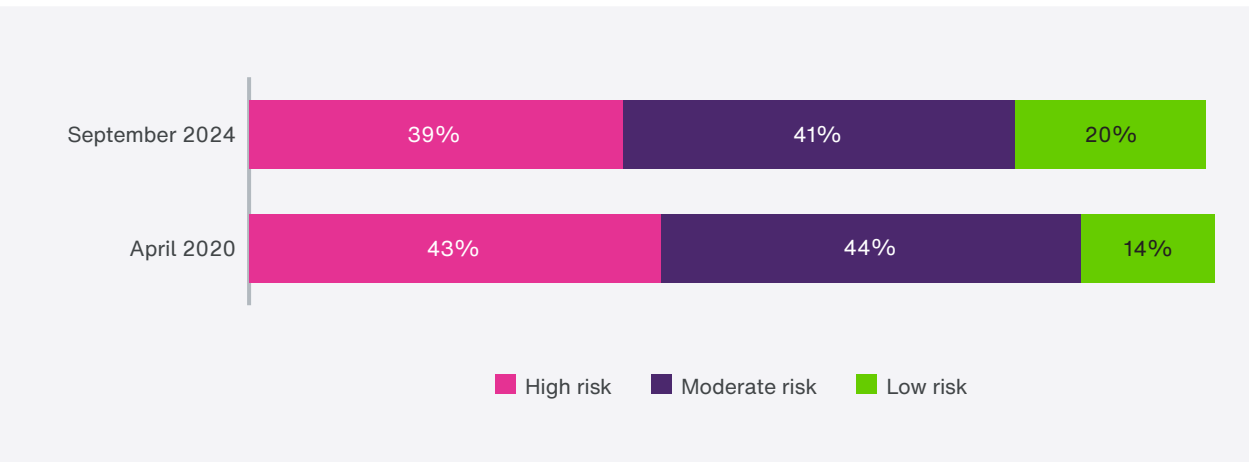
The mental health of workers in Australia has declined to the lowest point since August 2020.





Mental health risk.

In September 2024, 39 per cent of workers in Australia have a high mental health risk, 41 per cent have a moderate mental health risk, and 20 per cent have a low mental health risk. More than four years since the launch of the MHI in April 2020, the proportion of workers with a high mental health risk has decreased by four 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 more than two years, the lowest Mental Health Index sub-scores have been anxiety (54.7) and isolation (57.5). Work productivity (59.4), depression (59.8), optimism (64.1), and financial risk (64.3) follow. General psychological health (67.1) continues to be the most favourable mental health measure in September 2024.

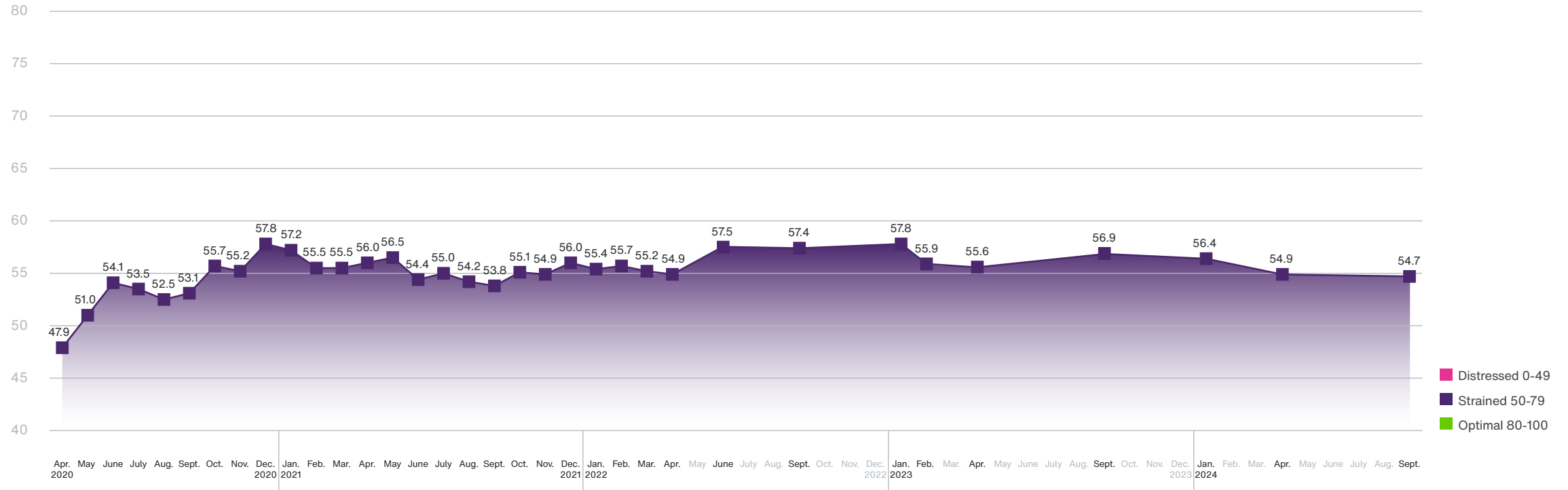
- Anxiety and isolation have been the lowest sub-scores for more than two years
- All mental health sub-scores have declined compared to the previous period
- The depression score has declined most significantly, down 2.3 points from April 2024

Mental Health Index Sub-scores	September 2024	April 2024
Anxiety	54.7	54.9
Isolation	57.5	59.3
Work productivity	59.4	60.8
Depression	59.8	62.1
Optimism	64.1	65.0
Financial risk	64.3	65.1
Psychological health	67.1	69.2



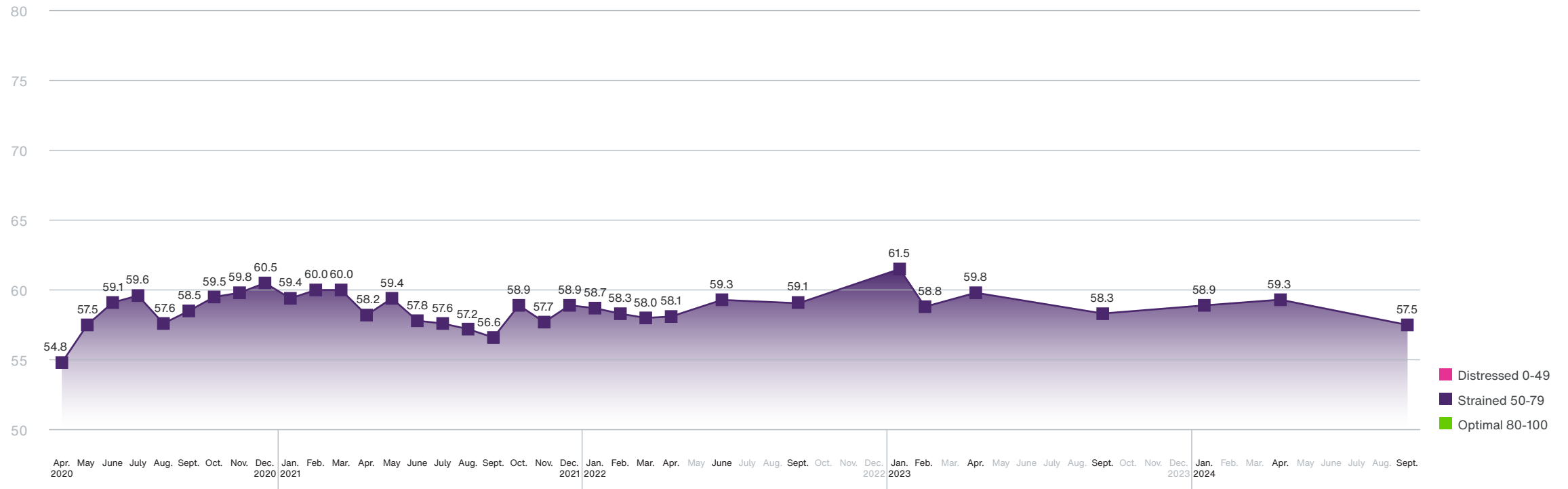
Anxiety

Anxiety sub-scores have fluctuated significantly since the launch of the MHI in April 2020. Since peaking in January 2023, anxiety sub-scores have generally declined. In September 2024, the anxiety score continues to decline and remains the lowest of all mental health sub-scores for more than two years.



Isolation

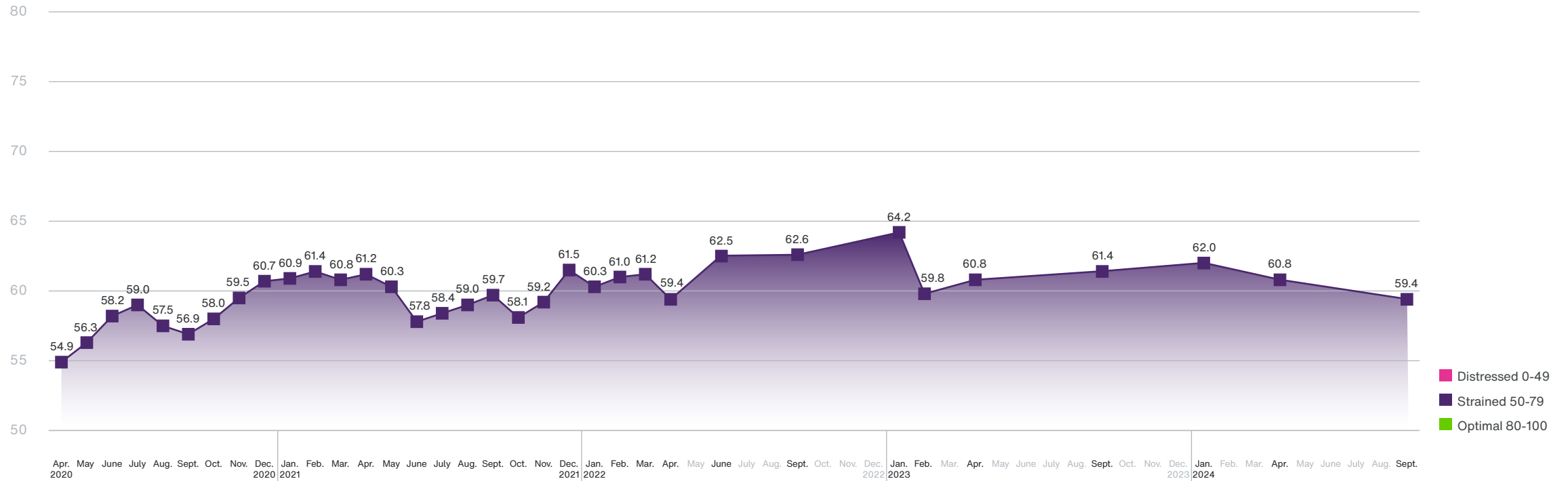
The isolation sub-score has varied significantly since April 2020. Since peaking in January 2023, isolation scores declined through September 2023. Despite two periods of improvement in January and April 2024, the isolation sub-score continues to decline and remains the second lowest of all mental health sub-scores for more than two years.



Work productivity

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

The work productivity sub-score generally improved from April 2020 through January 2023. Similar to other sub-scores, after peaking in January 2023, the work productivity sub-score declined sharply. Following three consecutive periods of improvement, the work productivity score declined in April and continues to decline in September 2024.



Mental health by gender and age.

- Since the launch of the MHI, women have had a significantly lower mental health score than men. In September 2024, the mental health score of women is 59.5 compared to 63.2 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. More than four years later, this pattern continues with a lower score for workers with at least one child (59.4) than workers without children (62.2)

Mental health by employment status.

- Overall, six per cent of respondents are unemployed¹ and eight per cent report reduced hours or reduced salary
- Workers reporting fewer hours compared to the previous month have the lowest mental health score (47.7), followed by workers reporting reduced salary (55.2), those not currently employed (56.8), and workers with no change to salary or hours (62.8)
- Managers have a slightly lower mental health score (61.1) than non-managers (61.4)
- Labourers have a lower mental health score (57.4) than service industry (61.2) and office workers (62.3)
- Self-employed/sole proprietors have the highest mental health score (63.6)
- Respondents working for companies with 101-500 employees have the lowest mental health score (59.5)



Emergency savings

- Workers without emergency savings continue to experience a lower mental health score (41.6) than the overall group (61.1). Workers with emergency savings have a mental health score of 70.9

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

The Mental Health Index by region.

In September 2024, the mental health scores in Western Australia, Southern Australia, Victoria, Queensland, and the Northern Territory have declined, while the mental health score in New South Wales has improved compared to April 2024.

- The highest mental health score is in Victoria, despite a 0.8-point decline from April 2024
- With a significant 16.6-point decline, the Northern Territory has the lowest mental health score in September 2024



State	September 2024	April 2024	Change
New South Wales	61.6	60.9	0.7
Western Australia	59.9	60.0	-0.1
South Australia	62.5	63.0	-0.5
Victoria	62.6	63.4	-0.8
Queensland	59.4	64.3	-4.9
Northern Territory	45.7	62.3	-16.6

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	Sept. 2024	April 2024
Employed (no change in hours/salary)	62.8	63.6
Employed (fewer hours compared to last month)	47.7	51.8
Employed (reduced salary compared to last month)	55.2	52.8
Not currently employed	56.8	63.2

Age group	Sept. 2024	April 2024
Age 20-29	52.5	55.3
Age 30-39	54.8	56.3
Age 40-49	60.0	61.1
Age 50-59	64.6	64.6
Age 60-69	68.8	71.0

Number of children	Sept. 2024	April 2024
No children in household	62.2	64.2
1 child	59.6	59.6
2 children	59.5	60.8
3 children or more	57.9	57.5

Gender	Sept. 2024	April 2024
Men	63.2	64.8
Women	59.5	60.5

Household income/annum	Sept. 2024	April 2024
<\$30K	49.5	54.3
\$30K to <\$60K	57.1	58.2
\$60K to <\$100K	61.1	62.1
\$100K to <\$150K	62.2	64.1
\$150K or more	64.9	65.7

Employer size	Sept. 2024	April 2024
Self-employed/sole proprietor	63.6	63.8
2-50 employees	61.6	62.9
51-100 employees	59.6	60.6
101-500 employees	59.5	61.0
501-1,000 employees	61.9	63.3
1,001-5,000 employees	60.5	63.2
5,001-10,000 employees	60.9	63.4
More than 10,000 employees	63.3	63.0

Manager	Sept. 2024	April 2024
Manager	61.1	61.7
Non-manager	61.4	62.9

Work environment	Sept. 2024	April 2024
Labour	57.4	60.1
Office/desk	62.3	64.0
Service	61.2	61.1

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.

Full-time post-secondary students have the lowest mental health score (49.4), followed by workers in Accommodation (53.3), and Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting (54.2).

Workers in Public Administration (68.4), Wholesale Trade (66.5), and Technology (65.2) have the highest mental health scores this month.



Industry	September 2024	April 2024	Change
Full-time post-secondary student	49.4	45.2	4.1
Administrative and Support services	59.0	55.5	3.5
Food Services	60.5	58.0	2.5
Wholesale Trade	66.5	64.1	2.4
Finance and Insurance	64.6	62.6	2.0
Construction	59.3	57.9	1.4
Educational Services	64.7	63.3	1.4
Accommodation	53.3	51.9	1.3
Technology	65.2	64.4	0.8
Public Administration	68.4	68.5	-0.2
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	60.7	61.1	-0.4
Retail Trade	61.6	62.6	-1.0
Manufacturing	62.9	64.7	-1.8
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	64.4	67.2	-2.8
Health Care and Social Assistance	60.7	64.3	-3.6
Transportation and Warehousing	63.8	67.6	-3.8
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	54.2	58.8	-4.6
Other	55.9	62.3	-6.4
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	59.6	69.8	-10.2

Spotlight

The relationship between MHI scores and productivity.

Productivity losses are calculated using an assessment of four key metrics:

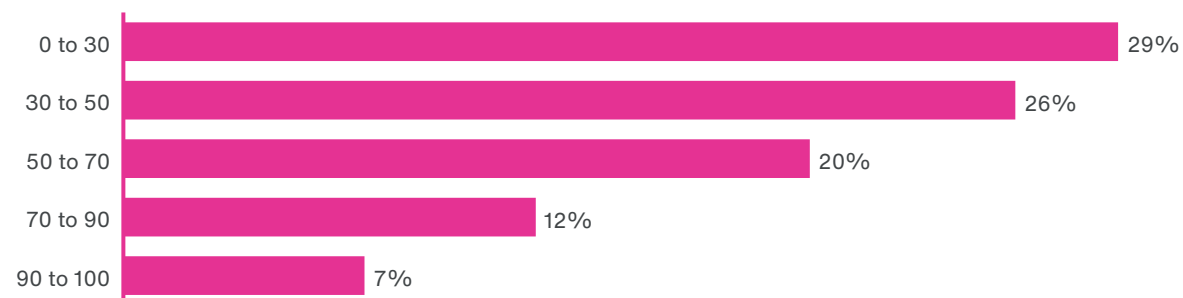
1. Work effort when feeling well
2. Absenteeism when feeling unwell
3. Instances of working when feeling unwell (commonly referred to as Presenteeism)
4. Work effort when feeling unwell

Productivity loss is reported as the number of workdays lost per year, based on a standard 240-day work year.

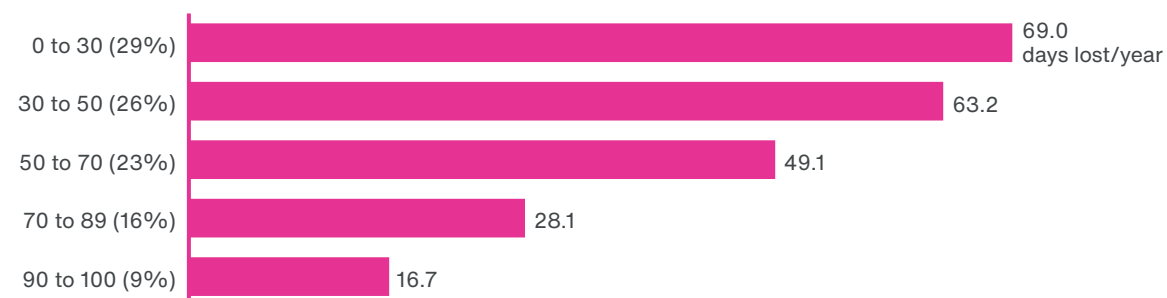
- Mental health scores are strongly correlated with productivity. Workers with lower mental health scores experience greater productivity loss, while those with higher scores experience less productivity loss
- Nearly one-third (32 per cent) of workers have a mental health score of 50 or lower. The productivity loss of this group is nearly three times the number of lost workdays as 20 per cent of workers with a mental health score of 80 or higher



Productivity loss by MHI score



Productivity loss in working days per year by MHI score



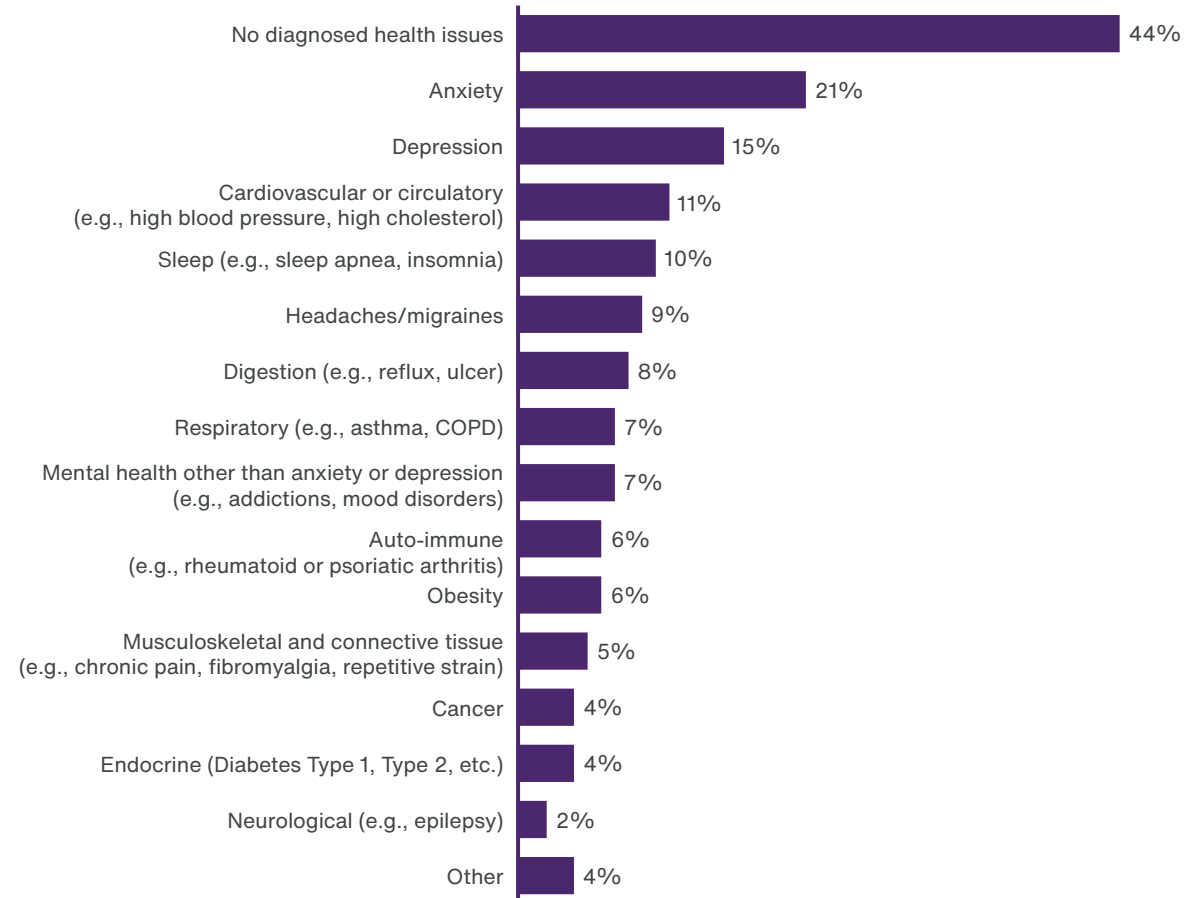
The impact of health conditions on MHI scores and productivity.

Workers with diagnosed mental health conditions experience the most significant productivity losses. Mental health conditions are disproportionately reported among younger workers (under 40), and workers without emergency savings.

- More than one in five (21 per cent) workers report an anxiety diagnosis, 15 per cent report a depression diagnosis, 11 per cent report a cardiovascular or circulation diagnosis and 10 per cent report a diagnosed sleep disorder
- Nearly half (44 per cent) did not report any diagnoses; this group has the highest mental health score (69.5), more than eight points higher than the national average (61.1)



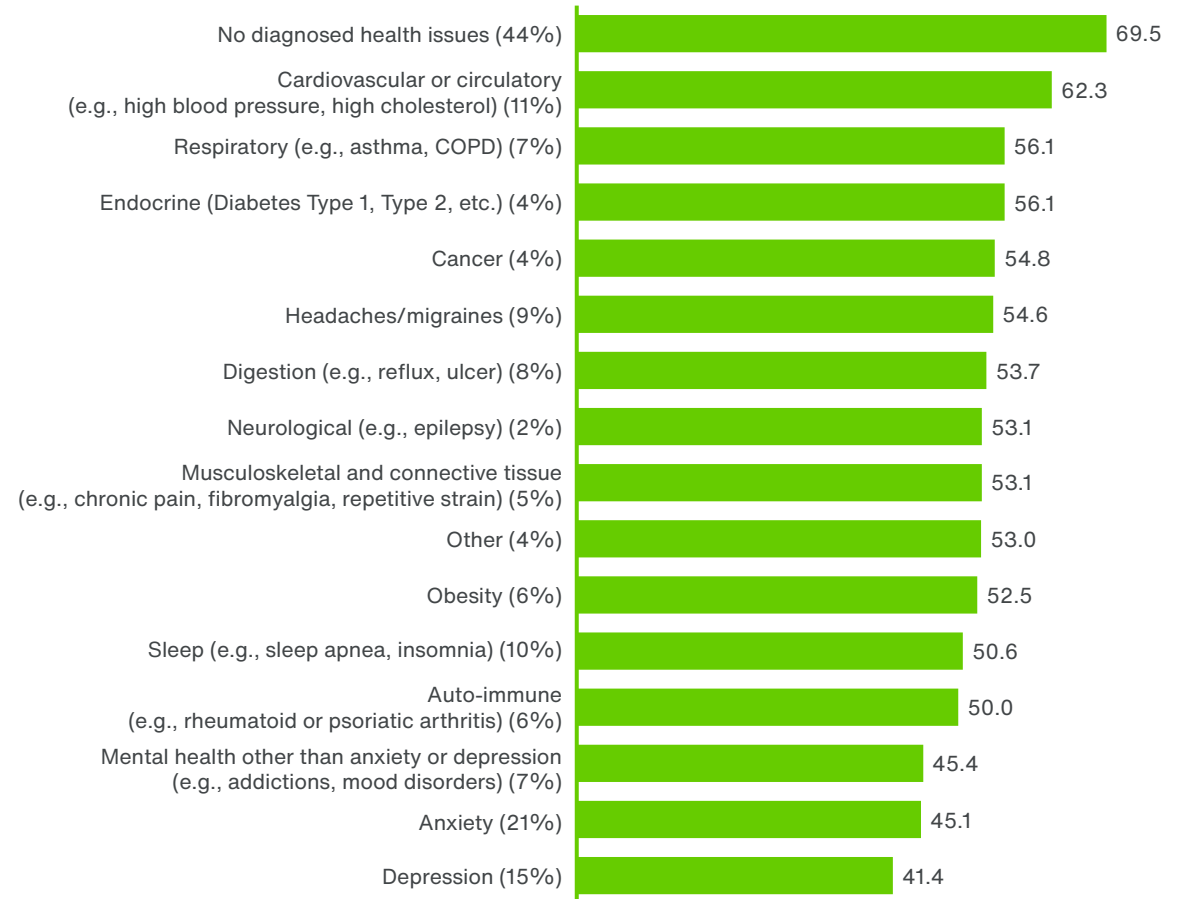
Diagnosed health conditions



- Workers under 40 are more than twice as likely as workers over 50 to report being diagnosed with anxiety and depression
- Workers without emergency savings are three times more likely to report being diagnosed with anxiety and depression

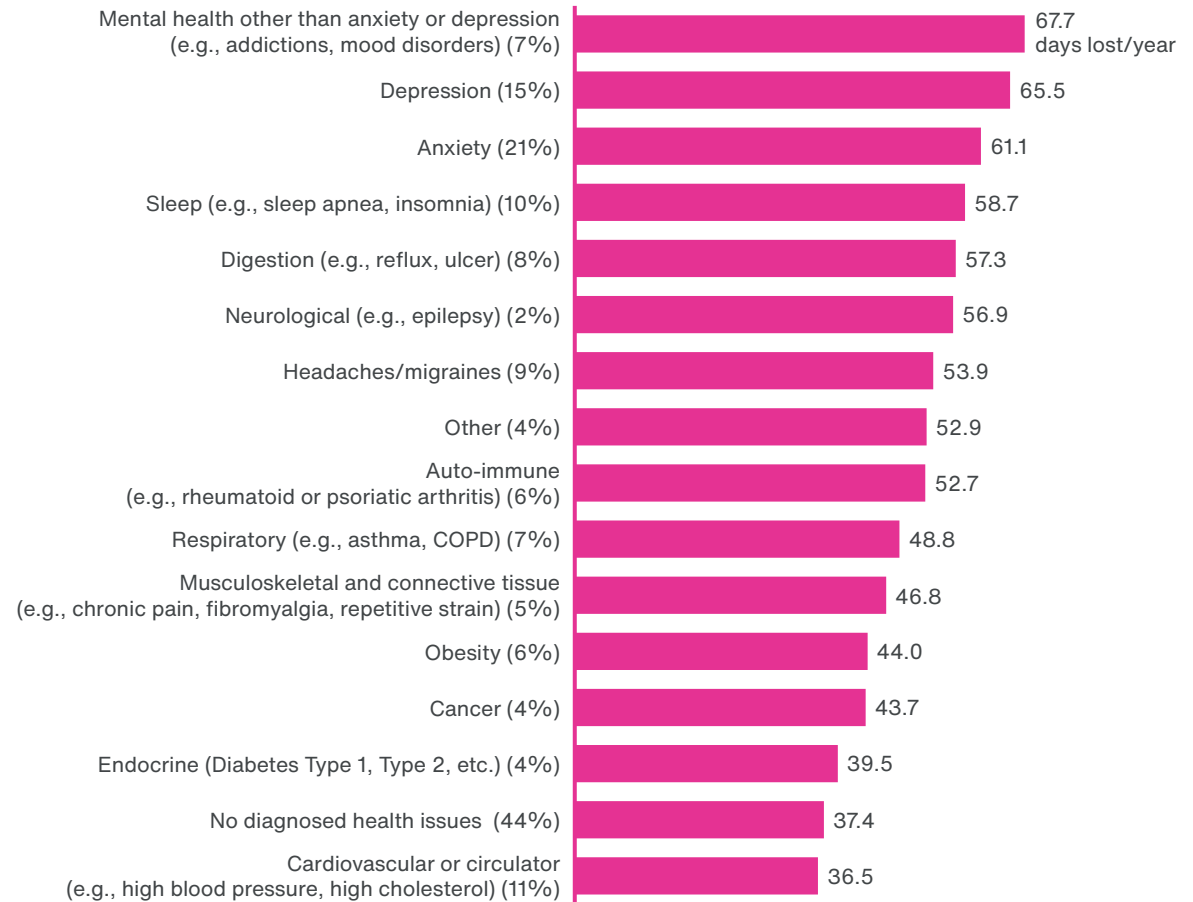


MHI score by “Diagnosed health conditions”



- Workers diagnosed with a mental health condition other than anxiety or depression experience the most significant productivity loss (67.7 working days per year) and have a mental health score (45.4) more than 24 points lower than workers with no diagnosed health conditions (69.5) and nearly 16 points lower than the national average (61.1)
- Workers diagnosed with depression lose 65.5 working days of productivity per year and have the lowest mental health score (41.4), more than 28 points lower than workers with no diagnosed health conditions (69.5) and nearly 20 points lower than the national average (61.1)
- Workers diagnosed with anxiety lose 61.1 working days of productivity per year and have a mental health score (45.1) more than 24 points lower than workers with no diagnosed health conditions (69.5) and 16 points lower than the national average (61.1)

Productivity loss (in working days/year) by “Diagnosed health conditions”



Dietary habits

More than half of workers adhere to a healthy diet, with workers without emergency savings and those with lower household income more likely to report unhealthy eating. The mental health of workers reporting unhealthy eating is 22 points lower than workers reporting healthy eating.

- More than half (51 per cent) of workers report a very healthy or somewhat healthy diet; this group has the highest mental health score (67.0), six points higher than the national average (61.1)
- The lowest mental health score (45.4) is among eight per cent of workers reporting an unhealthy diet, nearly 22 points lower than workers reporting a healthy diet (67.0) and nearly 16 points lower than the national average (61.1)
- Workers without emergency savings are 60 per cent more likely than workers with emergency savings to report an unhealthy diet
- Workers with an annual household income less than \$100,000 are 40 per cent more likely than workers with an annual household income greater than \$100,000 to report an unhealthy diet



How would you describe your overall diet?



MHI score by “How would you describe your overall diet?”



Workers over 50 are more likely than workers under 40 to follow a balanced diet.

- More than one-third (34 per cent) of workers generally follow a balanced diet with no specific exclusions; this group has the highest mental health score (65.5), more than four points higher than the national average (61.1)
- Workers over 50 are 60 per cent more likely than workers under 40 to generally follow a balanced diet with no specific exclusions
- Twenty-four per cent report following specific dietary preferences/restrictions; this group has the lowest mental health score (56.1), more than nine points lower than workers following a balanced diet with no specific exclusions (65.5) and five points lower than the national average (61.1)



Do you follow any specific dietary preferences or restrictions?



MHI score by “Do you follow any specific dietary preferences or restrictions?”

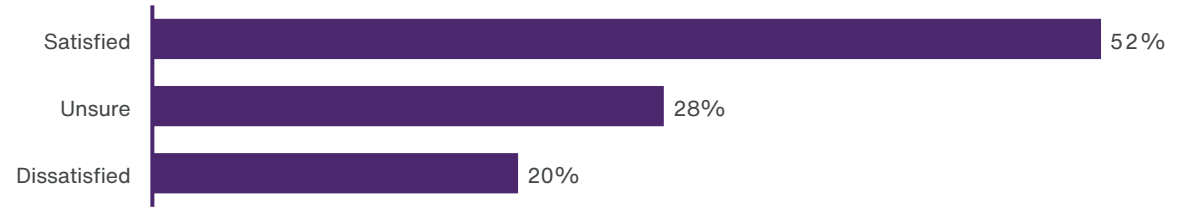


Physical wellbeing

Workers dissatisfied with their physical health have a mental health score 23 points lower than satisfied workers and lose an additional 19 working days in productivity annually compared to satisfied workers.

- More than half (52 per cent) of workers are satisfied with their physical health; this group has the highest mental health score (69.5), more than eight points higher than the national average (61.1)
- One in five (20 per cent) are dissatisfied with their physical health; this group has the lowest mental health score (46.2), more than 23 points lower than workers who are satisfied with their physical health (69.2) and nearly 15 points lower than the national average (61.1)
- Workers who are satisfied with their physical health have a productivity loss of 38.3 working days per year compared to 57.6 working days per year among workers who are dissatisfied with their physical health
- Workers without emergency savings are more than twice as likely as workers with emergency savings to be dissatisfied with their physical health

How satisfied are you with your current physical health?



MHI score by “How satisfied are you with your current physical health?”



Productivity loss (in working days/year) by “How satisfied are you with your current physical health?”



Workers who never engage in physical activity have a mental health score 15 points lower than workers who often engage and lose 14 additional working days in productivity annually.

- More than half (52 per cent) of workers sometimes engage in physical activity; the mental health score of this group (58.7) is more than two points lower than the national average (61.1)
- More than one-third (38 per cent) often engage in physical activity; this group has the highest mental health score (66.8), nearly six points higher than the national average (61.1)
- Workers who often engage in physical activity have a productivity loss of 40.0 working days per year compared to at least 47.2 working days per year among workers who engage sometimes or not at all
- The lowest mental health score (52.1) is among 10 per cent of workers who do not engage in physical activity, nearly 15 points lower than workers who often engage (66.8) and nine points lower than the national average (61.1)
- Workers without emergency savings are more than twice as likely as workers with emergency savings to not engage in physical activity
- Women are 40 per cent more likely than men to not engage in physical activity

Do you engage in physical activity?



MHI score by “Do you engage in physical activity?”



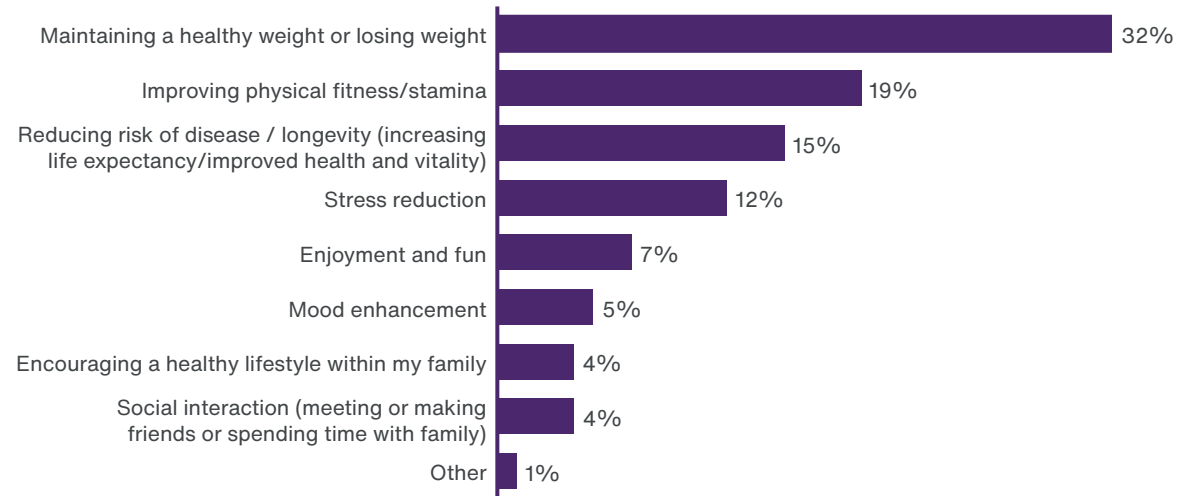
Productivity loss (in working days/year) by “Do you engage in physical activity?”



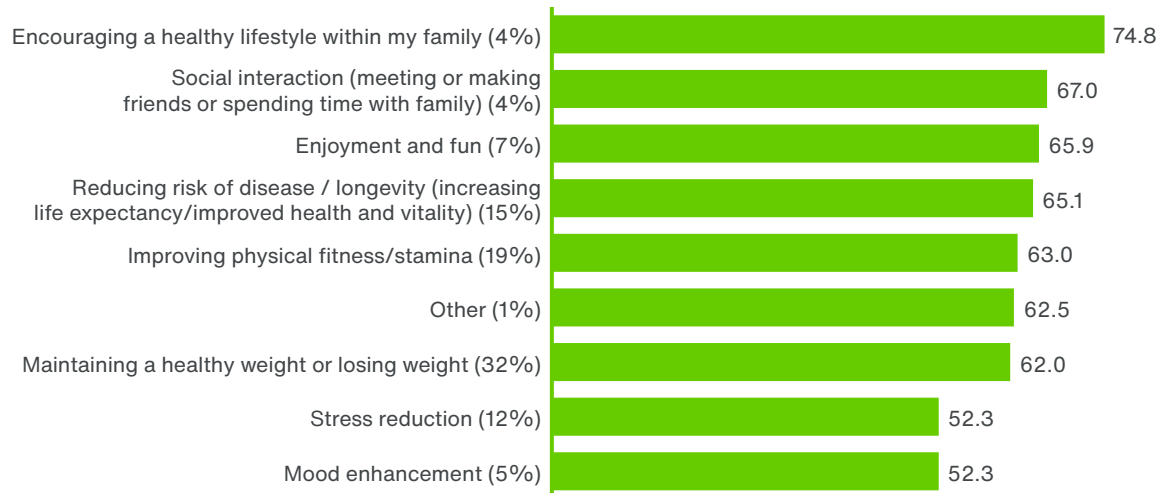
Maintaining or losing weight, improving physical fitness and reducing the risk of disease are the primary motivators for participating in physical activity.

- Nearly one-third (32 per cent) of workers report that maintaining a healthy weight or losing weight is their biggest motivator for participating in physical activity outside of work, 19 per cent report improving physical fitness/stamina, 15 per cent report reducing the risk of disease/longevity is their biggest motivator, 12 per cent report stress reduction, and seven per cent report enjoyment and fun as their biggest motivator
- The lowest mental health scores (52.3) are among 12 per cent of workers reporting stress reduction and five per cent reporting mood enhancement as their biggest motivator for participating in physical activity
- Workers under 40 are nearly twice as likely as workers over 50 to report stress reduction as their biggest motivator for participating in physical activity

What is your biggest motivator for participating in physical activity outside of work?



MHI score by “What is your biggest motivator for participating in physical activity outside of work?”

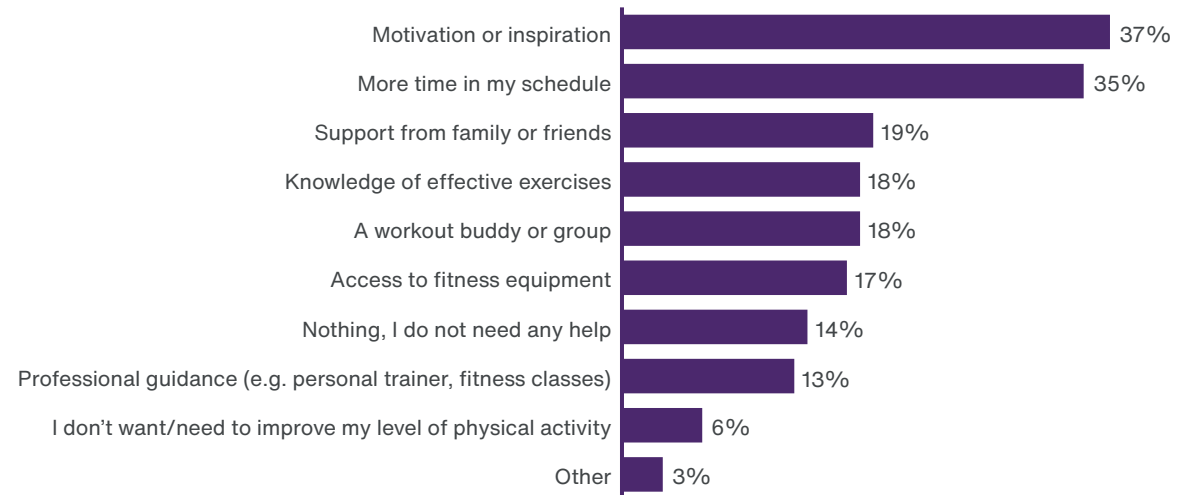


Motivation/inspiration and more time are the leading factors workers believe would help to improve their physical activity.

- Nearly two in five (37 per cent) workers say that motivation or inspiration would help improve their physical activity, 35 per cent say that more time in their schedule would help, 19 per cent say support from family or friends would help, 18 per cent say that knowledge of effective exercises would help, 18 per cent say that a workout buddy or group would help, and 17 per cent say that access to fitness equipment would help improve their physical activity
- One in seven (14 per cent) do not need help improving their physical activity; this group has the highest mental health score (71.1), 10 points higher than the national average (61.1)



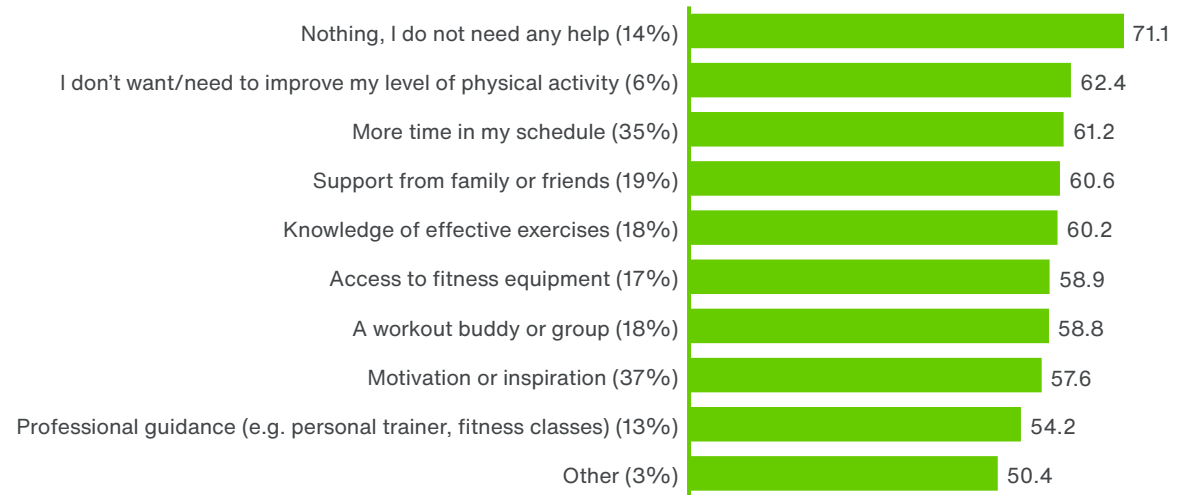
What would help you improve your level of physical activity?



- Parents are 60 per cent more likely than non-parents to say that support from family or friends would help improve their physical activity
- Workers under 40 are nearly 60 per cent more likely than workers over 50 to say that support from family or friends would help improve their physical activity
- Non-managers are twice as likely as managers to report not needing help improving their physical activity
- Workers over 50 are more than twice as likely as workers under 40 to report not needing help improving their physical activity
- Non-parents are twice as likely as parents to report not needing help improving their physical activity



MHI score by “What would help you improve your level of physical activity?”

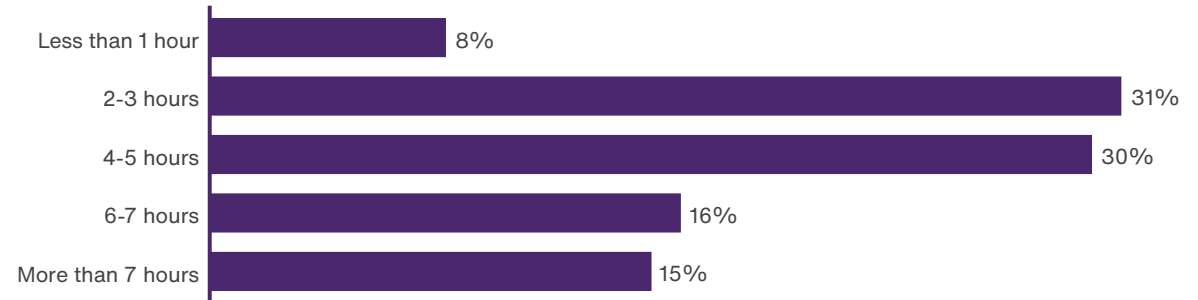


Nearly one-third of workers spend at least six hours sitting or inactive. Productivity losses are greatest among workers spending more than seven hours sitting or inactive.

- The lowest mental health score (56.5) is among 15 per cent of workers who spend more than seven hours per day sitting or being inactive; this score is at least three points lower than workers who spend five or fewer hours per day sitting or being inactive and nearly five points lower than the national average (61.1)
- Workers who spend 2-3 hours sitting or being inactive have a productivity loss of 40.1 days per year compared to a productivity loss of 54.5 working days per year among workers who spend more than seven hours per day sitting or being inactive



On average, how many hours per day do you spend sitting or being inactive?



MHI score by “On average, how many hours per day do you spend sitting or being inactive?”



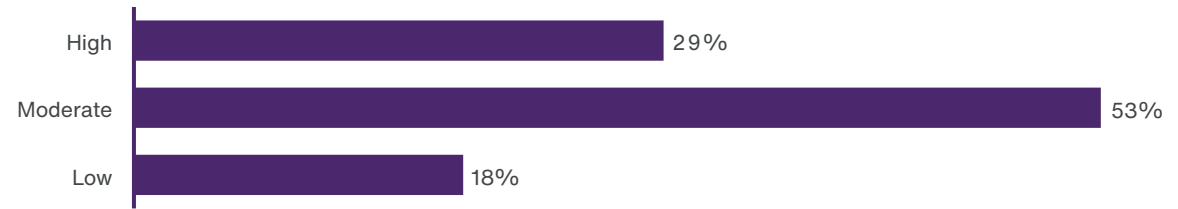
Productivity loss (in working days/year) by “On average, how many hours per day do you spend sitting or being inactive?”



Workers reporting low energy lose an additional 39 days in productivity annually compared to workers reporting high energy.

- More than one-quarter (29 per cent) of workers rate their energy level as high on a typical day; this group has the highest mental health score (71.0), 10 points higher than the national average (61.1)
- The lowest mental health score (42.4) is among 18 per cent of workers who rate their energy level as low, nearly 29 points lower than workers who rate their energy level as high (71.0) and nearly 19 points lower than the national average (61.1)
- Workers reporting high energy have a productivity loss of 28.6 working days per year compared to a productivity loss of 67.8 working days per year among workers reporting low energy
- Workers without emergency savings are more than twice as likely as workers with emergency savings to report low energy levels on a typical day

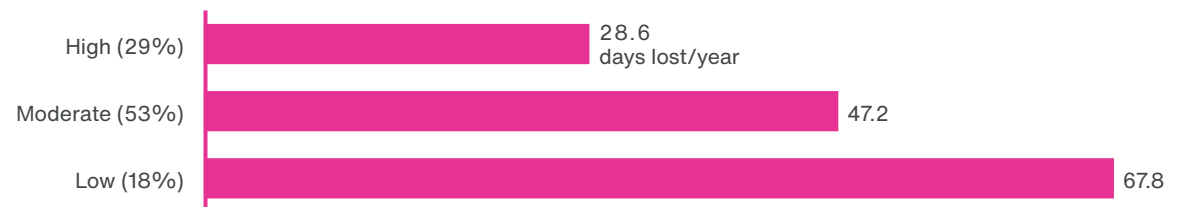
How would you rate your energy level on a typical day?



MHI score by “How would you rate your energy level on a typical day?”



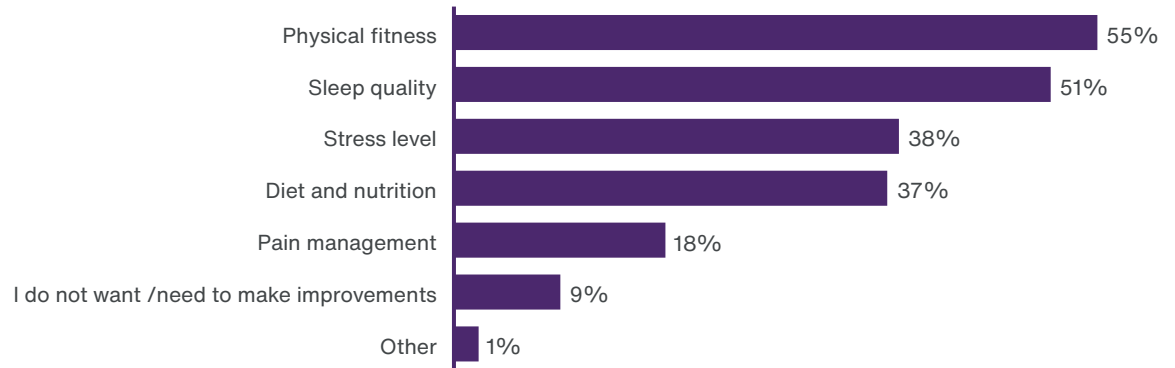
Productivity loss by “How would you rate your energy level on a typical day?”



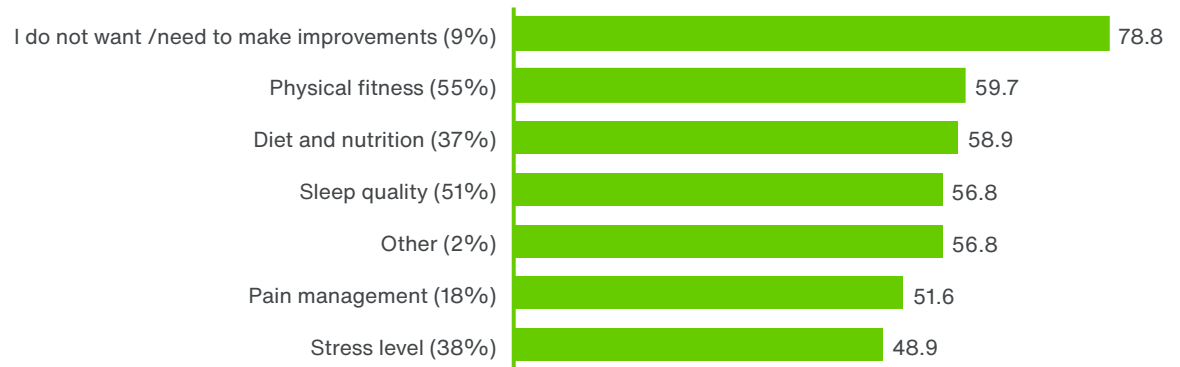
Physical fitness and sleep quality are top priorities for self-improvement. Younger workers (under 40) and workers without financial security are more likely to want to manage stress better.

- More than half (55 per cent) of workers want to improve their physical fitness, 51 per cent want to improve their sleep quality, 38 per cent want to improve their stress level, 37 per cent want to improve their diet and nutrition, and 18 per cent want to improve pain management
- The lowest mental health score (48.9) is among 38 per cent of workers who want to improve their stress level, 30 points lower than workers who report not wanting to or needing to make improvements (78.8), and more than 12 points lower than the national average (61.1)
- Workers without emergency savings are more than twice as likely as workers with emergency savings to report wanting to improve their stress level
- Workers under 40 are 60 per cent more likely than workers over 50 to report wanting to improve their stress level
- Non-managers are three times more likely than managers to report not wanting to or needing to make improvements
- Workers over 50 are twice as likely as workers under 40 to report not wanting to or needing to make improvements

Which of the following do you want to improve?



MHI score by “Which of the following do you want to improve?”



Pinpointing the drivers of feeling unwell.

More than three in five (63 per cent) workers report feeling unwell at work at least some of the time with 39 per cent feeling mentally unwell more often and 28 per cent feeling physically unwell more often.

- Nearly two in five (39 per cent) workers report feeling mentally unwell more often; this group has the lowest mental health score (48.5), nearly 13 points lower than the national average (61.1) and nearly nine points lower than workers who report feeling physically unwell more often (57.4)
- Workers under 40 are 60 per cent more likely than workers over 50 to feel mentally unwell more often
- Workers over 50 are 50 per cent more likely than workers under 40 to feel physically unwell more often
- One-third (33 per cent) report feeling mentally and physically unwell in nearly equal proportions, and 28 per cent report feeling physically unwell more often



Are you more often mentally or physically unwell?



MHI score by “Are you more often mentally or physically unwell?”

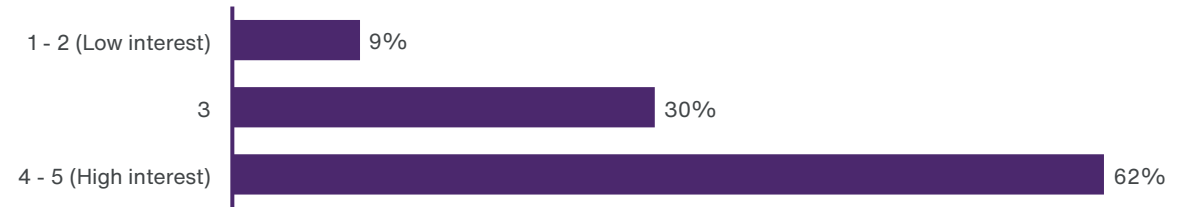


Improving health and wellbeing.

Workers reporting low interest in improving their health and wellbeing lose nearly five more weeks of productivity annually (23 working days) than workers reporting high interest in improving their health and wellbeing.

- More than three in five (62 per cent) workers report high interest (rating of 4 or 5) in improving their health and wellbeing; this group has the highest mental health score (64.5), more than three points higher than the national average (61.1)
- Nine per cent report low interest (rating of 1 or 2) in improving their health and wellbeing; this group has the lowest mental health score (47.8), nearly 17 points lower than workers reporting high interest (rating of 4 or 5) (64.5) and more than 13 points lower than the national average (61.1)
- Workers reporting high interest in improving their health and wellbeing have a productivity loss of 40.9 working days per year compared to 63.9 working days per year among workers reporting low interest in improving their health and wellbeing
- Workers without emergency savings are more than twice as likely as workers with emergency savings to report low interest in improving their health and wellbeing

How would you rate your overall interest in improving your health and wellbeing?



MHI score by “How would you rate your overall interest in improving your health and wellbeing?”



Productivity loss (in working days/year) by “How would you rate your overall interest in improving your health and wellbeing?”

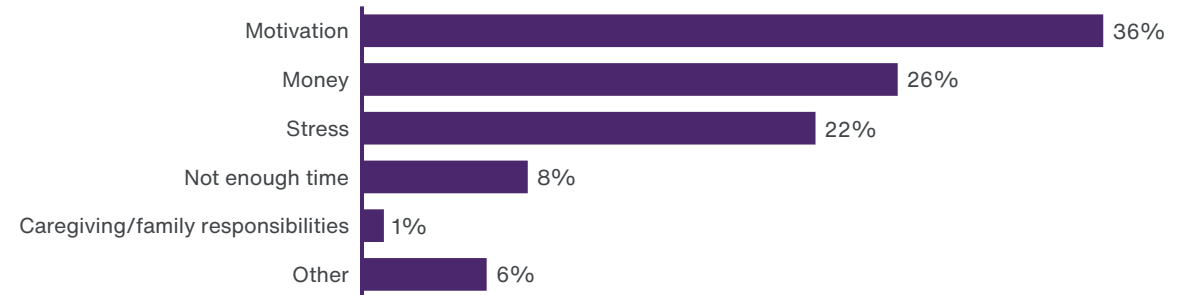


Younger workers (under 40), non-managers, and women report a lack of time as the primary obstacle to improving their health and wellbeing.

- More than one-third (36 per cent) of workers say lack of motivation is the primary reason for low interest in improving their health and wellbeing, 26 per cent say money is the reason, 22 per cent say stress is the reason for low interest, and eight per cent say they do not have enough time to improve their health and wellbeing
- Workers under 40 are more than five times as likely as workers over 50 to report not having enough time to improve their health and wellbeing
- Women and non-managers are 60 per cent more likely than their counterparts to report not having enough time to improve their health and wellbeing
- Workers without emergency savings are more than four times as likely as workers with emergency savings to say stress is the primary reason for low interest in improving their health and wellbeing



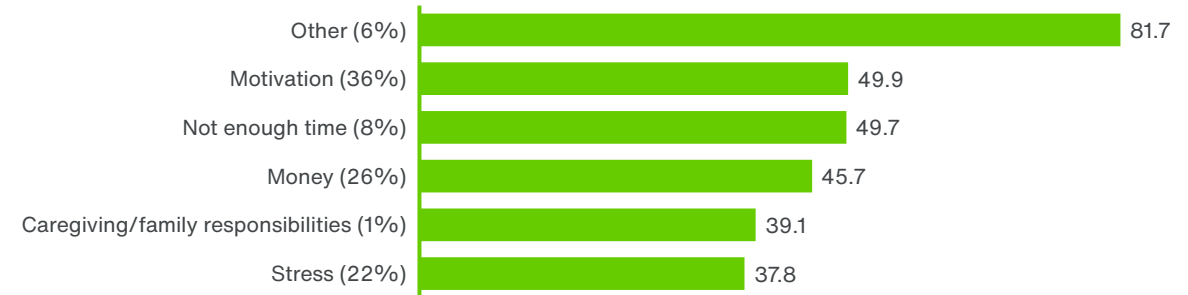
Why is your interest in improving your health and wellbeing low?



- The lowest mental health score (37.8) is among 22 per cent of workers who say they have low interest in improving their health and wellbeing due to stress; the mental health score of this group is more than 23 points lower than the national average (61.1)
- Workers under 40 are nearly three times as likely as workers over 50 to say stress is the primary reason for low interest in improving their health and wellbeing
- Workers with an annual household income lower than \$100,000 are 60 per cent more likely than workers with an annual household income greater than \$100,000 to say stress is the primary reason for low interest in improving their health and wellbeing



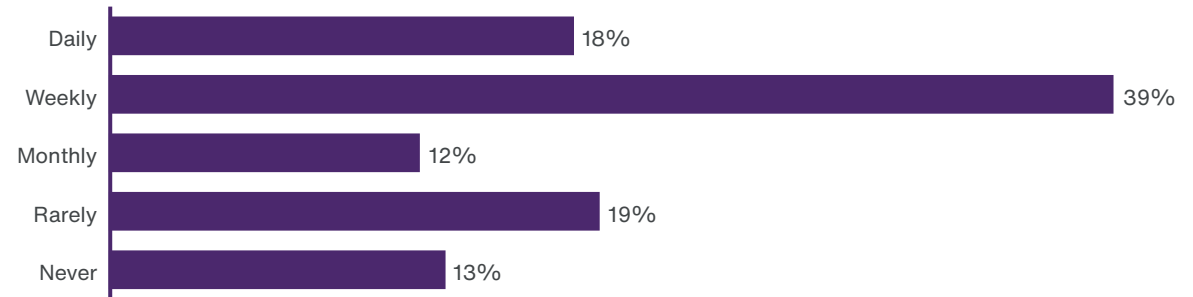
MHI score by “Why is your interest in improving your health and wellbeing low?”



Workers who engage in daily activities/practices promoting mental wellbeing have higher mental health scores compared to those who only participate weekly or less often.

- Nearly one in five (18 per cent) workers participate in daily activities/practices that promote mental wellbeing; this group has the highest mental health score (68.4), more than seven points higher than the national average (61.1)
- Workers with emergency savings are 60 per cent more likely than workers without emergency savings to participate daily in activities/practices that promote mental wellbeing
- The lowest mental health score (55.5) is among 19 per cent of workers who rarely participate in activities/practices that promote mental wellbeing, nearly 13 points lower than workers who participate daily (68.4) and nearly six points lower than the national average (61.1)
- Workers over 50 are nearly twice as likely as workers under 40 to never participate in activities/practices that promote mental wellbeing

How often do you participate in activities or practices that promote mental wellbeing?



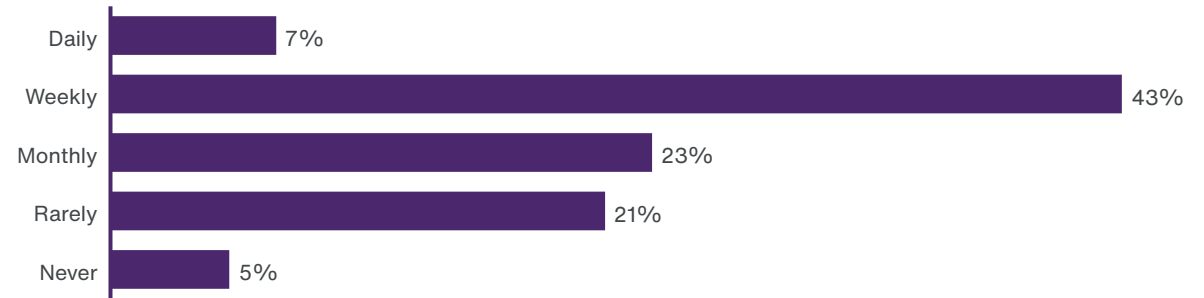
MHI score by “How often do you participate in activities or practices that promote mental wellbeing?”



Fewer than 10 per cent of workers engage in daily activities that promote social wellbeing, with those without emergency savings more likely to report never participating in social activities.

- Fewer than one in ten (seven per cent) workers participate in daily activities that promote social wellbeing, yet this group has the highest mental health score (66.7), more than five points higher than the national average (61.1)
- Managers are more than twice as likely as non-managers to participate daily in activities/practices that promote social wellbeing
- Men are 50 per cent more likely than women to participate in daily activities/practices that promote social wellbeing
- The lowest mental health score (46.4) is among five per cent of workers who do not participate in activities that promote social wellbeing, more than points lower than workers who participate daily (66.7) and nearly 15 points lower than the national average (61.1)
- Workers without emergency savings are 80 percent more likely than workers with emergency savings to never participate in activities/practices that promote social wellbeing

How often do you engage in activities that promote social wellbeing such as spending time with friends or participating in community events?



MHI score by “How often do you engage in activities that promote social wellbeing such as spending time with friends or participating in community events?”

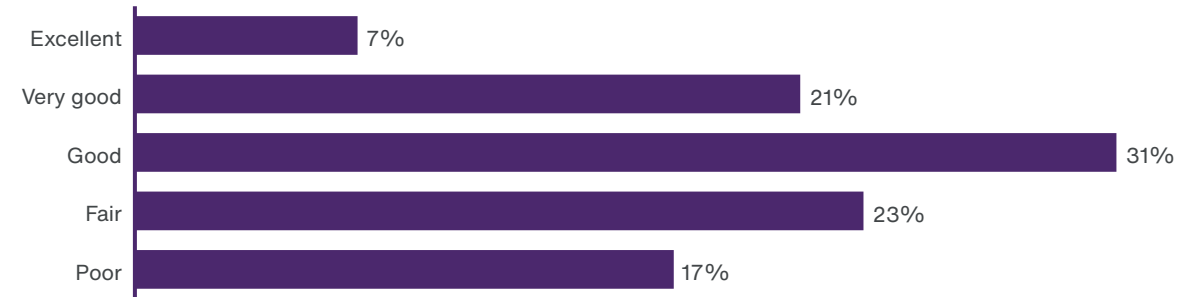


Employer support for wellbeing.

Workers rating poor employer support for their physical wellbeing have a mental health score 13 points lower than workers reporting excellent support and lose an additional 30 working days in productivity annually.

- More than one-quarter (28 per cent) of workers rate employer support for physical wellbeing as very good/excellent; this group has the highest mental health scores (64.3 and 67.3 respectively), at least three points higher than the national average (61.1)
- The lowest mental health score (54.2) is among 17 per cent of workers rating employer support for physical wellbeing as poor, at least ten points lower than workers rating support as very good/excellent and seven points lower than the national average (61.1)
- Productivity losses increase as the employer's rating for support declines; workers rating employer support for physical wellbeing as excellent lose 26.3 working days per year in productivity compared to 56.6 working days per year in productivity loss among workers rating employer support as poor

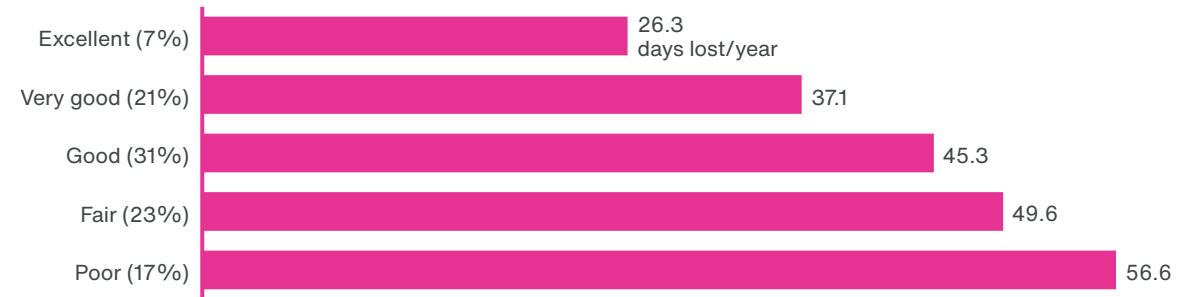
How would you rate the support provided by your employer for your physical wellbeing?



MHI score by “How would you rate the support provided by your employer for your physical wellbeing?”



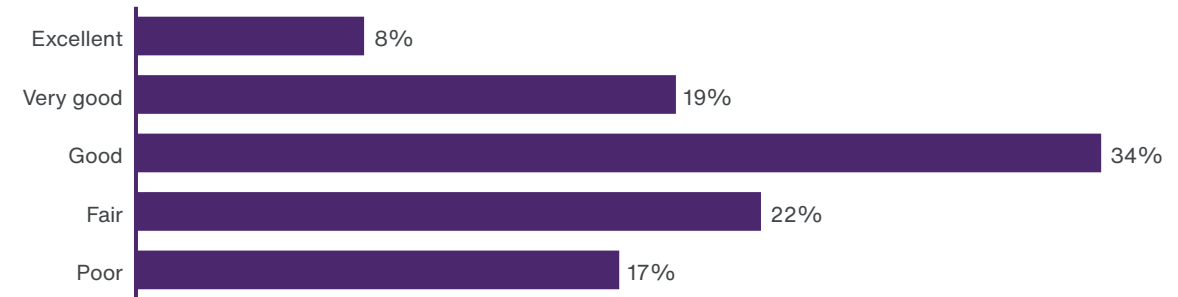
Productivity loss (in working days/year) by “How would you rate the support provided by your employer for your physical wellbeing?”



Workers rating poor employer support for their mental wellbeing have a mental health score 15 points lower than workers reporting excellent support and lose an additional 30 working days in productivity annually.

- More than one-quarter (27 per cent) of workers rate employer support for mental wellbeing as very good/excellent; this group has the highest mental health scores (67.5 and 68.0 respectively), at least six points higher than the national average (61.1)
- The lowest mental health score (52.5) is among 17 per cent of workers rating employer support as poor, at least 15 points lower than workers rating support as very good/excellent and nearly nine points lower than the national average (61.1)
- Productivity losses increase as the employer’s rating for support declines; workers rating employer support for mental wellbeing as excellent lose 28.4 working days per year in productivity compared to 58.4 working days per year in productivity loss among workers rating employer support as poor

How would you rate the support provided by your employer for your mental wellbeing?



MHI score by “How would you rate the support provided by your employer for your mental wellbeing?”



Productivity loss (in working days/year) by “How would you rate the support provided by your employer for your mental wellbeing?”

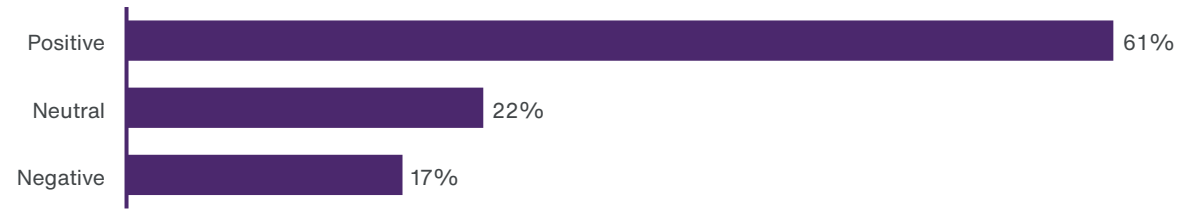


Experience with healthcare.

Nearly one in five (17 per cent) workers report a negative experience with the healthcare system, with women and workers without emergency savings bearing a disproportionately higher rate of negative encounters compared to their counterparts.

- More than three in five (61 per cent) workers report a positive experience with the healthcare system; this group has the highest mental health score (66.0), five points higher than the national average (61.1)
- Nearly one in five (17 per cent) report a negative experience with the healthcare system; this group has the lowest mental health score (50.0), 16 points lower than workers reporting a positive experience (66.0) and 11 points lower than the national average (61.1)
- Workers without emergency savings are nearly twice as likely as workers with emergency savings to report a negative experience with the healthcare system
- Women are 50 per cent more likely than men to report a negative experience with the healthcare system

In general, how would you rate your experience with the healthcare system?



MHI score by “In general, how would you rate your experience with the healthcare system?”



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 provides a measure of 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 1,000 people who live in Australia 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 Australia. Respondents are asked to consider the prior two weeks when answering each question. Data for the current report was collected between September 17 and September 30, 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





www.telushealth.com

