



# TELUS Mental Health Index.

Australia | January 2025

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# What you need to know for January 2025.

At least one-third of workers are feeling anxious and isolated and do not have emergency savings to cover basic needs; three in ten say their mental health is negatively impacting work productivity.

- At 61.6, the mental health of workers has improved a half point from the previous period
- 38 percent of workers have a high mental health risk, 42 percent have a moderate mental health risk, and 20 percent have a low mental health risk
- General psychological health and optimism sub-scores have had the greatest improvements from the previous period
- Anxiety and isolation remain the lowest mental health sub-scores for nearly three years
- The mental health scores in Western Australia and Queensland have improved, while scores in Victoria and Southern Australia have declined compared to September 2024
- The mental health score of managers remains slightly higher than the score of non-managers
- Labourers continue to have a lower mental health score than service industry and office workers

More than two in five workers feel under constant stress, with the concern disproportionately among younger workers.

- 41 per cent of workers feel under constant stress; the mental health score of this group is nearly 31 points lower than workers not feeling constant stress and nearly 15 points lower than the national average
- 34 per cent of workers are skeptical of others' motives
- 31 per cent of workers are feeling angrier and more distrustful of others
- 26 per cent of workers get easily frustrated in daily situations
- Workers under 40 are more likely to feel under constant stress, to feel angrier and more distrustful of others, and to be easily frustrated



Workers identify health benefits as the most significant opportunity for improvement; more than one-third value better support for their wellbeing over financial rewards.

- 46 per cent of workers say their organisation excels in flexible work, while 31 percent say their organisation needs to improve flexible work
- 36 per cent of workers say their organisation excels at workload management, while 32 percent say their organisation needs to improve workload management
- 30 per cent of workers say a supportive culture is a source of strength for their organisation, while 25 per cent say this is an area of improvement
- 29 per cent of workers say their organisation excels in diversity and inclusion
- 61 per cent of workers trust their organisation to be fair and honest in how they deal with employees
- 36 per cent of employees would prefer better support for their wellbeing over a 10 percent increase in salary



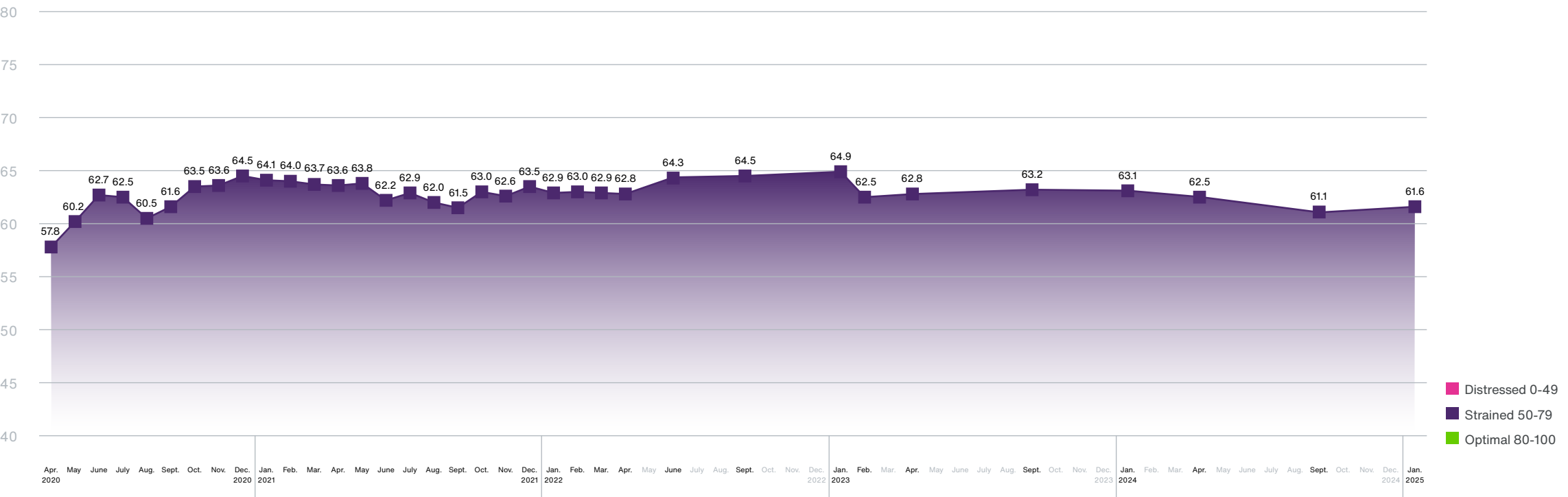
Cost, wait times, and stigma cited as reasons for delaying or avoiding mental health support in 2024.

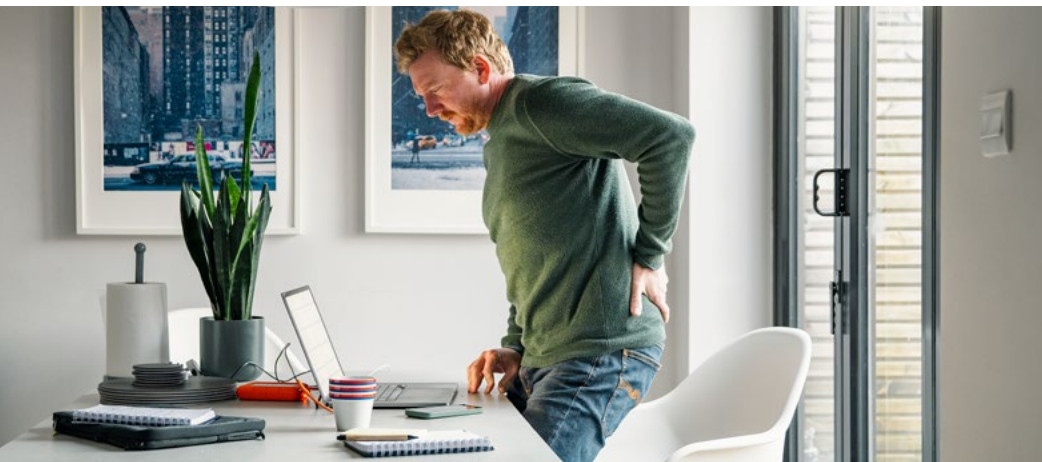
- 29 per cent of workers delayed or avoided seeking dental care in 2024, 19 per cent of workers delayed or avoided seeking medical care in 2024, and 13 per cent of workers delayed or avoided seeking prescription medication in 2024
- 16 per cent of workers delayed or avoided seeking mental health support in 2024
- 61 per cent of workers cite cost as the reason for delaying or avoiding seeking mental health support in 2024
- 33 per cent of workers cite a long wait time as the reason for delaying or avoiding seeking mental health support in 2024
- 21 per cent say they didn't know where to get help/how to access support as the reason for delaying or avoiding seeking mental health support in 2024
- 20 per cent say stigma (friends, family, etc.) was the reason for delaying or avoiding seeking mental health support in 2024

# The Mental Health Index.

The overall Mental Health Index (MHI) for January 2025 is 61.6. After peaking in January 2023, the mental health of workers declined to a low in September 2024, but a slight 0.5-point improvement is observed in January 2025.

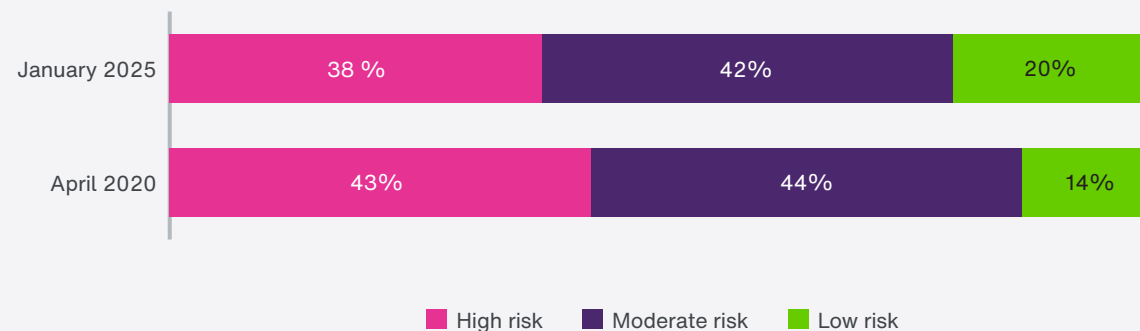
MHI Current Month January 2025	September 2024
61.6	61.1





## Mental health risk.

In January 2025, 38 per cent of workers have a high mental health risk, 42 per cent have a moderate mental health risk, and 20 per cent have a low mental health risk. Nearly five years since the launch of the Mental Health Index in April 2020, the proportion of workers in the high-risk group has declined by five 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.

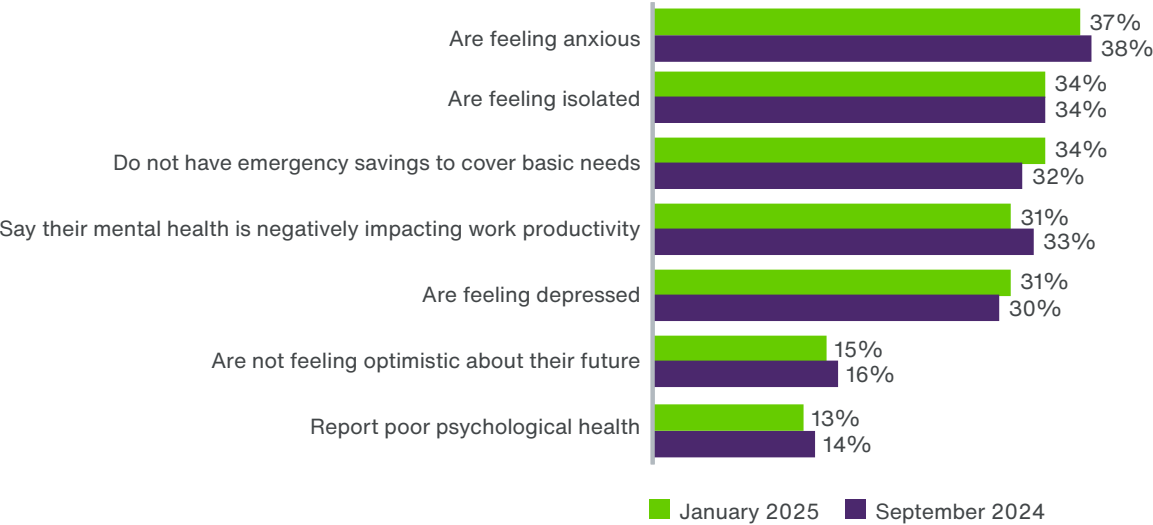
For nearly three years, anxiety (54.6) has been the lowest Mental Health Index sub-score. Isolation (57.8), work productivity (59.5), depression (59.7), financial risk (63.5), and optimism (65.6) follow. General psychological health (68.8) remains the most favourable mental health measure in January 2025.

- Anxiety and isolation have been the lowest mental health sub-scores for nearly three years
- General psychological health (up 1.7 points) and optimism (up 1.5 points) sub-scores have improved compared to September 2024
- The financial risk score declined nearly one point from September 2024

Nearly two in five (37 per cent) workers feel anxious, 34 per cent feel isolated, 34 per cent do not have emergency savings for basic needs, 31 per cent say their mental health is negatively impacting work productivity, 31 per cent feel depressed, 15 per cent do not feel optimistic about their future, and 13 per cent of workers generally cite poor psychological health.

Mental Health Index Sub-scores	January 2025	September 2024
Depression	59.7	59.8
Anxiety	54.6	54.7
Optimism	65.6	64.1
Work productivity	59.5	59.4
Isolation	57.8	57.5
Psychological health	68.8	67.1
Financial risk	63.5	64.3

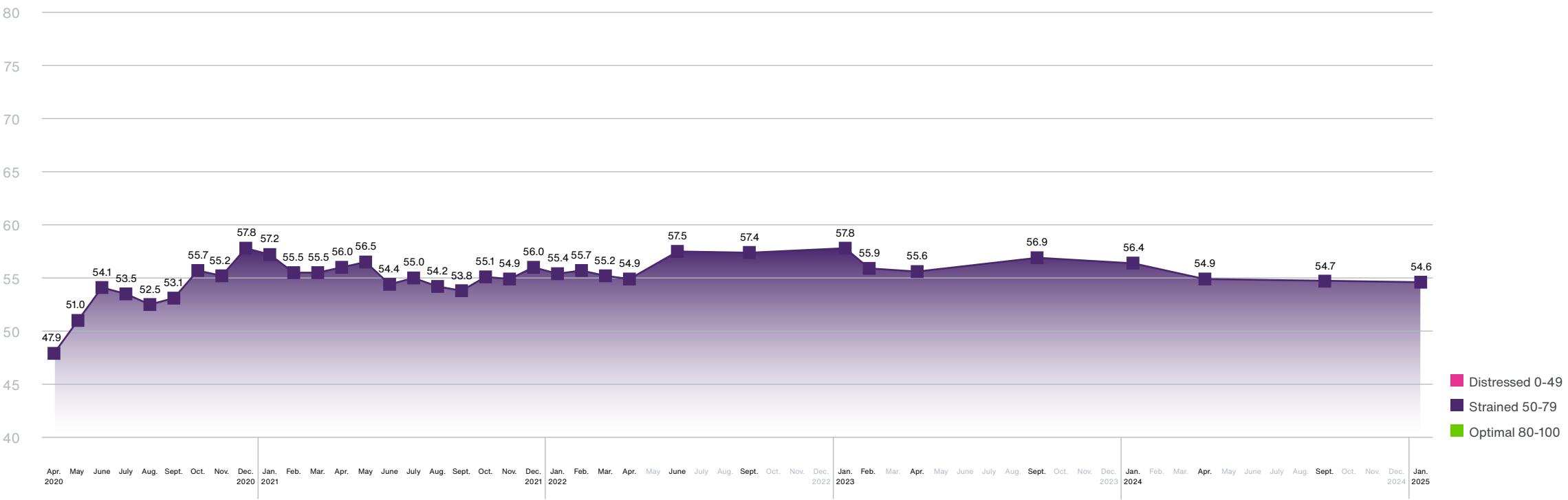
Percentage at risk by MHI sub-score



Anxiety

In January 2025, 37 per cent of workers say they often feel unsettled and nervous.

Anxiety sub-scores have fluctuated since the launch of the MHI in April 2020. After peaking in January 2023, anxiety scores have generally declined. In January 2025, the anxiety sub-score declined slightly and remains the lowest mental health sub-score for nearly three years.

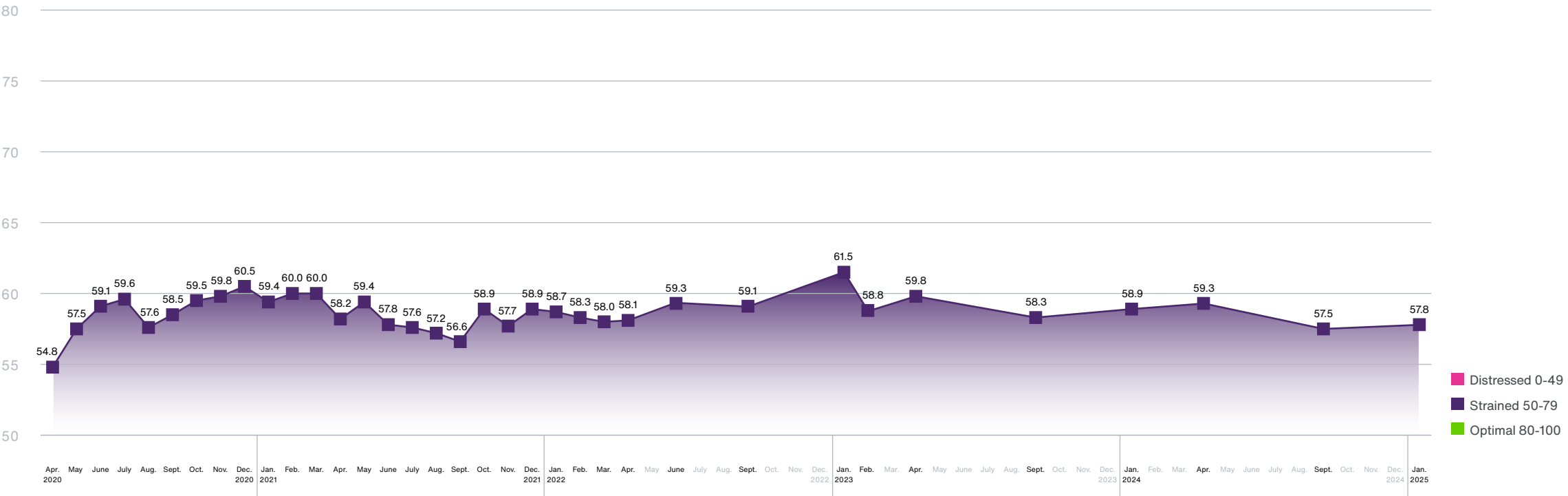




Isolation

In January 2025, 34 per cent of workers say they often feel alone.

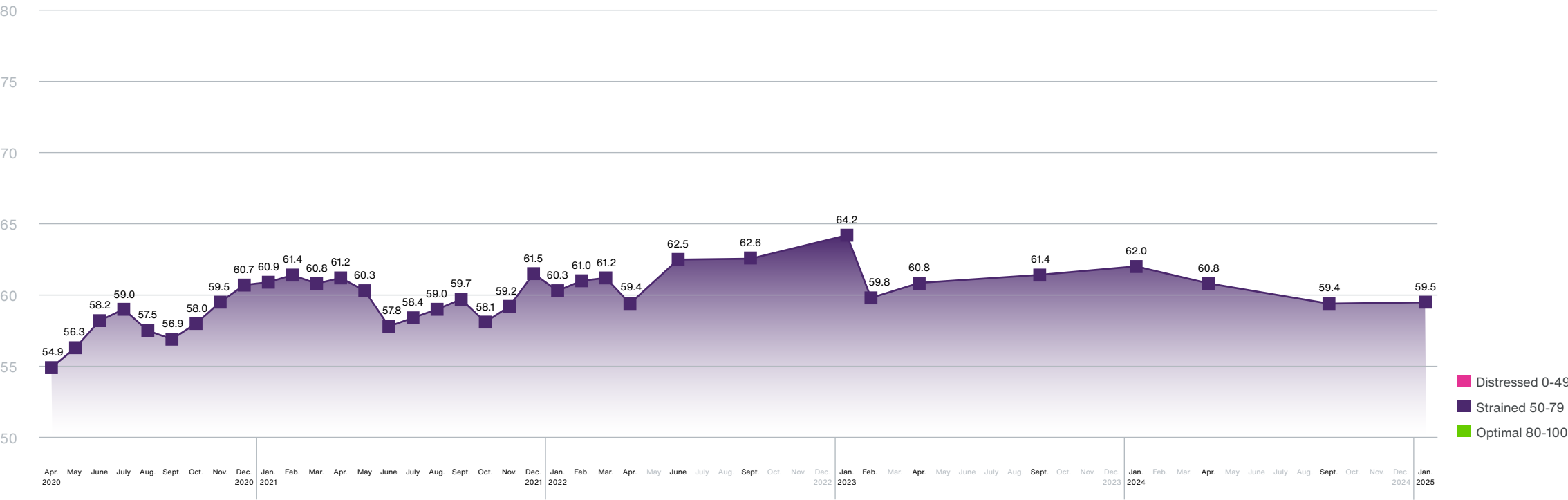
The isolation sub-score has fluctuated significantly since April 2020. After peaking in January 2023, isolation scores generally declined through September 2023. Following two periods of improvement, the score declined notably in September 2024. Despite a marginal increase in January 2025, the isolation sub-score remains the second lowest of all mental health sub-scores for nearly three years.



Work productivity

In January 2025, 31 per cent of workers say their mental health is negatively impacting their work productivity and goals.

The work productivity sub-score made incremental improvements from April 2020 to January 2023. After peaking in January 2023, the sub-score declined sharply. January 2025 marks a stabilisation since September 2024, though the sub-score remains significantly low.



## Mental health by gender and age.

- Since the launch of the MHI, women have had a significantly lower mental health score than men. In January 2025, the mental health score of women is 60.8 compared to 62.6 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 (60.7) than workers without children (62.2)

## Mental health by employment status.

- Overall, five 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 previous month have the lowest mental health score (47.1), followed by workers reporting fewer hours than the last month (49.3), respondents not currently employed (61.7), and workers with no change to salary or hours (63.0)
- Labourers have a lower mental health score (57.2) than service industry (61.6) and office workers (62.9)
- Managers (61.8) and non-managers have nearly equal mental health scores (61.5)
- Respondents working for companies with 5,001-10,000 employees have the highest mental health score (66.5)
- Self-employed/sole proprietors have the lowest mental health score (59.4)



## Emergency savings

- Workers without emergency savings continue to experience a lower mental health score (42.0) than the overall group (61.6). Workers with emergency savings have a mental health score of 71.5

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

# The Mental Health Index by region.

In January 2025, the mental health scores in Western Australia and Queensland have improved, while scores in Victoria and Southern Australia have declined compared to September 2024.

- The highest mental health score is in New South Wales (excluding A.C.T.)
- With a moderate 1.2-point increase, Queensland has the most notable improvement in mental health compared to September 2024
- The lowest mental health score is in the Australian Capital Territory (A.C.T.) (54.0)

Region	January 2025	September 2024	Change
New South Wales (excluding A.C.T.)	62.8	No data	N/A
Australian Capital Territory (A.C.T.)	54.0	No data	N/A
Queensland	60.6	59.4	1.2
Western Australia	60.1	59.9	0.2
Victoria	62.4	62.6	-0.2
South Australia	62.1	62.5	-0.4

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	Jan. 2025	Sept. 2024
Employed (no change in hours/salary)	63.0	62.8
Employed (fewer hours compared to last month)	49.3	47.7
Employed (reduced salary compared to last month)	47.1	55.2
Not currently employed	61.7	56.8

Age group	Jan. 2025	Sept. 2024
Age 20-29	53.5	52.5
Age 30-39	56.4	54.8
Age 40-49	59.9	60.0
Age 50-59	64.1	64.6
Age 60-69	69.1	68.8

Number of children	Jan. 2025	Sept. 2024
No children in household	62.2	62.2
1 child	60.5	59.6
2 children	60.9	59.5
3 children or more	60.7	57.9

Gender	Jan. 2025	Sept. 2024
Men	62.6	63.2
Women	60.8	59.5

Household income/annum	Jan. 2025	Sept. 2024
<\$30K	49.6	49.5
\$30K to <\$60K	56.6	57.1
\$60K to <\$100K	61.1	61.1
\$100K to <\$150K	61.7	62.2
\$150K or more	67.0	64.9

Employer size	Jan. 2025	Sept. 2024
Self-employed/sole proprietor	59.4	63.6
2-50 employees	61.9	61.6
51-100 employees	61.0	59.6
101-500 employees	60.5	59.5
501-1,000 employees	61.2	61.9
1,001-5,000 employees	61.1	60.5
5,001-10,000 employees	66.5	60.9
More than 10,000 employees	62.1	63.3

Manager	Jan. 2025	Sept. 2024
Manager	61.8	61.1
Non-manager	61.5	61.4

Work environment	Jan. 2025	Sept. 2024
Labour	57.2	57.4
Office/desk	62.9	62.3
Service	61.6	61.2

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 (51.8), followed by workers in Food Services (53.8).

Workers in Public Administration (70.4), Educational Services (69.7), and Finance and Insurance (68.1) have the highest mental health scores this month.



Industry	January 2025	September 2024	Change
Accommodation	58.6	53.3	5.3
Educational Services	69.7	64.7	5.1
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	63.4	59.6	3.8
Finance and Insurance	68.1	64.6	3.6
Full-time post-secondary student	51.8	49.4	2.5
Public Administration	70.4	68.4	2.1
Health Care and Social Assistance	62.8	60.7	2.1
Construction	60.3	59.3	1.1
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	65.3	64.4	0.9
Other	56.3	55.9	0.4
Wholesale Trade	66.3	66.5	-0.2
Manufacturing	62.7	62.9	-0.2
Transportation and Warehousing	63.0	63.8	-0.7
Administrative and Support Services	57.7	59	-1.2
Technology	62.5	65.2	-2.7
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	57.3	60.7	-3.4
Information and Cultural Industries	51.3	55.4	-4.2
Retail Trade	57.3	61.6	-4.3
Food Services	53.8	60.5	-6.7

# Spotlight

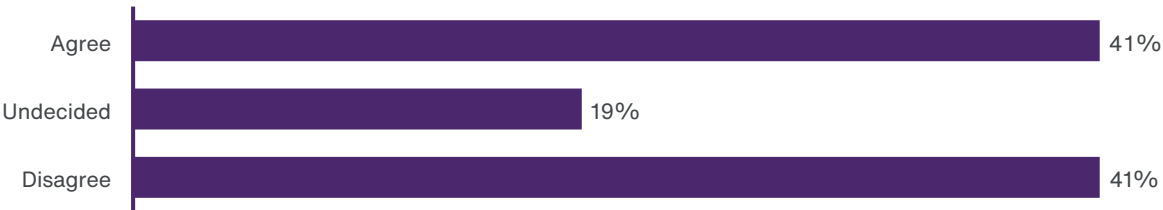
## Stress, skepticism, and optimism.

More than two in five workers feel under constant stress, with the concern disproportionately among younger workers and parents.

- More than two in five (41 per cent) workers are feeling under constant stress; this group has the lowest mental health score (46.9), nearly 31 points lower than workers not feeling constant stress (77.8) and nearly 15 points lower than the national average (61.6)
- Workers under 40 are 80 per cent more likely than workers over 50 to feel under constant stress
- More than two in five (41 per cent) are not under constant stress; this group has the highest mental health score (77.8), more than 16 points higher than the national average (61.6)



I feel under constant stress



MHI score by “I feel under constant stress”

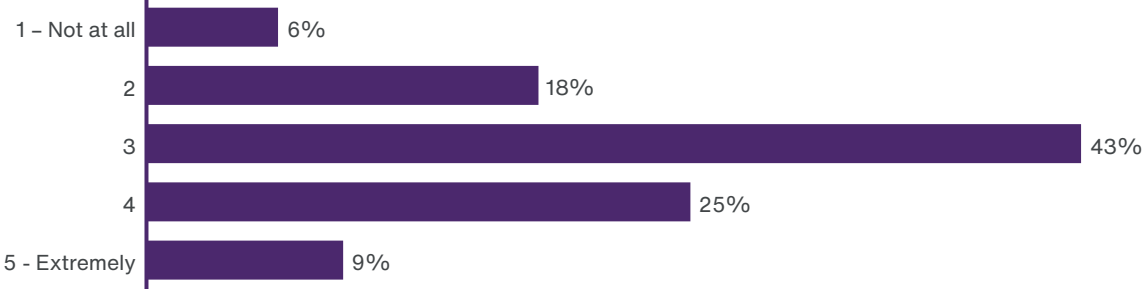


**More than one in three workers are highly skeptical about others’ motives.**

- More than one in three (34 per cent) workers are highly skeptical (rating of 4 or 5) about others’ motives; this group has the lowest mental health scores (53.9 and 49.0 respectively), at least seven points lower than the national average (61.6)
- Workers without emergency savings are nearly twice as likely as workers with emergency savings to be skeptical about others’ motives
- Nearly one-quarter (24 per cent) are unlikely to be skeptical (rating of 1 or 2) about others’ motives; this group has the highest mental health scores (68.8 and 74.9, respectively), at least seven points higher than the national average (61.6)



**On a scale of 1-5 (1 being not at all, 5 being extremely), how skeptical are you about others’ motives?**



**MHI score by “On a scale of 1-5 (1 being not at all, 5 being extremely), how skeptical are you about others’ motives?”**



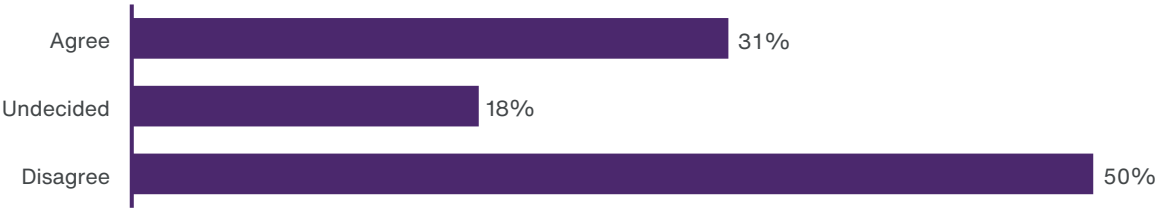


Nearly one in three workers feel angrier and more distrustful of others.

- Nearly one in three (31 per cent) workers are feeling angrier and more distrustful of others; this group has the lowest mental health score (45.2), nearly 29 points lower than workers not feeling angrier and more distrustful of others (74.5) and more than 16 points lower than the national average (61.6)
- Workers under 40 are 60 per cent more likely than workers over 50 to be feeling angrier and more distrustful of others
- Workers with an annual household income under \$60,000 are 50 per cent more likely than workers with an annual household income greater than \$100,000 to report feeling angrier and more distrustful of others
- Half (50 per cent) of workers are not feeling angrier and more distrustful of others; this group has the highest mental health score (74.1), more than 12 points higher than the national average (61.6)



I am feeling angrier and more distrustful of others



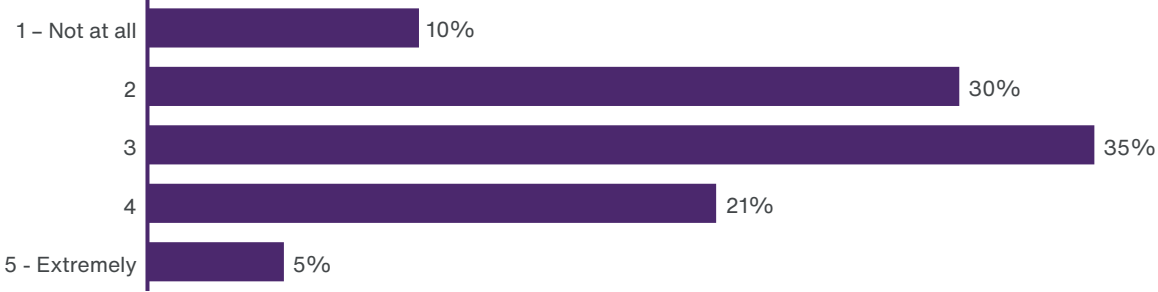
MHI score by “I am feeling angrier and more distrustful of others”



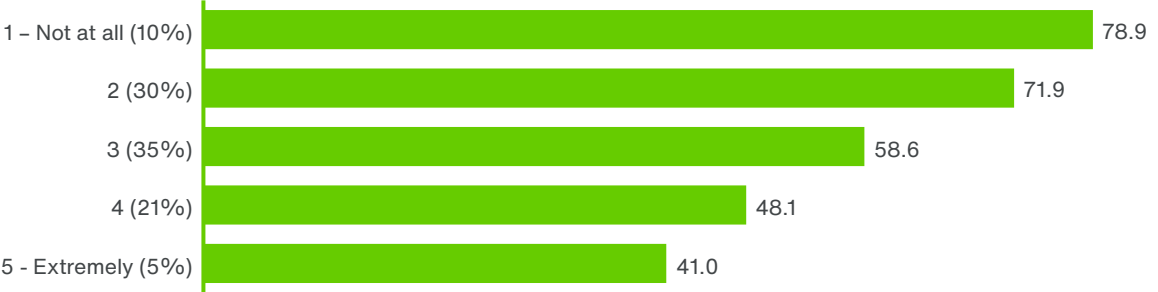
**More than one-quarter of workers report getting easily frustrated in daily situations.**

- More than one-quarter (26 per cent) of workers report being easily frustrated in daily situations (rating of 4 or 5); this group has the lowest mental health scores (41.0 and 48.1 respectively), at least 13 points lower than the national average (61.6)
- Workers under 40 are more than 50 per cent as likely as workers over 50 to report being easily frustrated in daily situations
- Workers without emergency savings are two and a half times more likely than workers with emergency savings to report being easily frustrated in daily situations
- More than two in five (42 per cent) report not being easily frustrated in daily situations (rating of 1 or 2); this group has the highest mental health scores (78.9 and 71.9 respectively), at least 10 points higher than the national average (61.6)

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not at all, 5 being extremely), how easily do you get frustrated in daily situations?



MHI score by “On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not at all, 5 being extremely), how easily do you get frustrated in daily situations?”

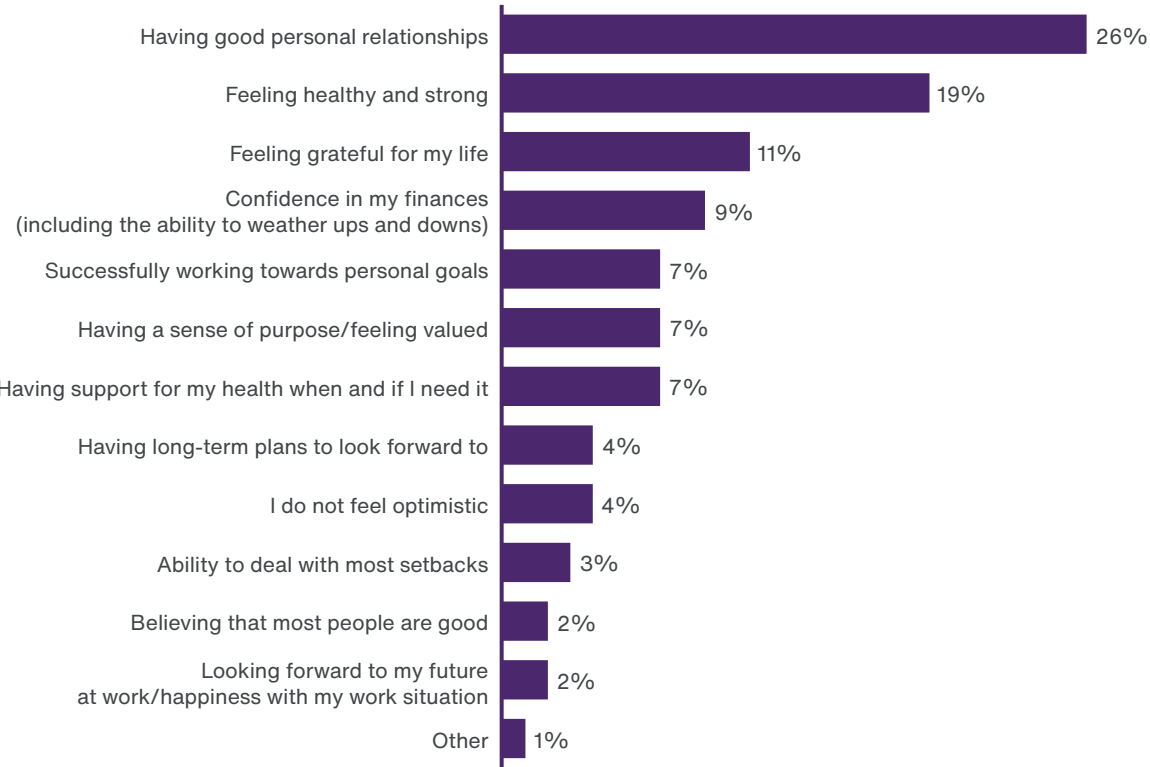


Good personal relationships, feeling healthy and strong, gratitude, and confidence in financial stability drive personal optimism.

- Having good personal relationships is the leading factor most driving personal optimism (26 per cent), followed by feeling healthy and strong (19 per cent), feeling grateful for their life (11 per cent), and confidence in their finances (nine per cent)

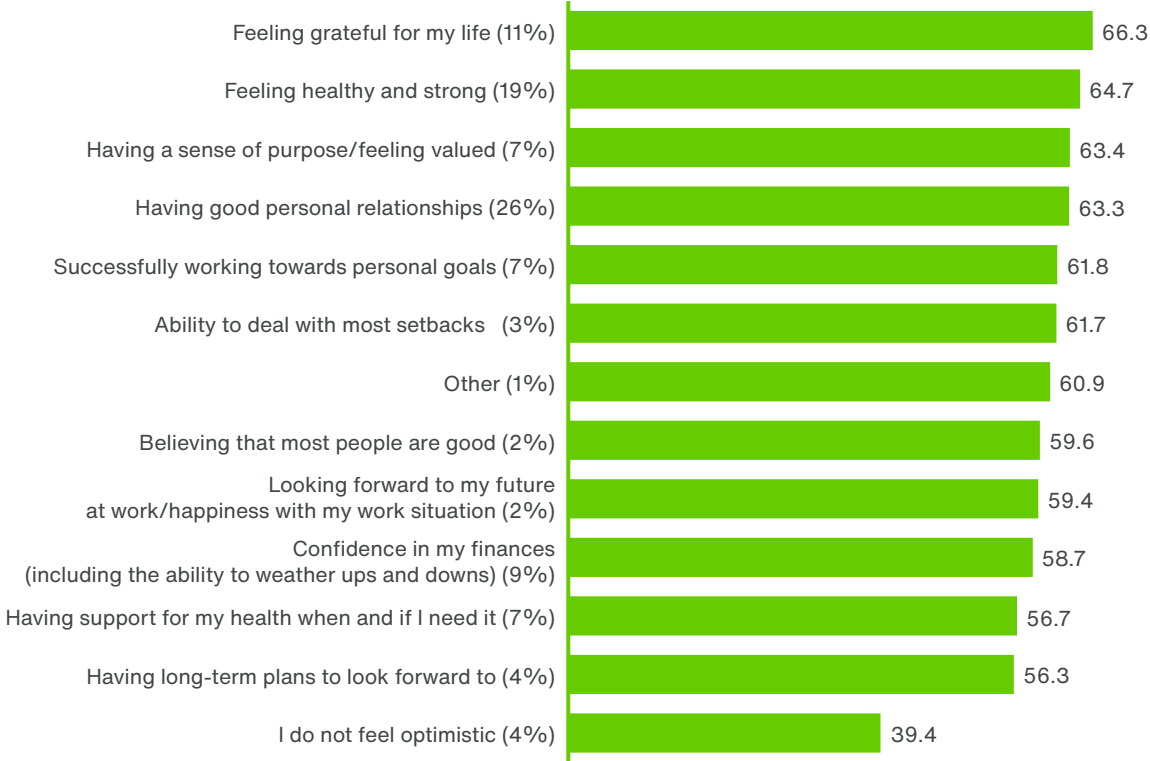


What factor most drives your personal optimism?





MHI score by “What factor most drives your personal optimism?”



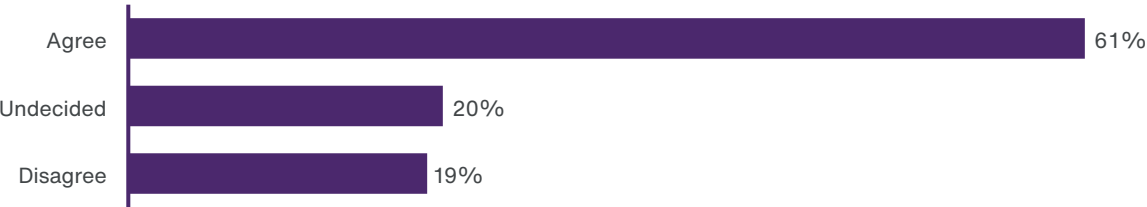
# Perceptions of organisational fairness, strengths, and opportunities.

More than three in five workers trust their company to be fair and honest in dealing with employees.

- More than three in five (61 per cent) workers trust their company to be fair and honest in how they deal with employees; this group has the highest mental health score (66.5), nearly five points higher than the national average (61.6)
- Nearly one in five (19 per cent) don't trust their company to be fair and honest in how they deal with employees; this group has the lowest mental health score (52.6), 14 points lower than workers who trust their company (66.5) and nine points lower than the national average (61.6)



I trust the company I work for to be fair and honest in how they deal with employees



MHI score by “I trust the company I work for to be fair and honest in how they deal with employees”

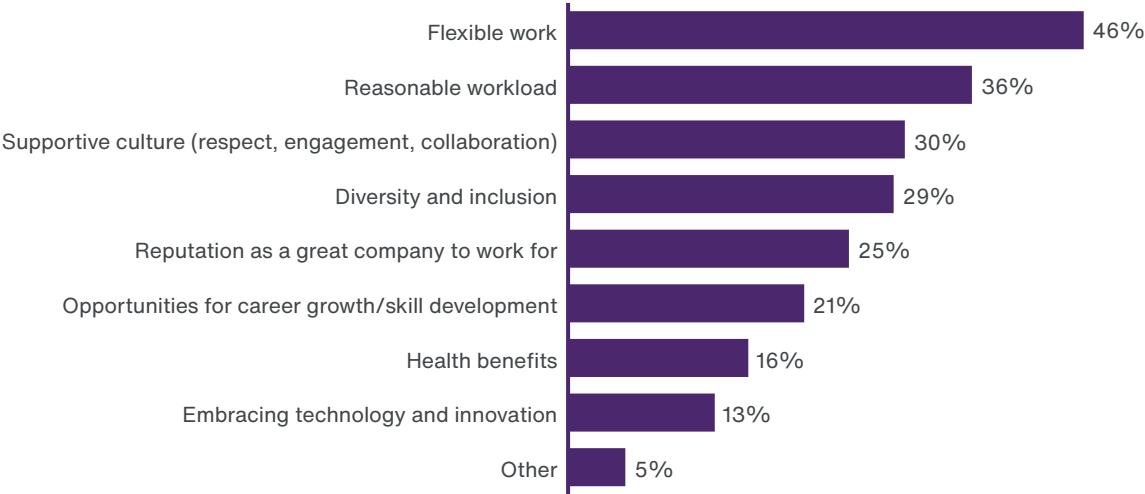


Workers rank flexible work as the area in which their organisation excels most.

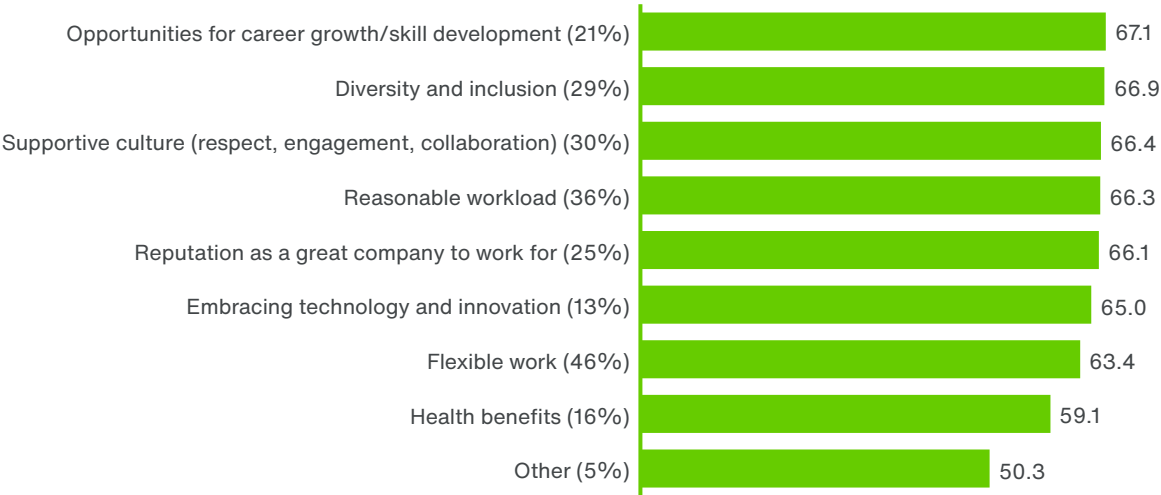
- Nearly half (46 per cent) of workers say their organisation excels at flexible work, 36 per cent say their organisation excels at workload management, 30 per cent say a supportive culture is a source of strength for their organisation, 29 per cent say diversity and inclusion is an area in which their organisation excels, and 25 per cent say their organisation has a reputation as a great company to work for



In which area(s) do you believe your organisation excels?



MHI score by “In which area(s) do you believe your organisation excels?”

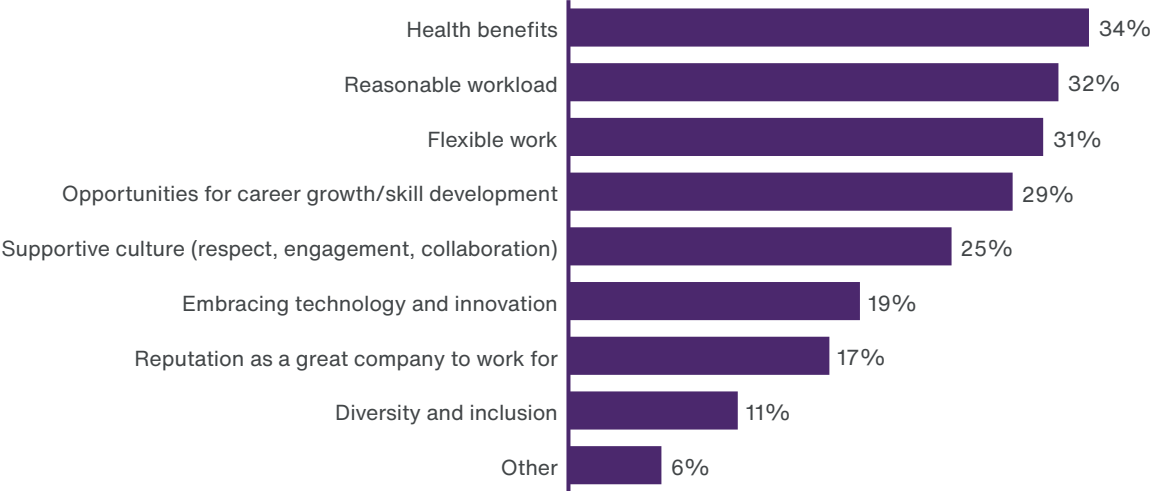


**Workers identify health benefits as the greatest opportunity for improvement in their workplaces.**

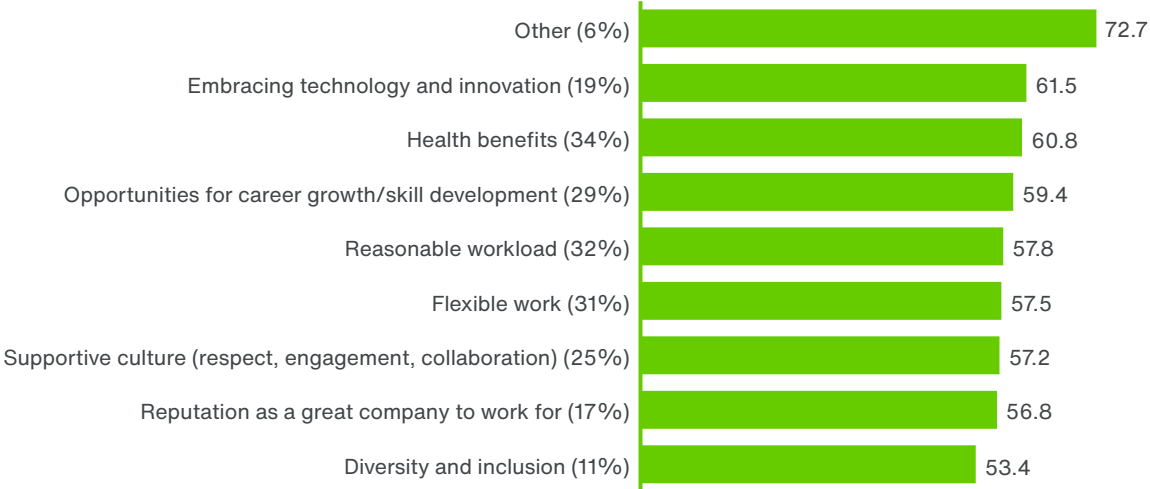
- More than one-third (34 per cent) of workers say their organisation needs to improve health benefits, 32 per cent say their organisation needs to improve workload management, 31 per cent say improvement is needed concerning flexible work, 29 per cent say opportunities for career growth/skills development needs to improve, and 25 per cent say a supportive culture is an area requiring the most improvement in their organisation



**In which area(s) do you believe your organisation needs to improve?**



**MHI score by “In which area(s) do you believe your organisation needs to improve?”**

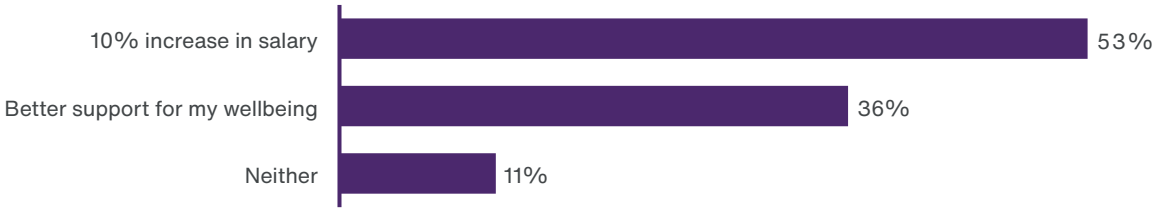




**More than one-third value better support for their wellbeing over financial rewards.**

- More than half (53 per cent) of workers say a 10% increase in salary is more important; this group has a mental health score (63.7) modestly higher than the national average (61.6)
- More than one-third (36 per cent) say better support for their wellbeing is more important; this group has the lowest mental health score (58.9), more than two points lower than the national average (61.6)

**Which of the following is more important to you?**



**MHI score by “Which of the following is more important to you?”**



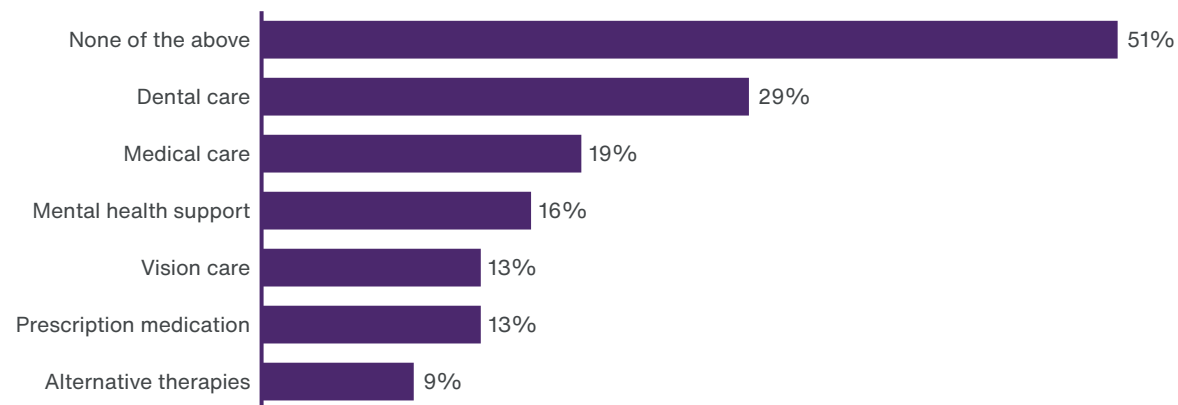


## Use of and barriers to healthcare.

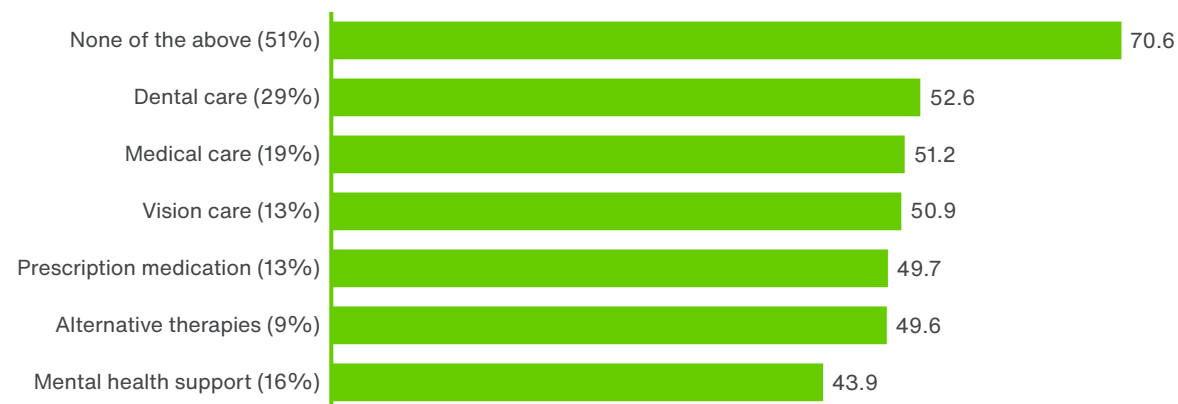
### Younger workers and parents more often delayed or avoided seeking mental health support in 2024.

- More than one-quarter (29 per cent) of workers delayed or avoided seeking dental care in 2024, 19 per cent delayed or avoided medical care in 2024, and 16 per cent delayed or avoided mental health support in 2024
- The lowest mental health score (43.9) is among 16 per cent of workers who delayed or avoided seeking mental health support in 2024, nearly 27 points lower than workers who did not delay or avoid seeking care and nearly 18 points lower than the national average (61.6)
- Workers under 40 are twice as likely as workers over 50 to have delayed or avoided seeking mental health support in 2024
- Parents are more than 30 per cent as likely as non-parents to have delayed or avoided seeking mental health support in 2024
- More than half (51 per cent) did not delay or avoid seeking care in the last year; this group has the highest mental health score (70.6), nearly nine points higher than the national average (61.6)
- Workers over 50 are 70 per cent more likely than workers under 40 not to have delayed or avoided seeking care in 2024

### In the last year (2024), did you delay or avoid seeking any of the following?



### MHI score by “In the last year (2024), did you delay or avoid seeking any of the following?”

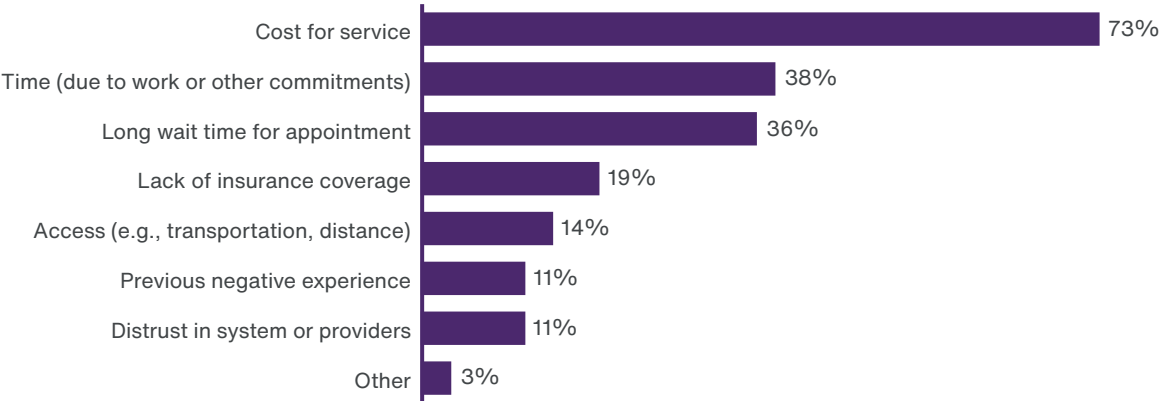


**Cost and time are the top reasons cited for delaying or avoiding medical care in 2024.**

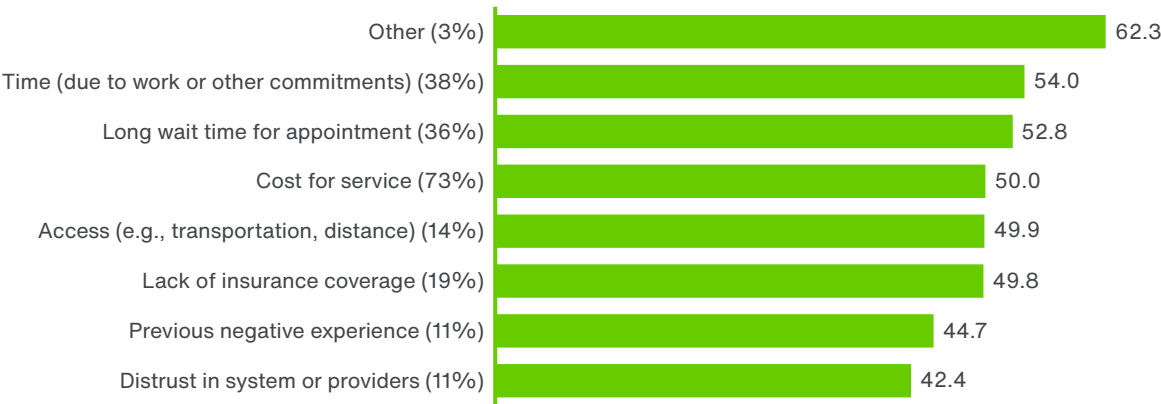
- More than seven in ten (73 per cent) workers cite cost as the reason for delaying or avoiding seeking medical care in 2024, 38 per cent cite time due to work or other commitments, 36 per cent cite a long wait time, 19 per cent cite a lack of insurance coverage, and 14 per cent cite access (e.g., transportation, distance)
- The lowest mental health score (42.4) is among 11 per cent of workers citing distrust in the system or providers as the reason for delaying or avoiding seeking medical care in 2024, more than 19 points lower than the national average (61.6)



**Why did you delay or avoid seeking medical care in 2024?**



**MHI score by “Why did you delay or avoid seeking medical care in 2024?”**

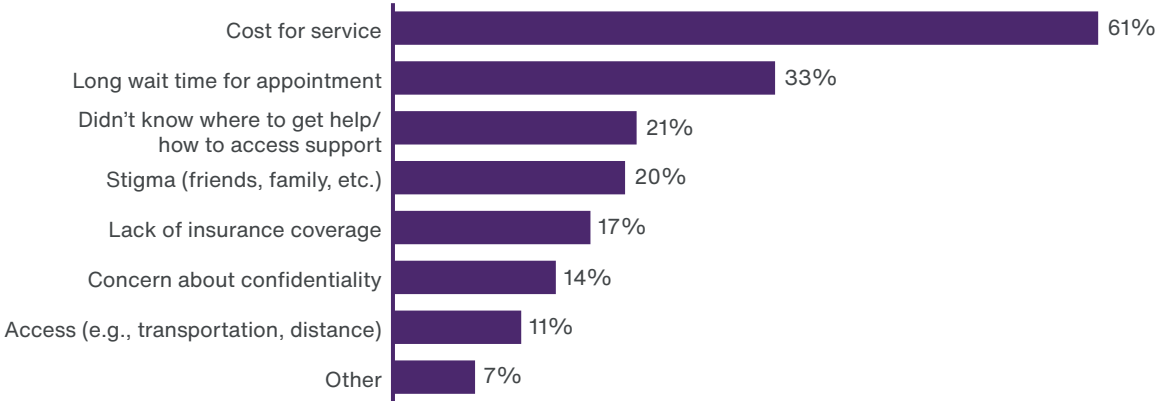


Workers overwhelmingly cite cost as the top barrier to having delayed or avoided seeking mental health support in 2024.

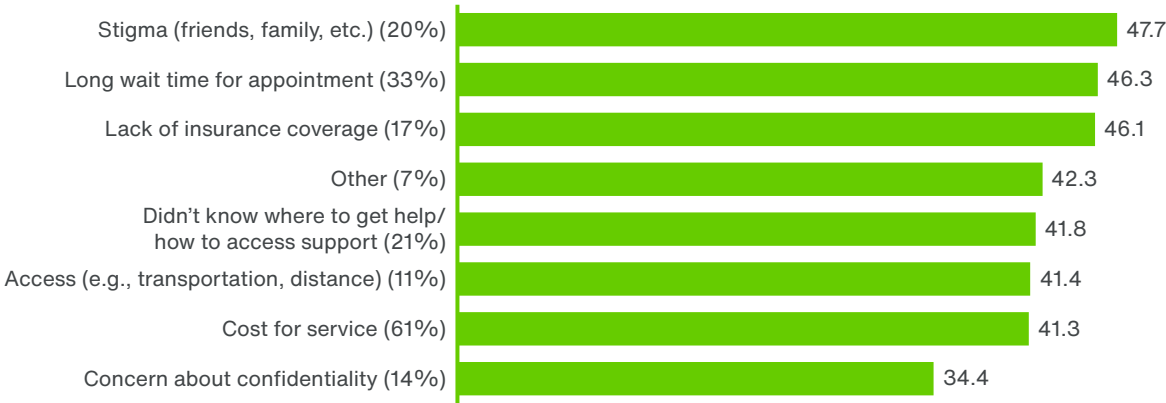
- More than six in ten (61 per cent) workers cite cost as the reason for delaying or avoiding seeking mental health support in 2024, 33 per cent cite long wait times for an appointment, and 21 per cent say they didn't know where to get help/how to access support
- The lowest mental health score (34.4) is among 14 per cent of workers citing concerns about confidentiality as the reason for delaying or avoiding seeking mental health support in 2024, more than 27 points lower than the national average (61.6)



Why did you delay or avoid seeking mental health support in 2024?



MHI score by “Why did you delay or avoid seeking mental health support in 2024?”



# 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 measures 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 businesses and governments.

## 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 previous 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 January 22 and January 29, 2025.

## 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 are available upon request.

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