



# TELUS Mental Health Index.

United Kingdom | Q1 2026

# Table of contents

<b>1. What you need to know: Q1 2026</b> .....	<b>3</b>	<b>3. The Mental Health Index by region</b> .....	<b>12</b>	<b>6. Overview of the TELUS Mental Health Index</b> .....	<b>29</b>
<b>2. The Mental Health Index</b> .....	<b>5</b>	<b>4. The Mental Health Index by industry</b> .....	<b>14</b>	Methodology.....	29
Mental health risk .....	6	<b>5. Spotlight</b> .....	<b>15</b>	Calculations.....	29
Mental Health Index sub-scores.....	7	The relationship between		Additional data and analyses.....	29
Anxiety .....	8	MHI scores and productivity .....	15		
Isolation.....	9	Presenteeism.....	16		
Work productivity .....	10	Employer support for wellbeing.....	17		
Mental health by gender and age .....	11	Barriers to mental health support .....	19		
Mental health by employment status.....	11	Workplace culture .....	22		
Emergency savings.....	11	Turnover .....	23		
		Adoption of AI at work.....	27		

# What you need to know: Q1 2026.

## Mental health has plateaued at a persistently low baseline.

At 65.0, the mental health score of workers in the United Kingdom is almost unchanged from September 2025.

A stagnant score at this level is a signal for concern, with anxiety and isolation remaining the most significant challenges.

Key indicators from this period include:

- 32 per cent of workers have a high mental health risk; 42 per cent moderate; 27 per cent low
- All mental health sub-scores, apart from work productivity, have either declined or held flat from September 2025
- Anxiety and isolation have been the lowest mental health sub-scores for more than three years
- 33 per cent of workers report feeling anxious; 32 per cent feel isolated; 27 per cent report feeling depressed
- 25 per cent of workers report that their mental health is negatively affecting work productivity
- 24 per cent of workers lack emergency savings to cover basic needs
- Mental health scores have declined in all regions compared to September 2025
- Managers continue to score higher than non-managers, and labourers score lower than both service industry and office workers

## Younger workers disproportionately report unmet mental and physical health support needs.

One in four workers wants better tools to manage stress, mental health support, and career development. Workers under 40 are more than twice as likely as those over 50 to want better mental and physical health support.

- 25 per cent of workers want resilience training and better tools to manage stress
- 24 per cent of workers believe their employer could better support mental health; 22 per cent say the same for physical health
- Workers wanting better mental health support **score nearly 16 points lower** on the Mental Health Index than those who don't need additional support; these workers also **lose 49.9 days per year in productivity**, 25 more days than workers who don't require additional support
- 24 per cent of workers want skills training and career development
- 36 per cent of workers report no need for additional employer support; this group is typically older, non-managerial, and does not include parents



### Cost is the most cited barrier to accessing mental health support.

Nearly two in five workers identify cost or affordability as a barrier to accessing mental health support. One in five cite long wait times or limited availability of care.

- 37 per cent of workers citing cost as a barrier **score 21 points lower** on the Mental Health Index and **lose 21 more days per year in productivity** compared to workers who report no barriers
- Workers who report a lack of energy as their primary barrier to seeking care have the lowest mental health score, and **lose more than double the productivity days** of workers facing no barriers
- Younger workers, managers, and parents are more concerned about stigma for seeking support

### AI adoption is growing, with outcomes varying by employer support and frequency of use.

More than two in five workers report employer support for AI adoption and nearly three in five report improved efficiency as a result.

- 50 per cent of workers use AI tools at least several times per month
- 57 per cent of workers who use AI report improved efficiency
- The lowest mental health score is among five per cent of workers whose employers actively discourage AI use, more than 11 points lower than workers whose employers encourage it
- Managers are more likely to report both improved efficiency from AI tools and employer encouragement of AI use

### Outcomes differ substantially based on whether workers perceive their organisation's culture as supportive of their wellbeing.

Six in 10 workers describe their organisation's culture as supportive of their wellbeing; those who **don't lose 24 more days of productivity** annually.

- Workers who feel their organisation's culture doesn't support their wellbeing **score nearly 19 points lower** on the Mental Health Index and **lose 24 more days per year in productivity**
- 13 per cent of workers are considering leaving their jobs; this group **scores 18 points lower** on the Mental Health Index and **loses 27 more days annually in productivity** compared to workers not considering leaving
- 21 per cent of workers are uncertain about staying; they **lose 10 more days per year** and **score nearly 14 points lower** on the Mental Health Index than workers not considering leaving
- Better career opportunities, improved benefits and higher compensation are the primary drivers of turnover intention

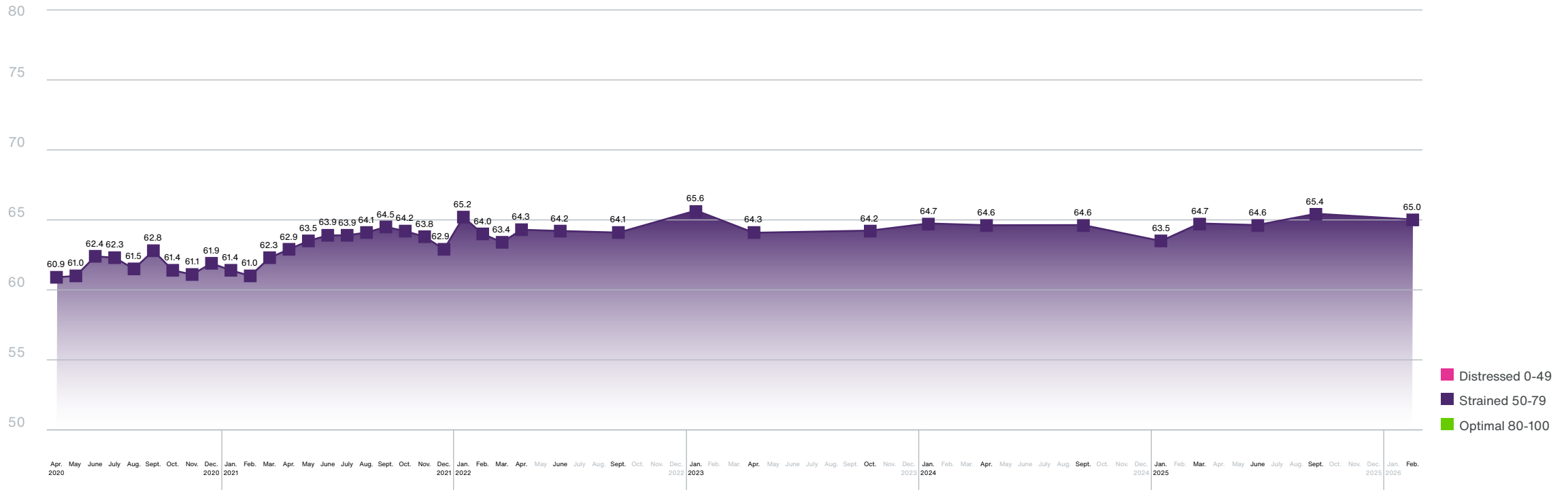
In this report, **productivity loss** refers to the number of workdays lost per year due to physical health issues and/or emotional or mental health challenges. Some fluctuations in productivity are inevitable, as employees naturally experience varying levels of efficiency throughout their workday.



# The Mental Health Index.

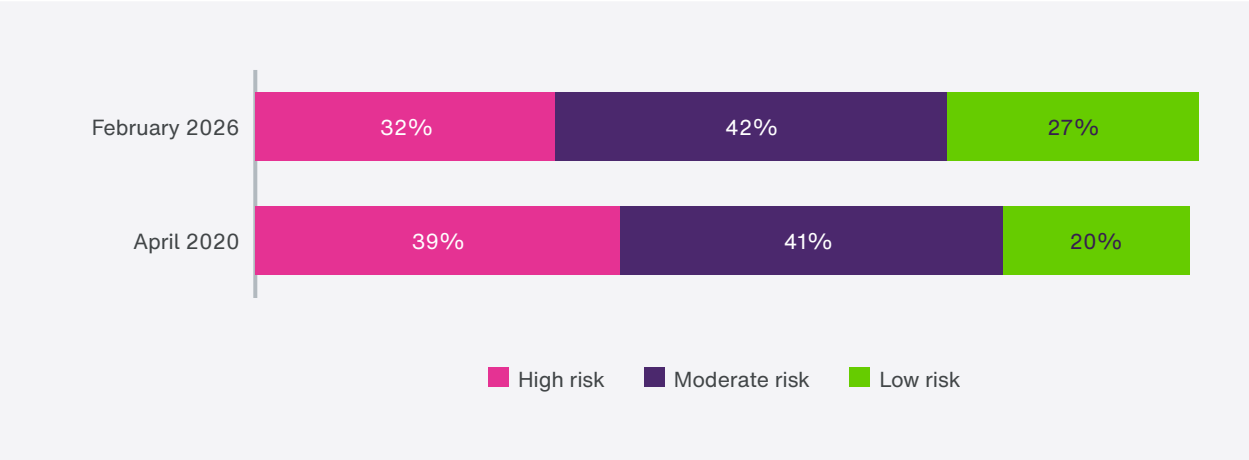
The overall Mental Health Index (MHI) for the first quarter of 2026 is 65.0. The mental health score of workers in the United Kingdom peaked in January 2023 and has failed to recover, remaining at persistently low levels.

MHI Current Month February 2026	September 2025
65.0	65.4



### Mental health risk.

In the first quarter of 2026, 32 per cent of workers have a high mental health risk, 42 per cent have a moderate mental health risk, and 27 per cent have a low mental health risk. Nearly six years after the launch of the Mental Health Index in April 2020, the proportion of workers in the high-risk group has declined by seven 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.

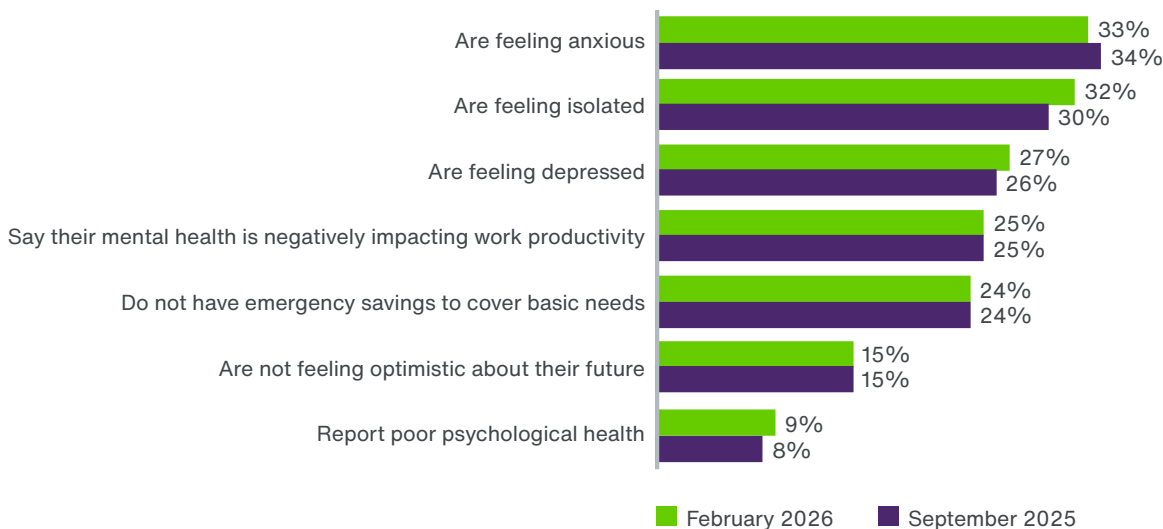
For more than three years, anxiety (56.7) has ranked as the lowest Mental Health Index sub-score, followed by isolation (60.8), depression (62.9), optimism (65.6), work productivity (66.5), and financial risk (72.9). General psychological health (73.1) remains the highest-performing mental health measure in the first quarter of 2026.

- Anxiety and isolation have been the lowest mental health sub-scores for more than three years
- All mental health sub-scores, apart from work productivity, have either declined or are unchanged compared to the previous period

One-third (33 per cent) of workers feel anxious, 32 per cent feel isolated, 27 per cent feel depressed, 25 per cent say their mental health is negatively impacting work productivity, 24 per cent don't have emergency savings for basic needs, 15 per cent don't feel optimistic about their future, and nine per cent of workers cite poor psychological health.

Mental Health Index Sub-scores	February 2026	September 2025
Anxiety	56.7	56.8
Isolation	60.8	61.2
Depression	62.9	63.2
Optimism	65.6	66.1
Work productivity	66.5	65.8
Financial risk	72.9	72.9
Psychological health	73.1	74.1

## Percentage at risk by MHI sub-score



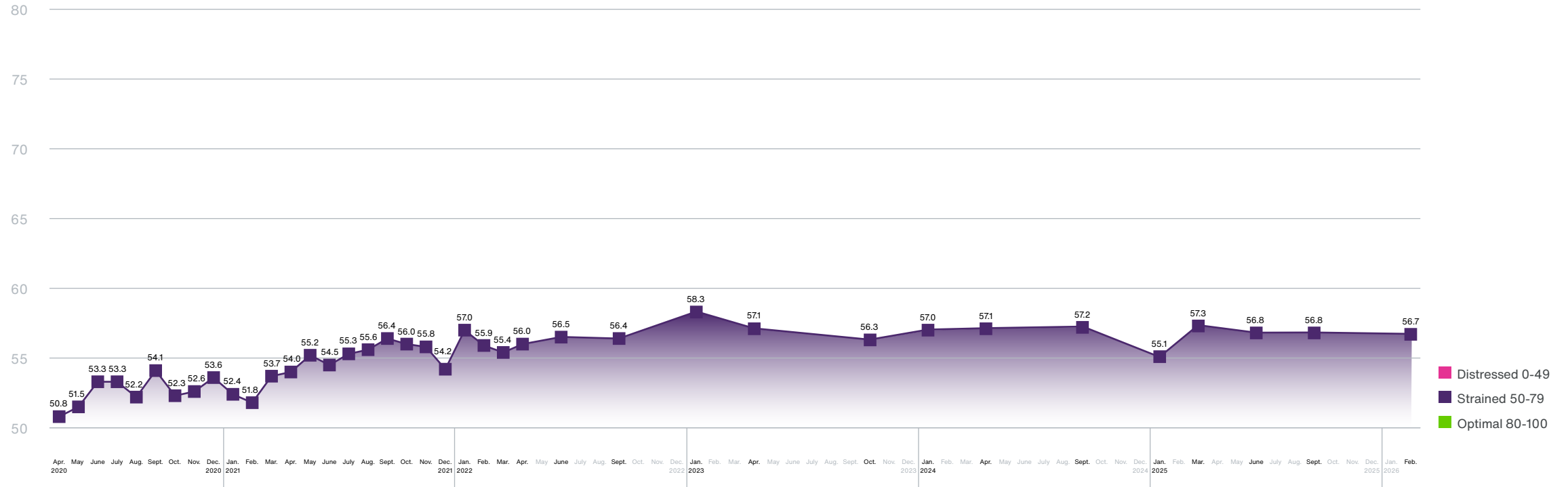
# Anxiety

In the first quarter of 2026, 33 per cent of workers say they often feel unsettled and nervous

After peaking in January 2023, the anxiety sub-score declined over two consecutive periods and has remained relatively stable since. In February 2026, there is virtually no change from the previous two periods, and anxiety persists as the lowest mental health sub-score for more than three years.

Sub-score  
February 2026

**56.7**



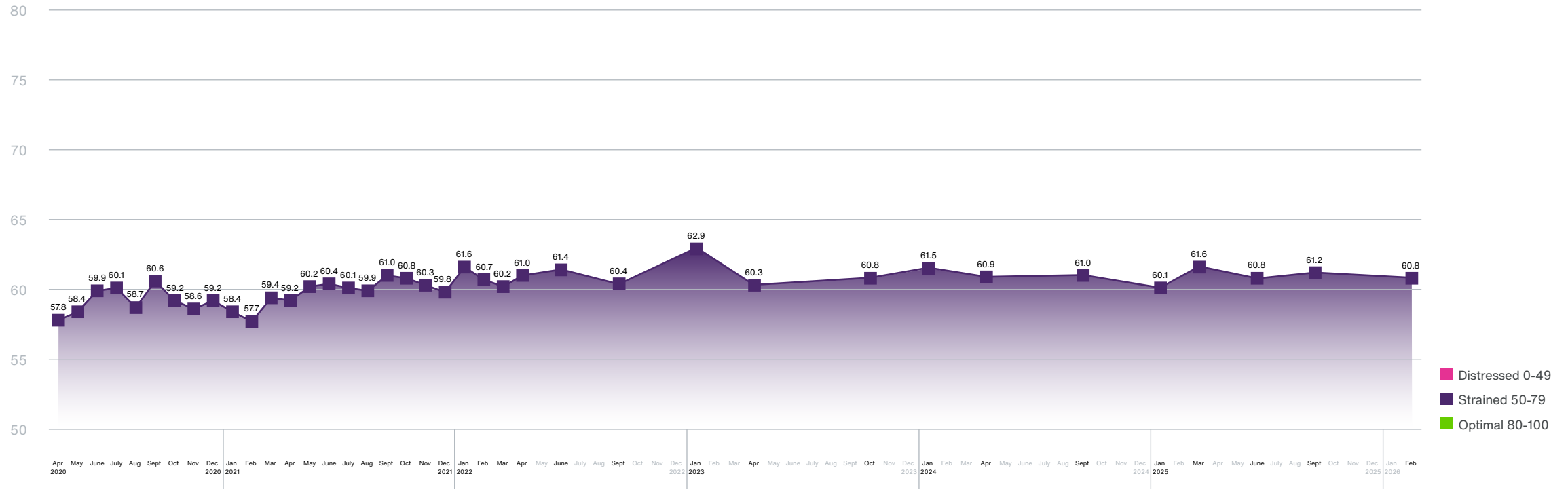
## Isolation

In the first quarter of 2026, 32 per cent of workers say they often feel alone.

From April 2020 through January 2023, the isolation sub-score has fluctuated significantly. After peaking in January 2023, the isolation score declined sharply in April and has remained relatively stable since. The isolation score has declined modestly in February 2026 and remains the second-lowest sub-score for more than three years.

Sub-score  
February 2026

60.8



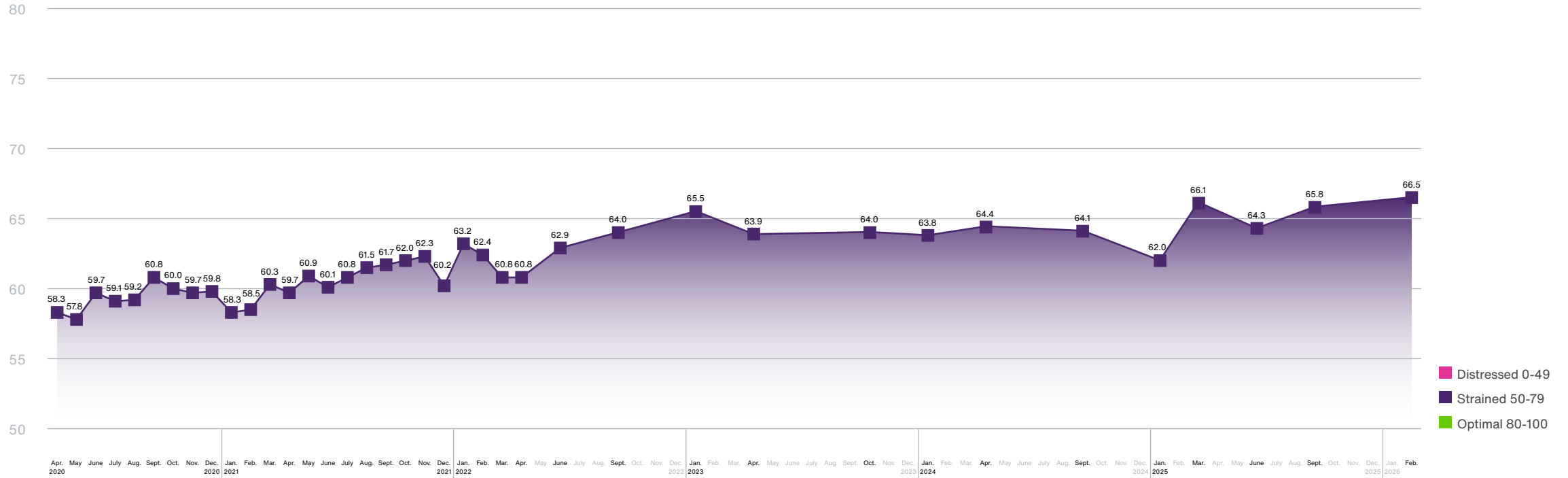
## Work productivity

In the first quarter of 2026, 25 per cent of workers say their mental health is negatively impacting their work productivity and goals.

Overall, the impact of mental health on work productivity has generally improved, suggesting that its adverse effects have decreased over time. February 2026 marks the peak of the work productivity score since the Mental Health Index was launched in April 2020.

Sub-score  
February 2026

66.5



## Mental health by gender and age.

- Since the launch of the MHI, women have had a significantly lower mental health score than men. In February 2026, the mental health score of women is 62.8 compared to 67.3 for men
- In general, mental health scores have improved with age

## Mental health by employment status.

- Overall, three per cent of respondents are unemployed<sup>1</sup> and six per cent report reduced hours or reduced salary
- Workers reporting reduced salary compared to the previous month have the lowest mental health score (45.2), followed by workers reporting fewer hours than the last month (54.4), workers with no change to salary or hours (65.6), and respondents not currently employed (71.5)
- Managers have a higher mental health score (66.4) than non-managers (63.5)
- Labourers have a lower mental health score (63.1) than service industry (63.7) and office workers (66.0)
- Respondents working for companies with 1,001-5,000 employees have the highest mental health score (67.0)
- Respondents working for companies with 51-100 employees have the lowest mental health score (62.5)



## Emergency savings

- Workers without emergency savings continue to experience a lower mental health score (49.1) than the overall group (65.0). Workers with emergency savings have a mental health score of 70.0

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

## The Mental Health Index by region.

In the first quarter of 2026, mental health scores across all regions have declined compared to September 2025.

- Despite a modest decline from the previous period, the highest mental health score is in England (65.3)
- The lowest mental health score continues to be in Northern Ireland (61.5), down 1.6 points from September

Region	February 2026	September 2025	Change
England	65.3	65.6	-0.3
Scotland	62.8	63.5	-0.7
Wales	63.9	65.4	-1.5
Northern Ireland	61.5	63.1	-1.6

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	Feb. 2026	Sept. 2025
Employed (no change in hours/salary)	65.6	66.3
Employed (fewer hours compared to last month)	54.4	55.6
Employed (reduced salary compared to last month)	45.2	48.6
Not currently employed	71.5	67.1

Age group	Feb. 2026	Sept. 2025
Age 20-29	57.4	61.9
Age 30-39	62.3	63.2
Age 40-49	61.6	59.9
Age 50-59	66.2	66.6
Age 60-69	69.8	71.4

Number of children	Feb. 2026	Sept. 2025
No children in household	65.0	65.7
1 child	63.6	63.4
2 children	65.7	66.7
3 children or more	69.3	63.8

Gender	Feb. 2026	Sept. 2025
Men	67.3	67.9
Women	62.8	62.7

Household income/annum	Feb. 2026	Sept. 2025
<£15K	54.3	55.3
£15K to <£30K	57.0	59.4
£30k to <£60K	63.3	64.0
£60k to <£100K	68.6	68.0
£100K and over	74.7	75.4

Employer size	Feb. 2026	Sept. 2025
Self-employed/sole proprietor	65.5	63.3
2-50 employees	64.5	64.4
51-100 employees	62.5	61.3
101-500 employees	66.3	65.7
501-1,000 employees	63.0	67.7
1,001-5,000 employees	67.0	67.8
5,001-10,000 employees	63.1	68.8
More than 10,000 employees	65.7	66.4

Manager	Feb. 2026	Sept. 2025
Manager	66.4	67.0
Non-manager	63.5	63.8

Work environment	Feb. 2026	Sept. 2025
Labour	63.1	62.7
Office/desk	66.0	66.5
Service	63.7	65.1

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 (57.2), followed by workers in Food Services (58) and Accommodation (58.6).

Workers in Real Estate, Rental and Leasing (72.7), Technology (70.1), and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (69.5) have the highest mental health scores in the first quarter of 2026.



Industry	February 2026	September 2025	Change
Wholesale Trade	61.9	58.1	3.8
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	69.5	65.8	3.7
Food Services	58.0	56.4	1.6
Public Administration	65.5	64.2	1.3
Retail Trade	62.7	61.4	1.3
Finance and Insurance	67.0	66.1	0.9
Information and Cultural Industries	63.0	62.3	0.7
Transportation and Warehousing	65.5	64.9	0.6
Educational Services	67.3	67.2	0.1
Administrative and Support Services	59.5	59.8	-0.2
Technology	70.1	70.4	-0.3
Manufacturing	69.4	69.7	-0.4
Accommodation	58.6	59.1	-0.5
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	61.1	62.0	-0.9
Media and Telecommunications	60.6	61.6	-1.0
Utilities	67.3	69.2	-1.9
Other services (except Public Administration)	64.5	66.7	-2.2
Health Care and Social Assistance	64.4	67.1	-2.7
Other	61.9	64.8	-2.9
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	72.7	75.7	-3.0
Construction	63.7	67.1	-3.4
Full-time post-secondary student	57.2	60.7	-3.4

# Spotlight

## The relationship between MHI scores and productivity.

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

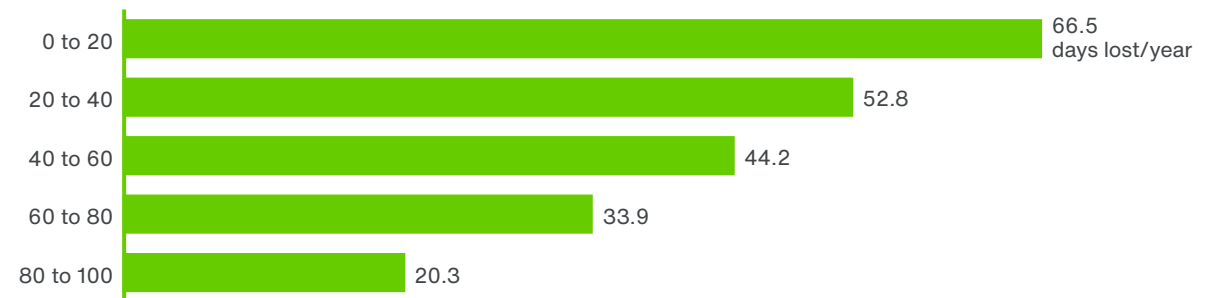
1. Work effort when feeling well
2. Absenteeism when feeling unwell
3. Instances of working when feeling unwell (commonly referred to as Presenteeism)
4. Work effort when feeling unwell

Productivity loss is reported as a percentage of working time lost and 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
- More than one-quarter (27 per cent) of workers have a mental health score of 50 or lower. The productivity loss of this group is nearly two and a half times the number of lost workdays as 27 per cent of workers with a mental health score of 80 or higher



Productivity loss in working days per year by MHI score

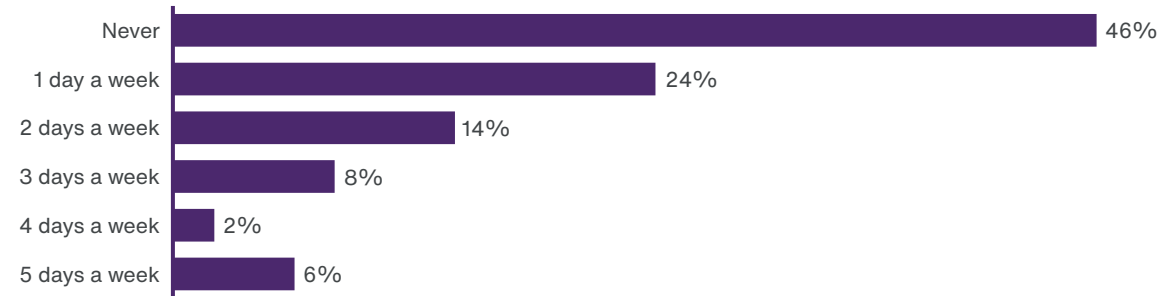


# Presenteeism

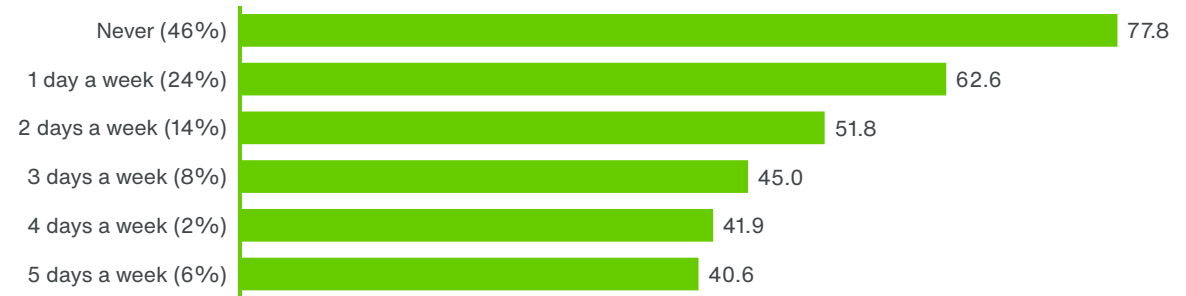
**Presenteeism refers to productivity loss when someone is working while unwell. More than half of workers report doing their jobs at least one day per week while feeling unwell.**

- 54 per cent of employees report working while feeling unwell at least one day per week; this group has significantly lower mental health scores and experiences greater productivity losses compared to workers who never work while unwell
- The highest mental health score (77.8) is among 46 per cent of workers who never work while unwell, nearly 13 points higher than the national average (65.0)
- Workers over 50 are 90 per cent more likely than workers under 40 to report never working while unwell
- Non-parents are 40 per cent more likely than parents to report never working while unwell

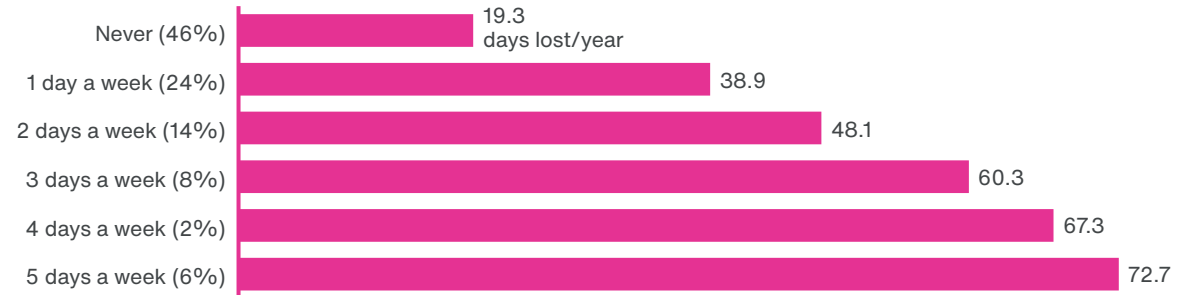
**In a typical week, how often do you do your job feeling mentally or physically unwell?**



**MHI score by “In a typical week, how often do you do your job feeling mentally or physically unwell?”**



**Productivity Loss by “In a typical week, how often do you do your job feeling mentally or physically unwell?”**



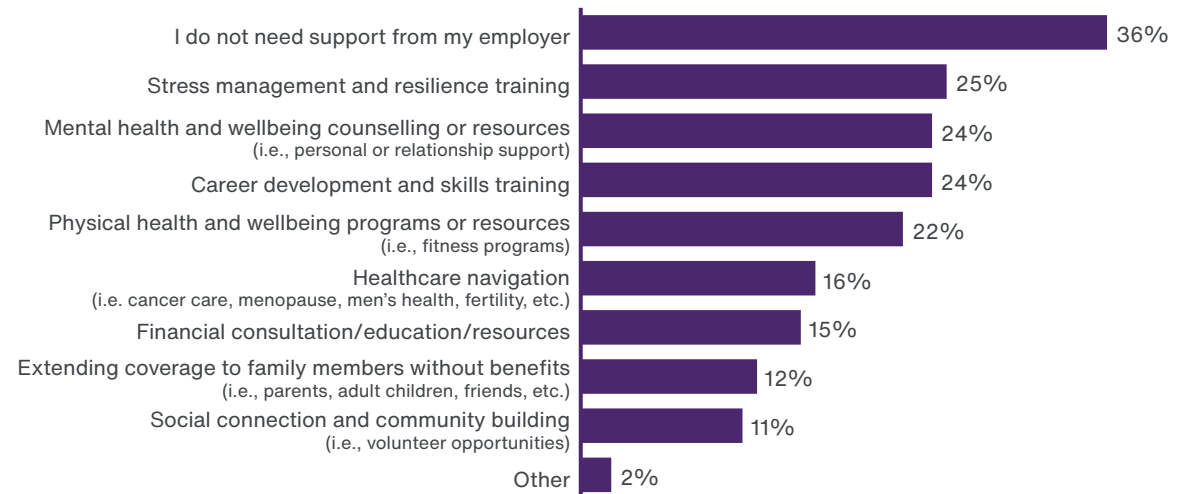
## Employer support for wellbeing.

**Younger workers are twice as likely to want better mental and physical health support from their employers.**

- One-quarter (25 per cent) of workers say their employer could provide better stress management and resilience training; 24 per cent want better mental health support, 24 per cent want career development and skills training, 22 per cent want physical health and wellbeing programs or resources, and 16 per cent want healthcare navigation
- Workers under 40 are more than twice as likely as workers over 50 to want better mental and physical health support
- Workers over 50 are more than three times as likely as workers under 40 to say they don't need support from their employer
- Non-parents are more than twice as likely as parents to say they don't need support from their employer
- Non-managers are 80 per cent more likely than managers to report they don't need support from their employer

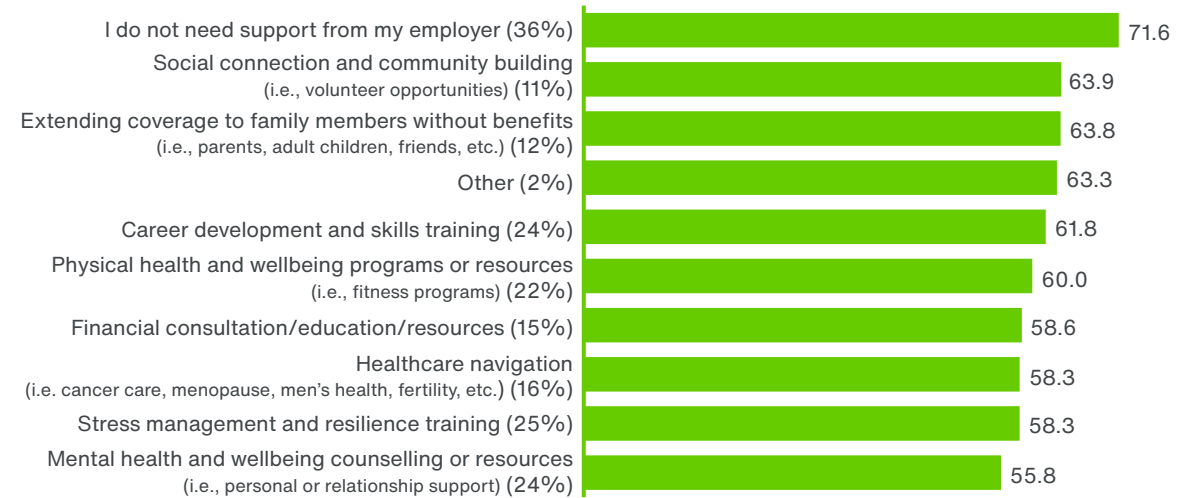


### Are there any areas where you feel your employer could provide better support?

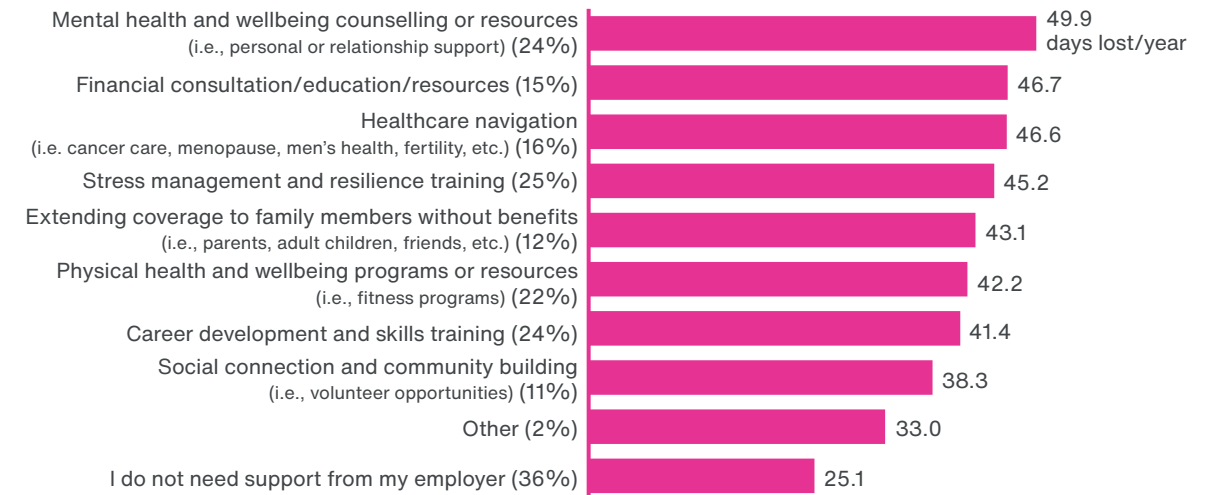


- The lowest mental health score (55.8) is among 24 per cent of workers wanting better support for their mental health, nearly 16 points lower than workers not needing support from their employer (71.6), and more than nine points lower than the national average (65.0)
- Workers wanting better support for their mental health have an annual productivity loss of 49.9 days, nearly 25 days more compared to those requiring no support (25.1 working days per year)

#### MHI score by “Are there any areas where you feel your employer could provide better support?”



#### MHI score by “Are there any areas where you feel your employer could provide better support?”

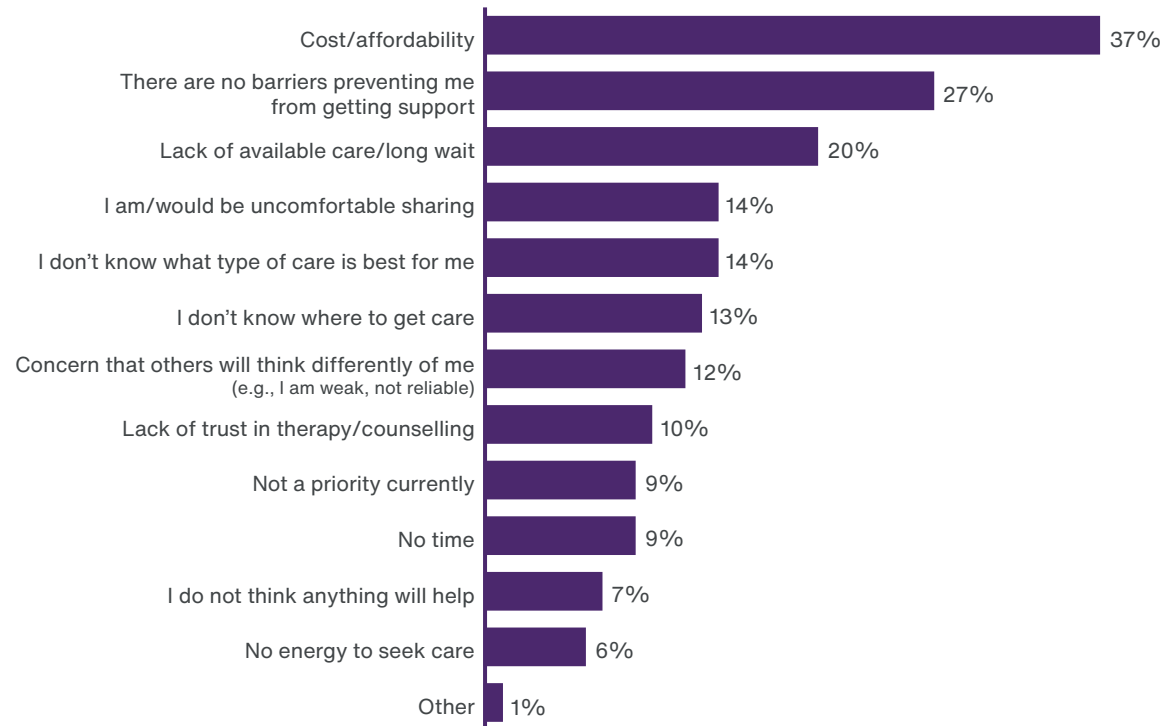


## Barriers to mental health support.

**Cost/affordability and lack of available care/long wait times most commonly prevent workers from getting mental health support.**

- Nearly two in five (37 per cent) workers say cost/affordability is preventing them from getting mental health support, 20 per cent say it's a lack of available care or a long wait, 14 per cent would be uncomfortable sharing, 14 per cent don't know what type of care is best, and 13 per cent don't know where to get care
- Parents and workers under 40 are 50 per cent more likely to be concerned that others will think differently of them if they seek mental health support
- Managers are 40 per cent more likely than non-managers to be concerned that others will think differently of them if they seek mental health support
- Workers over 50 are nearly twice as likely as workers under 40 to report no barriers to support
- Non-parents are 60 per cent more likely than parents to report no barriers to support

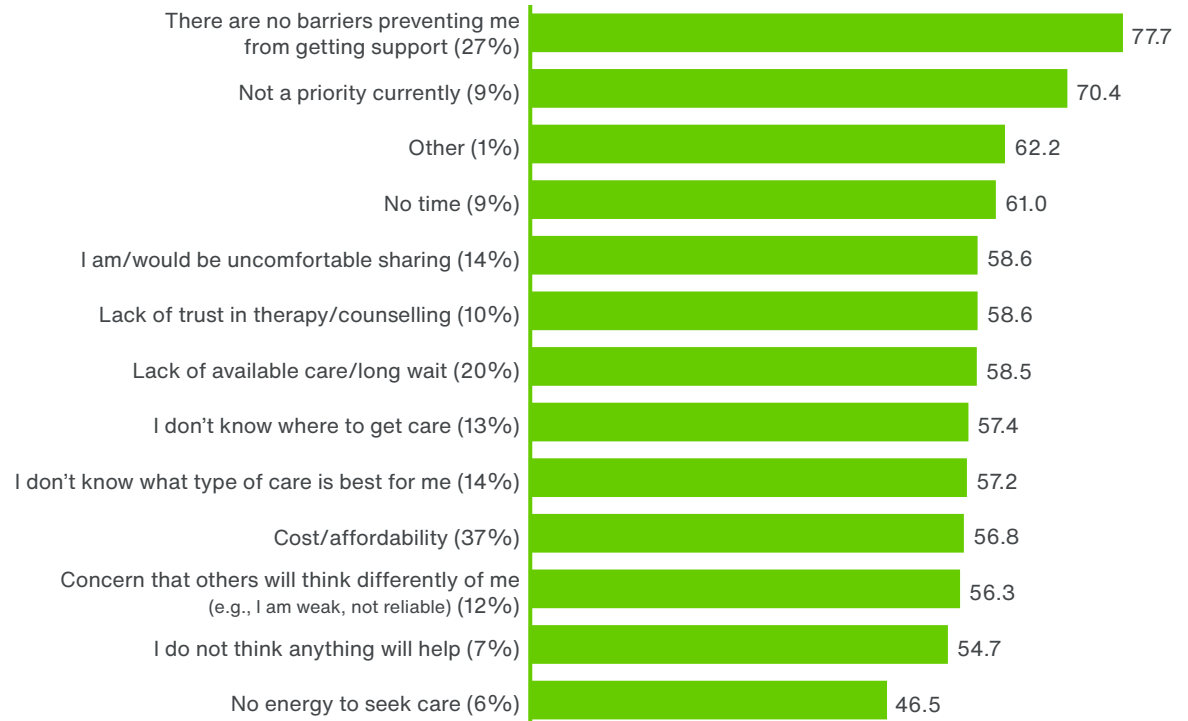
What would prevent you from getting mental health support if you needed it?



- The highest mental health score (77.7) is among 27 per cent of workers reporting no barriers to mental health support, nearly 13 points higher than the national average (65.0)
- The lowest mental health score (46.5) is among six per cent of workers who don't have the energy to seek care, 31 points lower than workers reporting no barriers to support (77.7) and more than 18 points lower than the national average (65.0)



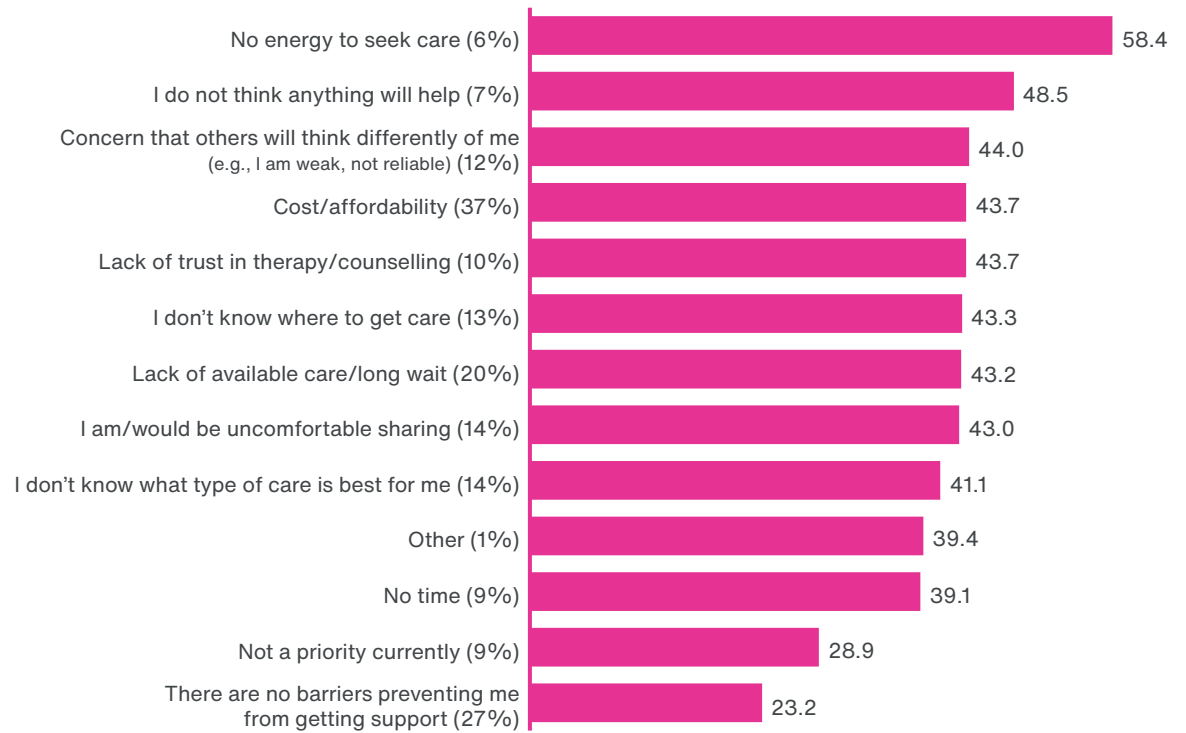
#### MHI score by “What would prevent you from getting mental health support if you needed it?”



- Workers reporting no barriers to support have an annual productivity loss of 23.2 days, 25 days fewer compared to those lacking the energy to seek care (58.4 working days per year)



### Productivity Loss by “What would prevent you from getting mental health support if you needed it?”

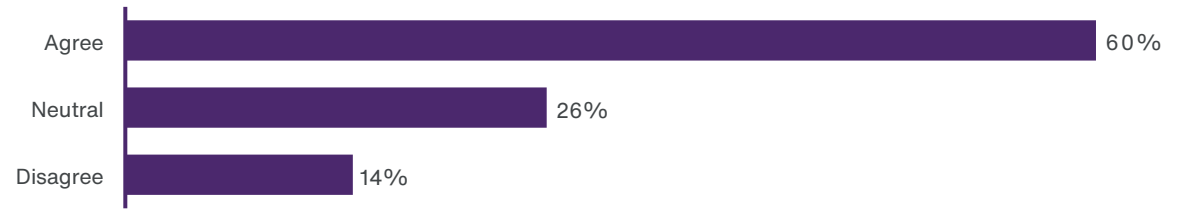


# Workplace culture

**Only six in 10 workers believe their organisation’s culture supports their wellbeing.**

- Three in five (60 per cent) perceive their workplace culture as supportive of their personal wellbeing; this group has the highest mental health score (70.4), more than five points higher than the national average (65.0)
- One in seven (14 per cent) don’t perceive their workplace culture as supportive of their personal wellbeing; this group has the lowest mental health score (51.8), more than 19 points lower than workers who perceive their workplace culture as supportive (70.4) and 13 points lower than the national average (65.0)
- Workers who perceive their workplace culture as supportive of their personal wellbeing have an annual productivity loss of 30.6 days; 24 days fewer compared to workers who perceive it as unsupportive (54.9 working days per year)

The workplace culture at my organisation supports my personal wellbeing



MHI score by “The workplace culture at my organisation supports my personal wellbeing”



Productivity Loss by “The workplace culture at my organisation supports my personal wellbeing”



# Turnover

**More than one-third of workers are considering leaving their jobs or are uncertain about staying.**

- Nearly two-thirds (65 per cent) of workers are not thinking about leaving their jobs; this group has the highest mental health score (70.2), more than five points higher than the national average (65.0)
- Nearly one in seven (13 per cent) workers are thinking about leaving their jobs; this group has the lowest mental health score (51.8), more than 18 points lower than workers who are not thinking of leaving their jobs (70.2), and more than 13 points lower than the national average (65.0)
- Workers not considering leaving their jobs have an annual productivity loss of 28.3 days, a difference of 27 days compared to workers considering a change (55.4 working days per year)

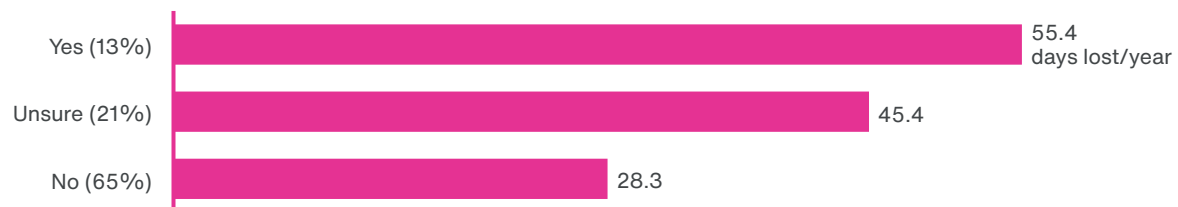
## Are you thinking of leaving your job?



## MHI score by “Are you thinking of leaving your job?”



## Productivity Loss by “Are you thinking of leaving your job?”

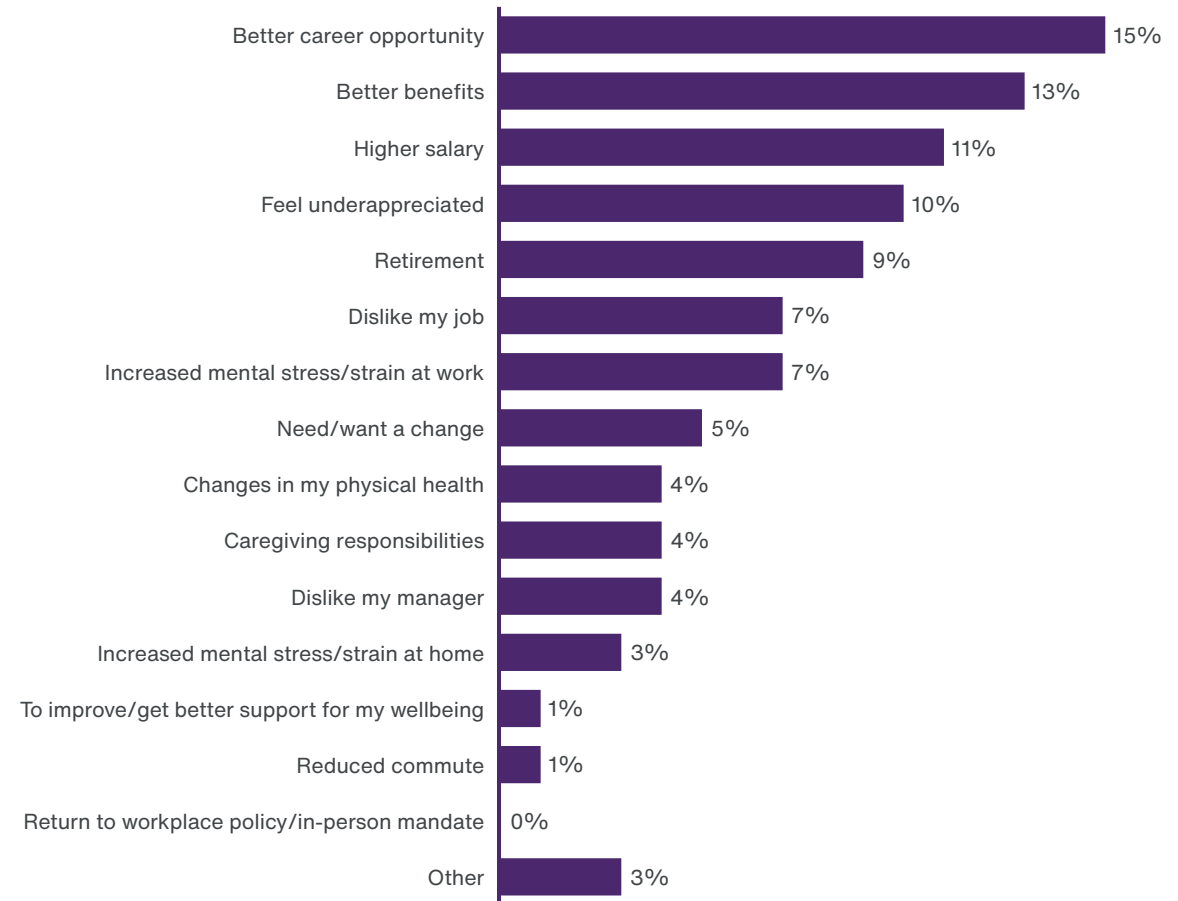


**Better career opportunities, better benefits, higher salaries, and feeling underappreciated are the primary drivers of turnover.**

- Nearly one in six (15 per cent) workers who are thinking of leaving say better career opportunities are the primary reason for considering leaving their jobs, 13 per cent say better benefits, and 11 per cent say it's for a higher salary
- Workers under 40, parents, and managers are more likely to report better career opportunities and better benefits as the reasons for considering leaving their jobs



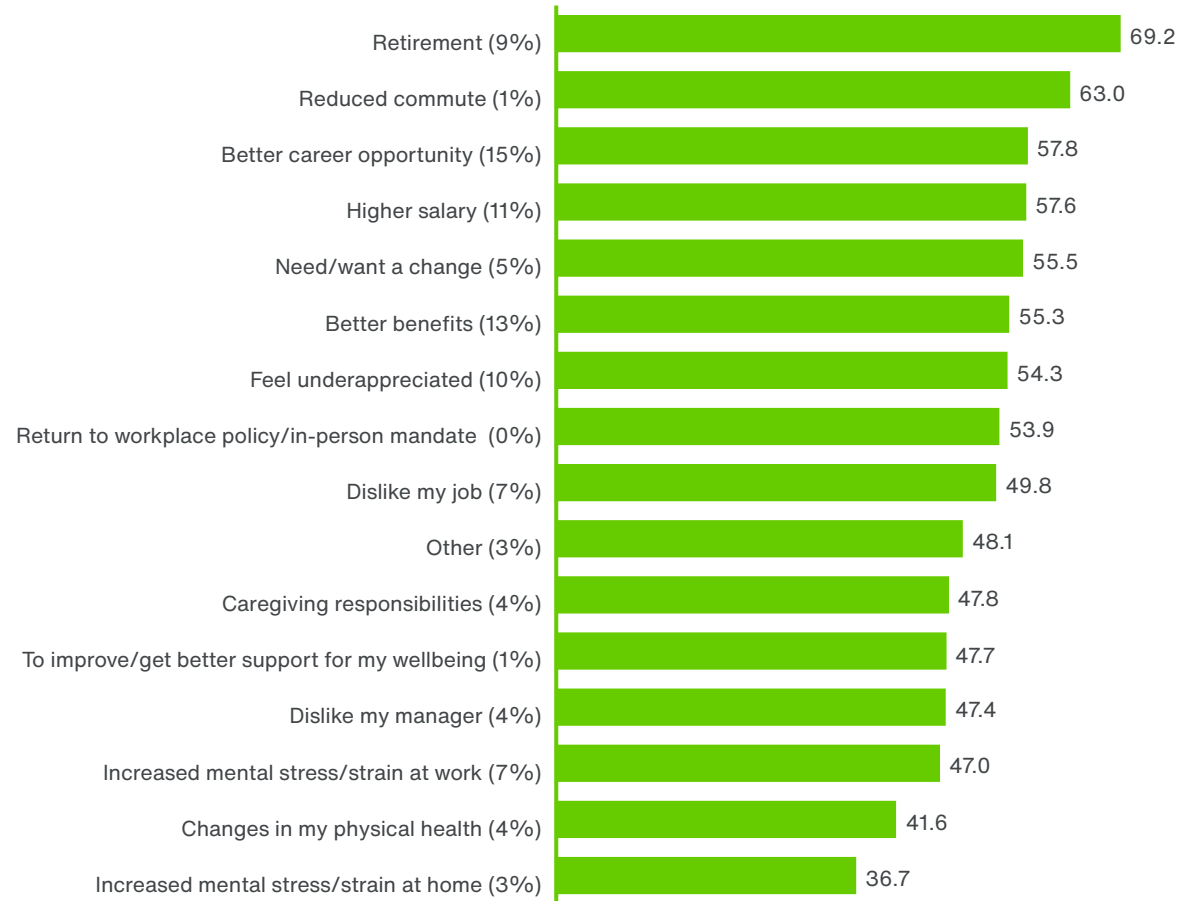
**What is the primary reason you are thinking of leaving your job?**



- The mental health score of 13 per cent of workers considering leaving their jobs for better benefits (55.5) is nearly 10 points lower than the national average (65.0); this group also experiences a productivity loss of 43 days annually

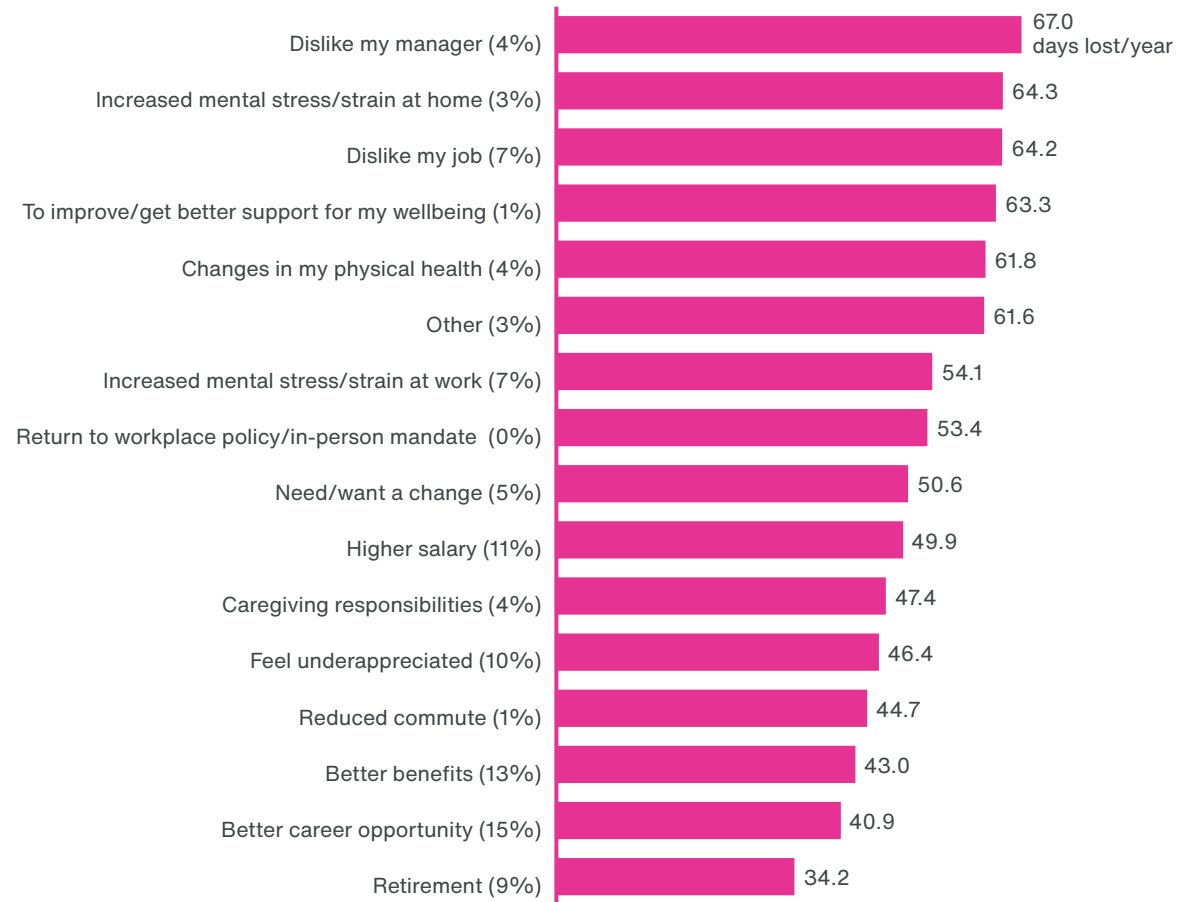


### MHI score by “What is the primary reason you are thinking of leaving your job?”





### Productivity Loss by “What is the primary reason you are thinking of leaving your job?”



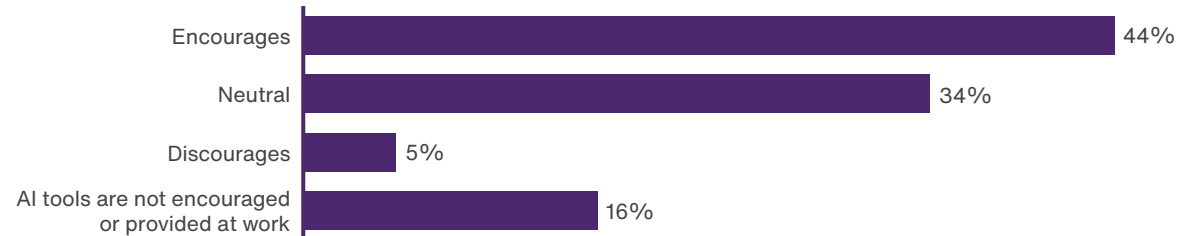
## Adoption of AI at work.

**More than two in five workers are encouraged to use AI tools in their work.**

- More than two in five workers report that their employer encourages AI use (44 per cent), 34 per cent are neutral on the matter, five per cent are discouraged from using AI, and 16 per cent say AI tools are not encouraged nor provided at work
- Managers are 50 per cent more likely than non-managers to say their employer supports or encourages the use of AI tools in their work
- The lowest mental health score (55.5) is among five per cent of workers reporting their employer discourages the use of AI tools in their work, more than 11 points lower than workers whose employers encourage AI tools (66.9) and nearly 10 points lower than the national average (65.0)



To what extent does your employer support or encourage the use of AI tools in your work?



MHI score by “To what extent does your employer support or encourage the use of AI tools in your work?”



**Among workers who use AI tools or technologies at work, more than half report improved efficiency.**

- More than one-third (36 per cent) of workers use AI in their work at least several times per week; a further 14 per cent use AI in their work several times per month
- More than half (57 per cent) of workers using AI report improved efficiency; this group has a mental health score (66.6) modestly higher than the national average (65.0)
- Managers are 75 per cent more likely than non-managers to report that AI tools/technologies have improved their efficiency at work



**How often do you use AI tools or technologies in your current job?**



**How would you describe the impact of AI tools/technologies on your efficiency at work?**



**MHI score by “How would you describe the impact of AI tools/technologies on your efficiency at work?”**



# Overview of the TELUS Mental Health Index.

The mental health and wellbeing of a population are essential to overall health and work productivity. The Mental Health Index measures the current mental health status of employed adults. Increases and decreases in the MHI are intended to predict cost and productivity risks and inform the need for investment in mental health support by 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 2,000 people who live in the United Kingdom and are currently employed or who were employed within the last six months. Participants are selected to represent the age, gender, industry, and geographic distribution in the United Kingdom. Respondents are asked to consider the previous two weeks when answering each question. Data for the current report were collected between February 25 and March 9, 2026.

## 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. 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 subgroup is available upon request.

Contact [MHI@telushealth.com](mailto:MHI@telushealth.com)





[www.telushealth.com/en-gb](http://www.telushealth.com/en-gb)

