



Continuing the Conversation: Mental Wellbeing in Market Research 2020

Summary of findings

26th August 2020



What people think,
feel and do

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LONDON | NEW YORK



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We are Opinium



Thought Leadership, Brand & Comms, NPD, Stakeholder Engagement



London + New York



50 people



Method neutral



What people think,
feel and do



**We all have
mental health**

Our audit at a glance...



We ran a study in parallel amongst UK workers to provide a benchmark





Key findings and recommendations

Thank you research land!



Fieldwork

June – July 2020



Sample size

1,143 responses from UK researchers:

- 275 In-house/ client-side
- 570 Agency
- 79 Supplier
- 145 Freelance
- 74 'other'

Key recommendations from the research



Don't get complacent

A great deal of progress has been made in the last year and this is something all of us in the industry can be proud of. However, there is still lots of work to do and plenty of areas for improvement. Employers need to keep striving for better mental health amongst their employees.



Continue to offer wellbeing programmes and initiatives

Employees are enjoying the benefits of wellbeing initiatives on their mental health; employers should continue to offer these and expand to new initiatives. There are some initiatives that there are demand for but are not currently being widely provided.



Learn from the lockdown

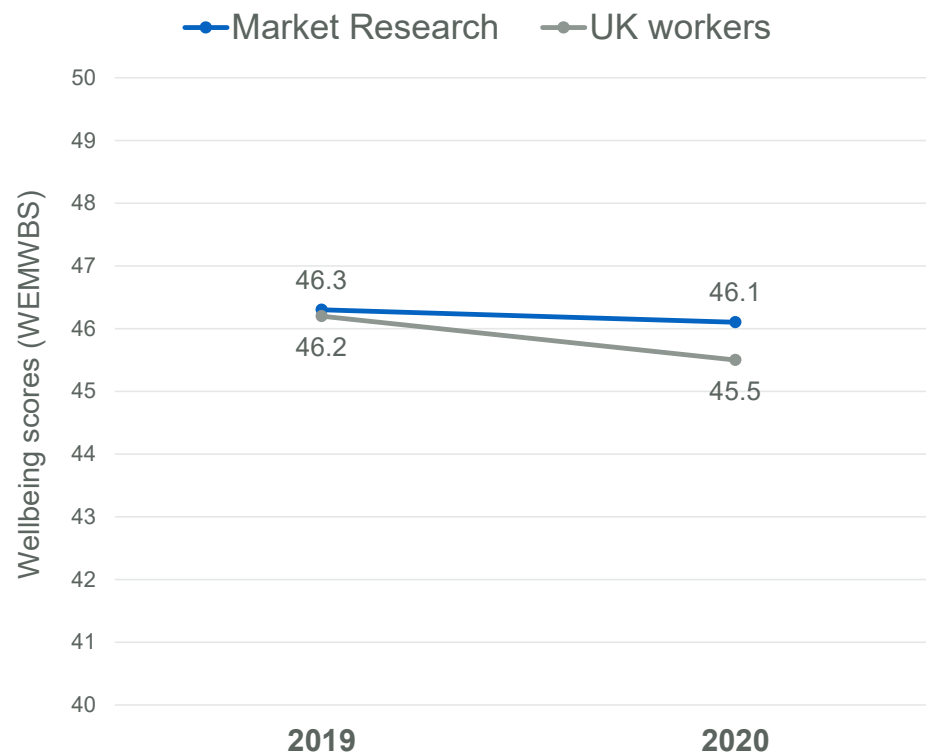
Working from home has provided employees with a number of benefits during lockdown, and has improved the mental wellbeing of many. Employers need to learn how to make some of these changes in working patterns permanent and allow greater flexibility.



Recommendation 1:

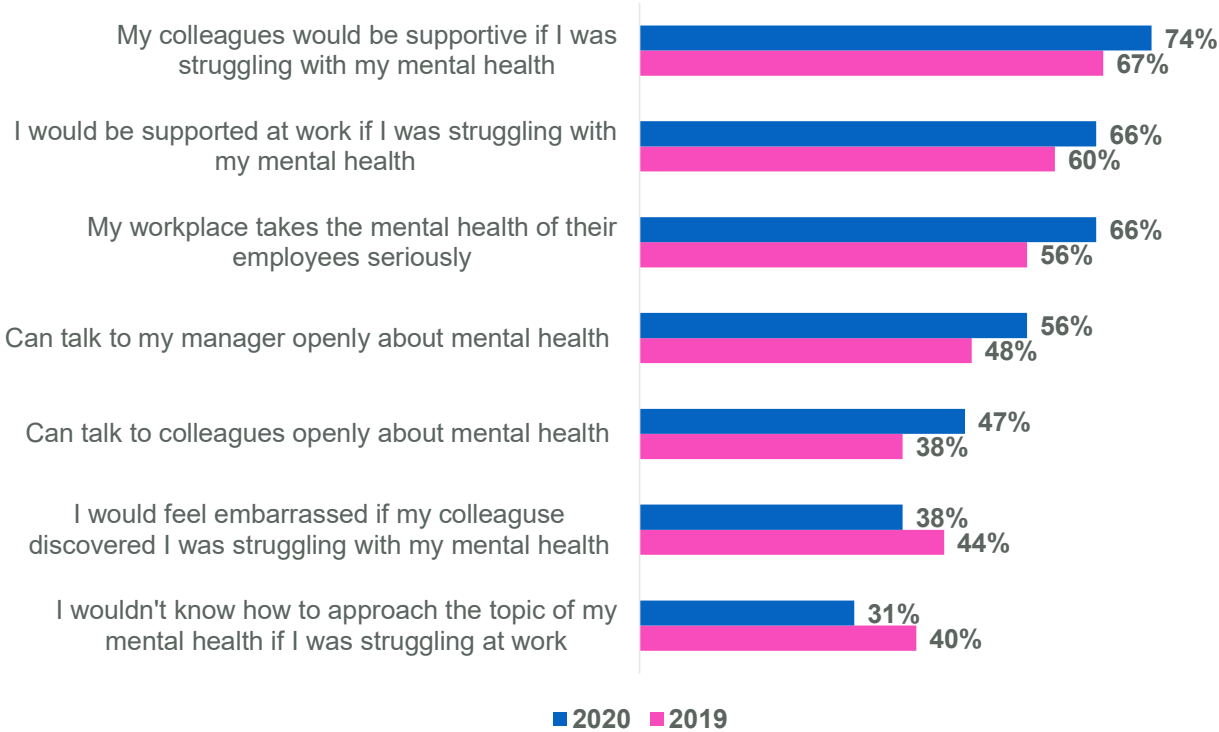
Don't get complacent

Wellbeing scores have remained stable versus 2019 and are higher than national benchmarks



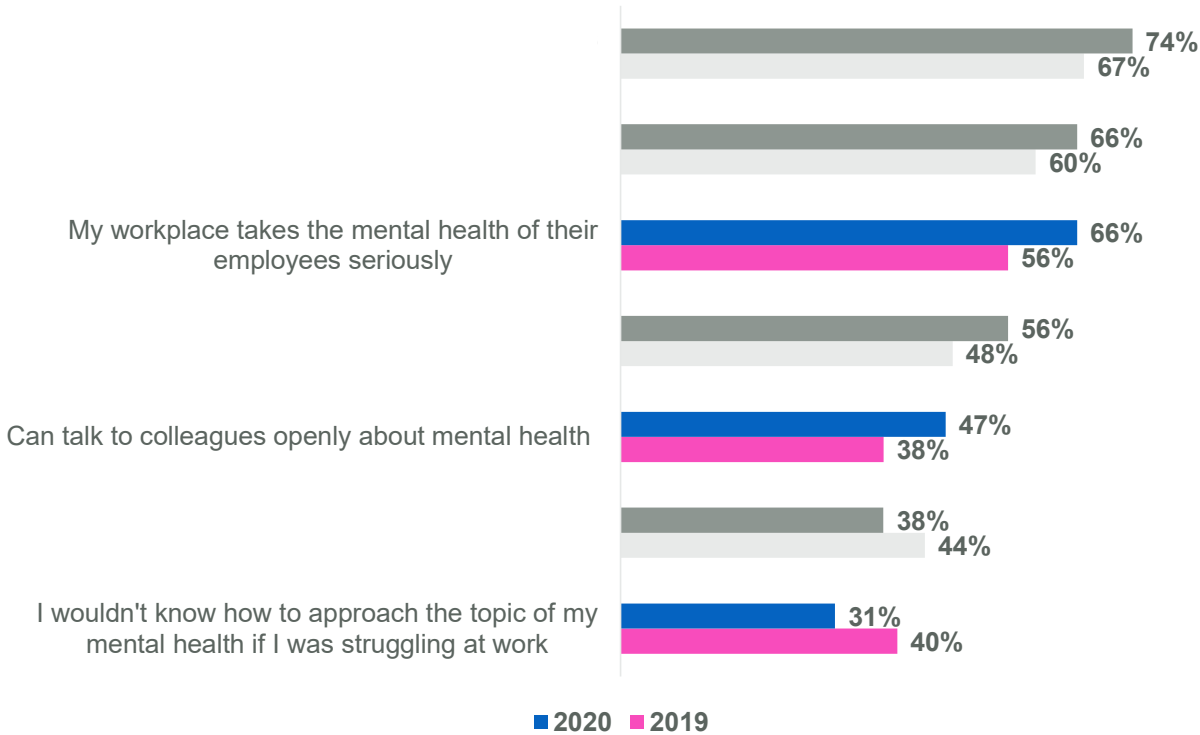
Workplace attitudes towards mental health are changing for the better

Attitudes towards mental health in the workplace



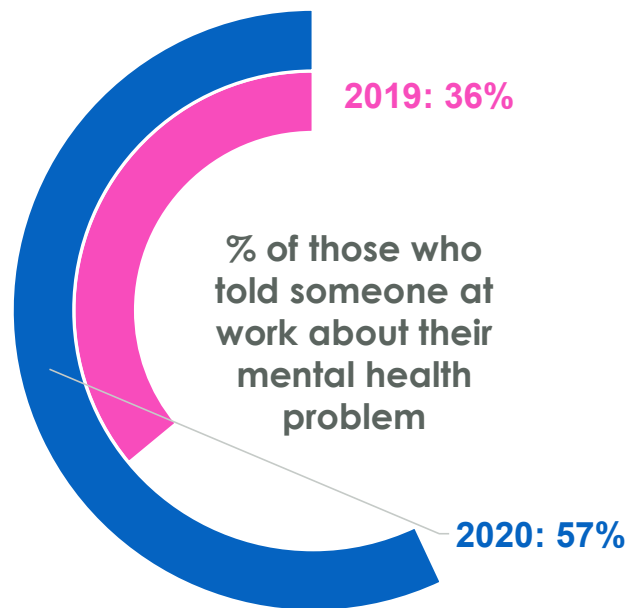
Particularly regarding feeling more able to talk openly and mental health being taken seriously

Attitudes towards mental health in the workplace



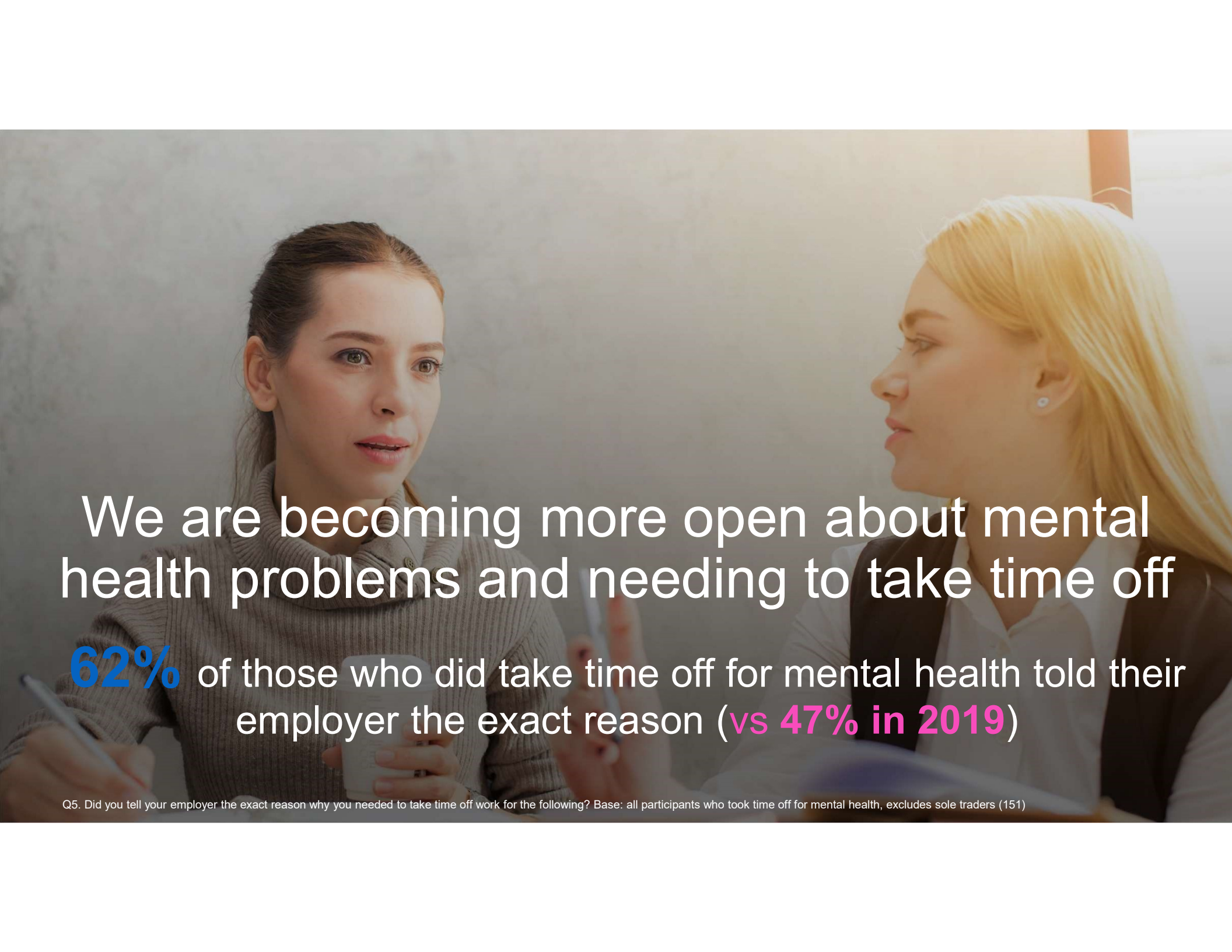
This has resulted in more researchers being open about their mental health at work

Experiences of opening up about mental health at work (vs. 2019 %)



- 75 %** They were understanding and supportive (**vs. 62%**)
- 26 %** They asked me what the company could do to help (**41%**)
- 25 %** Although they were sympathetic they didn't know how best to support me (**30%**)
- 18 %** They told me about various ways in which the company could help (**19%**)
- 14 %** They offered me the option of compassionate leave if ever things got too much (**23%**)
- 8 %** They didn't take it as seriously as they should have (**vs. 15%**)
- 6 %** They told me to speak to my line manager/ a mental health first aider/ HR

Q11. You mentioned that you have experienced the following in the last 12 months: Have you ever told someone at your current workplace about this? Base: all participants who experienced a mental health problem, excluding sole traders, 834. Q14. You mentioned that you told someone at your current workplace that you were experiencing: . How did they respond? Please select all that apply Base: all participants who told someone about struggling with mental health, excluding sole traders, 489

A photograph of two women in a professional setting, possibly a meeting or interview. The woman on the left has dark hair pulled back and is wearing a grey turtleneck sweater. The woman on the right has long blonde hair and is wearing a white shirt and a dark vest. They are both looking towards the right side of the frame. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

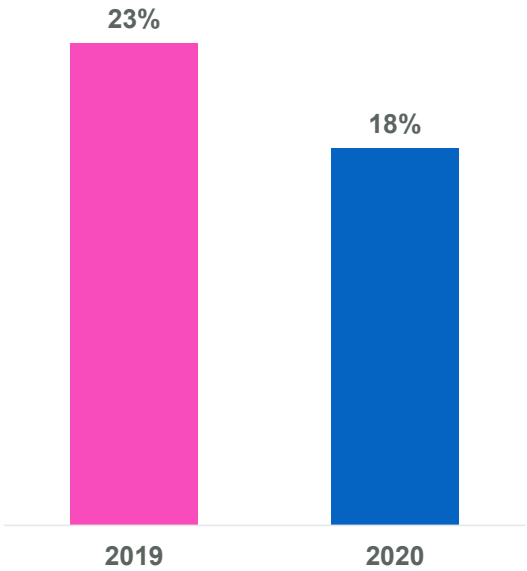
We are becoming more open about mental health problems and needing to take time off

62% of those who did take time off for mental health told their employer the exact reason (vs **47% in 2019**)

Q5. Did you tell your employer the exact reason why you needed to take time off work for the following? Base: all participants who took time off for mental health, excludes sole traders (151)

However, less people are taking time off for their mental health, and workload is still an issue

% who have taken time off work for mental health



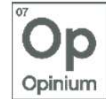
51%

of those who didn't take time off cited too much work as the reason (47% 2019)

53%

said that workload and having too much to do causes them stress at work. The top stress for market researchers (59% 2019)

Q3. Did you take any time off work to rest/ recover from each of the following? Base: all participants who experienced a mental health problem in past 12m, 951
Q4. Why didn't you take time off work for each of the following? Base: all who didn't take time off for mental health, 792
Q9. Which, if any, of the following cause you to feel stressed at work? Select all that apply. Base: all participants, 1143



And there is still work to do in changing attitudes towards mental health in the workplace

56% felt **guilty for taking time off** work for their mental health (**65% 2019**)

25% Didn't tell anyone at work about their mental health problem because **didn't think it appropriate** to discuss their mental health at work (**23% 2019**)

21% Didn't tell anyone at work about their mental health problem because they were afraid it would **jeopardise their career** (**28% 2019**)

“ I felt these were ‘normal’ situations to be in, and also... I didn't want to be perceived as weak or attention seeking (absurd as it sounds, I know). ”

Q6. You mentioned that you took time off work for the following: To what extent to do agree or disagree with the following statements? Base: all who took time off for mental health, 169

Q16. You mentioned that you didn't tell anyone at your current workplace that you were experiencing . Why didn't you tell anyone? Base: all participants who didn't tell anyone at work about struggling with their mental health, 344

Recommendation Summary:

- Attitudes towards mental health in the workplace are changing for the better
- Employees are becoming more open about mental health
- Those who have taken time off for their mental health have had positive experiences
- But there is still work to be done, as many are still not taking time off for mental health, with workload being a key reason
- Employers need to continue to cultivate a safe environment for employees to be open about mental health, whilst also managing stresses such as a workload

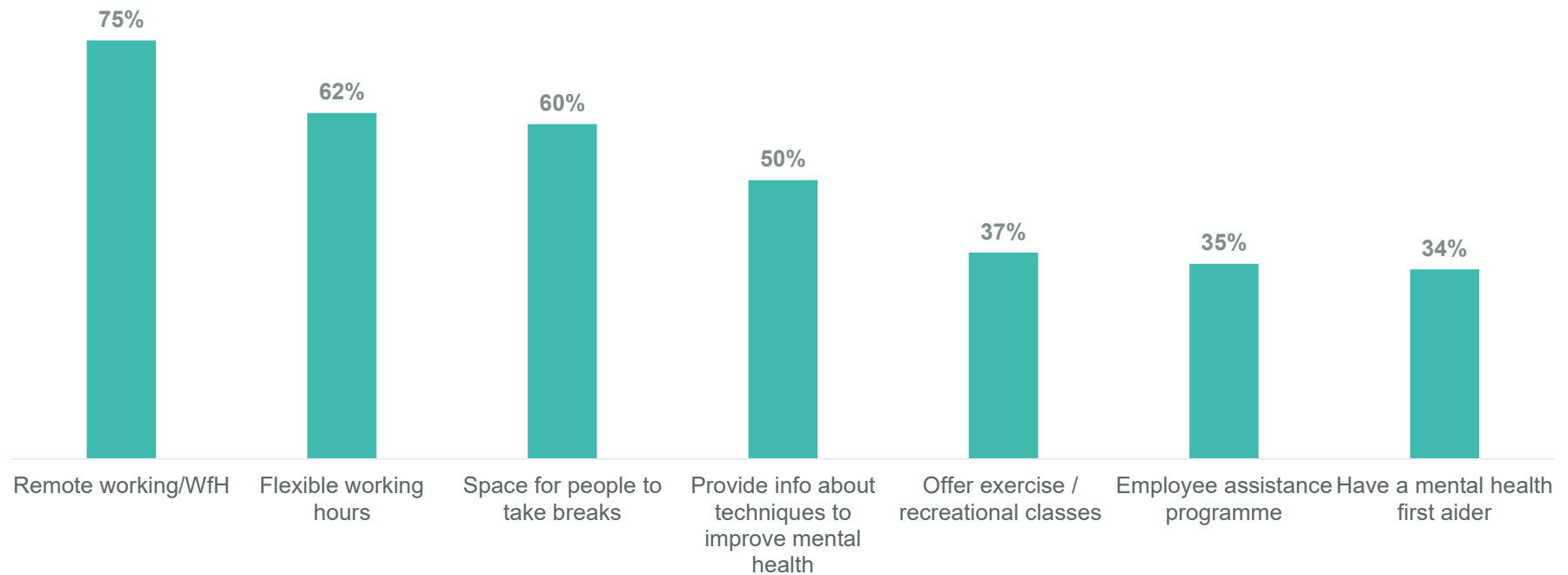


Recommendation 2:

Continue to offer wellbeing programmes and initiatives

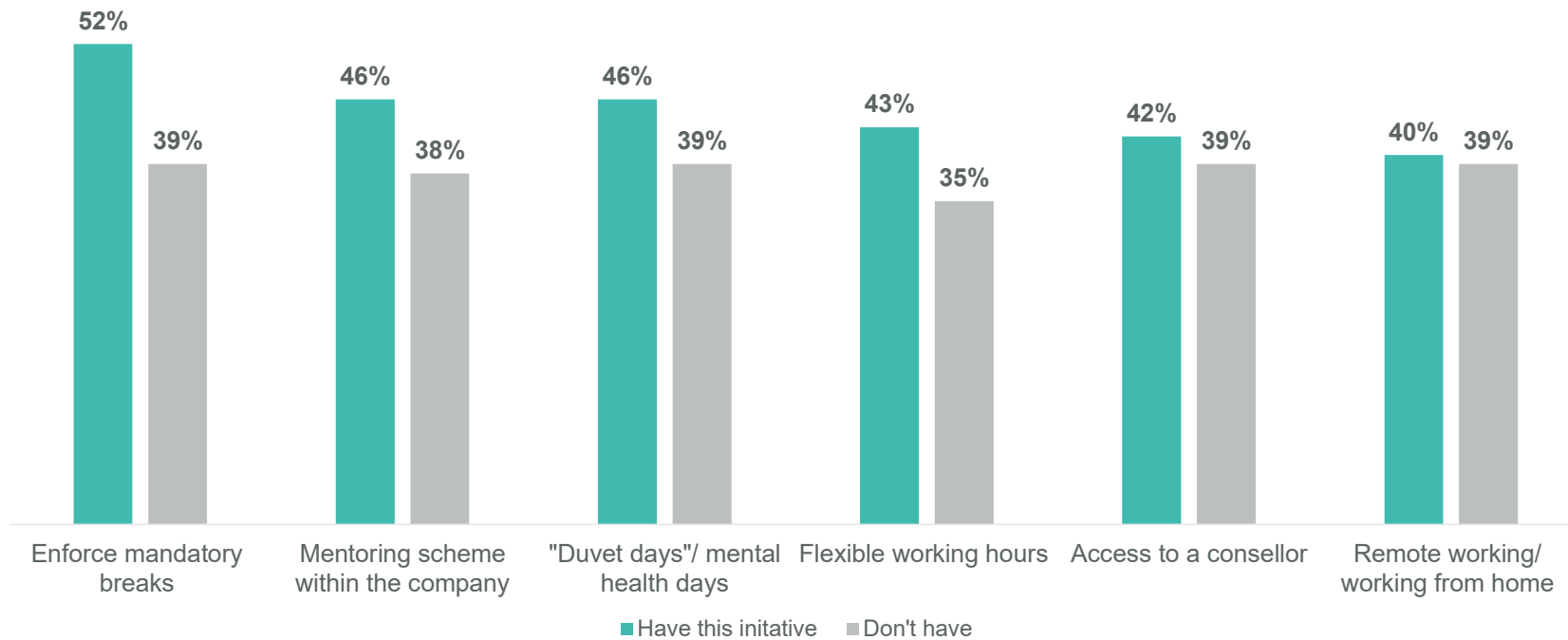
Working from home and flexible working hours are the most common initiatives offered by employers

Programmes and initiatives offered by employers



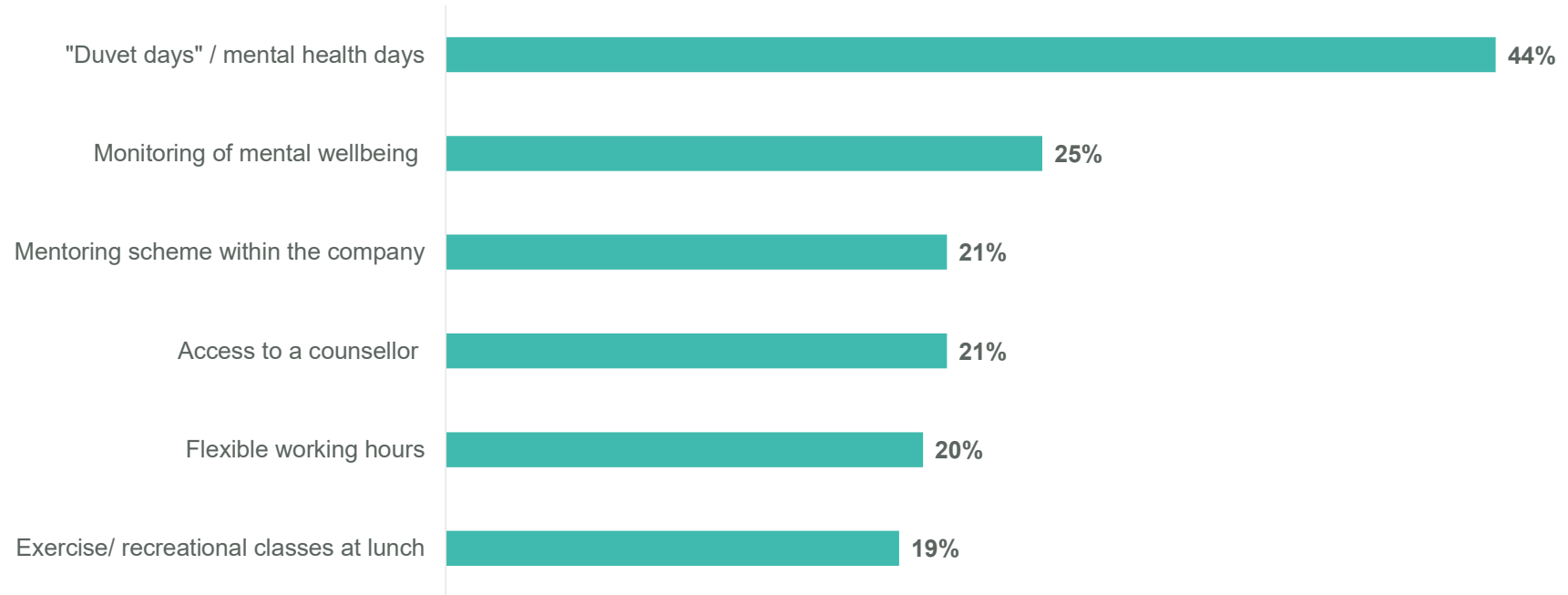
There is evidence to suggest that those with access to these schemes have better mental wellbeing

Percentage with an above average WEMWBS based on access to schemes



There is still demand from employees for the introduction of more programmes

Initiatives employees would like to see their workplace introduce





Recommendation 2

Recommendation Summary:

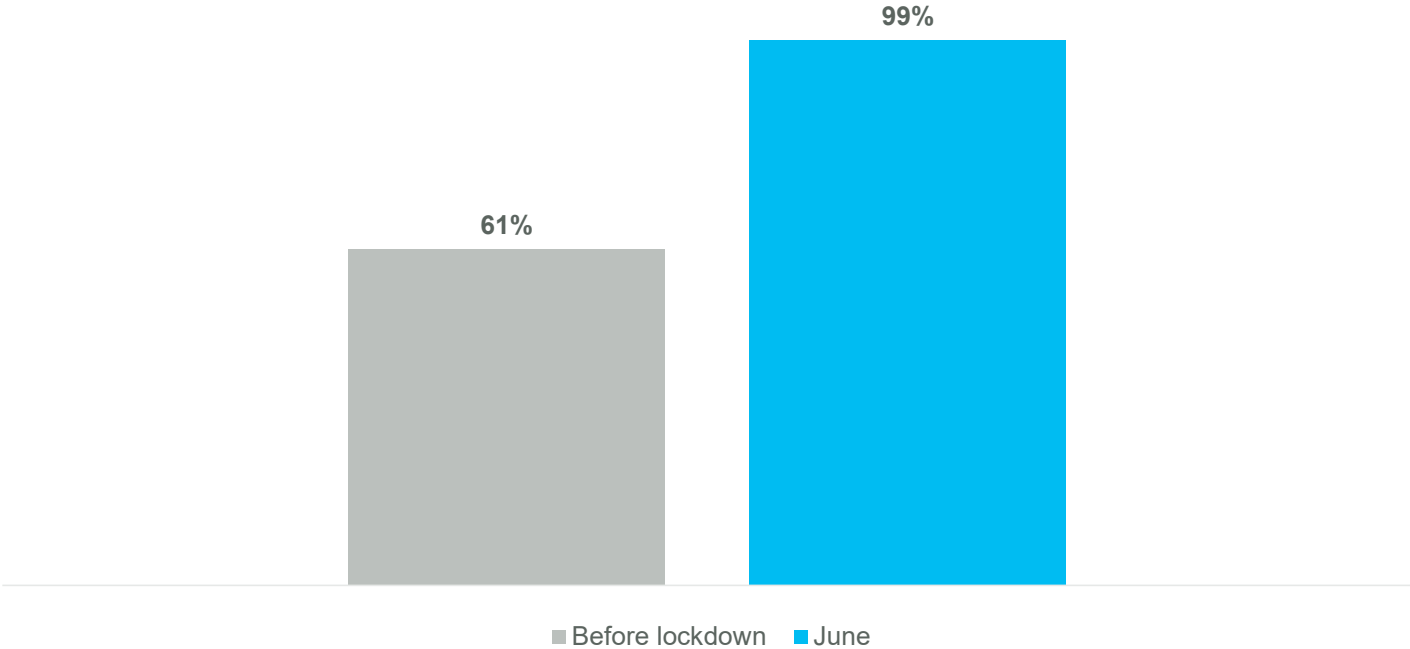
- **Employers that don't already should introduce initiatives for their workers**
- **Those that do should keep up the good work!**
- **There is always room for more; look to introduce new programmes and initiatives by finding out what your people want.**



Recommendation 3:
Learn from the lockdown

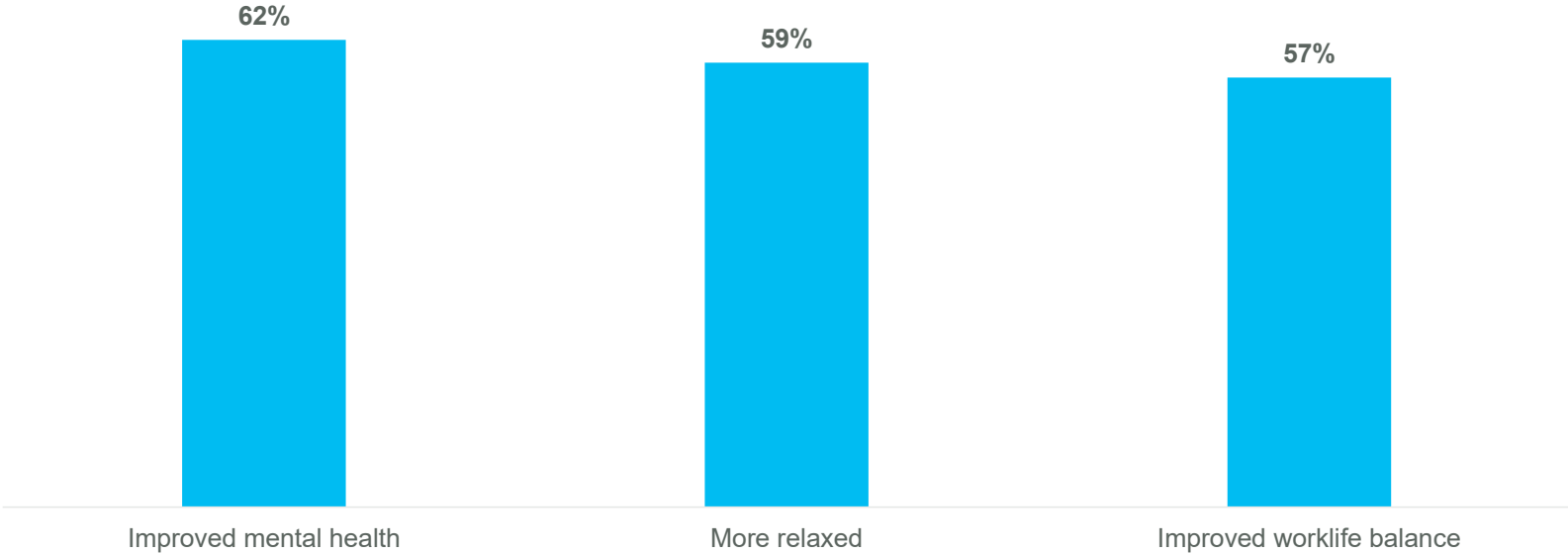
An existing working from home culture made the transition to lockdown an easy one

Percentage working from home before and during lockdown



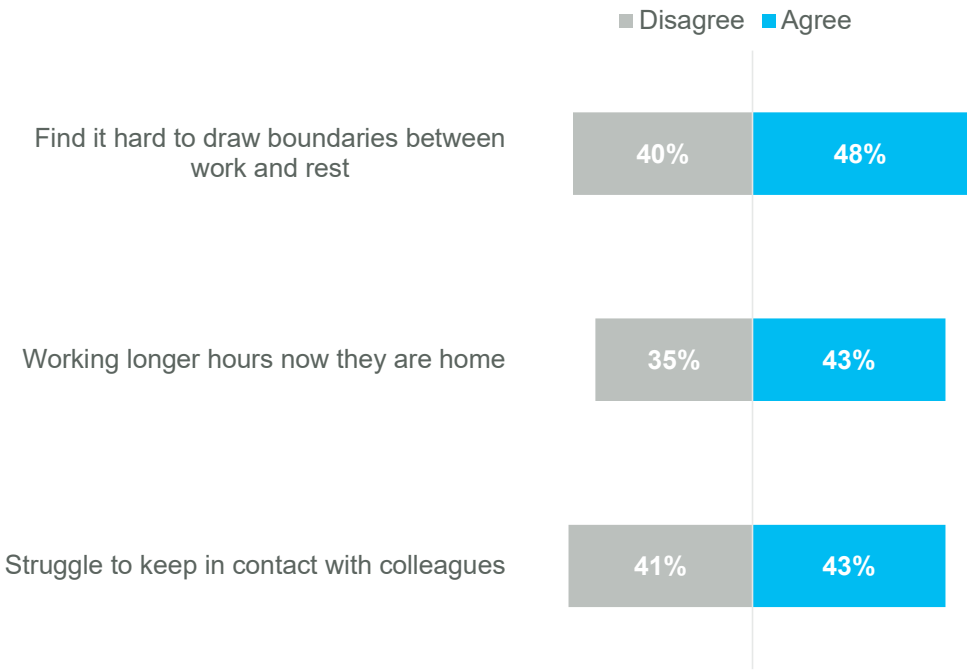
Working from home has had many positive effects on wellbeing

Benefits of working from home during lockdown



But not everything about working from home has been easy

Not everything about lockdown has been positive



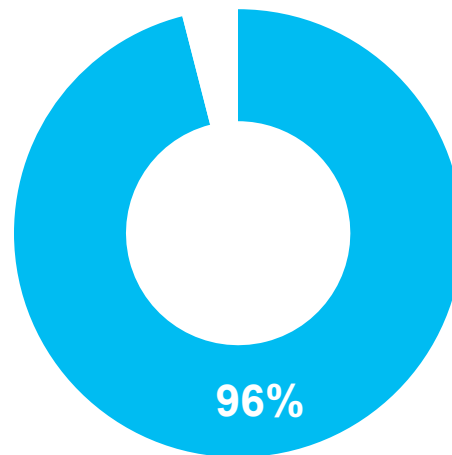
“As someone who lives alone, it has been a lonely experience (no amount of zoom, skype, Teams, webex calls can make up for the lack of human interaction)”

“I’ve also been looking after a small child during this time (while also trying to work) so that also hasn’t helped!”

“I find it very helpful to have the structure of getting up and going to work, being in the office around my colleagues, interacting with them, and then physically leaving the office to come home. Also I live in a very small flat with my partner who is also working from home - it is very cramped and uncomfortable, which just makes the days more difficult.”

Overall, most people want working from home to continue in some capacity

Percentage who want working from home to continue after lockdown





Recommendation 3

Recommendation Summary:

- Working from home has clear and obvious benefits for the wellbeing of employees
- However, there are also positives to office working
- The key is to be flexible and encourage a culture that works on a person by person basis




In any difficulty there is also opportunity...


Thank you



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