

The Mental Health Index™ report

Regional Comparison – Australia,
Canada, United Kingdom
and United States, April 2020

**Spotlight on the mental
health impact of the
COVID-19 pandemic**



LifeWorks
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Executive Summary

The April 2020 Mental Health Index™ comes at a unique time. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted lives and livelihoods more broadly and more quickly than anything in recent memory. As well, it looms ominously for at least the next several months. While an impact on mental health would be expected, the size of the impact is noteworthy.

Data from Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States shows that the lowest Mental Health Index™ scores in the four regions are in:

- Australia (-17.0), followed by
- the United Kingdom (-13.8)
- Canada (-11.7), and then
- the United States (-8.0).

Comparing March 2020 to April 2020, there was a significant increase in mental stress in all regions. The increase in mental stress was the greatest in:

- Canada, followed by
- Australia
- the United States, and
- the United Kingdom.

The most prevalent COVID-19 pandemic concern that is impacting mental health is financial for Australia, Canada and the United States, with Australia having the highest proportion of individuals where this is a concern. The most prevalent issue for the United Kingdom is fear of a loved one dying from COVID-19.

The single greatest COVID-19 pandemic concern is financial for those living in Australia and Canada. The single greatest concern for respondents living in the United States and the United Kingdom is the fear of a loved one dying from COVID-19.

The lowest Mental Health Index scores in the four regions are in Australia, followed by the United Kingdom



Some personal disruption because of the COVID-19 pandemic is reported in all regions:

- 97.1 per cent of respondents in the United Kingdom
- 96.4 per cent in both Australia and Canada, and
- 96.3 per cent in the United States report some level of disruption.

In Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States, the greatest proportion of individuals believe that the personal disruption caused by the pandemic will be over in June 2020.

In Australia, the greatest proportion believe it will be over in 2021.

In terms of the availability of emergency savings, the United States has the highest proportion of individuals who have any emergency fund (76.7 per cent), followed by the United Kingdom, Canada and then Australia. Lack of emergency saving predicts a lower score on the Mental Health Index™ regardless of income.

Additional data and analyses

Industry scores, demographic breakdown of sub-scores, and specific cross-correlational and custom analyses as well as benchmarking against the national results or any sub-group, are available upon request. Contact MHI@morneaushepell.com

Personal disruption because of the COVID-19 pandemic is reported in all regions

For downloading the MHI for the four regions:





Overview of The Mental Health Index™

The mental health and well-being of a population is essential to overall health and work productivity. The Mental Health Index™ provides a measure of the current mental health status of employed adults in a given geography, compared to the benchmarks collected in the years of 2017, 2018 and 2019. The increases and decreases in the Index are intended to predict cost and productivity risks, and inform the need for action by individuals, business and government.

The Mental Health Index™ report has three main parts:

- The overall Mental Health Index™ (MHI), which is a measure of deviation from the benchmark of mental health and risk.
- A Mental Stress Change score (MStressChg), which measures the level of reported mental stress, compared to the prior month.
- A Spotlight section that reflects the specific impact of current issues in the community: For the current and immediately foreseeable future, the measures in this section relate to the mental health impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Methodology

The data for this report was collected through on-line surveys of representative groups of 5,000 residents of the United States, 3,000 residents in Canada, 2,000 residents of the United Kingdom, and 1,000 residents in Australia. All of those surveyed are currently employed or were employed within the prior six months. The same respondents participate each month to remove sampling bias. The respondents were asked to consider the prior two weeks when answering each question. The Mental Health Index™ is published monthly,

Collected through an on-line survey of 5,000 residents of the United States, 3,000 residents in Canada, 2,000 residents of the United Kingdom, and 1,000 residents in Australia



starting

April 2020. The benchmark data was collected in 2017, 2018 and 2019. The data for April 2020 was collected between March 27, 2020 and March 30, 2020 for Canada, and between April 4, 2020 and April 9, 2020 for Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Calculations

To create The Mental Health Index™, the first step leverages a response scoring system that turns individual responses to each question into a point value. Higher point values are associated with better mental health and less mental health risk. Each individual's scores are added and then divided by the total number of possible points to get a score out of 100. The raw score is the mathematical mean of the individual scores.

To demonstrate change, the current month's scores are then compared to the benchmark and the prior month. The benchmark is comprised of data from 2017, 2018 and 2019. This was a period of relative social stability and steady economic growth. **The deviation relative to the benchmark is the Mental Health Index™. A score of zero in the Mental Health Index™ reflects no change, positive scores reflect improvement, and negative scores reflect decline.**

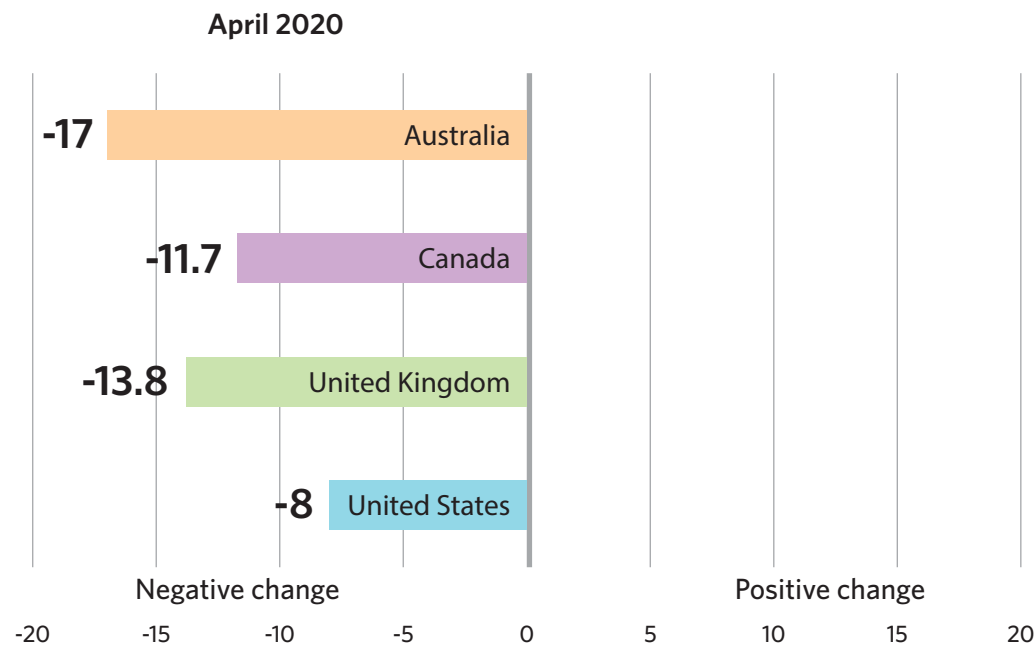
A Mental Stress Change score is also reported given that increasing and prolonged mental stress is a potential contributor to changes in mental health. It is reported separately and is not part of the calculation of the Mental Health Index™. The Mental Stress Change score is calculated as (Percentage reporting less mental stress + Percentage reporting the same level of mental stress * 0.5) * -1 + 100. The data compares the current to the prior month.

A Mental Stress Change score of 50 reflects no change in mental stress from the prior month. Scores above 50 reflect an increase in mental stress and scores below 50 reflect a decrease in mental stress. The range is from zero to 100. A succession of scores over 50, month over month, reflects high risk.



Regional comparisons – Australia, Canada, United Kingdom and United States

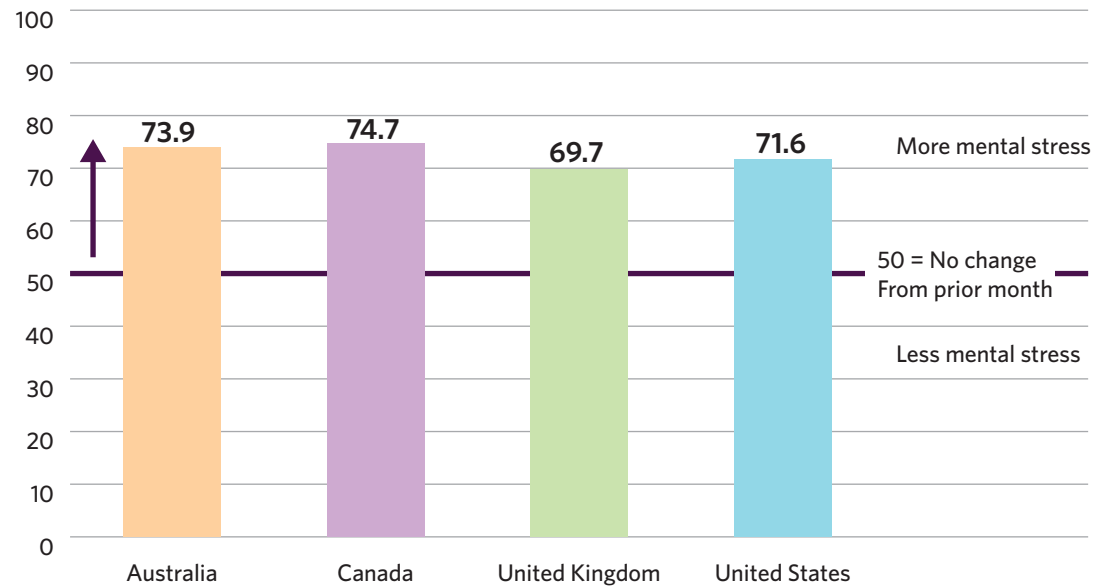
The Mental Health Index™ by region



Overall, the Mental Health Index™ is lowest in Australia, followed by Canada, the United Kingdom, and then the United States. While some differences are evident, the Index for each region shows significant decline.



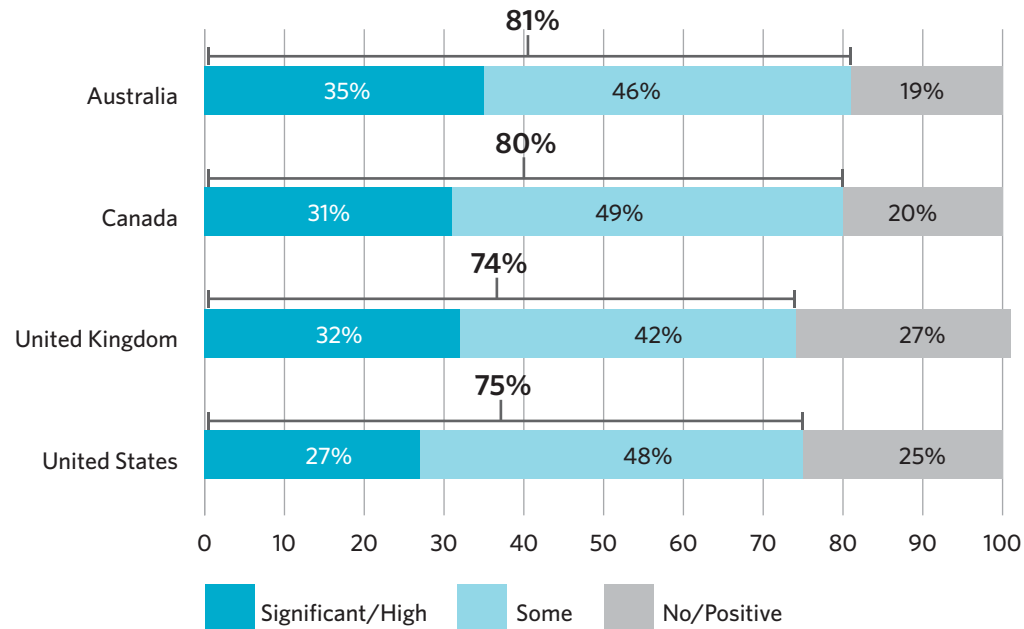
The Mental Stress Change Score by region



Comparing March 2020 to April 2020, there is a significant increase in mental stress in all regions. The increase is greatest in Canada, followed by Australia, the United States, and the United Kingdom.



The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic by region



Australia and Canada are similar with 81 per cent and 80 per cent of individuals, respectively, indicating that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on their mental health. The proportion for the United States is 75 per cent and for the United Kingdom it is 73 per cent.



The mental health impact of the COVID-19 pandemic relates to:	Australia	Canada	United Kingdom	United States
A loved one dying from COVID-19	39.7%	42.6%	52.7%	43.9%
Getting ill with COVID-19	33.5%	41.4%	41.9%	40.0%
The financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic	62.4%	54.8%	41.3%	53.2%
How the COVID-19 pandemic is impacting my family / relationships	34.0%	33.4%	28.9%	28.8%
Dying from COVID-19	15.2%	17.8%	26.6%	20.7%
Ongoing work strain / overwork due to the COVID-19 pandemic	32.8%	25.8%	24.3%	24.4%
Loneliness due to the COVID-19 pandemic	25.9%	21.1%	20.3%	20.9%
Not having food / medicine/ healthcare or other issue as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic	20.0%	20.2%	17.6%	17.9%
Other	2.8%	3.3%	3.1%	3.3%
None	19.2%	20.1%	26.6%	24.8%

The most prevalent COVID-19 pandemic concern is financial for Australia, Canada and the United States, with Australia having the highest proportion of individuals where this is a concern. The most prevalent issue for the United Kingdom is fear of a loved one dying from COVID-19.

The top four concerns are the same for all regions. They include the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic; a loved one dying; getting ill with COVID-19 themselves; and the impact on family/ relationships.

The prevalence of concern regarding individuals dying from COVID-19 themselves is higher in the United Kingdom and the United States than it is in Canada or Australia.

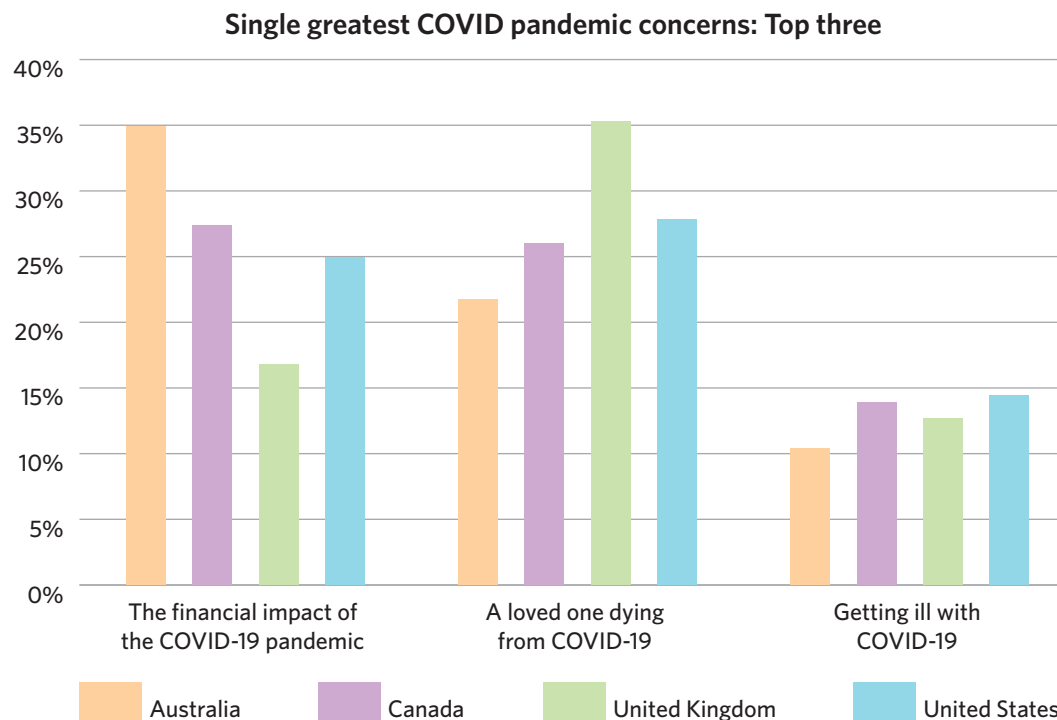


The single greatest concern / fear related to the COVID-19 pandemic:	Australia	Canada	United Kingdom	United States
A loved one dying from COVID-19	21.7%	26.0%	35.3%	27.8%
The financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic	34.9%	27.4%	16.8%	24.9%
Getting ill with COVID-19	10.4%	13.9%	12.7%	14.4%
Dying from COVID-19	6.2%	7.1%	11.4%	8.8%
How the COVID-19 pandemic is impacting my family / relationships	5.7%	9.1%	7.4%	6.7%
Loneliness due to the COVID-19 pandemic	7.8%	4.8%	5.7%	6.1%
Ongoing work strain / overwork due to the COVID-19 pandemic	7.8%	5.3%	5.5%	5.7%
Not having food / medicine / healthcare or other issue as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic	3.3%	4.0%	2.9%	3.4%
Other	2.2%	2.5%	2.4%	2.3%

The single greatest COVID-19 pandemic concern impacting mental health is financial for Australia and Canada. The single greatest concern for the United Kingdom and the United States is fear of a loved one dying from COVID-19.

The three concerns are the same for all regions. They include the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, a loved one dying, and getting ill with COVID-19 themselves.

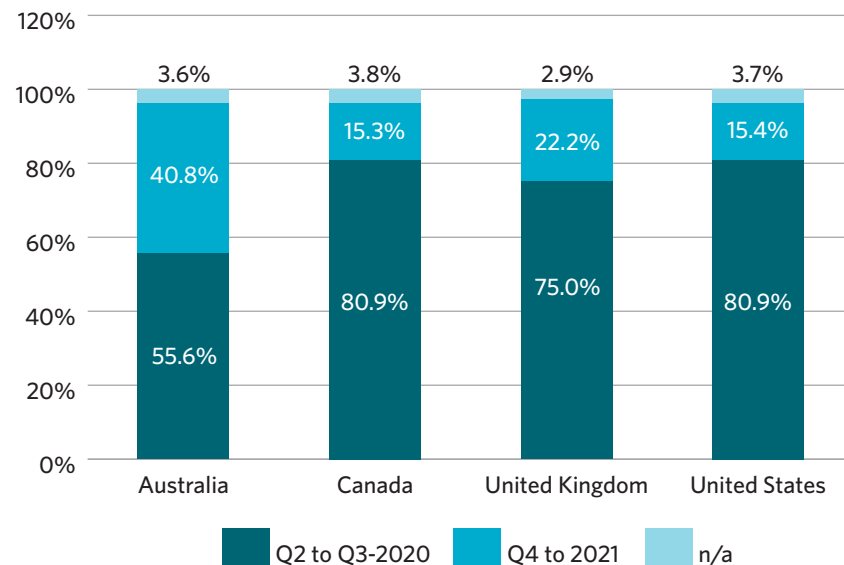
The fourth most significant concern varies by region. The fear of dying from COVID-19 is reported in the United Kingdom and the United States, whereas the impact on family/relationships is noted for Canada, and loneliness for Australia.





Belief regarding when the personal disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic will be over	Australia	Canada	United Kingdom	United States
April	3.8%	6.1%	2.3%	3.6%
May	4.8%	14.7%	7.6%	13.5%
June	10.5%	22.7%	19.5%	26.8%
July	13.4%	15.7%	18.3%	17.7%
August	10.0%	10.8%	12.5%	11.2%
September	13.1%	10.8%	14.9%	8.1%
October	11.2%	2.8%	5.6%	3.0%
November	3.6%	1.0%	1.6%	1.3%
December	5.1%	1.2%	1.7%	1.4%
2021	20.9%	10.4%	13.3%	9.7%
I am not feeling any disruption	3.6%	3.8%	2.9%	3.7%

Belief of when the personal disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic will be over



Some personal disruption because of the COVID-19 pandemic is reported in all regions. Ninety-seven (97.1) per cent of respondents in the United Kingdom, 96.4 per cent in both Australia and Canada and 96.3 per cent in the United States report some level of disruption.

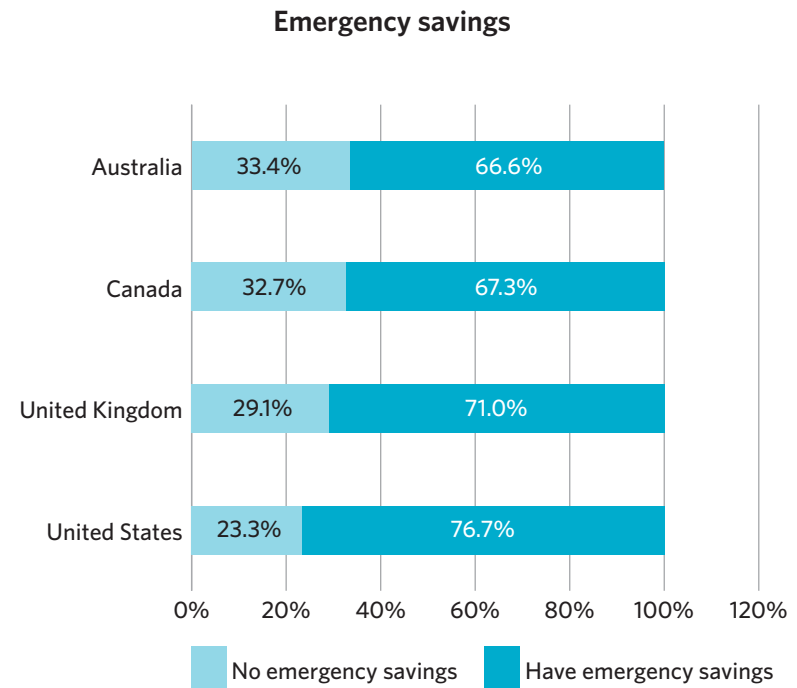
Respondents in Canada and the United States equally believe that the personal disruption will be over in Q2 to Q3 2020, while 75 per cent of individuals in the United Kingdom, and 55.6 per cent of individuals in Australia, believe the same.

In Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States, the greatest proportion of individuals believe that the personal disruption caused by the pandemic will be over in June 2020, whereas in Australia, the greatest proportion of respondents believe it will be over in 2021.

In terms of the availability of emergency savings, the United States has the highest proportion of individuals who have any emergency fund (76.7 per cent), followed by the United Kingdom, Canada, and then Australia.

Having emergency savings predicts a better Mental Health Index™ score.

For downloading the MHI for the four regions:



Morneau Shepell is the leading provider of technology-enabled HR services that deliver an integrated approach to employee well-being through our cloud-based platform. Our focus is providing world-class solutions to our clients to support the mental, physical, social and financial well-being of their people. By improving lives, we improve business. Our approach spans services in employee and family assistance, health and wellness, recognition, pension and benefits administration, retirement consulting, actuarial and investment services. Morneau Shepell employs approximately 6,000 employees who work with some 24,000 client organizations that use our services in 162 countries. Morneau Shepell is a publicly traded company on the Toronto Stock Exchange (TSX: MSI).



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