

The Mental Health Index by LifeWorks™


United Kingdom | November 2021



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November 2021 highlights

 After a period of improvement, the mental health index and key sub-scales have declined for the second consecutive month.

At 11 points below the pre-pandemic benchmark, the mental health of Britons continues to show strain

- The Mental Health Index™ for November 2021 has decreased from October to 11 points below the pre-2020 benchmark.
- Differences in mental health scores between those with and without emergency savings have been reported since the launch of the Index in April 2020. Nearly two years later, individuals without emergency savings have a mental health score (-26.9) more than 20 points below the overall group (-11.0) and more than 20 points below those with emergency savings (-5.0).

In spite of wider adoption of digital/video mental health support, almost half of Britons want in-person support

- 38% of Britons indicate a preference for in-person support.
- 33% do not have a preference.
- The remaining 22% indicate a preference for video, digital, telephonic or another modality

Nearly one-quarter of working Britons report that their working life has worsened since the start of the pandemic

- 21% of Britons indicate that their working life has worsened compared to before the pandemic; the mental health of this group is more than 11 points below the national average.
- Britons working from home are more than twice as likely than those working at the worksite to report an improvement in their working lives compared to before the pandemic.
- 19% of Britons report that their personal life has worsened compared to before the pandemic; the mental health of this group is 14 points below the national average.

Improving sleep is the most valued area of mental wellbeing support for Britons

- 40% of Britons report that improving sleep is the greatest value for their mental health.
- 35% indicate that the most valued area of support is improving mental focus, memory, and problem solving.

40%

want to improve
their sleep

38%

prefer in-person
counselling

35%

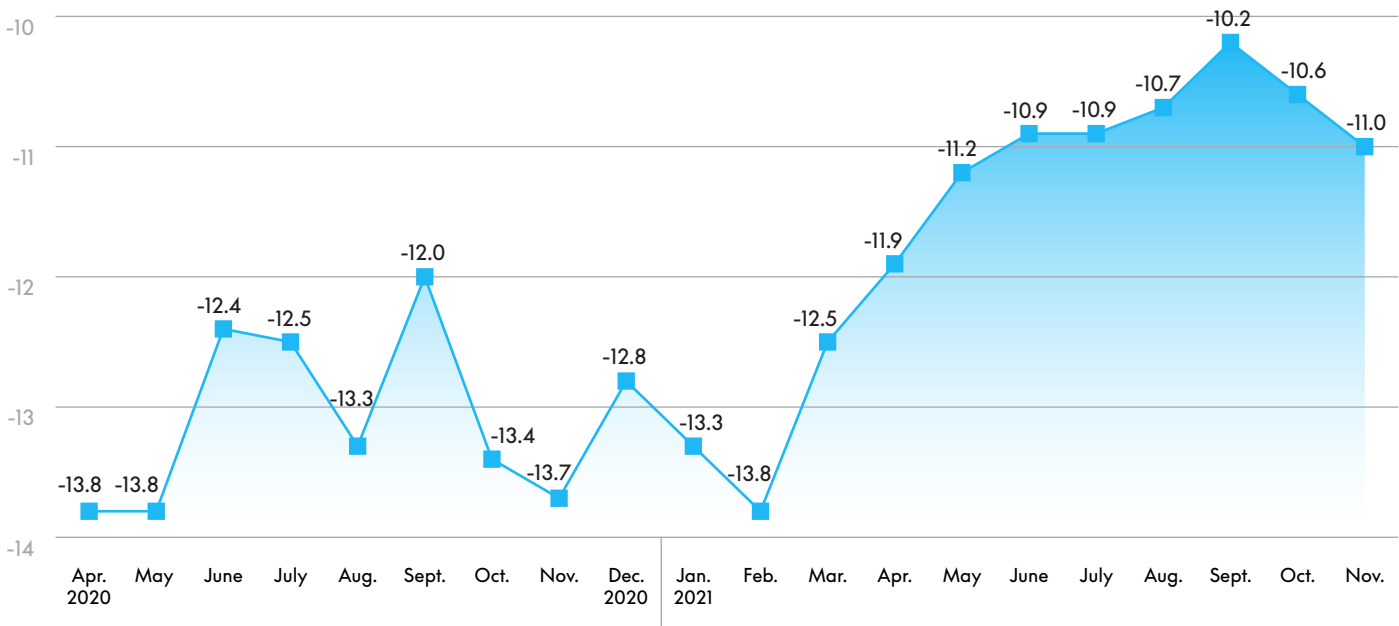
want to improve
their mental focus, memory,
and problem solving

19%

indicate worsening of
their personal life since
the pandemic

The Mental Health Index™

The Mental Health Index™ (MHI) is a measure of deviation from the benchmark¹ of mental health and risk. **The overall Mental Health Index™ for November 2021 is -11.0 points.** A 11-point decrease from the pre-COVID-19 benchmark reflects a population whose mental health is similar to the most distressed one per cent of the benchmark population.



MHI Current Month
November 2021

-11.0

October 2021

-10.6

¹ The benchmark reflects data collected in 2017, 2018 and 2019.

Mental Health Index™ sub-scores

The lowest Mental Health Index™ sub-score is for the risk measure of optimism (-13.1), following by depression (-12.4), anxiety (-12.4), isolation (-10.5), work productivity (-9.5), and general psychological health (-4.0).

The best sub-score, and the only measure above the historical benchmark continues to be financial risk (4.0).

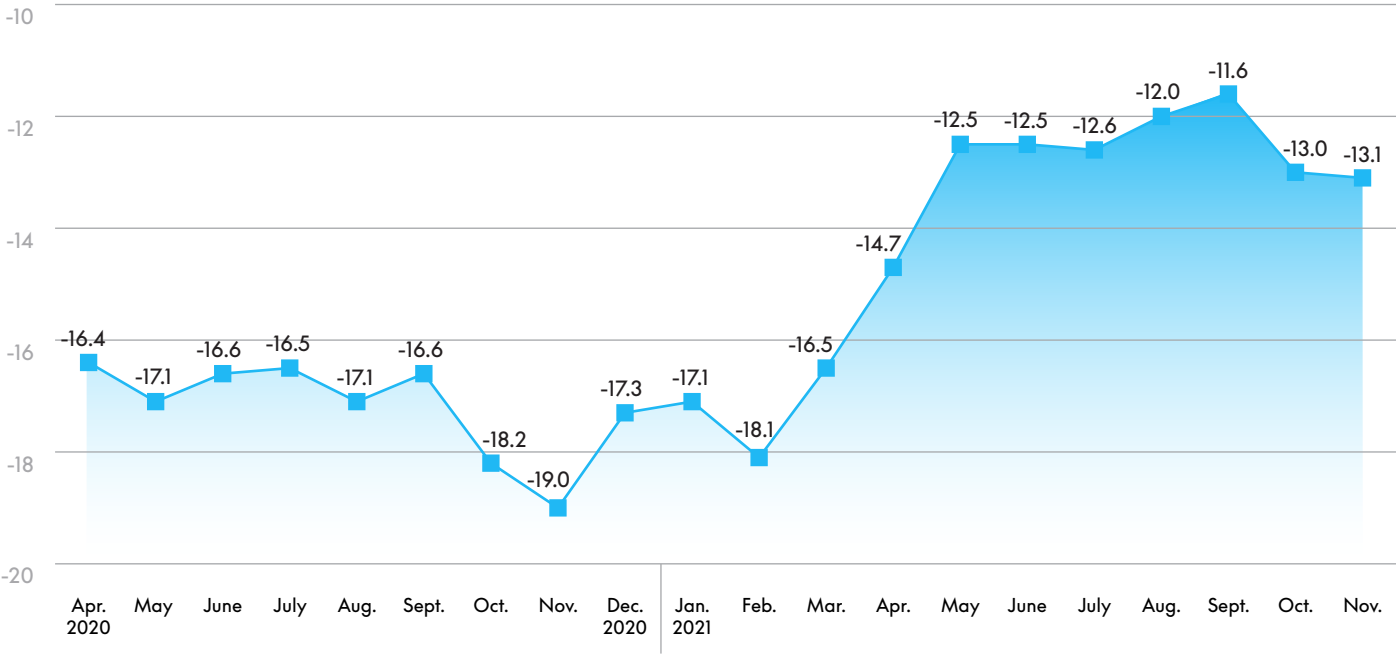
- All sub-scores, apart from work productivity, declined compared to October 2021.
- Despite 1.6-point decline from October 2021, financial risk continues to be the strongest of all sub-scores and is above the pre-2020 benchmark.

Mental Health Index™ Sub-scores ² 2021	November	October
Optimism	-13.1	-13.0
Depression	-12.4	-12.3
Anxiety	-12.4	-12.2
Isolation	-10.5	-10.0
Work productivity	-9.5	-9.9
Psychological health	-4.0	-3.7
Financial risk	4.0	5.6

2 The demographic breakdown of sub-scores is available upon request.

Optimism

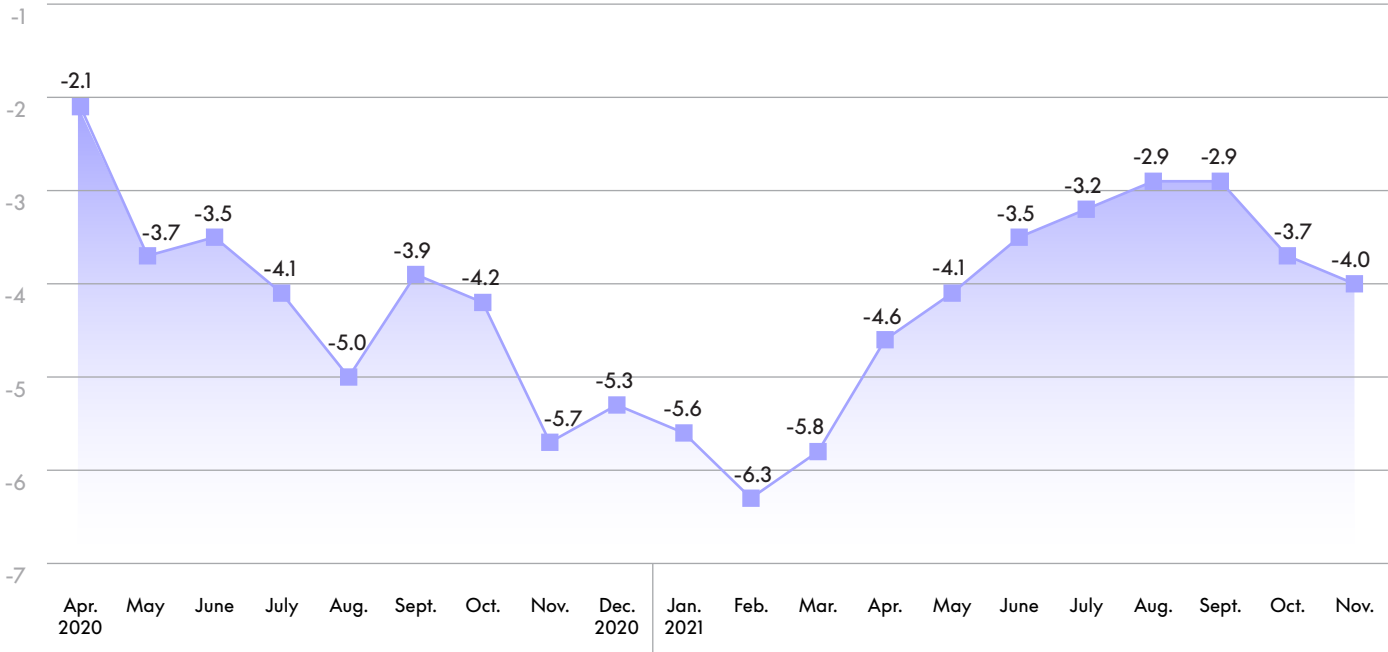
Since April 2020, optimism sub-scores have remained significantly below the benchmark however, beginning in March 2021, scores improved to a high of -11.6 in September. After seven months of improvement, the optimism score in the United Kingdom fell 1.4-points to -13.0 in October 2021. In November, the score remains nearly unchanged from the prior month at -13.1 points below the pre-2020 benchmark.



General psychological health

The psychological health sub-score assesses individuals' self-perception of their overall level of psychological health.

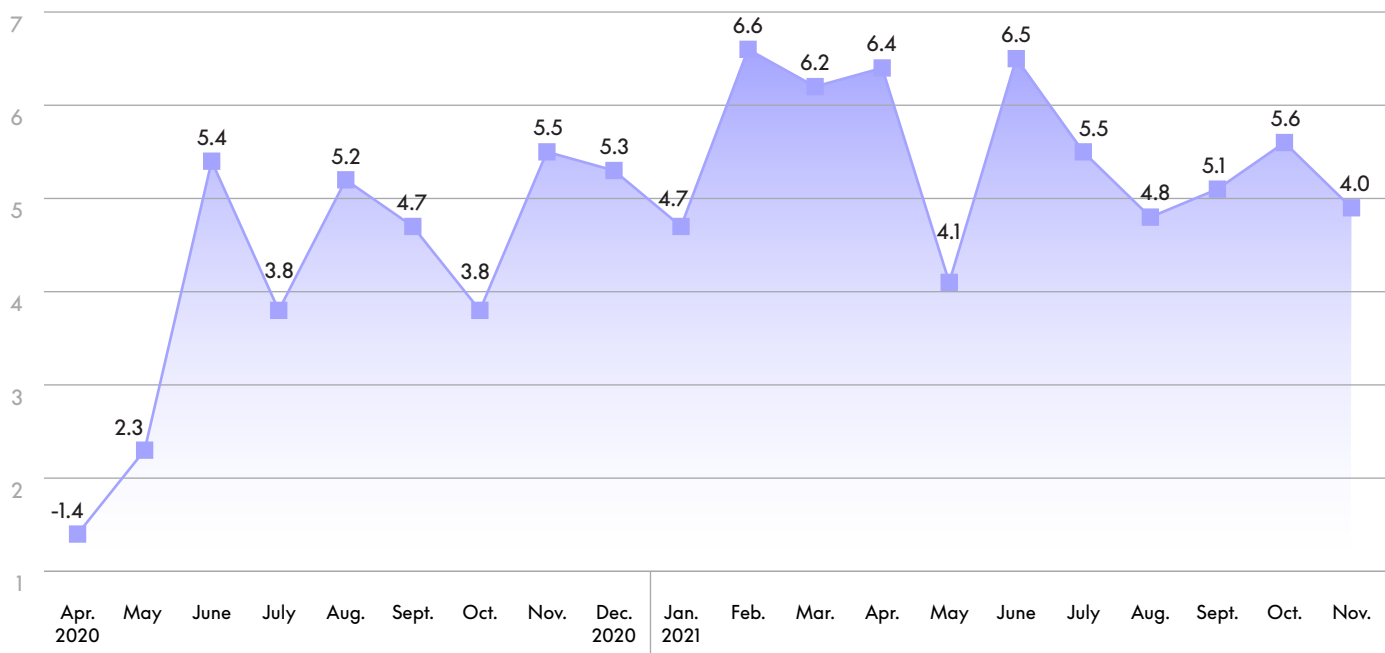
From the launch of the MHI in April 2020 to February 2021, the general psychological health of Britons declined to a low of 6.3 points below the pre-2020 benchmark. Since March 2021, scores have increased, reaching -2.9 in August. After six months of improvement, the psychological health of Britons fell nearly 1 point to -3.7 in October. In November, the psychological health score continues to decline to -4.0 points below the pre-2020 benchmark.



Financial risk

The financial risk sub-score measures the level of individuals' emergency savings.

The financial risk score of Britons remains the strongest of all sub-scores. Since the launch of the Index in April 2020, the financial risk sub-score has been above the pre-2020 benchmark. Following two consecutive months of declines in July and August, the financial risk score recovered in October to 5.6 points however, a significant 1.6-point decline is seen in November, dropping the score to 4.0.



Demographics

- Since the launch of the MHI, women have had significantly lower mental health scores than men. In November 2021, the mental health score of women is -13.4 compared to -9.0 for men.
- In each of the past 20 months, mental health scores improve with age.
- Differences in mental health scores between those with and without children have been reported since the launch of the Index in April 2020. Nearly two years later, this pattern continues with a lower score for those with at least one child (-14.2) compared to those without children (-9.4).

Employment

- Overall, three per cent of respondents are unemployed³ and seven per cent report reduced hours or reduced salary.
- Individuals reporting reduced salary compared to the prior month have the lowest mental health score (-22.0), followed by those reporting fewer hours (-20.2), and those not currently employed (-13.6).
- Managers have a slightly lower mental health score (-11.1) than non-managers (-10.9).
- Sole proprietors/self-employed have the highest mental health score (-8.4).
- Respondents working for companies with 51-100 employees have the lowest mental health score (-17.0).

Emergency savings

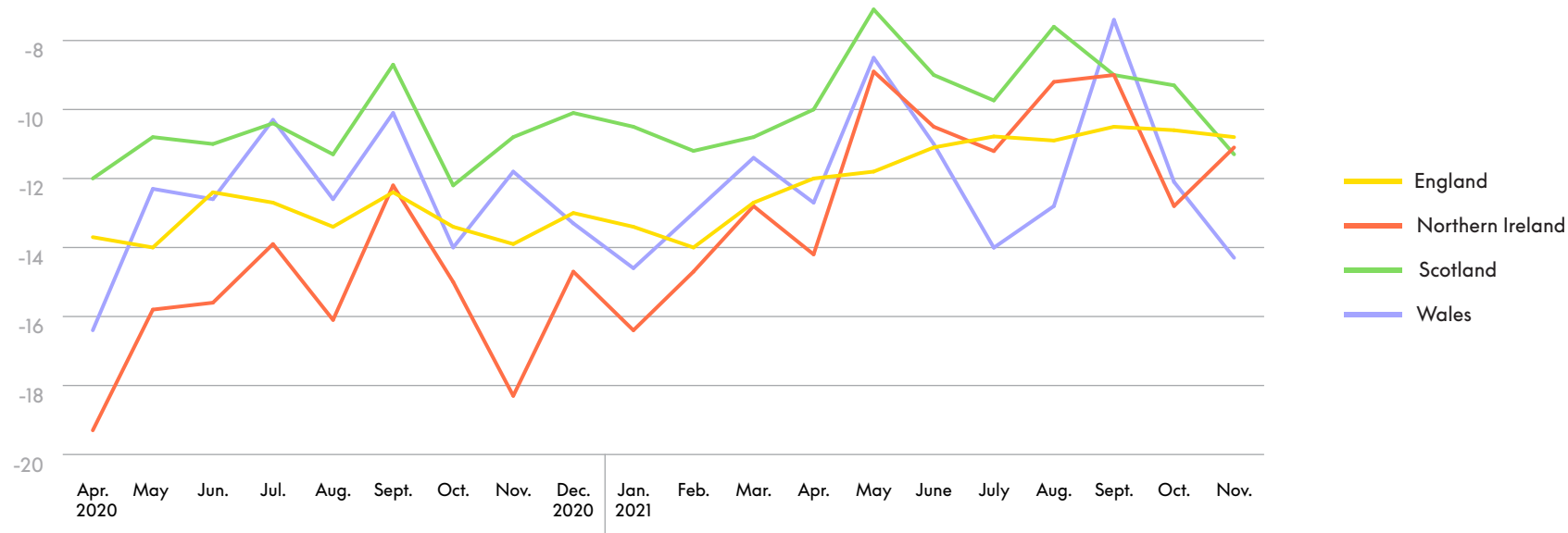
- Those without emergency savings continue to experience a lower mental health score (-26.9) than the overall group (-11.0). Individuals with emergency savings have a mental health score of -5.0.

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

Mental Health Index™ (regional)

Since April 2020, regional mental health scores have fluctuated. In October 2021, the mental health scores in all regions declined compared to the prior month.

- With a significant 1.7-point increase, Northern Ireland is the only region with an improvement of mental health scores in November (-11.1).
- With two months of declines, Wales continues to have the lowest mental health score (-14.3).
- The highest mental health score is in England (-10.8), despite a modest 0.2-point decline from October.



Employment status	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Employed (no change in hours/salary)	-10.2	-9.9
Employed (fewer hours compared to last month)	-20.2	-19.3
Employed (reduced salary compared to last month)	-22.0	-24.2
Not currently employed	-13.6	-8.2
Age group	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Age 20-29	-19.0	-18.6
Age 30-39	-18.0	-17.0
Age 40-49	-13.2	-12.6
Age 50-59	-8.1	-7.8
Age 60-69	-4.9	-4.2
Number of children	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
No children in household	-9.4	-8.6
1 child	-14.4	-13.2
2 children	-14.5	-15.7
3 children or more	-12.1	-15.2

Region	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
England	-10.8	-10.6
Northern Ireland	-11.1	-12.8
Scotland	-11.3	-9.3
Wales	-14.3	-12.1
Gender	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Men	-9.0	-8.8
Women	-13.4	-12.8
Household income	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Household Income <£15K/annum	-18.2	-18.0
£15K to <£30K/annum	-17.6	-15.2
£30k to <£60K	-9.3	-10.0
£60k to <£100K	-6.2	-6.4
£100K and over	-1.5	-1.4

Employer size	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Self-employed/sole proprietor	-8.4	-8.2
2-50 employees	-9.7	-9.3
51-100 employees	-17.0	-15.0
101-500 employees	-12.3	-10.5
501-1,000 employees	-13.3	-12.9
1,001-5,000 employees	-10.1	-11.5
5,001-10,000 employees	-8.9	-9.7
More than 10,000 employees	-9.4	-9.5
Manager	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Manager	-11.1	-10.1
Non-manager	-10.9	-11.1

Numbers highlighted in **orange** are the most negative scores in the group.

Numbers highlighted in **green** are the least negative scores in the group.

Available upon request:

Specific cross-correlational and custom analyses

Mental Health Index™ (industry)

Respondents working in Food Services have the lowest mental health score (-19.0). This score is notably lower than the next lowest scores: individuals employed in Information and Cultural Industries (-16.3) and Administrative and Support Services (-15.8).

Individuals employed in Real Estate, Rental and Leasing (-1.6), Professional Scientific, and Technical Services (-7.2), and Manufacturing (-8.0) have the highest mental health scores this month.

Individuals employed in Health Care and Social Assistance, Arts, Entertainment and Recreation, and Wholesale Trade have seen the greatest improvement in mental health since last month.

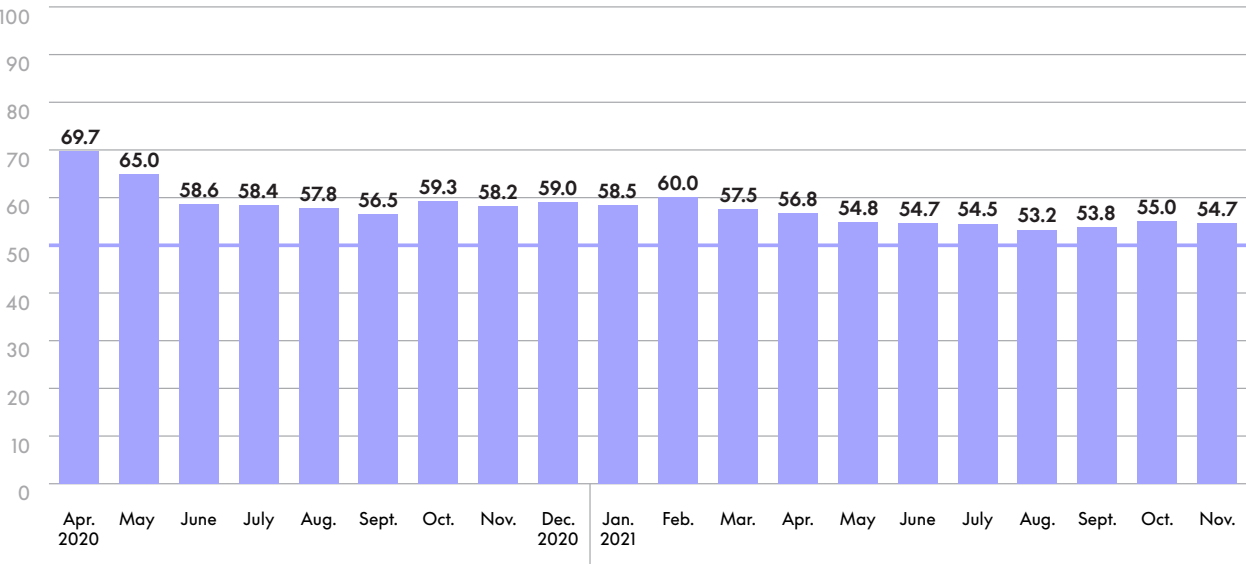
Changes from the prior month are shown in the table.

Industry	November 2021	October 2021	Change
Health Care and Social Assistance	-11.2	-13.4	2.2
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	-13.2	-14.7	1.5
Wholesale Trade	-12.6	-13.9	1.3
Transportation and Warehousing	-11.2	-12.3	1.2
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	-7.2	-8.3	1.1
Other	-10.1	-10.8	0.7
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	-1.6	-1.8	0.1
Finance and Insurance	-8.6	-8.5	-0.1
Other services (except Public Administration)	-8.1	-7.5	-0.7
Retail Trade	-13.4	-12.5	-0.9
Educational Services	-10.4	-8.8	-1.7
Food Services	-19.0	-17.3	-1.7
Information and Cultural Industries	-16.3	-14.5	-1.8
Manufacturing	-8.0	-6.1	-1.8
Public Administration	-9.8	-7.6	-2.2
Administrative and Support services	-15.8	-13.1	-2.7
Construction	-13.9	-10.5	-3.3

The Mental Stress Change score

The Mental Stress Change score (MStressChg) is a measure of the level of reported mental stress compared to the prior month. **The Mental Stress Change score for November 2021 is 54.7.** This reflects a net increase in mental stress compared to the prior month.

The current score indicates that 17 per cent of the population is experiencing more mental stress compared to the prior month, with seven per cent experiencing less. A continued increase in mental stress since April 2020 indicates a significant accumulation of strain in the British population.



▲ More mental stress
50 = No change from prior month
▼ Less mental stress

MStressChg
Current Month—
November 2021

54.7

MStressChg
October 2021

55.0

Mental Stress Change (percentages)

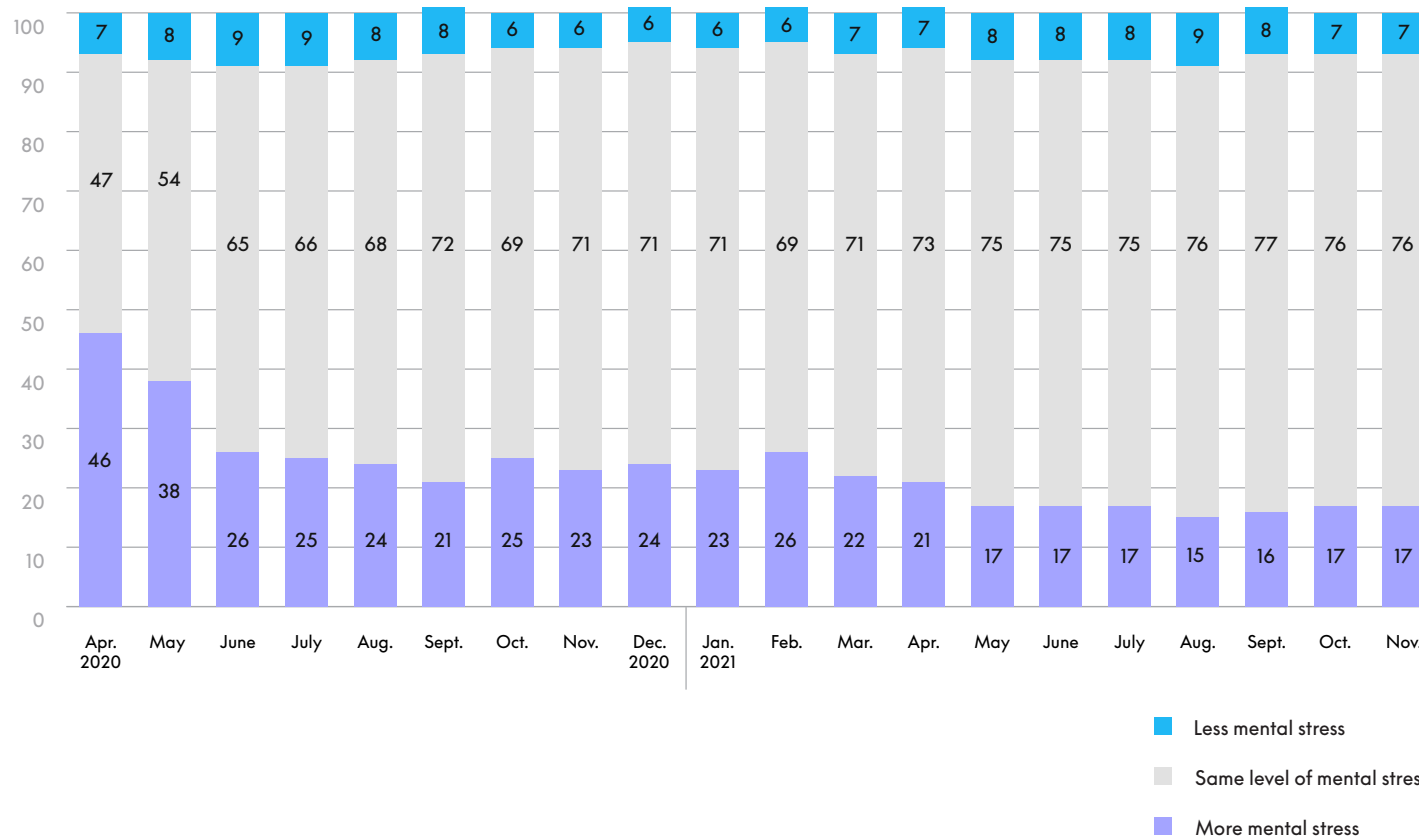
Mental Stress Change tracks stress changes each month.

The percentages of those experiencing more stress, the same level of stress, and less stress for each month of the survey are shown in the graph.

For more than one year, the percentage of those experiencing more mental stress than the previous month has steadily decreased; however, the data showing this decline is too insignificant to lower the overall Mental Stress Change score to below 50 (the level at which stress is lower than the previous month). As the proportion of individuals reporting the same level of stress or more stress than the previous month continues to outweigh the proportion reporting less mental stress, the population will continue to feel the effects of significantly increased stress and will not be able to reach a more sustainable and healthy level of stress.

In April 2020, 46 per cent of individuals reported an increase in mental stress. The number of respondents reporting increased month-over-month mental stress is 17 per cent in November 2021, while 76 per cent of respondents report the same level of mental stress and seven per cent report a decrease in mental stress.

Mental Stress Change by month



Demographics

- Since the launch of the MHI in April 2020, younger people have experienced a greater increase in mental stress month over month compared to older respondents.
- Since April 2020, women have had larger increases in mental stress compared to men. In November 2021, the mental stress change score for women is 55.7 compared to 53.9 for men.

Geography

- The greatest increase in month-over-month stress is for respondents living in Northern Ireland (60.5), followed by Scotland (56.1), England (54.6), and Wales (51.6).

Employment

- The greatest increase in mental stress is seen in employed people with reduced hours (59.6), followed by employed people with no change to salary or hours (54.6), and unemployed people (51.8).
- Managers have a greater increase in mental stress (56.2) than non-managers (53.8).

Employment status	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Employed (no change in hours/salary)	54.6	54.6
Employed (fewer hours compared to last month)	59.6	59.6
Employed (reduced salary compared to last month)	50.0	53.7
Not currently employed	51.8	55.6
Age group	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Age 20-29	58.4	55.4
Age 30-39	58.5	58.5
Age 40-49	55.3	55.9
Age 50-59	52.6	53.4
Age 60-69	53.3	53.2
Number of children	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
No children in household	53.2	53.2
1 child	58.2	57.3
2 children	57.4	59.5
3 children or more	57.0	57.7

Region	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
England	54.6	54.9
Northern Ireland	60.5	50.9
Scotland	56.1	54.6
Wales	51.6	58.4
Gender	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Men	53.9	54.2
Women	55.7	55.8
Household income	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Household Income <£15K/annum	54.7	57.4
£15K to <£30K/annum	57.3	56.1
£30k to <£60K	54.2	55.9
£60k to <£100K	54.6	52.4
£100K and over	50.4	52.6

Employer size	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Self-employed/sole proprietor	54.2	52.6
2-50 employees	54.5	53.9
51-100 employees	57.6	55.8
101-500 employees	55.2	56.9
501-1,000 employees	53.7	54.1
1,001-5,000 employees	56.0	56.2
5,001-10,000 employees	55.2	56.9
More than 10,000 employees	52.5	53.6
Manager	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Manager	56.2	56.4
Non-manager	53.8	54.0

Numbers highlighted in **orange** are the most negative scores in the group.

Numbers highlighted in **green** are the least negative scores in the group.

Available upon request:

Specific cross-correlational and custom analyses

The Mental Stress Change (industry)

In November 2021, individuals employed in Real Estate, Rental and Leasing (46.3) report less mental stress than the prior month. A score of 50 means that the proportion of the population experiencing more stress is balanced by the proportion experiencing less stress. A score below 50 indicates that the group is experiencing less stress than the prior month.

Individuals employed in Food Services and Wholesale Trade have the most significant increase in mental stress (58.0) followed by those employed in Health Care and Social Assistance (57.7).

Mental Stress changes from the last two months are shown in the table.

Industry	November 2021	October 2021
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	46.3	50.0
Other	49.7	55.8
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	52.0	54.4
Retail Trade	52.6	53.2
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	53.5	55.8
Manufacturing	54.3	51.0
Public Administration	54.3	55.9
Other services (except Public Administration)	54.5	54.9
Administrative and Support services	54.7	52.0
Finance and Insurance	55.2	53.5
Transportation and Warehousing	55.7	54.4
Information and Cultural Industries	55.8	60.4
Educational Services	56.4	55.2
Construction	56.9	52.1
Health Care and Social Assistance	57.7	59.8
Wholesale Trade	58.0	54.5
Food Services	58.0	54.5

Spotlight

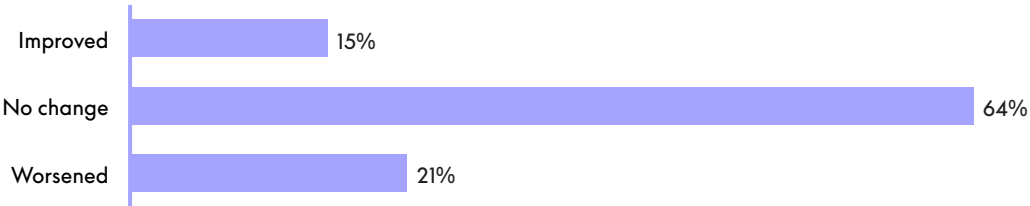
Pandemic effect on working and personal life

Impact on working life

Respondents were asked how they would describe their working life now compared to before the pandemic.

- Nearly two-thirds (64 per cent) report no change in their working life compared to before the pandemic and this group has the most favourable mental health score (-6.8).
- More than one-in-five (21 per cent) indicate that their working life has worsened compared to before the pandemic and this group has the least favourable mental health score (-22.6), more than 11 points below the overall UK average (-11.0).

How has your work life changed compared to **before the pandemic**?

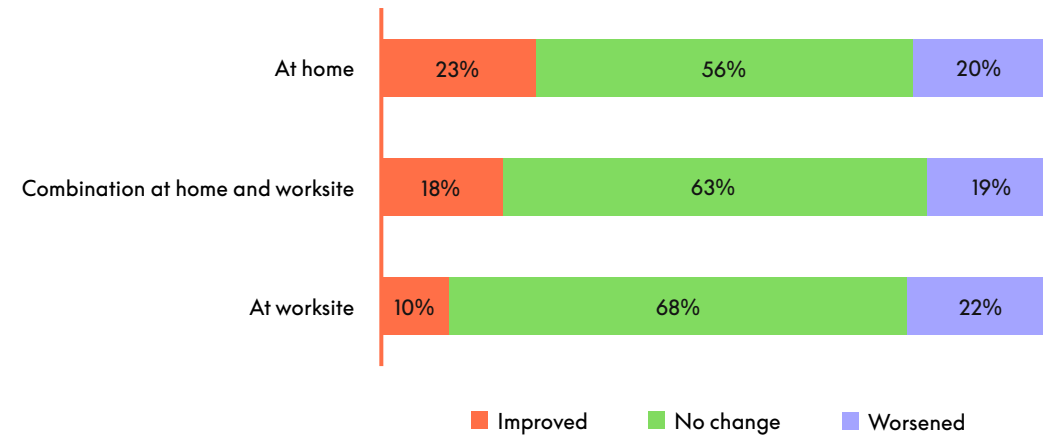


MHI score by how your working life has changed compared to before the pandemic



- Individuals working from home are more than twice as likely as individuals working at the worksite to report an improvement in their working lives compared to before the pandemic.
- Individuals splitting their time between home and the worksite are nearly twice as likely to report an improvement in their working lives than individuals working exclusively at the worksite.
- Individuals reporting reduced salary or who are working fewer hours are more than twice as likely than individuals with no change to hours or salary to report that their working life has worsened compared to before the pandemic.

Change in working life compared to before the pandemic (work location)



Impact on personal life

In November 2021, respondents were asked how they would describe their personal life now compared to before the pandemic.

- More than two-thirds (70 per cent) report no change in their personal life when compared to before the pandemic and this group has the second most favourable mental health score (-7.7), second only to 11 per cent reporting that their personal life has improved (-7.6).
- Nearly one in five (19 per cent) indicate that their personal life has worsened compared to before the pandemic and this group has the least favourable mental health score (-25.0), 14 points below the overall UK average (-11.0).
- Individuals reporting working fewer hours or with reduced salary are twice as likely as individuals with no change to hours or salary to report that their personal life has worsened compared to before the pandemic.
- Respondents under 40 are twice as likely as respondents over 50 to report an improvement in their personal lives compared to before the pandemic.

How has your personal life changed compared to **before the pandemic**?



MHI score by how your personal life has changed compared to before the pandemic

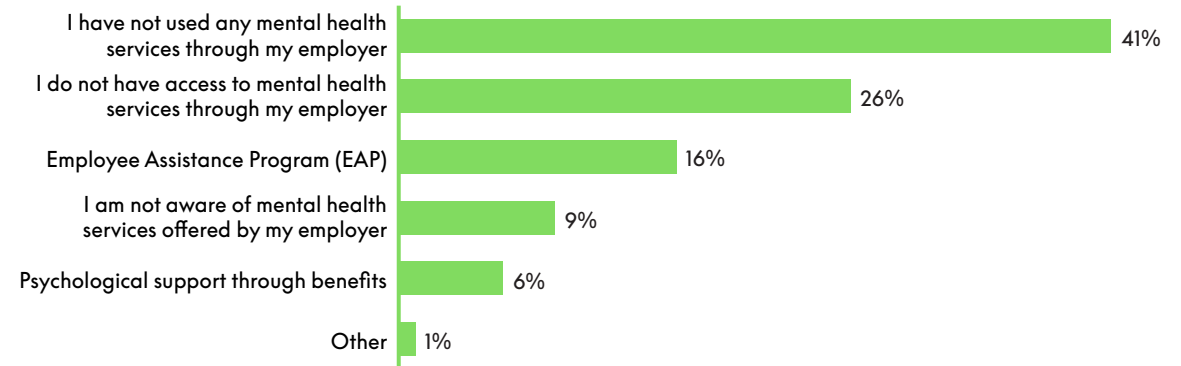


Use of employer-funded mental health services

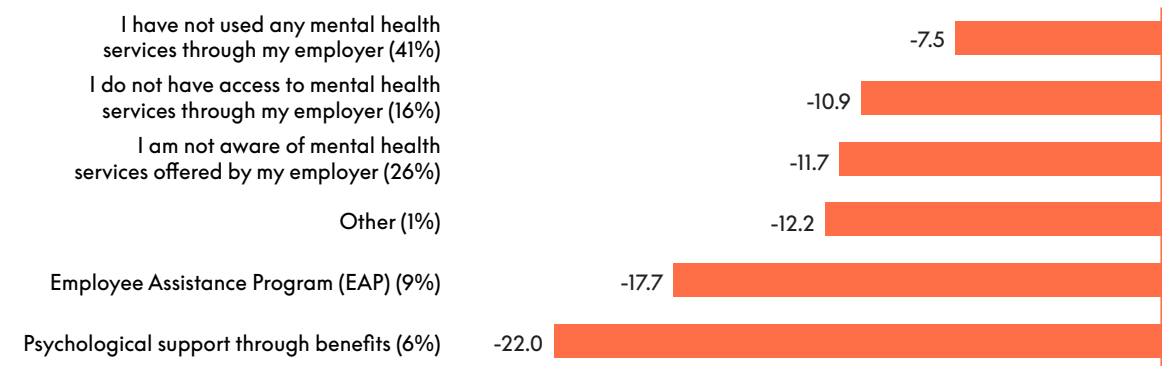
Respondents were asked whether they have used any employer-funded mental health services.

- Forty-one per cent report not using any mental health services through their employer and this group has the most favourable mental health score (-7.5).
- Six per cent report using psychological support through benefits and this group has the least favourable mental health score (-22.0).
- Parents are nearly twice as likely as non-parents to use an Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- Managers are twice as likely as non-managers to use psychological support through their benefits plan as well as twice as likely to reporting using an Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

Use of employer-funded mental health services



MHI score by use of employer-funded mental health services

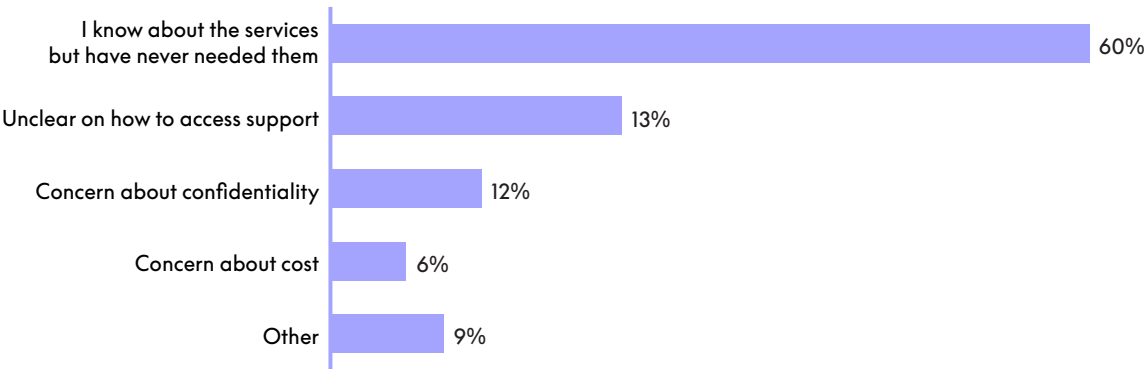


Reasons for not utilizing employer-funded mental health services

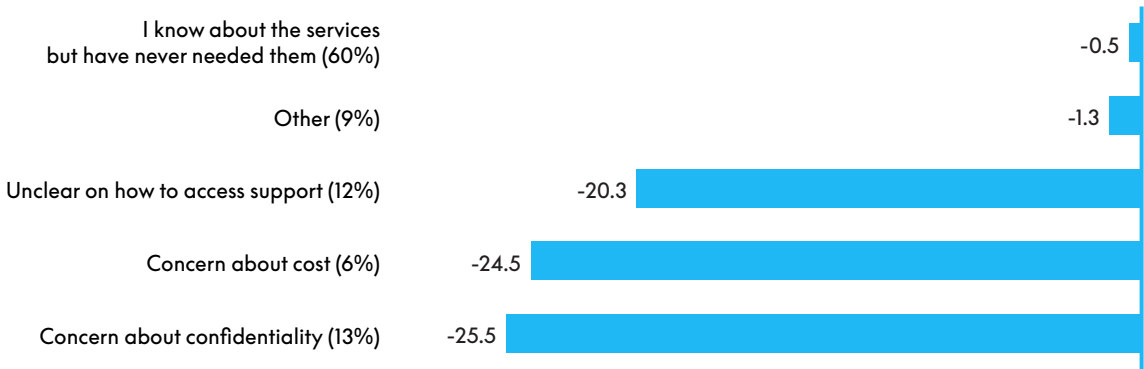
Respondents who have not used mental health services through their employer were asked why they have not used services.

- Nearly two-thirds (60 per cent) report that they are aware of the services, but have never needed them, and this group has the most favourable mental health score (-0.5).
- Thirteen per cent indicate that they have concerns about confidentiality, and a further 12 per cent report that they are unclear on how to access support as reasons for not using mental health services through their employer.

Reason for not using employer-funded mental health services



MHI score by reason for not using employer-funded mental health services



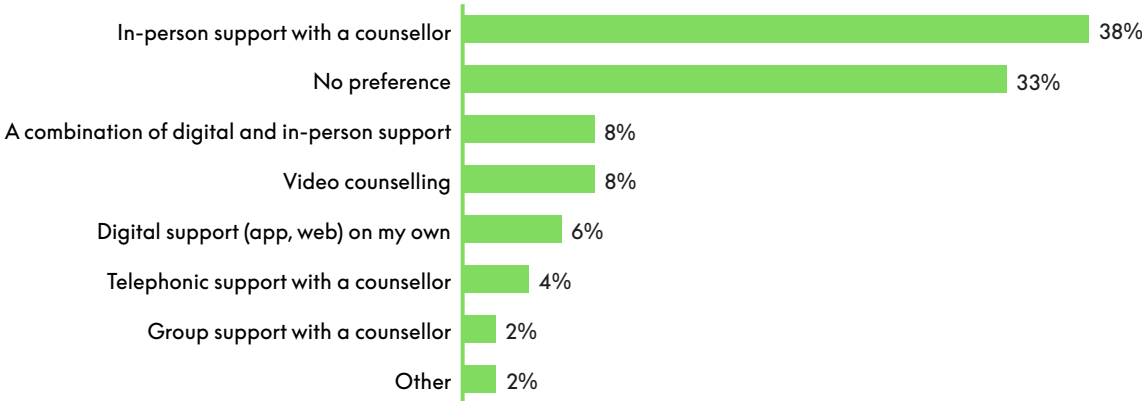
Mental health support

Modality

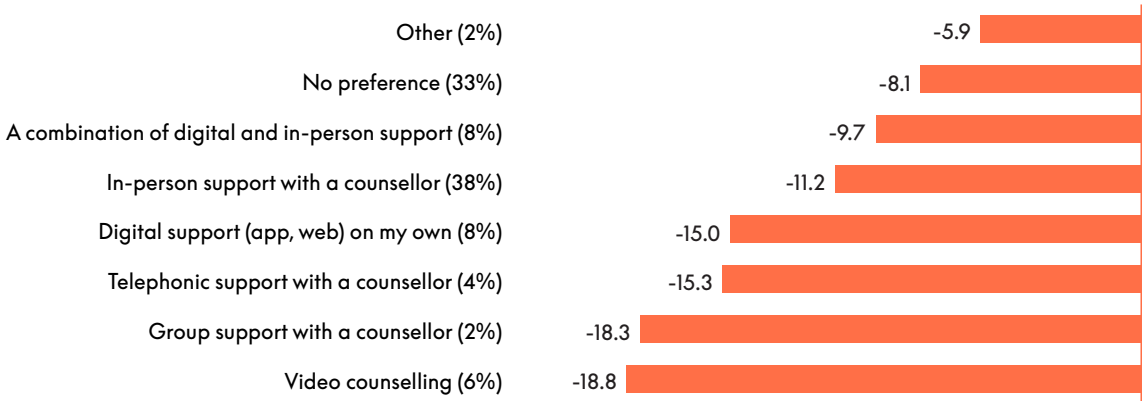
Respondents were asked about their preferred modality of mental wellbeing support.

- More than one-third (38 per cent) report in-person support with a counsellor as their preferred modality for support.
- One-third (33 per cent) report having no preference.
- Parents are more than twice as likely as non-parents to select video counselling as their preferred modality for support.

Preferred modality for support



MHI score by preferred modality for support

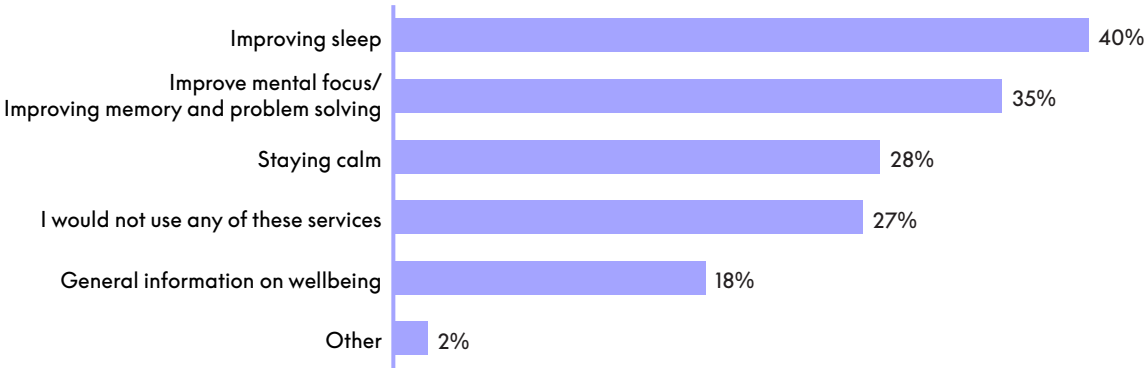


Most valued areas of mental wellbeing support

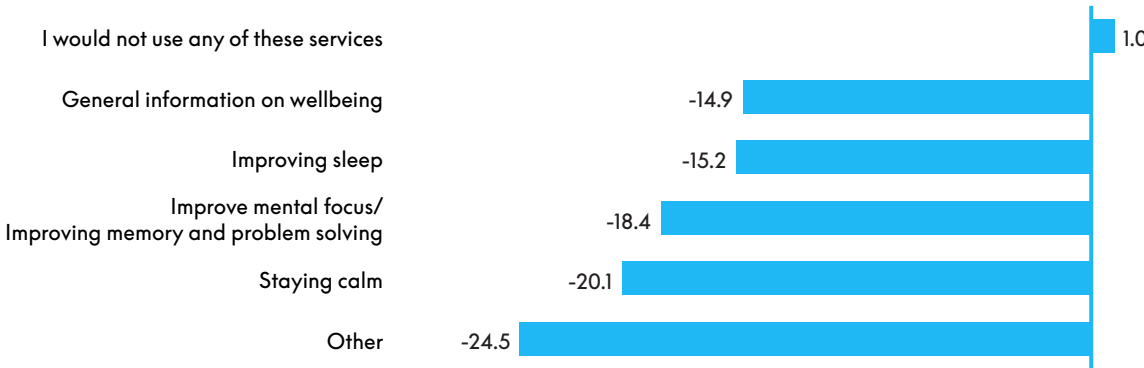
Respondents were asked about the areas that they would value mental wellbeing support.

- Forty per cent report that improving sleep is the most valued area of mental wellbeing.
- Individuals under 40 are nearly twice as likely as individuals 50 and over to indicate that support for staying calm is their most valued area.

Mental wellbeing areas where support is most valued



MHI score by mental wellbeing areas where support is most valued



Overview of the Mental Health Index by LifeWorks™

The mental health and wellbeing 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 each geography compared to benchmarks collected in 2017, 2018 and 2019. The 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 three parts:

1. The overall Mental Health Index™ (MHI), which is a measure of change compared to the benchmark of mental health and risk.
2. A Mental Stress Change (MStressChg) score, which measures the level of reported mental stress compared to the prior month.
3. 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 prior six months. Participants are selected to be representative of the age, gender, industry, and geographic distribution in the United Kingdom.

The same respondents take part each month to remove a sampling bias. Respondents are asked to consider the prior two weeks when answering each question. The Mental Health Index™ has been published monthly since April 2020. Benchmark data was collected in 2017, 2018 and 2019. Data for the current report was collected between November 9 and 22, 2021.

Calculations

To create the Mental Health Index™, the first step leverages a response scoring system turning individual responses to each question into a point value. Higher point values are associated with better mental health and less mental health risk. Everyone's scores are added and then divided by a 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 comprises data from 2017, 2018 and 2019. This was a period of relative social stability and steady economic growth. **The change compared 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 (percentage reporting less mental stress + percentage reporting the same level of mental stress * 0.5) * -1 + 100. The score reflects a comparison of 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.

Additional data and analyses

Demographic breakdown 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@lifeworks.com



About LifeWorks

LifeWorks is a world leader in providing digital and in-person solutions that support the total wellbeing of individuals. We deliver a personalized continuum of care that helps our clients improve the lives of their people and by doing so, improve their business.

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