



NSW Mentally Healthy Workplaces

WORKER MENTAL HEALTH

DURING COVID-19



December 2020

mentalhealthatwork.nsw.gov.au

Mentally Healthy Workplaces in NSW

worker mental health during COVID-19



instinct and reason



Prepared for: SafeWork NSW (SWNSW 672095)

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Reference: J2974

December 2020

project overview

Objectives

SafeWork NSW's vision is to ensure NSW workplaces take effective action to create mentally healthy workplaces to enable "healthy, safe and productive working lives". By 2022, the aim is to have more than 90,000 NSW businesses taking effective action, with the target of a 30% reduction in serious workplace illness and injuries.

The re-execution of the mentally healthy workplaces survey for the 2020 mid-term evaluation provided an opportunity to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health in the workplace in NSW.

Both the employer and worker BMT surveys included additional questions that focused on understanding worker mental health experiences in the last 12 months, the contribution of COVID-19 to mental health in the last 12 months, support and improvements for those feeling unwell provided by the workplace, and the impact of being required to work from home or being required to remain working from the workplace.

Method

The employer and worker BMT surveys were administered online through research only panels.

Timing of fieldwork: 36 days in field



Length of survey:

Employer survey: **14 mins 20 secs**

Worker survey: **13 mins 57 secs**

Sample

**NSW
employers**



**NSW
workers**

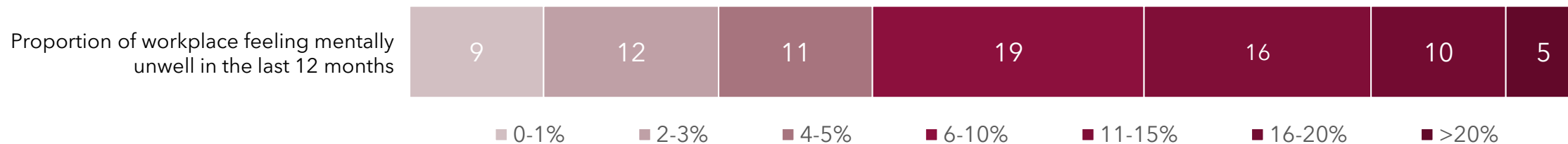


The results presented in the rest of the report are weighted to the population based on ABS data by ward area, age and gender (the sample profiles and footnotes provide the unweighted responses). All tests for statistical significance have been undertaken at the 95 per cent level of confidence. A red circle or green square around a value denotes that the result is significantly lower or greater (respectively) than that of the total sample for that question.



workplace mental health in the last 12 months

Employers (%)



Supervisors (%)



Workers (%)



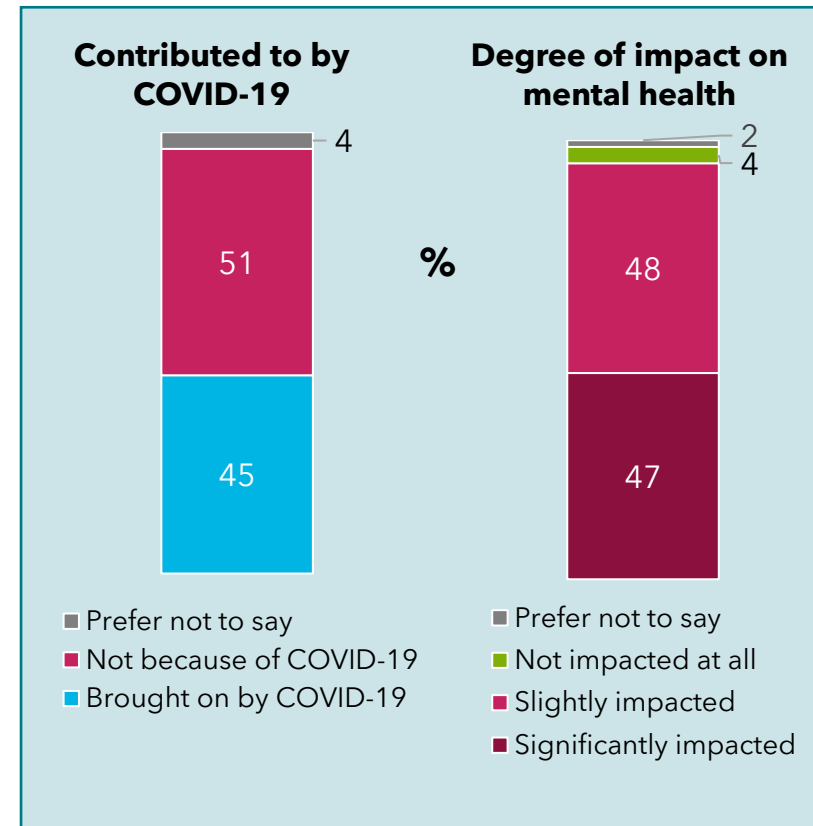
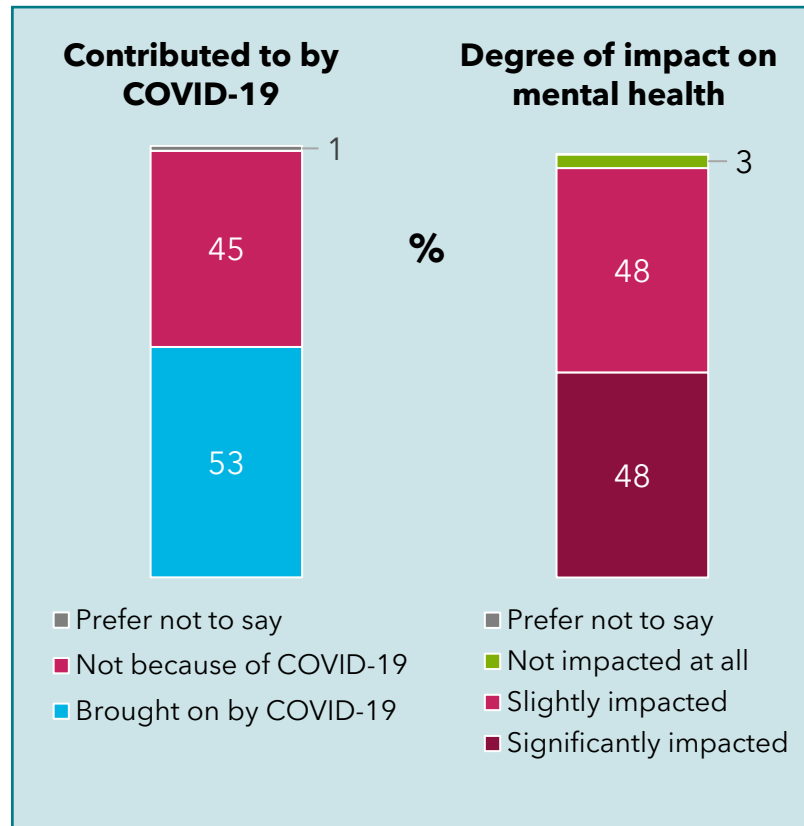
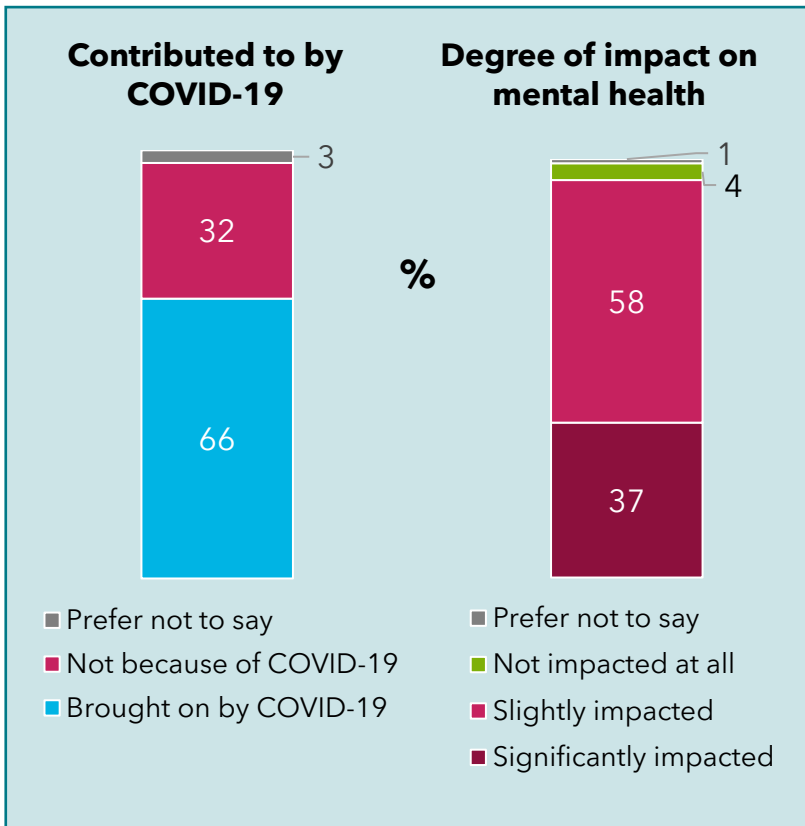


contribution of COVID-19 to mental health in the last 12 months

Employers

Supervisors

Workers



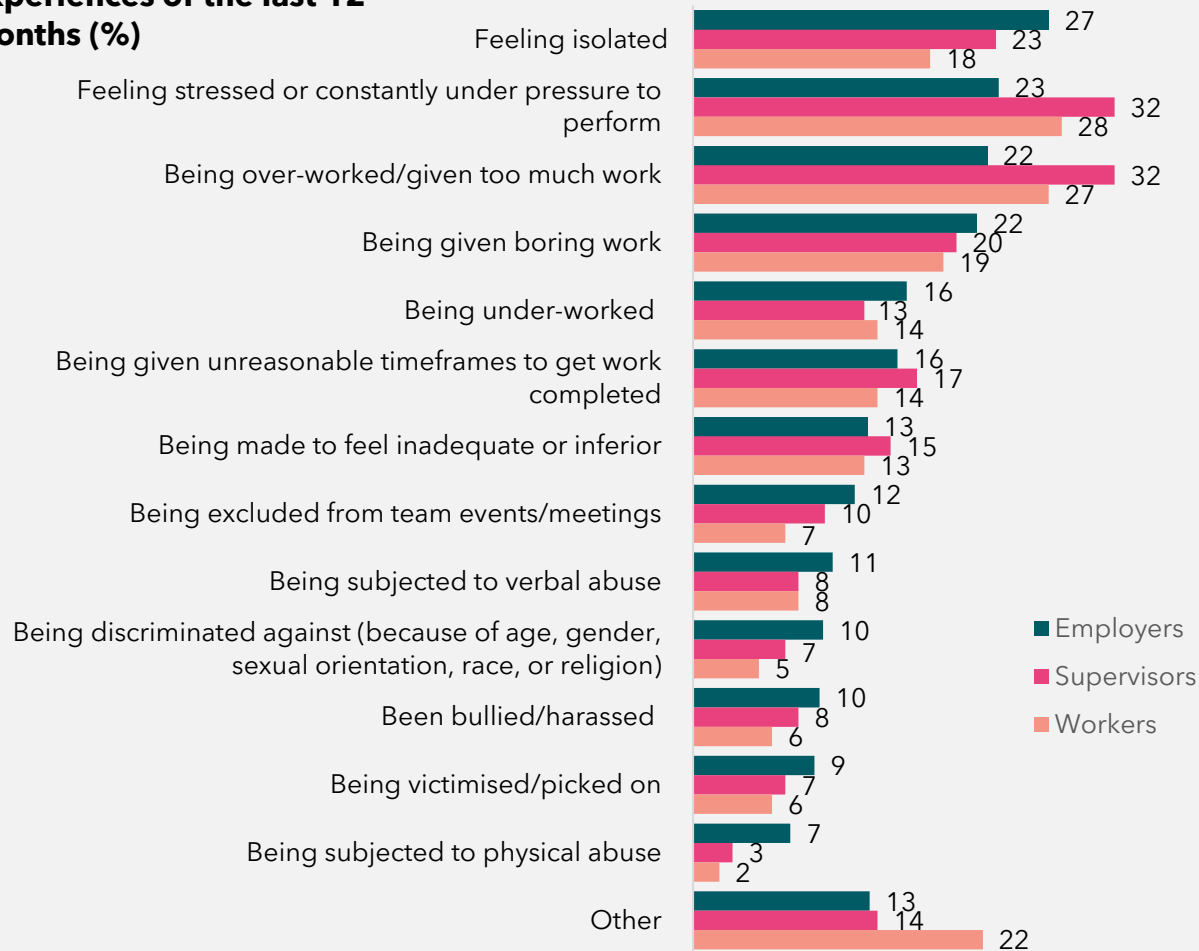
QF1a. [single response] Was this brought on by the COVID-19 experience? Base: NSW employers (senior management/HR roles) stating % workforce mentally unwell in the last 12 months n=3,314; NSW supervisors who responded mentally unwell in the last 12 months n=1,065; NSW workers who responded mentally unwell in the last 12 months n=1,696

QF1b. [single response] To what degree has COVID-19 impacted workers' mental health and wellbeing? Base: NSW employers (senior management/HR roles) stating worker mental health impacted by COVID-19 n=2,311; NSW supervisors who stated mental health impacted by COVID-19 n=607; NSW workers who stated mental health impacted by COVID-19 n=731

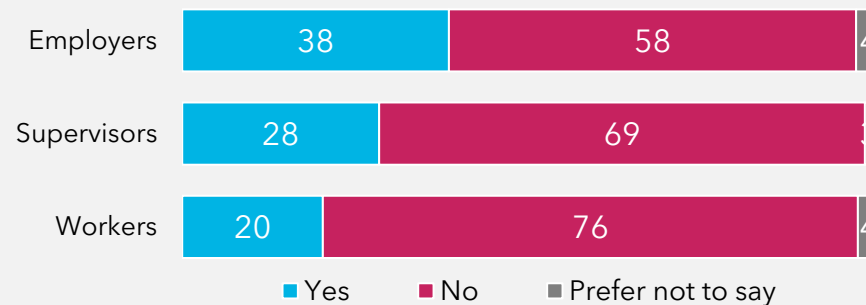


mental health experience of workers in the last 12 months

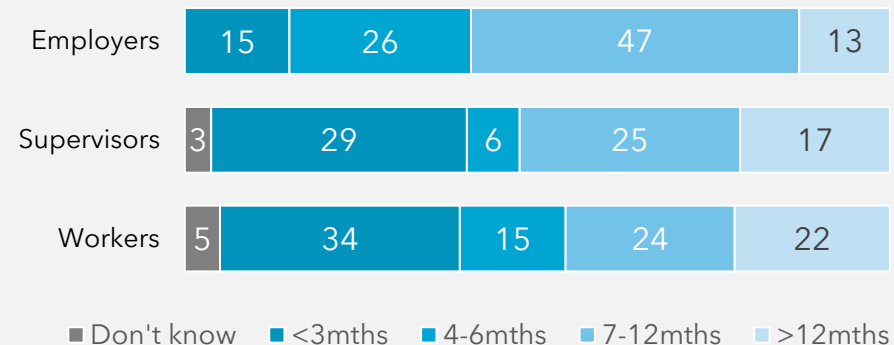
Experiences of the last 12 months (%)



Worker time off work due to feeling mentally unwell (%)



Length of time off work due to feeling mentally unwell (%)



QF4. [multiple response] To the best of your knowledge, please indicate which of the following experiences, if any, you/your workers have experienced at work in the last 12 months? Base: NSW employers (senior management/HR roles) n=3,731; NSW supervisors n=2,737; NSW supervisors n=2,737; NSW workers n=5,267

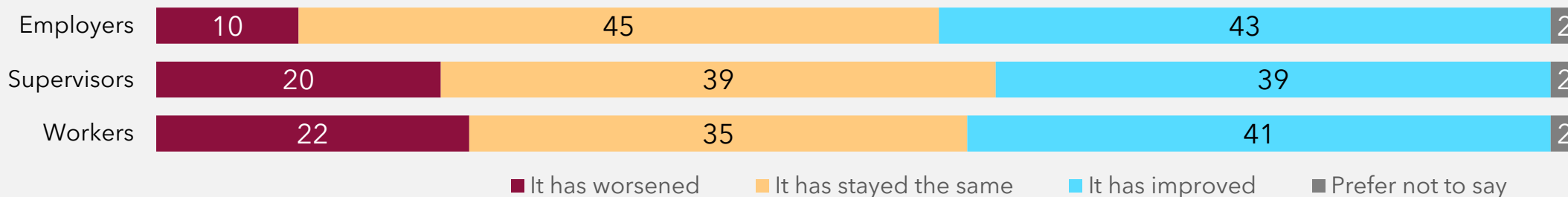
QF5a. [single response] Have workers had to take time off work due to feeling mentally unwell in the workplace? Base: NSW employers (senior management/HR roles) n=4,002; NSW supervisors n=2,737; NSW workers n=5,268

QF5b. [single response] How long ago was that? Base: NSW employers (senior management/HR roles) stating workers had time off work due to mental health n=2,085; NSW supervisors stating they had time off work due to mental health n=796; NSW workers stating they had time off work due to mental health n=1,281

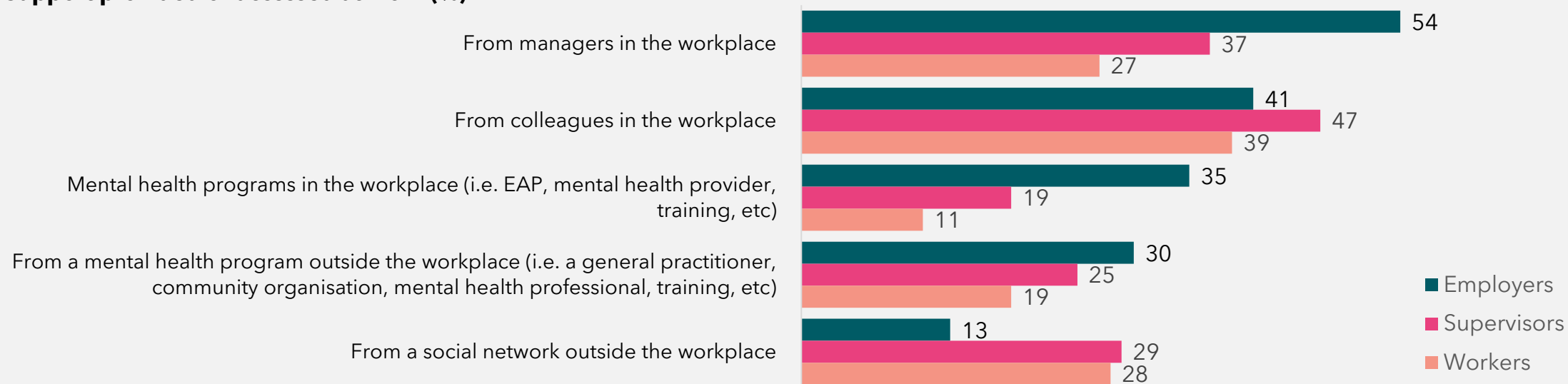


support and improvements for those feeling unwell

Change in worker mental health since feeling mentally unwell (%)



Support provided or accessed at work (%)



QF3. [single response] What change, if any, has there been in your/your workers' mental health since you/they felt mentally unwell? Base: NSW employers (senior management/HR roles) stating % workforce mentally unwell in the last 12 months n=3,314; NSW supervisors stating mentally unwell in the last 12 months n=1,065; NSW workers stating mentally unwell in the last 12 months n=1,696

QF3a. [multiple response] What support, if any, has been provided or accessed by you/workers since they felt mentally unwell? Base: NSW employers (senior management/HR roles) stating workforce mental health improved OR workplace has a positive impact on mental health n=2,778; NSW supervisors stating workforce mental health improved OR workplace has a positive impact on mental health n=1,548; NSW workers stating workforce mental health improved OR workplace has a positive impact on mental health n=2,649



how many worked from home during COVID-19?

%

Employers



64% of employers worked from home sometimes prior to COVID-19



74% worked from home during COVID-19 ↑

Supervisors



39% of supervisors worked from home sometimes prior to COVID-19



60% worked from home during COVID-19 ↑

Workers



28% of workers worked from home sometimes prior to COVID-19



43% worked from home during COVID-19 ↑

■ Never ■ 1 day ■ 2 days ■ 3 days ■ 4 days ■ 5 days ■ Don't know

QG1. During the COVID-19 period (March to now); about how many days a week, if any, have you generally worked from home? [S/R]

QG2. Irrespective of COVID-19, about how many days a week, if any, did you generally work from home? [S/R]

Base: NSW employers n= 4,002; NSW supervisors n=2,737; NSW workers n= 5,268



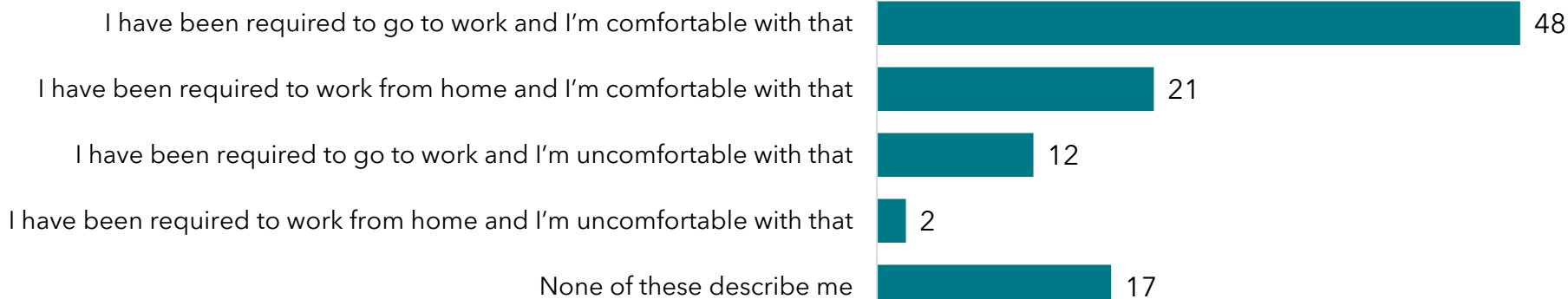
comfort with their working situation

%

Supervisors



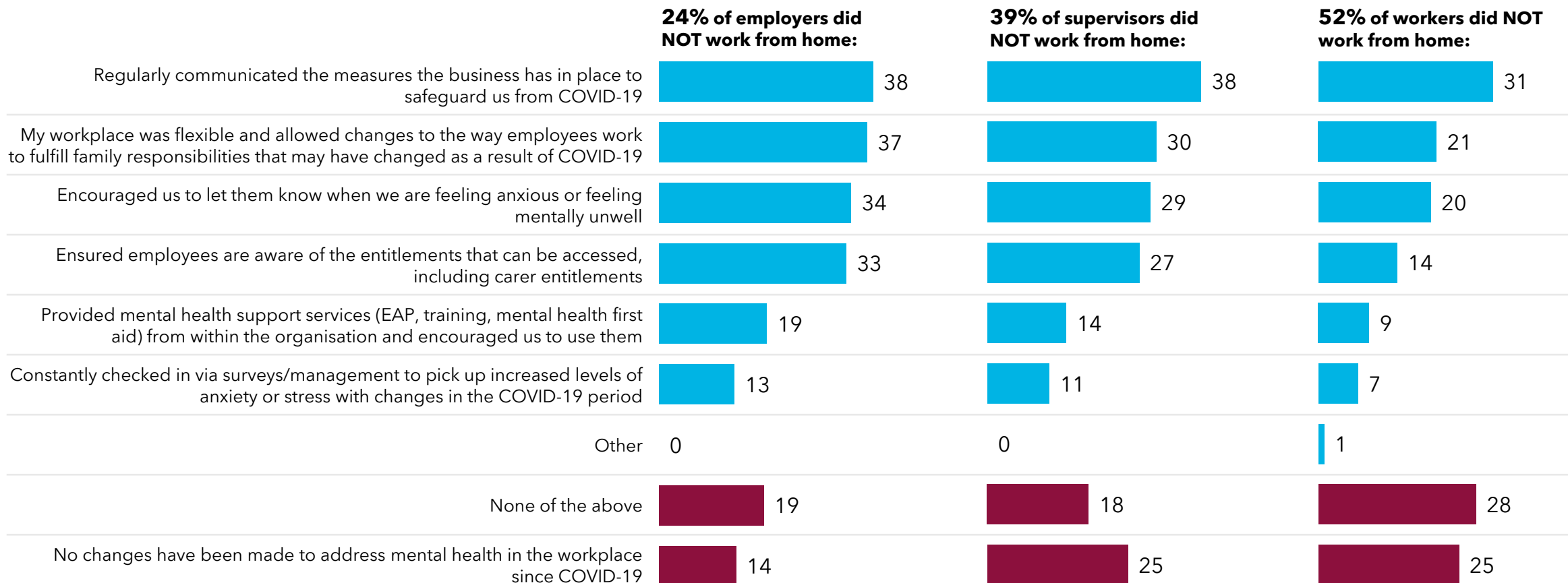
Workers





workplace support for mental health during COVID-19

%



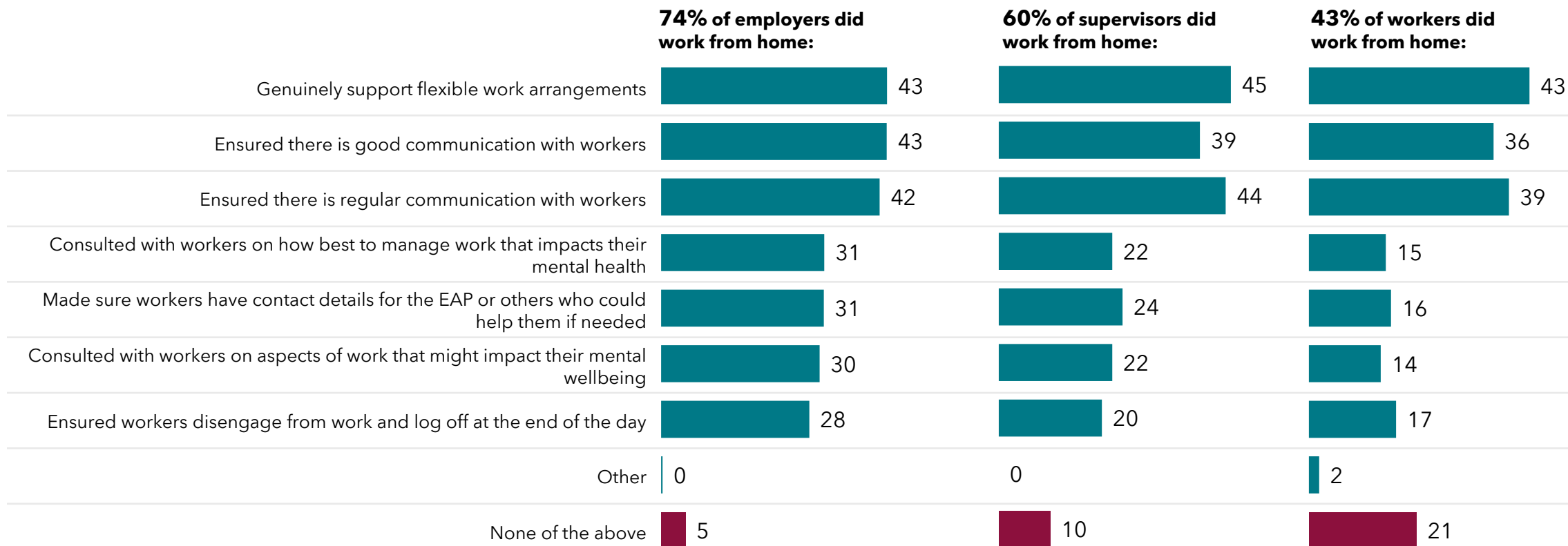
QG4. Which of the following, if any, has your workplace done to address mental health in general during the COVID-19 period? [M/R]

Base: NSW employers who never worked from home since COVID-19 started n=537; NSW supervisors who never worked from home since COVID-19 started n=904; NSW workers who never worked from home since COVID-19 started n=2,525



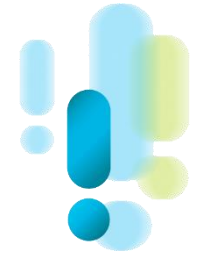
working from home support for mental health during COVID-19

%



QG5. Which of the following, if any, has your workplace undertaken in relation to working from home during COVID-19? [M/R]

Base: NSW employers who have worked from home since COVID-19 started n=3,400; NSW supervisors who have worked from home since COVID-19 started n=1,789; NSW workers who have worked from home since COVID-19 started n=2,537



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Information on the latest laws can be checked by visiting the NSW legislation website
www.legislation.nsw.gov.au

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