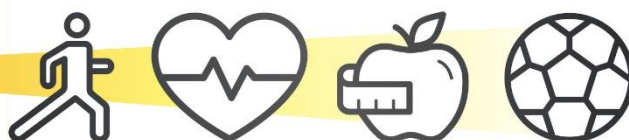
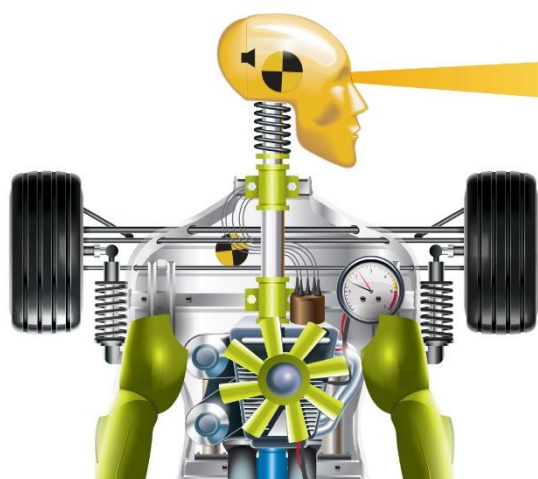


Male Health in the Workplace Survey Results

November 2019



MALE HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

An initiative of the Irish Men's Sheds Association

 **Iarnród Éireann**
Irish Rail

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 **ESB** Energy for generations

Men in the Workplace Survey - Results

The following results are from the *Men in the Workplace* Survey which was carried out to help inform the development of a dedicated workplace section of the Irish Men' Sheds Association Malehealth.ie website. The survey was completed by employees from Irish Rail (70.27%) and ESB – East Wall (29.73%), via Survey Monkey. All respondents were male.

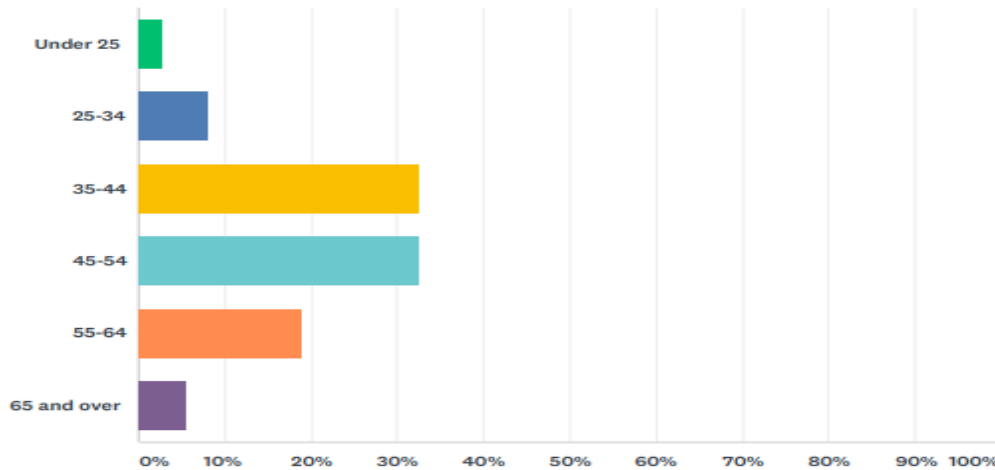


Figure 1: Age range of respondents

General Health

Respondents were asked to rate their general health from “Very good” to “Very Bad” (See Table 1).

Table 1: Health of respondents

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Very good	27.03%
Good	48.65%
Fair	21.62%
Bad	0.00%
Very bad	2.70%

Satisfaction Levels

Respondents were asked if their day-to-day activities were limited due to any health problems or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months. Responses varied from “Yes, limited a lot” (2.70%), “Yes, limited a little” (24.32%) and “No” (72.97%). Participants were asked to rate their satisfaction with life on a scale from 0-10. The average response was 6.5/10. Respondents were also asked to rate how worthwhile the things they do in life are. The average response was 7/10.

Belongingness within workplace

Respondents were asked if they felt like they belong to their workplace (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree) 16.67% said they “Strongly Agree”, 66.67% said they “Agree”, 11.11% said they “Disagree” and while 5.56% said they “Strongly disagree”.

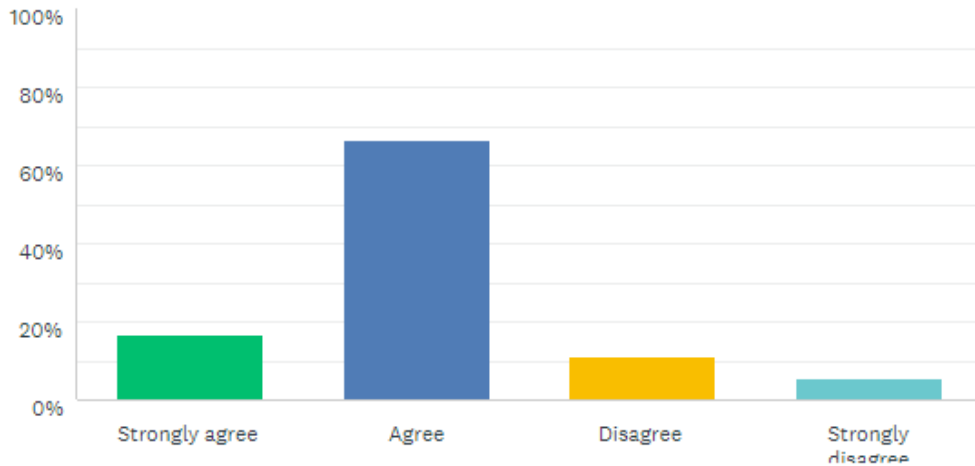


Figure 2: Belonging in the workplace

Support in the Workplace

Respondents were asked if they felt supported by the people in their workplace (See Table 2).

Table 2: Support in the workplace

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly agree	21.62%
Agree	67.57%
Disagree	8.11%
Strongly disagree	2.70%

Average working day

Respondents were asked how many hours, per day they spent in their workplace. The average number of hours spent by respondents was 8 hours (45.95%) (Figure 3).

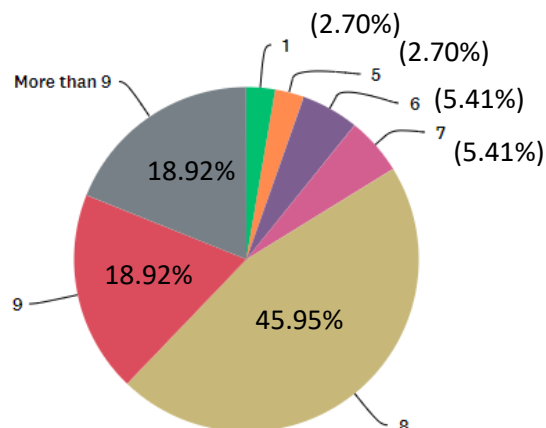


Figure 3: Hours spent in the workplace

Sedentary behaviour

Respondents were asked how many times a day, an average, their sedentary behaviour was disrupted by standing up, or walking (Table 3).

Table 3: Sedentary interruption

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
5 times or less	18.92%
6-10 times or less	27.03%
11-20 times	27.03%
More than 20 times	27.03%

Health Behaviours

Participants were asked, in the past week, on how many days they completed a total of 30 minutes or more moderate to intense physical activity (Figure 4).

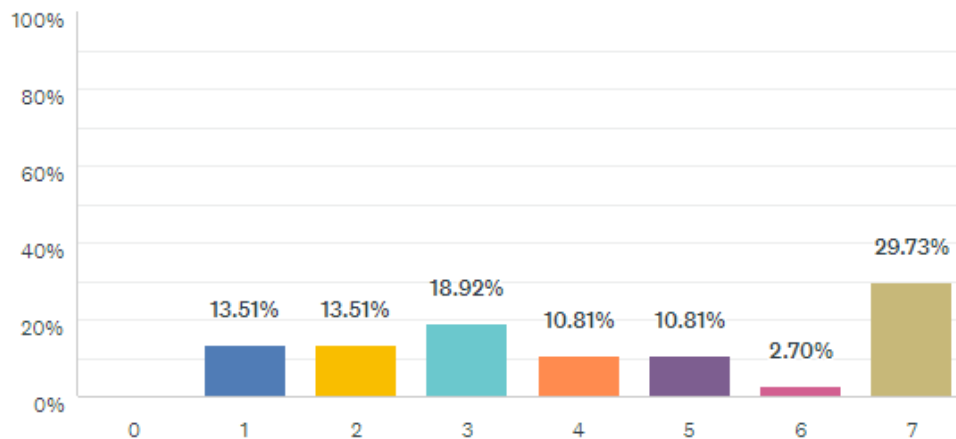


Figure 4: Physical Activity

Participants were asked how many portions for Fruit and/or vegetables they had the previous day (Table 4).

Table 4: Fruit/Veg intake of respondents

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
0	2.70%
1	2.70%
2	24.32%
3	35.14%
4	16.22%
5	8.11%
6	2.70%
7+	8.11%

Respondents were also asked where they sourced their food for break time/lunch (Figure 5).

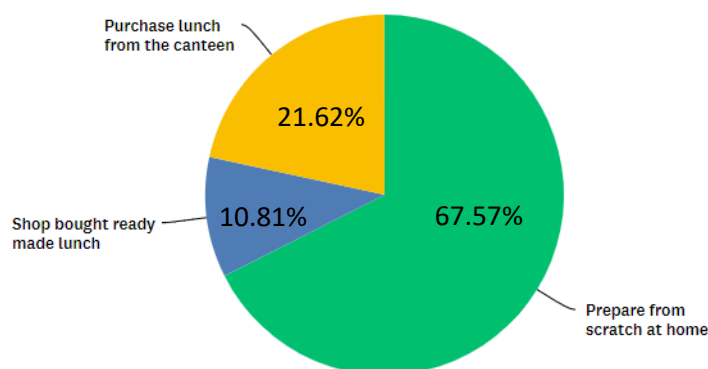


Figure 5: Food Source

Participants were asked if they smoke cigarettes, cigars, a pipe or use chewing tobacco. Results found that 43.24% said they never smoked, 45.95% formerly smoked, while 10.81% of respondents currently smoke.

Participants were asked if they drink alcohol (Table 5).

Table 5: Response on alcohol intake

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	88.57%
No	11.43%

Mental health

Respondents were asked how certain (very certain to very uncertain) they felt about the following statements (See table 6).

Table 6: Respondents rates of Mental well-being

How certain are you about the following?	Very Certain	Certain	Somewhat certain	Uncertain	Very Uncertain
I have a good understanding about how to manage my mental health and wellbeing	18.18%	51.52%	30.30%	0.00%	0.00%
I am certain I could have a conversation about my mental health with someone in my workplace	20.59%	38.24%	23.53%	11.76%	5.88%
I am equipped with practical supports to maintain and enhance my mental wellbeing	20.59%	55.88%	17.65%	2.94%	2.94%

I feel my workplace is supportive of its employees mental wellbeing	20.59%	38.24%	26.47%	5.88%	8.82%
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Illness/Disability

Participants were also asked if they suffered from any illness, disability or other physical or mental problem which was made worse by their job or by any work they have done in the past.

Table 7: Illness experienced by respondents

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	21.21%
No	78.79%

Stress

Respondents were asked what factors affected their stress in the workplace (Table 8). However, some participants felt that there were a number of reasons from the list which could have increased their stress levels.

Table 8: Stress causing factors

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Worklife balance/ Workload	47.06%
Confidence in job security	2.94%
Beng deemed unfit for work by a medical check	5.88%
Working environment	11.76%
Colleagues/ Workplace politics	20.59%
Sense of purpose/ career direction	11.76%

Respondents were asked how many days they missed work due to illness in the last 12 months (Figure 6). Out of those who answered yes, the average amount of days missed was 2-days.

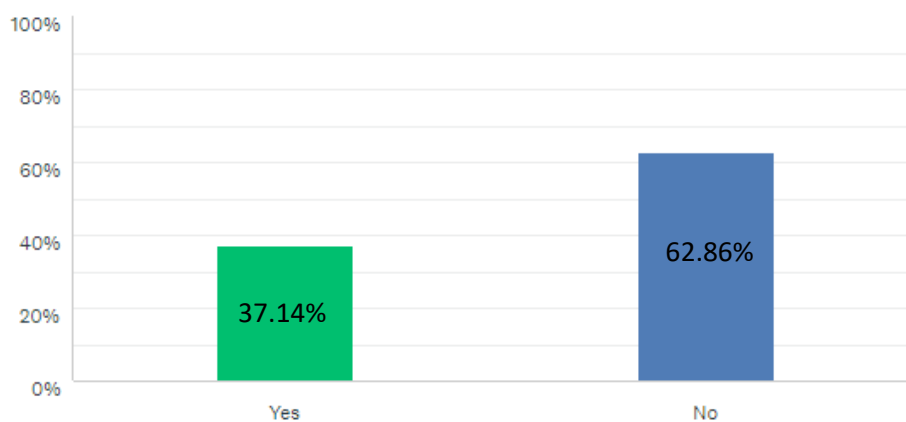


Figure 6: Missed Work

Sleep

Respondents were asked about their quality of sleep and if they had any trouble going to sleep or staying asleep in the past 12 months (Figure 7).

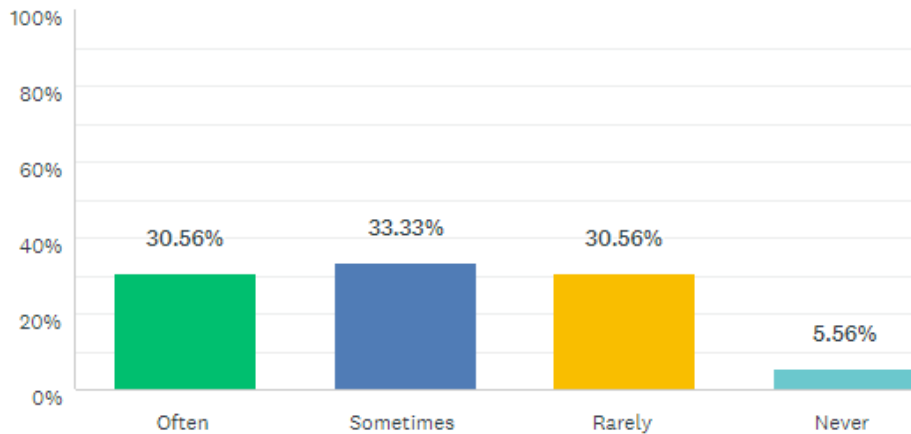


Figure 7: Sleep

The survey also found that the average amount of time spent sleeping was between 6 to 7 hours (Figure 8).

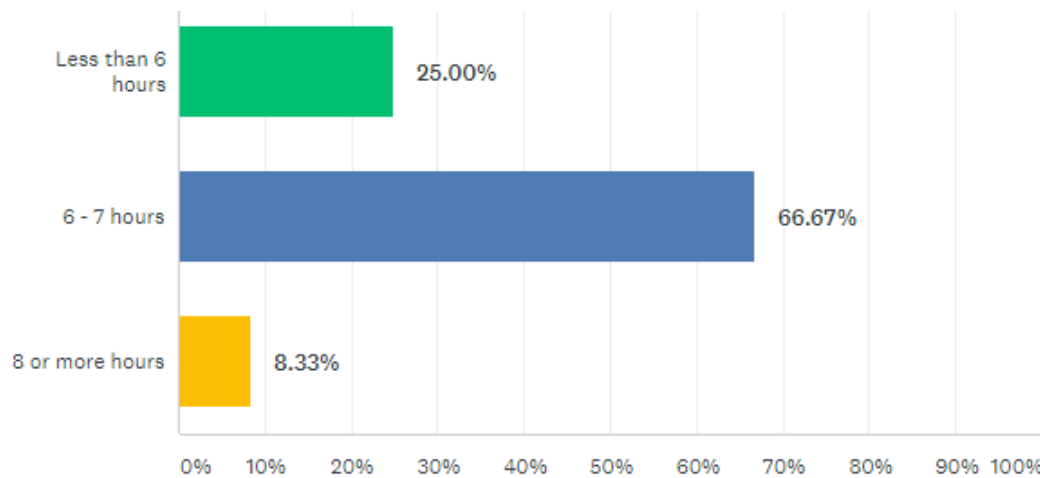


Figure 8: Sleep Time

Employment

Participants were asked to state if their employer provided any of the following (Figure 9):

- Flexible work conditions
- Health insurance contribution
- Opportunities for professional growth
- A safe working environment
- Sick pay scheme
- Necessary health and safety equipment and conditions to carry out my role

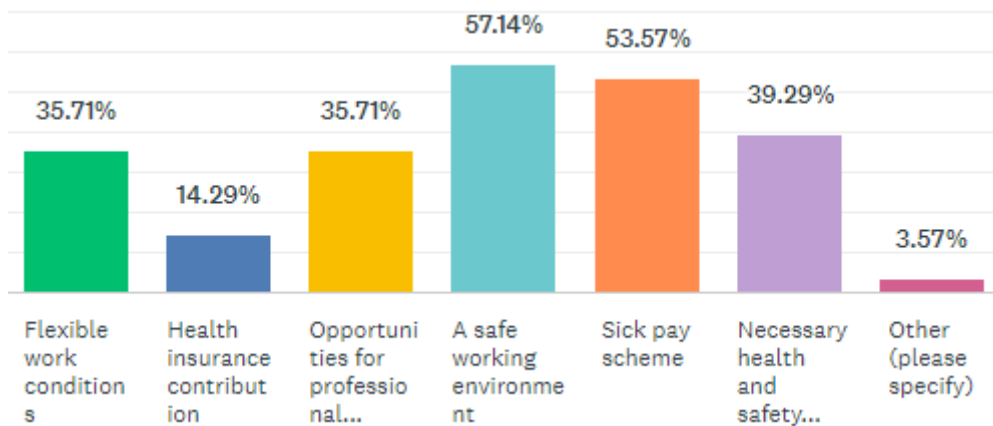


Figure 9: Employee Benefits

The men were asked how much they feel their work impacts each of the following from “Often” to “Never” (See table 9):

- Stress from my job impacts relationships with my friends and family.
- My company has realistic expectations about my workload.
- If things get hard I am supported by my supervisor or colleagues.
- I spend time thinking about or actively looking for another job.
- I miss work because of work related stress.
- Frustration from my job causes me to engage in unhealthy behaviours such as alcohol use, smoking, or arguing with family.
- I have experienced discrimination in my workplace because of my age.
- I worry about retirement.

Table 9: Respondents rating of impacts of work

Please indicate which best describes your experiences.	Often	Sometimes	Never	Rarely
Stress from my job impacts relationships with friends and family	2.86%	60.00%	17.14%	20.00%
My company has realistic expectations about my workload	25.00%	58.33%	11.11%	5.56%
If things get hard, I am supported by my supervisor or colleagues	25.00%	58.33%	5.56%	11.11%
I spend time thinking about or actively looking for another job	8.33%	33.33%	38.89%	16.67%
I worry about retirement	8.57%	48.57%	25.71%	17.15%
I miss work because of work related stress	0.00%	13.89%	66.67%	19.44%
Frustration from my job causes me to engage in unhealthy behaviours such as alcohol use, smoking, or arguing with family	5.56%	19.44%	44.44%	30.56%
I have experienced discrimination in my workplace because of my age	13.89%	11.11%	50.00%	25.00%

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction (very satisfied to very dissatisfied) with their job with 35% reporting to be “quite satisfied” and 17.65% reporting to be “neither satisfied or dissatisfied”. Participants were also asked to rate how satisfied (very satisfied to very dissatisfied) they were with the social and physical environments at work (Figure 10).

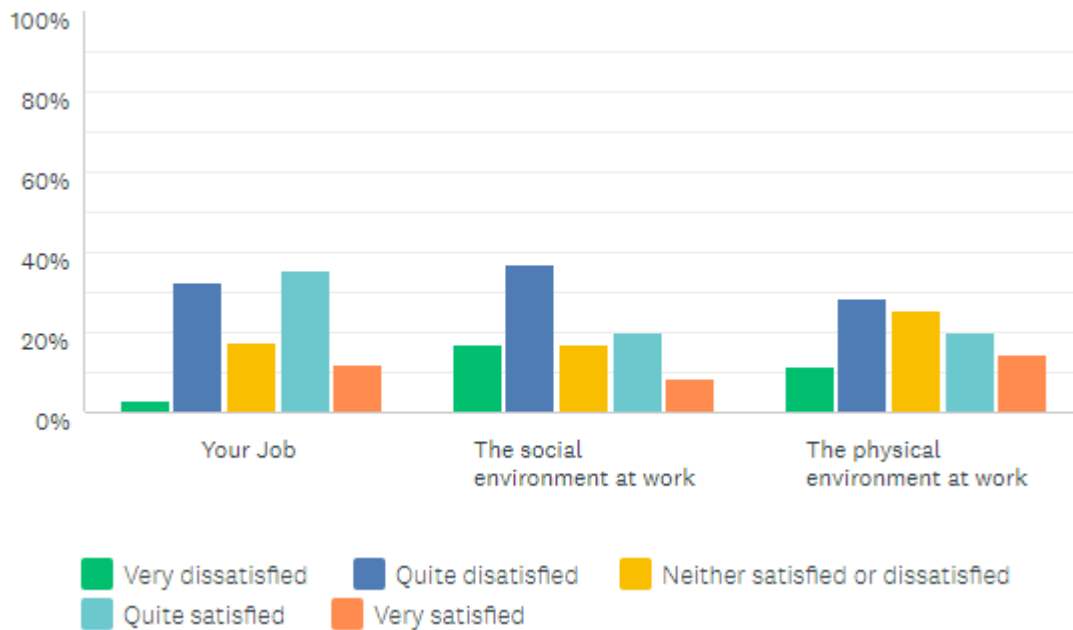


Figure 10: Satisfaction with Work

Repondents were asked if they thought that paid work was generally good or bad for physical health (Figure 11).

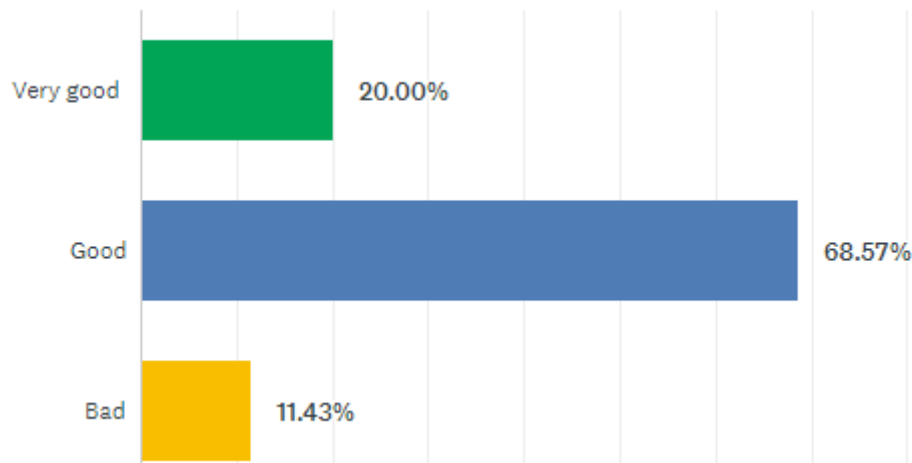


Figure 11: Paid work and heath

Challenges faced by men in the workplace

Respondents were given the opportunity to express the biggest challenges they think men encounter in the workplace (Figure 12).



Figure 12: Challenges

Health and Well-being Programmes

Participants were asked if they would be interested (*“Extrememly interested”* to *“Not interested”*) in taking part in the following programmes if they were offered in their workplace (Table 10);

- Health Checks
- Physiscal Activity
- Stress and mental wellbeing - emotional resilliance
- Healthy eating/weight management
- Smoking cesstaion
- Preperation for retirement

Table 10: Respondent interest in Workplace Programmes

Please indicate which best describes your experiences	Extremely interested	Fairly interested	Not Interested	Undecided/not applicable
Smoking cesstaion	19.35%	9.68%	29.03%	41.94%
Preparation for retirement	59.38%	21.88%	6.25%	12.50%
Health Checks	59.38%	34.38%	6.25%	0.00%
Healthy eating/weight management	62.50%	34.38%	3.13%	0.00%
Physical activity	50.00%	43.75%	6.25%	0.00%
Stress and mental wellbeing (emotional resilliance)	50.00%	50.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Suggestions made by participants to help improve health and well-being in the workplace;

- Social outings, outside of the work environment – Exercise classes, walking etc.
- Wellbeing days – Workshops and Programmes.
- More involvement from employers to collaborate and gain feedback.

Discussion:

Respondents who took part in the survey described their experience within the workplace to be positive and enjoyable. Many of the men felt like they belonged to their workplace and agree that, for the most part, it provides a safe and supportive environment, with flexible working conditions, and opportunity for professional growth. The average respondent spends around 7 to 8 hours per day working, which is mainly active and away from sedentary behaviour. However, the results found that many of the men do not reach the recommended daily amount of 30 minutes or more moderate to intense physical activity. It may be beneficial for employers to look at enhancing their employees activities levels, as over half of the participants were *extremely interested* in taking part in a physical activity programme within their place of work. Moreover, over half of the men prepared their lunch at home but only a small percent consumed the recommended amount of fruit and vegetables, which might also provide an opportunity to run a healthy eating and weight management programme.

The survey suggests that the men have a good understanding about their own mental health and are aware of the supports available to them. Yet, when asked about their ability to talk to a work colleague, or feeling supported by their employer, many of the respondents didn't feel as confident in discussing issues around mental health. This may be due to the workplace being predominantly male, and the stigma around male health and "*macho culture*". Furthermore, factors such as work-life balance, as well as workload were key issues which reportedly affected their stress levels, as well as their relationship with friends and family. When asked about their level of interest in relation to taking part in various health and well-being programmes such as health checks, stress management and emotional resilience workshops, over half of the respondents were *extremely interested* in taking part in these initiatives. Overall, the survey suggests that the participants would like their workplace to focus more attention on men's health, by running male focused programmes and initiatives that intend to improve the health and wellbeing of a target group that is usually difficult to reach.

Recommendations:

- Facilitate opportunities for employees to communicate and network with each other through social events, team building and group activities.
- Promote the health and wellbeing of men by organising workshops and programmes which focus on specific topics such as physical activity, stress management, mental health awareness and time management.
- Designate a key contact who can provide men with relevant information and also provide the men with support if a problem emerges.
- Facilitate yearly health checks.
- Encourage physical activity by organising activities such as walking on lunch breaks, monthly step challenges.
- Consider running evening and weekend events to cater for men that may be employed during these times.
- Encourage an environment where issues can be openly discussed and the resources linked in to provide techniques and support to those in need. All employees should feel valued, validated and supported in the workplace
- Provide guidance and support to employees in advance of their post working life & assist employees to facilitate retirement planning beyond the financial and welfare arrangements pertained to retirement.