

The workingwell study

Benchmarking mental health capabilities and experiences in Tasmanian workplaces.



Results Summary

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The Working Well Tasmania Study was commissioned by the WorkCover Tasmania Board to provide foundational data and evidence to guide the development of WorkSafe Tasmania's Workplace Mental Health Framework.

The Working Well study team at the Menzies Institute for Medical Research extends sincere thanks to the WorkCover Tasmania Board, as well as everyone who participated in and contributed to this important research.

What we did

The Working Well survey was completed by 230 Employers and 1730 Workers in small, medium and large organisations in all industries, sectors and regions in Tasmania.

We asked Employers and Workers in Tasmania how capable their organisations were at managing workplace mental health across four themes:

- Policy & Process
- Risk Management
- Education & Training
- Support Services.

For each theme, survey responses were ranked into capability levels:

1. Basic Awareness
2. Intention
3. Limited Action
4. Effective Action
5. Integrated and Sustained

We also asked about exposure to stressors at work and workplace mental health management experiences.

What we found

The results showed that 70% of Tasmanian employers rate their capability for managing worker mental health as being at 'basic awareness' or 'intention' level.

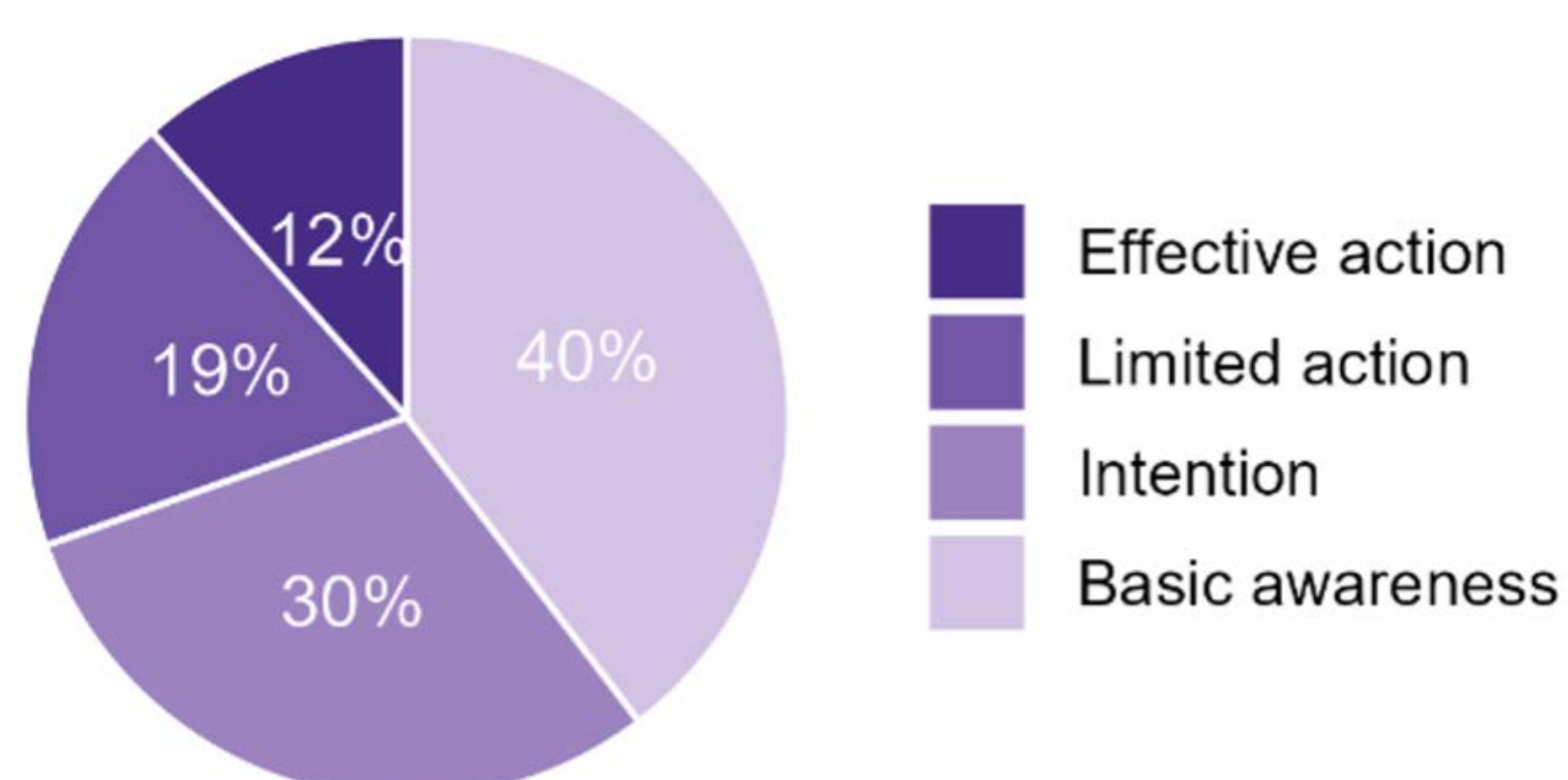
The remaining employers reported having 'limited action' (19%) and 'effective action' (12%).

None of the employers consistently scored their organisation at the 'integrated and sustained' level.

Overall, Workers said 4% of employers were at the 'basic awareness' level, while 72% of employers were scored at the 'intention' or 'limited action' level, with the remainder distributed across 'effective action' (12%) and 'integrated and sustained' (12%).

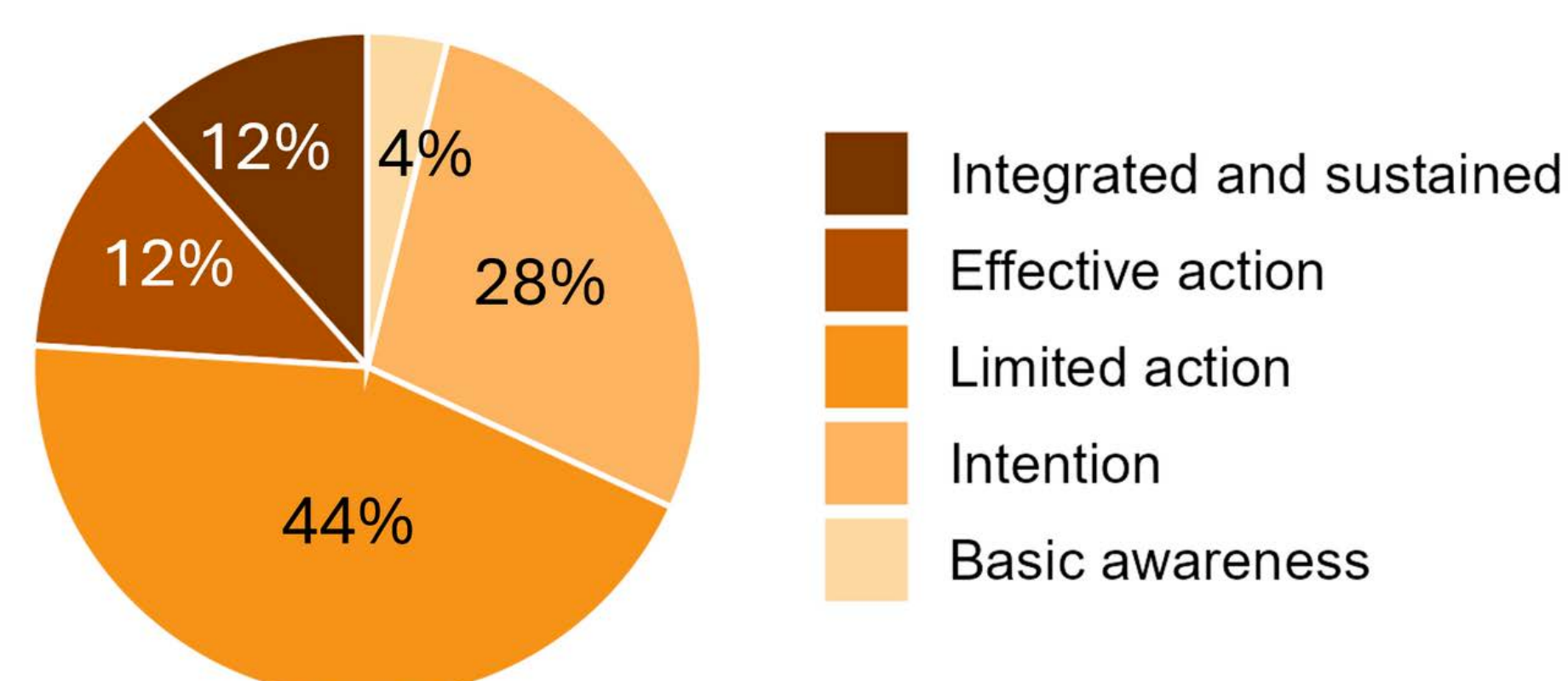
Workers in supervisory roles rated their employers higher than non-supervisors. This may indicate that supervisors and managers are more aware of their organisations' approaches to mental health management than workers

Employer Capability Levels



Tasmanian Workers rated their employers as being more capable than the Employers considered themselves.

Worker Ratings of Employer Capability



What are Tasmanian employers doing well?

The most common mental health management strategies reported by employers and workers were:

- comprehensive workplace induction for new employees
- training to help recognise and respond to workplace risks
- providing access to support services.

What can be improved?

Few employers use organisational indicators (e.g. KPIs) for monitoring workplace mental health and safety. This suggests mental health management is not yet widely embedded in systemic reporting practices.

Workers said that employers did not generally promote, or consult with workers about mental health and worker wellbeing, and that access to internal services for mental health support were lacking.

Differences by organisation size, industry, sector and region

Size When comparing the results of small, medium and large organisations, Workers rated medium sized employers highest, followed by large, then small organisations. Employers reported no systematic differences in mental health management capability by organisation size.

Industry There was no consistent difference in capability ratings by industry when looking within the Employer or Worker responses. But when comparing Workers with Employers, Workers in the manufacturing, hospitality and knowledge/professional services industry groups rated their organisations as more capable than the employers' responses suggest.

Sector Workers (but not Employers) in federal government agencies, the non-profit, community sector and private business reported marginally higher capability than workers employed in state or local government.

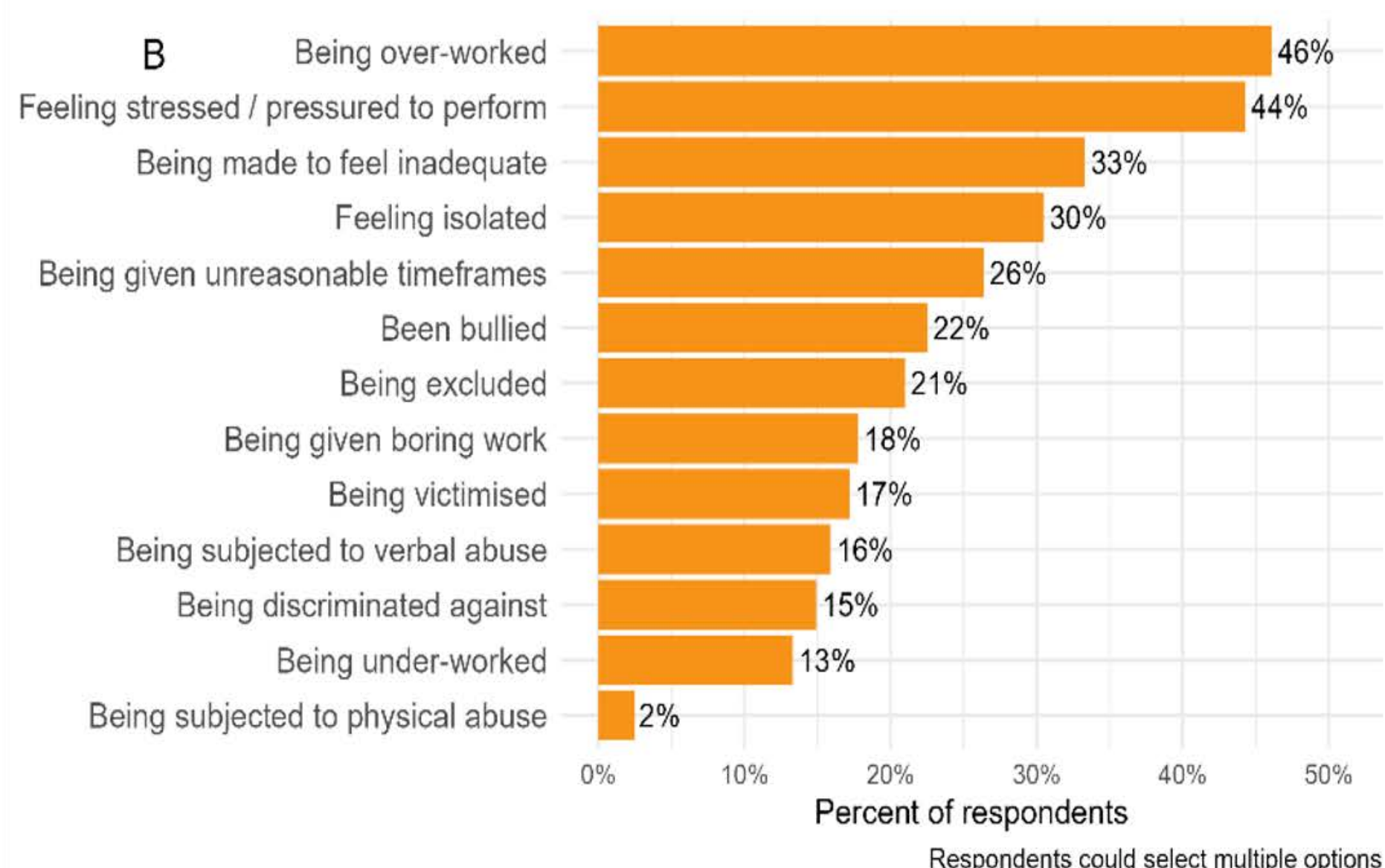
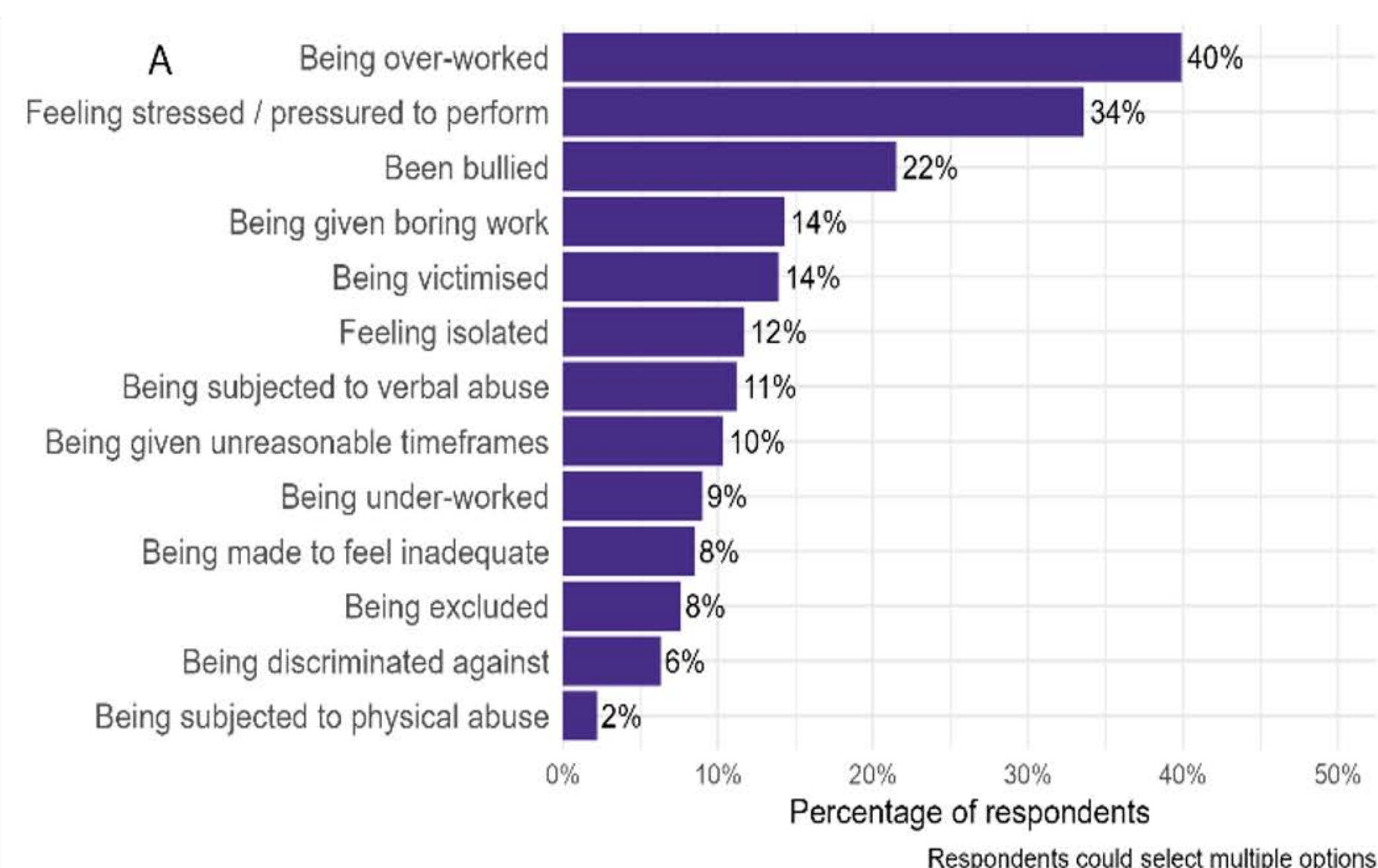
Region Workers (but not Employers) based in Hobart or in the West and North of Tasmania rated their workplaces higher than workers based in Launceston, the North-East or South-East of the State.

How does workplace mental health management show up in the workplace experience?

Most Employers reported their workplace was mentally healthy, that they were aware of psychosocial risks, and that workers' careers would not be adversely affected by disclosure of a mental health problem.

Workers mostly reported enjoying their job, but only around half said their workplace is a mentally healthy one, and that disclosure of a mental health problem would not have adverse career impacts.

Exposure to psychosocial hazards: Employer advised (A) and Worker reported (B).



Employers reported being advised of fewer psychosocial hazard exposures by their workforce than Workers said they experienced.

Both Employers and Workers ranked being over-worked and feeling stressed as the most common hazards. The least common hazard was being subjected to physical abuse. Figures A and B illustrate variability in Employer and Worker views about how often hazard exposures occur.

Finally, the results of the Working Well survey provide an important indication of job quality.

The impact of poor job quality and hazard exposures on worker mental health is being prepared for international academic publication.

For more information on the study:

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