

Investing in the Future of our Youth



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Introduction to the McKinsey Health Institute

Who we are

The McKinsey Health Institute (MHI) is an enduring, **non-profit-generating entity** within the firm

MHI believes, over the next decade, humanity could add as much as **45 billion extra years of higher-quality life**, which is roughly six years per person on average – and substantially more in some countries and populations

MHI’s mission is to **catalyze the actions** needed across continents, sectors, and communities to realize this possibility

What we focus on

Brain Health

Infectious Diseases

Healthcare Worker Capacity

Healthy Longevity

Equity & Health

Healthy Living

Sustainability & Health

Healthy Workforces

What we do

Convene and enable leaders

Bring leaders together to share learnings and take action

Advance research

Design, conduct, invest in, and share research

Promote & create open-access data assets

Gather, secure, integrate, enrich, and openly share useful data

Stimulate innovation

Catalyze and scale innovation through several initiatives



Employers have a significant role to play in preventing poor employee health and supporting employees to achieve good health

With over **60% of the working population around the world employed¹**, adding years to life and life to years requires **employers to lean into supporting the health of their workforce**. which will benefit their employees, businesses, and the broader community

Employers have an opportunity to make a real difference, for the **benefits of their employees, businesses and the broader community.**

1. In 2023, the estimate number of people employed reached ~3.4 billion worldwide, [Statista](#)

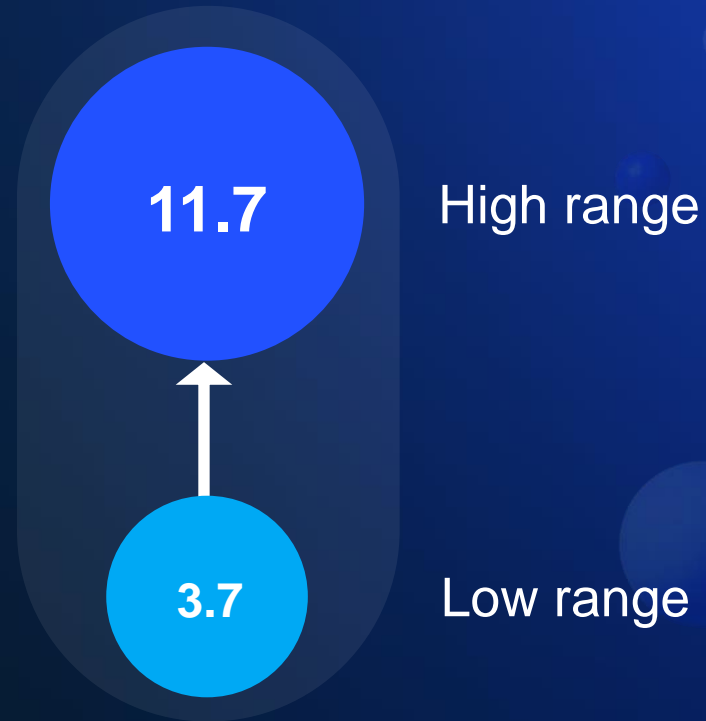


**If we create
organisations that
thrive, everybody
benefits..**

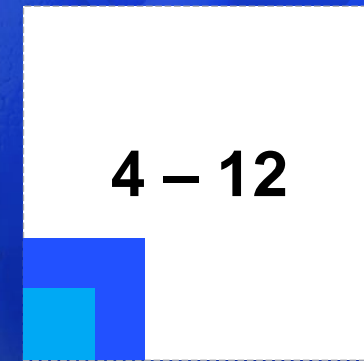


Improving global employee health and well-being could create up to \$11.7 trillion in economic value

Estimated total value created by initiatives to improve employee health and well-being⁴, \$ trillion



Initiatives' estimated share of global GDP¹, %



All economies

Total GDP, \$ trillion³

100.6

1. Costs associated with implementing health and well-being interventions not included in calculation

The real economic opportunity around health and wellbeing is on moving people from poor health to optimal health

Opportunity, in billions USD



...sentiment in society is shifting

1 Gen Z employees increasingly prioritize well-being as a factor in selecting an employer (68%¹)

2 Investors are starting to factor in social factors as part of their investment/ ESG criteria

3 We are starting to see the first court cases on workplace behaviours and their impact on wellbeing²



1. % agree to the question "How important do you think mental health is when selecting an employer?", 2022 Gen Z Brain Health Survey, Gen Z oversample (covers ages 18-24); Weighted by gender and age; Dates fielded: May 5 – June 6 2022; 9 countries and 9,000 respondents sampled
2. Court Services Victoria fined \$380k for 'toxic' workplace, Lawyers Weekly, 2023 <https://www.lawyersweekly.com.au/biglaw/38328-court-services-victoria-fined-380k-for-toxic-workplace>

**Employee health:
is the glass half
empty or half full?**



57% of employees globally report good holistic health ...

Average share of global employees
reporting good health,
% of respondents¹



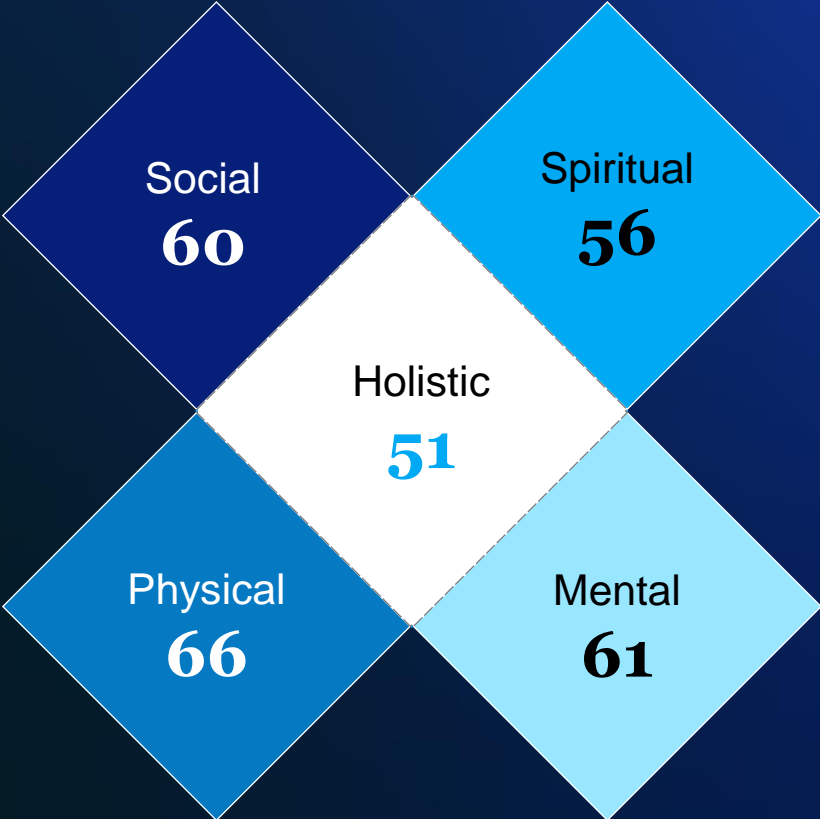
1. Social, spiritual, physical, and mental health data represent the percentage of respondents that scored an average of 4 or higher on questions for that dimension, on a response scale of 1 to 5. Holistic health data represents the percentage of respondents that scored an average for 4 or higher across the 4 dimensions of health

51% of GenZ employees report good holistic health¹, which is less than the global average of 57%

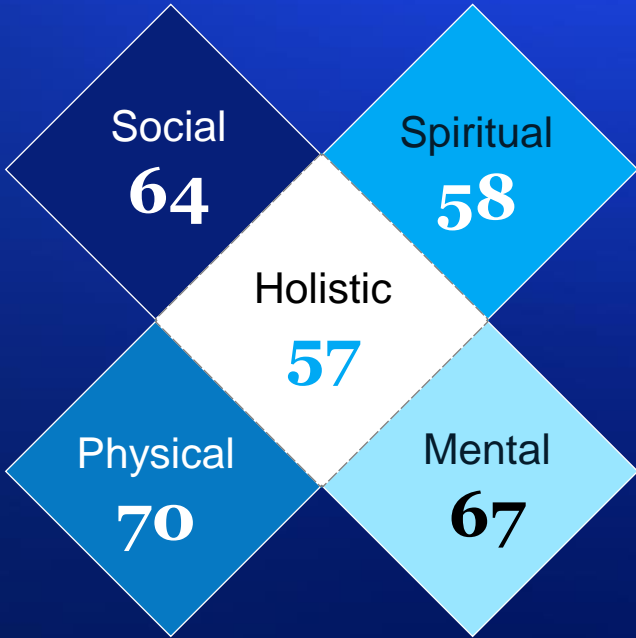
Average share of employees who report their health as good, by health dimension¹, % of respondents²

Preliminary

GenZ average by health dimension



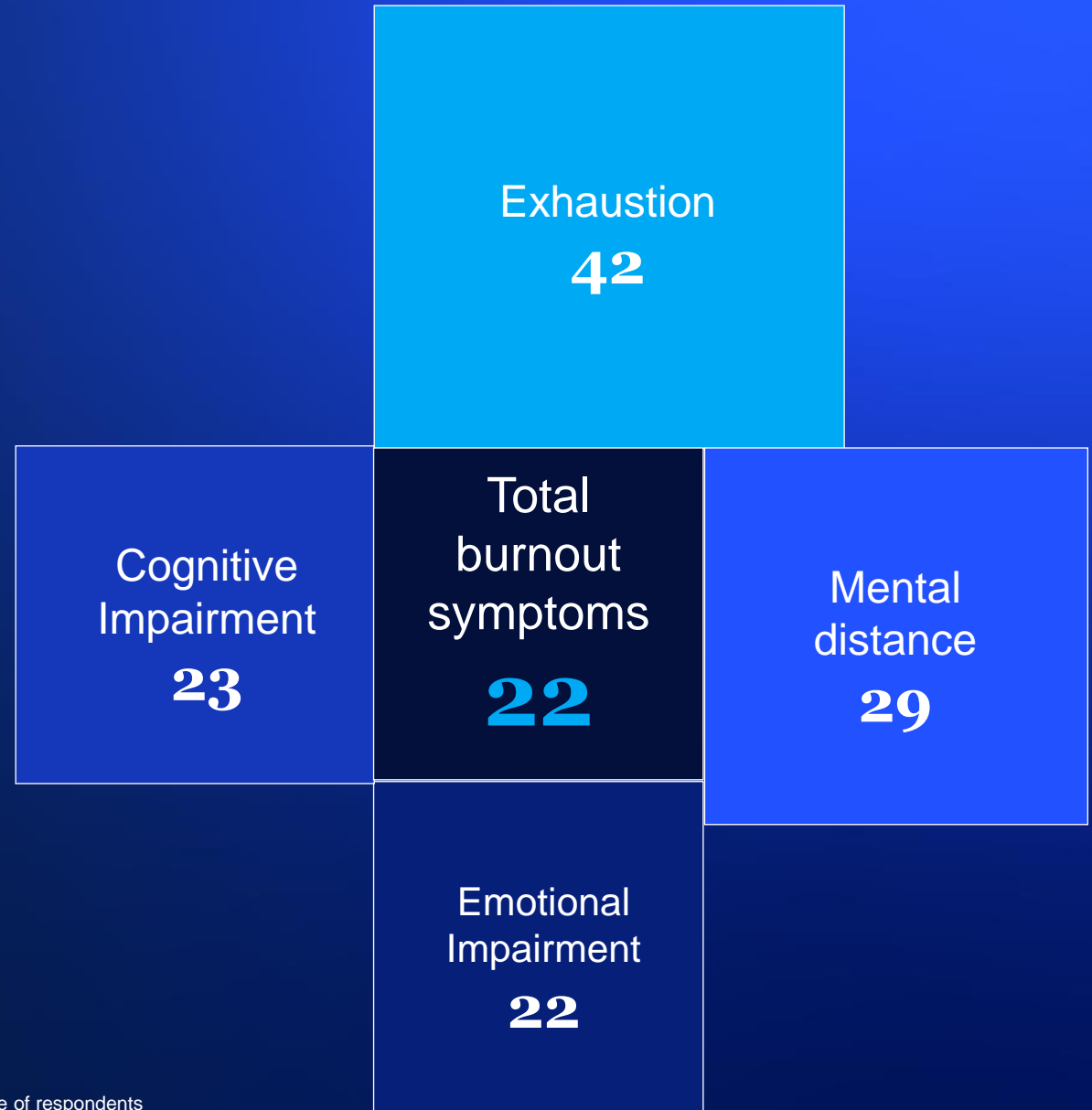
Global average by dimension



1. Social, spiritual, physical, and mental health data represent the percentage of respondents that scored an average of 4 or higher on questions for that dimension, on a response scale of 1 to 5. Holistic health data represents the percentage of respondents that scored an average for 4 or higher across the 4 dimensions of health
2. n = 6,118 (up until age 28)

... while **1** in **5** employees globally experience symptoms of burnout

Average share of global employees reporting good health, % of respondents¹



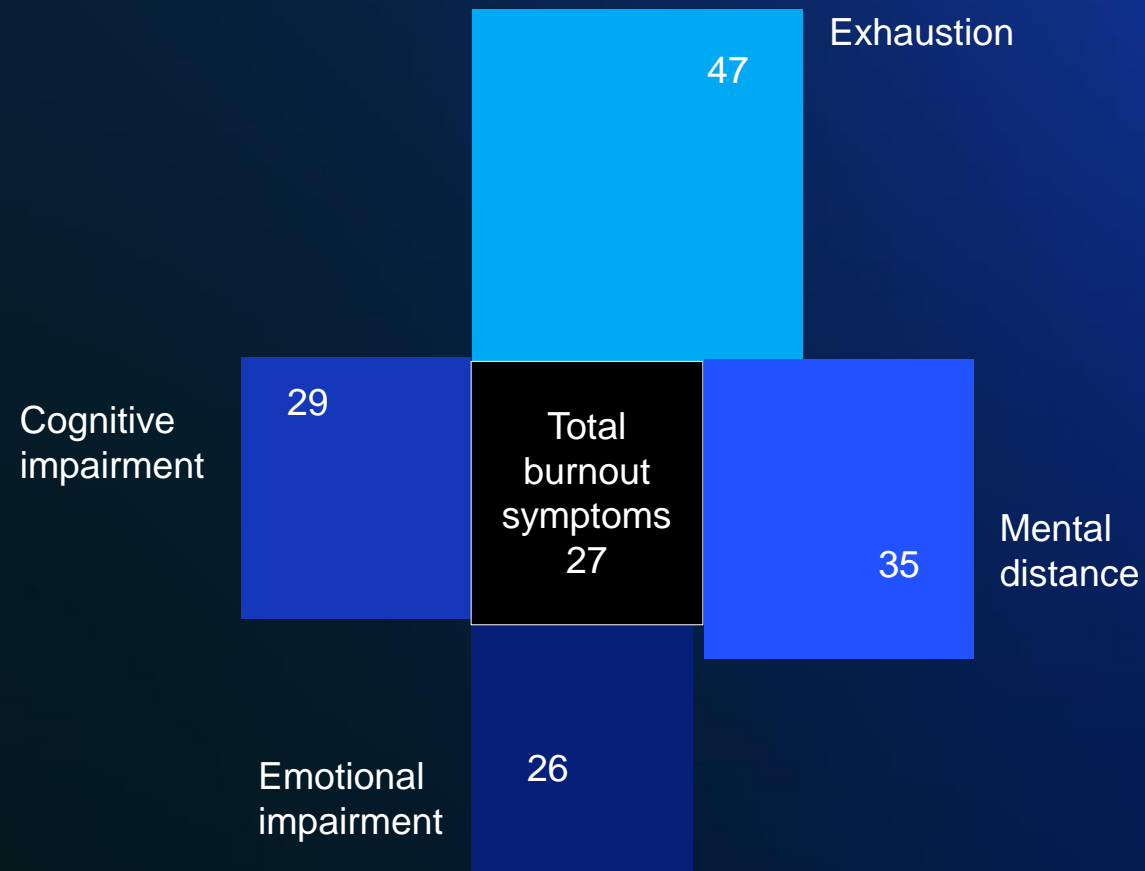
1. Cognitive impairment, emotional impairment, exhaustion, and emotional distance data represent the percentage of respondents that scored an average of 3 or higher on questions for that dimension, on a response scale of 1 to 5. Burnout symptoms data represents the percentage of respondents that scored an average for 3 or higher across the 4 dimensions of burnout symptoms

27% of GenZ employees report burnout symptoms¹, which is higher than the global average of 22%

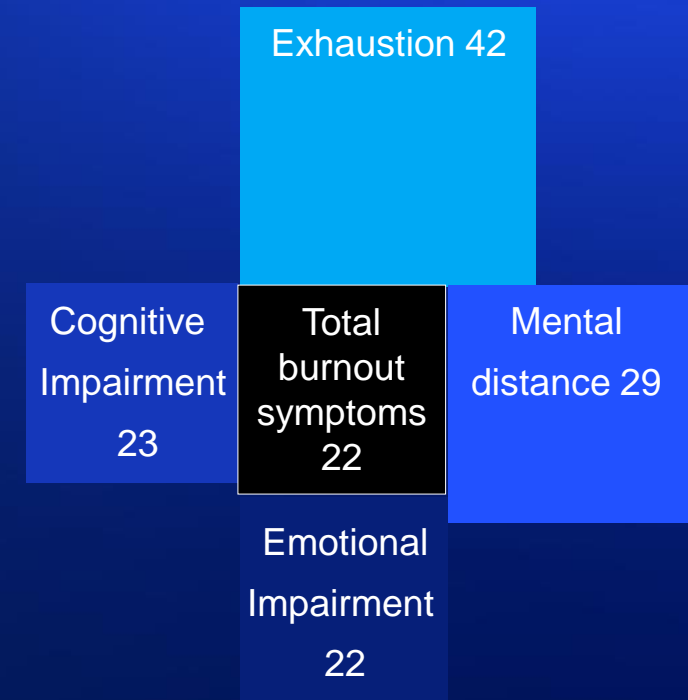
Average share of who report themselves as suffering from burnout symptoms¹, by dimension, % of respondents²

Preliminary

GenZ average by dimension



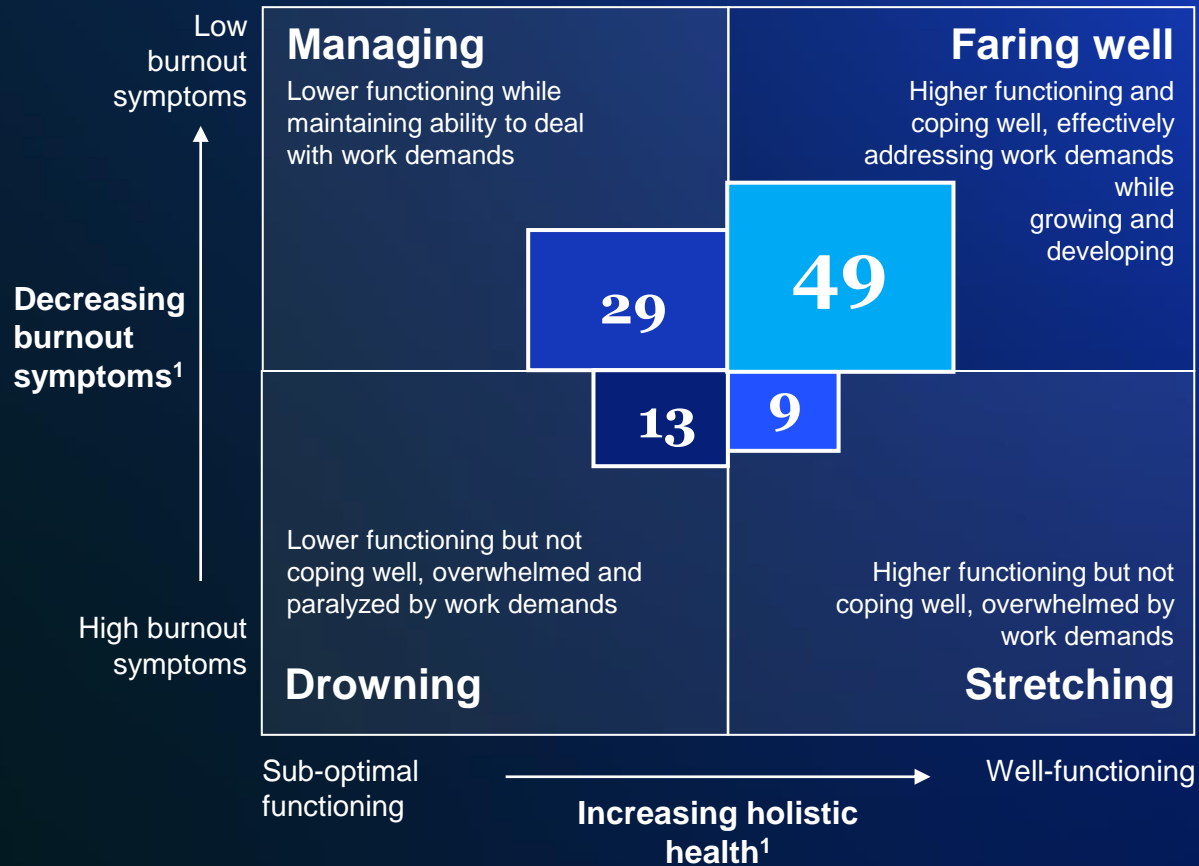
Global average by dimension



1. Cognitive impairment, emotional impairment, exhaustion, and mental distance data represent the percentage of respondents that scored an average or 3 or higher on questions for that dimension, on a response scale of 1 to 5. Burnout symptoms data represents the percentage of respondents that scored an average for 3 or higher across the 4 dimensions of burnout symptoms
2. n = 6,118 (up until age 28)

For employees to thrive, organizations should both address burnout symptoms and support good holistic health – just one is not enough

Global opportunity gap, % share of employees



51%

of employees report either sub-optimal holistic health, higher burnout symptoms, or both – what we call the ‘opportunity gap’

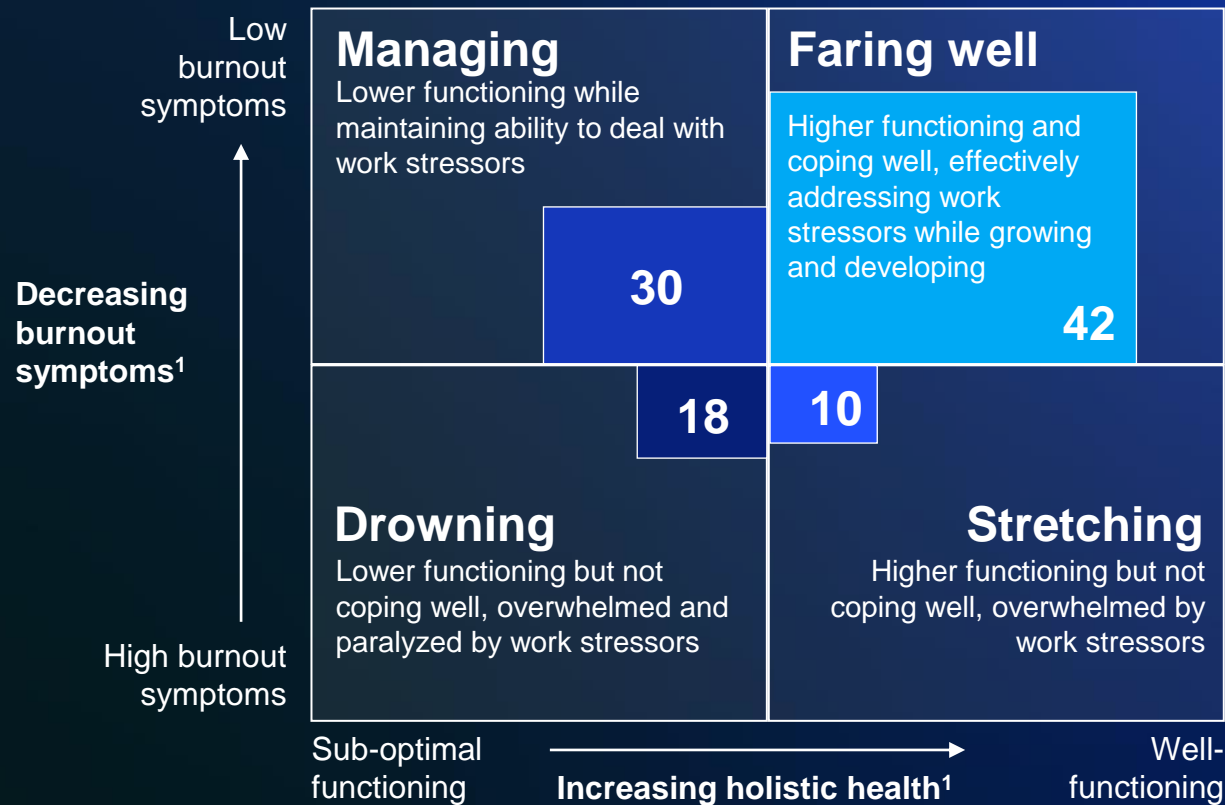
1. "High" burnout symptoms is defined as employees reporting burnout symptom scores greater than or equal to 3 and "low" burnout symptoms is defined as employees reporting burnout symptom scores less than 3. "Well-functioning" on holistic health is defined as employees reporting holistic health scores greater than or equal to 4 and "sub-optimal functioning" on holistic health is defined as employees reporting holistic health scores less than 4

Addressing burnout symptoms & holistic health simultaneously could help GenZ employees across the spectrum of health

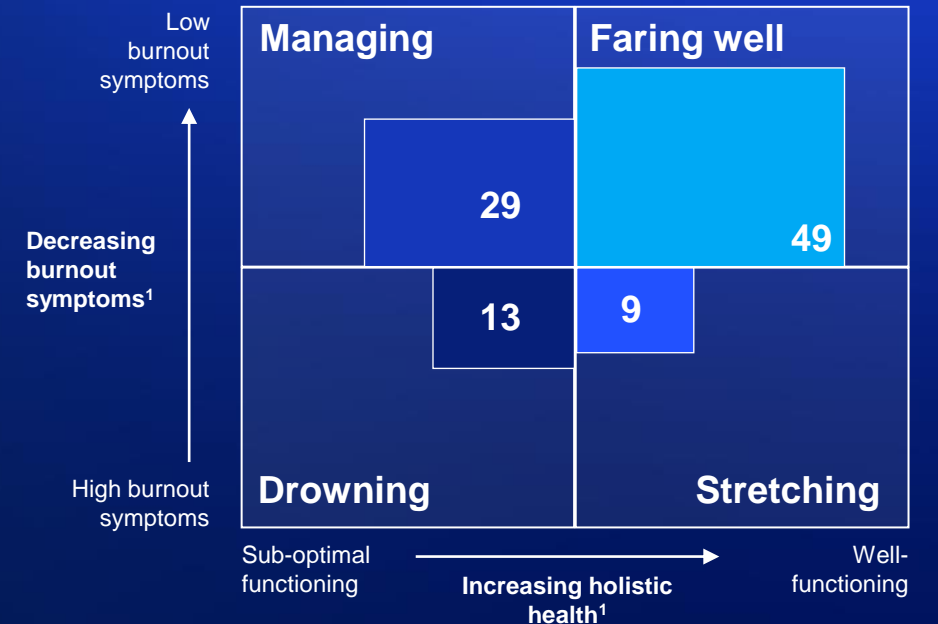
58% of GenZ employees report either sub-optimal holistic health, higher burnout symptoms, or both compared to 51% globally— what we call the ‘opportunity gap’

Preliminary

GenZ opportunity gap, % share of employees²



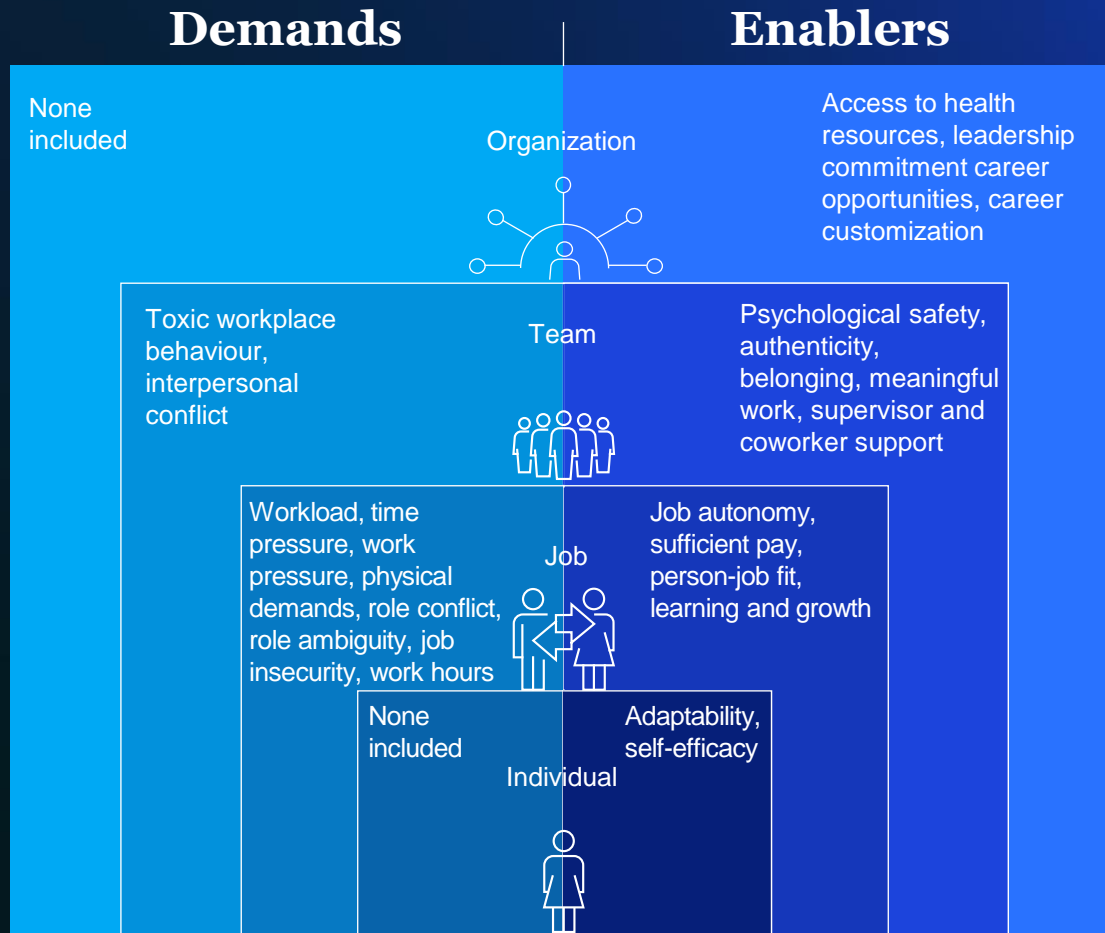
Global average by dimension



1. "High" burnout symptoms is defined as employees reporting burnout symptom scores greater than or equal to 3 and "low" burnout symptoms is defined as employees reporting burnout symptom scores less than 3. "Well-functioning" on holistic health is defined as employees reporting holistic health scores greater than or equal to 4 and "sub-optimal functioning" on holistic health is defined as employees reporting holistic health scores less than 4

2. n = 6,118 (up until age 28)

We measured how several workplace factors impact a wide set of health and work-related outcomes



Health-related outcomes

Holistic health
 Burnout symptoms
 Depression symptoms
 Distress symptoms
 Anxiety symptoms
 Sleep hours
 Sleep satisfaction
 Happiness at work
 Loneliness at work
 Financial instability



Work-related outcomes

Work engagement
 Organizational advocacy
 Job satisfaction
 Work-life balance
 Intent to leave
 Absenteeism due to health
 Absenteeism due to caregiving
 Task performance
 Presenteeism
 Innovative work behaviors

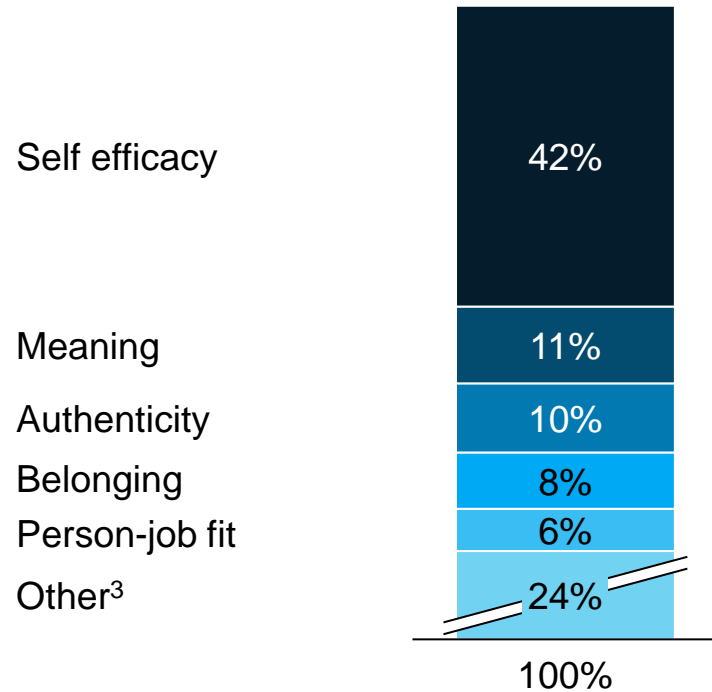
What are the key drivers for GenZ?



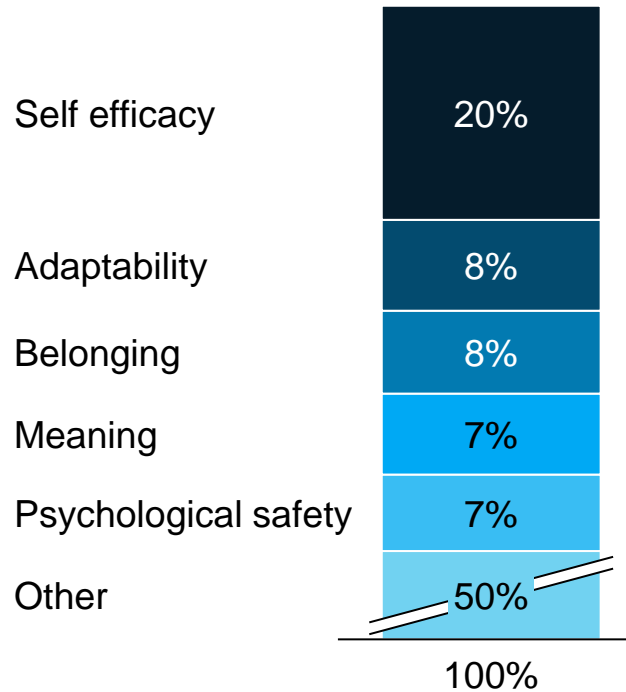
Gen Z: Top five drivers of holistic health

Relative importance of predictors for holistic health¹
 % of difference in outcome predicted by construct²

Gen Z



Global (incl. Gen Z)



Note: Relative importance was conducted for exploratory reasons. While comparisons between global and group-specific drivers can be informative, actions taken need to consider the specific situation and context due to small sample sizes

1. All predictors displayed are statistically significant ($p < .05$)
2. Explained variance in holistic health is 36% for Gen Z and 49% for global
3. 'Other' includes all additional enablers and stressors in our [research model](#)

Source: Relative importance analysis, MHI Employee Holistic Health Survey 2023 (n=30,392 (global), n=5303 for Gen Z)

Interpretation

What does relative importance tell us?

- In a complex model that includes many workplace drivers, relative importance tells us how strongly each predictor influences our outcome of interest
- The percentages represent the proportion of variance each predictor influences in the outcome
- For example, self efficacy predicts one fifth of the differences between employees on holistic health at the global level. However, for Gen Z workers, self efficacy predicts over double of these differences

Gen Z: Top five drivers of burnout symptoms

Relative importance of predictors for burnout¹
 % of difference in outcome predicted by construct²

Gen Z



Global (incl. Gen Z)



Note: Relative importance was conducted for exploratory reasons. While comparisons between global and group-specific drivers can be informative, actions taken need to consider the specific situation and context due to small sample sizes

1. All predictors displayed are statistically significant ($p < .05$) except role ambiguity and work pressure among Gen Z
2. Explained variance in burnout is 47% for Gen Z and 69% for global
3. 'Other' includes all additional enablers and stressors in our [research model](#)

Source: Relative importance analysis, MHI Employee Holistic Health Survey 2023 (n=30,392 (global), n=5303 for Gen Z)

Interpretation

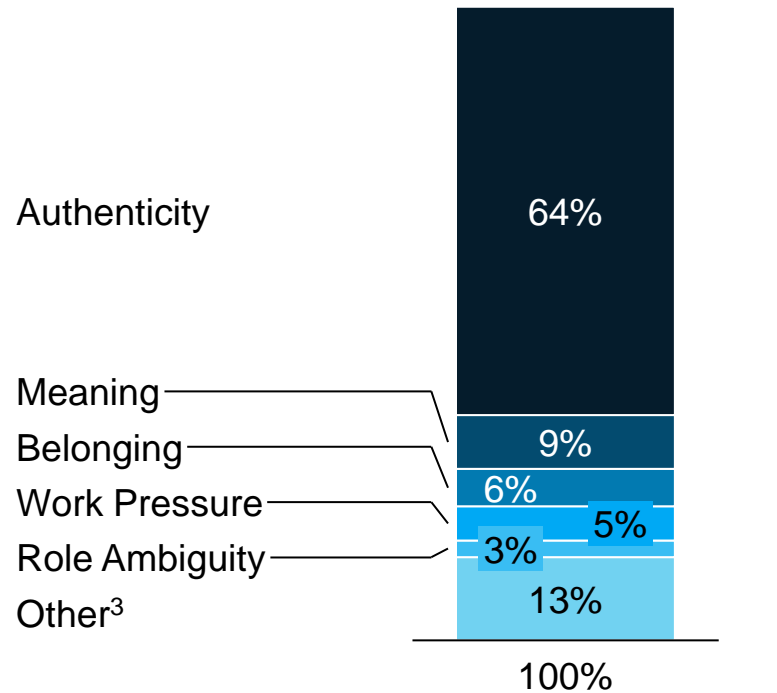
What does relative importance tell us?

- In a complex model that includes many workplace drivers, relative importance tells us how strongly each predictor influences our outcome of interest
- The percentages represent the proportion of variance each predictor influences in the outcome
- For example, toxic workplace behavior (TWB) predicts one fifth of the differences between employees on burnout symptoms at the global level. However, among Gen Z employees, TWB predicts almost one-third of these differences

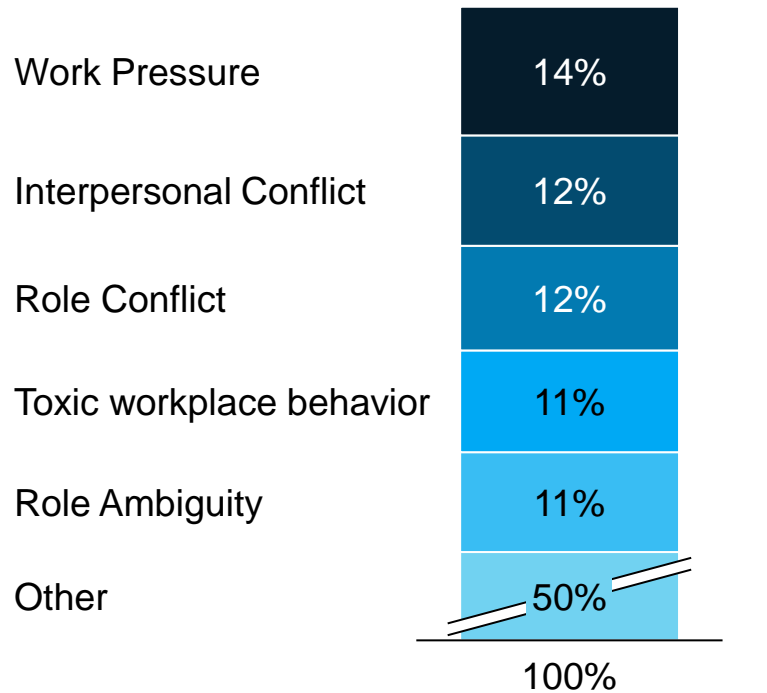
Gen Z: Top five drivers of distress symptoms

Relative importance of predictors for distress symptoms¹
 % of difference in outcome predicted by construct²

Gen Z



Global (incl. Gen Z)



Note: Relative importance was conducted for exploratory reasons. While comparisons between global and group-specific drivers can be informative, actions taken need to consider the specific situation and context due to small sample sizes

1. All predictors displayed are statistically significant ($p < .05$)
2. Explained variance in distress symptoms is 79% for Gen Z and 53% for global
3. 'Other' includes all additional enablers and stressors in our [research model](#)

Source: Relative importance analysis, MHI Employee Holistic Health Survey 2023 (n=30,392 (global), n=5303 for Gen Z)

Interpretation

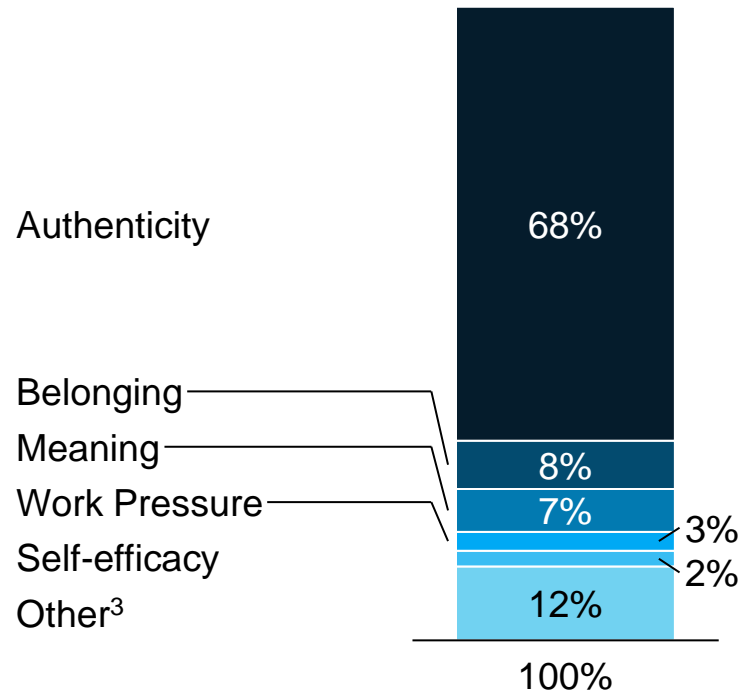
What does relative importance tell us?

- In a complex model that includes many workplace drivers, relative importance tells us how strongly each predictor influences our outcome of interest
- The percentages represent the proportion of variance each predictor influences in the outcome
- For example, toxic workplace behavior predicts just over one-tenth of the differences between employees on distress symptoms at the global level. However, for Gen Z workers, authenticity predicts the majority of the differences between employees

Gen Z: Top five drivers of anxiety symptoms

Relative importance of predictors for anxiety symptoms¹
 % of difference in outcome predicted by construct²

Gen Z



Global (incl. Gen Z)



Note: Relative importance was conducted for exploratory reasons. While comparisons between global and group-specific drivers can be informative, actions taken need to consider the specific situation and context due to small sample sizes

1. All predictors displayed are statistically significant ($p < .05$) except belonging for Gen Z
2. Explained variance in anxiety symptoms is 89% for Gen Z and 47% for global
3. 'Other' includes all additional enablers and stressors in our [research model](#)

Source: Relative importance analysis, MHI Employee Holistic Health Survey 2023 (n=30,392 (global), n=5303 for Gen Z)

Interpretation

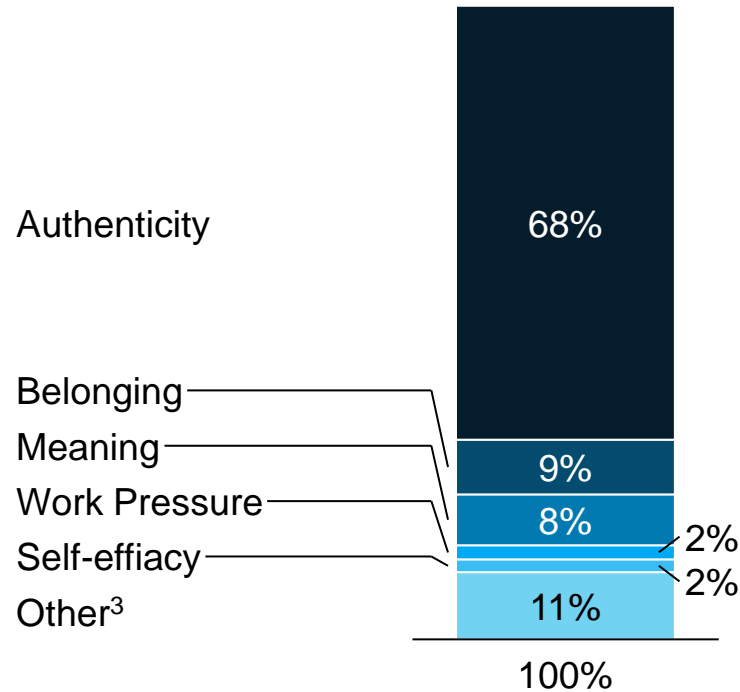
What does relative importance tell us?

- In a complex model that includes many workplace drivers, relative importance tells us how strongly each predictor influences our outcome of interest
- The percentages represent the proportion of variance each predictor influences in the outcome
- For example, toxic workplace behavior predicts just over one-tenth of the differences between employees on anxiety symptoms at the global level. However, for Gen Z workers, authenticity predicts the majority of the differences between employees

Gen Z: Top five drivers of depression symptoms

Relative importance of predictors for depression symptoms¹
 % of difference in outcome predicted by construct²

Gen Z



Global (incl. Gen Z)



Note: Relative importance was conducted for exploratory reasons. While comparisons between global and group-specific drivers can be informative, actions taken need to consider the specific situation and context due to small sample sizes

1. All predictors displayed are statistically significant ($p < .05$) except belonging for Gen Z
2. Explained variance in depression symptoms is 87% for Gen Z and 48% for global
3. 'Other' includes all additional enablers and stressors in our [research model](#)

Source: Relative importance analysis, MHI Employee Holistic Health Survey 2023 (n=30,392 (global), n=5303 for Gen Z)

Interpretation

What does relative importance tell us?

- In a complex model that includes many workplace drivers, relative importance tells us how strongly each predictor influences our outcome of interest
- The percentages represent the proportion of variance each predictor influences in the outcome
- For example, toxic workplace behavior predicts just over one-tenth of the differences between employees on depression symptoms at the global level. However, for Gen Z workers, authenticity predicts the majority of the differences between employees

**Companies can't
“yoga” their way
to good health**



Most companies are not seeing ROI because they are not investing in the right interventions



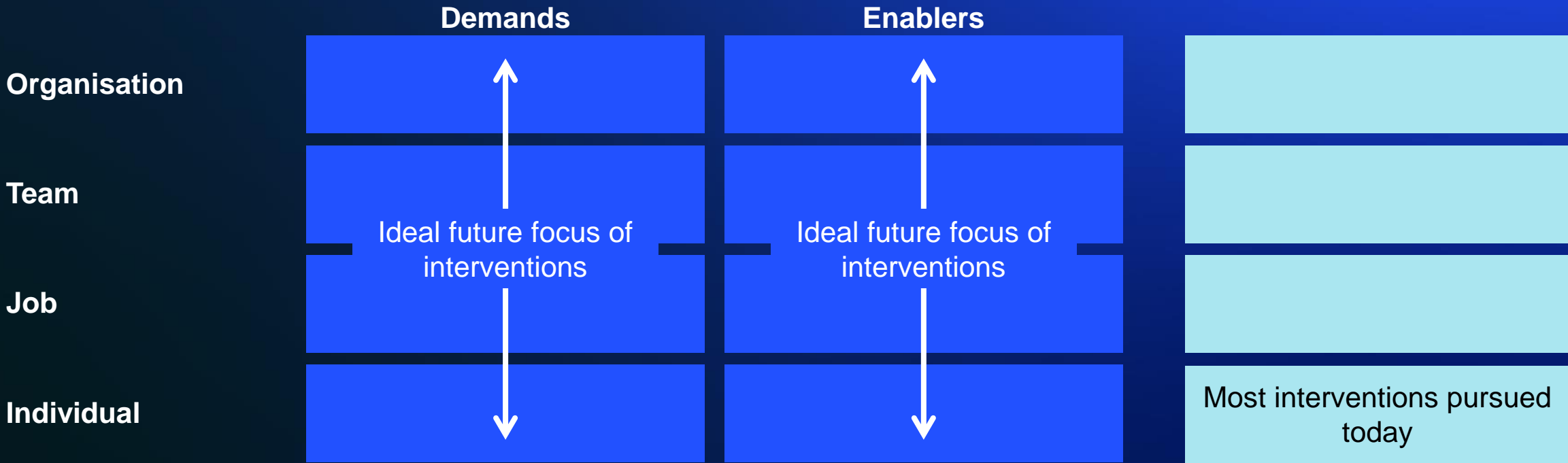
Intended audience



Address drivers
Proactive



Address effects
Reactive



A recipe for a thriving workforce

- > Treat employee **health** as a **strategic imperative**
- > Take an **organization-wide approach** (not just focusing on individual interventions)
- > **Invest better**, not more
- > **Hold leaders** accountable to outcomes

Non exhaustive

Self-efficacy / Adaptability

– Emotional flexibility training



Purpose / Meaning

– Job crafting



Belonging

– Inclusion & Psychological Safety



Authenticity

– Having difficult conversations



Example Interventions to support the top four drivers of health outcomes for GenZ

1. The four outcomes we looked at: holistic health, burnout symptoms, and screeners for distress, anxiety and depression

**What can
educators learn
from this?**



Non exhaustive

What can educators do to prepare GenZ for the workplace based on the top four drivers of health outcomes?

Self-efficacy / Adaptability
– Emotional flexibility training



Belonging & Authenticity
– Interpersonal effectiveness and difficult conversations



Wellbeing Purpose / Meaning integrated in learning programs
– example: IE University Spain



Psychoeducational courses
– example: University of Bristol



Healthy work means healthy workforces, healthy organisations and healthy societies



McKinsey
Health Institute

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Investment activity in mental health

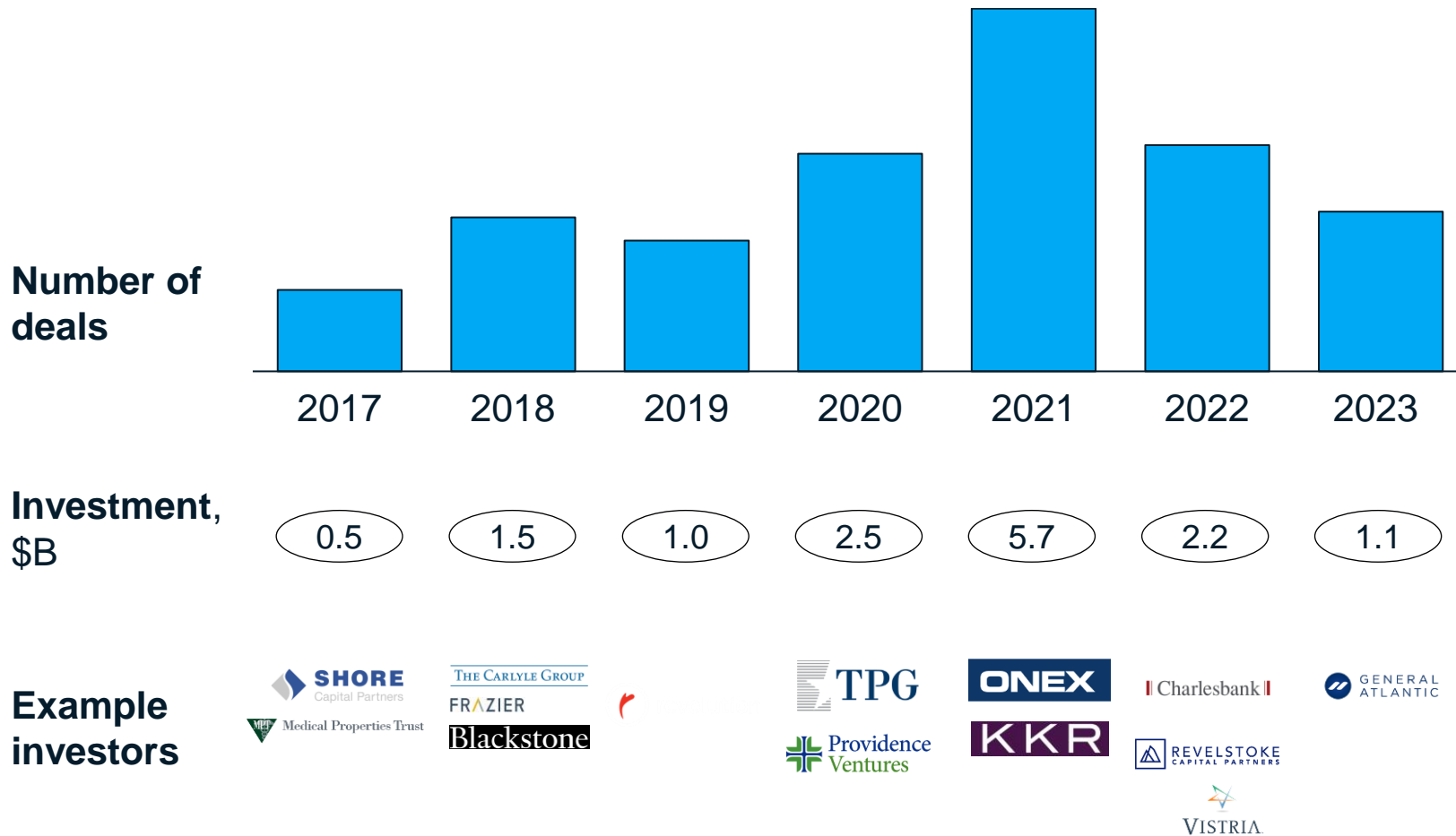


Insights on Gen Z mental health



Vision and roadmap for the future

US investment in behavioral health has grown



US investment in behavioral health clinical and technology services grew sharply since 2017; while it has slowed, it remains above pre-pandemic levels

1. YTD October 2023

Source: RockHealth, Capital IQ, Levin, PitchBook, CrunchBase, BHBusiness

Not exhaustive

Example VC/PE-backed youth mental health companies in the US

Virtual care providers



Hybrid in-person and virtual providers



Enablers, digital therapeutics, and wellness



In Europe, mental health received the second highest funding in digital health among ventures with a specific disease focus

Top 5 therapeutic areas by investment value (early-stage funding only)
2019-2023

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Oncology	\$222M	\$178M	\$139M	\$411M	\$95M
Mental Health	\$71M	\$144M	\$200M	\$197M	\$75M
Women's Health	\$149M	\$173M	\$107M	\$167M	\$89M
Cardiovascular	\$48M	\$154M	\$81M	\$120M	\$246M
Neurology	\$0.2B	\$0.3B	\$1.0B	\$0.5B	\$0.2B

Not exhaustive

Example digital mental health companies in Europe

Based in the Netherlands

Virtual care providers



Enablers, digital therapeutics, and wellness

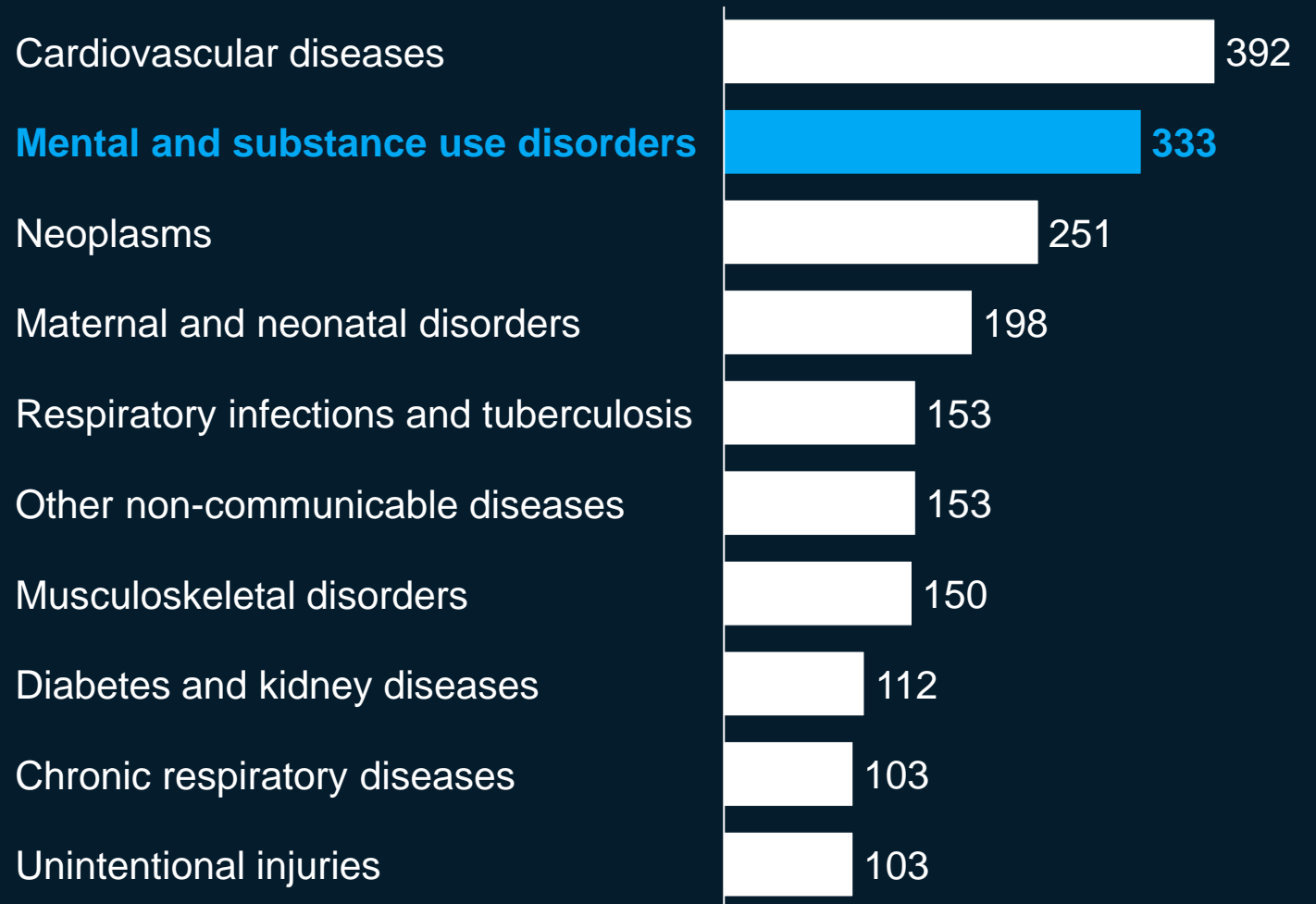


Triumf Health



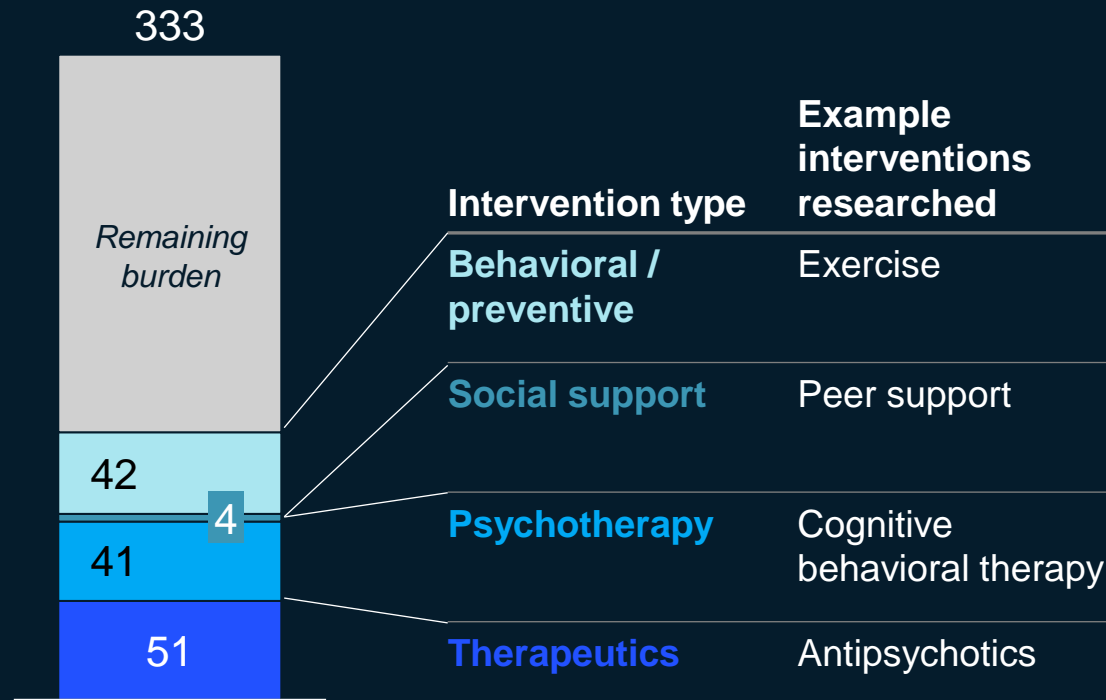
The global disease burden for mental health conditions and substance use disorders is over 330M DALYs, on par with cardiovascular disease and cancer

Top 10 disease categories by disease burden
Millions Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALYs)



By scaling what works¹, we can reclaim 130M+ life years globally

Addressable burden for mental and substance use disorders
Millions DALYs



1. The interventions included in this analysis must be evidence-based (e.g., had multiple peer-reviewed studies)
2. Assuming efficacy and adoption are constant between tech and non-tech enabled interventions

In the Netherlands, the disease burden for mental health conditions and substance use disorders is ~785K DALYs



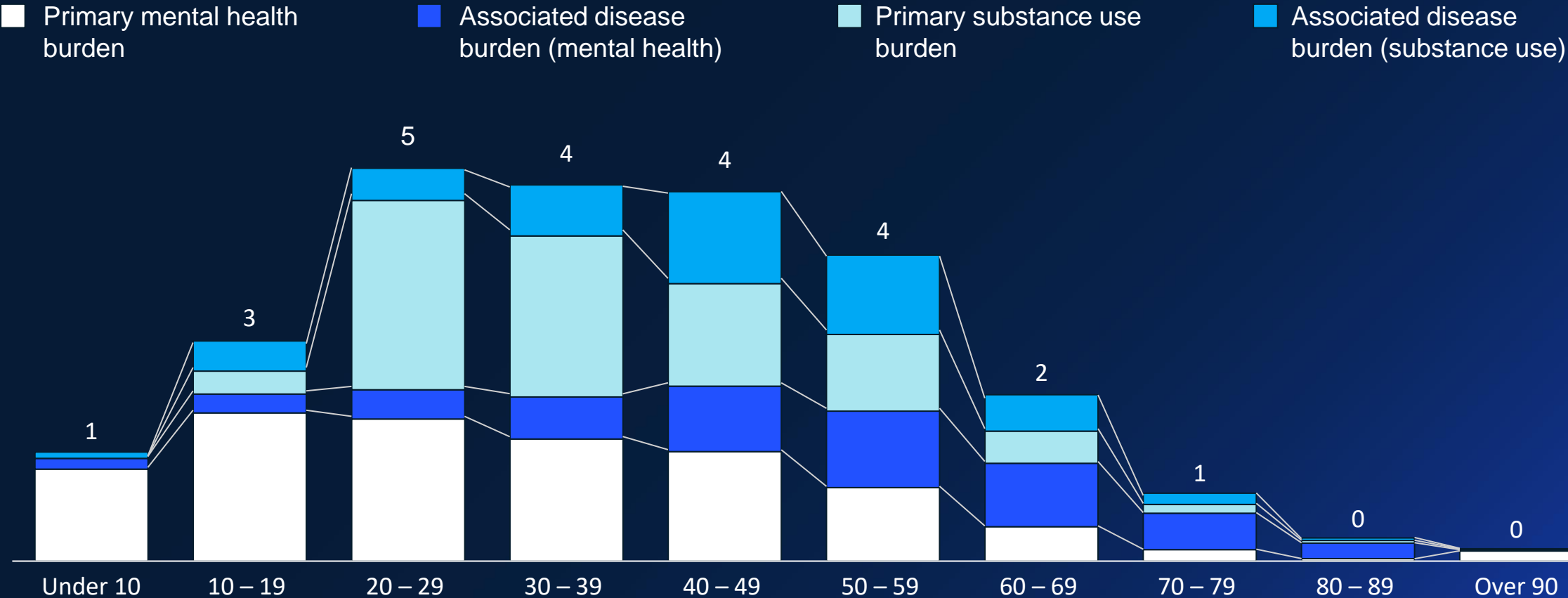
- Primary burden of mental and substance use disorders
- Associated burden of mental health conditions
- Associated burden of substance use disorders

**Explore MHI's
Prioritizing Brain
Health Tool:**



We must prioritize early intervention to reduce burden for mental health conditions and substance use disorders

Disease burden by age group
Millions DALYs



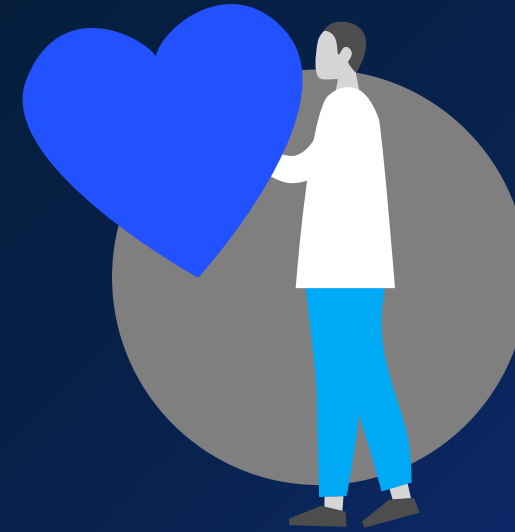
Source: IHME Global Burden of Disease 2019; McKinsey Health Institute

Addressing youth mental health is key to adding years to life and life to years



~75%

of mental illnesses appear by the age of 24



~10–25-year

shorter life expectancy for people with serious mental illnesses

Contents



Investment activity in mental health



Insights on Gen Z mental health



Vision and roadmap for the future

MHI has launched a consumer survey focused on the topic of Gen Z¹ brain health

The survey spans across ~25 countries...

Europe



Africa



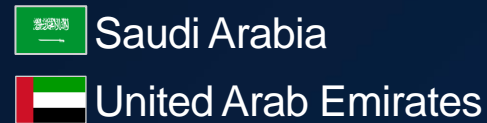
Asia



Americas



Middle-East



Australia



... and 5 generations...



Gen Z
13-24 years old



Millennials
25-40 years old



Gen X
41-56 years old



Baby Boomers
57-75 years old



Silent Generation
76-93 years old

... and covers a range of topics including...



Overall health and wellbeing



Attitudes towards MH



MH service utilization



Social Media and digital health services

1. Gen Z aged 18-24 (sometimes including 13-17) as well as four other generations surveyed for comparison (Millennials: 25-40 years old, Gen X 41-56 years old, Baby Boomers: 57-75 years old, Silent Generation: 76+ years old)

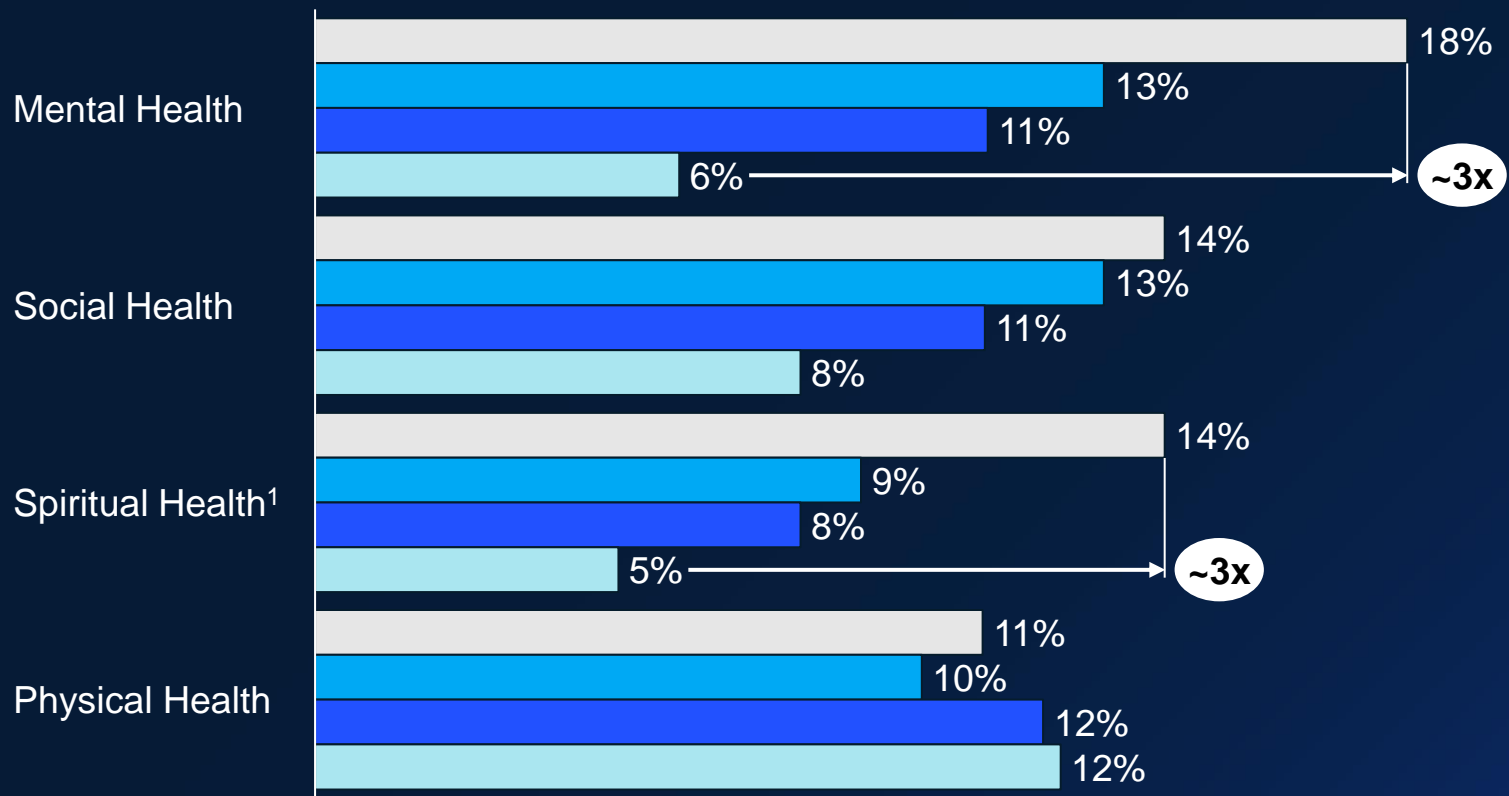
Our Global MHI survey not only shows the nuanced relationship between social media and mental health for Gen Z, but highlights digital mental health tools as a pathway to better health in Gen Z

- 1** More **Gen Z respondents reported poor or very poor health** across most dimensions of health than other generations
- 2** While **social media has positive effects on mental health across generations**, Gen Z is the most likely to report negative effects
- 3** Many Gen Z indicate that **digital mental health programs (e.g., online and mobile therapy programs) are avenues for positive mental health impact**, and there is an opportunity to better support Gen Z in finding digital tools to support their mental health

Gen Z reported poorer health across most dimensions of health

■ Generation Z (18-24) (n=16,823) ■ Millennials (25-40) (n=13,080) ■ Generation X (41-56) (n=6,937) ■ Baby Boomers (57-76) (n=5,119)

Self-reported health as poor or very poor, % of respondents



~1 in 5 Gen Z respondents reported poor mental health, more than any other generation

Gen Z reported poor spiritual health **~3x** more than Baby Boomers and reported poor physical health at par with older generations

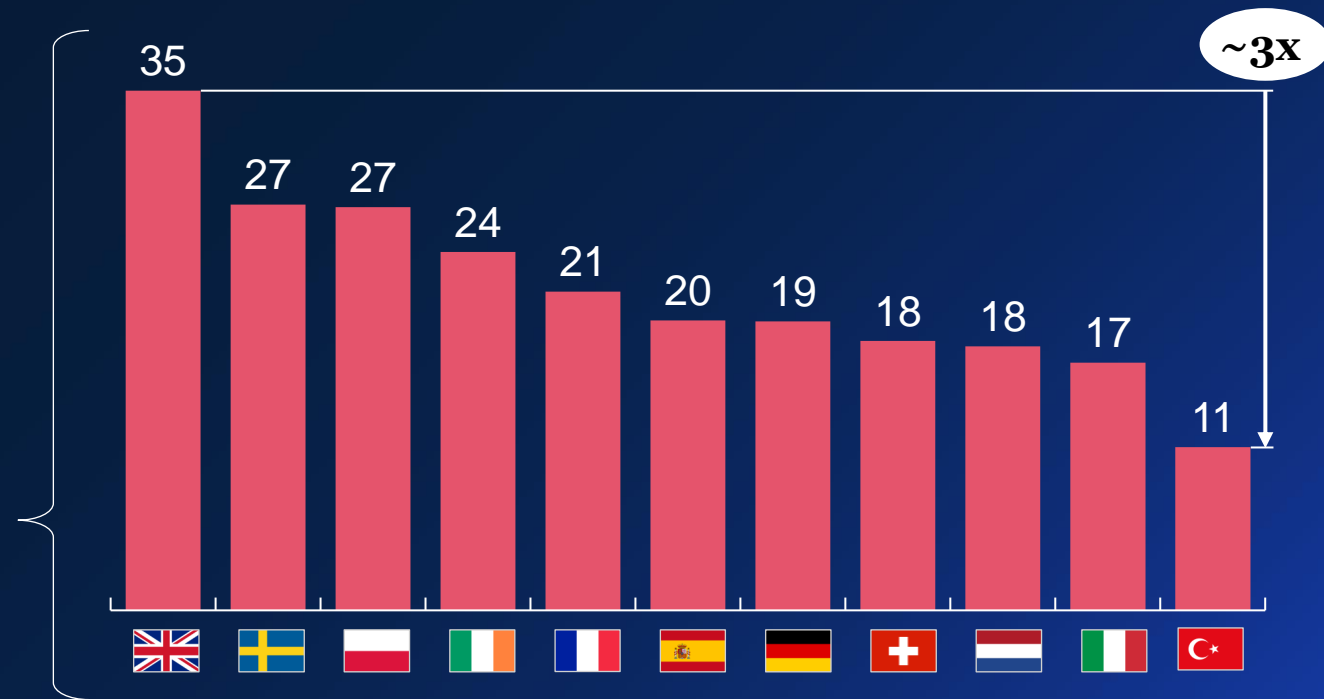
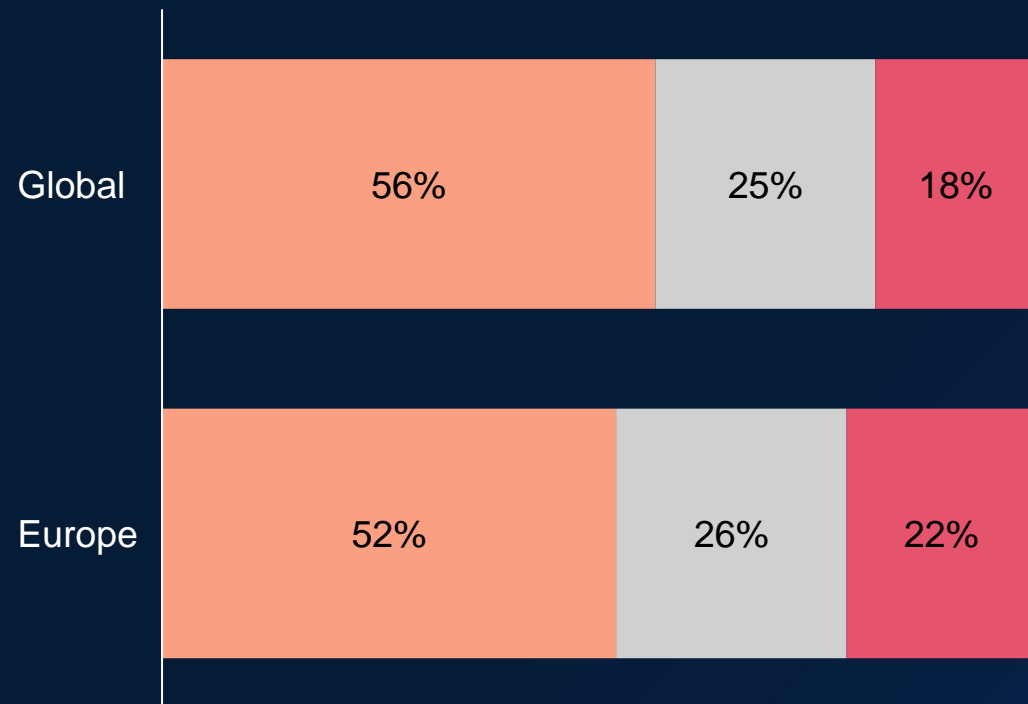
1. Spiritual health enables people to integrate meaning in their lives (strong spiritual health does not necessarily imply the adoption of religious beliefs, in general, or any specific dogma.) It includes: (1) a strong sense of purpose, (2) a broad sense of connection to something larger themselves, whether to a community, a calling, or to a form of divinity, and (3) The ability to feel rooted and mindful in the present moment

In Europe, Gen Z were more likely to report poor mental health, with important within-region differences

■ Good or Very Good
 ■ Neutral
 ■ Poor or Very Poor

Self reported mental health status, % of respondents

“Poor” or “very poor” mental health, % of respondents

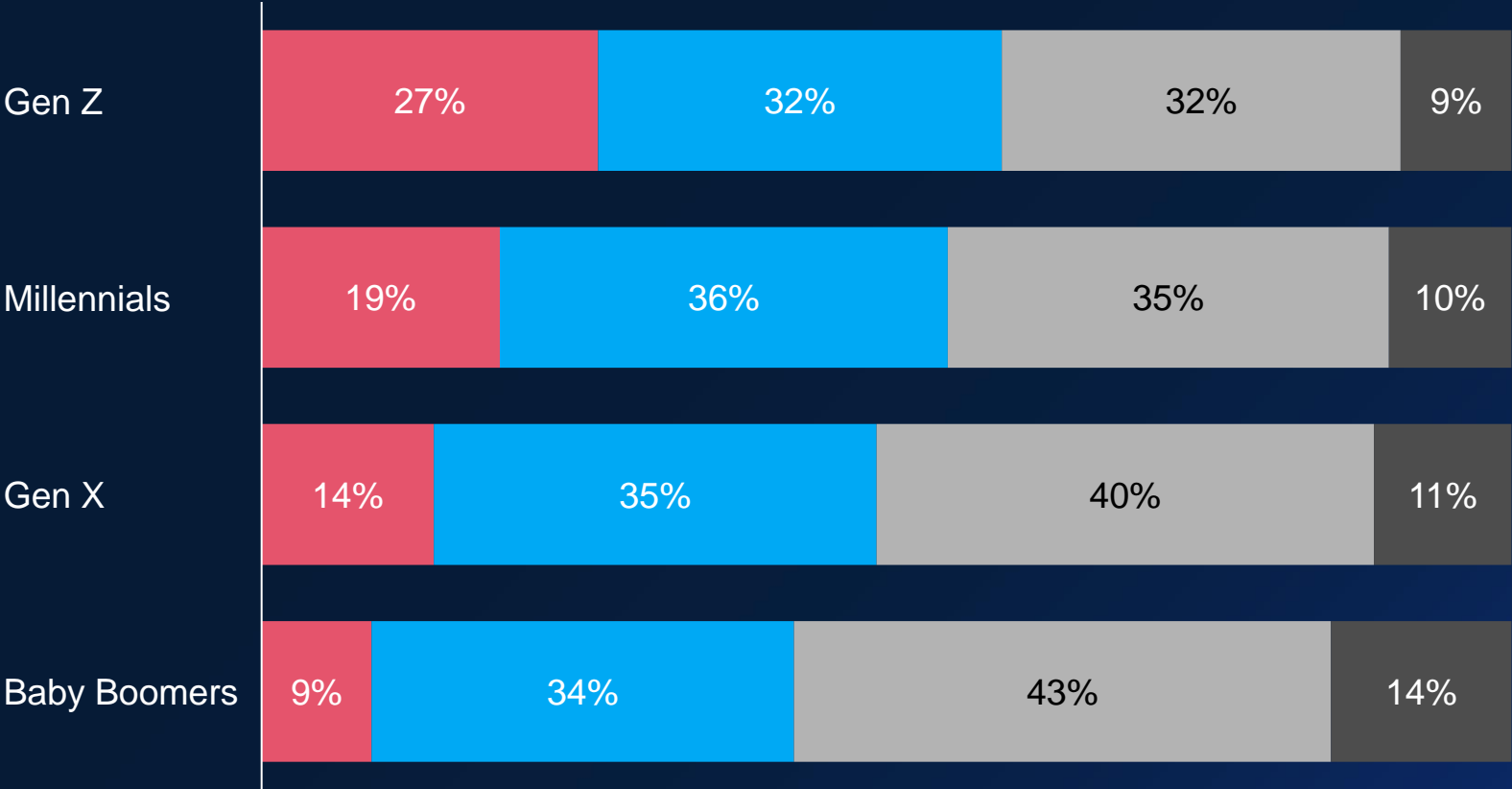


Gen Z mental health varies significantly across Europe, with Gen Z in the UK **~3x more** likely to report poor mental health than Gen Z in Turkey

Gen Z was more likely to report negative effects of social media on their mental health

■ Negatively impacts ■ Positively impacts ■ Does not affect ■ n.a.

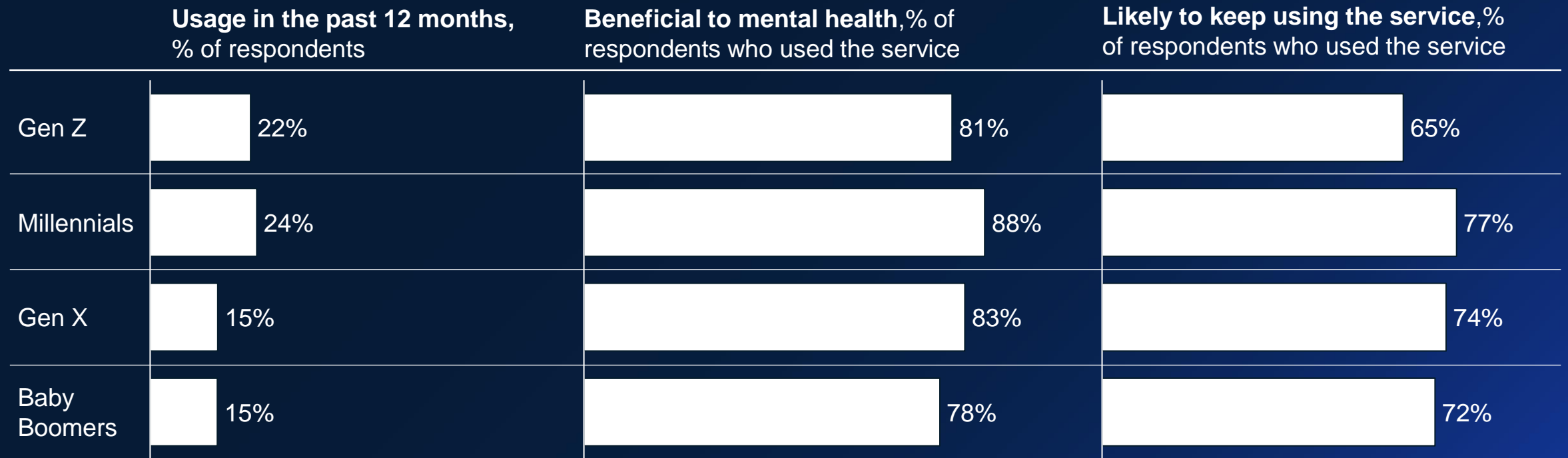
Reported impact of technology and social media on mental health, % of respondents



Gen Z respondents were **3X more** likely than Baby Boomers to report social media having a negative effect on their mental health

Technology, such as digital mental health care tools, also offers opportunities to improve mental health

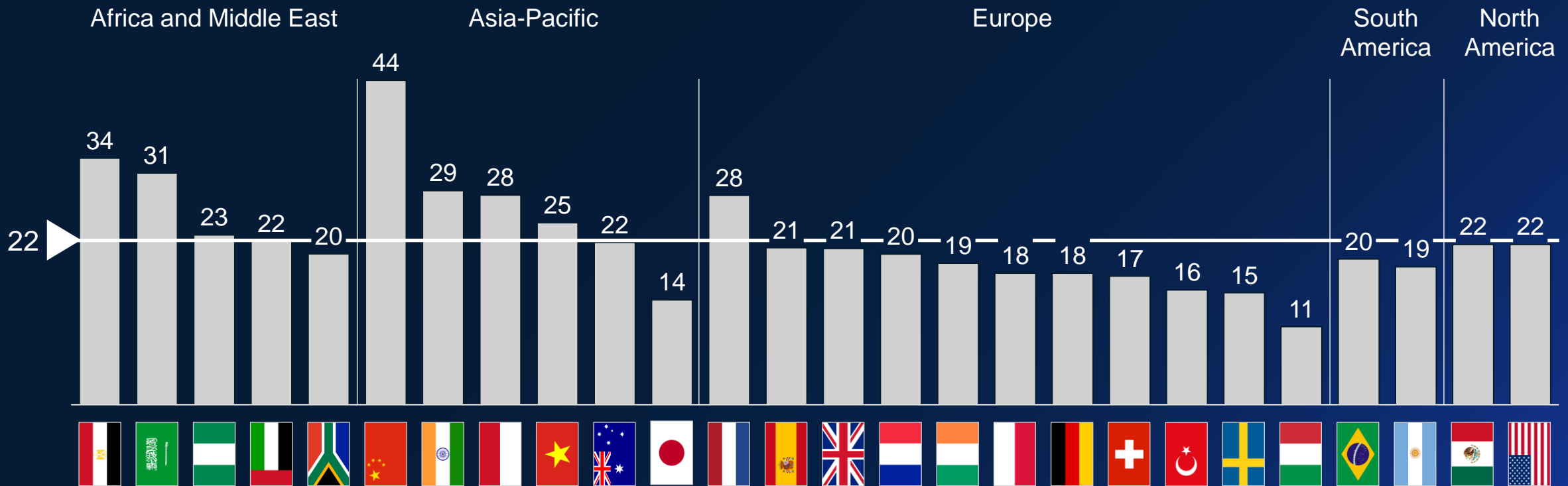
Reported behavior towards and feedback on digital mental health care



While Gen Z and Millennials reported using digital mental health care the most, Gen Z was the least likely to continue using the programs

Gen Z respondents in the Netherlands have the highest utilization of digital mental health care in Europe, among surveyed countries

Respondents who used digital mental health care in the past 12 months, % of respondents



While Gen Z in most European countries report using digital mental health care less than the global average, the Netherlands leads the region with above-average engagement

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Investment activity in mental health

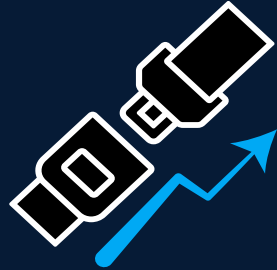


Insights on Gen Z mental health



Vision and roadmap for the future

Systems-level change is achievable



Seat belt usage increased from 14% in 1983 to **90% in 2016.**



Prevalence of smoking among men **has declined 50 percent or more** in Japan, many European countries, and the United States over the past 50 years.



Mask wearing in public went from globally rare to common in several Asian countries in the 1990s, and then to a **near global norm during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Everyone has a role to play – systems level change requires a virtuous cycle of both institutional & individual stakeholder action



Governments consider how to use resources to positively affect drivers of mental health while developing strategies to improve health literacy.



Private sector organizations realize they are in the business of mental health – that most products and services they offer could affect the drivers of mental health.



Employers recognize the impact of workplace experiences on employee mental health and adapt to improve the working environment.

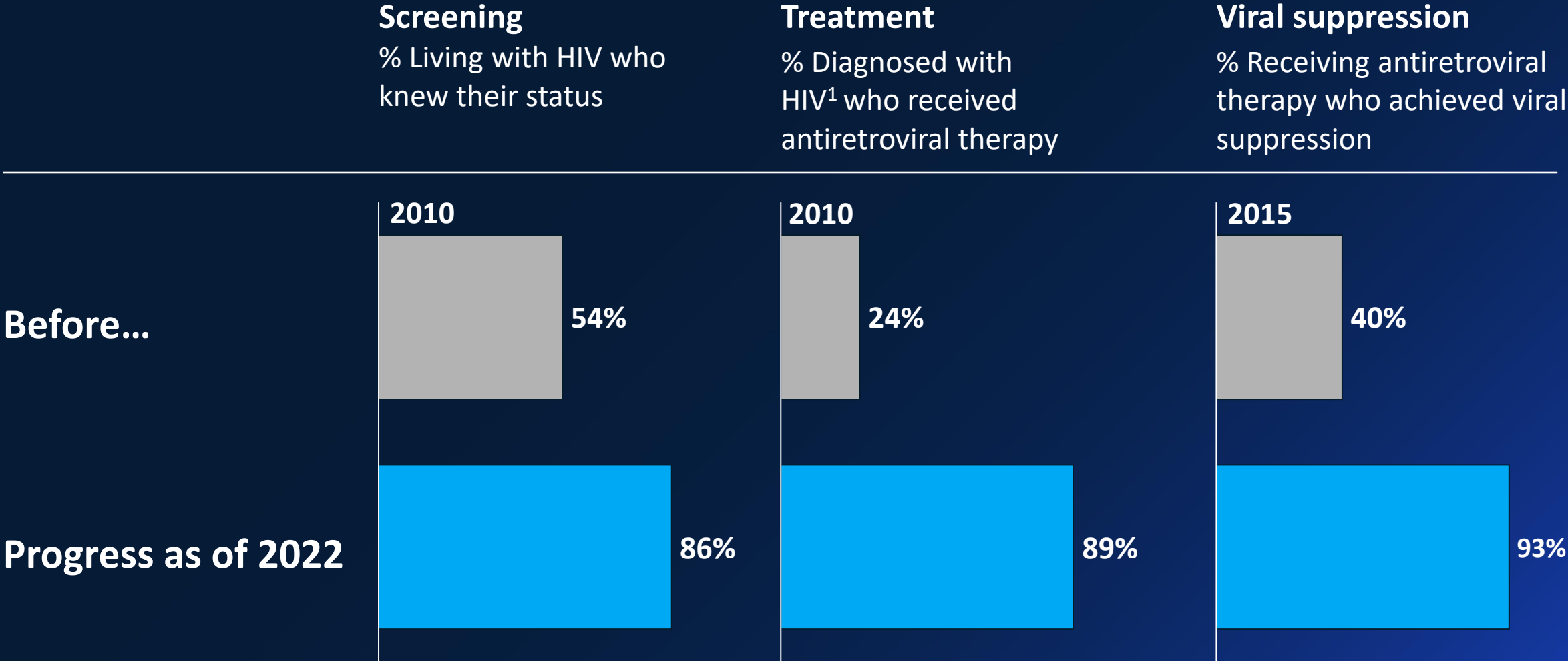


The health sector embraces the need to modernize and adapt – to innovate and improve.



The philanthropic sector invests in research and new solutions, convenes stakeholders and drives advocacy to influence change.

The 90-90-90 vision – taking inspiration from UNAIDs



Alignment for Progress's 90-90-90 vision – Mental Health as Essential Health

By 2033...

90%

Of individuals are screened for mental and substance use disorders.

90%

Of those identified as needing care will receive evidence-based treatment.

90%

Of those receiving treatment can manage their symptoms in recovery.

The 90-90-90 roadmap is framed around a public health approach, where robust, population-level prevention measures and infrastructure are essential.

We encourage you to collaborate with McKinsey Health Institute to add years to life and life to years

Keep in the flow as an MHI collaborator

Join the dialogue as part of our ecosystem

Engage as a partner

Follow us on LinkedIn

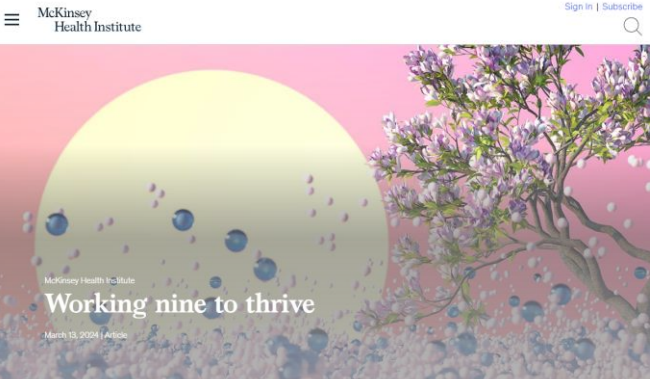
Find out more on our engagement platform at
mckinsey.com/mhi



Thank you!

A decorative graphic on the right side of the slide consists of numerous thin, light blue lines that originate from a point near the bottom center and fan out towards the top right corner, creating a sense of motion and depth against the dark blue background.

To learn more...



By [Jacqueline](#) [Patrick Simon](#)

Better all
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A global business collaboration making the workplace

Work has a profound in
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work to advance their
their workers. The new
a strong sense of work.



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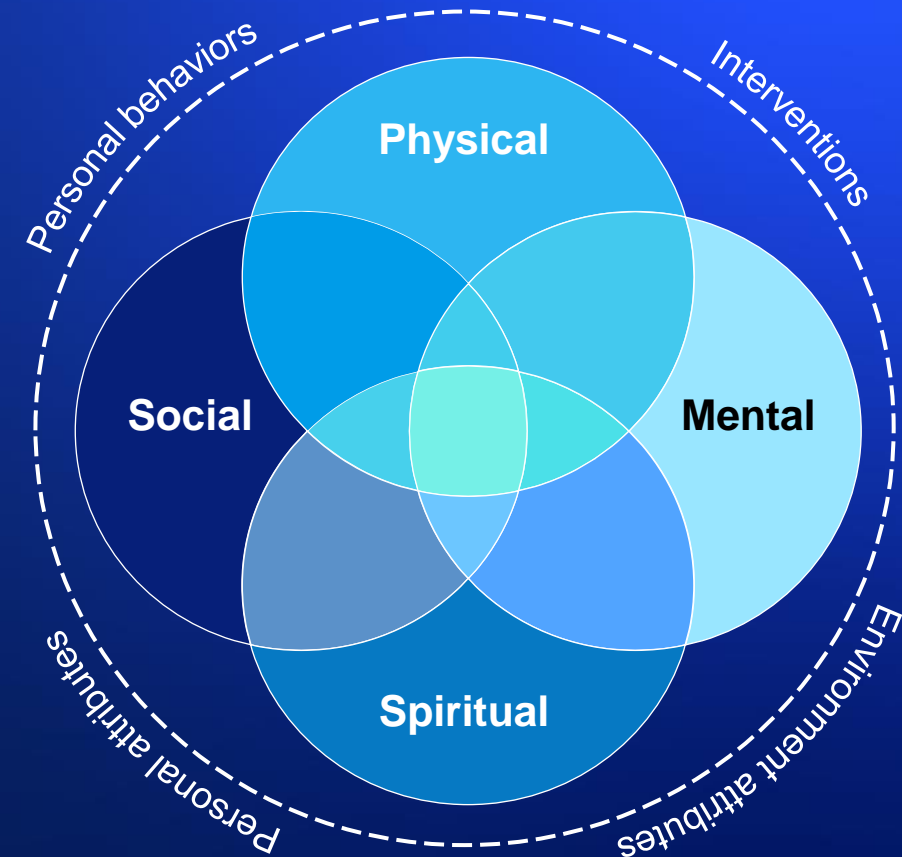
to up-
alth.

Visit our Employee Health Platform to learn more about our **free-of-charge survey** and **action planning tools**

Holistic health includes each of MHI's four dimensions of health

- Social:** an individual's ability to build healthy, nurturing, genuine, and supportive relationships
- Physical:** the extent to which an individual can competently perform physical tasks and activities without significant discomfort
- Mental:** an individual's cognitive, behavioral, and emotional state of being
- Spiritual:** the extent to which people integrate meaning in their lives

Holistic Health: an integrated view of an individual's mental, physical, spiritual, and social functioning



Critical employee health

An employee's health may shift along this continuum over time

Strong employee health



Achieving good holistic health requires interventions at all levels of the organisation

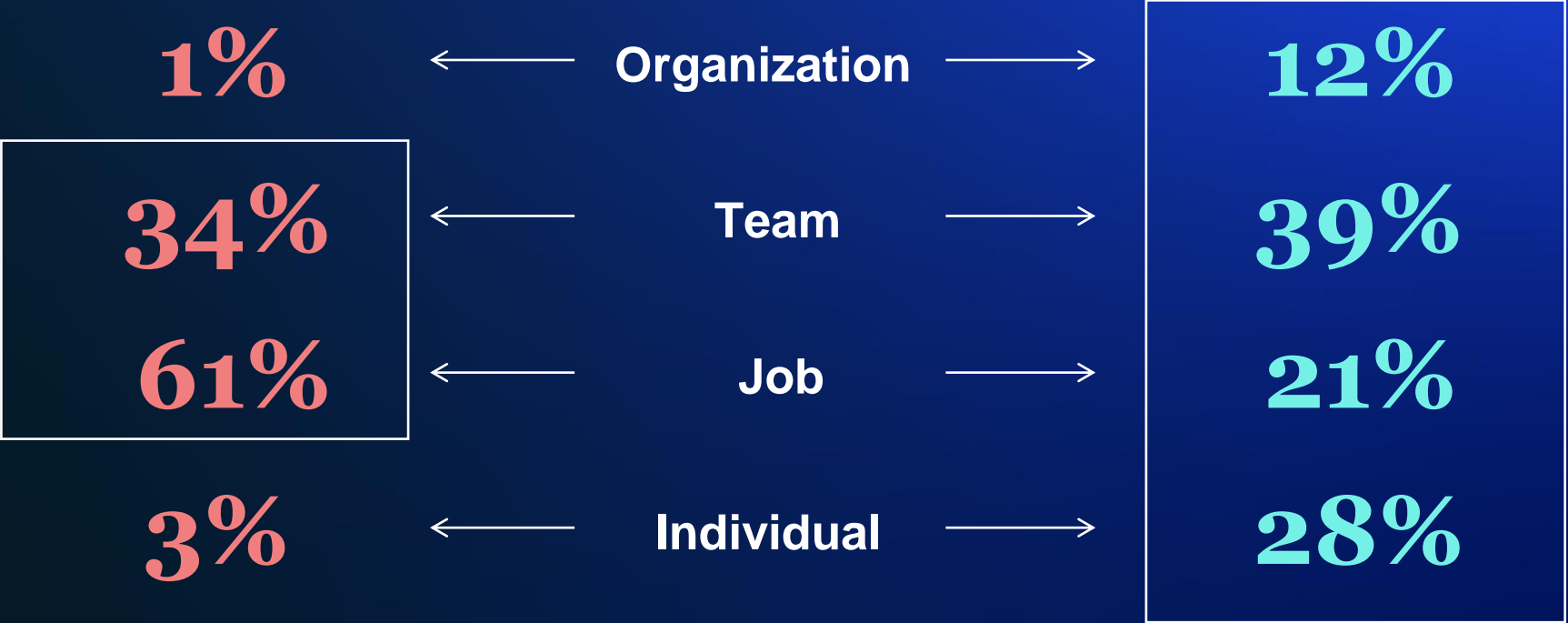
Impact of demands and enablers on outcomes by organizational level, % of variance in outcomes explained

 Areas of highest potential impact

Burnout symptoms¹



Holistic health²

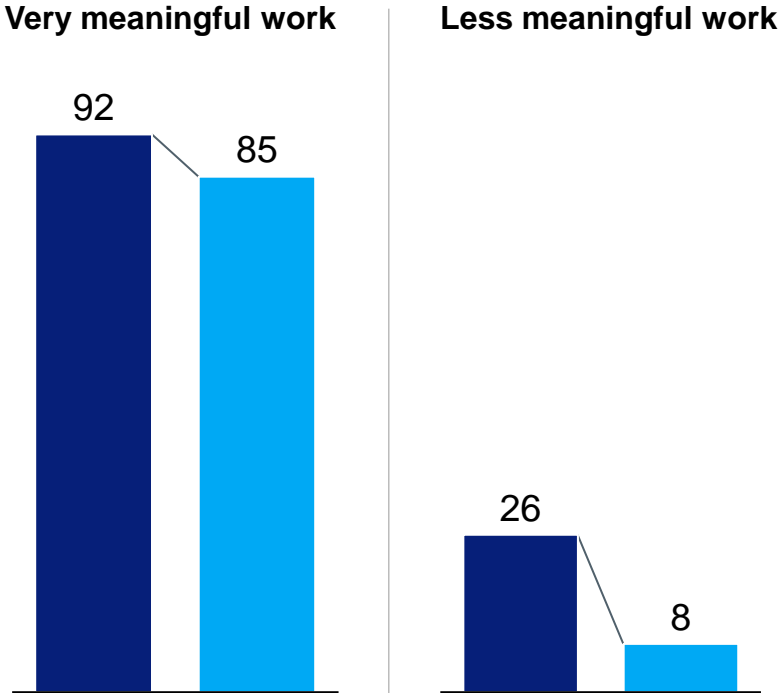
1. Total variance explained 68% | 2. Total variance explained 49%

Addressing a top demand: Does more meaningful work compensate for a toxic workplace?

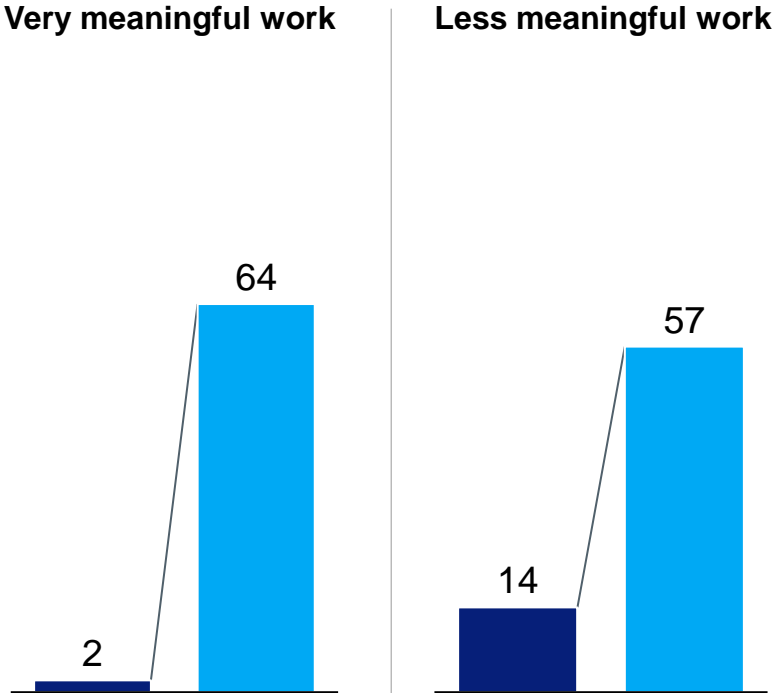
■ Reporting low levels of toxic behavior at work
 ■ Reporting high levels of toxic behavior at work

Employees who reported good holistic health or high burnout symptoms by meaningfulness of work, % share

Good holistic health¹



High burnout symptoms¹



In toxic environments, those who rate their work less meaningful rate themselves 11x less holistically healthy than those who view their work as meaningful

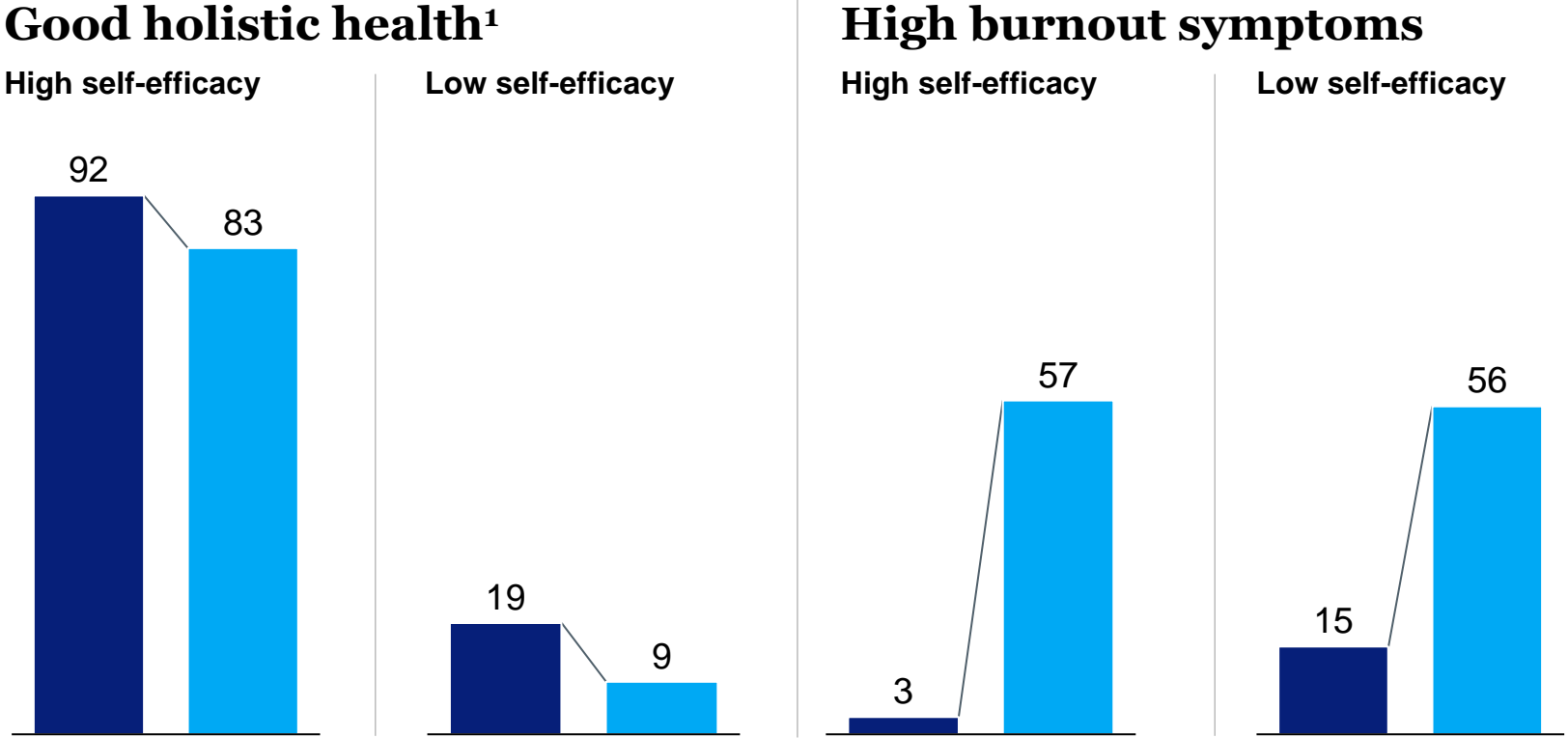
However, in toxic environments, meaningful work does not reduce burnout symptoms

1. "low" refers to bottom quartile (25%) of respondents, and "high" and "good" refer to top quartile (25%) of respondents. There is a statistically significant relationship between experiencing toxic workplace behavior and holistic health/burnout, moderated by meaningful work

Addressing a top demand: Does greater self-efficacy compensate for role ambiguity at work?

■ Reporting low levels of role ambiguity at work
 ■ Reporting high levels of role ambiguity at work

Employees who reported good holistic health or high burnout symptoms by self-efficacy at work, % share



When role ambiguity is high, those who report low self-efficacy rate themselves 9x less holistically healthy than those who report high self-efficacy

However, when role ambiguity is high, self-efficacy does not reduce burnout symptoms

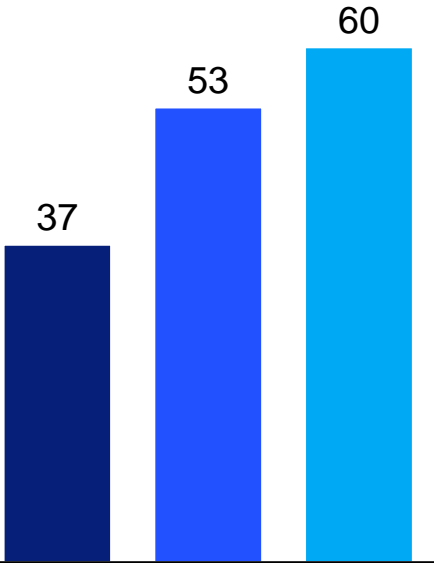
1. "low" refers to bottom quartile (25%) of respondents, and "high" and "good" refer to top quartile (25%) of respondents. There is a statistically significant relationship between experiencing toxic workplace behavior and holistic health/burnout, moderated by self-efficacy

Additional findings: Does work location matter?

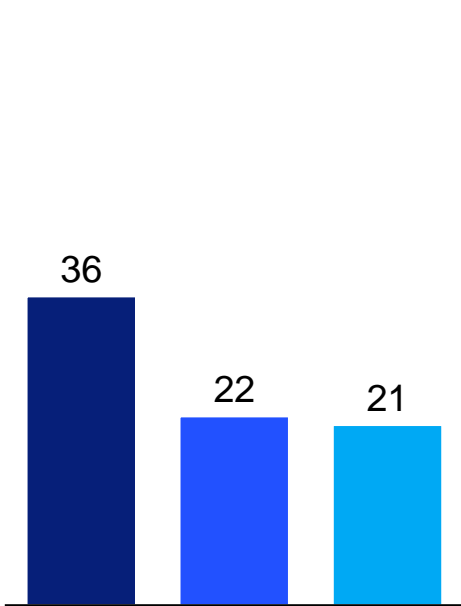
■ 100% in person, want to work 100% remotely ■ Hybrid or 100% in person, want more remote ■ In ideal work location

Reported good holistic health, innovative work behaviors or high burnout by work location, % share

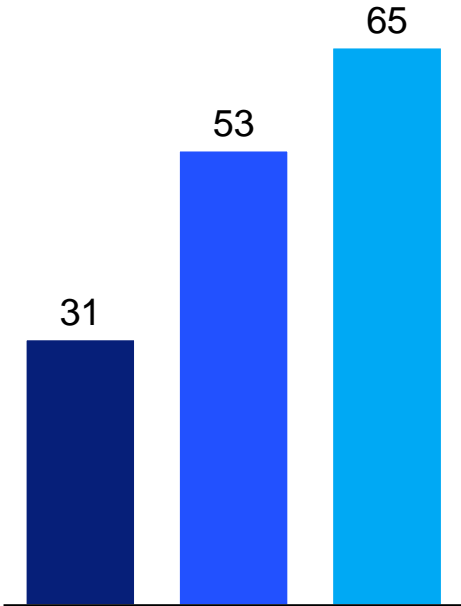
Positive holistic health¹



High burnout symptoms



High innovative work behaviors



1. Positive holistic health represents the percentage of respondents that scored an average of 4 or higher across the 4 dimensions of health. High burnout symptoms represents the percentage of respondents that scored an average of 3 or higher across the 4 dimensions of burnout symptoms High innovative work behaviors refer to top quartile innovative work behaviors

As workers move further away from their ideal working location, their holistic health and innovative work behaviors decrease by 2x while burnout symptoms increase by 2x

An exploratory analysis revealed that 51% of the students who practiced the taught activities maintained improved mental well-being

Long-term analysis of a psychoeducational course on university students' mental well-being

Objective



The study aimed to investigate the long-term effectiveness of a **psychoeducational course** designed to improve mental well-being among **university students**

The course focused on teaching **evidence-based techniques** derived from **positive psychology**



Methodology



The researchers followed up on a sample of **228 undergraduate students** from various disciplines at the University of Bristol who had taken the **positive psychology course 1 or 2 years prior**

The study employed a **pre-registered design**, meaning the data analysis plan was established before looking at the results to minimize bias

Researchers collected data on the students' current mental well-being using a university-wide survey.



Result



The initial analysis **did not reveal a clear long-term benefit** for all participants who had taken the course compared to students who hadn't

However, researchers conducted an exploratory analysis focusing on a subgroup – the **115 students (roughly 51%)** who reported **continuing to practice the positive psychology activities** learned in the course. This subgroup showed **significantly higher levels of sustained mental well-being** compared to the follow-up period

This finding suggests that the course may be effective in promoting long-term mental well-being, but only for students who **actively engage with the practices** taught in the course

[Home](#) > [Higher Education](#) > [Article](#)

Long-term analysis of a psychoeducational course on university students' mental well-being

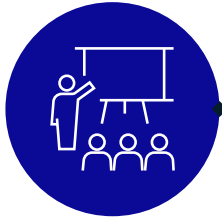
[Open access](#) | Published: 08 March 2024



Higher Education

Purpose and meaning interventions

Not exhaustive



Launched the Unilever “**Discover your purpose**” **workshop**: a one-day workshop¹



Gave employees the opportunity to **identify their personal purpose**



Helped employees to **put their purpose at the heart of their development & career**

Impact (2021)²:

49% Higher intrinsic motivation

33% Higher job satisfaction

27% Higher list satisfaction



Launched a single volunteering hub to enable employees to post and join projects³



Extended the support through **donation matching program** as well as corporate donations⁴



Committed as a signatory of the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Publishers Compact**⁵

Impact (2022)⁴:

663 Volunteering hours spent

241 Goods donated

625 CHF in monetary donations



1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2sGDZTMddCY> | 2. <https://www.betterspace.uk/blog/why-individual-purpose-is-important-lessons-from-tim-munden/> | 3. <https://progressreport.frontiersin.org/community#our-people> | 4. <https://www.frontiersin.org/news/2023/01/25/frontiers-volunteers-thinking-globally-acting-locally/> | 5. <https://www.frontiersin.org/news/2020/11/30/frontiers-joins-un-sdg-publishers-compact/>

Unilever is emphasizing the importance and impact of placing purpose at the heart of the organization and aligning it on organization, job and individual levels

Context

Unilever is a multinational consumer goods company with an extensive portfolio of products in personal care, foods, refreshments and home care. In 2023, it ranked 6th largest Fast-Moving Consumer Goods company globally by net sales.²

Unilever developed The Unilever “Discover your purpose” in 2017³, a one-day workshop aimed to give people the opportunity to identify their personal purpose and put it at the heart of their development and career.



Intervention approach

In 2010, Unilever launched the **Unilever Leadership Development Program (ULDP)** including workshops on “**Developing Leadership Purpose**”, these workshops ran until 2016 and covered 100% of top leadership with the goal to create senior leadership team purpose to drive integration and high performance.³

In 2017, Unilever decided to extend the workshops and developed the “**Discover your Purpose**” workshops. The workshops ran with over 55k of their people and were aimed at helping employees **discover their professional as well as personal purpose**, with the belief that “**people with purpose thrive and companies with purpose last**”. Each workshop is conducted in small groups, led by a facilitator. The group are encouraged to explore crucible moments in life that give leading indicators to values, beliefs, and purpose. The goal is **for each participant to establish a connection with their purpose** and to embark on a personal journey to establish ways in which to live it.⁸

Unilever’s global wellbeing initiatives are driven by a **Chief Health and Wellbeing Officer**. The company also **conducts several surveys throughout the year** to pulse check employees’ mental health, wellbeing, overall engagement with provided tools to track utilization of their interventions.⁷

Outcomes

Part of the workshops were run in a randomised control trial in a joint study with the London School of Economics, a link between the people who had attended this workshop and **significantly increased levels of motivations, engagement and performance.**

49% Higher intrinsic motivation

33% Higher job satisfaction

27% Higher list satisfaction

Several individual Unilever offices (Ireland, UK) have been externally recognized for outstanding workplace wellbeing support.^{11,12}

1. <https://www.unilever.com/our-company/>
2. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/260963/leading-fmcg-companies-worldwide-based-on-sales/>
3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2sGDZTMddCY>
4. <https://workforcenutrition.org/webapi/news-detail/45>
5. <https://www.unilever.com/planet-and-society/responsible-business/employee-wellbeing/>
6. <https://icoh.confex.com/icoh/2012/webprogram/Paper7922.html>
7. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-we-take-care-our-people-unilever-leena-nair>

8. <https://fouracresleadership.com/news/discover-your-purpose-goes-external/>
9. <https://www.unilever.com/planet-and-society/future-of-work/future-workplace/>
10. <https://www.betterspace.uk/blog/why-individual-purpose-is-important-lessons-from-tim-munden/>
11. <https://www.unilever.co.uk/news/2022/unilever-ireland-recognised-as-a-great-place-to-work/>
12. <https://www.rsph.org.uk/rsph-health-and-wellbeing-awards-health-and-wellbeing-in-workplaces-finalist-unilever-uk-ltd.html>

Emotional flexibility and general self-efficacy: A pilot training intervention study with knowledge workers

Context

- Emotional flexibility advancement has been found to be highly effective in clinical settings to treat, for example, depression, anxiety, and chronic pain. In the working context, encouraging results have also been seen in the public sector and limited studies in the private sector have revealed effectiveness
- No studies have yet looked at the effectiveness of developing these skills amongst high-paced, high-demanding, and highly-educated knowledge workers

What is emotional flexibility?

- Emotional flexibility (EF) is a concept central to so-called 'ACT' (Acceptance and Commitment Therapy) – a contextual and applied theory based on Relational Frame Theory (RFT). This theory and therapy has been successfully applied in clinical psychological therapeutic settings to treat, for example, anxiety, depression, stress, and pain regulation
- The ACT approach focuses on six cognitive sub-processes that are argued to form emotional flexibility: purpose and values, present moment awareness, acceptance, defusion, self-in-context, and committed action. At its core is the focus on helping patients to move toward what is important to them (aligned with their values), instead of moving away (avoidance behavior), as the latter may eventually lead to a reduced quality of life.
- For example, a patient with social anxiety learns how to still engage with friends and in a job despite anxiety, as opposed to withdraw from social engagement and potentially becoming isolated.

Methodology

- The participants in the study are knowledge workers from a private organization in Germany. Senior leaders in the organisation invited researchers to investigate the effect of (1) EF training and (2) the impact on parameters of health
- Data was collected through online surveys before and after an emotional flexibility workshop (non-)treatment. We conducted an experiment with treatment and control groups, with only the treatment group receiving an emotional flexibility training
- Both groups filled out a pre-process survey, followed by three short workshops (2x 4.5 hours, 1x 2.5 hours) over a period of weeks, with take home exercises in between sessions
- Content design of the workshops on extensive practical experience with and piloting of the workshop format introduced in Authentic Confidence¹, with a strong focus on aligning content with the context of knowledge workers

1. Brassey J, Van Dam N, Van Witteloostuijn A. Advancing Authentic Confidence through Emotional Flexibility. An evidence-based playbook of insights, practices and tools to shape your future: LuLu Publishing—Lulu.com; 2019.

Outcome

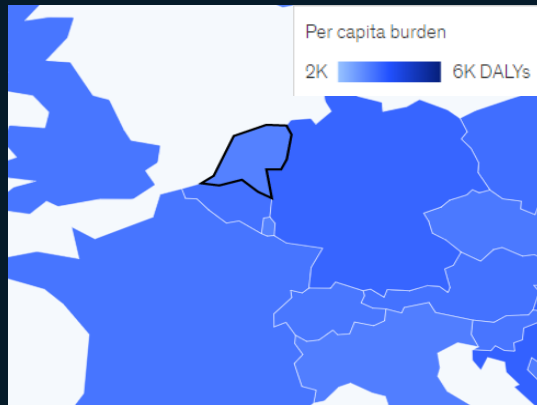
- Emotional flexibility improved significantly for the treatment group, whereas the improvements were minimal or negative for the control group.
- Furthermore, we reveal that General self-efficacy improved amongst treatment group participants (and not for control group participants), and that this is associated with emotional flexibility.
- Finally, we show that the improvements were higher for participants starting from a lower baseline.

Mental and substance-use disorder burden in the Netherlands

~16% of all-cause DALYs



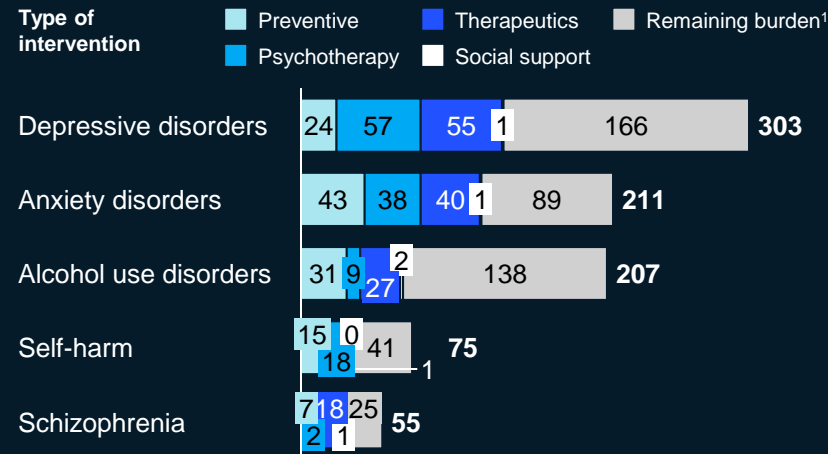
Total burden of mental and substance use disorders



Total estimated burden of mental and substance use disorders is **785K DALYs** (or **4K DALYs per 100k capita**), which is the lowest among its neighbors

~**35%** of burden is the **associated burden** (e.g., cirrhosis from alcohol use disorders, exacerbated diabetes from comorbid depression)

Estimated addressable burden for top 5 most burdensome disorders in the Netherlands



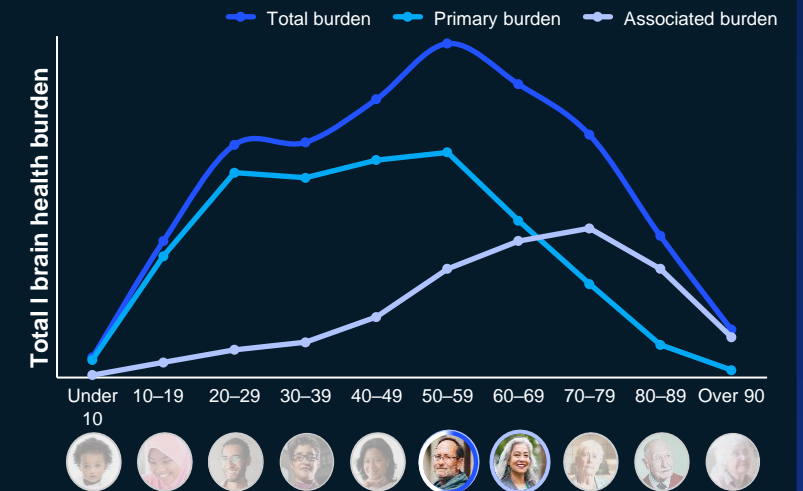
Depressive disorders (205K DALYs), **anxiety disorders** (198K DALYs) and **alcohol-use disorders** (128K DALYs) drive ~70% of the burden, but nearly 330K DALYs can be alleviated by focusing on these three disorders through a combination of prevention, psychotherapy, therapeutics, and social support



In 2015, the **economic costs of mental ill-health** in the Netherlands, including investment in the mental health system, the costs of lower employment and productivity, were equivalent ~5% of GDP or **€35.2bn**

- [OECD 2015](#)

Peak disease burden occurs between **50-59 years** of age. Peak primary burden occurs between **50-59 years**, while peak associated burden occurs much later, between **70-79 years**.



People between **50-59 years** of age experience the most burden (~20% of total burden) with **depressive disorders being the leading cause** for this age group, followed by anxiety disorders and alcohol-use disorders

Primary burden peaks earlier in life while associated burden continues to grow with age. **Investment into earlier interventions and treatment** could minimize considerable downstream burden and are also more cost-effective.

Alleviating burden earlier in life could also have additional benefits to the individual and society later in life such as **lower healthcare costs and higher productivity**. [Find out more here](#)

1. Remaining burden that cannot be treated with current available interventions