

Workplace Wellbeing

*...feeling good and
functioning well*

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what works
wellbeing

The UK's National Body for Wellbeing
Evidence, Policy & Practice

An independent collaborative
organisation set up to develop and
share robust, accessible and useful
evidence about wellbeing



Wellbeing is...

Simply put, it's about 'how we're doing' as individuals, communities and as a nation, and how sustainable that is for the future. It is sometimes referred to as social welfare or social value.



Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

whatworkswellbeing.org | [@WhatWorksWB](https://twitter.com/WhatWorksWB)



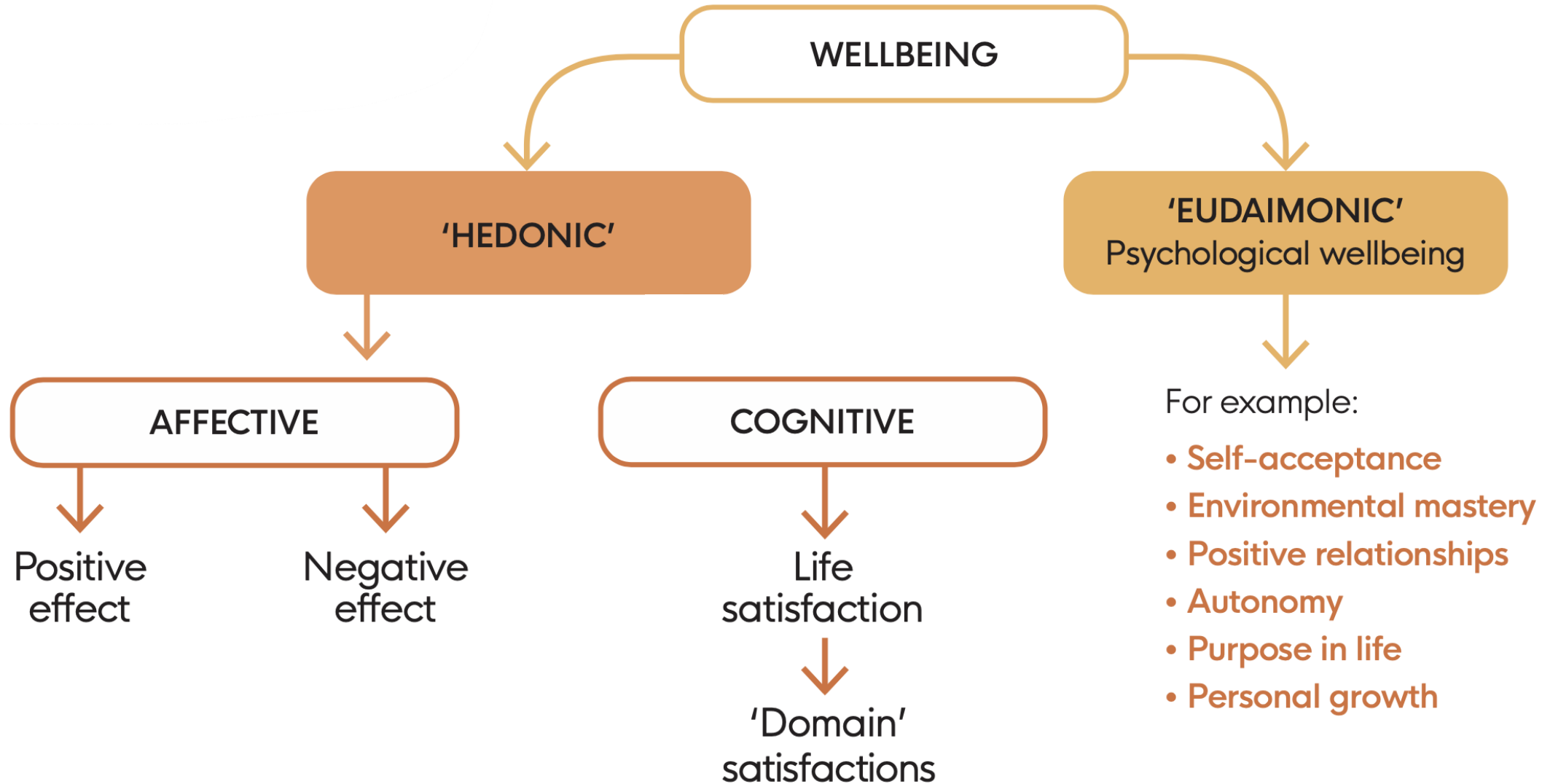
Wellbeing is personal and subjective

- It's about how we feel ourselves and how we experience life as a whole.
- It's quality of life, good physical and mental health, relationships, and being part of our communities.
- It's about how external/ environmental conditions affect our lives and how we function in society.

It's different for different people.



Components of self-reported wellbeing

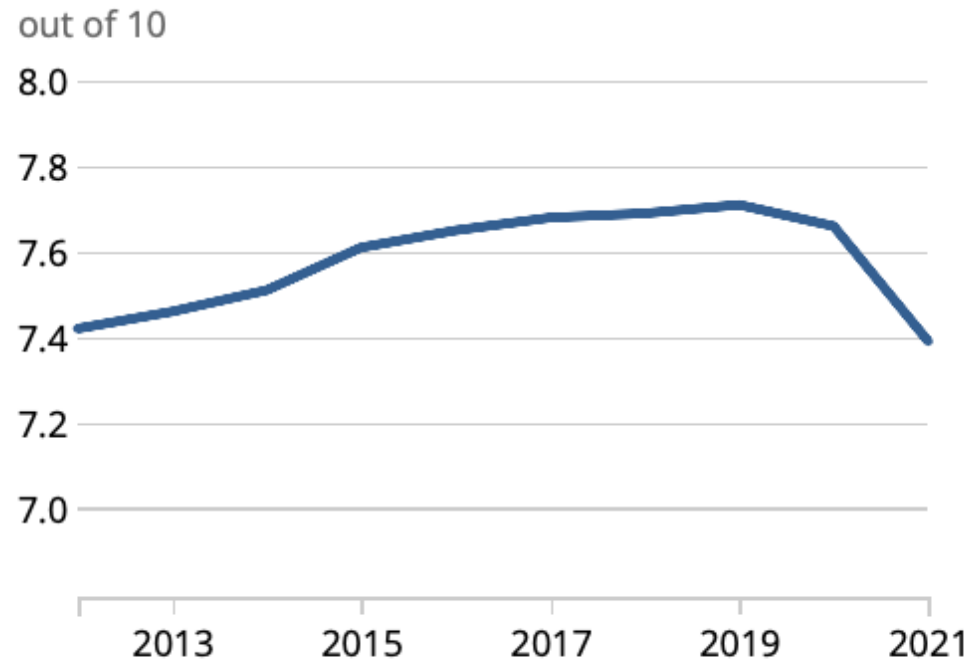


Personal well-being measures deteriorated in the year ending March 2021

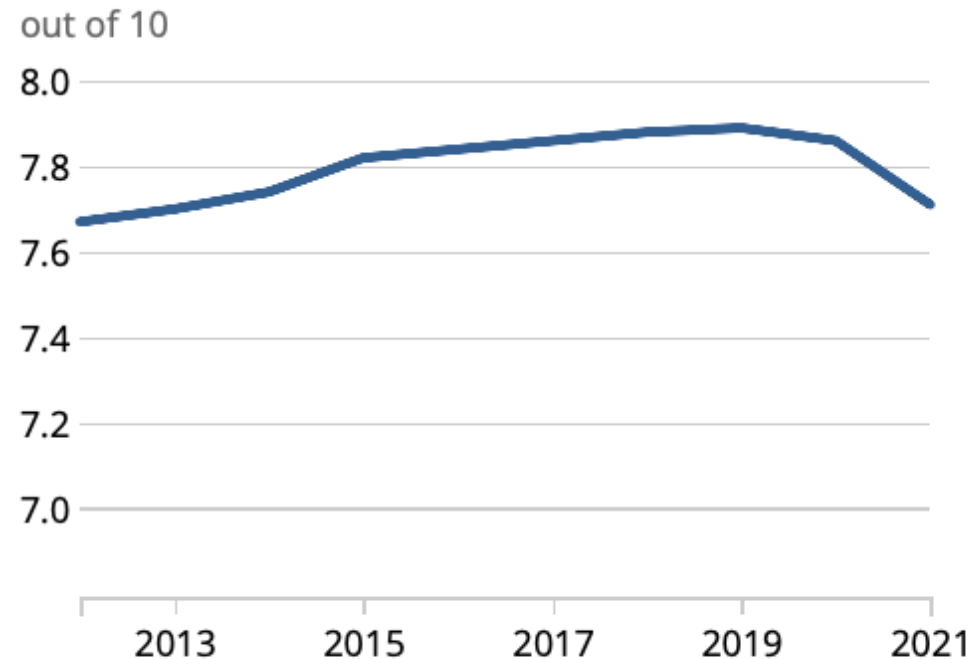
March 2021

Average personal well-being ratings, UK, years ending March 2012 to March 2021

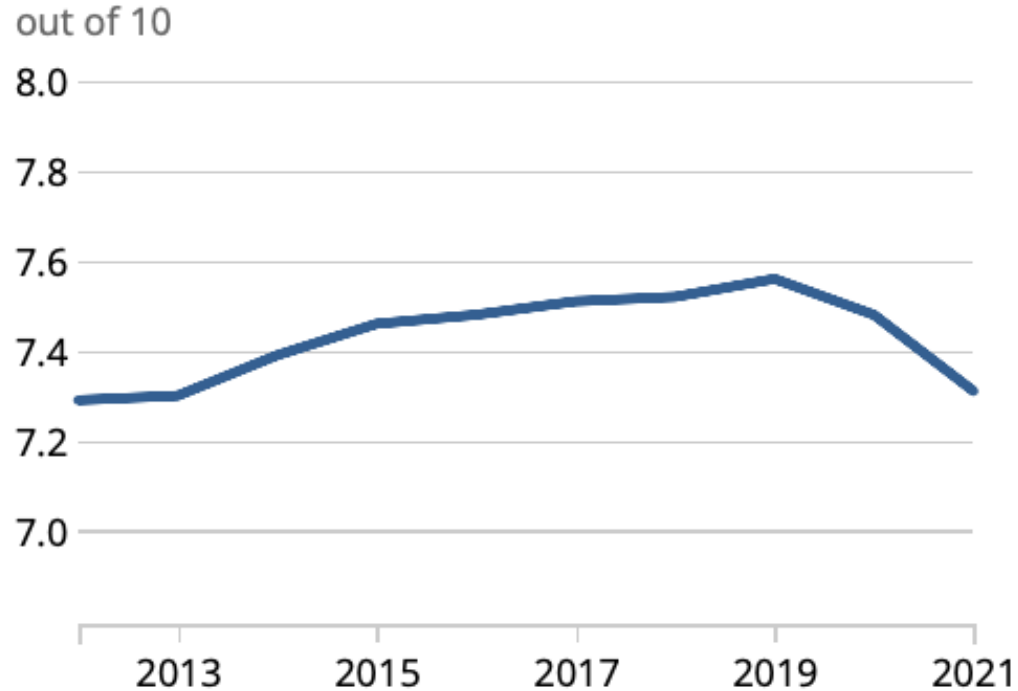
Overall, how **satisfied** are you with your life nowadays?



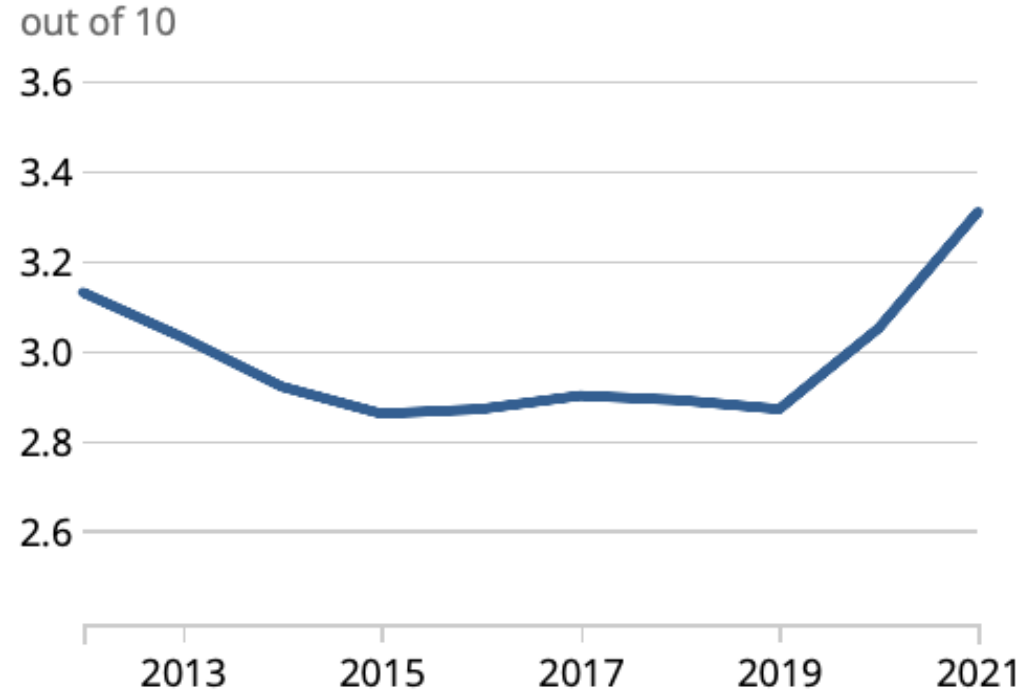
Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are **worthwhile**?



Overall, how **happy** did you feel yesterday?



Overall, how **anxious** did you feel yesterday?

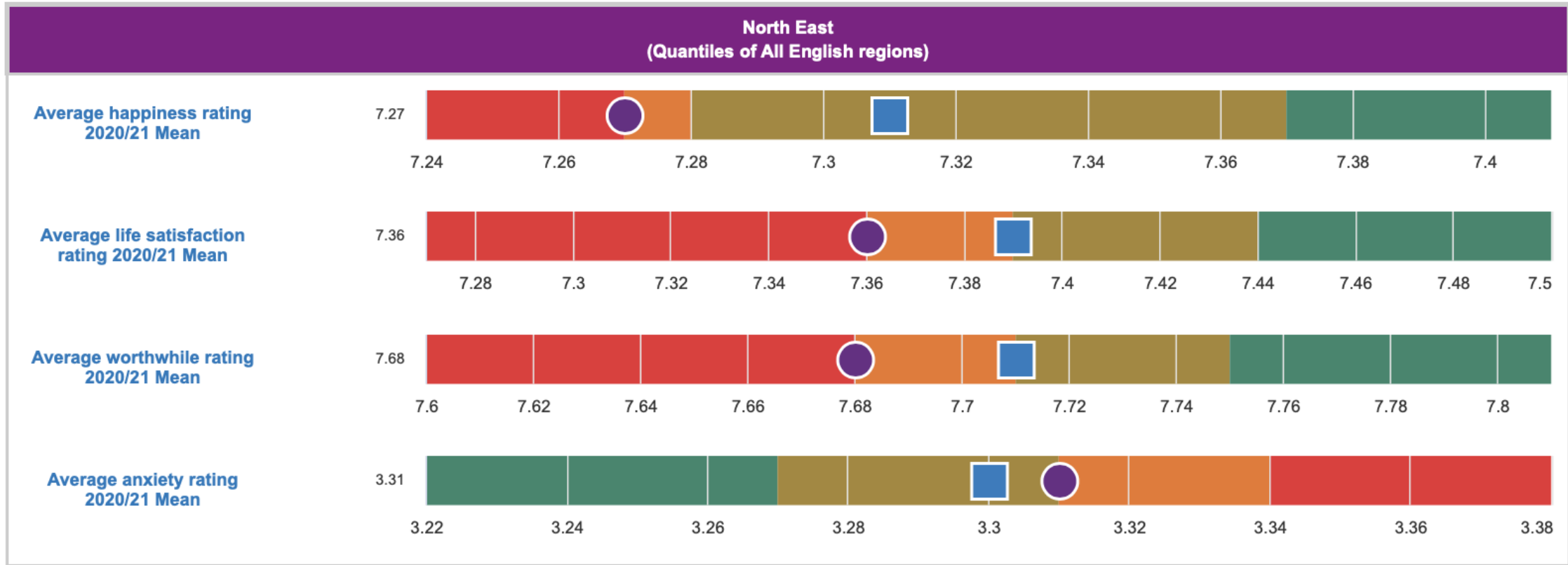


Source: Office for National Statistics – Annual Population Survey

Average self-reported wellbeing over time for Yorkshire and Humberside & All English regions (LG Inform)



Average self-reported wellbeing in North East & All English regions



● North East

■ Mean for All English regions



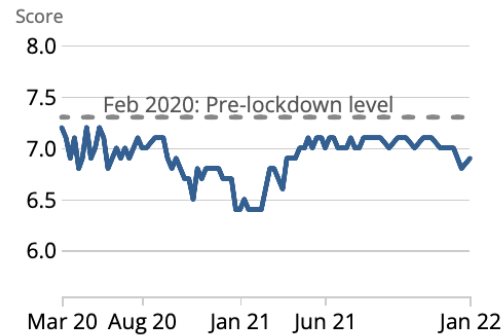
The impact of the pandemic on personal wellbeing

Evaluative

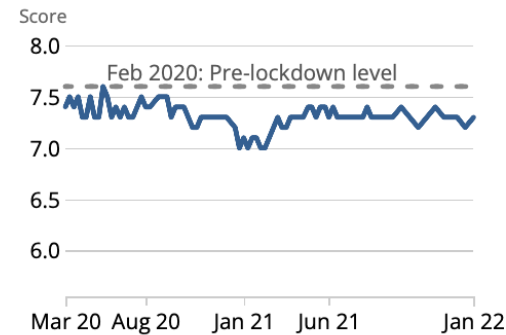
Life Satisfaction – moves more slowly but more lasting. Affected by employment, health & relationships

Adults in Great Britain, March 2020 to January 2022

Overall, how **satisfied** are you with your life nowadays?



Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are **worthwhile**?



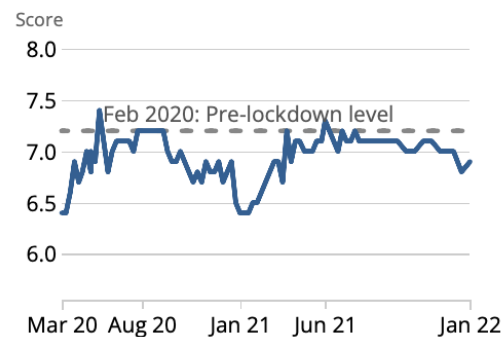
Eudaimonic / Purpose

Worthwhile – moves more slowly but important. Affected by job quality, relationships, time use, religion, caring/giving.

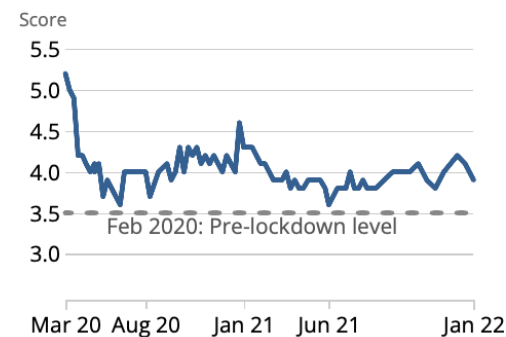
Positive Affect

Happiness – moves more rapidly and more impacted by time use. Needs regular top up and greater frequency.

Overall, how **happy** did you feel yesterday?



Overall, how **anxious** did you feel yesterday?

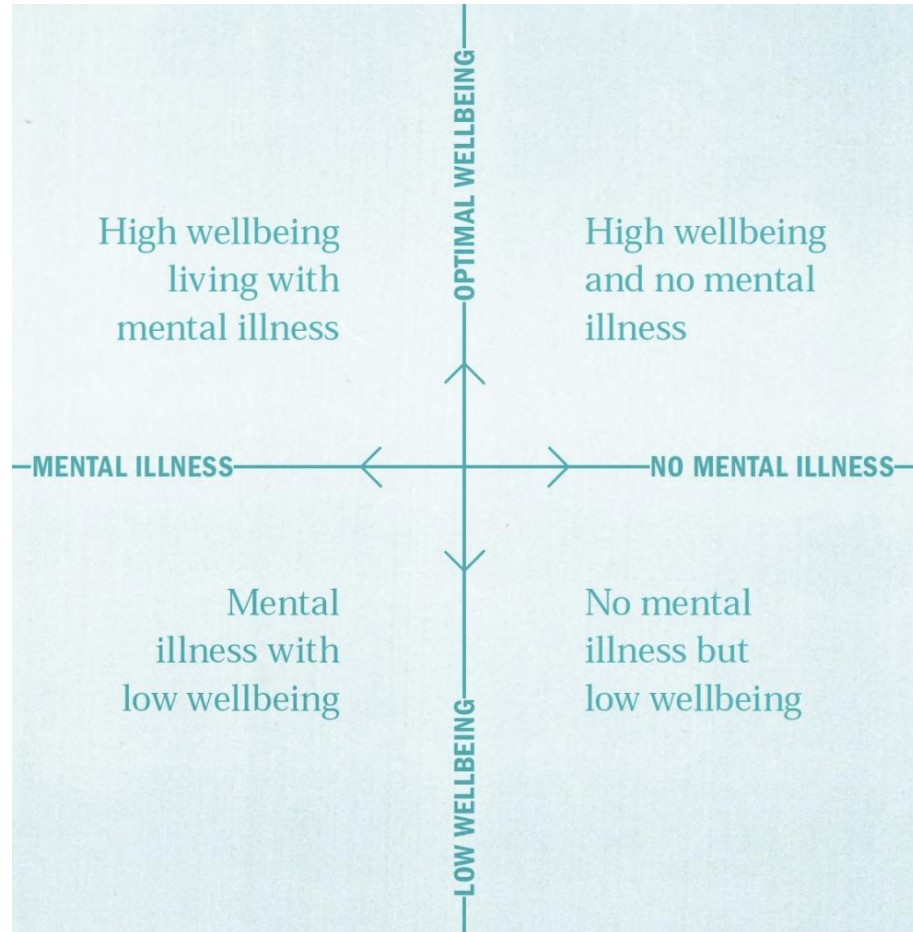


Negative Affect

Anxiety – moves more rapidly and linked with fear, safety and financial concerns



Mental Health and Wellbeing



Mental health and wellbeing: dual continuum

Mental health refers to a spectrum of experience, from good mental health to mental illness and distress.

Wellbeing includes wider physical, social and economic experience.



What matters for wellbeing?



Determinants of subjective wellbeing, based on quantitative analysis of effect sizes.



Greater negative link with wellbeing



Mixed evidence or no effect



Greater positive link with wellbeing



personal

Loneliness

Poor health

Having a child

Someone to rely on

Partner relationship



wider environment & play

Basic needs not met

Air pollution

Noise pollution

Music

Physical activity

Green space

Trust



work

Unemployed

Low quality work

Longer commute

Years of education




High quality work




Employed

Very few things impact wellbeing as much as work



unemployment damages wellbeing







   **Unemployment is damaging to people's wellbeing** regardless of their age, gender, level of education, ethnicity or part of the country in which they live. The longer the time unemployed, the worse the effect.

   **People do not adapt to unemployment.** Unlike the impact of many other life events, their wellbeing is permanently reduced.

but it affects people differently

  **Gender matters.** Men's wellbeing is more affected by the incidence and duration of unemployment.

  **Age matters.** Wellbeing may decline further for young people, particularly if the spell of unemployment is longer.'



  **Effects on others.** Unemployment not only affects the person who lost their job, it also reduces the wellbeing of their spouse, especially female spouses.



(re)employment boosts wellbeing





   **Re-employment leads to higher wellbeing**



but it depends on the type of work

  **Men appear to gain more** than women when they are re-employed, but it depends on the type of work.


  **Job quality.** The increase in wellbeing is smaller for those who transition into a job with less prestige, lower pay or lower autonomy.


  **Temporary jobs.** Increases in wellbeing is smaller for those who enter into temporary jobs compared to permanent work (and wellbeing declines if move from standard to non-standard employment).

what mitigates the damaging effect of unemployment?

  **Social support**
Those who can rely on social support from family and friends.

  **Living in an area with high unemployment**
There may be less stigma associated with unemployment where the local unemployment rate is higher, and in the UK, this results in a smaller the reduction in wellbeing from being unemployed.

 **Personality**
Extroverts suffer less, while conscientious individuals suffer more.

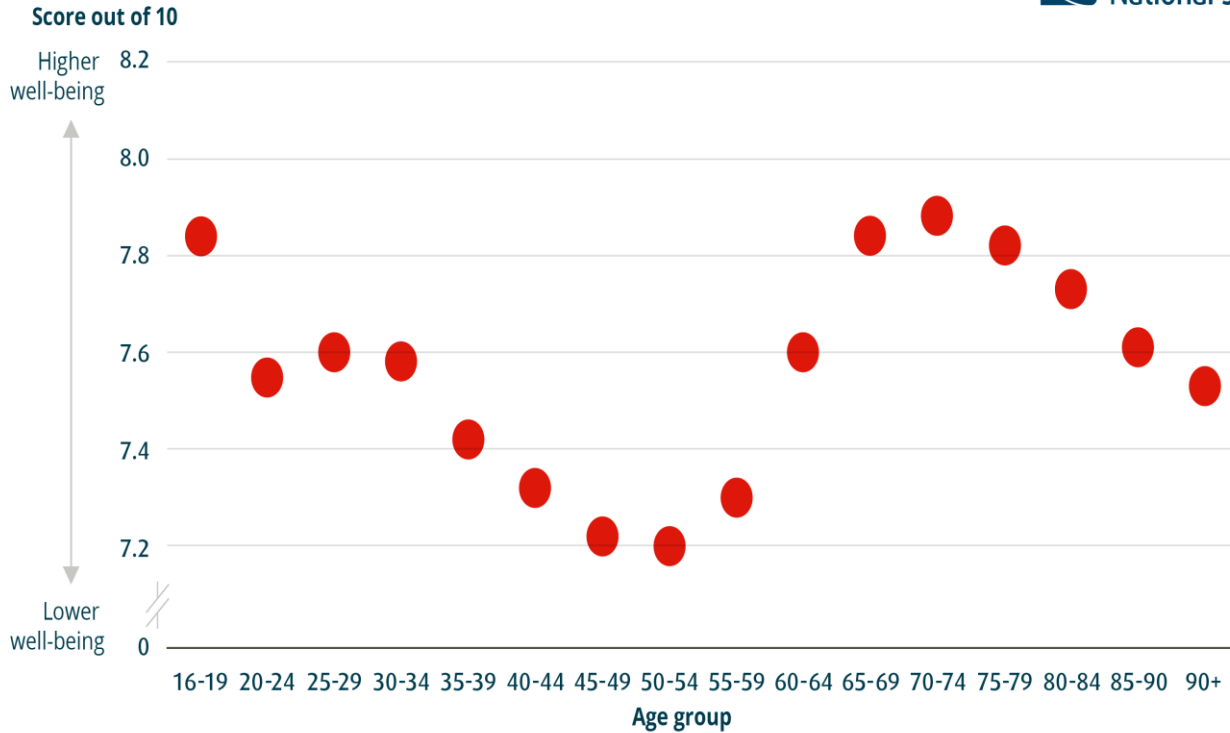
 **Employability**
Those with skills or who are more adaptable suffer less.

 **Social capital**
Little evidence of mitigating effects from most social participation activities, including voluntary work, but regular religious attendance has buffering effect.



We're least happy during working age

Average Life Satisfaction, 2012-2015, UK



Source: Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics

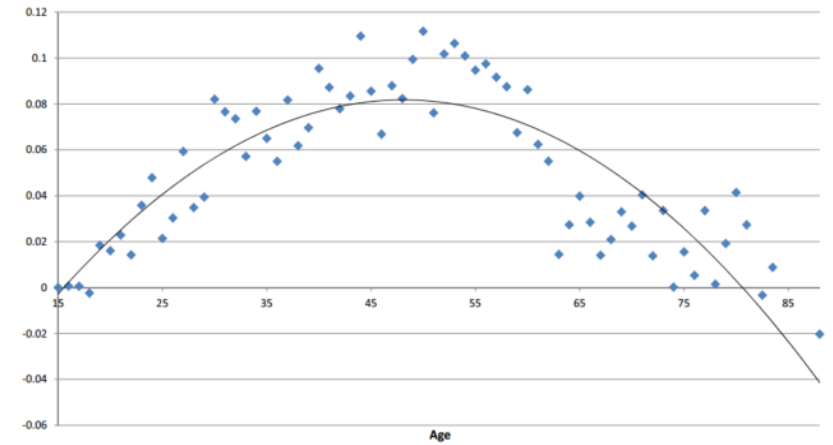
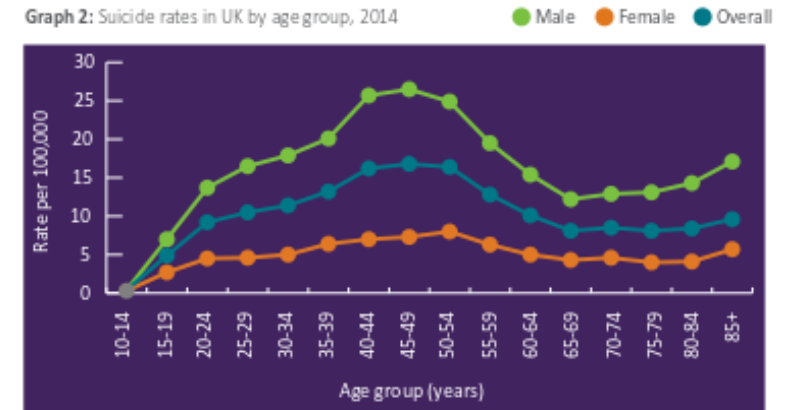


Chart 2. The regression-adjusted relationship between the probability of antidepressant use and age (full set of controls, as in Column 1 of Table 2).

Anti depressant and suicide rates by age, UK



Graph 2 shows that in the UK the age group with the highest suicide rate per 100,000 for all persons and males is 45-49 years, and for females is 50-54 years. This data also indicates a slight bimodal distribution (where there are two 'modes'/peaks in the distribution across the ages) with peaks in the mid-years and those aged over 85 years. The ONS mark rates calculated from fewer than 20 counts as unreliable. The data in Graph 2 that is considered unreliable has been greyed out.



Workplaces & wellbeing

Think of a time you had high wellbeing at work...

What did it feel like, and what was the cause?



Workplace drivers of wellbeing

Not all 'work' is the same

What makes the biggest difference for your people?

1. People work for People

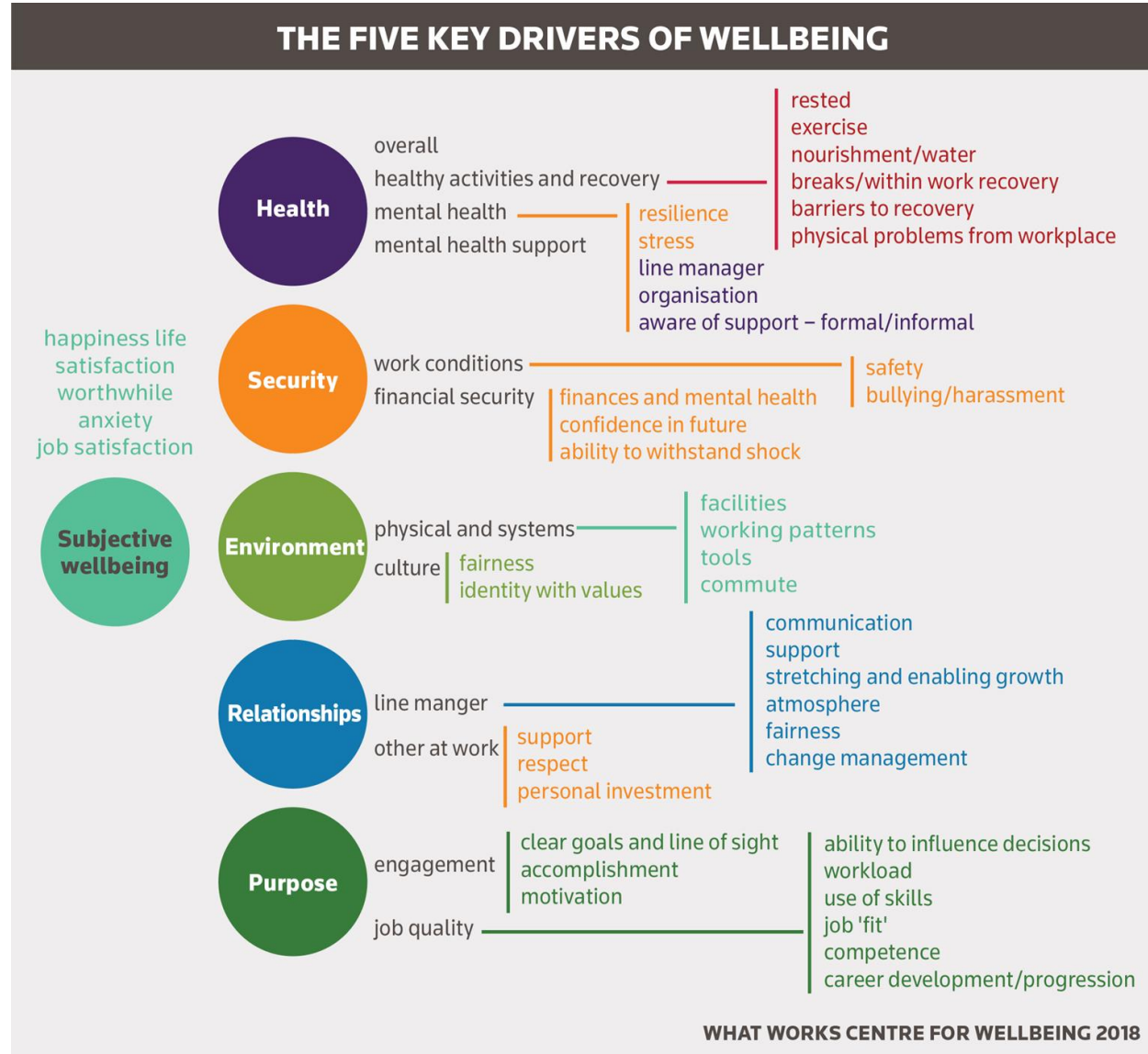
Health & Relationships

2. We need to feel safe

Security & Environment

3. We need to feel fulfilled

Purpose



Development supported by



Ministry of Defence



Department for Work & Pensions

Introducing the NHS health and wellbeing model

Many factors influence health and wellbeing of our diverse NHS people and teams. Some of these, such as physical and mental health, are well understood. However, there are other factors such as relationships, management skills and the environment that are fundamental to support our diverse NHS people in providing world class health care to our patients. This model underpins the set of resources that form this Health and Wellbeing Framework. There are seven health and wellbeing domains containing sixteen elements, these elements incorporating supporting evidence, case studies and critical questions for our organisations.

The proactive interventions and services that empower our NHS people to manage their own health and wellbeing. Sections cover:

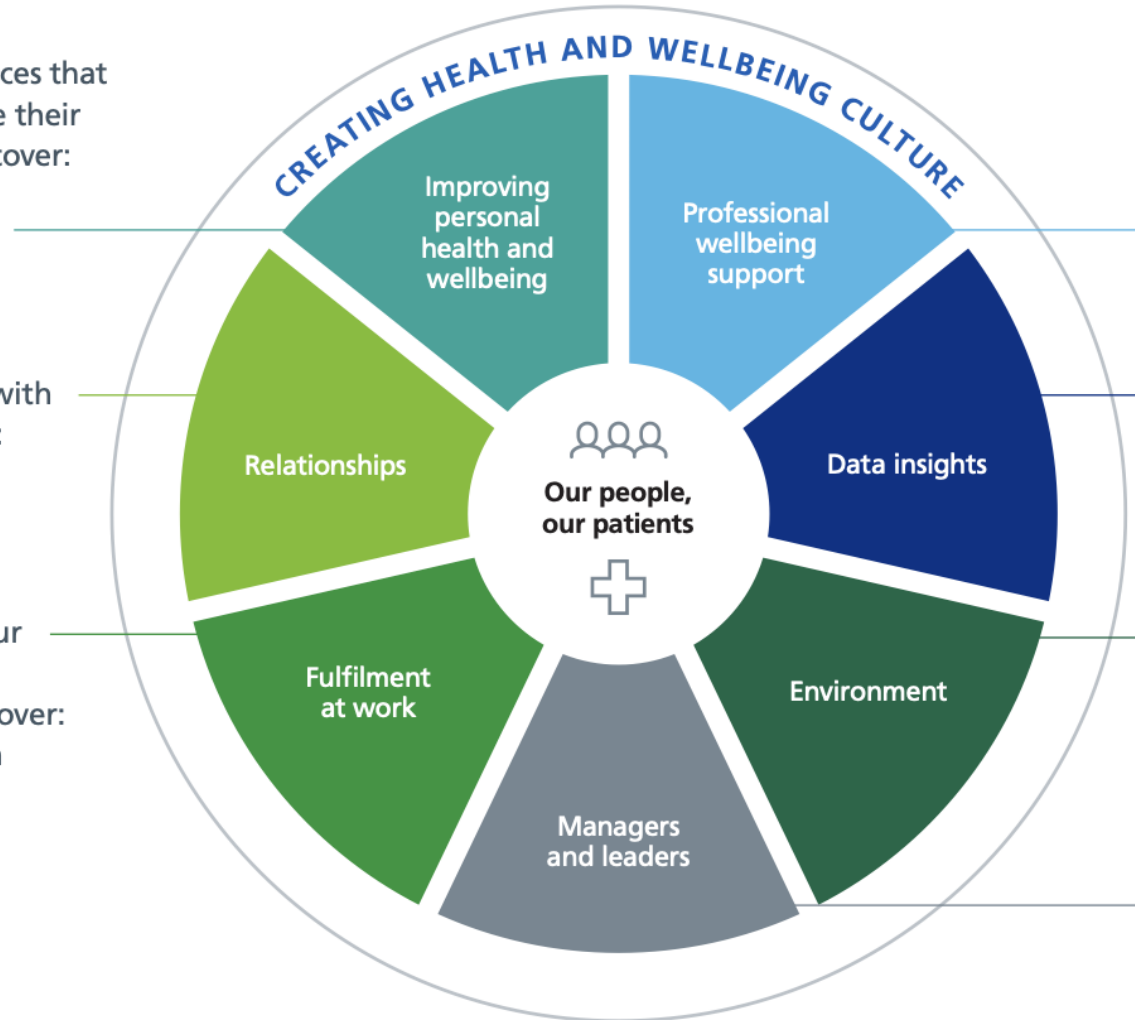
- mental and emotional wellbeing
- physical wellbeing
- healthy lifestyle

The ways our teams work together with care and compassion. Sections cover:

- supporting each other
- working together

How our work at the NHS inspires our NHS people, and how we support their growth and passion. Sections cover:

- purpose, potential and recognition
- life balance
- bringing 'yourself' to work



The teams and services, like occupational health, available to support organisation and people in their health and wellbeing. Sections cover:

- support services and partners
- organisation design and policy
- interventions overview

Our approach to understanding our health and wellbeing needs and then measuring our effectiveness in supporting them

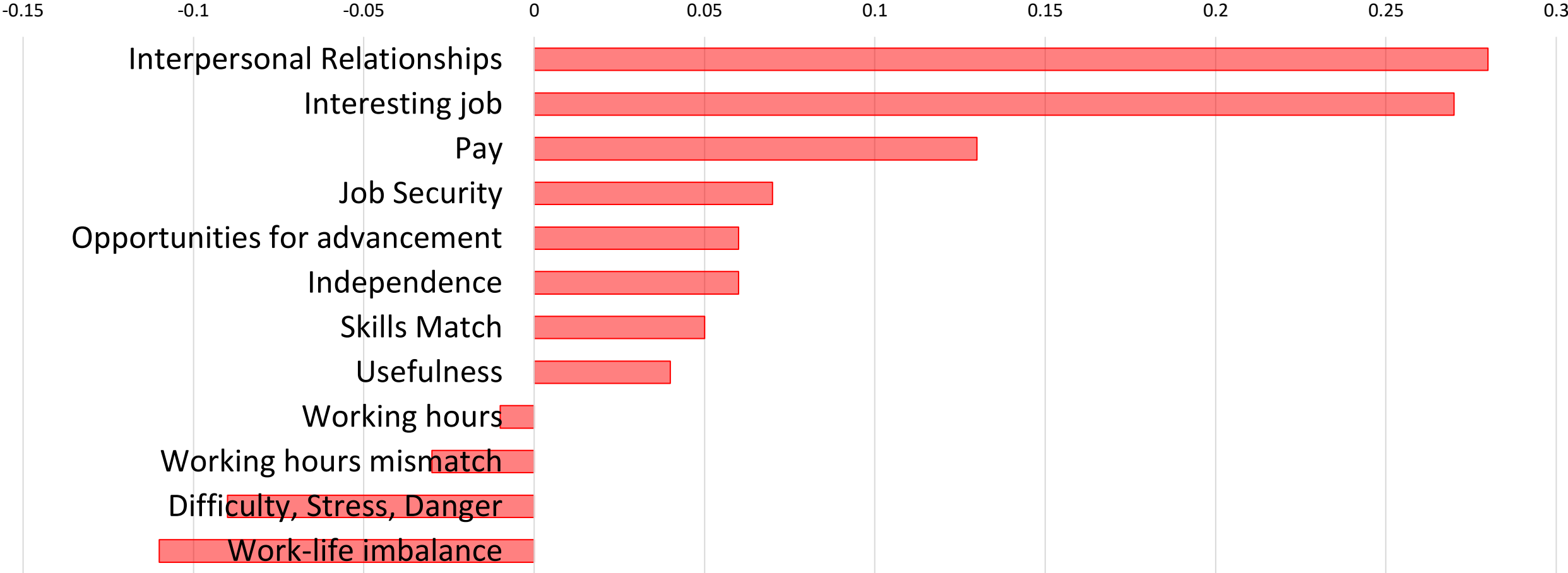
Physical work spaces and the facilities available to our people to rest, recover and succeed

How our leaders and managers across all levels of the NHS provide health and wellbeing support as part of their role. Sections cover:

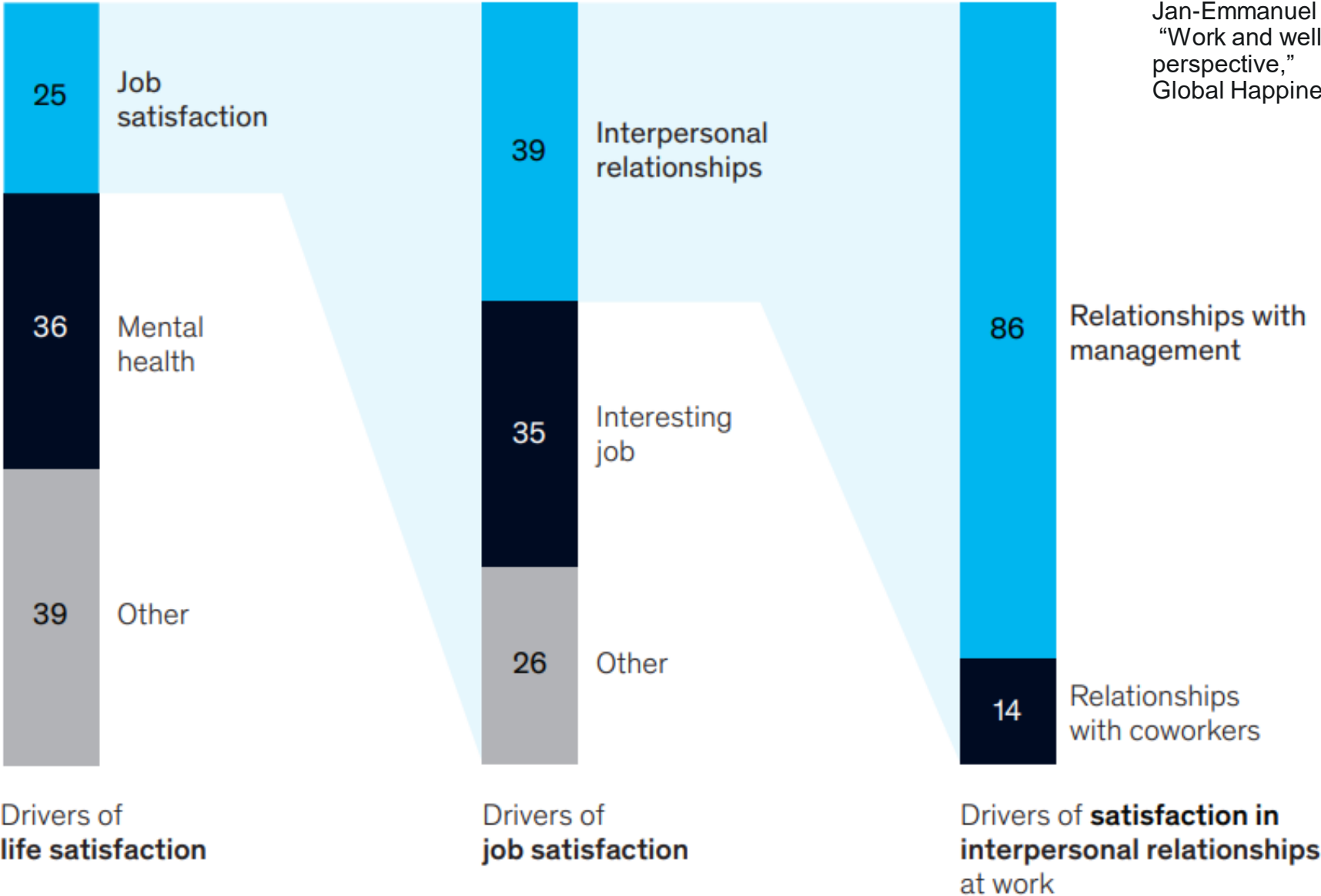
- senior manager responsibilities
- healthy leadership behaviours
- skilled managers



The drivers of job satisfaction



Share of satisfaction explained by each factor, %



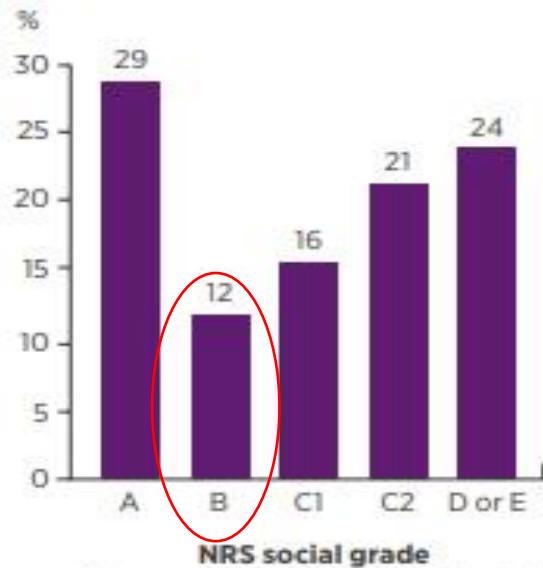
Jan-Emmanuel De Neve et al.,
 "Work and well-being: A global
 perspective,"
 Global Happiness Policy Report 2018

Managers are key...but managers are often miserable

.....the 'squeezed' middle manager

- Under the most pressure at work, with excessive workloads
- Most likely to need support with mental health

Mental health

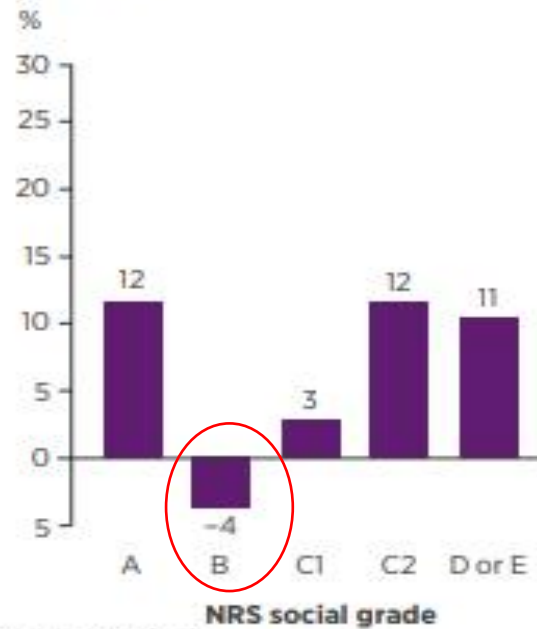


(A is most senior, E is most junior)

Net positive = (% very positive or positive) - (% negative or very negative)

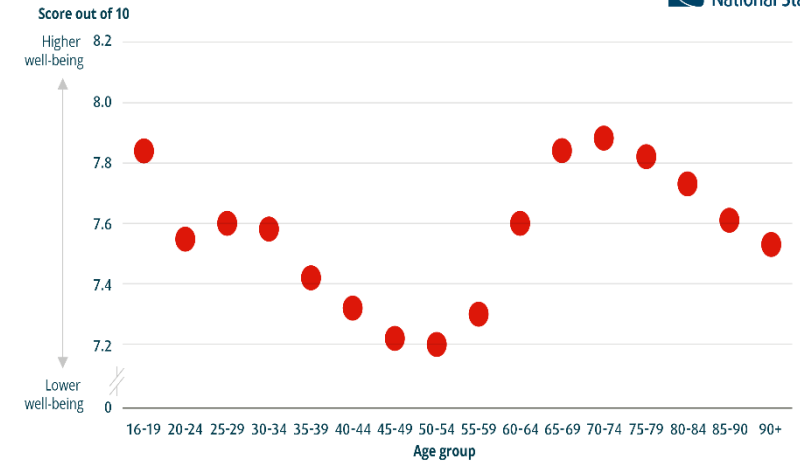
Base: all employees (n=6,009)

Physical health



NRS social grade

Average Life Satisfaction, 2012-2015, UK



Source: Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics

Work is also not very 'happy' time and place (positive affect/mood).

After being ill in bed we are least happy in the presence of our line manager.

Know your people; know your context

How are the drivers of wellbeing
effected where you are?
What do you already do?
What impact is it having?



Know your People



Guidance

Voluntary reporting on disability, mental health and wellbeing: A framework to support employers to voluntarily report on disability, mental health and wellbeing in the workplace

Published 22 November 2018

Thriving at work

*The 100 essential / 100 essential
at work that is essential to your success*



Recommended questions

- overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?
- overall, to what extent do you feel that things you do in your life are worthwhile?
- how happy did you feel yesterday?
- how anxious did you feel yesterday?

These questions (including ranking of a response to a statement) are based on principles of wellbeing for example, health, security, environment, relationships and purpose as recommended by the What Works Centre for Wellbeing, including:

- all in all, how satisfied are you with your job?
- I would recommend my organisation as a great place to work
- how would you rate your overall physical health now?
- how would you rate your overall mental health now?
- I feel safe from threats and physical hazards in my work environment
- my line manager helps and supports me
- my colleagues help and support me
- I am satisfied with my physical working environment
- my work gives me the feeling of a job well done



Context: How wellbeing can vary by driver across different sites

Overarching Wellbeing Indicators: lower Anxiety scores reflect better wellbeing, so the colour scale has been reversed.

Drivers: the scores for each Sub-Driver are the average difference between location score and average BD score, for all questions within that Sub-Driver Question Set. Some of the scales for questions within the Sub-Driver have been reversed to generate a score that is higher for results that indicate higher wellbeing, and lower for results that indicate generally lower wellbeing e.g. a negative score against 'I feel too tired after work to enjoy the things that I would like to do at home' is associated with better wellbeing, and has been converted to a positive score.

For the sites with large enough Military and Civilian survey populations (Site 1, Site 2, Site 3 and Site 4), there two scores to demonstrate the divergent needs of the different populations. These scores are the difference between Civilian or Military location score and the average BD Civilian or Military score, for all questions within that Sub-Driver Question Set.

| Driver | Sub-Driver/ Question Set | Site 1 | | Site 2 | | Site 3 | | Site 4 | | Site 5 | Site 6 | Site 7 | Site 8 |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| | | Civilian | Military | Civilian | Military | Civilian | Military | Civilian | Military | 94% Civ., 6% Mil. | 17% Civ., 83% Mil. | 6% Civ., 94% Mil. | 12% Civ., 88% Mil. |
| Overarching Wellbeing Indicators | Life Satisfaction | 6.6 | | 6.5 | | 6.6 | | 6.7 | | 6.3 | 6.5 | 6.7 | 6.5 |
| | Job Satisfaction | 6.2 | | 5.8 | | 6 | | 6.3 | | 5.8 | 5.1 | 6.3 | 5.4 |
| | Anxiety | 3.8 | | 4 | | 3.5 | | 3.8 | | 4.2 | 3.4 | 3.2 | 3.9 |
| Health | Physical Health | 2.1 | -1.8 | -5.4 | 2.4 | -1.4 | 2 | -5.6 | -3.1 | 0.1 | -0.9 | 3.4 | 1.6 |
| | Mental Health | 5.3 | -1 | -5.7 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 2.3 | -2 | 0.7 | -1 | 9 | -3 |
| | Support and Accessing Support | -8.3 | -11.8 | -5.3 | 2.5 | 12.3 | 3 | 18.3 | 10.3 | 4 | 1 | 13.5 | 1.8 |
| | Presenteeism | -1.7 | -3 | -1.3 | 4.7 | 1.7 | -1.7 | -1 | 2.2 | 5.3 | 3.7 | 5.2 | -3.3 |
| Relationships | My Manager | -2.7 | 1.3 | 0 | 3.3 | 3.3 | -3.3 | 15.7 | 8.7 | 0.7 | -3.3 | 11.7 | -2.3 |
| | My Colleagues | -2 | 3.5 | -0.5 | 4 | -2.5 | 2.5 | 4.5 | 4 | 0.3 | -1 | 4 | 2 |
| | Workplace Culture | -3.2 | 3.2 | -4.3 | 0.2 | 8.3 | 3.3 | 0.5 | 7.8 | 3 | -3 | 14 | -7.8 |
| Environment | Facilities, Tools and Systems | -4.3 | -1.3 | -1.8 | 1.8 | 16 | -3 | 12 | -0.5 | -0.5 | 1.3 | 15.6 | 2.8 |
| | My Working Pattern | -5 | 4.8 | 0.3 | -3.3 | 1.8 | 0.5 | 0.3 | -2 | 15.8 | -2.3 | 7.3 | -21.3 |
| | My Commute | -19.5 | -15 | 5 | -8.5 | 12 | -0.5 | 20 | 1.5 | 0 | 5 | 0.5 | 13.5 |
| Security | My Employment | 6 | -4 | 3 | -2 | -12 | -2 | 7 | -2 | -3 | 4 | 5 | 2 |
| | My Financial Security | 2.4 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 3.9 | -5.3 | -2.9 | 1.8 | 0 | -3.9 | 1.2 | 7 | 4.6 |
| Purpose | My Work | 2.2 | 4 | -2 | 1.5 | 6.9 | 3.4 | 7.7 | 7.1 | 0.5 | -8.1 | 12.8 | -9.1 |
| | My Organisation | -0.5 | 2.5 | -4 | 3 | 12.5 | 8.3 | 5.8 | 4.8 | 3 | -7.5 | 10 | -10 |
| | Opportunities | -5 | -7 | 0 | 4.5 | 4.8 | 4 | 11.3 | 7.3 | 5.8 | -5.6 | 8.5 | -9 |



How are the Civil Service doing?

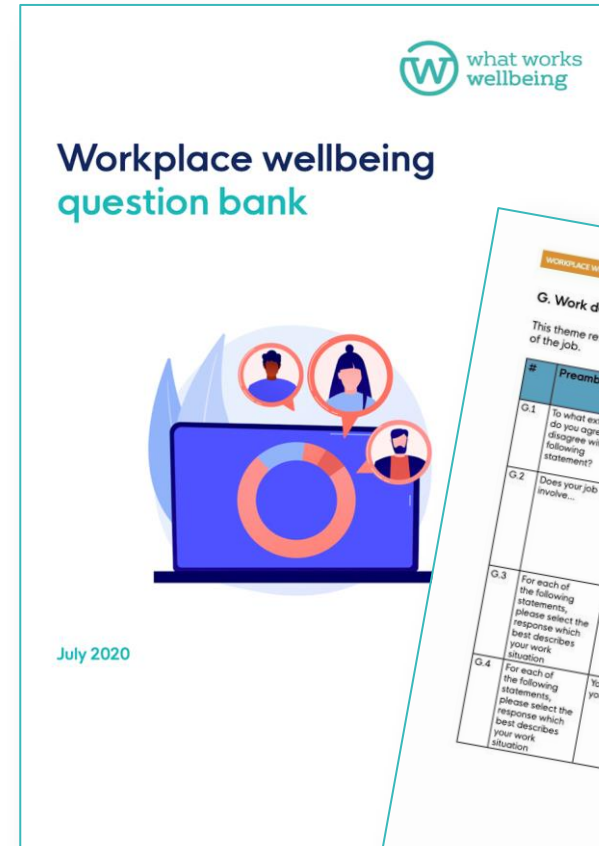
Civil Service People Service 2019 - Wellbeing scores against PERMA and Stress

| Department | W01: Life Satisfaction | W02: Worthwhile | W03: Happiness | W04: Anxiety | PERMA | Proxy Stress |
|------------|------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|------------|--------------|
| SG | 71% | 74% | 65% | 31% | 75% | 27% |
| WG | 77% | 72% | 68% | 32% | 77% | 20% |
| DfE | 71% | 74% | 64% | 32% | 75% | 25% |
| DIT | 71% | 74% | 67% | 34% | 74% | 29% |
| FCO | 69% | 74% | 66% | 34% | 76% | 27% |
| DHSC * | 70% | 73% | 64% | 33% | 75% | 26% |
| DCMS | 69% | 74% | 65% | 35% | 74% | 27% |
| CO | 70% | 73% | 63% | 35% | 75% | 28% |
| DfT | 69% | 71% | 63% | 30% | 74% | 26% |
| MHCLG * | 69% | 72% | 64% | 33% | 75% | 26% |
| DExEU | 70% | 72% | 64% | 35% | 74% | 28% |
| DWP | 67% | 72% | 63% | 32% | 74% | 29% |
| BEIS | 68% | 72% | 63% | 33% | 74% | 26% |
| CS | 67% | 71% | 62% | 32% | 74% | 28% |
| MoD | 66% | 70% | 61% | 29% | 73% | 30% |
| HMT | 70% | 70% | 61% | 40% | 75% | 25% |
| DfID | 65% | 74% | 60% | 36% | 74% | 30% |
| Defra | 66% | 71% | 61% | 36% | 73% | 29% |
| HO | 64% | 69% | 60% | 32% | 72% | 32% |
| MoJ | 64% | 70% | 61% | 34% | 73% | 32% |
| HMRC | 62% | 66% | 57% | 34% | 70% | 33% |

Understanding staff wellbeing needs

How are we doing in terms of...?

- Purpose and engagement
- Job prospects
- Autonomy and skills use
- Work demands
- Relationships and management
- Working time quality
- Physical environment
- Organisational health policies
- Financial wellbeing



This is a sample question card from the 'Workplace Wellbeing Question Bank'. It is titled 'G. Work demands' and includes a preamble: 'This theme refers to workload, work pressures, quantitative and emotional intensity of the job.' The card contains a table with four questions (G.1 to G.4) and their corresponding answer scales and benchmark data.

| # | Preamble | Question | Answer scale | Benchmark data |
|-----|---|---|--|----------------|
| G.1 | To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? | I have an acceptable workload | 1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Neither agree nor disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly disagree | CSPS |
| G.2 | Does your job involve... | Working to tight deadlines | 1. All of the time 2. Almost all of the time 3. Around 1/2 of the time 4. Around 1/3 of the time 5. Almost never 6. Never | EWCS6 |
| G.3 | For each of the following statements, please select the response which best describes your work situation | You have enough time to get the job done | 1. Always 2. Most of the time 3. Sometimes 4. Rarely 5. Never Don't know | EWCS6 |
| G.4 | For each of the following statements, please select the response which best describes your work situation | Your job requires that you hide your feelings | 1. Always 2. Most of the time 3. Sometimes 4. Rarely 5. Never Don't know | EWCS6 |

At the bottom of the card, there is a footer with the 'what works wellbeing' logo, the text 'Workplace wellbeing What Works Centre for Wellbeing', the website 'www.whatworkswellbeing.org.uk/questionbank', and the page number 'Page 10'.

The case for financial wellbeing in the workplace



94%

of UK employees admit to **worrying about money**, and of these - **77% say that money worries impact them at work (2019)**.



69%

of UK employers believe their **employees' job performance is negatively affected** when they are under financial pressure (2018).

Six out of 10 employees consider financial wellbeing to be the responsibility of their employer.

2019

What Works: Improving wellbeing at work



'Good jobs' that lead to higher wellbeing tend to give staff >



More control over your job



Clarity of what is expected of you



Variety in what you do



Positive relationships with managers, colleague, and customers



Belief workplace is fair



Sense of purpose and value



Opportunities to use and develop skills



Safe and pleasant work environment

What is a good job?



Supportive supervision



Sense of security and prospects



Good work/life balance

Good people management practices

Impacts on job satisfaction,
engagement,
sickness absence,
patient satisfaction.



Management and Performance: good people management practices make a difference

Good work, wellbeing and performance | What Works Centre for Wellbeing | December 2017



good work, wellbeing and
changes in performance
outcomes



**Illustrating the effects of good people
management practices with an analysis of
the National Health Service**

Chidiebere Ogbonnaya, University of East Anglia
Kevin Daniels, University of East Anglia



1

Trusts that made the most extensive use of good people management practices:

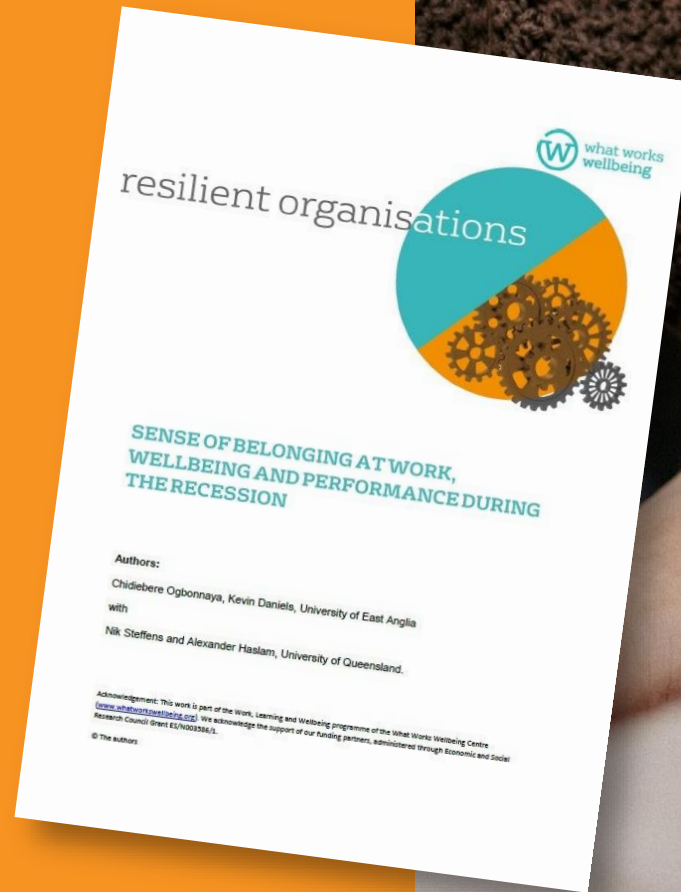
1. were over three times more likely to have the lowest levels of **staff sickness absence**
2. at least four times more likely to have the **most satisfied patients**.
3. more than twice as likely to have staff with the highest levels of **job satisfaction** compared to NHS Trusts that made least use of these practices
4. over three times more likely to have staff with the highest levels of **engagement**.

Line managers can directly influence:

- **good work organization:** providing workers with the context, guidance, tools, and autonomy to minimize frustration and make their jobs meaningful
- **psychological safety:** the absence of interpersonal fear as a driver of employee behaviour

Belonging and shared values

Impacts on organisational resilience and performance.



The social atmosphere at work



Shared activities can improve wellbeing and performance by improving workplace social atmospheres.



Interventions that seek to improve wellbeing through improving perceptions of fair treatment at work do not yet have strong enough evidence of their impact.





Wellbeing skills and training courses



what evidence did we find?

Key messages



Wellbeing training is effective and a wide range of approaches work.



Training leaders to be effective and supportive in managing employees may enhance wellbeing for both managers and employees, when the most appropriate learning process is used and in the right context.



Professional training may also have positive wellbeing benefits for the learner, but the evidence base needs to be developed. We can be confident that there are no adverse effects.

What's the best type of training for wellbeing?

The evidence for wellbeing training is strong and we know that it works across a range of industry contexts, at least in the short-term (see page 3 for examples). The evidence is weaker for professional training. However in some cases this training may result in additional benefits, for the employee and organisation, beyond wellbeing.

Future work is looking at cost effectiveness and the wellbeing 'bang for the buck' of different approaches.

| Training | Sector |
|--|--|
| Sleep training | Teachers |
| Relaxation | Health |
| Happiness | Insurance services |
| Acceptance and commitment therapy | Local government employees with elevated stress |
| Stress inoculation <i>Same study as above</i> | Local government employees with elevated stress |
| Stress management | Manufacturing Government departments |
| Problem solving | Workers with physical health condition Flight attendants |
| Empowerment | Social care |
| Life skills | Various |
| Psychological flexibility | Child special education staff |
| Cognitive Behavioural Therapy | Manufacturing - white collar, clerical, technical Insurance sales |
| Psychological skills / mindfulness | Nurses Social workers |
| Mindfulness | Social care |
| Resilience | Junior doctors |
| Meditation awareness training | Middle management |
| Person-centred care | Health – dementia care |
| Evidence-based practice | Mental health workers |
| Conflict management | Health – <i>see case study</i> |
| Emotional intelligence | Mental health support staff |

What works for employee wellbeing?

- Great people management
- Belonging & shared values
- Wellbeing skills training
- Learning at work
- Team work and shared activities

Effect on personal wellbeing, sustainable performance achievements.

- Organisation-wide approaches or holistic strategies
- *How* interventions are implemented is also important



Concluding thoughts

- **Measure, benchmark and report** employee wellbeing: seek to understand difference: how do the drivers of workplace wellbeing play out across roles and sites?
- **Map** what data you have and what interventions you are delivering. What works well, for who in what context?
- **Employment** and high **quality jobs** are important for individual wellbeing, for reasons beyond income: for example building purpose & meaning in our lives. It's **important to measure purpose**
- Recognise **trade-offs** between job quality aspects
- **What can employers do?** Give employees opportunities to use their skills, train and have more control over their tasks; ensure good quality management and healthy workplace relationships are in place. **Evaluate** & understand impact of new interventions
- A good job is also one that provides the access and means for people to **engage in other purposeful activities** at home or outside work (volunteering, leisure time, continuous education, etc). A ripple to enhanced societal and population level wellbeing

Thank you!

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