

9 October 2023

For Immediate Release

Most Singaporeans feel that more can be done to address mental health issues in Singapore

10 October is designated as World Mental Health Day by the United Nations. The theme for 2023, set by the World Federation of Mental Health, is 'Mental health is a universal human right'¹. With this in mind, RySense conducted a poll among 1,583 respondents from our online panel, HappyDot.sg, to find out how Singaporeans feel about mental health and mental wellness.

1 in 3 Singaporeans feel that there is positive change in the way mental health is viewed

With mental health issues at the forefront in Singapore in the past few years, about one third or 36% of respondents feel that there has been some positive change. However, 24% think that mental health is still not widely talked about and 31% feel that though there is talk about mental health, there has hardly been any positive change. (Figure 1)

Encouragingly, most have become more understanding of people who may have mental health challenges

8 in 10 (79%) have become more understanding of people who may have mental health challenges. Only 1% reported that they have become less understanding and 20% said they remained the same in their understanding towards people who may have mental health challenges.

Perceived costs and fear of stigma among reasons preventing people from seeking professional help

The top 3 reasons that Singaporeans feel people may not seek professional help for mental health challenges are:

1. It is too expensive (45%)
2. Not comfortable in sharing personal difficulties with strangers (40%)
3. They think they can overcome mental health difficulties by themselves (33%)

While people have become more understanding towards those who may have mental health challenges, a proportion feel that people might not seek professional help due to reasons pertaining to fears of stigma:

- Afraid the medical records can be used against them (25%)
 - Afraid that others will think they're crazy (22%)
- (Figure 2)

The workplace is the top area needing change

Most Singaporeans feel more attention is needed in the area of mental health in workplaces, followed by changing the way society views mental health, mental health in schools, and government policies and outreach.

¹ <https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-mental-health-day/2023>

Flexibility in work arrangements and addressing work stress and burnout are key

With most feeling that mental health in workplaces is the area that needs most attention, we asked our respondents which areas workplaces should pay more attention to. These were their top 3 aspects:

1. Being open to flexibility in work arrangements – 63%
 2. Addressing work stress and burnout – 62%
 3. Educating leaders on how to be more supportive to employees – 39%
- (Figure 3)

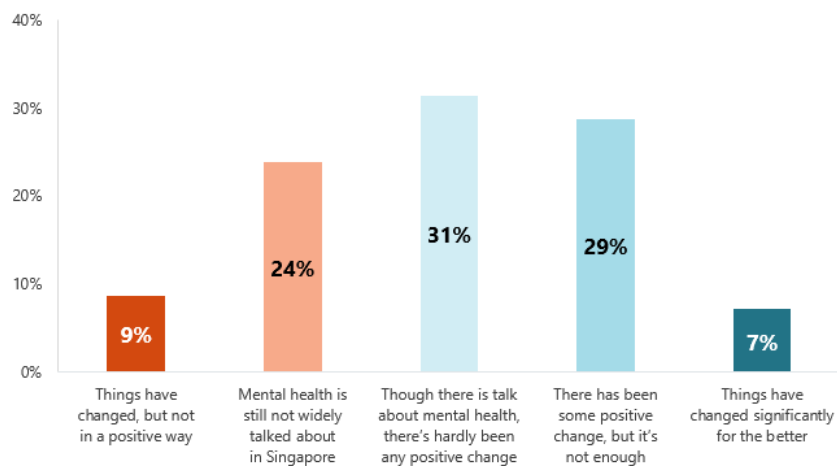
Chilling at home is the top method to relieve stress, though there are gender differences

On a personal front, Singaporeans ranked chilling at home, having a good meal, watching a show/movie and exercising/doing their favourite sports as their top ways to relieve stress. (Figure 4) Across genders, females comparatively prefer to have a good meal, chill at home, engage in retail therapy and go for wellness experiences. Males comparatively prefer to exercise/do sports and play video games.



Appendix

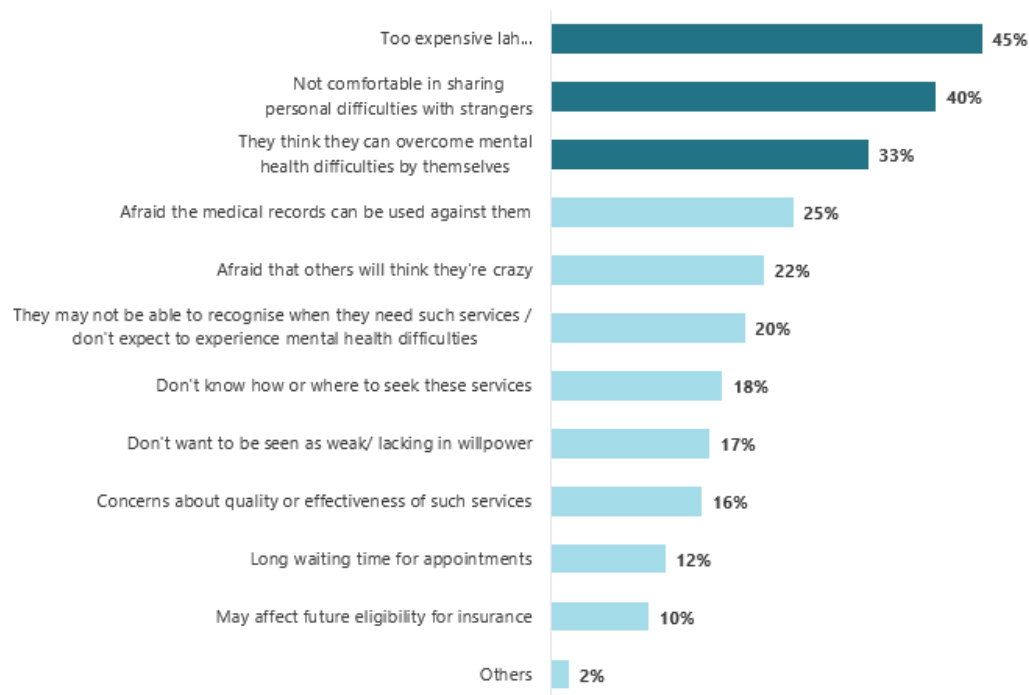
In your opinion, which of the following **best** describes how mental health issues are currently seen in Singapore?



Weighted Base. All respondents. N=1583.

Figure 1

What are the main reasons that people may **not** seek professional help for mental health challenges in Singapore?

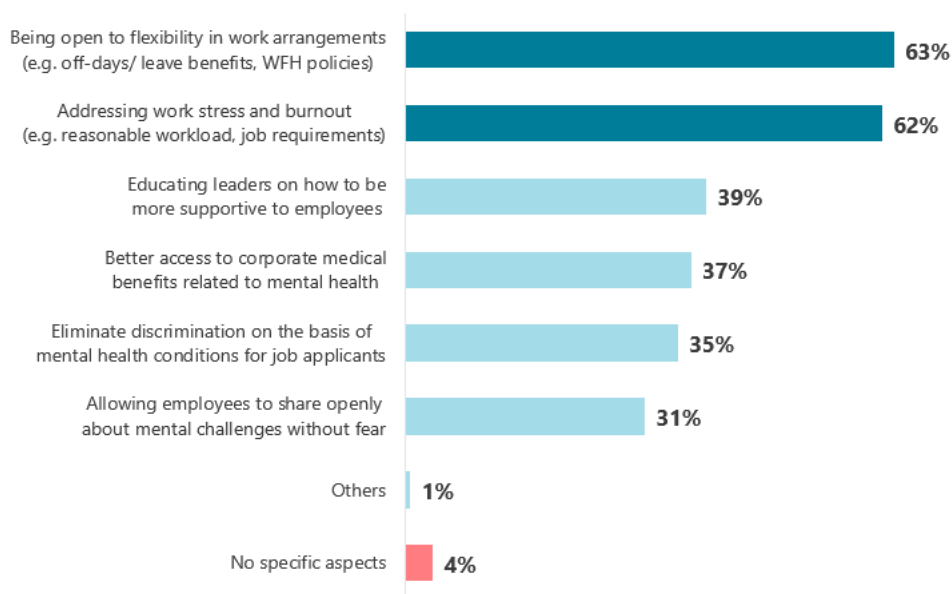


Weighted Base. All respondents. N=1583.

Figure 2



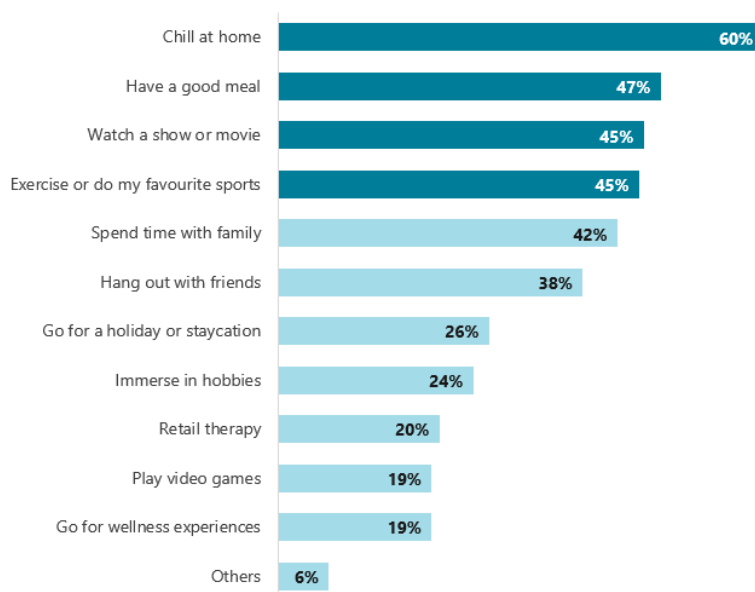
Which of the following aspects related to mental health do you think workplaces should pay more attention to?



Weighted Base. All respondents. N=1583.

Figure 3

When you are feeling stressed out, what do you normally do to relieve stress?



Weighted Base. All respondents. N=1583.

Figure 4



Above figures are based on a survey conducted in September 2023 of 1,583 Singapore residents from RySense's online panel, HappyDot.sg, aged 15+ and representative of national population. Percentages may not add up to 100% and are rounded off.

About RySense

RySense is a Singapore-based research organisation which seeks to understand what people in Singapore think, feel and do. We are specialists in research methods, public opinion research and social trends and have conducted research on a range of socio-economic issues as well as current affairs topics. Using robust approaches, we seek to generate reliable insights about the Singapore landscape, which reflect both subtle nuances and macro perspectives. We are run by a diverse team of market research professionals.

For more information, please visit www.rysense.sg.

About HappyDot.sg

HappyDot.sg is an online survey community for Singapore residents to voice their opinions on issues that impact Singapore. We survey our panellists on a variety of social issues to understand the aspirations of Singaporeans. HappyDot.sg is owned by RySense.

For more information, please visit www.happydot.sg.

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