



Wellbeing Report 2025



With Thanks to:



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A message from The Care Workers' Charity

Foreword from Karolina Gerlich, CEO of The Care Workers' Charity

I am incredibly proud to introduce this landmark report, The Care Worker Wellbeing Survey, which shines a necessary and urgent spotlight on the realities faced by care workers across the UK. This work would not have been possible without the dedication, openness, and honesty of every care worker who took the time to share their experiences. Your voices are powerful, and this report is a testament to the strength, commitment, and compassion you bring to your roles every single day.

On behalf of The Care Workers' Charity, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all those who participated in the survey. Your stories and insights are invaluable, and they will help shape a future in which care workers are better supported, fairly recognised, and meaningfully valued.

I would also like to give special thanks to Care Research, whose partnership and hosting of the survey and data were instrumental to the success of this project. Your expertise and collaboration have enabled us to produce a robust, insightful and actionable body of work that centres the lived experience of our care workforce.

This report is more than a collection of findings—it is a call to action. We urge policymakers, care providers, and society at large to take heed of what has been shared here and to work together in building a fairer, more sustainable adult social care sector. Care workers care for our loved ones every day; it is time we show them the same care in return.

Karolina Gerlich
Chief Executive Officer
The Care Workers' Charity



Introduction

The well-being of the Adult Social Care workforce has long been a pressing concern. With approximately 2 million individuals working across the sector care workers play an essential role, with their work being skilled, responsible and deeply compassionate. Despite their critical contributions, the internal and external pressures faced by care workers are too frequently overlooked in local and national discussions about Adult Social Care.

In response to this, The Care Workers' Charity launched the 'Care Worker Wellbeing Survey' – an open call to a range of roles across the sector to share their experiences and understandings. This survey aimed to build a clearer understanding of workforce wellbeing; what factors are affecting it, what support is currently available and where the most urgent gaps lie. Reflecting the most prominent issues for care workers, the survey focused on a range of topics including, but not limited to, mental well-being, workload, financial well-being and career satisfaction.

The response was both powerful and encouraging. With over 2000 respondents, there is a clear demonstration of a strong collective desire to be heard and to drive positive change. This work comes at a critical moment. The Adult Social Care workforce continues to face significant pressures and without urgent and meaningful action, the sustainability and quality of care provision remain at serious risk.

Importantly, this survey and the following report does more than collect data; it amplifies the voices of care workers that are too often absent from policy discussions and decision-making. By centring their voices, we can inform more responsive and effective policies that prioritise the wellbeing of those on the frontline.

The Care Workers' Charity is proud to publish these findings, remaining firmly committed to advocating for a better, fairer future for all care workers. We hope this report will act as a catalyst for lasting change – and as a reminder that those who care for others deserve to be cared for in return.

Financial Wellbeing

Financial wellbeing goes beyond salary – it includes meeting essential needs, managing responsibilities, planning for the future, and feeling secure at work.



Financial wellbeing encompasses more than salary – it includes the ability to meet essential needs, manage responsibilities, plan for the future and feel secure in one's role. Despite playing a vital role in supporting individuals to live full, meaningful and enjoyable lives with dignity, choice and rich relationships, many care workers experience persistent financial insecurity. When these needs are unmet, it can negatively impact mental health, job satisfaction and retention - having broader implications for the quality and continuity of care and the long-term sustainability of the sector.

In recent years, fair remuneration for care workers has gained greater attention in public and policy discourse. Most notably, the government has committed to exploring the development of a Fair Pay Agreement (FPA) for those working in Adult Social Care. The FPA would aim to establish minimum standards for pay, terms and conditions across the sector, potentially addressing long-standing disparities and raising the overall status of care work. Its introduction could mark a transformative shift in how care work is valued and supported.

Initial findings reveal that low pay, limited access to sick pay, the increasing effects of the cost-of-living crisis and a **lack of comprehensive financial support** remain a consistent challenge for care workers. Against this backdrop, understanding the financial realities of care workers is more important than ever. Ensuring that proposed reforms are informed by real world experiences is essential for meaningful and effective change.



Key Findings

- 90.43% (1229 respondents) receive an hourly salary of £10-£15 per hour, with over half of our respondents (51.45% - 142 respondents) earning £30k or less. According to The Office of National Statistics 'Average Household Income, UK: Financial Year Ending 2023' report, published in September 2024, the median household income in the UK was £34,500. [1]
- Of those who responded, 60.68% (1000 respondents) reported being on full-time contracts. The results show that 59.17% (975 respondents) are working additional paid hours, with 31.01% (511 respondents) working 11 hours or more per week above their contracted hours. 41.63% (503 respondents) are undertaking additional unpaid hours each week for their organisation.
- However, 72.06% (1132 respondents) indicated they either do not feel financially secure, rarely feel financially secure or do not have any financial security at all. Paid Care Workers/Personal Assistants had the highest percentage of people who do not feel financially secure (80.77%). However, Care Worker/Care Assistants had the highest percentage of people who did not feel they have any financial security (25.11%).

Key Findings

When asked what contributes most to their financial insecurity, the top three responses were:

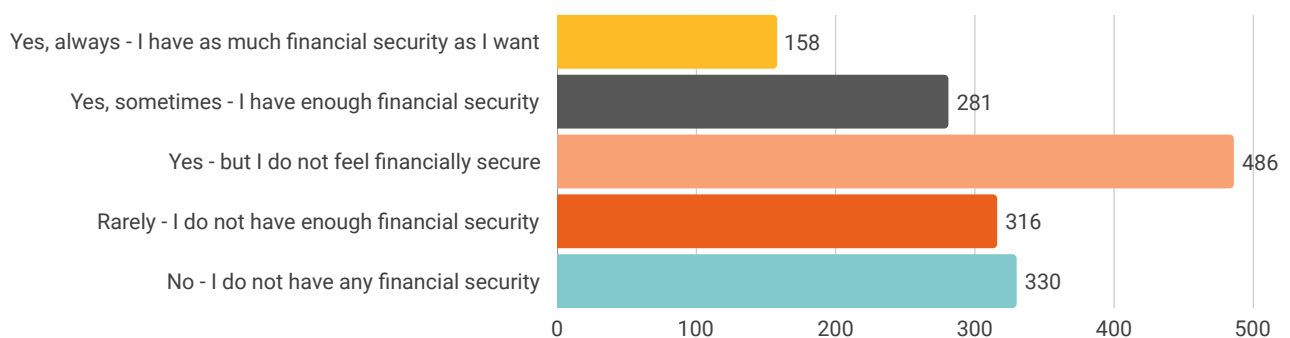
- 57.41% (643 respondents) cited that the hourly rate of pay is too low
- 39.38% (441 respondents) reported significant personal financial responsibilities
- 29.29% (328 respondents) identified the absence of paid sick leave as a key issue. This is unsurprising as only 29.15% (458 respondents) stated their organisation offers paid sick leave.

Looking to external sources of financial support, 45.80% (513 respondents) stated they had not sought any. However, 27.41% (307 respondents) had received support from The Care Workers' Charity (this is a high percentage because we reached out to people we had engaged with previously). 28.68% (256 respondents) had relied on food banks. 10.80% (121 respondents) have used a loan shark/payday loan company. By contrast, in the UK, around 1.1% of the general population have used payday loan companies in 12 months.[2] This highlights the extent to which some care workers turn to charitable or emergency support.

Housing emerged as a major monthly cost:

- 66.9% (1051 respondents) are renting - either privately, via local authorities or housing associations. Care Worker/Care Assistant respondents had the highest proportion of respondents in rented accommodation (73.21%).
- Only 26.21% (418 respondents) are homeowners, with 8.47% (133 respondents) reporting they are mortgage-free.
- 60.26% (931 respondents) as their main extra monthly expense

Q31. Does your monthly income cover all monthly expenditures, contributing to your financial security?



Key Findings

With only 26.29% (374 respondents) working in homecare services (domiciliary care), it is interesting to note that car-related costs were cited as prominent extra monthly costs.

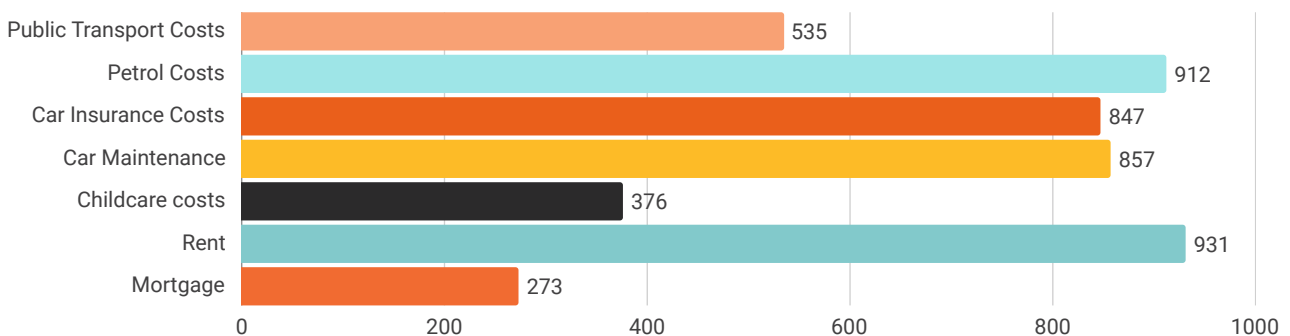
- 59.03% (912 respondents) cited petrol costs as an additional monthly cost
- 55.47% (857 respondents) cited car maintenance as an additional monthly cost
- 54.82% (847 respondents) cited car insurance costs as an additional monthly cost

Yet only 34.25% (538 respondents) stated their employer covered mileage, 13.24% (208 respondents) received support with petrol costs and 78.87% (1239 respondents) noting their organisation doesn't cover public transport costs to and from work. 61.87% (972 respondents) are not reimbursed for travel between client visits.

Other areas of support were also limited:

- Only 2.48% (39 respondents) receive support with childcare costs
- 73.46% (1154 respondents) do not receive support with insurance
- 67.28% (1057 respondents) reported their organisation doesn't offer early access to wages, with 58.32% (901 respondents) stating due to extra monthly costs, they have not been able to afford a holiday in the last year.

Q34. Which of the following are additional monthly costs?



Participant Quotes

We asked respondents to provide further feedback on their financial well-being. Find some of their responses down below:



'I struggle to pay my bills due to payroll sometimes quite often messing up pay and then not rectifying this which leaves me in a spiral of catching up on bills.'



'I work 60 hours a week including travel between clients to be able to afford what I need. It's a lot of my life dedicated to paying bills.'



'It's affecting my mental health makes me depressed as I'm working so many long hours but can't make ends meet.'



'With the rising costs of living, every month is beginning to become harder to afford basic living amenities.'



'I have to commute long distances as I am not paid enough to live locally on my own.'



'The pay in this sector is too low. I worry about how many hours I work per week in case I can't meet my financial commitments. I have cut back on my spending, where I can.'



'Expecting a child, unsure how I will pay for childcare as wages won't cover full time.'



'Struggling to live because of expenses.'

Participant Quotes

We asked respondents to provide further feedback on their financial well-being. Find some of their responses down below:



'I have to commute long distances as I am not paid enough to live locally on my own.'



'Just need to have opportunities to take on more shifts/work.'



'One has to work very long hours to have a meaningful earning.'



'With the rising costs of living, every month is beginning to become harder to afford basic living amenities.'



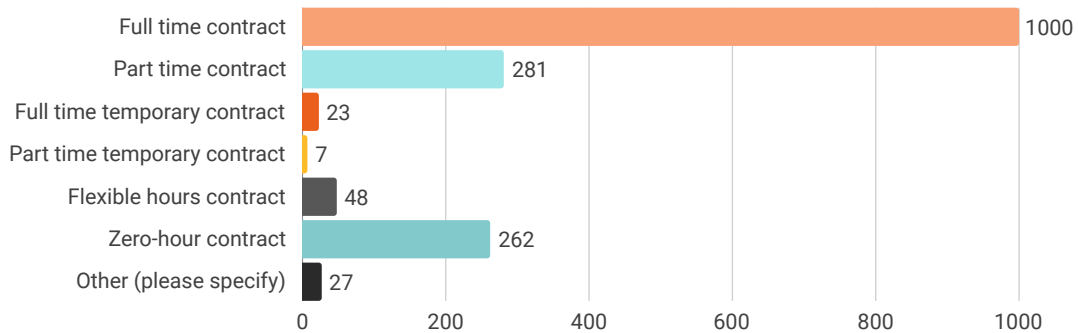
'I'm in a higher position in my small section of the company and I rely on overtime to make enough for my bills, my working hours mean I have to pay additional fees for afterschool childcare. It's a vicious circle. I can't imagine how the people below my wages cope with the cost of living. People rely on overtime and the company wants to put overtime to a stop to help people's wellbeing but it's going to have the opposite effect.'



'I work 60 hours a week including travel between clients to be able to afford what I need. It's a lot of my life dedicated to paying bills.'

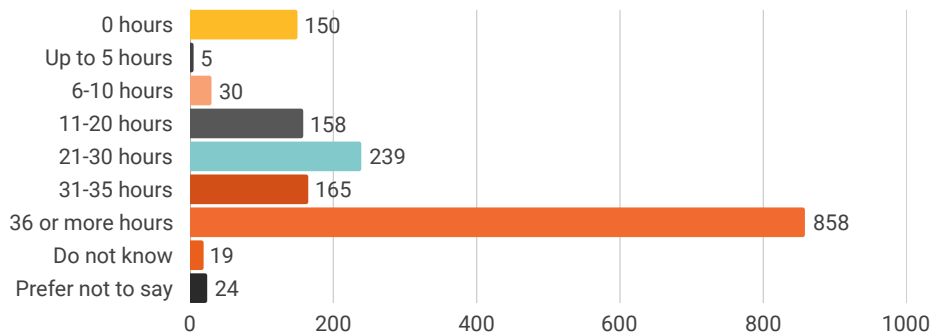
Q18. What type of contract are you employed on?

Answered 1648, Skipped 507



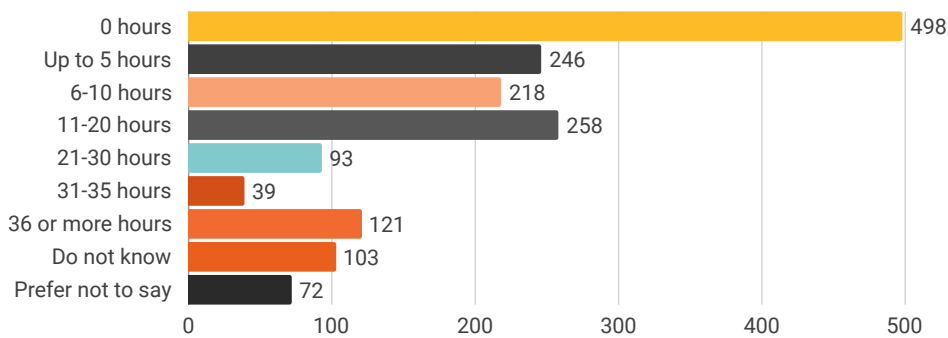
Q19. How many hours a week are you contract to work?

Answered 1648, Skipped 507



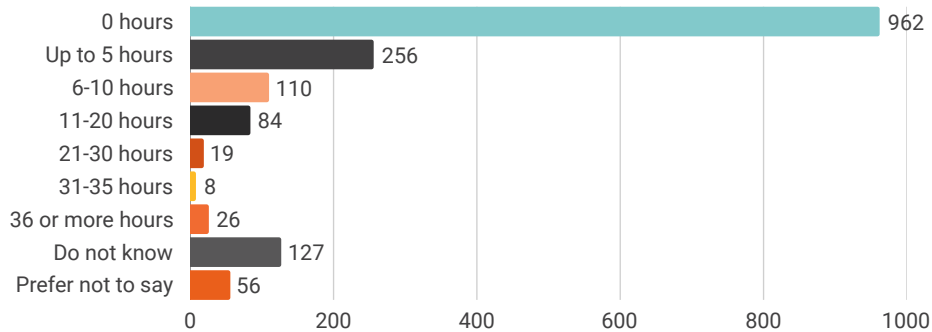
Q20. On average, how many additional PAID hours do you work per week for your employer over/above your contracted hours?

Answered 1648, Skipped 507



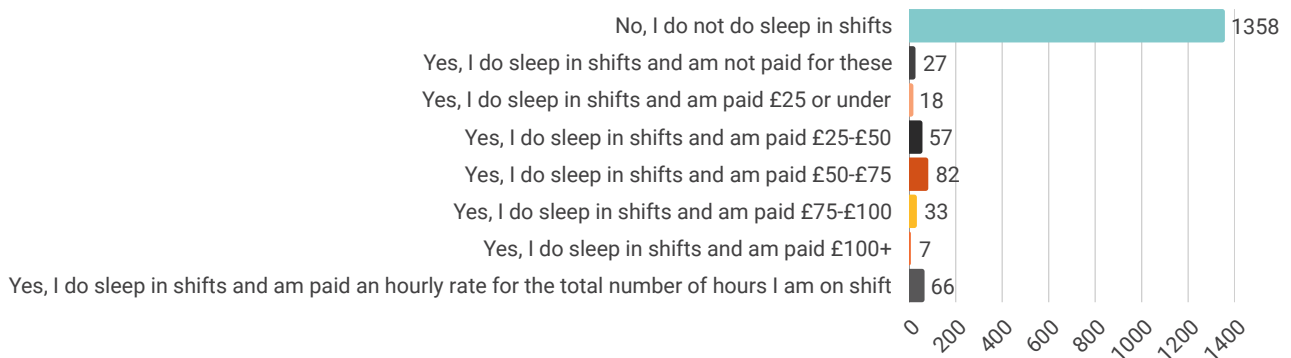
Q21. On average, how many additional UNPAID hours do you work per week for this organisation over/above your contracted hours?[Please include unpaid overtime and additional unpaid hours on-call]

Answered 1648, Skipped 507



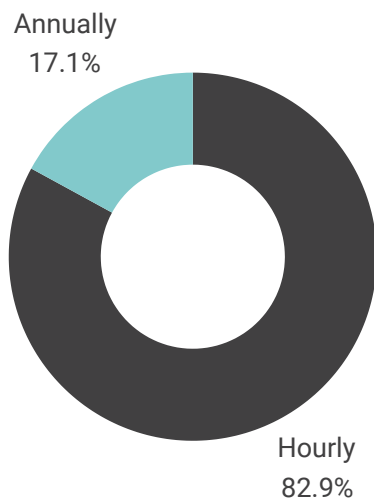
Q22. Do you do sleep in shifts and are you paid for these?

Answered 1648, Skipped 507



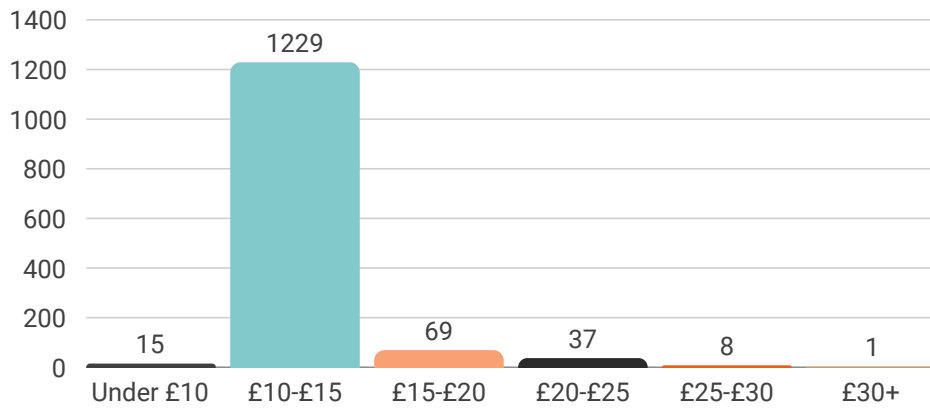
Q23. Are you paid hourly or annually?

Answered 1648, Skipped 507



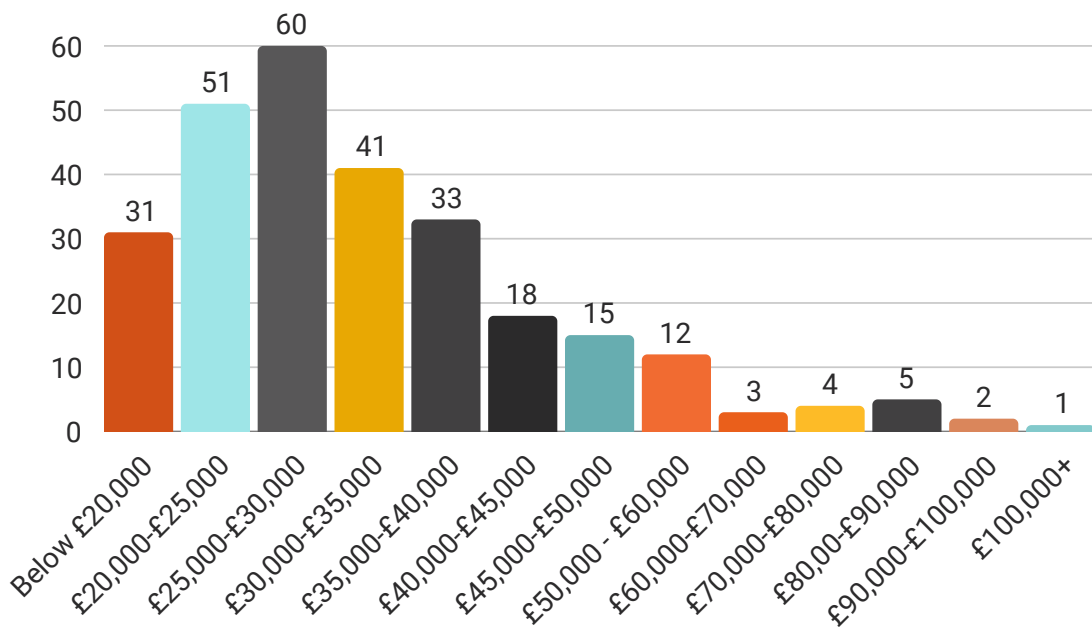
Q24. What is your hourly salary?

Answered 1359, Skipped 796



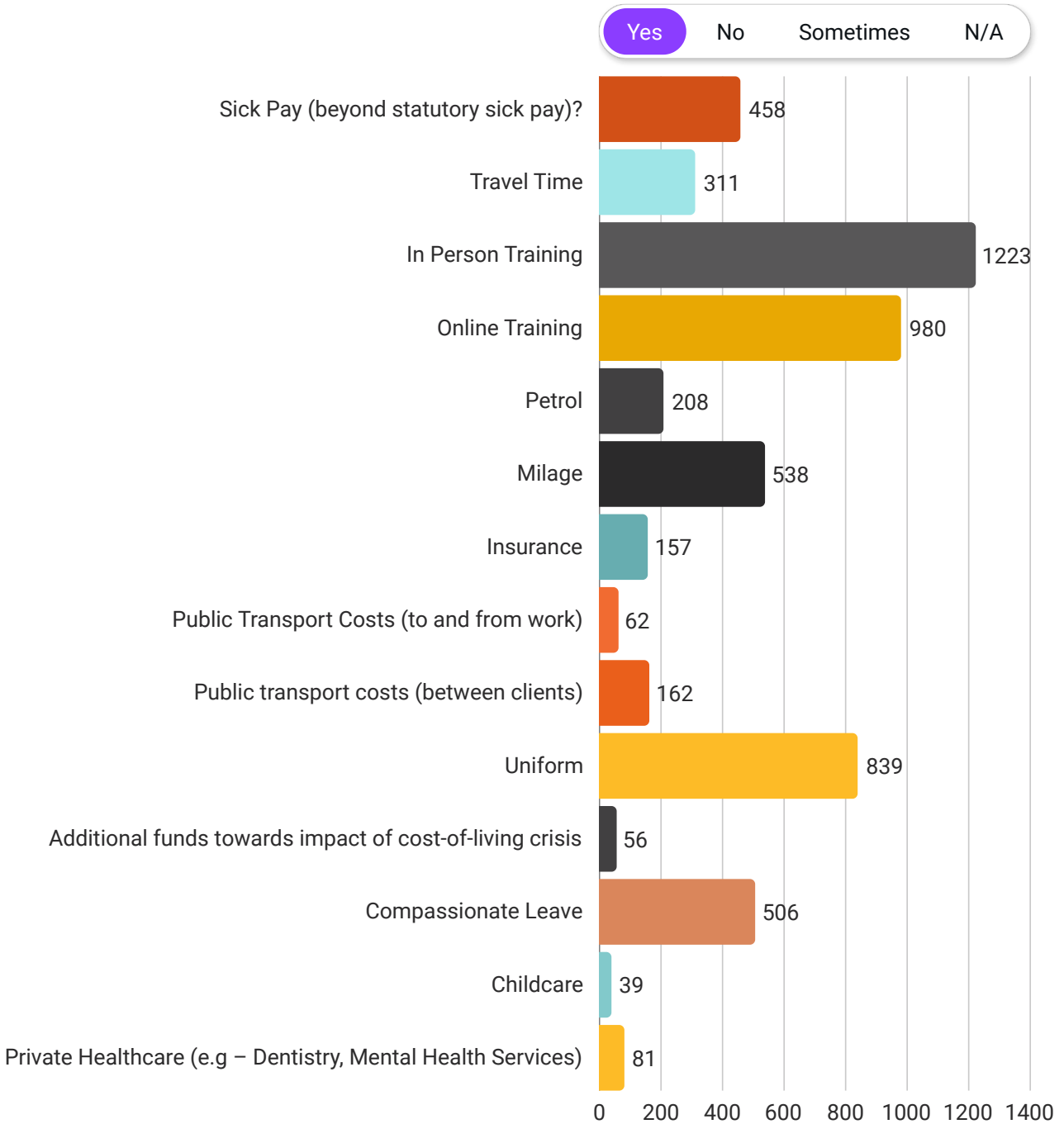
Q25. What is your annual salary?

Answered 276, Skipped 1879



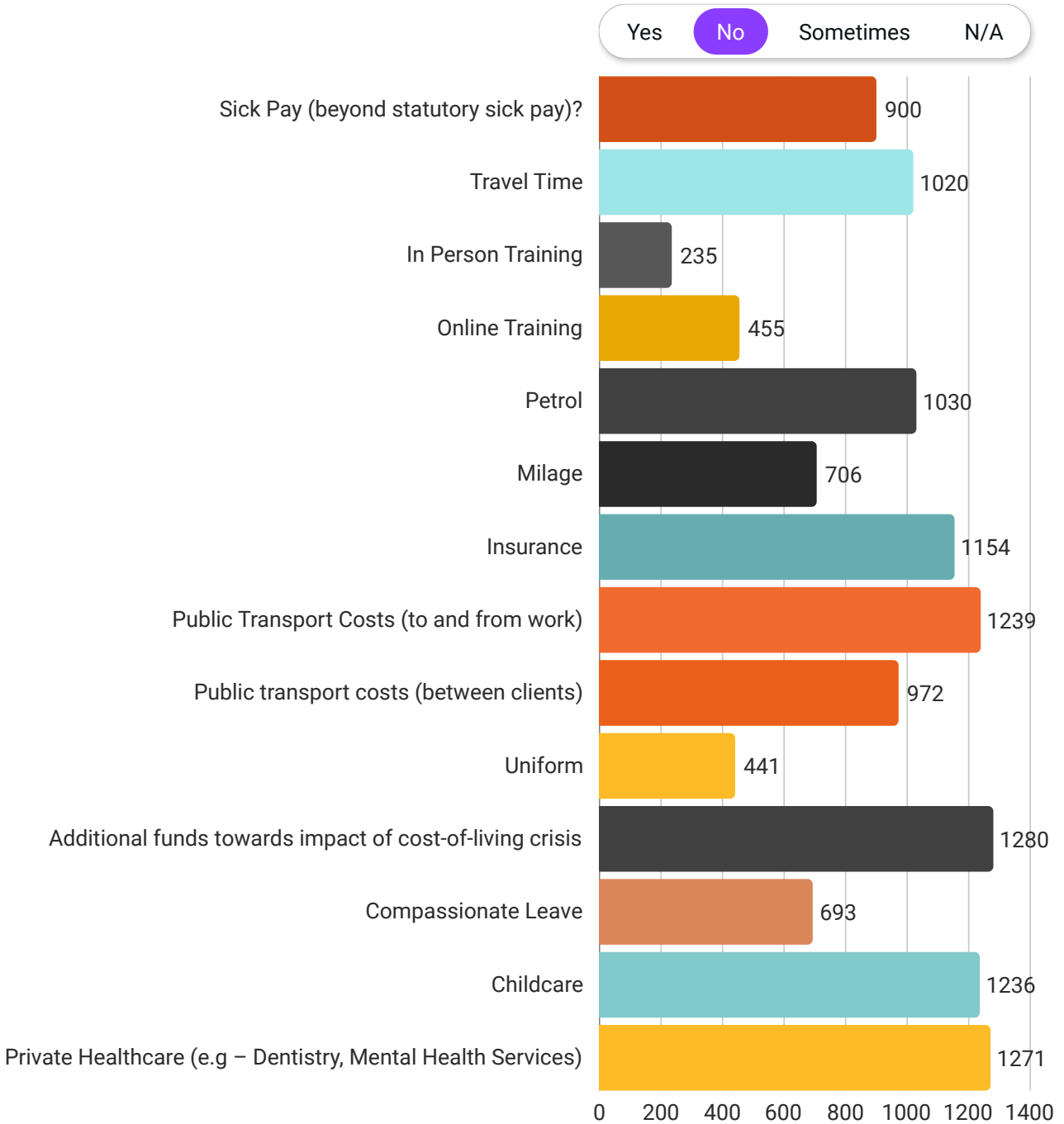
Q26. Does your employer pay for any of the following...

Answered 1571, Skipped 584



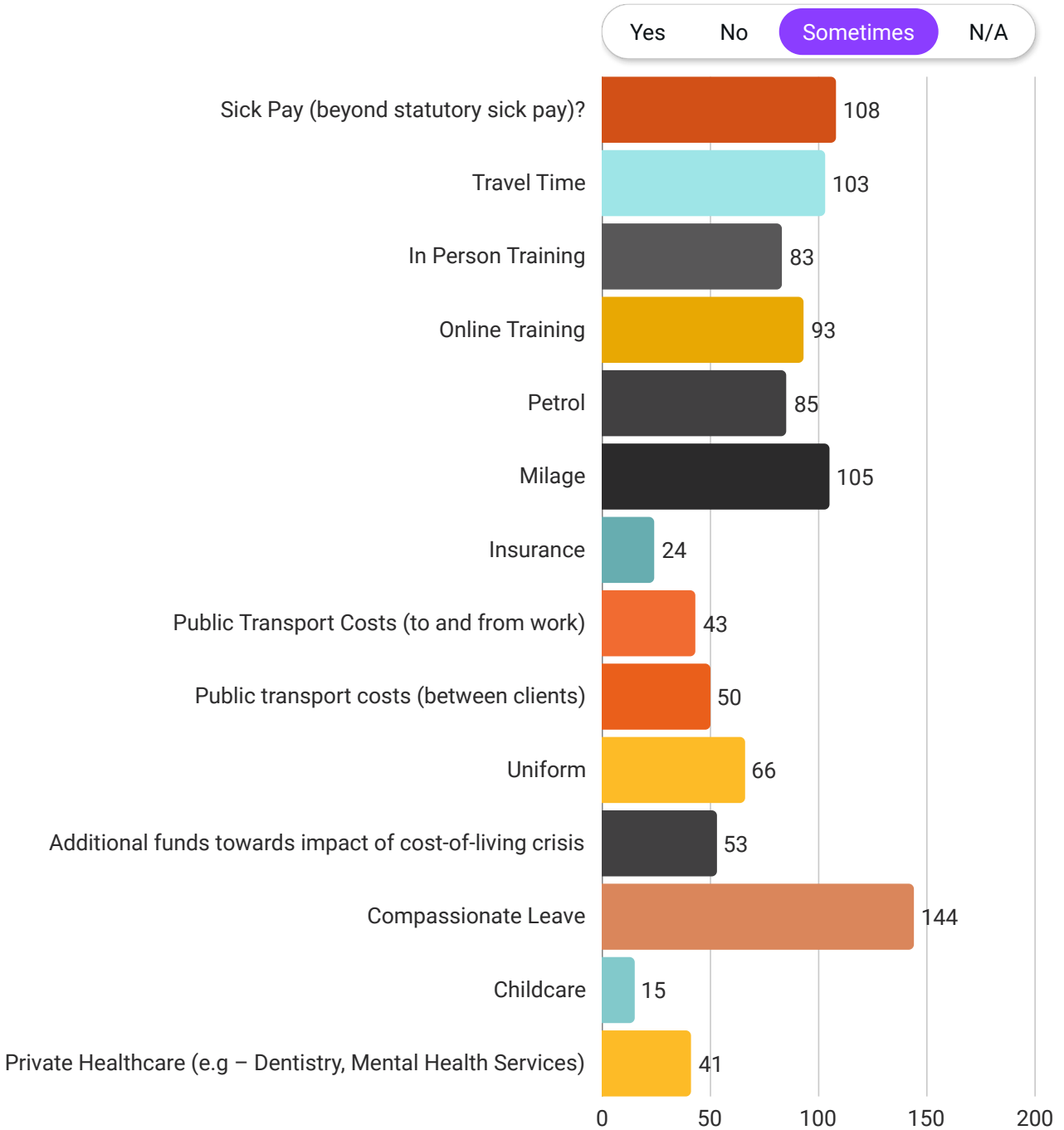
Q26. Does your employer pay for any of the following...

Answered 1571, Skipped 584



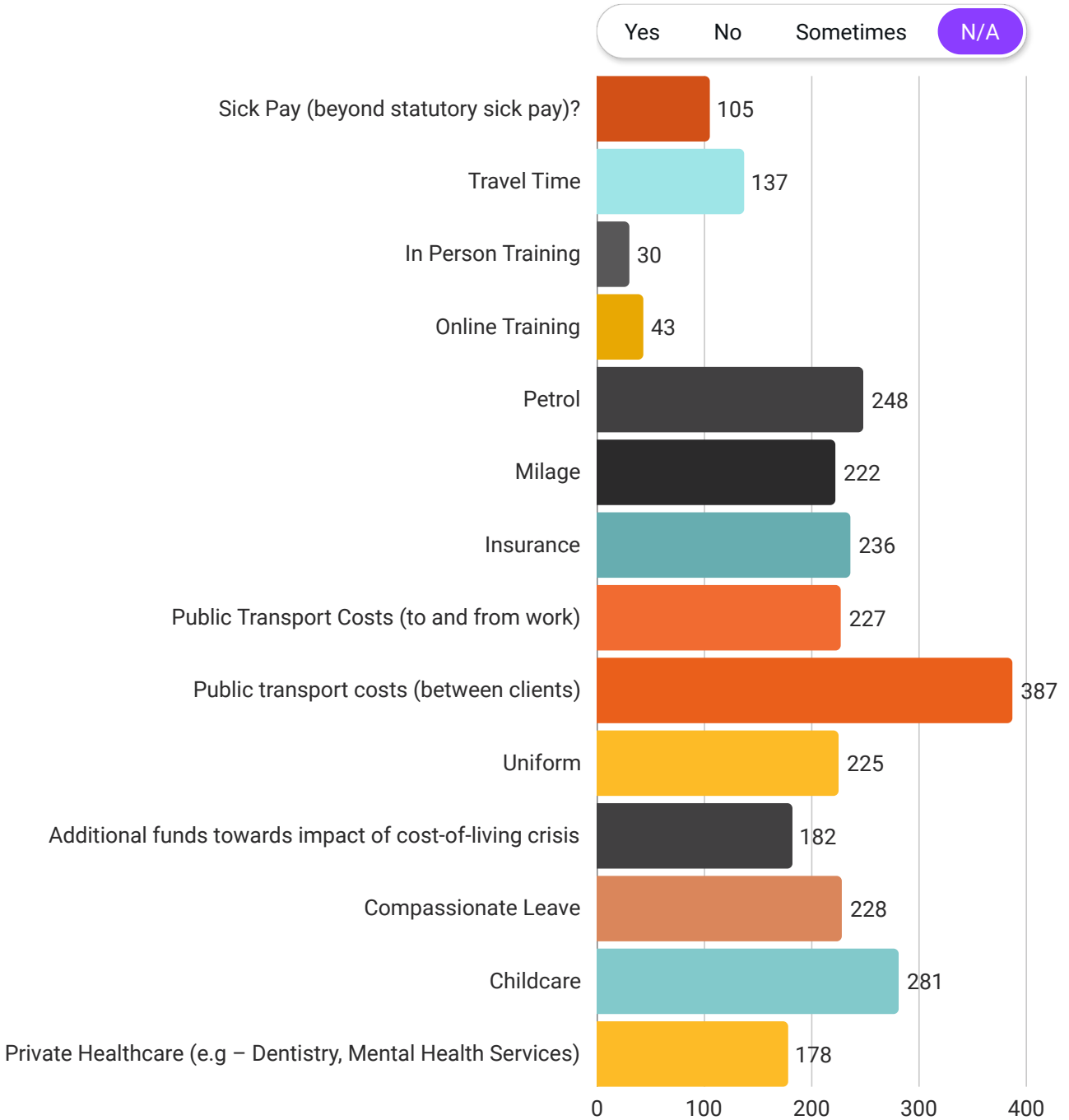
Q26. Does your employer pay for any of the following...

Answered 1571, Skipped 584



Q26. Does your employer pay for any of the following...

Answered 1571, Skipped 584



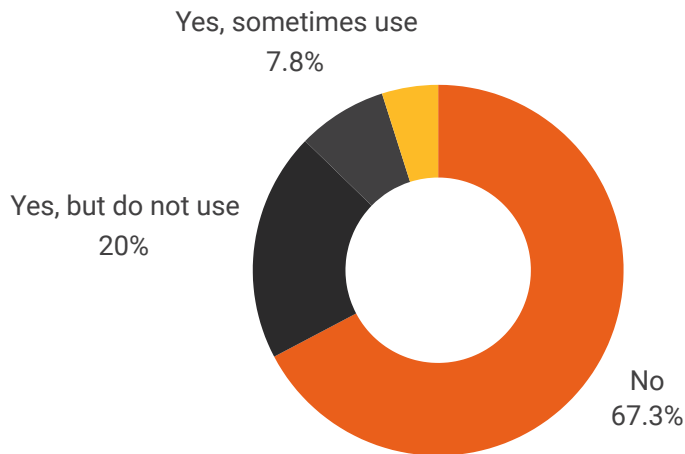
Q27. Are you claiming any work benefits (this includes housing benefit)

Answered 1571, Skipped 584



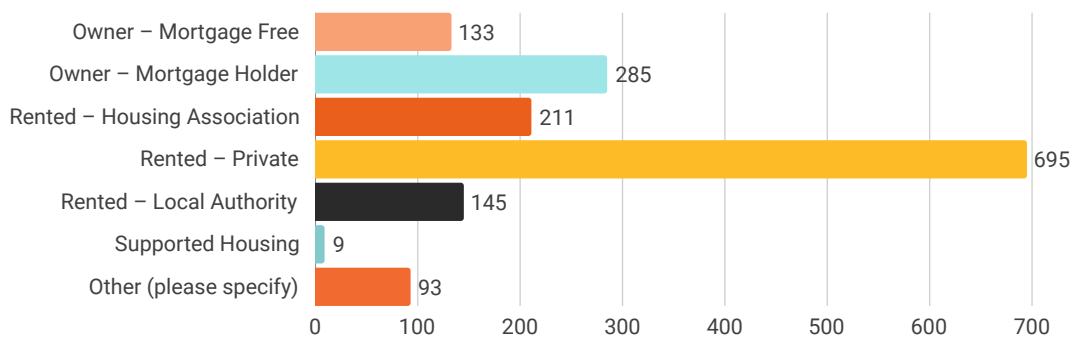
Q28. Does your organisation offer early access to your wages? If yes, do you use this?

Answered 1571, Skipped 584



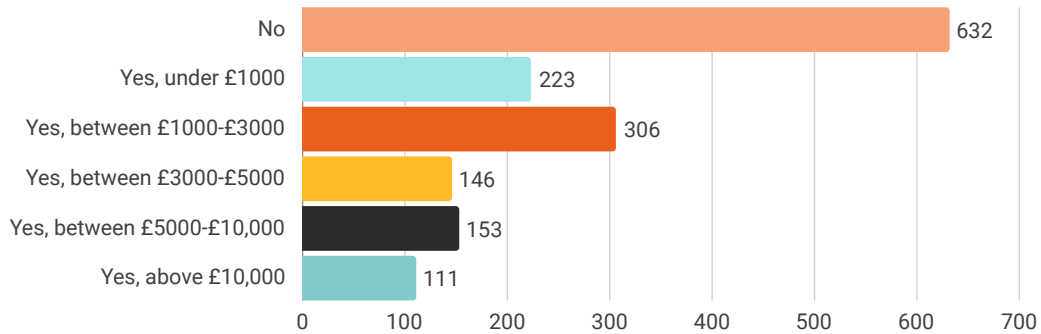
Q29. Do you rent or own your own home?

Answered 1571, Skipped 584



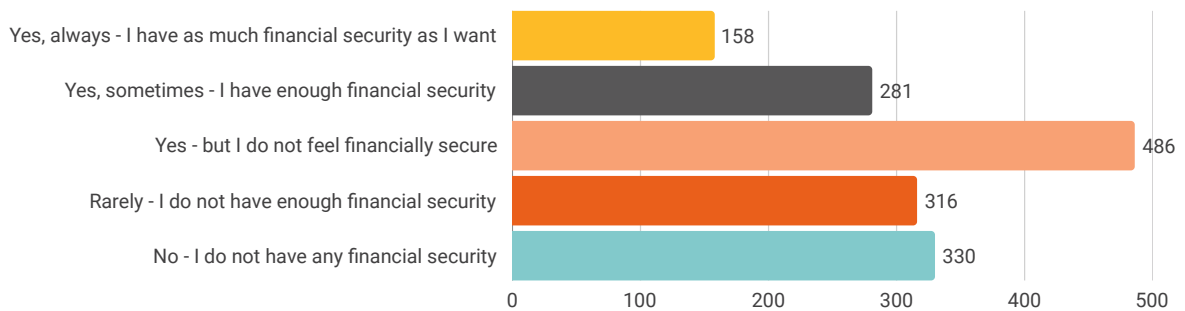
Q30. Do you have any additional debt (excluding your mortgage)

Answered 1571, Skipped 584



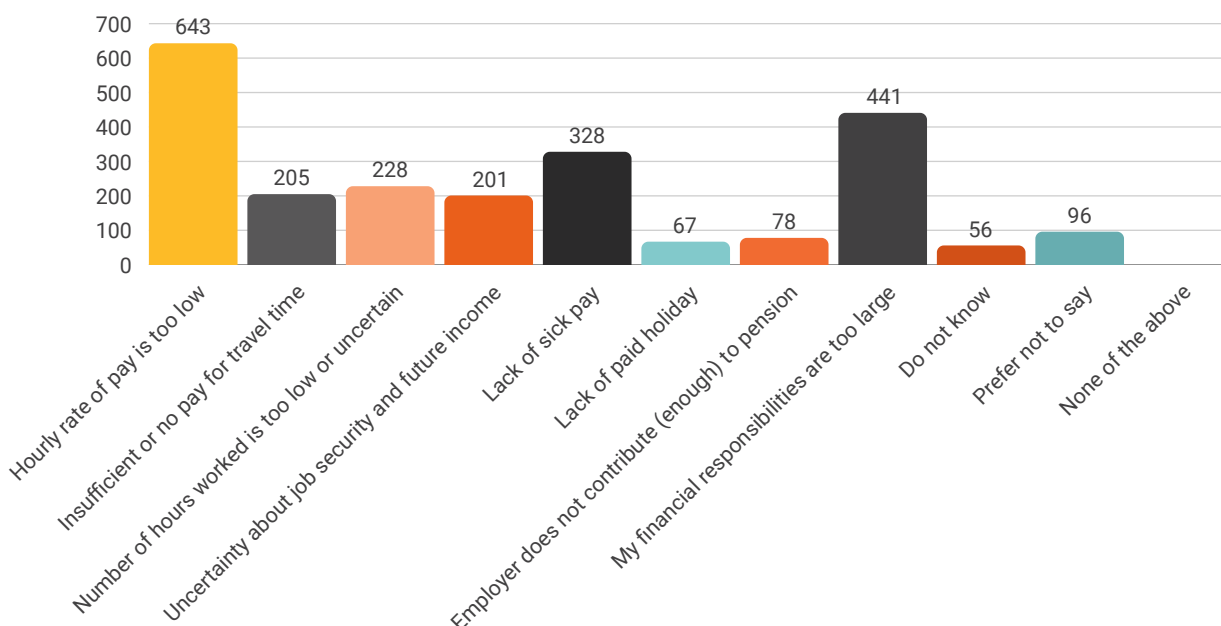
Q31. Does your monthly income cover all monthly expenditure, contributing to your financial security?

Answered 1571, Skipped 584



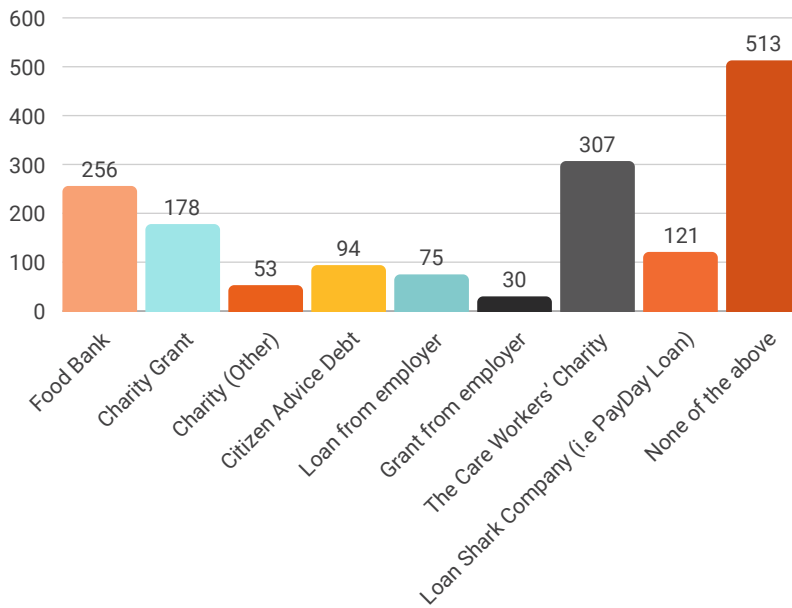
Q32. Which of the following prevent you from having enough financial security? Please select all that apply.

Answered 1120, Skipped 1034



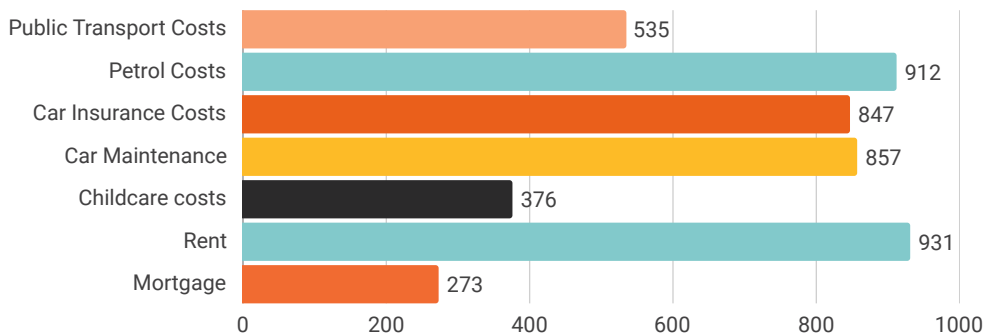
Q33. Have you ever sought support from or had to use the following?

Answered 1120, Skipped 1035



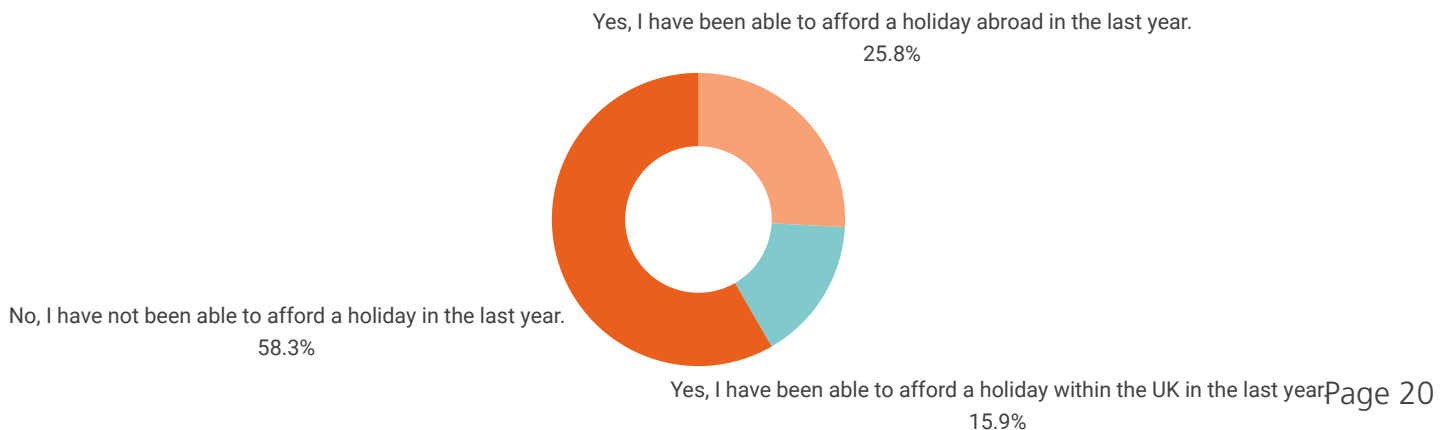
Q34. Which of the following are additional monthly costs?

Answered 1545, Skipped 610



Q35. Have you been able to afford a holiday this past year?

Answered 1545, Skipped 610



Mental Wellbeing

Mental wellbeing goes beyond the absence of illness, requiring supportive work environments, fair conditions, and sector-wide commitment, yet remains undervalued despite increasing pressures and inconsistent access to support.



Mental wellbeing should be understood as more than the absence of mental health conditions. It encompasses factors such as job satisfaction, a sense of purpose, access to adequate mental health support, opportunities for rest and recovery and the ability to maintain a work-life balance. Crucially, it also relies on working environments that foster safety – where care workers feel respected and empowered to voice concerns without fear of repercussions.

Care work demands not only technical expertise, but also significant emotional resilience, empathy and adaptability. Despite their contribution, the mental well-being of care workers has historically received limited attention in sector-wide policy discussions and decision-making.

The reality of working in Adult Social Care frequently presents significant challenges to achieving a good standard of mental well-being. Initial findings report high workloads, low pay, long working hours, staffing pressures and exposure to emotionally challenging situations are a significant problem for the care workforce, with the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing cost-of-living crisis intensifying these pressures. This is not to deny the encouraging progress in recognising the importance of workforce well-being, with some local and national initiatives offering mental health support, counselling services and peer support networks. However, access remains inconsistent – a sector-wide, coordinated approach is needed to embed mental well-being initiatives within workforce development and regulatory frameworks.



Key Findings

- 42.10% (607 respondents) either strongly agreed or agreed that they had been feeling unhappy or depressed, while 38.98% (562 respondents) reported feeling happy, all things considered.
- Only 25.25% (364 respondents) either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement 'I often worry about my work outside of working hours'.
- 34.33% (495 respondents) either strongly agreed or agreed that their job negatively affects their mental health.
- 20.95% (302 respondents) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that they often experience excessive levels of stress at work. 42.93% (619 respondents) had not experienced burnout. However, for those who had, only 12.55% (135 respondents) were able to access paid time off work, while 24.13% (348 respondents) reported not being able to take any time off work.

Key Findings

Further analysis of data by role shows variation in feelings of happiness, depression and overall satisfaction with their working life and life in general:

Role	Feeling Unhappy or Depressed (Agree or Strongly Agree)	Feeling Happy, All Things Considered (Agree or Strongly Agree)	Satisfied with Quality of Working Life (Agree or Strongly Agree)	Satisfied with Quality of Life in General (Agree or Strongly Agree)
Care Worker/ Care Assistant	40.51%	37.84%	50.36%	50.85%
Support or Outreach Worker	40.16%	38.98%	51.97%	51.97%
Paid Care Worker/ Personal Assistant	61.54%	38.46%	46.15%	46.16%
Registered / Assistant Manager	35.92%	41.75%	41.75%	64.08%

Key Findings

Access to mental health support remains an area requiring urgent attention:

- 15.81% (228 respondents) have, or are currently, accessing therapy services – either through their employer or an external organisation.
- 17.06% (246 respondents) indicated they have not sought therapy because they are unsure where to find appropriate support.
- Only 52.63% (730 respondents) believed mental health support was available in their workplace.

Understanding the role of autonomy and voice within the workplace, the survey found:

- 58.60% (845 respondents) either strongly agreed or agreed that they can voice their opinions and influence change in their area of work.
- However, 18.24% (263 respondents) either strongly disagreed or disagreed that they are involved in decisions affecting their role, with 25.38% (366 respondents) neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

Relationships within their workplace were also explored:

- 87.51% (1258 respondents) either strongly agreed or agreed that their relationships with those they care for and support are as positive as they would like.
- By comparison, 76.56% (1104 respondents) either strongly agreed or agreed that their professional relationships with colleagues were as positive as they would like – a difference of 10.95%.

Support for flexible working was mixed:

- 21.08% (304 respondents) either strongly disagreed or disagreed that their line manager actively promotes flexible working arrangements.
- 52.63% (759 respondents) either strongly agreed or agreed that their employer provides facilities and flexibilities to support family life.

Strikingly, 87.03% (1255 respondents) either strongly agreed or agreed that they are able to make a difference through their work. This alone highlights the ensuring sense of purpose and commitment among care workers, despite the pressures they face.

Participant Quotes

We asked respondents to provide further feedback on their mental well-being. Find some of their responses down below:



'Not having contracted hours make me stress, as sometimes we overwork but sometimes, we work less. So, there's no guarantee how many hours we can work in each month.'



'Not being able to voice opinions and be heard at work has affected my mental health.'



'Mental health is crucial in social care, as the role often involves high emotional demands, long hours, and intense situations that can impact well-being. Employers should prioritize mental health support by offering regular well-being check-ins, access to counselling services, and structured debriefing sessions for staff dealing with stressful situations



Additionally, fostering a positive work culture, ensuring adequate staffing levels, and encouraging open conversations about mental health can help prevent burnout. Self-care, peer support, and setting boundaries are also essential for maintaining mental resilience in such a demanding profession.'



I find the hardest thing around my mental health is my finances. I just want to be able to clear the debt and I would be happy as it gives me the opportunity to save for a house instead of worrying about am I going to have enough money to live each month.'



'I think people forget we spend all day caring for people, and it can be hard to then care for yourself when you're always putting others needs above your own. Yet I love my job. But it can be difficult when you develop personal relationships with the people you care for. You feel their moods with them, and it can be really difficult when you're having a bad day yourself.'

Participant Quotes

We asked respondents to provide further feedback on their mental well-being. Find some of their responses down below:



'Covid had a significant impact, and I accessed private counselling for 2 years and was diagnosed with PTSD. There are so many challenges in the sector - we have never had a chance to recover, the pressures and external burdens around funding, low staff wages and the cycle this has on staff and team morale and wellbeing is significant. There is a significant lack of support and acknowledgement from the government and society and a reform is desperately needed.'



'If seeking therapy or other forms of therapy for mental health, our company offers contribution of payment towards therapy fees, they regularly check in at least once a week and happily adapt normal working shifts and patterns to allow extra time off/breaks etc when needed.'



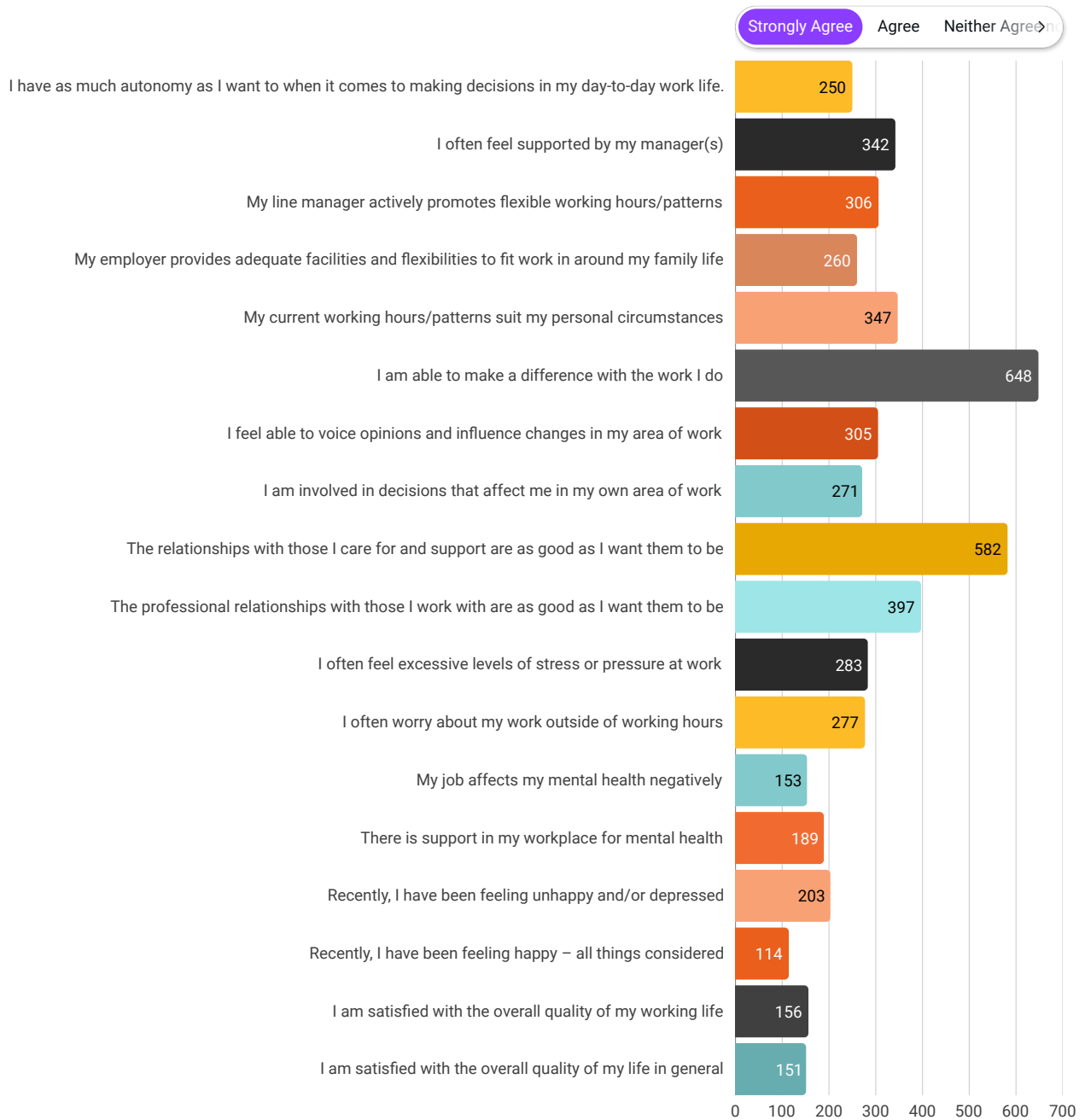
'It makes a huge difference when the management show a genuine concern for your mental health and have the time to talk to you and invite you to raise any concerns that are affecting you personally.'



'Rota should be equal, and not favouritism. 2 early shifts and 2 late shifts should be thought about for a work life balance. Break time should be deemed a specific time, not grabbing 5 minutes when you have time for a drink on a 6hr shift or more as 30min wage is docked regardless. This causes a lot of stress.'

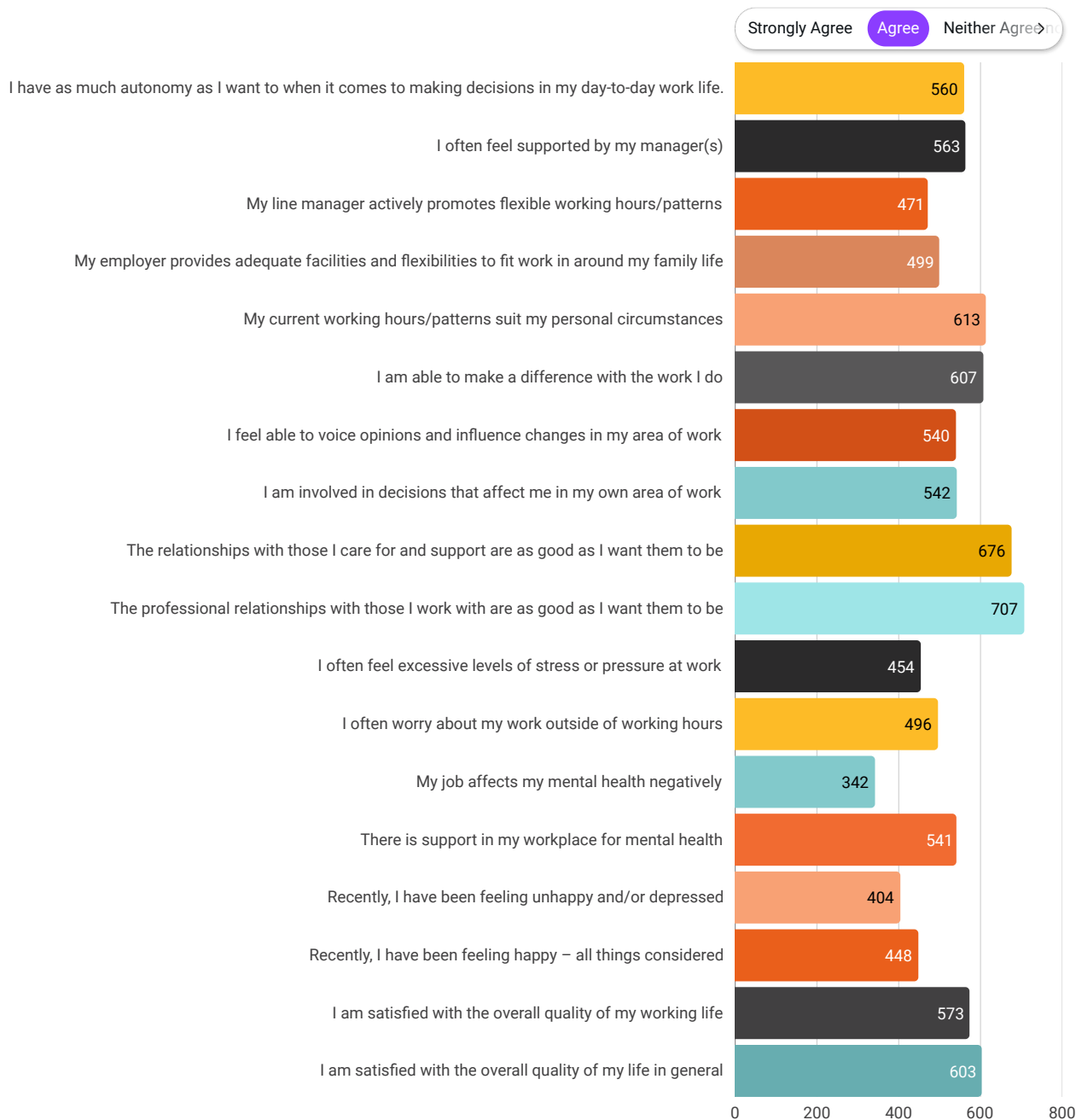
Q37. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements?

Answered 1442, Skipped 713



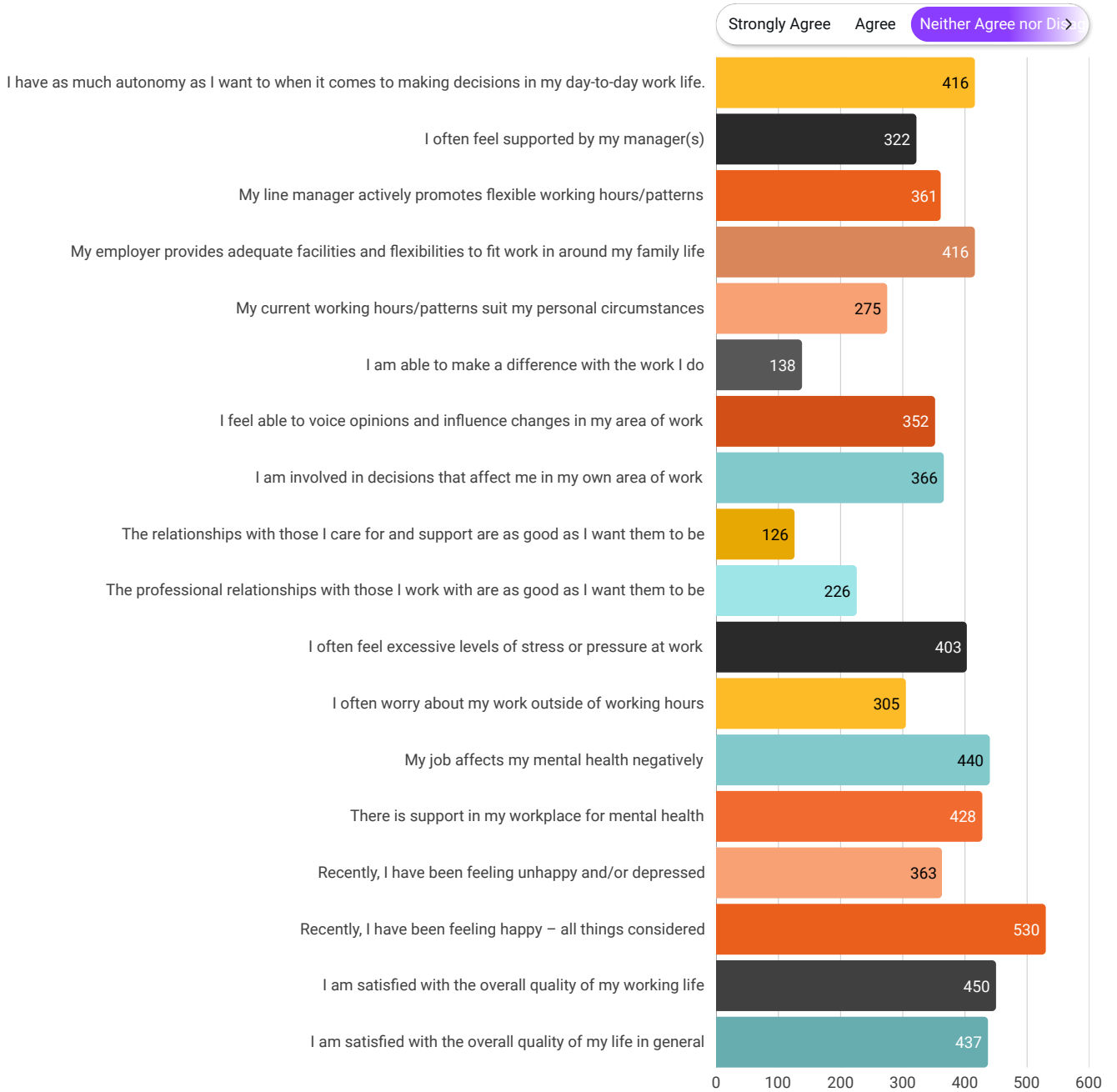
Q37. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements?

Answered 1442, Skipped 713



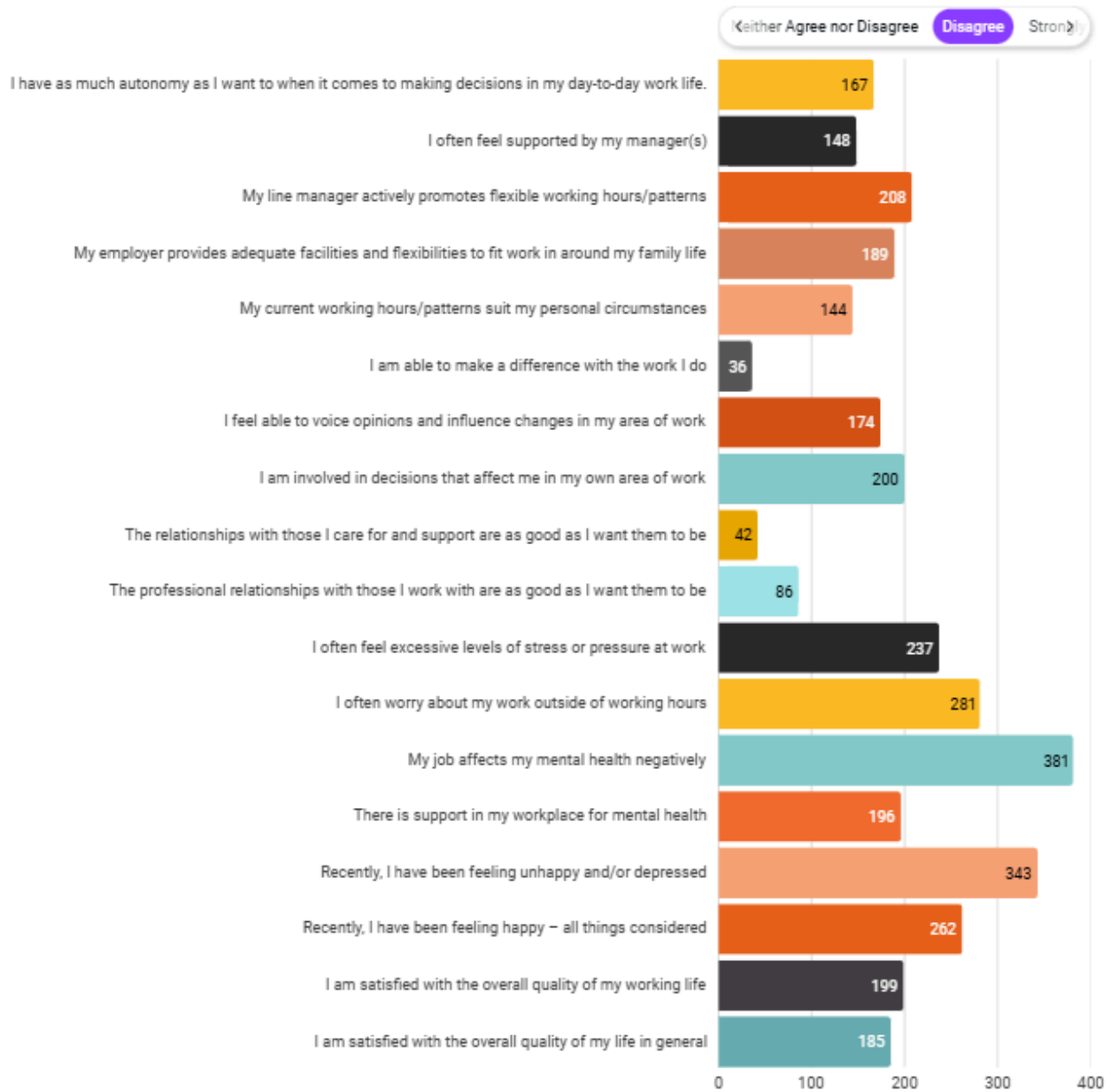
Q37. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements?

Answered 1442, Skipped 713



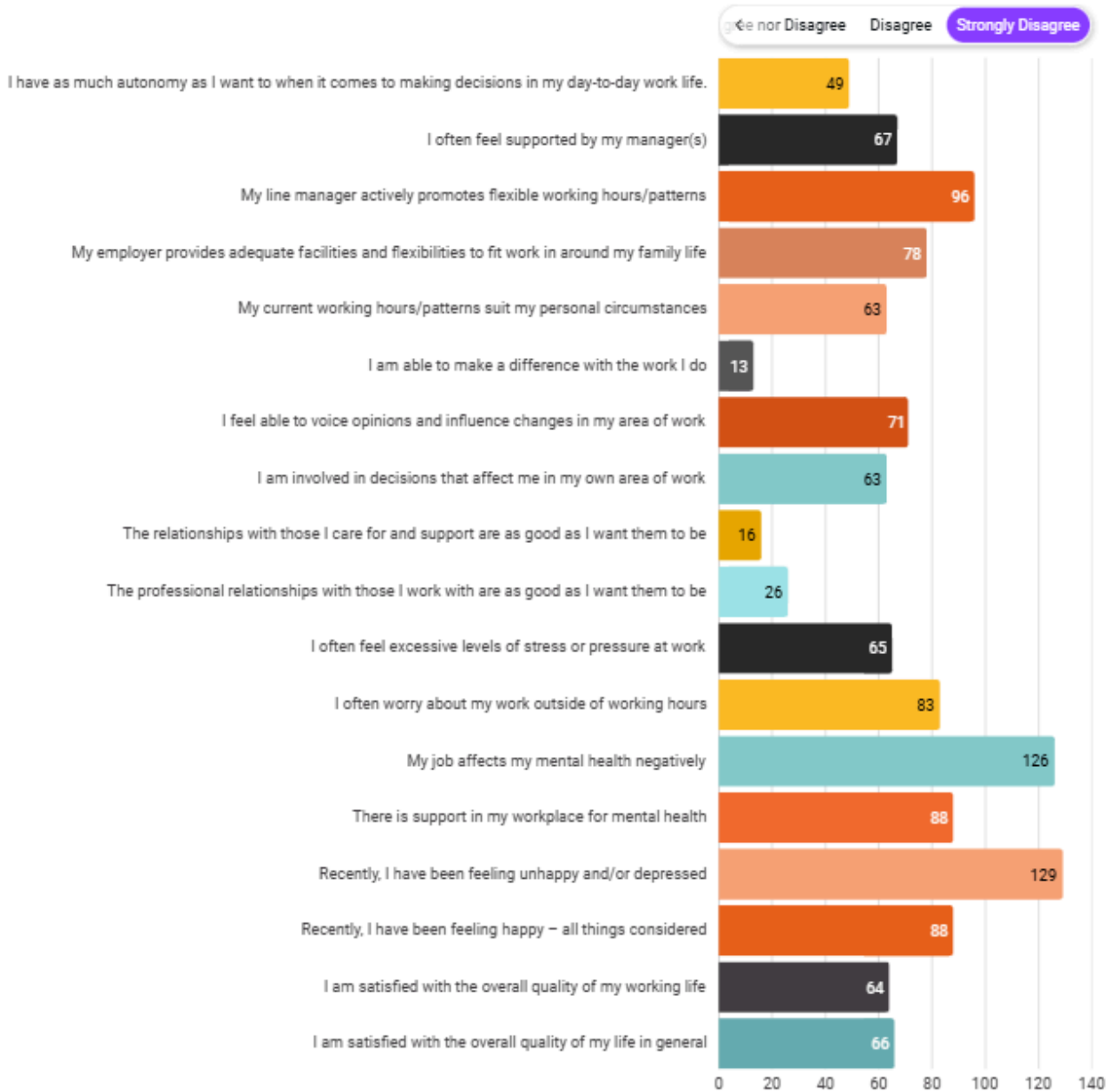
Q37. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements?

Answered 1442, Skipped 713



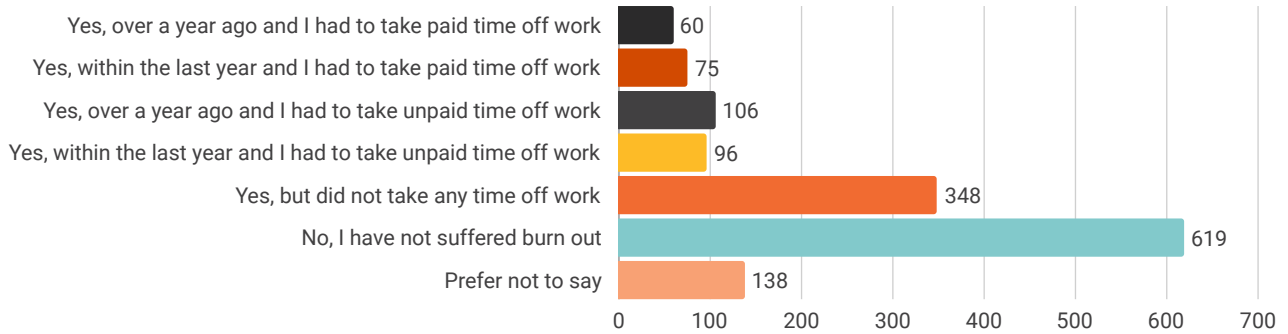
Q37. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements?

Answered 1442, Skipped 713



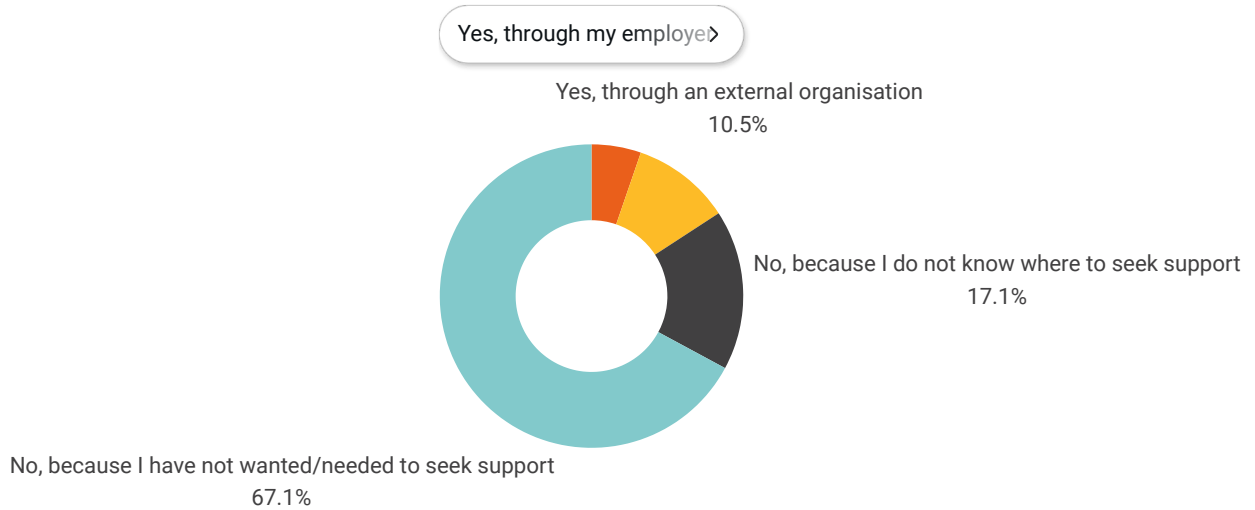
Q39. Have you suffered burn out due to your job in social care?

Answered 1142, Skipped 713



Q40. Are you currently, or have you sought therapy because of your job in social care?

Answered 1142, Skipped 713



Physical Wellbeing

Care workers' physical wellbeing must include protection from violence, harassment, and unsafe conditions—not just injury prevention—to ensure safety, respect, and dignity in care.



A comprehensive approach to the physical wellbeing of care workers must include more than the prevention of injury from manual tasks. It must ensure that care workers feel safe, respected and supported in all aspects of their role. This includes providing safe working conditions, protecting them from physical violence, verbal harassment, bullying and safeguarding against threats to sexual safety.

Care work is a physically demanding profession, however, beyond the physical strain of daily duties, care workers encounter risks of violence, bullying and harassment. They are frequently placed in vulnerable positions: working alone in private homes, supporting individuals with complex behaviours and managing the emotional demands of intimate personal care. These environments can expose them to physical assault, verbal abuse, racial discrimination and sexual harassment from those drawing on care, their families and colleagues. Worryingly, care work remains one of the few professions where such risks are relatively common and, in some cases, quietly normalised.

Initial findings indicate that incidents of violence, bullying and harassment are commonplace, with a perception that such happenings are an unavoidable part of the job. It is also highlighted that there is a discomfort in reporting, with contributing factors including, but not limited to, fear of repercussions and concerns about not being believed. Prioritising physical wellbeing is essential – not only to protect care workers, but to uphold the principles of compassion, dignity and respect that underpin the Adult Social Care system.



Key Findings

Within this section of the survey, respondents were given the option to skip the section to protect their mental wellbeing. Over half of our respondents chose to do so, suggesting the sensitivity of this topic and the ongoing culture of discomfort around speaking openly about these issues.

- 78.84% (839 respondents) either strongly agreed or agreed that they generally feel safe from physical abuse or violence by those they care for or their relatives, compared to 90.35% (1024 respondents) who feel safe from physical abuse or violence from colleagues – a 15.1% difference.
- 17.66% (198 respondents) either strongly disagreed or disagreed that they feel protected from harm caused by work-related stress, with 20.57% (281 respondents) neither agreeing or disagreeing.
- 79.92% (888 respondents) either strongly agreed or agreed that they work in a safe environment.
- 77.16% (865 respondents) either strongly agreed or agreed that their working conditions are satisfactory.

Key Findings

It is interesting to highlight the difference between feelings of safety in the workplace and experiences with either verbal or physical bullying, harassment or abuse. In total, 74.14% (748 respondents) have either experienced or witnessed either physical or verbal abuse, bullying and harassment. However, 79.92% (888 respondents) either strongly agreed or agreed that they work in a safe environment. This means that 68.36% of those who had experienced or witnessed bullying, harassment or abuse in the workplace generally feel safe. This spotlights the normality and internalised acceptance of such experience.

Experiences with violence revealed concerning trends:

- 24.60% (196 respondents) reported witnessing or experiencing physical violence in the last 12 months between 1–10 times, with 7.14% (80 respondents) more than 10 times.
- 92.8% (348 respondents) indicated that incidents of violence stemmed from those they support, while 10.94% (41 respondents) reported violence involving managers, team leaders or colleagues.

In terms of harassment, bullying and verbal abuse:

- 33.42% (372 respondents) witnessed or experienced harassment, bullying or verbal abuse in the last 12 months between 1–10 times, with 8.98% (100 respondents) more than 10 times.
- In comparison to physical violence and abuse, only 54.26% (255 respondents) attributed harassment, bullying or verbal abuse to those they support. 65.95% (310 respondents) reported it stemming from managers, team leaders or colleagues. This is a 55.01% increase compared to incidents of physical violence and abuse from managers, team leaders or colleagues

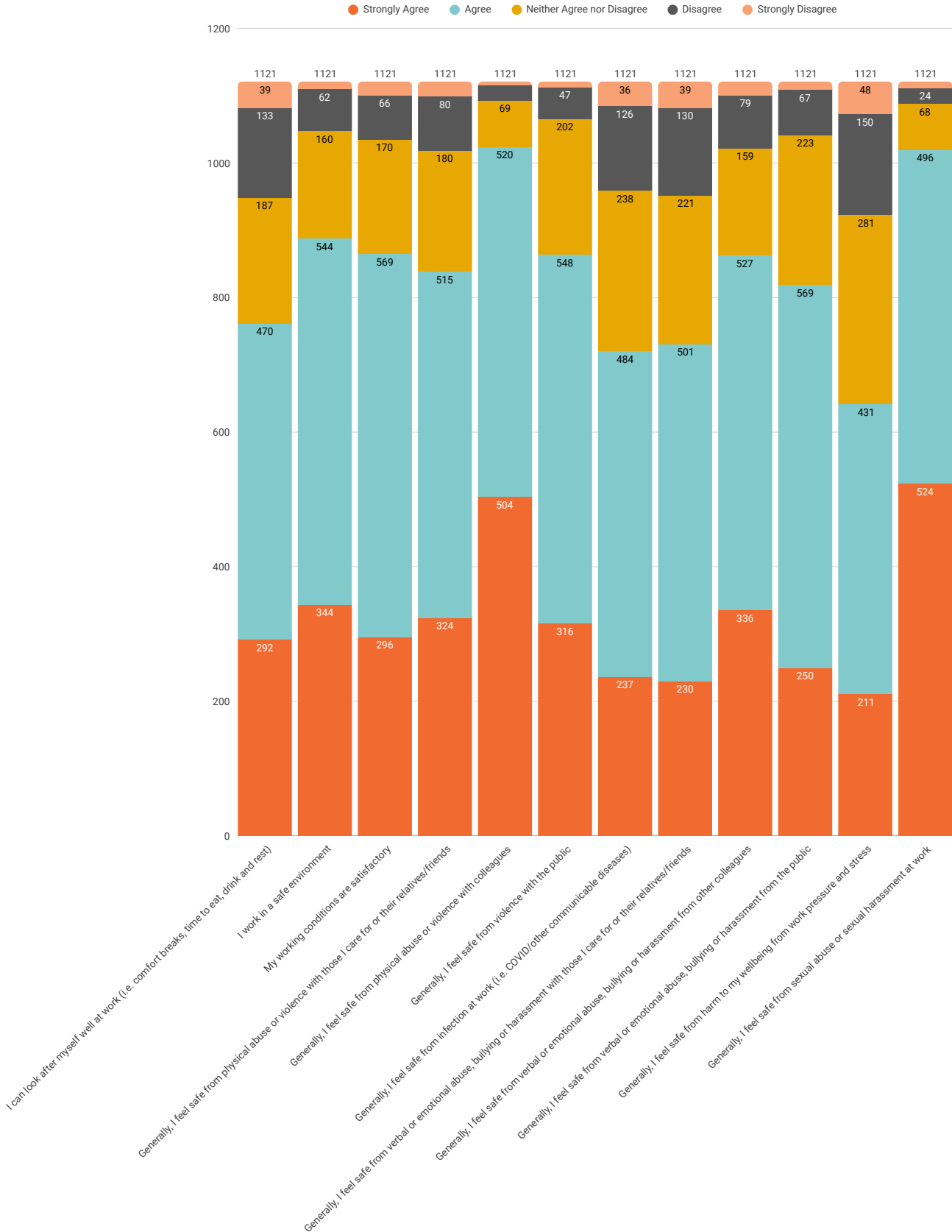
Regarding reporting practises:

- 90.93% (341 respondents) stated that either they or a colleague reported incidents of physical violence and abuse.
- 72.56% (341 respondents) stated that either they or a colleague reported incidents of harassment, bullying or verbal abuse.

In a data set where most abuse stems from managers, team leaders or colleagues, it is interesting to note that 9.63% (44 respondents) did not go on to report, with 11.70% (55 respondents) stating they did not report because they either did not know where/how to report or did not feel comfortable reporting.

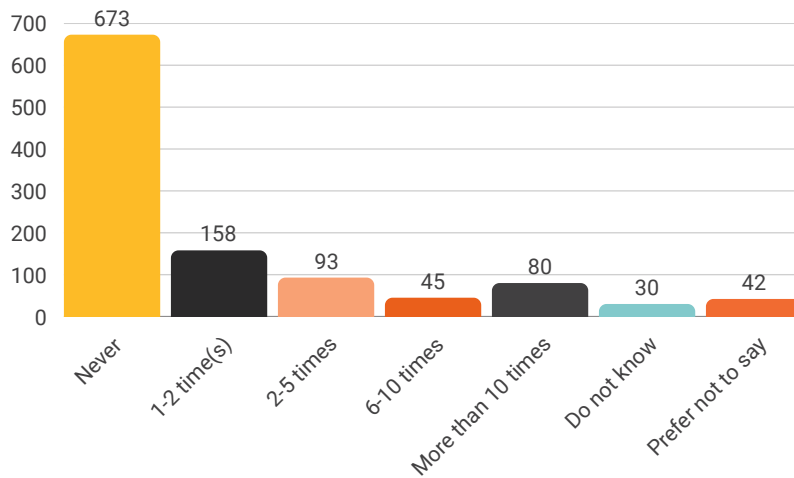
Q43. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements?

Answered 1121, Skipped 1034



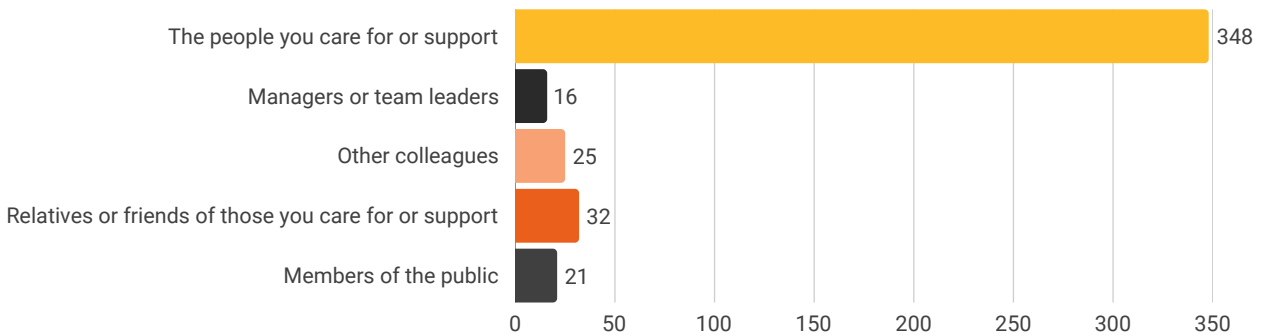
Q44. In the last 12 months, how many times have you personally experienced or witnessed physical violence while working?

Answered 1121, Skipped 1034



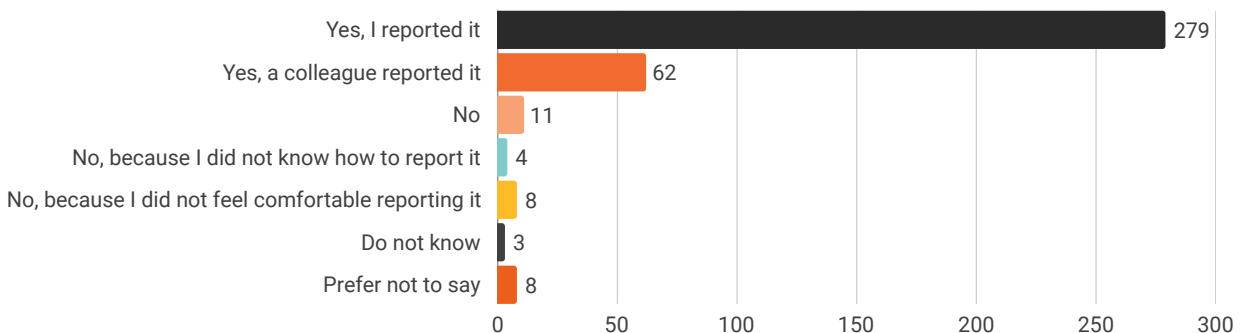
Q45. Who was this from? Please select all that apply.

Answered 375, Skipped 1780



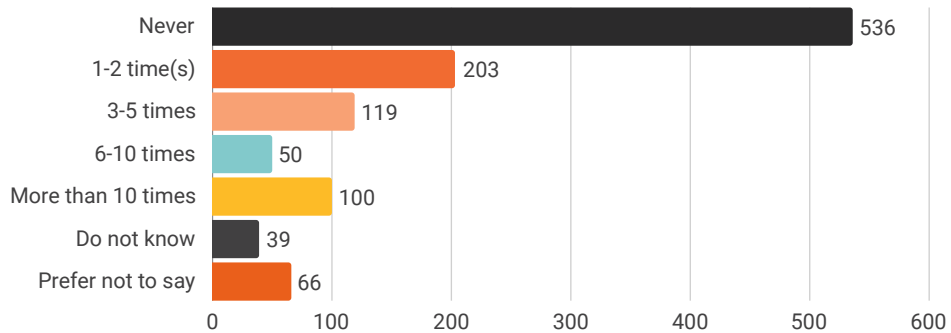
Q46. The last time you experienced or witnessed physical violence while working, did you or a colleague report it?

Answered 375, Skipped 1780



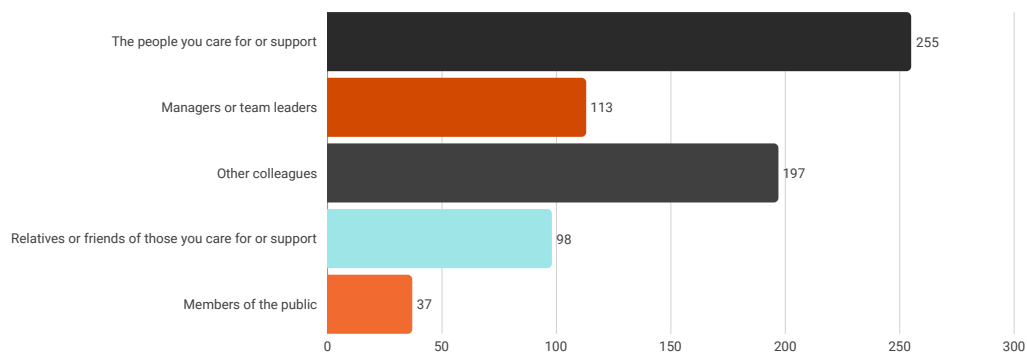
Q47. In the last 12 months, how many times have you personally experienced or witnessed harassment, bullying or verbal abuse while working?

Answered 1113, Skipped 1042



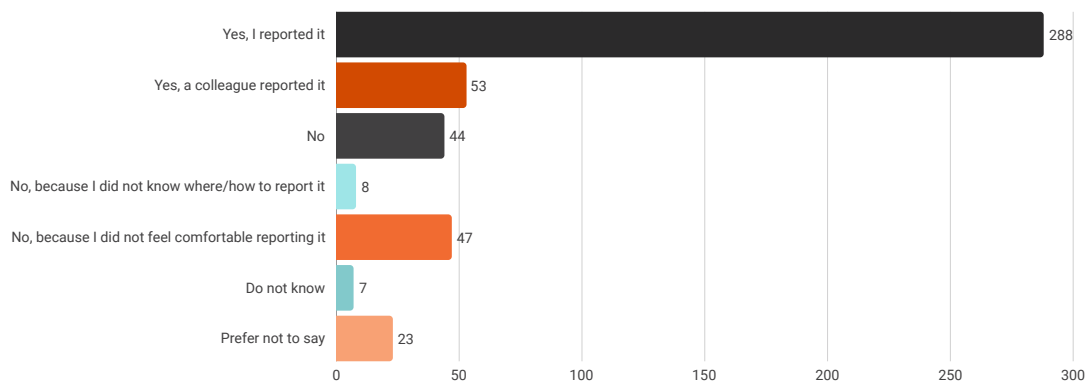
Q48. Who from?

Answered 470, Skipped 1685



Q49. The last time you experienced harassment, bullying or verbal abuse at work, did you or a colleague report it?

Answered 470, Skipped 1685



Training and Development

Training is key to helping care workers feel confident, supported, and ready for the challenges of their role.



Care work is a skilled profession, requiring technical knowledge, responsibility, and emotional intelligence. Training and development are essential to building a sustainable, high-quality Adult Social Care sector. Given the complexity of care work, it's crucial that training is accessible, adequate, and up to date—reflecting both practical and emotional demands.

Care workers must be confident in areas like safeguarding, moving and handling, dementia care, medication administration, and end-of-life support. Many are now also expected to manage delegated health tasks, which demands robust training and support to ensure safe, confident delivery.

Retention is one of the sector's biggest challenges. According to Skills for Care's October 2024 report, the turnover rate was 24.2% (350,000 leavers). Training and development play a vital role in retention—without adequate support, care workers may feel unprepared or unsupported, leading to job dissatisfaction.

Survey responses show a mixed picture: while many find their work fulfilling and feel encouraged to build new skills, satisfaction with career progression remains low. This highlights the inconsistent nature of training and development across the sector. Improving training and career pathways requires a coordinated, sector-wide effort involving employers, local authorities, training providers, and policymakers. Without this, gaps and inequalities will continue to impact the workforce.



Key Findings

- Overall, 74.95% (1014 respondents) either strongly agreed or agreed that their role offers them challenging and fulfilling work. Registered Managers and Assistant Managers were most likely to agree with this statement (88.17% or 894 respondents).
- Responses surrounding the ability to do their job was overwhelmingly positive: 76.21% (1031 respondents) either strongly agreed or agreed that they can use their abilities at work.
- 70.80% (958 respondents) either strongly agreed or agreed that their employer provides them with what they need to do their job effectively.

Key Findings

Encouragingly, 62.92% (946 respondents) reported being encouraged to develop new skills. However, 57.80% (782 respondents) are satisfied with the career opportunities available to them. Career satisfaction varies significantly across roles:

- Registered/Assistant Managers: 73.11%
- Care Workers/Care Assistants: 57.32%
- Support/Outreach Workers: 55.75%
- Paid Carer Worker/Personal Assistants: 36.37%

Satisfaction with training received was relatively high, with 77.76% (1050 respondents) either strongly agreeing or agreeing with the statement 'I am satisfied with the training received'. Responses were particularly positive among those new to the sector:

- Less than 1 year: 81.16%
- 1-5 years: 77.91%
- 5-10 years: 72.98%
- Over 10 years: 79.04%

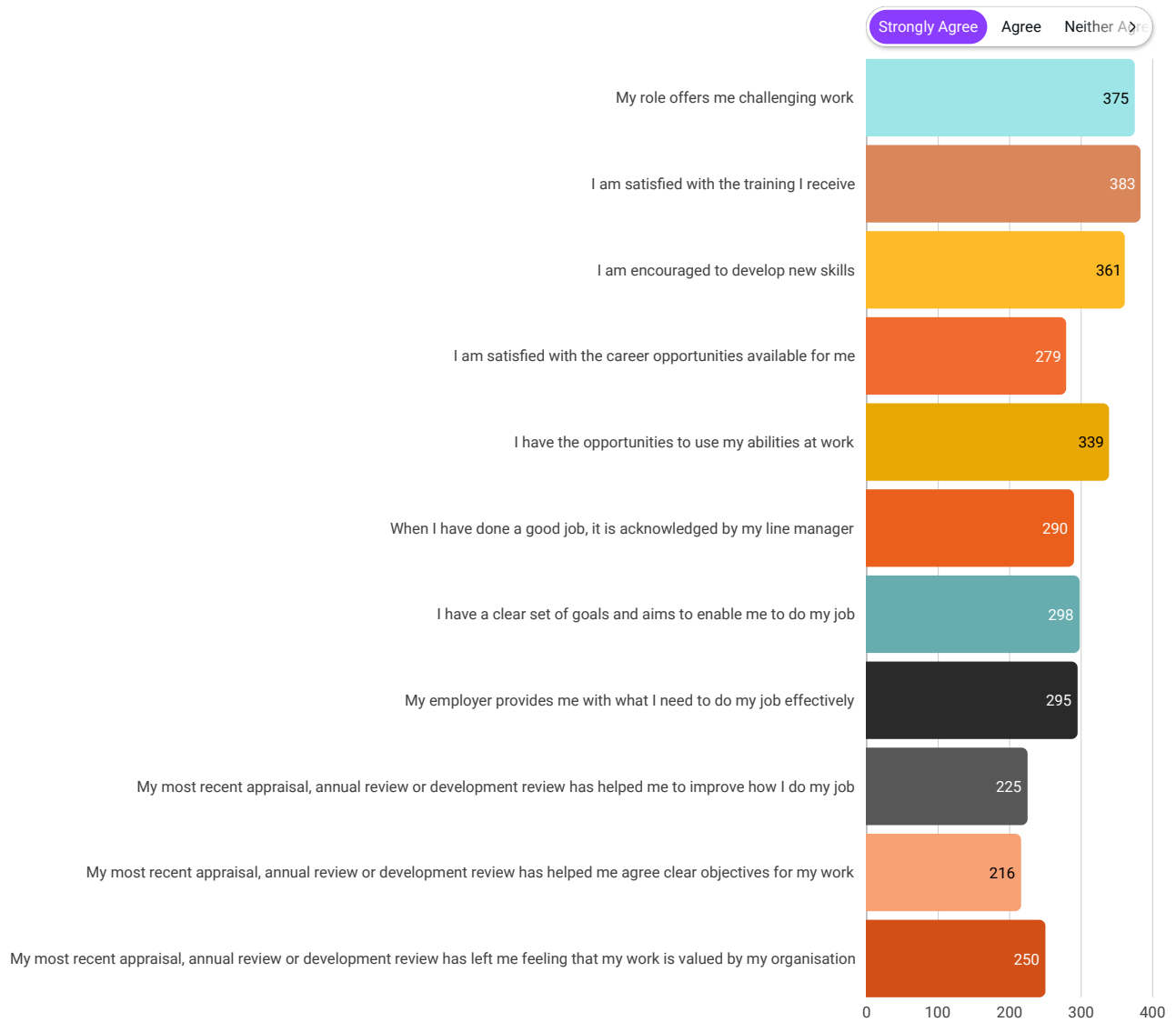
Regarding appraisals, annual and development reviews, responses were fairly consistent:

- 52.40% (709 respondents) either strongly agreed or agreed that their most recent appraisal, annual review or development review has helped them to improve how they do their job
- 54.39% (736 respondents) either strongly agreed or agreed that their most recent appraisal, annual review or development review has helped them agree clear objectives for their work
- 54.03% (731 respondents) either strongly agreed or agreed that their most recent appraisal, annual review or development review has left them feeling that their work is valued by their organisation.

Interestingly, only 56.02% (758 respondents) either strongly agreed or agreed that their line manager acknowledges them when they do a good job, with 24.54% (332 respondents) neither agreeing or disagreeing with this statement. This further highlights the disparities with accessible and equitable feedback for care workers to enhance their skills and roles. These findings suggest that while much of the care workforce value their roles and feel supported in their training, there is a need for more equitable and structured development opportunities to retain the workforce and build long-term capacity.

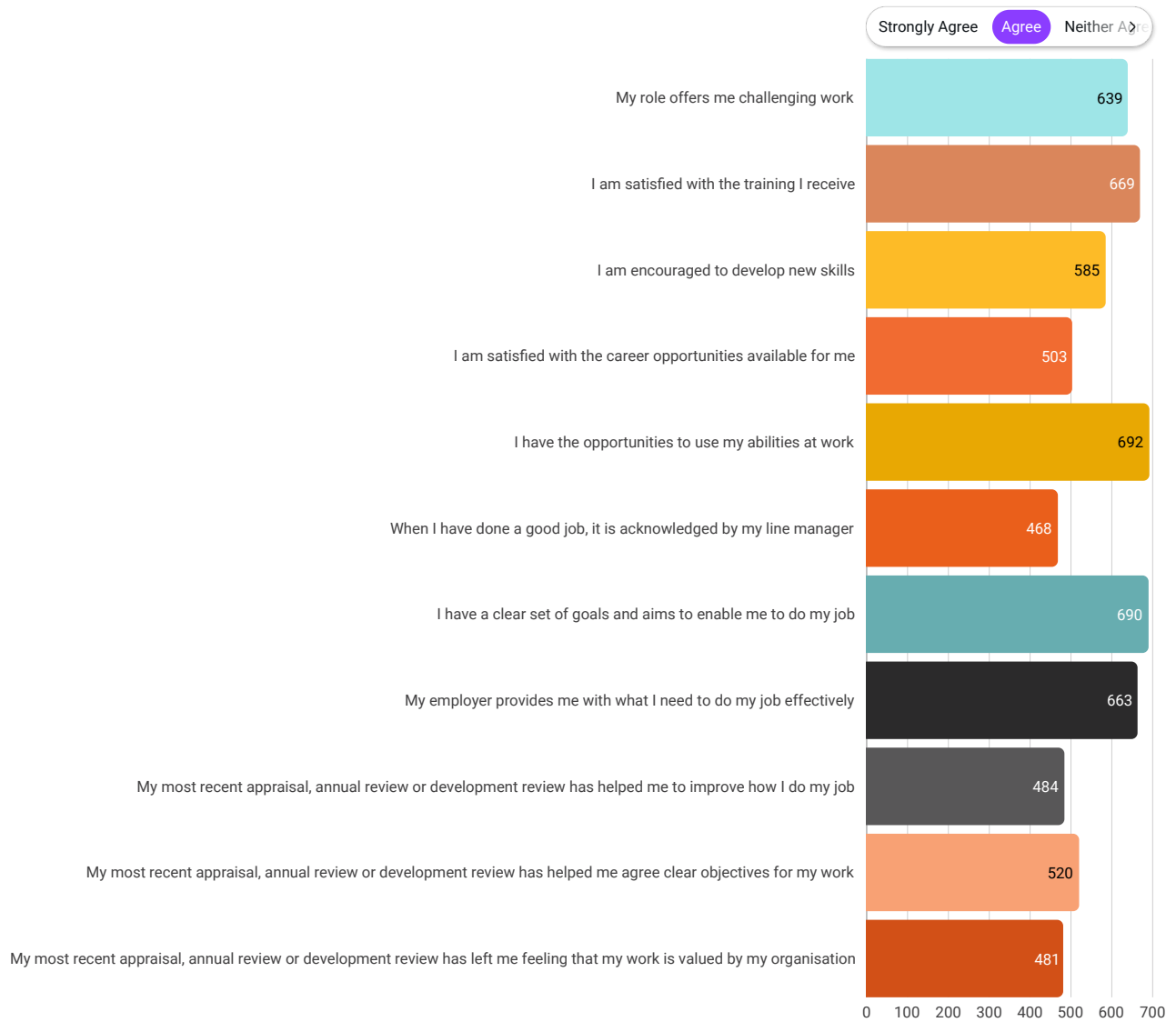
Q51. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements?

Answered 1353, Skipped 802



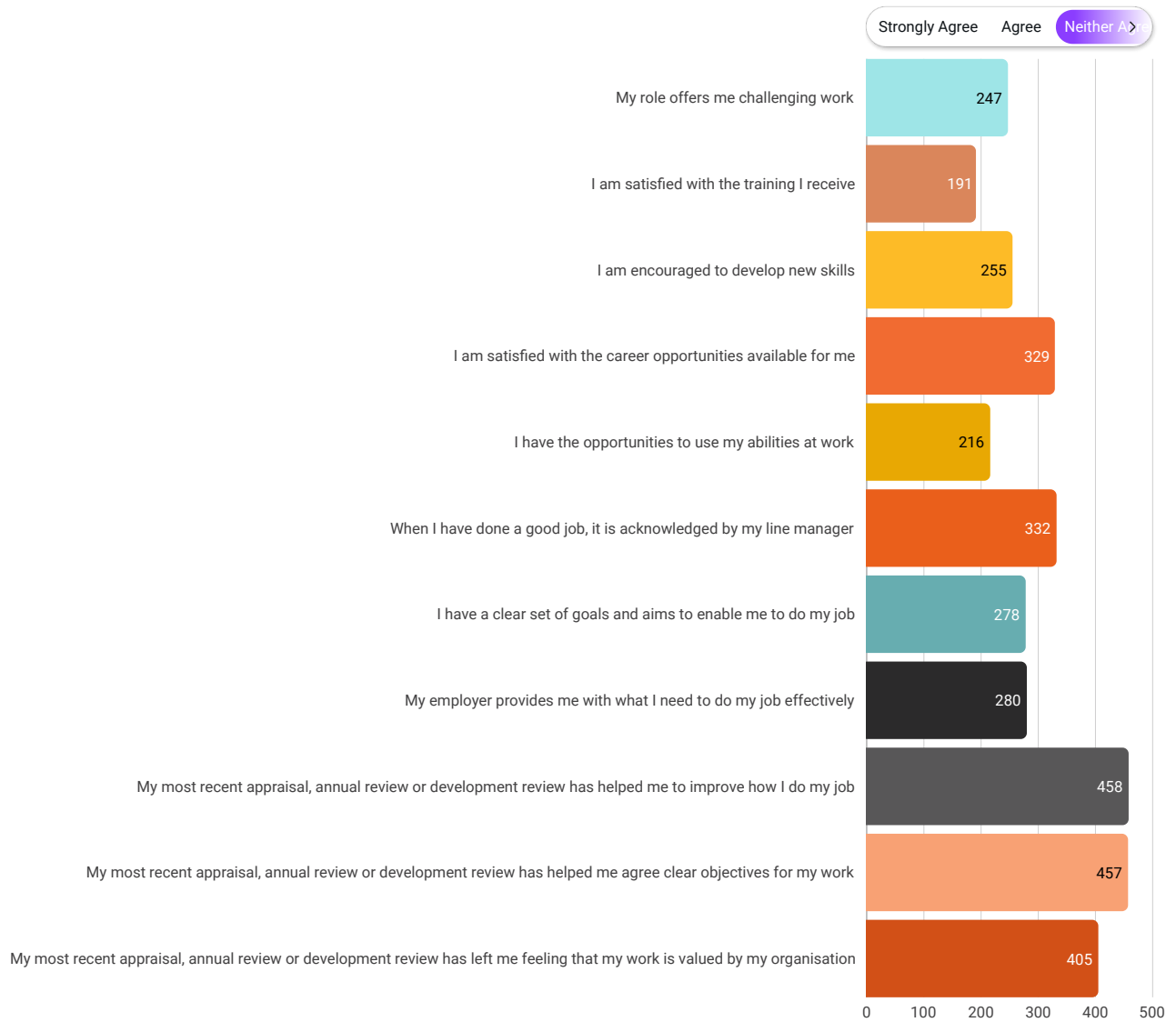
Q51. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements?

Answered 1353, Skipped 802



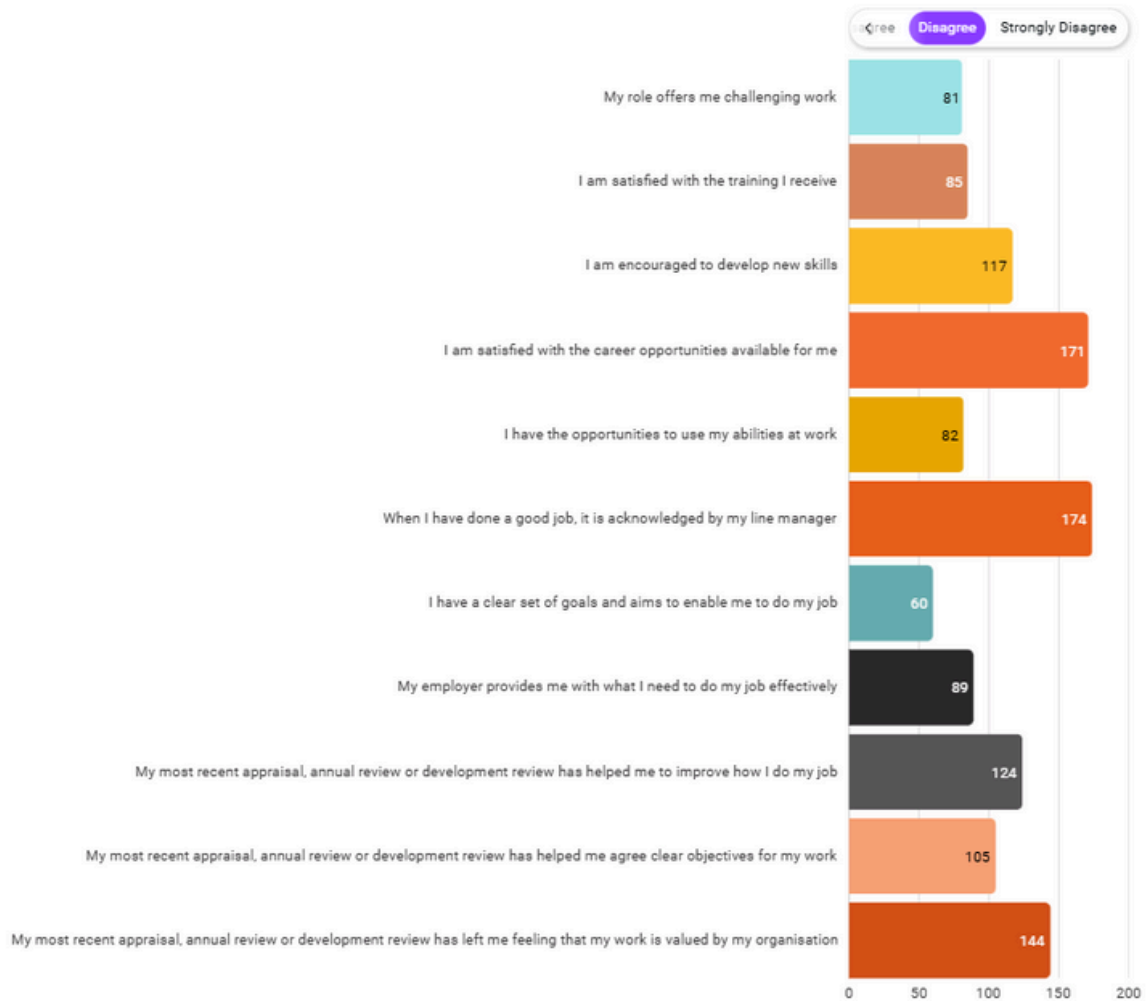
Q51. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements?

Answered 1353, Skipped 802



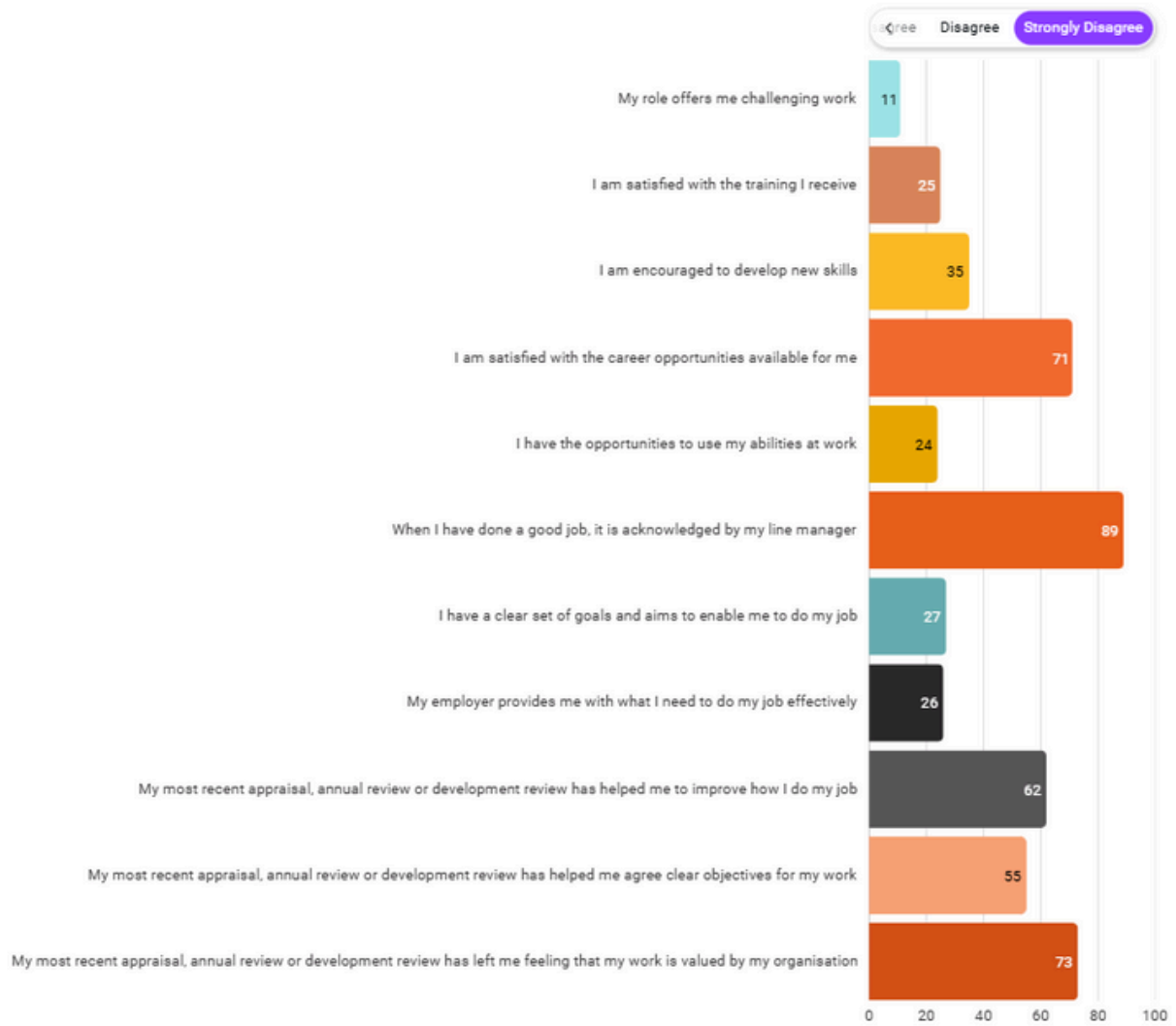
Q51. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements?

Answered 1353, Skipped 802



Q51. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements?

Answered 1353, Skipped 802



Perceptions



Care work is often characterised as low status or ‘unskilled’, despite playing an essential role in supporting the health, independence and dignity of those drawing on care across the UK. Understanding how care workers perceive their value is vital to addressing persistent workforce challenges within the sector. When care workers feel respected, recognised and supported, they are more likely to remain in their roles, allowing for the continuity of care. Feelings of being overlooked and undervalued can lead to disengagement, burnout and high turnover.

Initial findings reveal that while many feel appreciated by those closest to them—particularly friends and family members, there is a significant gap when it comes to feeling valued by the wider public and, in some cases, by their employers. This disconnect reflects broader societal attitudes toward care work. Alongside this, the survey explored the primary drivers influencing intentions to stay in or leave their current positions. The most common reasons cited for leaving an employer include low pay, limited career progression, the impact of work on health and wellbeing, and unsatisfactory working conditions.

These are longstanding issues that, if left unaddressed, will continue to undermine recruitment and retention across the sector. Encouragingly, the data points to strong commitment to their profession and a desire to remain in the sector—provided they are given the tools, recognition, and support to grow and thrive.



Key Findings

- 60.95% (799 respondents) either strongly agreed or agreed that their role is adequately valued by their manager(s).
- Interestingly, a higher proportion of respondents (75.52% or 990 respondents) either strongly agreed or agreed that their role is valued by friends or family
- In contrast, just 56.22% (737 respondents) either strongly agreed or agreed that their role is adequately valued by the wider public, highlighting an ongoing gap in the societal understanding and appreciation of care work.

Key Findings

Further analysis of the data by role shows some variation in perceptions of how valued individuals feel by different groups:

Role	Valued by Manager (%)	Valued by Friends & Family (%)	Valued by the Public (%)
Care Worker / Care Assistant	58.58%	75.74%	58.85%
Support / Outreach Worker	61.80%	72.97%	50.64%%
Paid Care Worker / Personal Assistant	42.85%	80.95%	57.14%
Registered Manager / Assistant Manager	73.04%	79.77%	50.56%

Key Findings

When asked about leaving their profession:

- 36.69% (581 respondents) stated they often think about leaving their current organisation, with 41.88% (549 respondents) stated they are not thinking about leaving their current job.
- 28.53% (374 respondents) indicated they are likely to look for a new job in the next 12 month
- 26.01% (341 respondents) reported they would leave as soon as they find another opportunity.
- 47.29% (620 respondents) either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement 'I would like to retire from adult social care or take a career break', with 30.51% (400 respondents) neither agreeing or disagreeing.
- Encouragingly, 44.47% (583 respondents) stated they would not like to find a job outside of Adult Social Care, with 32.65% (428 respondents) neither agreeing or disagreeing with this statement.
- 32.88% (431 respondents) expressed a desire to move into a role within the NHS – this suggests that alignment with more structured progression frameworks, perceived job security and more widely recognised benefits in NHS roles may be attractive to those currently working in Adult Social Care.

Exploring motivations for leaving a current employer, the top six responses were:

- 65.29% (856 respondents) cited pay and remuneration.
- 60.95% (799 respondents) cited impact on health and wellbeing
- 56.52% (741 respondents) cited career opportunities
- 38.98% (511 respondents) cited working conditions
- 36.25% (475 respondents) cited access to learning and development

Most strikingly, 76.06% (984 respondents) stated they would recommend a relative or friend to work in Adult Social Care.

Participant Quotes

We asked respondents to provide further feedback on perceptions. Find some of their responses down below:



'Social care is rewarding career but highly undervalued by government and the public.'



'After Covid, we went right back to how it was before, under appreciated with low pay.'



'Adult social care as a profession is underrated, it is such an important and noble profession, the work carers and healthcare workers do is not recognised enough. However, in the case of many migrants, it has become a means to an end, leaving other key sectors in home country...There are success stories, however there are also poor experiences to be noted, often times resulting in poor duty of care.'



'The perception is that our job isn't skilled and has little importance but the reality is that we do many different job roles within Care, some are highly skilled and vital, such as medication administration and without Carers the health and social care of this country would be in ruins.'



'Adult social care is a fulfilling career for many including myself but we are under paid and undervalued which affects the morale of staff over time.'



'It shouldn't be a lottery to have good management, it should be standard for support workers to feel valued and supported by line management across the board.'

Participant Quotes

We asked respondents to provide further feedback on perceptions. Find some of their responses down below:



'Classed wrongly as unskilled work , I have so many courses under my belt and the pay doesn't reflect or respect the knowledge and skills I have gained over the years. We are neither respected or valued in terms of what we bring to the table.'



'I feel that we are looked down upon for choosing a career in adult social care rather than acute medicine, particularly by paramedics and those who work in a hospital setting.'



'The job in itself is rewarding, however, the working conditions, low pay, discrimination, prejudices etc make it not worth it!'

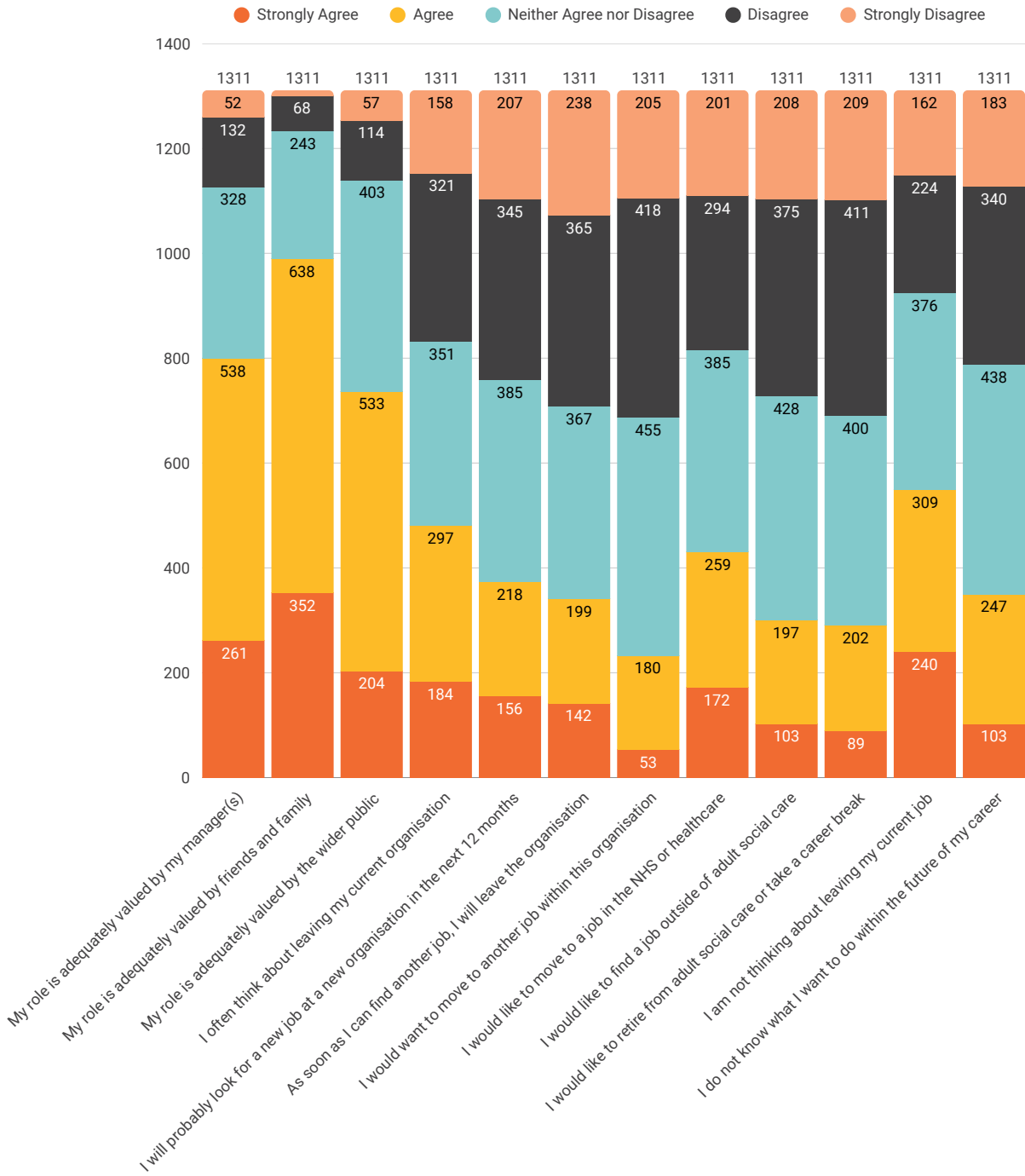


'I am coming to the end of my care career, but worry that the next generation have no incentive to work in social care.'

These findings underline the importance of not only improving pay and conditions but also ensuring that care workers are respected, recognised, and supported across the system. While most care workers feel recognised by their immediate support networks, the data suggests that perceptions of being valued by the wider public remain relatively low across all roles. Additionally, those in more senior positions, such as Registered Managers, tend to report feeling more valued by their employers than those in frontline roles such as Care Assistants or Personal Assistants. Addressing these issues will be critical to improving job satisfaction, reducing turnover, and creating a more valued workforce.

Q52. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements?

Answered 1311, Skipped 844



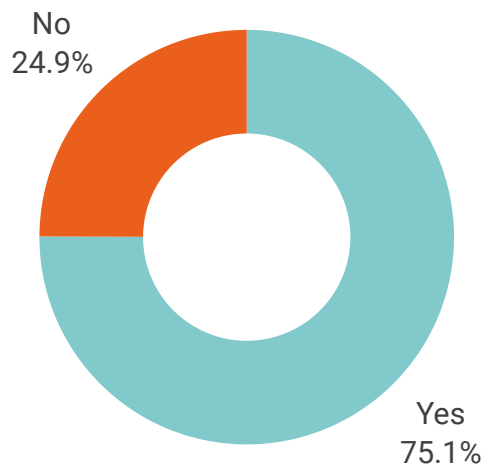
Q53. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements?

Answered 1311, Skipped 844



Q54. Would you recommend your relative or friend to work in adult social care?

Answered 1311, Skipped 844



Of The Time

(July 2024 – Present Day)

Recent changes in leadership, policy, and rising living costs have significantly affected care workers, highlighting the need to understand their experiences within the evolving Adult Social Care landscape.



Over the past year, changes in government leadership, ministerial appointments and both local and national budgets calls for the care workforce's perspectives on said developments in the context of the Adult Social Care sector; with a particular focus on the cost-of-living crisis and policy reform.

The ongoing cost-of-living crisis has placed increased financial pressure on care workers, impacting not only their personal well-being, but the long-term viability of remaining in the profession. Parallel to this, national conversations about the future of Adult Social Care is shaping the confidence, or lack thereof, of care workers in meaningful and lasting change.



Key Findings

- 81.12% (1057 respondents) indicated they had been directly impacted by the cost-of-living crisis. When asked to share more detail, concerns about affording necessities, increased reliance on external support and the emotional toll of financial insecurity came to the forefront.
- When asked whether they believed the new government would resolve current issues within the Adult Social Care sector, 71.91% (937 respondents) stated 'No'. This response suggests high levels of scepticism about the government's ability to deliver meaningful change and reflects a broader sense of disconnect between care workers and national policy discourse.
- These findings underscore the importance of engaging care workers in policy discussions, development and decision-making, recognising their value and expertise in shaping the future of Adult Social Care.

Participant Quotes

We asked respondents to provide further feedback. Find some of their responses down below:



'I am living paycheck to paycheck and barely getting by.'



'Everything is costing more but our pay is not rising.'



'My money has to go further as cost of everything has gone up, food, heating, transport etc.'



'I now worry more about meeting my financial goals as inflation keeps rising.'



'My bills are way too high, the tax deduction after pay is way too much and I'm always left with no money after paying my bills. Sometimes I have no enough money for all my shopping and if I try to seek help from food banks they said I'm employed full time and that I do not qualify. Everywhere I turn to for help I get nothing as they said I'm in full time employment.'



'Our household has relied on credit cards and now they are maxed out. Not sure how we'll get through the next year without getting into trouble with the utility companies and landlord.'

Participant Quotes

We asked respondents to provide further feedback. Find some of their responses down below:



'The cost of living is taking all our monthly salary preventing us from saving enough for future investment and for unforeseen circumstances.'



'Nursery fees have gone up. Petrol costs and rent going up but wages not matching this. Forever living in my overdraft and live paycheck to paycheck.'



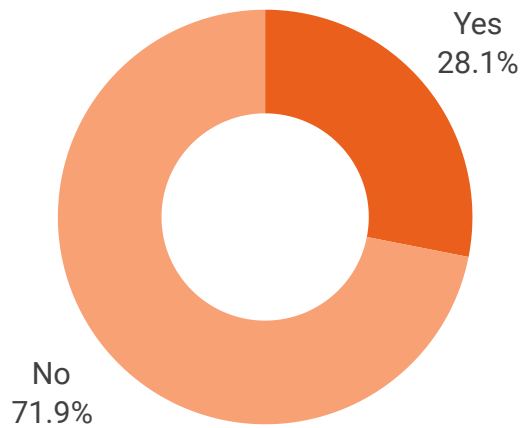
'As an immigrant who is legal in this country and working in adult social care, the cost-of-living crisis is heavily bore by immigrants. We have no access to a lot of things especially benefits, even discounts, loans and important things you need to cushion the cost-of-living crisis. we are taxed heavily, pay exorbitant rent to landlords, have to pay for almost everything from salary and little or no recourse to funds that can make it more bearable. Not to include the amount paid per hour as salary compared to all these. It is a struggle.'



'There is a general increase in the price of commodities and no enough shifts to earn a good living because the licence of my sponsor company had been revoked.'

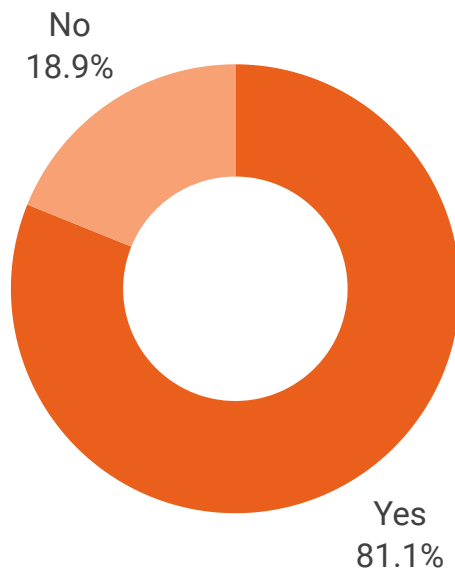
Q56. Do you think the new government will fix current issues within social care?

Answered 1303, Skipped 852



Q57. At the time of completing this survey, have you been impacted by the cost-of-living crisis?

Answered 1303, Skipped 852



Experiences of Working in Care

To conclude the survey, respondents shared their experiences of working in Adult Social Care. Among over 600 comments, key themes included passion for their work and acknowledgment of the sector's challenges.



'Working in care has been the most rewarding career in my working life. Knowing that you are making a change to every person you care for is the best feeling.'



It has not been easy for me especially when you don't have sponsorship. Many homes will not employ you, because you can only work for 20hrs, and they are looking for people who can work for more than 20hrs.'



'I love this job, but the mental load is huge. Stress is also very high. Poor access to support and low pay are other disadvantages. But the smile of the people I support is priceless.'



'I love working in the caring world it's very rewarding. You either have it or you don't! You need thick skin, a caring personality and nature and a love for the job or you will fail yourself and the residents if you don't. You will progress in your career if you have a positive attitude and love caring for the people in the community you support.'



'In adult social care, there is a focus on the person receiving care. Whilst this is incredibly important, Care Workers are often ignored. This means that we are undervalued and not recognised as a professional.'



'My experience as a care assistant is the opportunity to make a meaningful difference in someone's life. I find fulfilment in providing compassionate care and support to those in need, knowing that I can help.'

Experiences of Working in Care

To conclude the survey, respondents shared their experiences of working in Adult Social Care. Among over 600 comments, key themes included passion for their work and acknowledgment of the sector's challenges.



'I'm happy in my job role. But I think everyone in care should be paid a decent wage as it's a lot of responsibility and uses a lot of emotional support.'



'Working in care is a challenge and it's done because it's a way of giving back and making a difference in people's life that need it most. But one of the biggest challenges is no one wants to stay in these roles as a career long term due to the pay and the rise of living.'



'Social Care has and always will be treated as second class to NHS. Terms and conditions are poor, with no overtime rate, no weekend rate, no sick pay, short staffed. Owners promise everything and deliver nothing, they are only interested in profit and not staff. Staff regularly work short, miss breaks, don't get off shift on time. I wouldn't let any of my friends or family join social care. I have very little time to work left and all I can say it's no comparison to my time spent in the NHS; it's totally profit driven.'



'It is a role that requires so many skill sets but is so undervalued and underpaid.'



'Care work isn't for the faint hearted. It's extremely challenging, paid poorly you feel undervalued and not appreciated by society. But people do it and continue to do because we care otherwise why would you do it?'

Demographics



To contextualise the demographic makeup of survey respondents, we have drawn comparisons with data from Skills for Care’s report, *The State of the Adult Social Care Sector and Workforce in England (October 2024)*.^[1]

This widely recognised report provides a comprehensive overview of the adult social care workforce and serves as a key benchmark for understanding sector-wide trends.

Where relevant, demographic data gathered in our survey has been aligned with the categories outlined by Skills for Care to support comparability and sector relevance. The following demographic areas have been considered in this analysis:

- Age
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Nationality
- Working pattern
- Care setting

This approach allows for a more meaningful interpretation of our findings, offering insights into how different groups within the workforce may be experiencing key issues across adult social care.

Skills for Care vs The CWC Wellbeing Survey

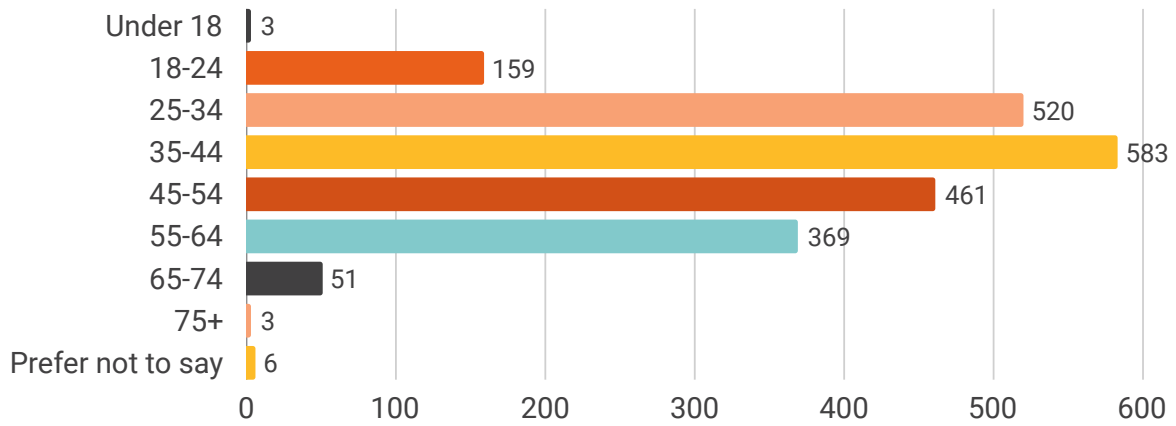
	Skills for Care	The CWC Wellbeing Survey	% Difference
Age: Under 25	8%	7.52%	-0.48%
Age: 25-54	64%	72.57%	+8.57
Age: 55+	27%	19.53%	-7.47%
Ethnicity: White	68%	61.12%	-6.88%
Ethnicity: Asian/Asian British	13%	11%	-2%
Ethnicity: Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	18%	19.77%	+1.77%
Ethnicity: Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups	2%	3.06%	+1.06
Ethnicity: Other	1%	1.58%	+0.58%
Nationality: British	75%	66.36%	-8.64%
Nationality: Non-EU	19%	26.31%	+7.31%

Skills for Care vs The CWC Wellbeing Survey

	Skills for Care	The CWC Wellbeing Survey	% Difference
Nationality: EU	6%	7.33%	+1.33%
Gender: Female	79%	82.92%	+3.92%
Gender: Male	21%	16.06%	-4.94%
Working Pattern: Full Time	55%	60.68%	+5.68%
Working Pattern: Part Time	45%	17.05%	-27.95%
Working Pattern: Zero Hours	21%	22.69%	+1.69%
Care Setting: Residential/Care Home	41%	44.85%	+3.85%
Care Setting: Homecare (Domiciliary)	43%	22.69%	-20.31%
Care Setting: Personal Assistant	8%	1.15%	6.85%

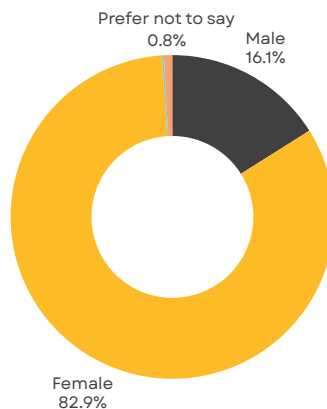
Q1. What is your age?

Answered 2155, Skipped 0



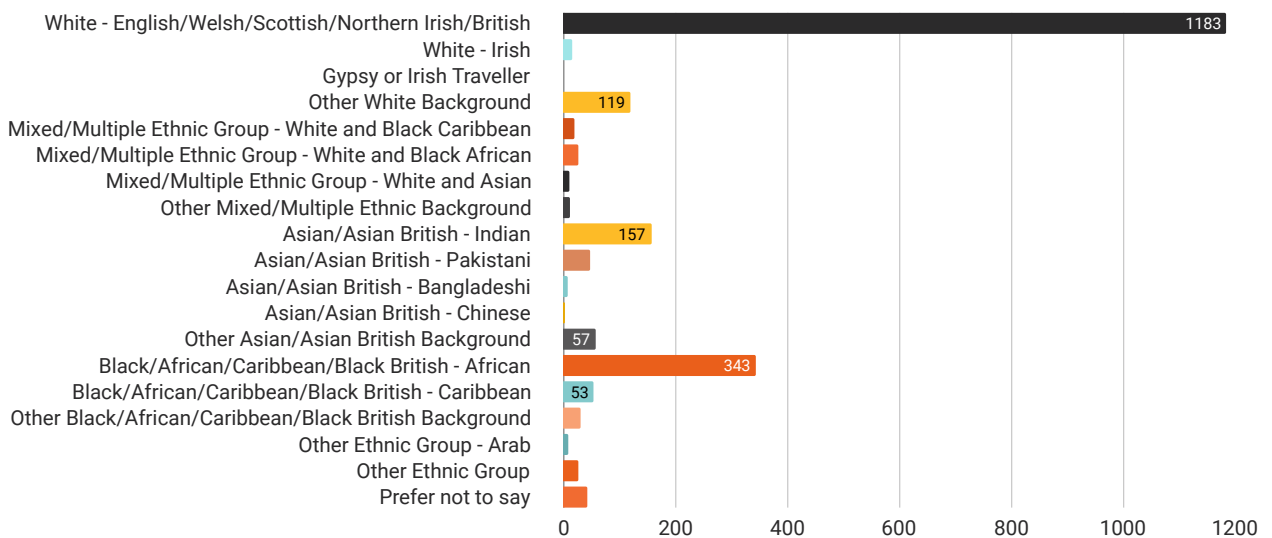
Q2. How do you identify?

Answered 2155, Skipped 0



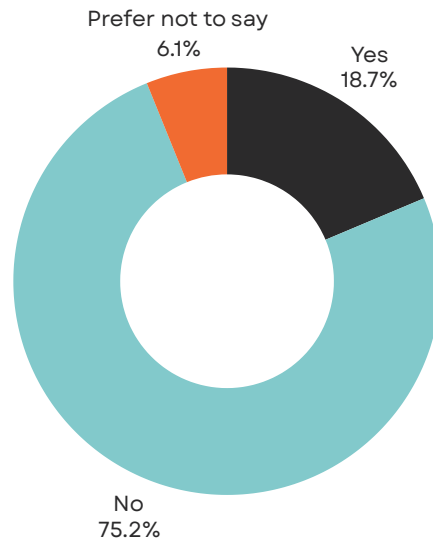
Q3. What is your ethnicity?

Answered 2155, Skipped 0



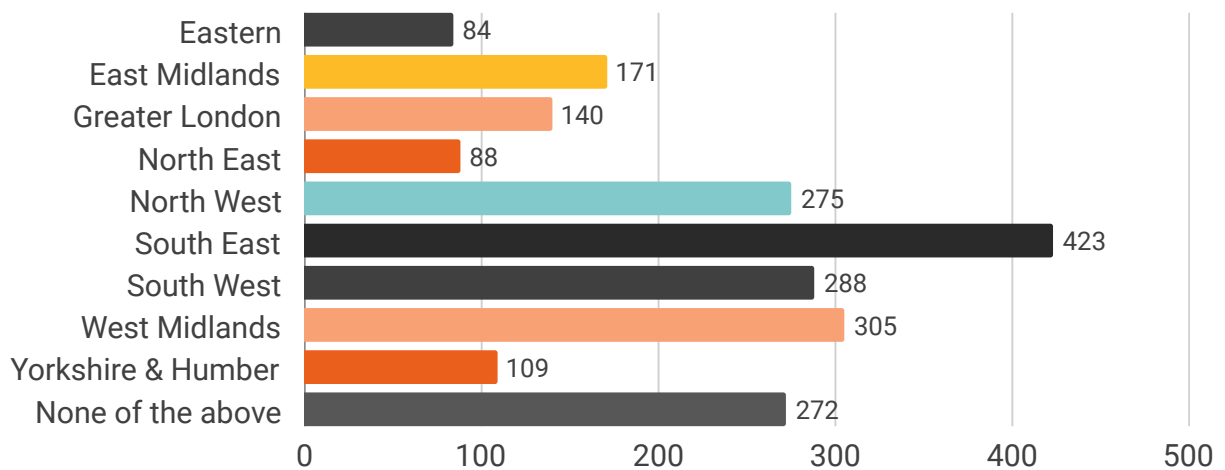
Q4. Do you have any chronic health conditions?

Answered 2155, Skipped 0



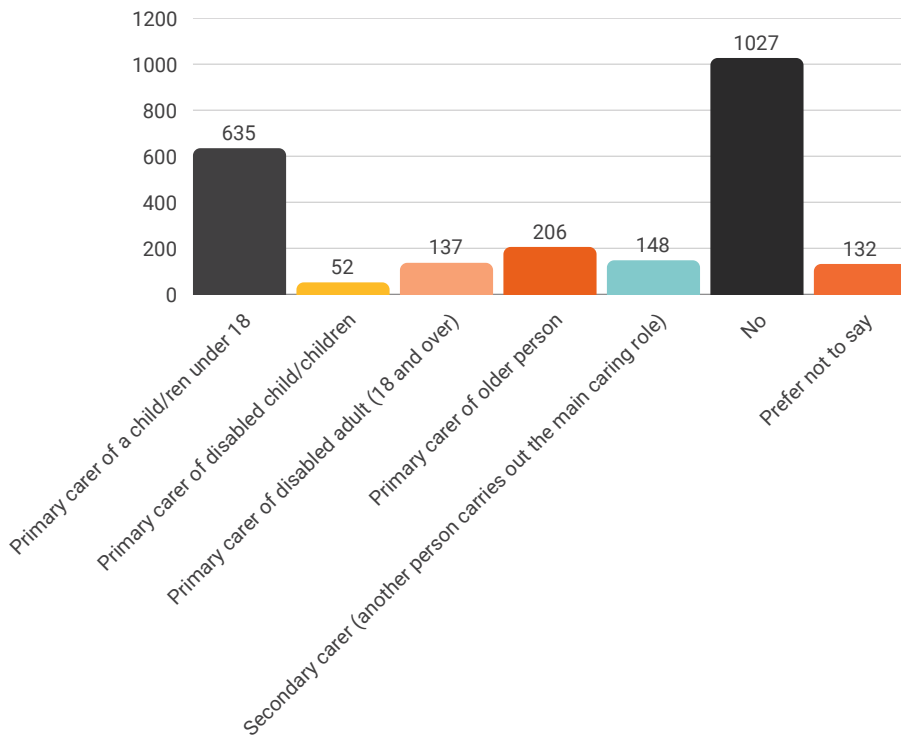
Q5. What is your region/postcode?

Answered 2155, Skipped 0



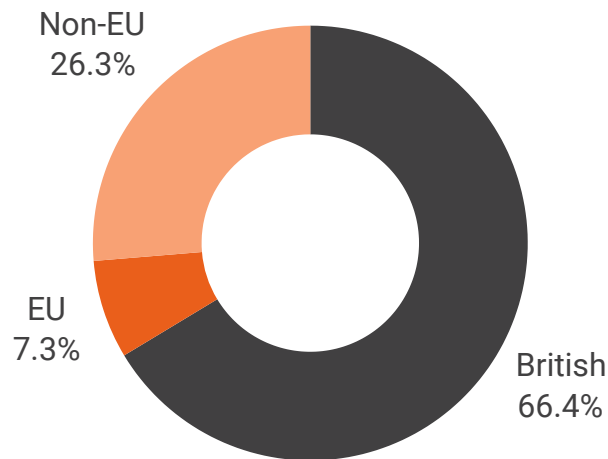
Q6. Do you have caring responsibilities outside of work?

Answered 2155, Skipped 0



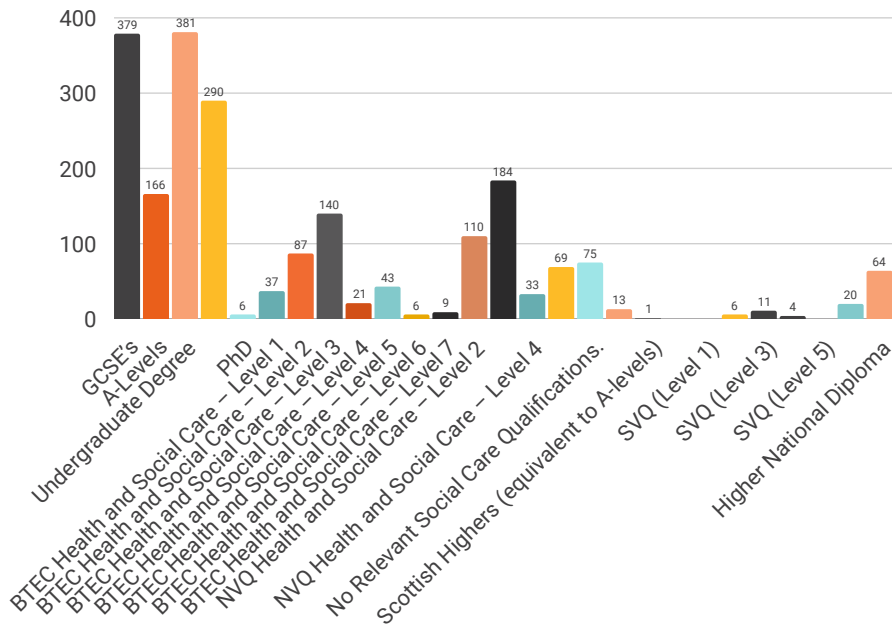
Q7. What is your immigration status?

Answered 2155, Skipped 0



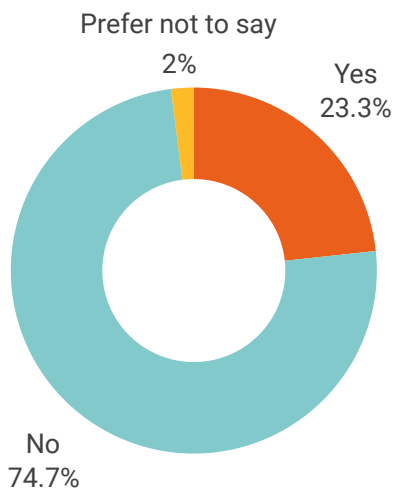
Q8. What is your level of education?

Answered 2155, Skipped 0



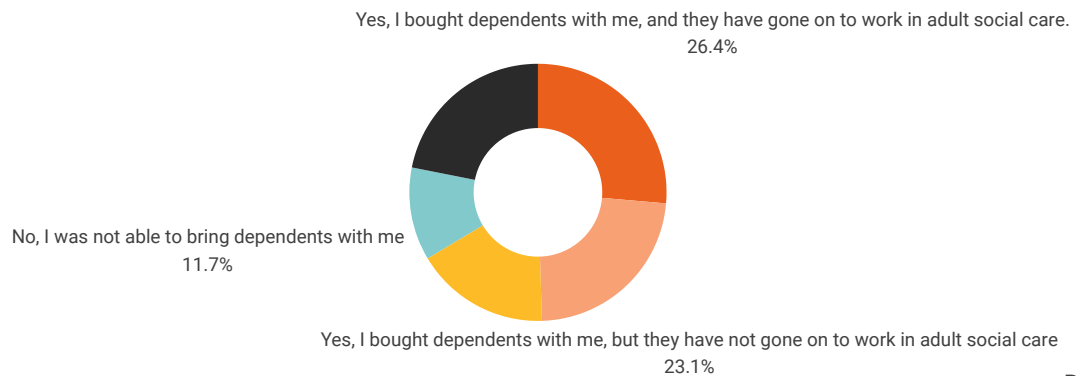
Q9. Are you working in care on an International Visa?

Answered 2155, Skipped 0



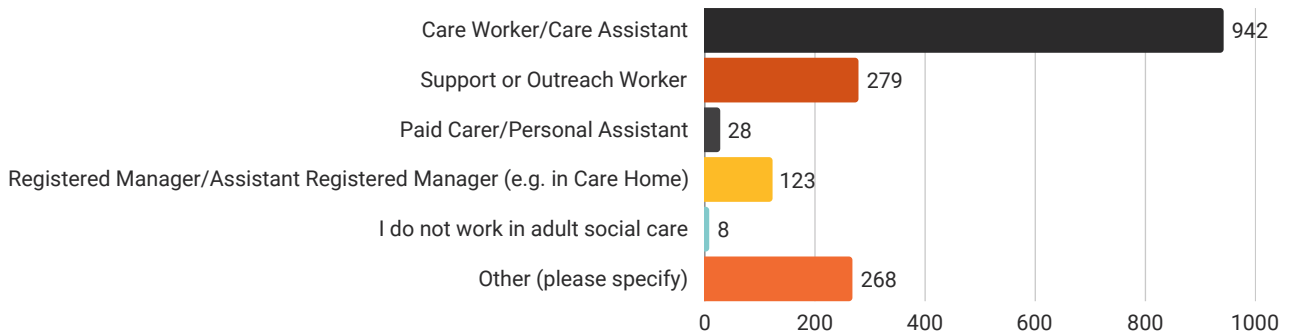
Q10. As an international recruit, did you bring dependents with you and have those dependents gone on to work in adult social care?

Answered 402, Skipped 1753



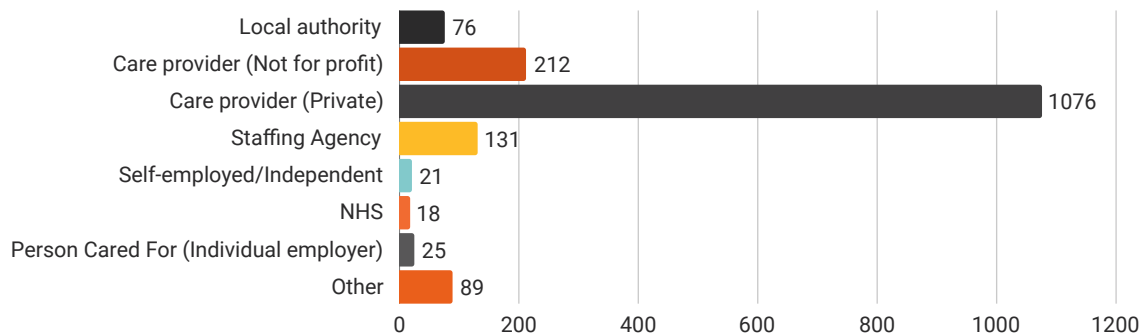
Q11. What is your job title?

Answered 1648, Skipped 507



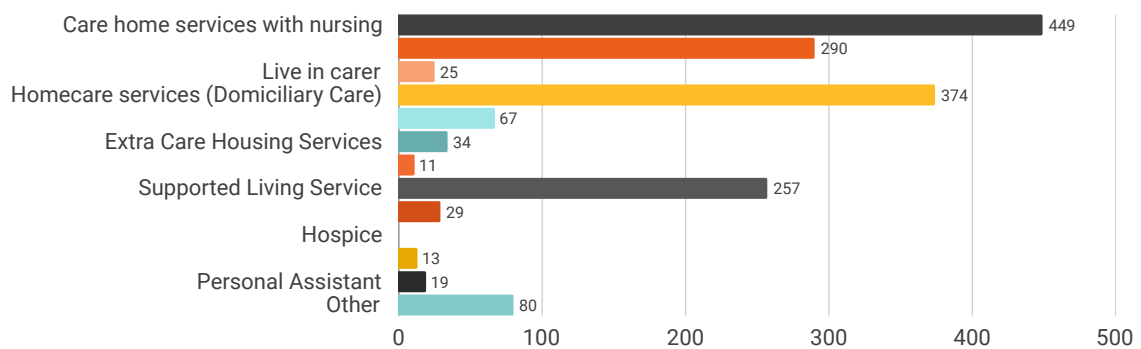
Q12. Who are you employed by?

Answered 1648, Skipped 507



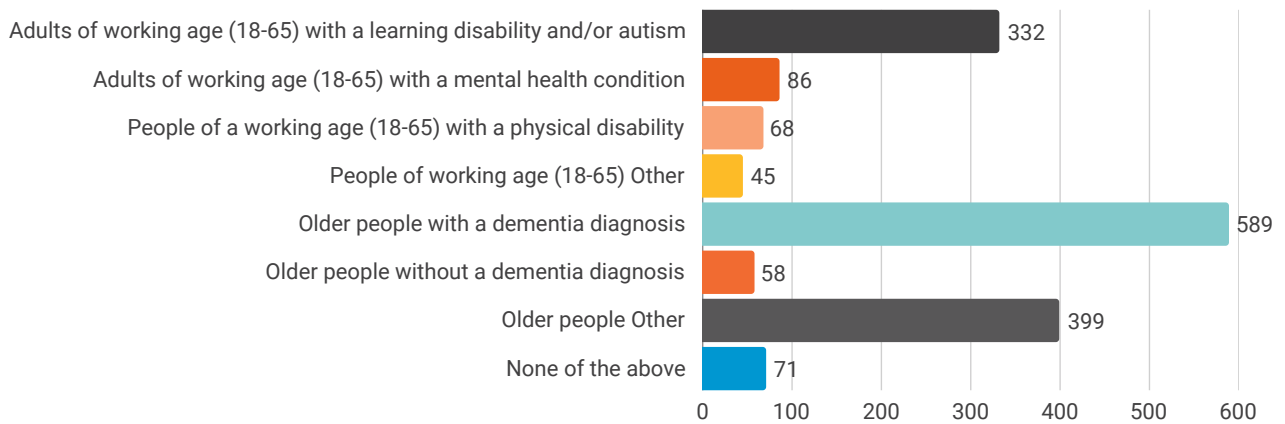
Q13. What is your work setting?

Answered 1648, Skipped 507



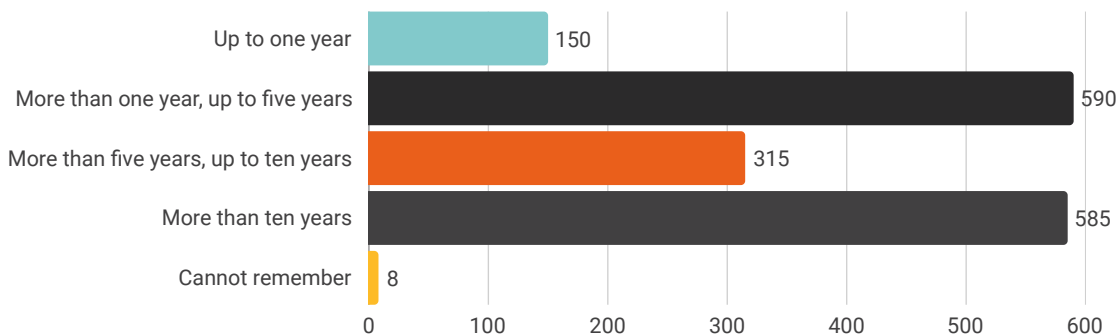
Q14. Who do you support?

Answered 1648, Skipped 507



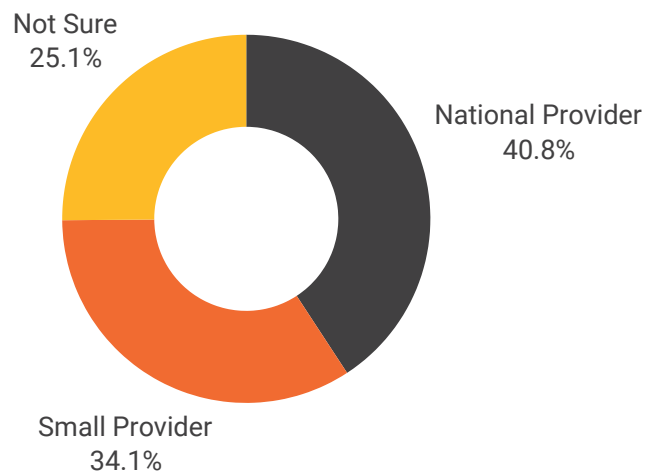
Q15. How long have you worked in the care sector?

Answered 1648, Skipped 507



Q16. What is the size of your organisation?

Answered 1648, Skipped 507



Conclusion

The findings of the 'Care Worker Wellbeing Survey' provide a compelling and detailed portrait of the realities of working in Adult Social Care today. They highlight the dedication and professionalism of the care workforce, whilst exposing systemic issues that continue to undermine care workers' wellbeing, professional development and sense of value.

Across each section of the survey and report, a consistent message emerges: care workers are passionate about their roles and are deeply committed to those they support, but they are doing so under immense strain and pressure. Action is needed across all levels – from employers and service providers to policy makers and government – to ensure all care workers are valued, protected and supported in their vital roles.

Mental Wellbeing: A significant proportion of respondents reported experiencing stress, unhappiness, and burnout. For example, 42.10% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they had been feeling unhappy or depressed, and over one-third said their job negatively affects their mental health. Alarming, access to support remains limited, with only 52.63% stating that their workplace provides adequate mental health resources.

Financial Wellbeing: 72.06% of respondents indicated that they did not feel financially secure, with 57.41% citing low hourly pay as a key contributor. The cost-of-living crisis was reported to have impacted 81.12% of respondents. Many reported difficulties affording essentials such as rent, transport, and childcare, with 22.86% having relied on food banks.



Conclusion

Physical Wellbeing: While the majority of care workers felt safe among colleagues (90.35%), only 74.84% felt safe from physical violence in their roles supporting those drawing on care or their families. Additionally, 33.42% had experienced or witnessed harassment, bullying, or verbal abuse—most frequently from managers or colleagues

Training and Development: 36.69% of respondents often think about leaving their organisation, and 26.01% said they would leave as soon as they found another role. While 75.52% of respondents felt their role was valued by friends and family, only 56.22% felt it was valued by the wider public - illustrating a disconnect between the reality of care work and public perceptions.

These findings are not just statistics—they reflect the lived experience of individuals delivering essential care every day. Listening to care workers' experiences is the first step. Acting on what they have shared must now be the priority.



Recommendations and Calls to Action

Invest in Workforce Wellbeing

- Embed mental health support in every care organisation.
- Ensure access to counselling, peer support, and rest breaks as standard practice.
- Promote flexible working for care workers to maintain a better work-life balance.

Improve Pay and Conditions

- Increase pay for care workers.
- Establish a Fair Pay Agreement for Adult Social Care to set minimum standards for pay, sick leave, and job security.
- Introduce travel time pay and fair mileage reimbursement for community-based care roles.

Strengthen Training and Career Pathways

- Expand funded training opportunities and ensure access is equitable across care settings and roles.
- Develop clearer, nationally recognised progression routes for all care workers.

Prioritise Safety

- Develop sector-wide policies to prevent and respond to harassment, bullying, and violence.
- Provide mandatory safeguarding training that includes the protection of care workers, not just those drawing on care.

Recognise and Value the Workforce

- Raise the profile of care work and shift public perception.
- Ensure care workers are included in all policy discussions that affect their roles.

The wellbeing of care workers is central to the delivery of safe, compassionate, and sustainable care. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated, long-term action across government, providers, and wider society. The Care Workers' Charity stands ready to continue championing care workers' voices and working towards a sector where those who care for others are truly cared for themselves.

References

According to The Office of National Statistics 'Average Household Income, UK: Financial Year Ending 2023' report, published in September 2024, the median household disposable income in the UK was £34,500.' --> This statistic came from:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/incomeandwealth/bulletins/householddisposableincomeandinequality/financialyearending2023>

However, 27.41% (307 respondents) had received support from The Care Workers' Charity [This is a high percentage because we reached out to people we had engaged with previously],

'By contrast, in the UK around 1.1% of the general population have used payday loan companies in a 12-month period' --> This statistic came from:

<https://www.fca.org.uk/publication/financial-lives/fls-2022-credit-loans.pdf?>

'According to Skills for Care's 'The State of the Adult Social Care Sector and Workforce in England' report, published in October 2024, there was a turnover rate of 24.2% (350,000 leavers).' --> This statistic came from: <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Adult-Social-Care-Workforce-Data/Workforce-intelligence/publications/national-information/The-state-of-the-adult-social-care-sector-and-workforce-in-England.aspx>

'To contextualise the demographic makeup of survey respondents, we have drawn comparisons with data from Skills for Care's report, The State of the Adult Social Care Sector and Workforce in England (October 2024)' --> Link to report:

<https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Adult-Social-Care-Workforce-Data/Workforce-intelligence/documents/State-of-the-adult-social-care-sector/The-state-of-the-adult-social-care-sector-and-workforce-in-England-2024.pdf>





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