



Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy

COVID-19 Member Survey

Main report

August 2020

Prepared by
Rachael Joyce & Larry Ryan

J.201976



RESEARCH
& INSIGHT



Research Objectives/Approach

- The Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP) is the largest Counselling and Psychotherapy organisation in Ireland, representing over 4, 500 members. Its role is to maintain professional standards of excellence in the field, and to represent the interests of both client and Counsellor/Psychotherapist.
- Behaviour & Attitudes (B&A) have conducted previous surveys amongst IACP members in 2013, 2015 and 2018, and another is planned for later in 2020.
- This report will present the findings of a more targeted member survey, conducted in July 2020 – which aims to understand how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted members and their work. Specifically members were asked about the impact of COVID-19 on:
 - Hours of work
 - Client fees
 - Personal wellbeing
 - Client wellbeing and presenting issues
 - Mode of working
 - Supervision
- Links to the online survey were distributed by B&A, and a strong response rate of 20% was achieved (N = 910 members).





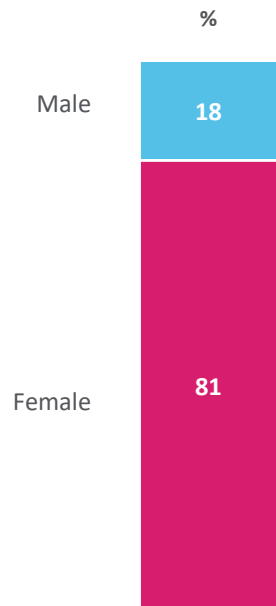
Results

Sample Profile

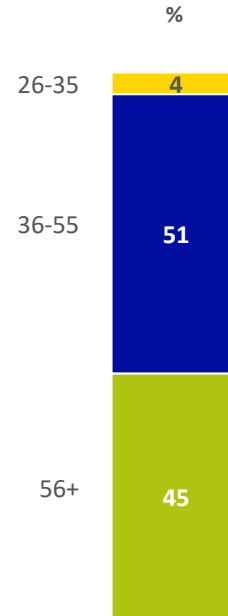
Base: All members – 910



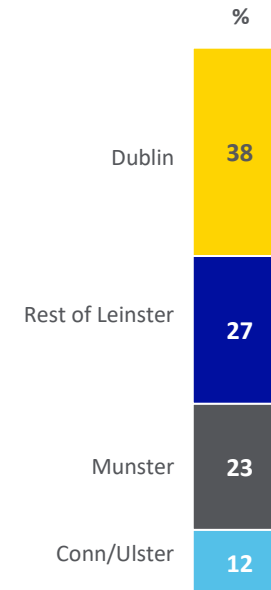
GENDER



AGE



REGION



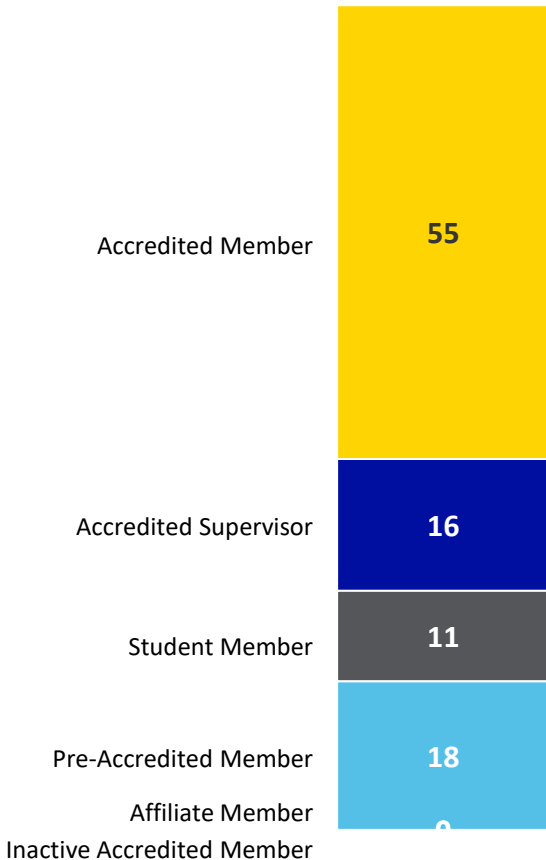
Sample Profile

Base: All members – 910



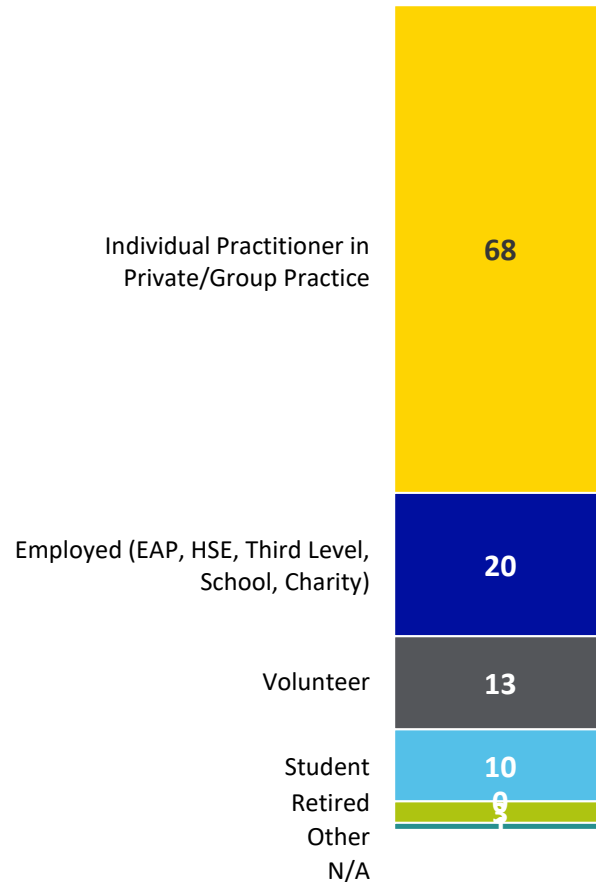
IACP MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY

%



USUAL WORK SITUATION

%



USUAL CLIENT LOAD

	Average proportion of client load
<i>Base:</i>	910
	%
Adult	84.80
Couples	14.60
Families	10.47
Groups	19.84
Children	17.22
Adolescents	26.14

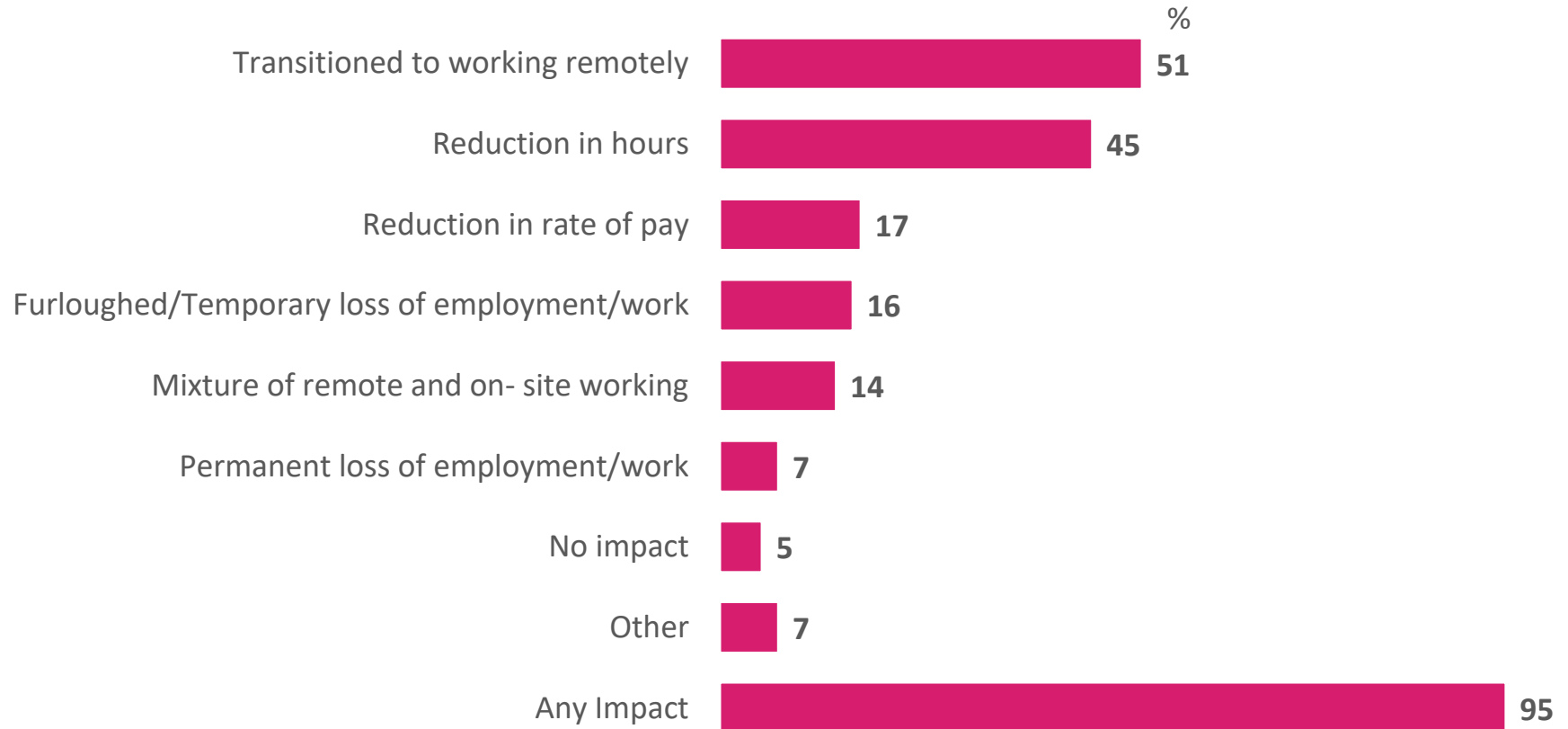


Impact of COVID-19 on Counsellors/Psychotherapists

Almost all have had their work affected by Covid-19



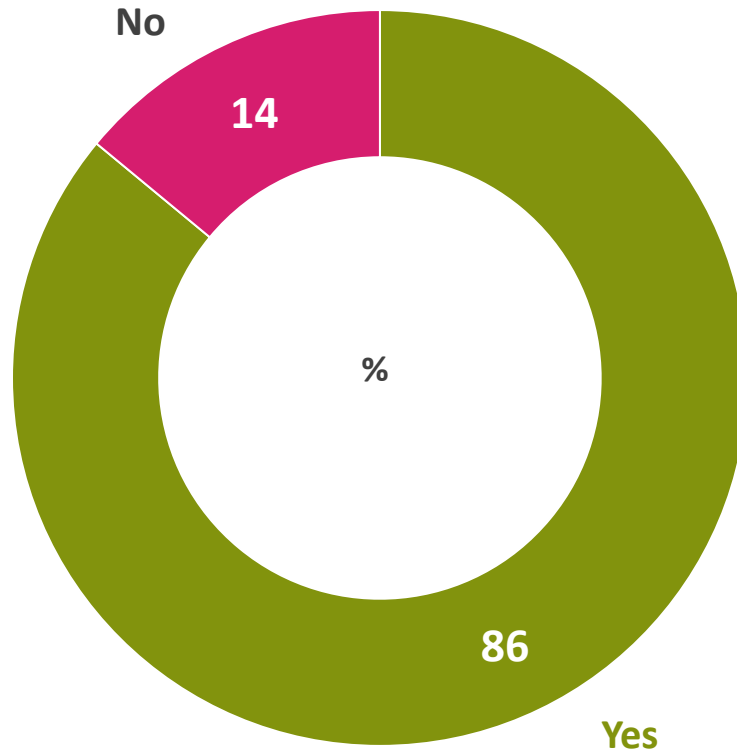
Base: All working pre COVID19 – 865



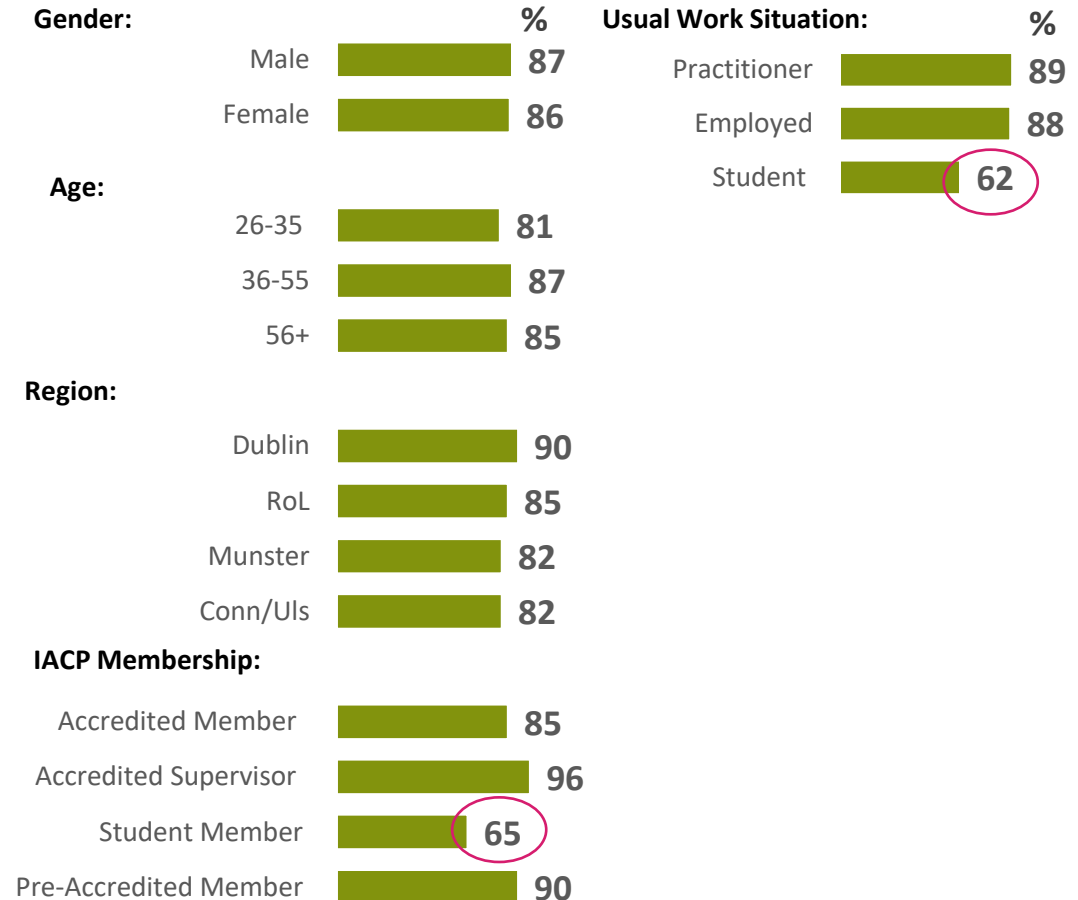
The most common impact of COVID-19 is the transition to remote working, followed by a reduction in hours. Nearly all members (95%) have been impacted in some way.

Most have continued to work during COVID-19, but a notable proportion have not

Base: All working pre COVID19 – 865



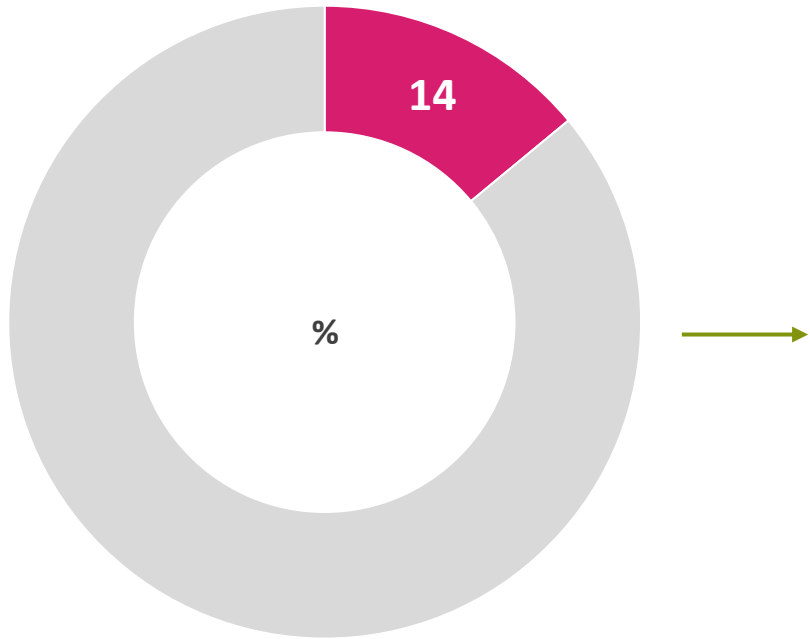
Continued to Work



Counselling/Psychotherapy students are least likely to have continued working during COVID-19 – around a third say they have not.

Those not working

Base: All working pre COVID19 – 865



Gender:

	%
Male	13
Female	14

Age:

26-35	19
36-55	13
56+	15

Region:

Dublin	10
RoL	15
Munster	18
Conn/Uls	18

IACP Membership:

Accredited Member	15
Accredited Supervisor	4
Student Member	35
Pre-Accredited Member	10

Usual Work Situation:

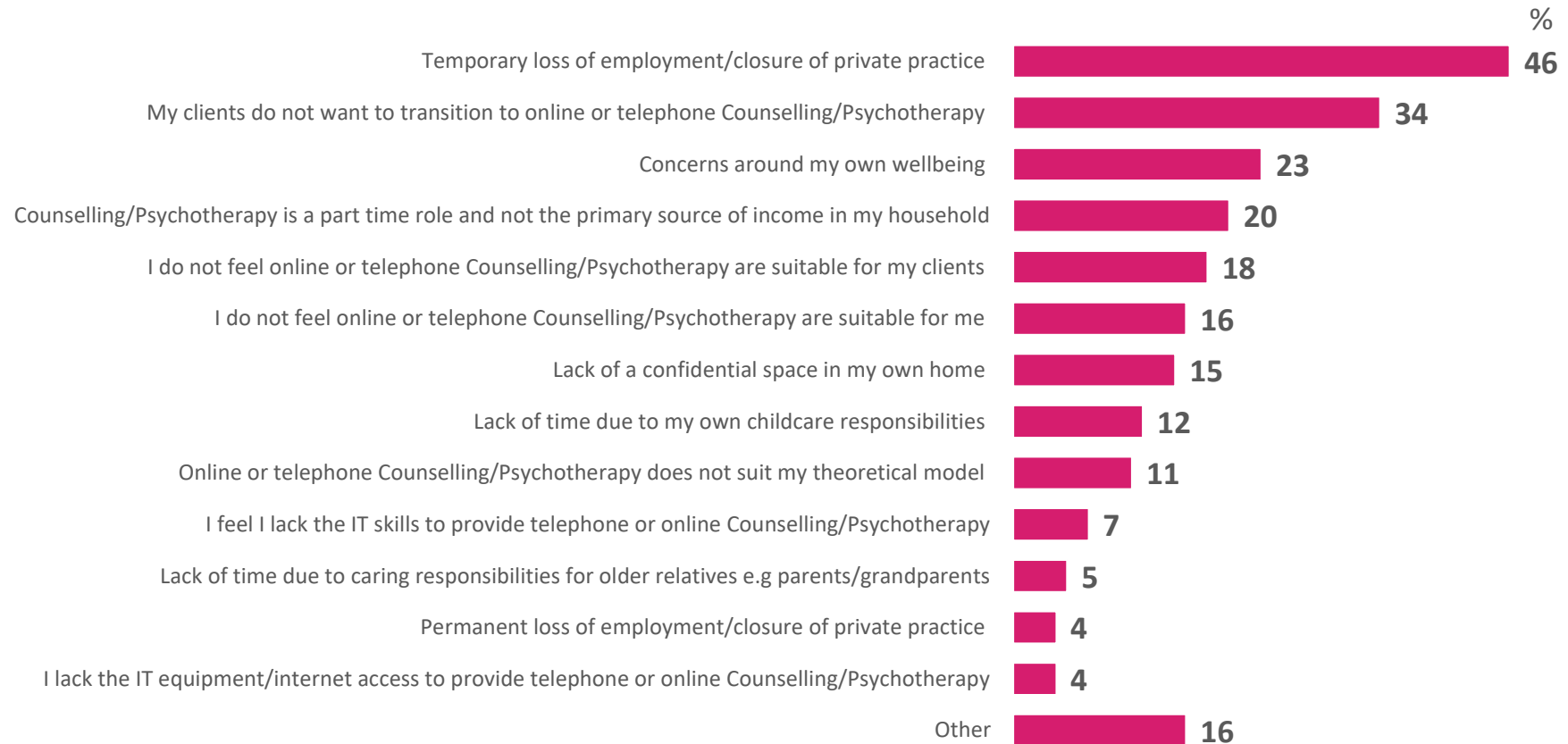
	%
Practitioner	11
Employed	12
Student	38

XXX



A third of those not working say clients did not want to transition to online Counselling/Psychotherapy

Base: All not working since COVID19 - 122

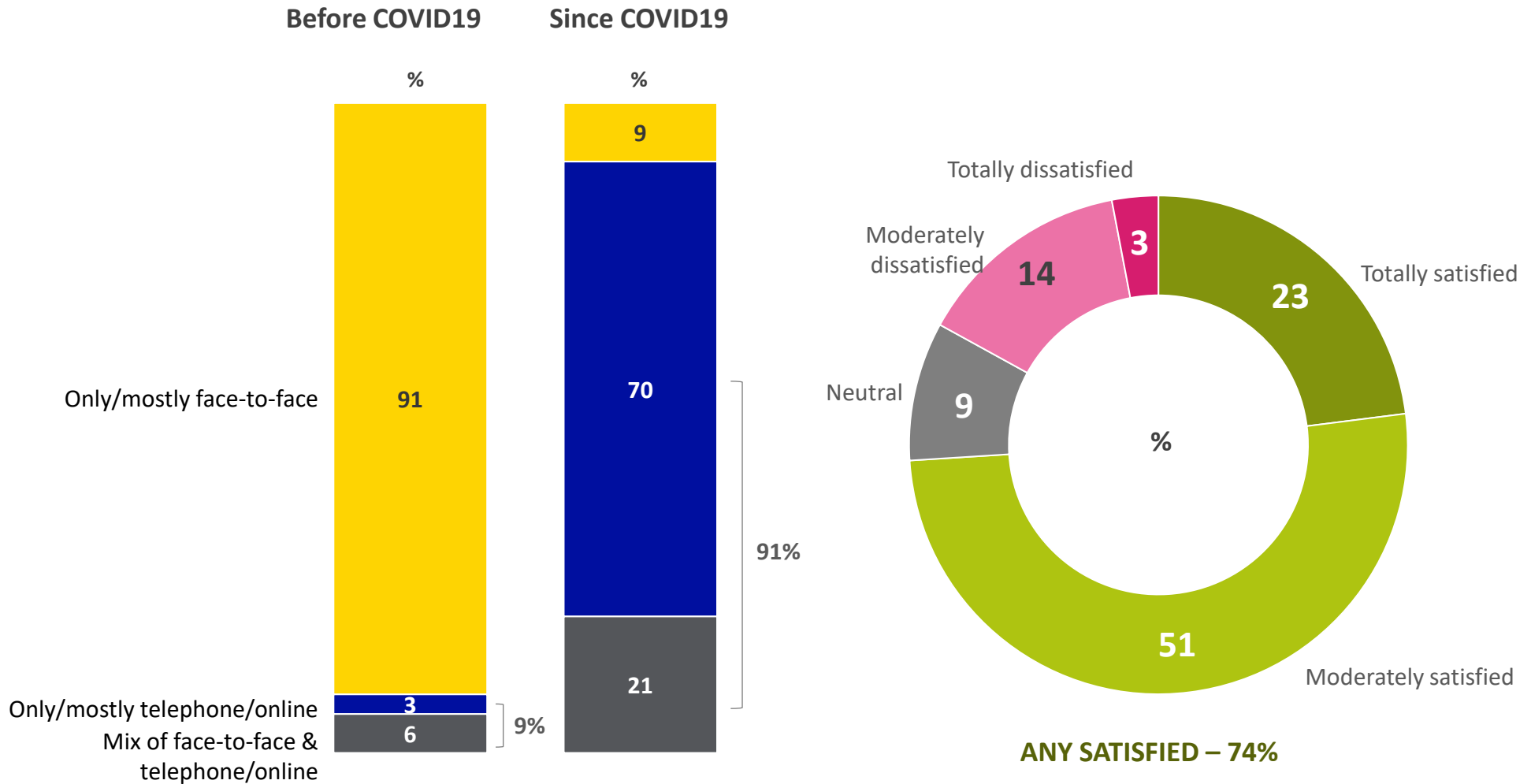


Almost half (46%) of those not working say this is due to temporary closures/loss of employment – a third (34%) say their clients were not comfortable transitioning to online sessions, while personal wellbeing was a factors for almost a fifth (23%).

7 in 10 have been mostly working online since COVID-19



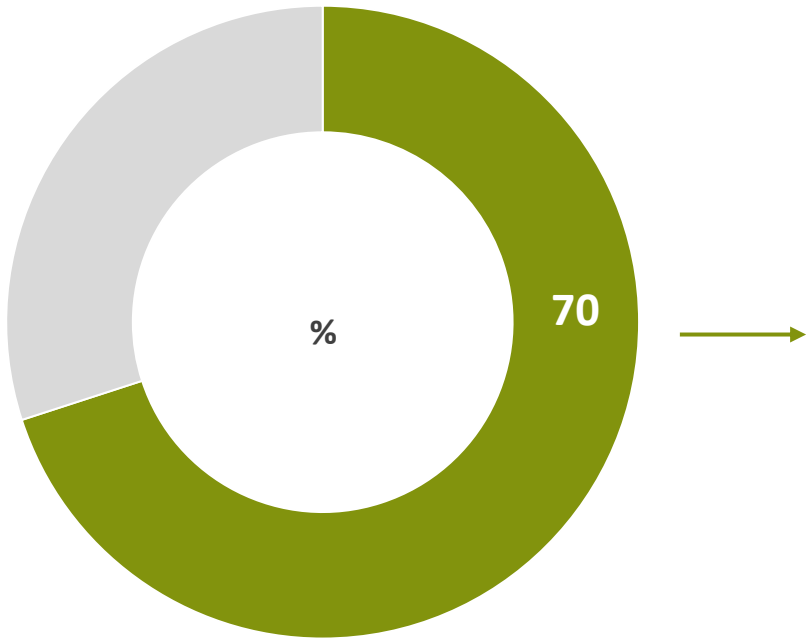
Base: All working since COVID19 – 743/ All working remotely – 675



The proportion of those mostly working online has increased from 3% to 70% since COVID-19. Almost 3 in 4 (74%) say they are satisfied with working remotely, with almost a fifth (23%) totally satisfied.

Working online

Base: All working since COVID19 – 743

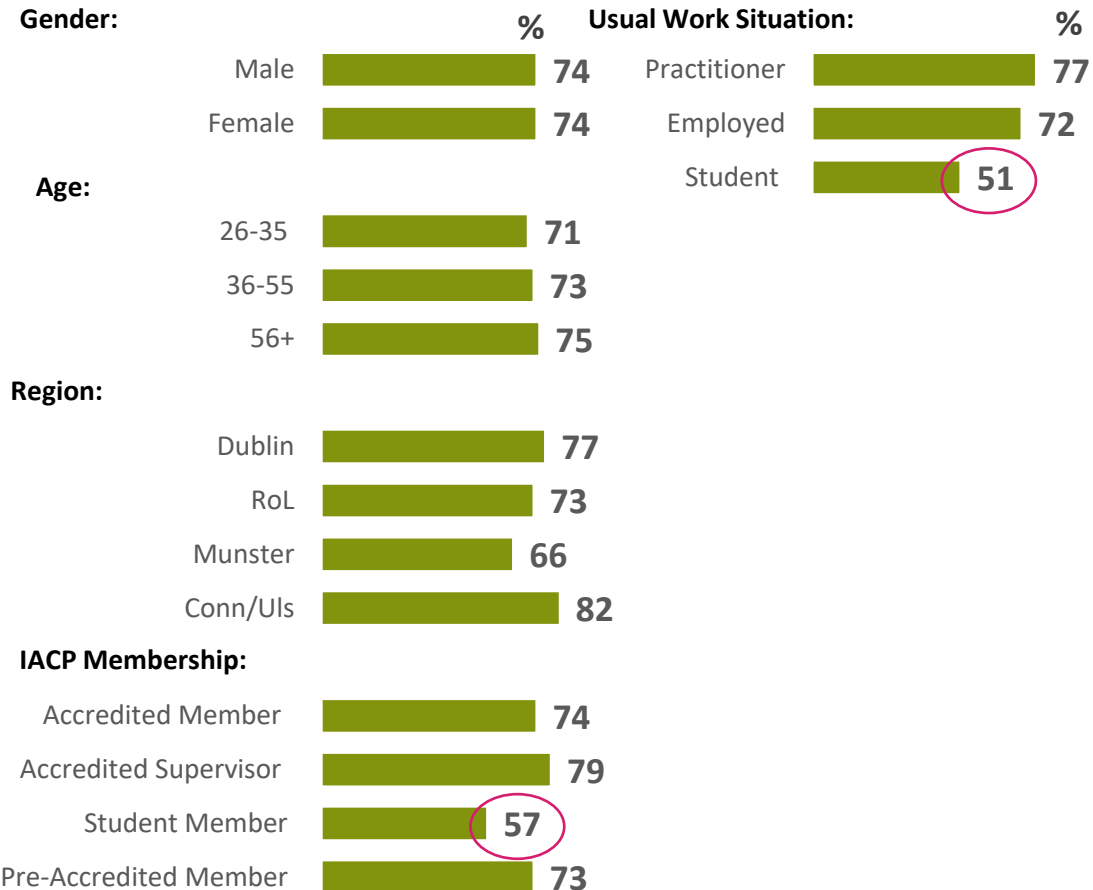
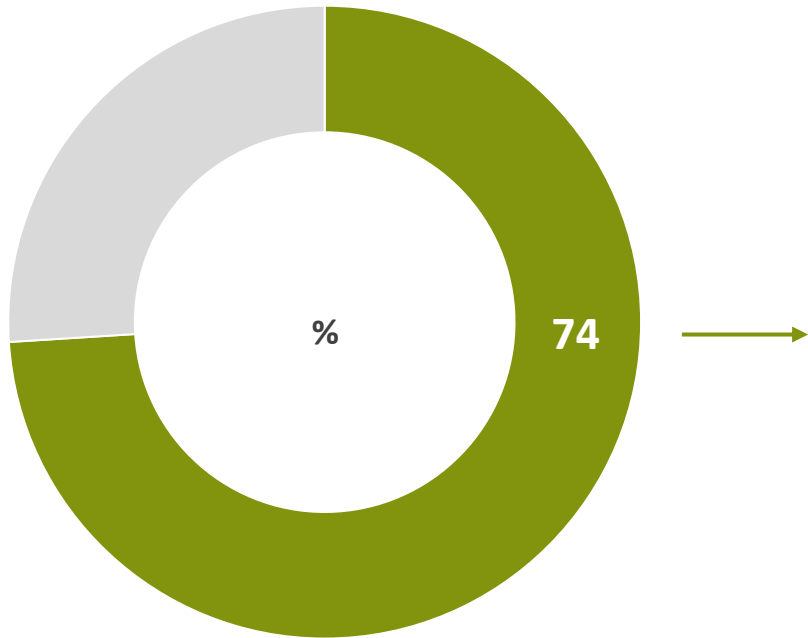


Gender:		%	Usual Work Situation:		%
Male		66	Practitioner		66
Female		71	Employed		76
			Student		76
Age:					
26-35		88			
36-55		68			
56+		72			
Region:					
Dublin		72			
RoL		67			
Munster		68			
Conn/Uls		77			
IACP Membership:					
Accredited Member		68			
Accredited Supervisor		76			
Student Member		83			
Pre-Accredited Member		69			

XXX

Satisfaction with remote working

Base: All working remotely – 675



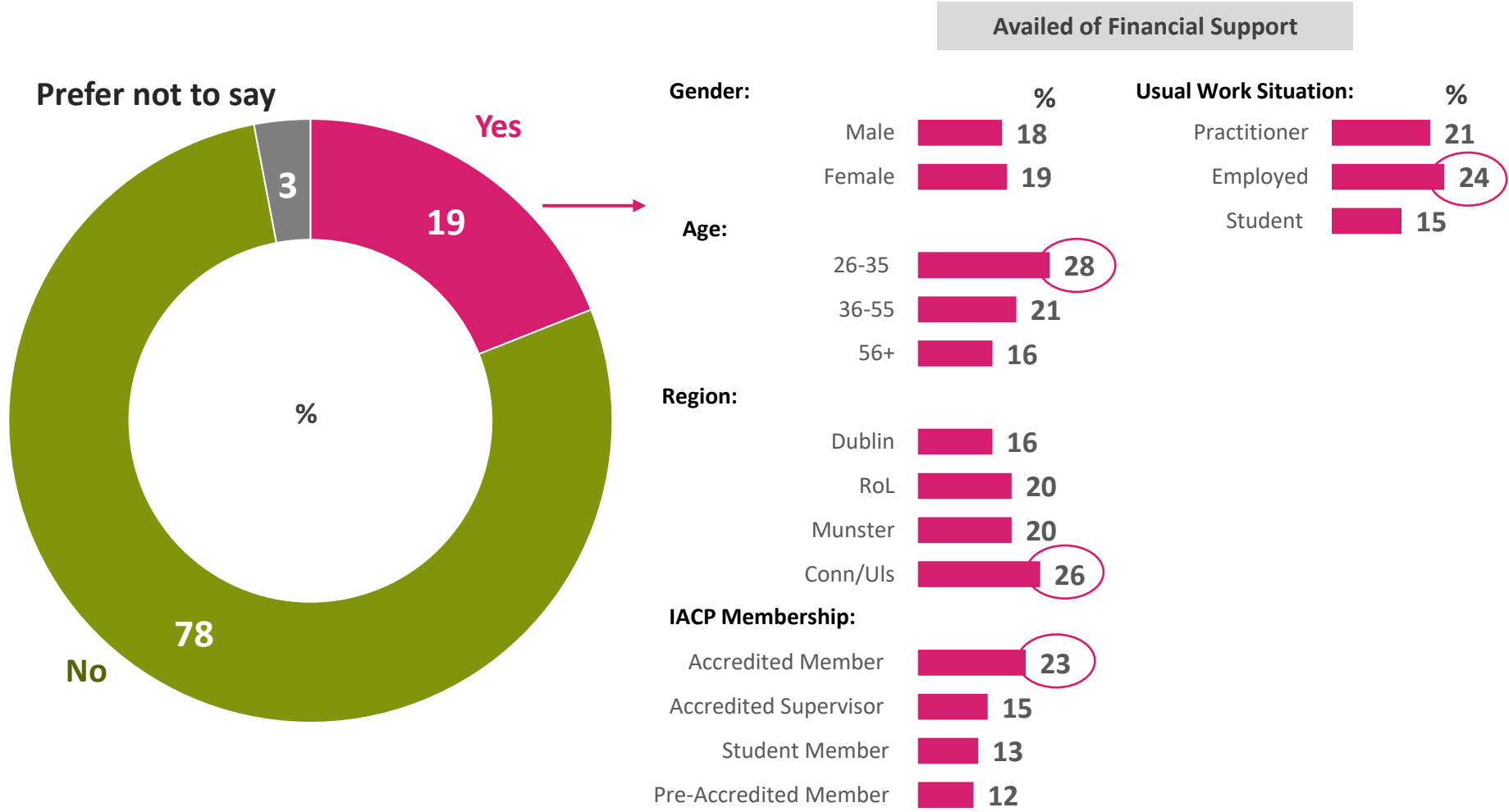
Counselling/Psychotherapy students are least satisfied with working remotely.



Just under a fifth have had to avail of financial support



Base: All working pre COVID19 – 865

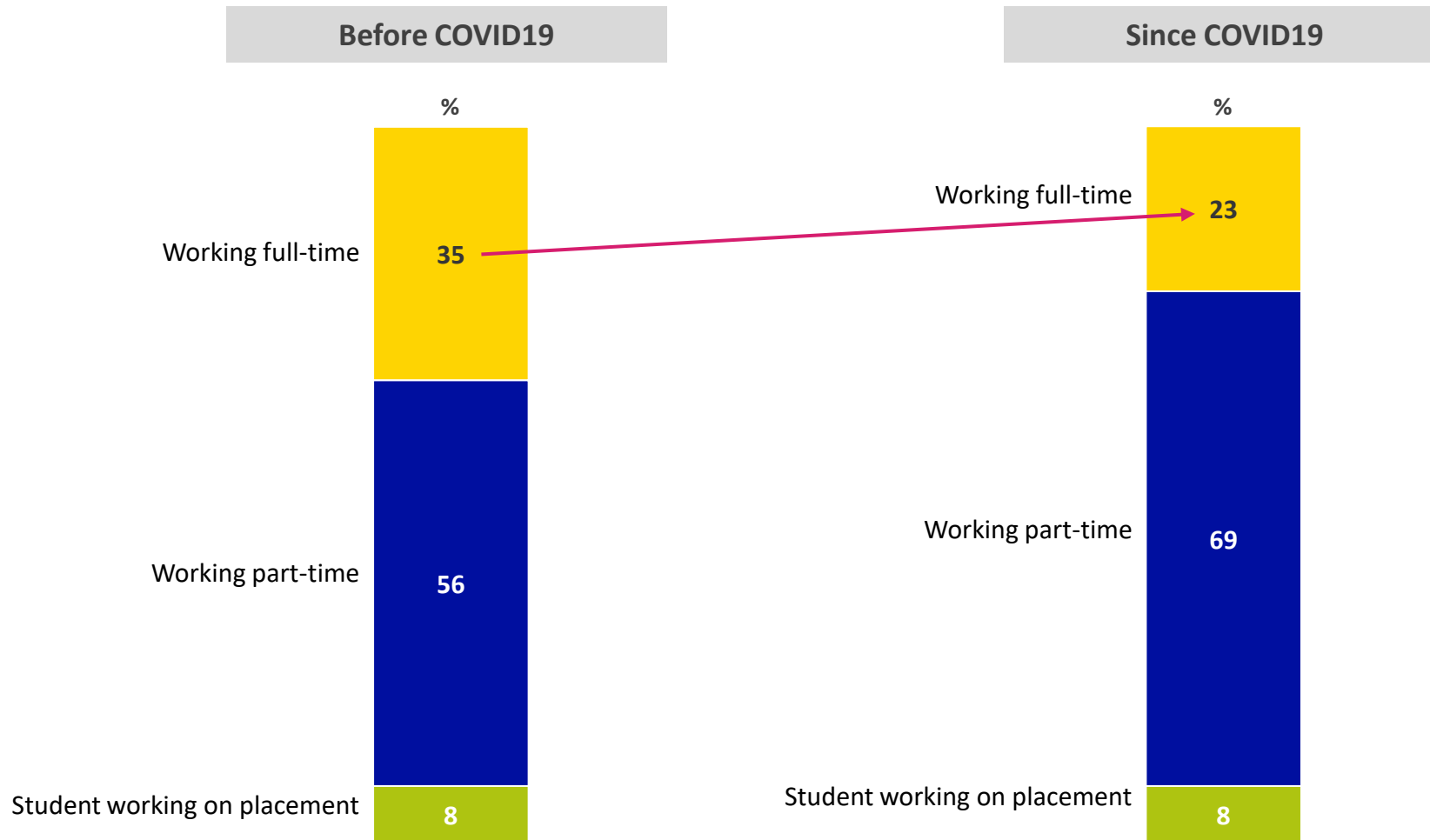


Those in the youngest age group are more likely to say they have availed of financial support, along with those based in Connacht/Ulster, accredited members and those employed by the HSE, a university, a school, etc.

Full-time work has reduced significantly since COVID-19



Base: All working since COVID19 - 743



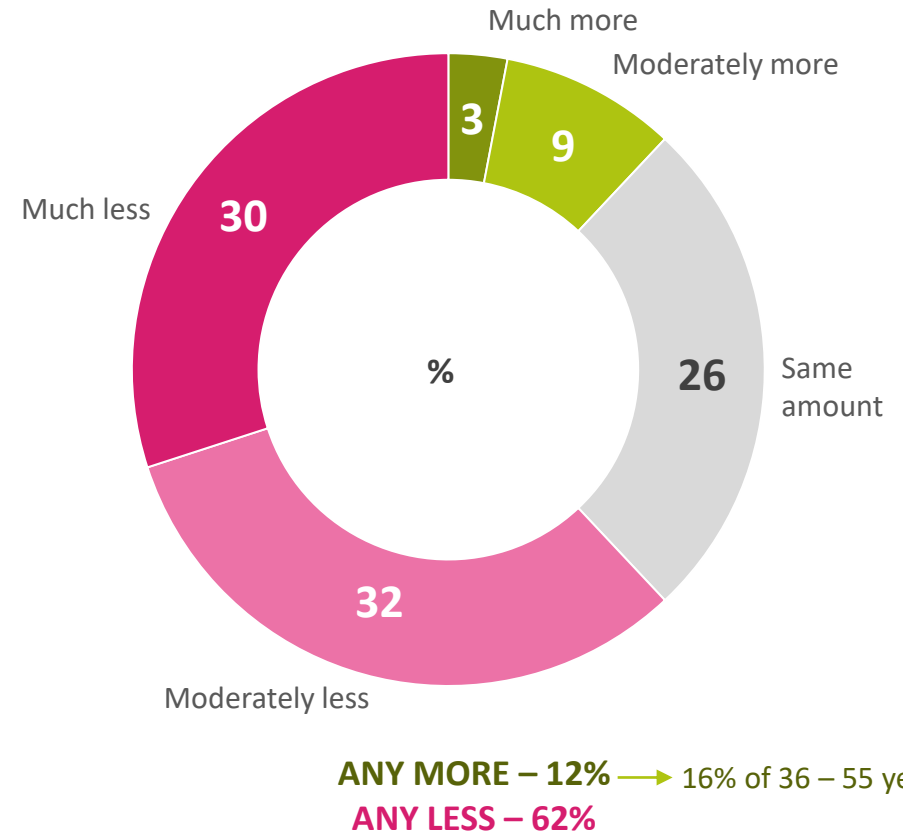
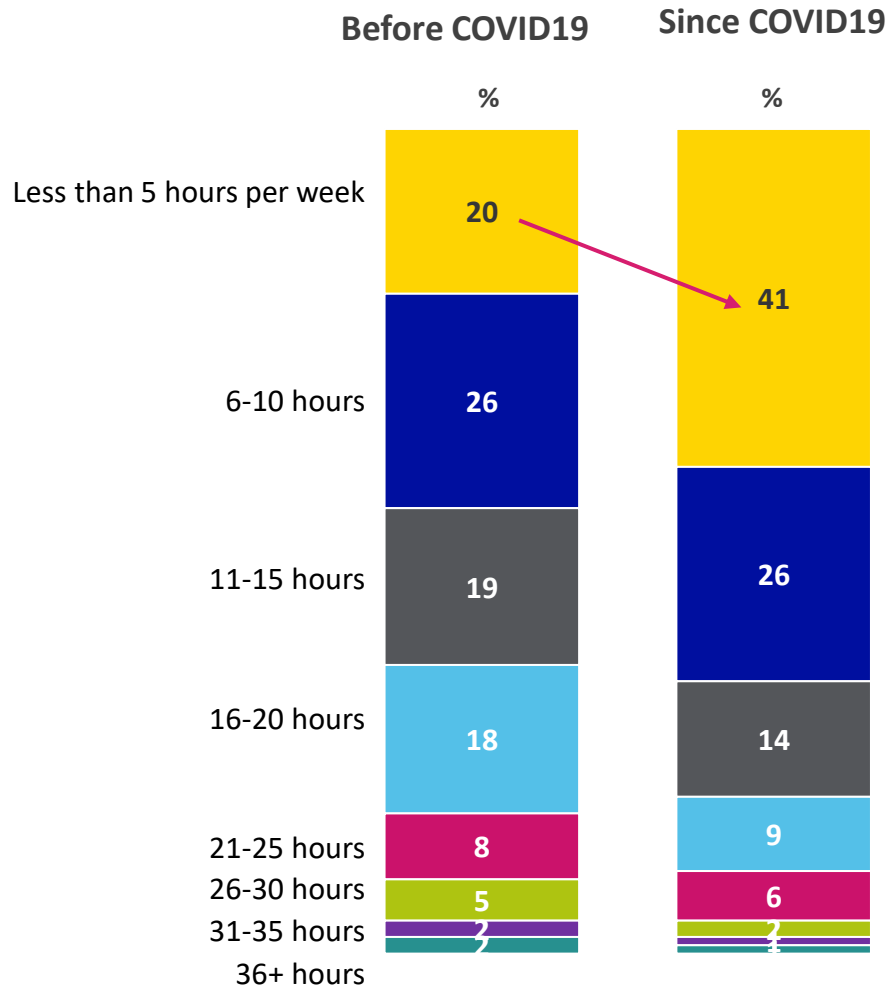
The proportion of those working full-time has fallen since COVID-19, with almost 7 in 10 now working on a part-time basis.



Over 2 in 5 have been working less than five hours weekly



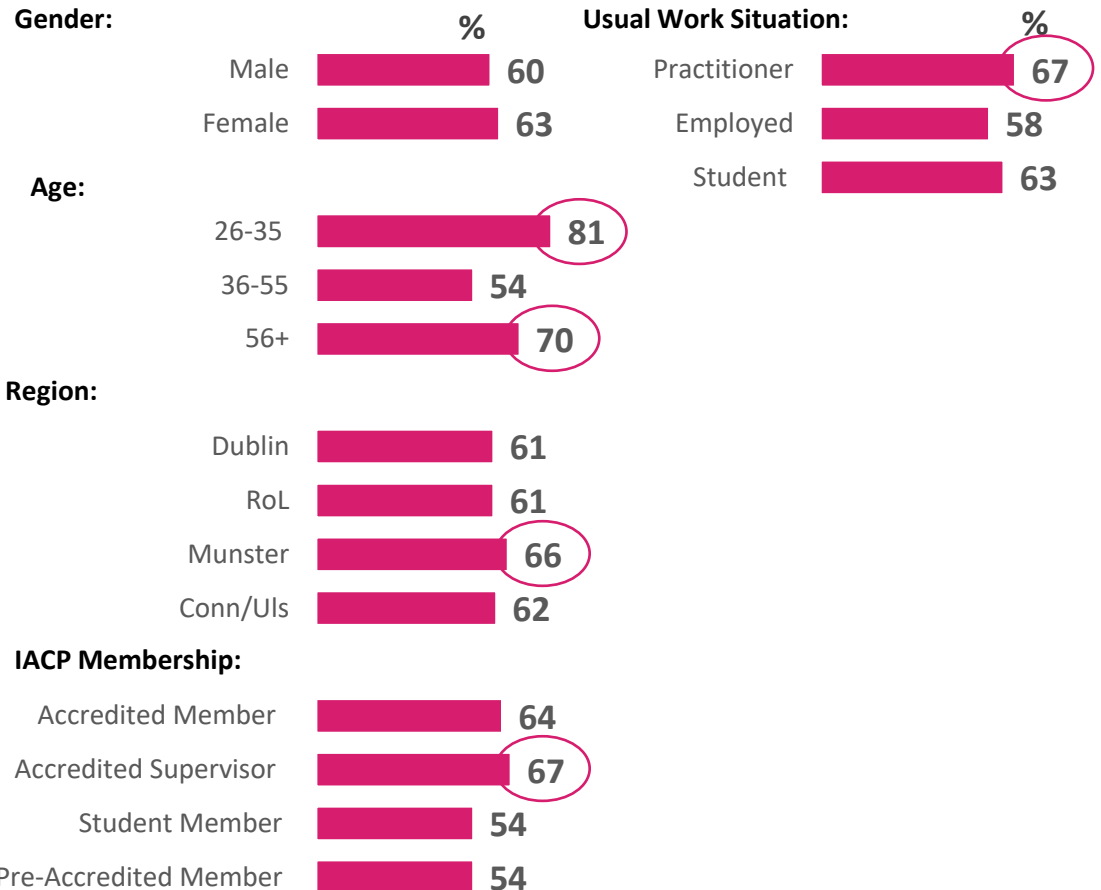
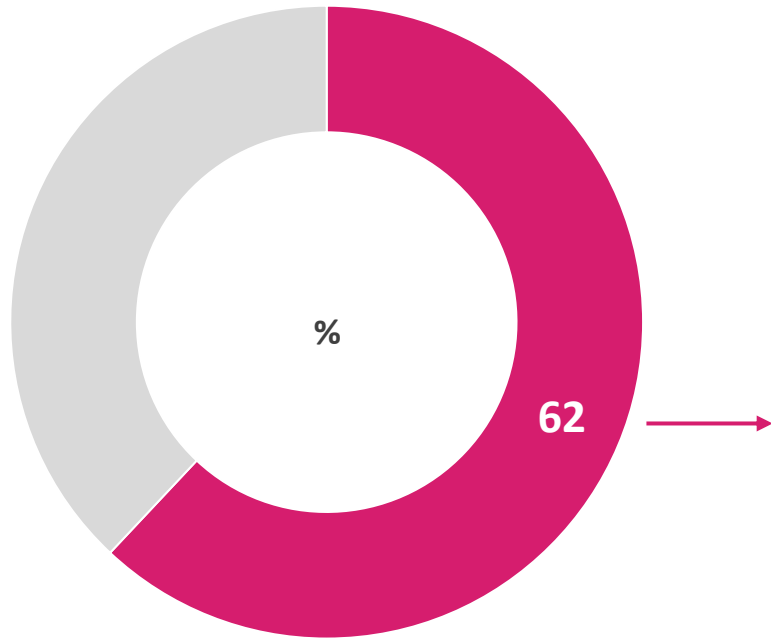
Base: All working since COVID19 - 743



Over 3 in 5 (62%) say they are working less hours than usual since COVID-19, with over 2 in 5 (41%) working less than five hours per week. However, there are a proportion (1 in 8) who say they have been working more.

Working less hours

Base: All working since COVID19 - 743



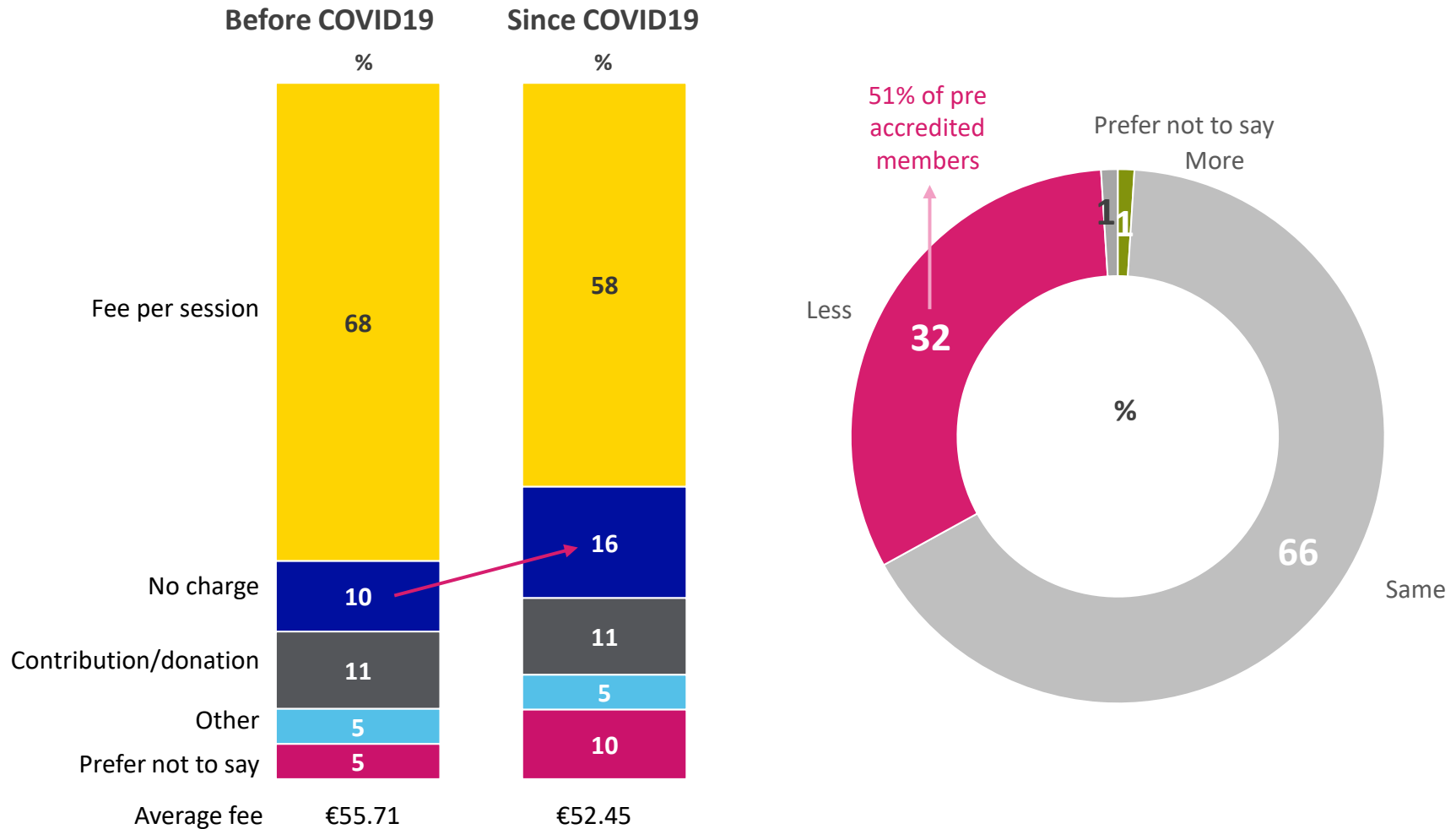
Over 4 in 5 (81%) of those aged 26-35 years say they have been working less hours since COVID-19.



Around a third say they have been charging clients less



Base: All working since COVID19 – 743/ All charging fee – 433



The proportion of those who say they have not been charging clients has increased somewhat since COVID-19. Around a third (32%) say they have been charging clients less, with the average fee now at €52.45.



Over half say they have had less newly referred clients



Base: All working since COVID19 - 743



While a fifth (21%) say they have had more newly referred clients since COVID-19, most say they have had less new (51%), existing (62%) and returning (43%) clients.

Less clients

Base: All working since COVID19 - 743

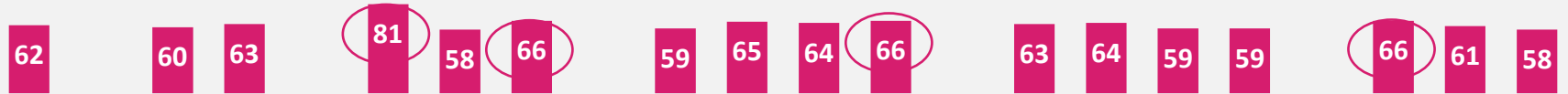


Total	Gender		Age			Region				Membership				Usual Working		
	Male	Female	26-35	36-55	56+	Dublin	RoL	Munster	Conn /Uls	Accredit Member	Accredit ed Supervisor	Student Member	Pre- Accredit ed Member	Practitio ner	Employ ed	Student
743	139	602	26	377	339	299	198	160	86	418	136	46	138	541	157	38

Newly referred clients



Existing clients



Returned clients



Those aged 56+ are more likely to say they have had less new, existing and returning clients.

Overall Impact of COVID-19



Base: All members – 910



The negative impact of COVID-19 has been most significant in terms of ability to offer Counselling/Psychotherapy and contact with colleagues/ other practitioners. Interestingly, an equivalent proportion say COVID-19 has had a positive impact on their own wellbeing, as those saying it has been negative.



Overall Impact of COVID19



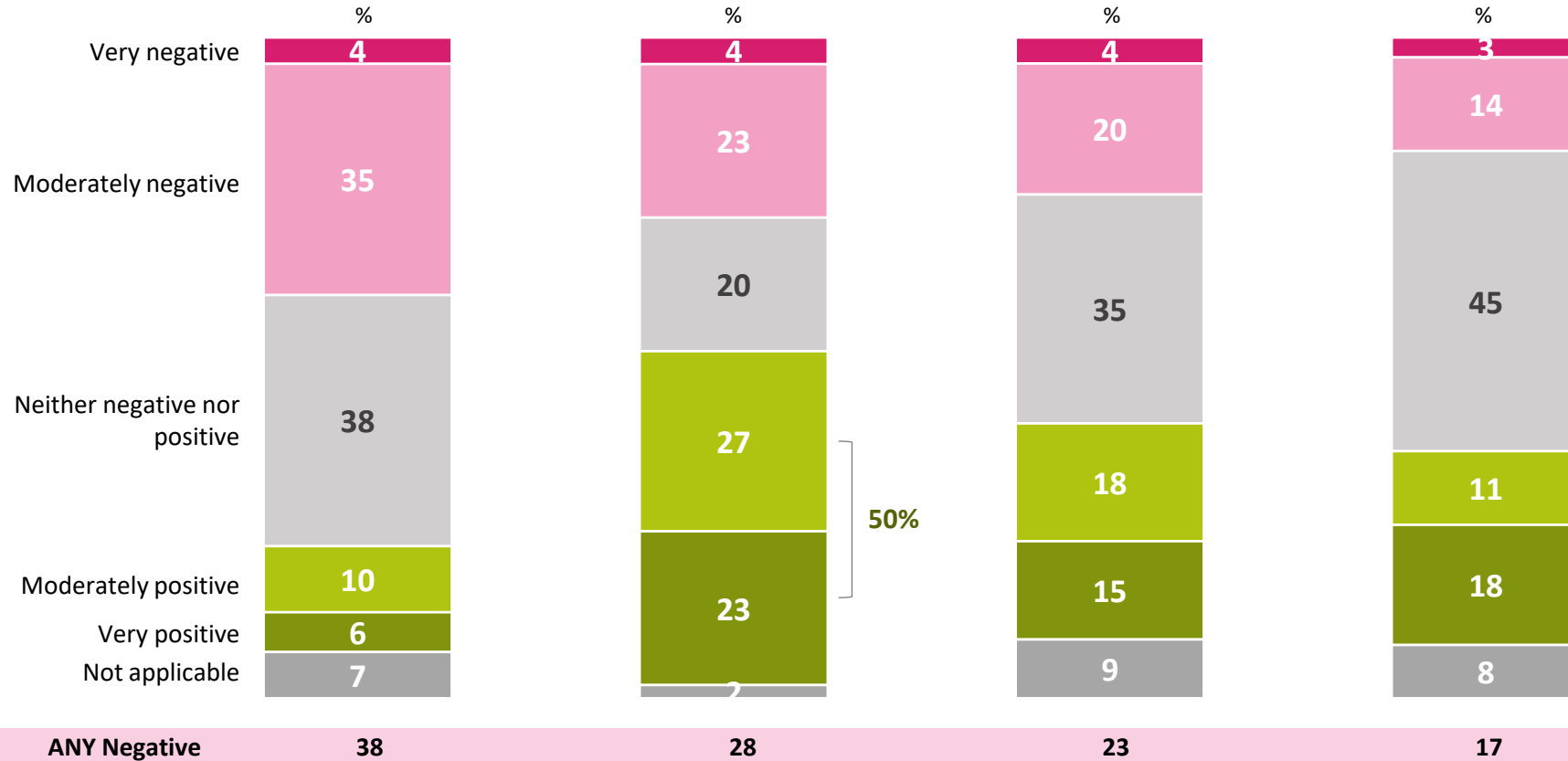
Base: All members – 910

Your emotional/
psychological health as it
relates to your practice
(e.g. knowledge, memory,
attention, decision
processes, motivation)

Your ability to
practise self-care

The quality of your
therapeutic
relationship with
your clients

The quality of your
relationship with
your supervisor



Half (50%) say COVID-19 has had a positive impact on their ability to practice self-care.

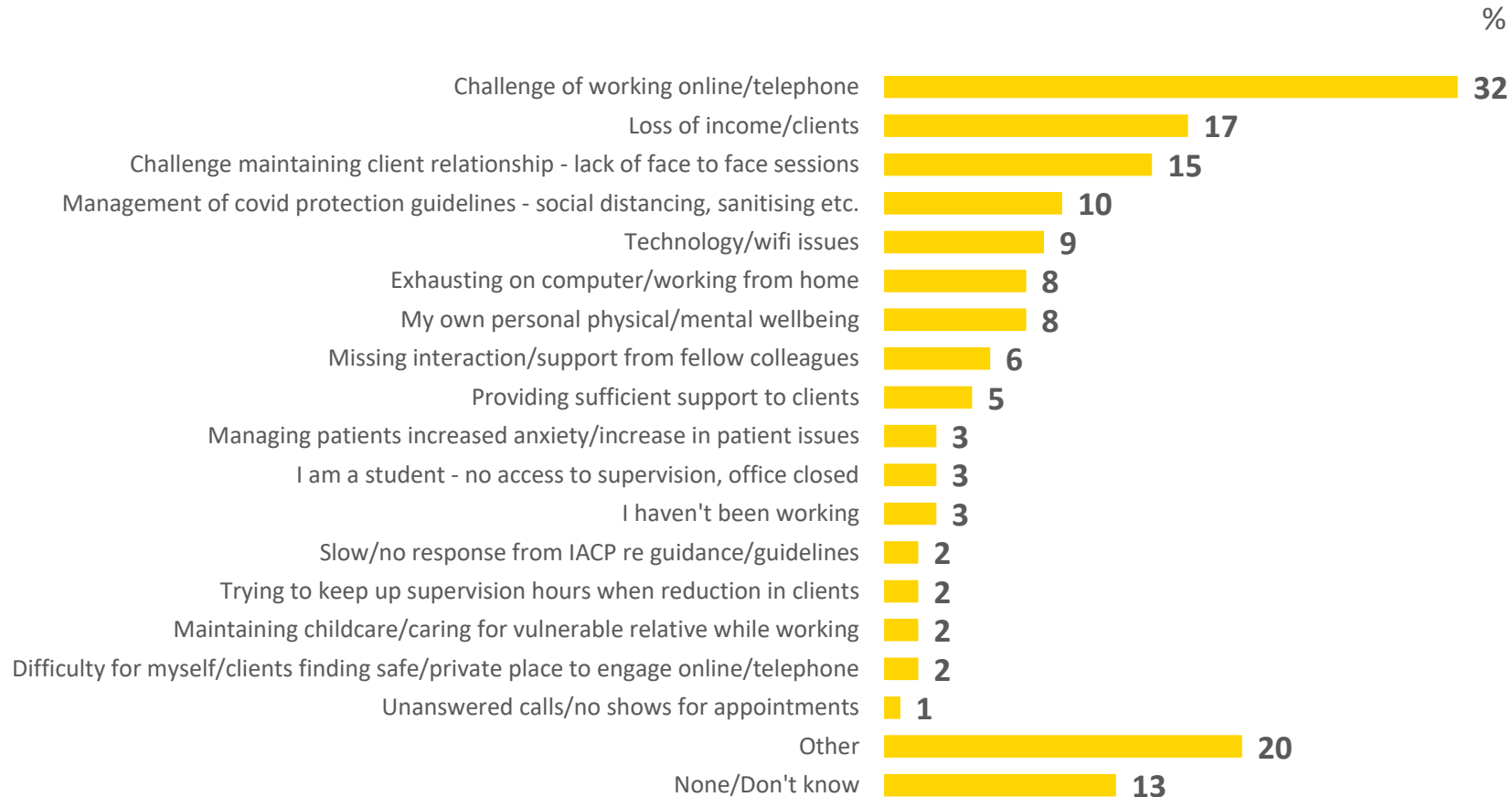


Working online has been a key challenge for a third

Base: All members – 910

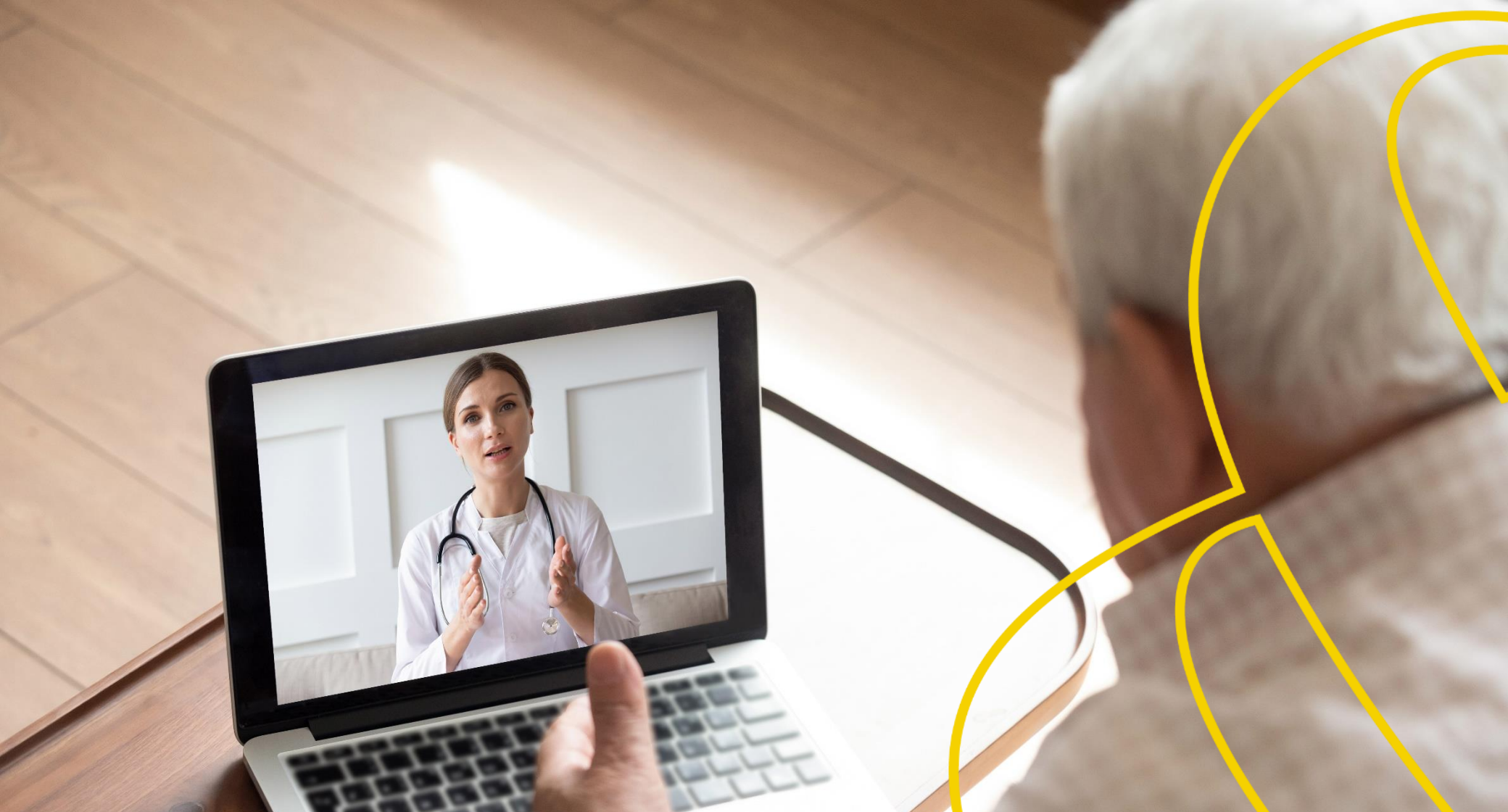


Open-ended question



Many of the challenges facing Counsellors/Psychotherapists relate to working remotely, such as maintaining therapeutic relationship, technology/WiFi issues, fatigue and loss of peer interaction. Overall, a wide range of challenges are mentioned.



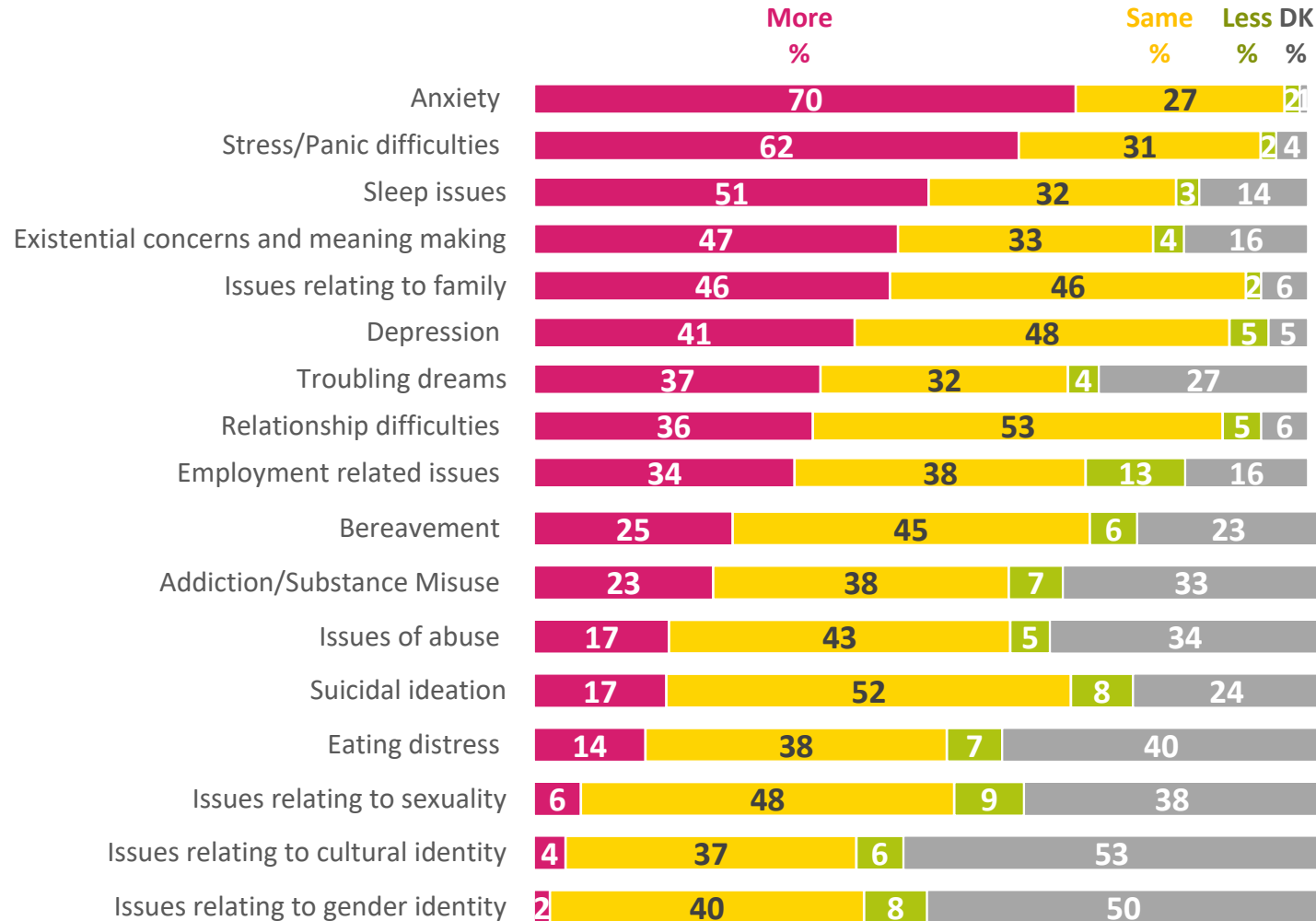


Impact of COVID-19 on Clients

More clients are presenting with anxiety & stress/panic



Base: All working since COVID19 - 743

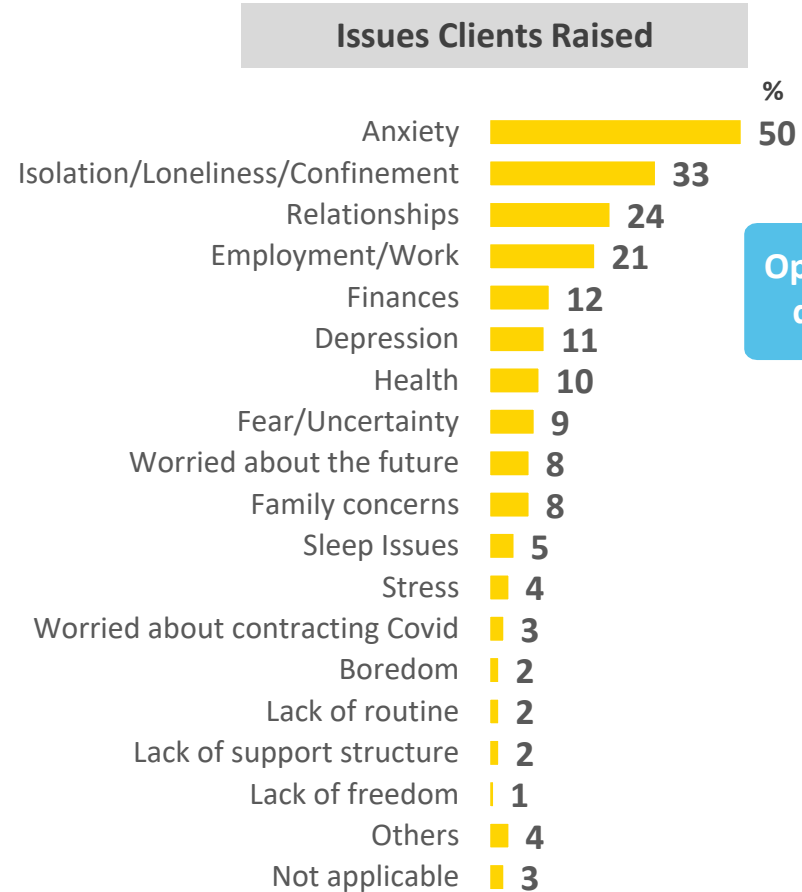
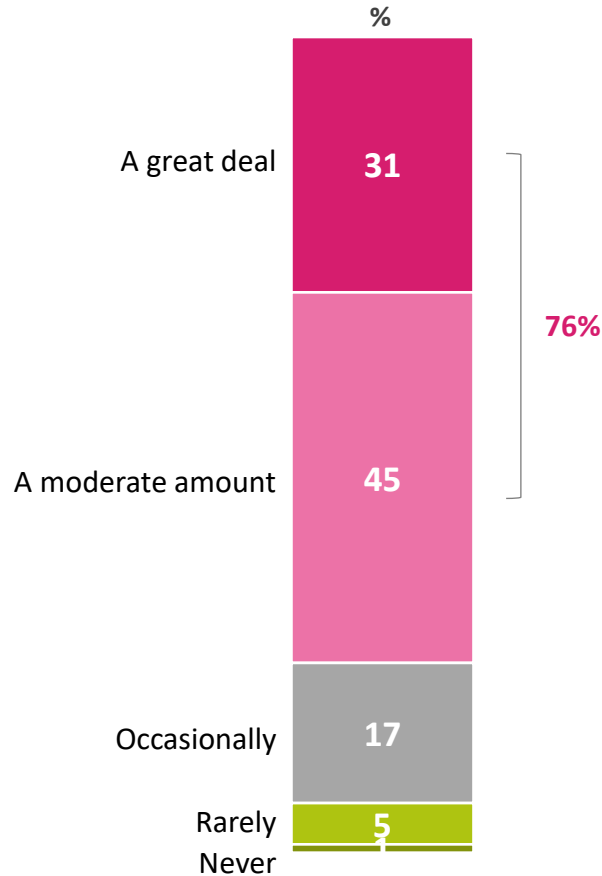


In addition to anxiety, stress & panic, Counsellors/Psychotherapists also report seeing more clients presenting with sleep, existential, family and mood issues.

Three quarters say clients are raising issues relating specifically to COVID-19 with some regularity



Base: All working since COVID19 - 743



Open-ended question

Just over 3 in 10 (31%) say clients are raising issues relating specifically to COVID-19 a great deal – with the top issue being anxiety, followed by loneliness, relationships and work. A wide range of client issues relating to the pandemic are mentioned.



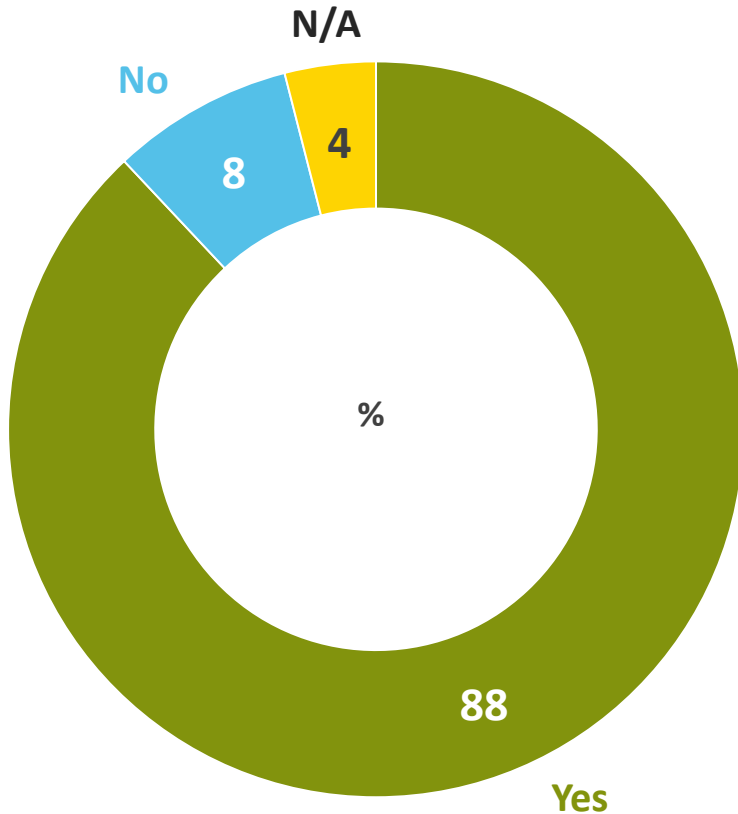
Supervision during COVID19

Just under a fifth say supervision has been much more important

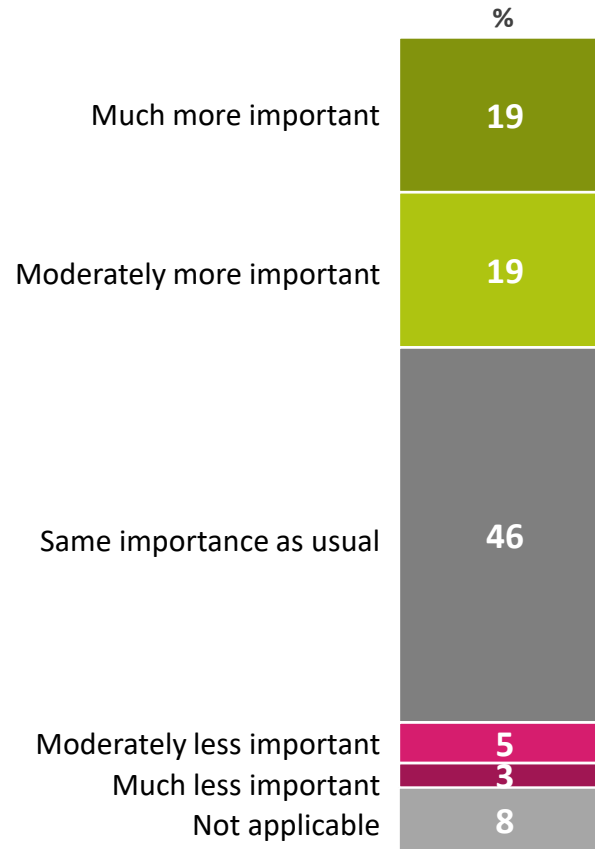


Base: All members – 910

Received Supervision



Importance of Supervision



ANY MORE IMPORTANT – 38%

Around 2 in 5 (38%) say supervision has been of more importance, while just under half (46%) feel it has been of the same importance as always – very few (8%) say it has been of any less importance.

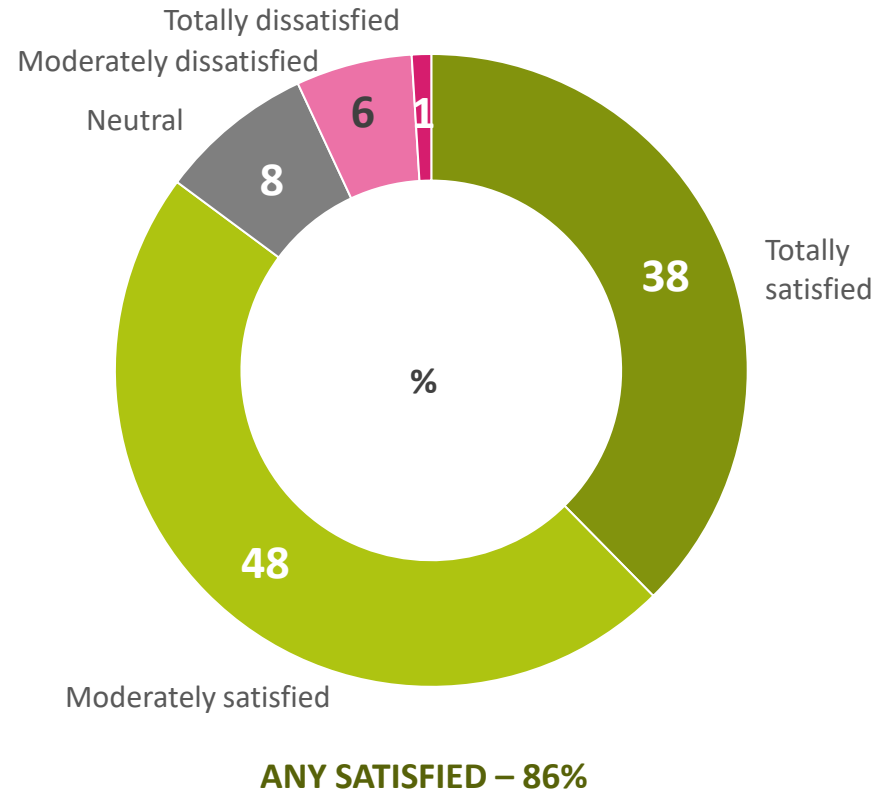
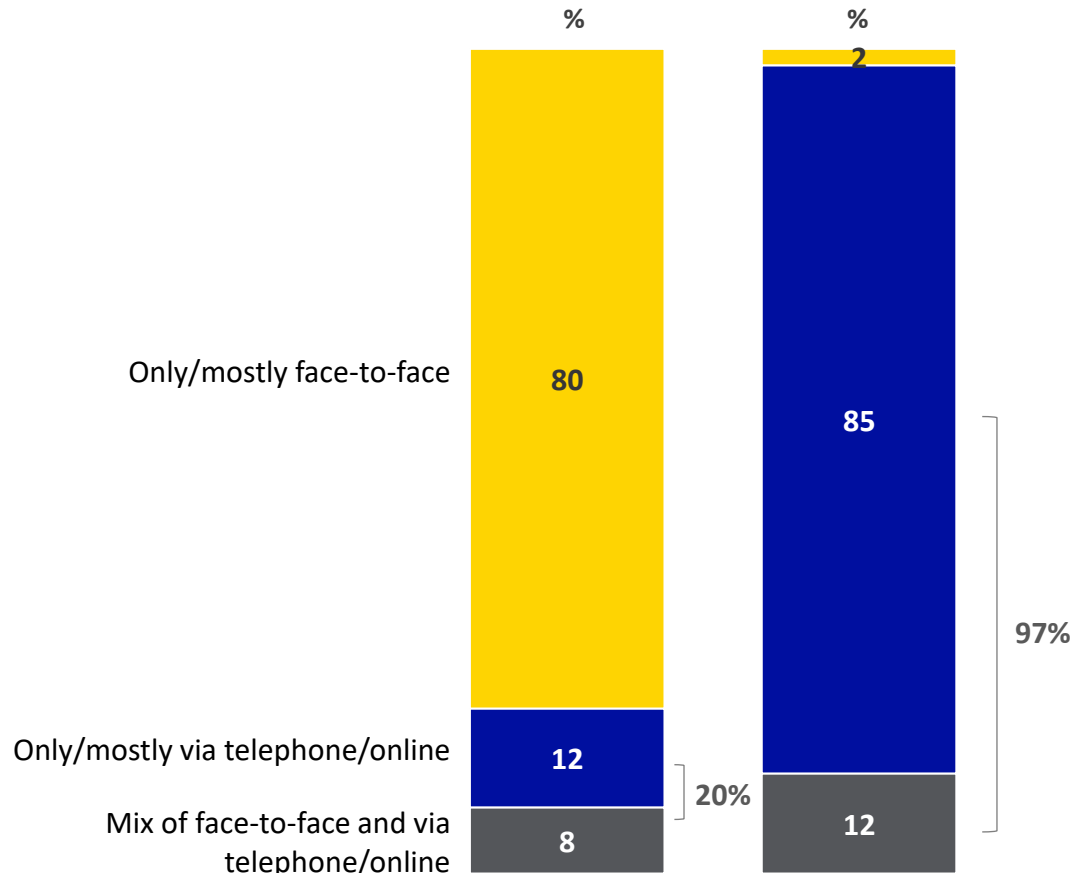
Almost 9 in 10 supervisors are satisfied with providing supervision online



Base: Accredited supervisors – 143

Before COVID19

Since COVID19

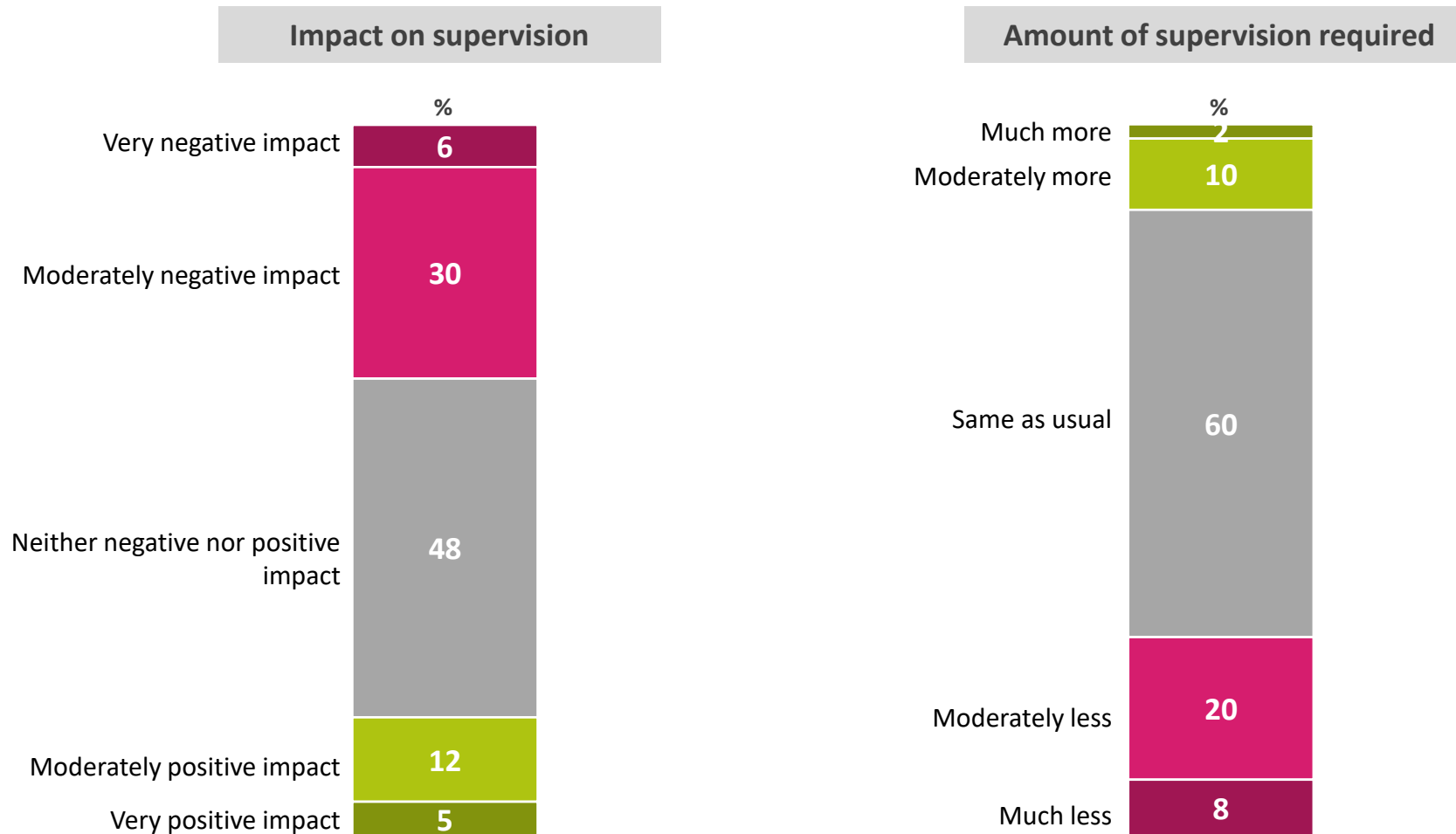


The proportion of those providing supervision mostly online has increased from 12% to 85% since COVID-19. Almost 9 in 10 (86%) supervisors say they are satisfied with working online, with almost 2 in 5 (38%) totally satisfied.

Over a third say supervision has been negatively impacted



Base: Accredited supervisors – 143



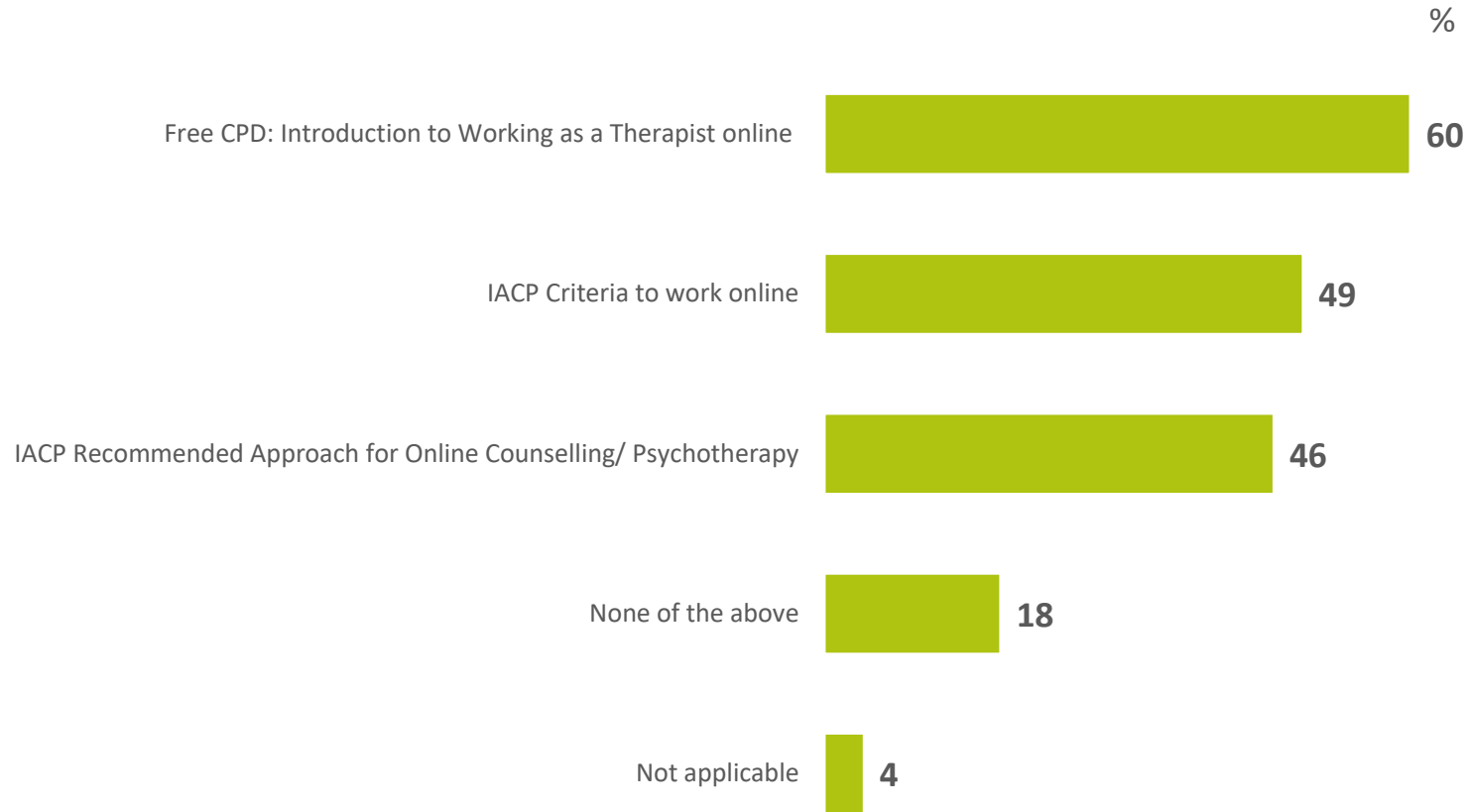
While over a third (36%) say supervision has been negatively impacted, nearly half (48%) of supervisors feel there has been no impact and just under a fifth (17%) have seen a positive effect from COVID-19. The majority (60%) of supervisors say they have been providing the same level of supervision as usual.



Support from IACP during COVID19

Almost 4 in 5 have used an IACP resource for working online

Base: All members – 910

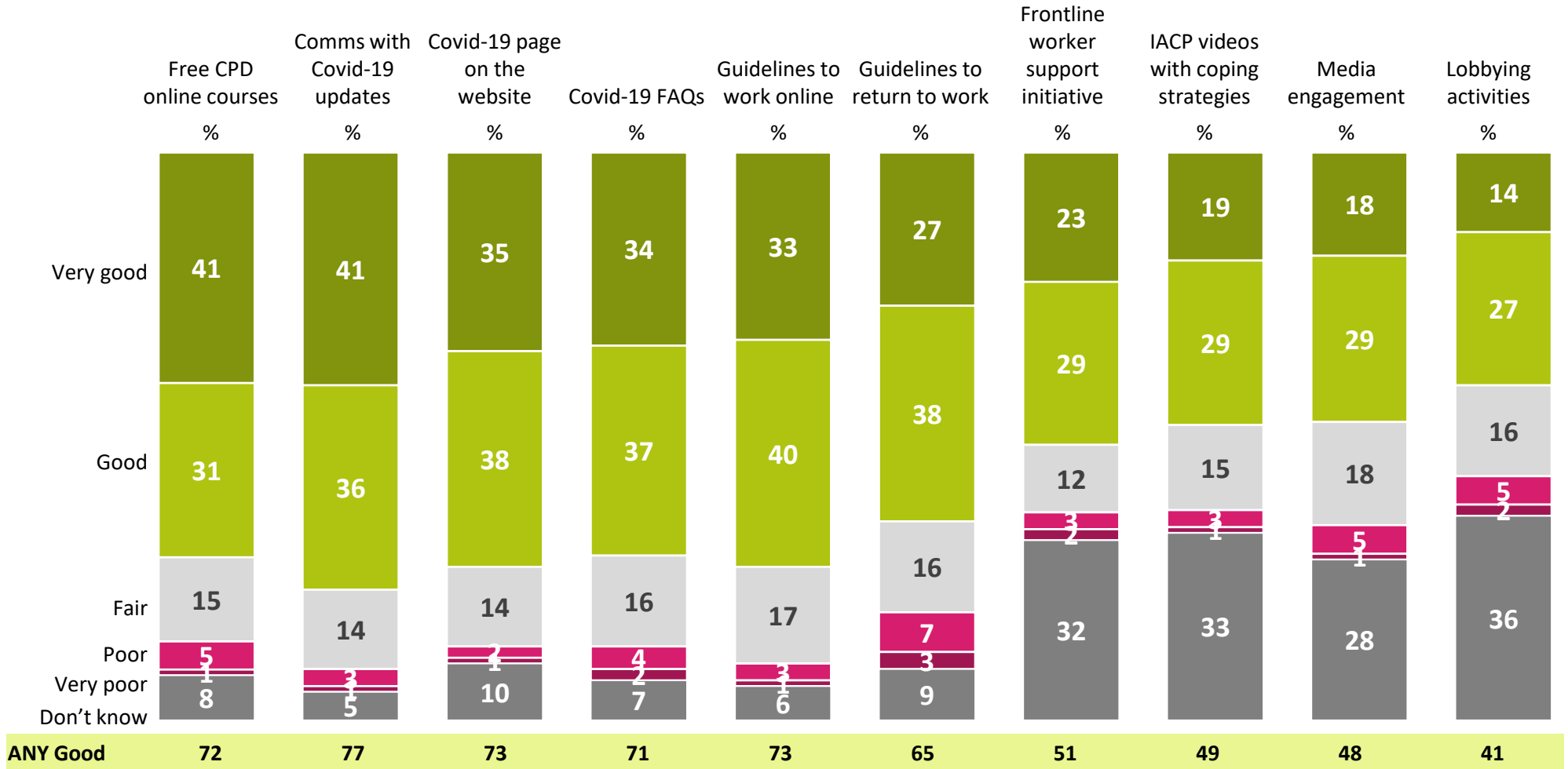


The free CPD for working as a therapist online is the most used resource.

Ratings of IACP resources are positive overall



Base: All members – 910

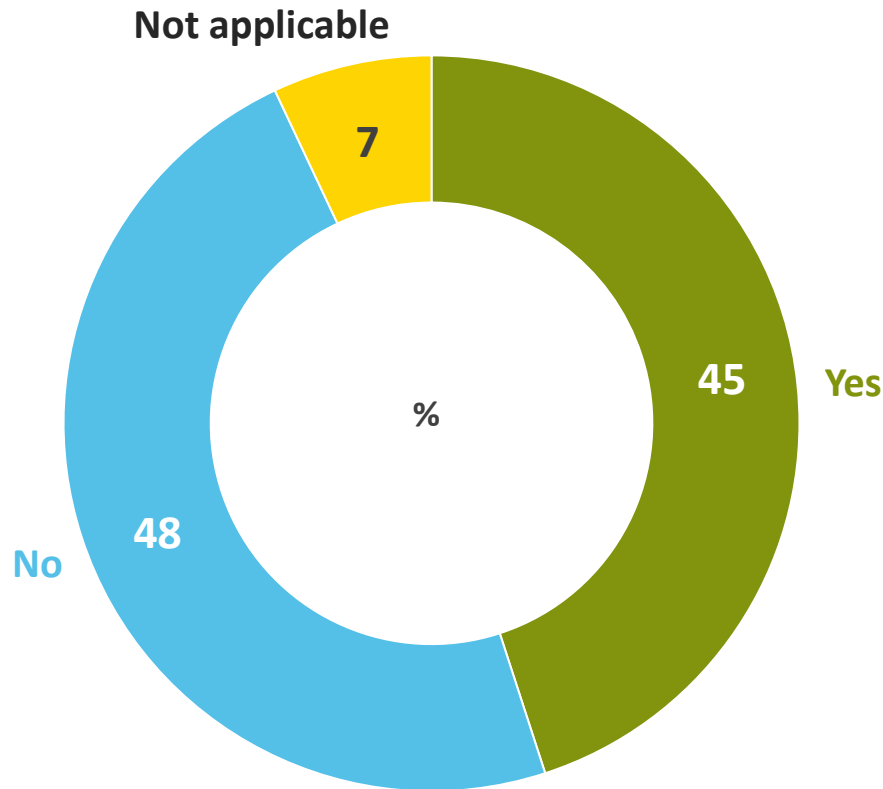


Free CPD online courses and IACP comms are rated particularly well, with more uncertainty around the frontline worker initiative, coping strategies videos, media engagement and lobbying activities – perhaps indicating a lack of awareness of these.

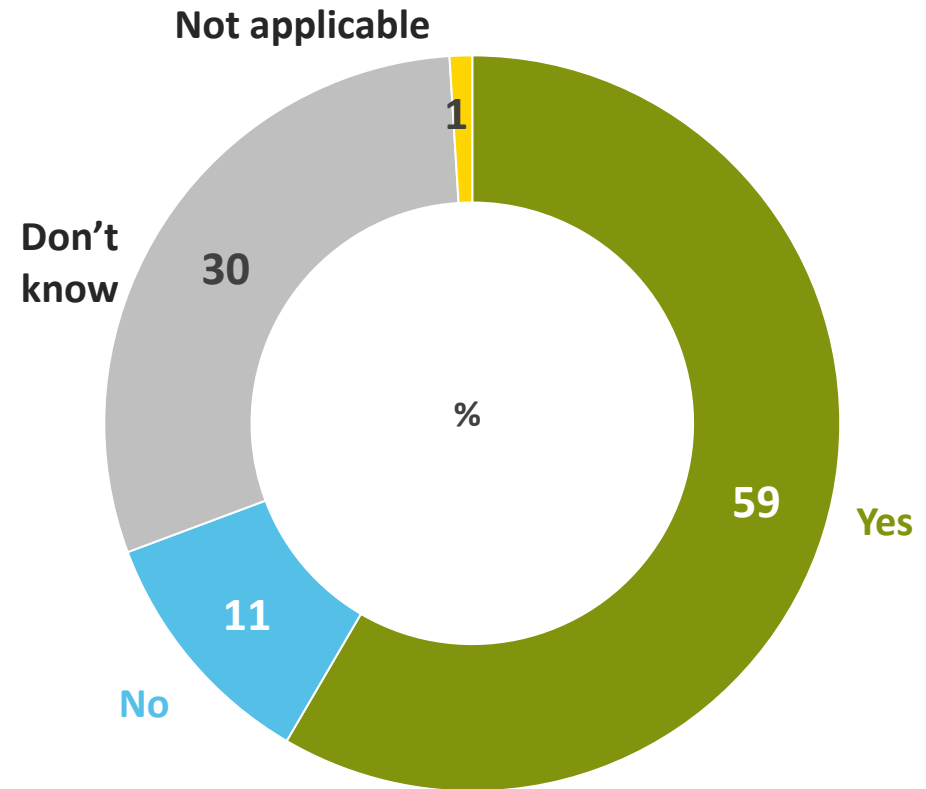
There is considerable engagement with training on 'working online'

Base: All members – 910

Completed any other training



Intend to undertake any further training



Demand for further training from IACP is evident

Base: All members – 910



Open-ended question



In addition to further training/CPD opportunities, improved communication and clearer guidelines are also suggested by some.



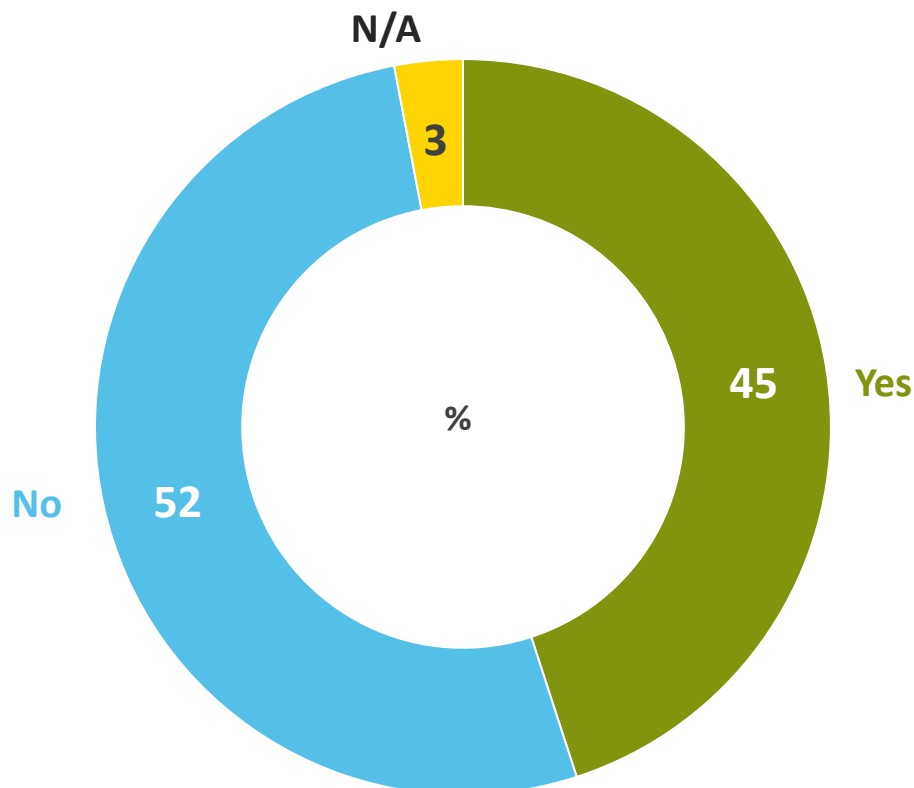
Future of Counselling/Psychotherapy

Just under half have returned to face-to-face client work

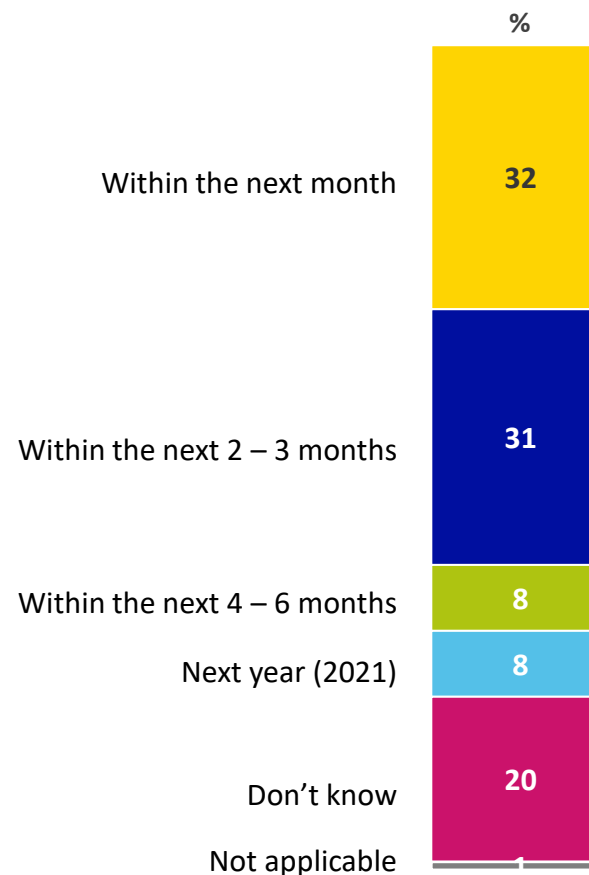


Base: All members – 910/ All not returned – 475

Returned to F2F work



Expected return to F2F work

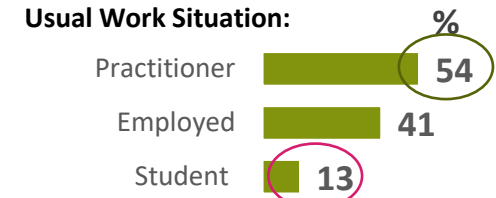
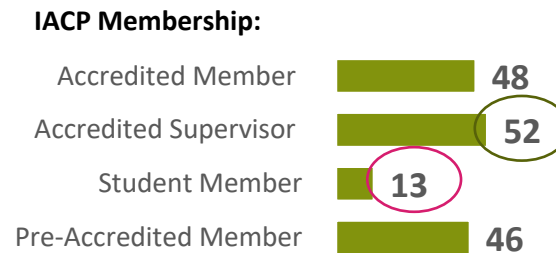
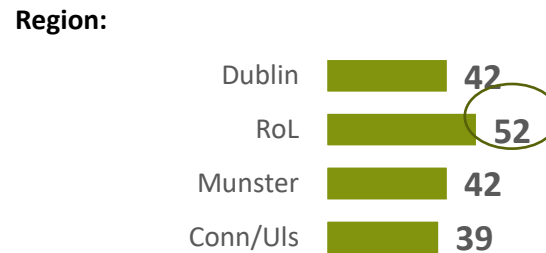
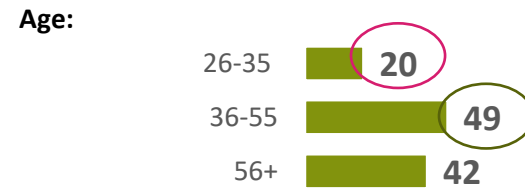
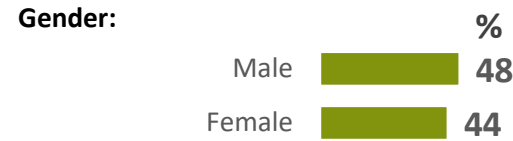
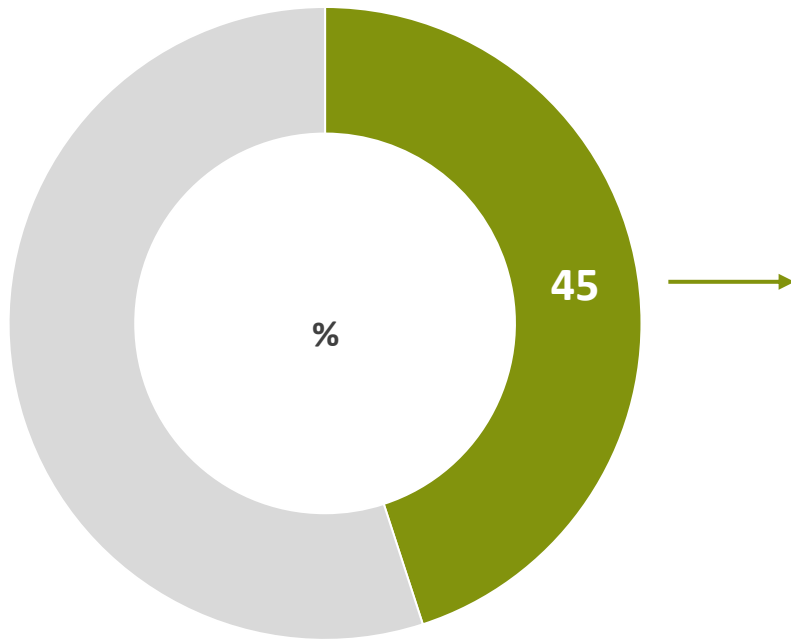


Of those who have not yet resumed face-to-face sessions, the majority (63%) believe they will do so within the next three months – however, a notable proportion (20%) remain unsure.

Counselling/Psychotherapy students are less likely to have returned to face-to-face client work



Base: All members – 910



Over a third say there are positive aspects of remote working

Base: All members – 910

Open-ended question

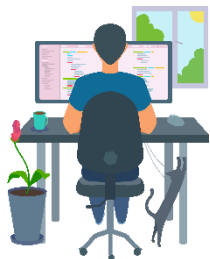


While over a third (36%) say there are positive aspects of remote working, the importance of face-to-face sessions is also mentioned. Adaptability, work-life balance and the importance of having up to date tech skills also emerge as key learnings.



Summary of Key Findings

Key Findings



Almost all members (**95%**) have had their **work affected** by COVID-19 in some way. The most common impact is the transition to remote working, followed by a reduction in hours.



Most have continued to work during COVID-19, but a notable proportion (14%) have not. A third (**34%**) of those not working say clients did not want to transition to online Counselling/Psychotherapy.

74%



The proportion of those mostly working online has increased from 3% to 70% since COVID-19. Almost 3 in 4 (**74%**) say they are satisfied with working remotely, with almost a fifth (**23%**) totally satisfied.

62%



Over 3 in 5 (**62%**) say they are **working less hours** than usual since COVID-19, with over 2 in 5 (41%) working less than five hours per week. Around a third (32%) say they have been charging clients less.

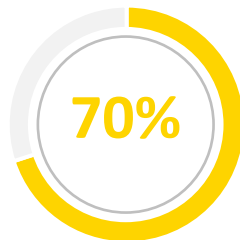


The negative impact of COVID-19 has been most significant in terms of ability to offer Counselling/Psychotherapy (63% any negative) and contact with colleagues/ other practitioners (54% any negative).



Interestingly, an equivalent proportion (37%) say COVID-19 has had a **positive** impact on their own **wellbeing**, as those saying it has been negative (39%). Half (50%) say COVID-19 has had a positive impact on their ability to **practice self-care**.

Key Findings



More clients are presenting with **anxiety** (70%) & **stress/panic** (62%). Just over 3 in 10 (31%) say clients are raising issues relating specifically to COVID-19 a great deal – with the top issue being anxiety, followed by loneliness, relationships and work.



Around 2 in 5 (38%) say supervision has been of more importance, while just under half (46%) feel it has been of the same importance as always – very few (8%) say it has been of any less importance.



The proportion of those providing supervision mostly online **has increased from 12% to 85%** since COVID-19. Almost 9 in 10 (86%) supervisors say they are satisfied with working online, with almost 2 in 5 (38%) totally satisfied.



Almost 4 in 5 (78%) have used an **IACP resource** for working online. Ratings of IACP resources are positive overall – with CPD online courses and IACP comms rated particularly well.



There is a **demand for further training/CPD opportunities** from the IACP. Improved communication and clearer guidelines are also suggested by some.



Just under half (45%) **have returned to face-to-face client work**. Of those who have not yet resumed face-to-face sessions, the majority (63%) believe they will do so within the next three months – however, a notable proportion (20%) remain unsure.

Thank you.



RESEARCH
& INSIGHT

*Milltown House
Mount Saint Annes
Milltown, Dublin 6 - D06 Y822
+353 1 205 7500 | www.banda.ie*

Delve Deeper