



# Is Working From Home Good for Mental Health?

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March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026

# Poll question

If you could choose, what would be your preferred work location?

1. Full-time at the office
2. Full-time at home
3. Hybrid (e.g., 2-3 days per week at the office)

# Poll question

Do you feel that working from home is better for your mental health?

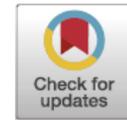
1. Yes
2. No



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## Mental Health & Prevention

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/mhp](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/mhp)



Is working from home good for mental health and well-being? Associations between work location, self-rated mental health, life satisfaction, and life and work stress among Canadian adults

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# Background

- COVID-19 transformed working modalities worldwide
- Telework has potential benefits (e.g., flexibility, reduced commuting time, cost savings for companies, environment) and drawbacks (e.g., less face-to-face social interactions, technostress, blurred boundaries between work and personal life) for mental health
- Evidence remains mixed and often non-representative
- It is unknown if teleworking is associated with better mental health and well-being among Canadian adult workers in the post-COVID-19 era.

# Study Objective

- Examine associations between work location and mental health and well-being
- Outcomes: self-rated mental health, life satisfaction, life stress, work stress
- Focus on Canadian adults post-COVID-19

# Study Design and Participants

- Cross-sectional analysis (2022 CCHS)
- Nationally-representative sample (n=24,614 adults aged 18+)
- Currently working adults
- All self-reported data

# Work Location Categories (3 groups)

- Fixed location outside the home
- Outside the home with no fixed location
- Working from home

\*Hybrid work schedule was not a response option, as the question asked about the primary work location for the majority of hours

# Outcome Measures

- Self-rated mental health (high: excellent or very good)
- Life satisfaction (very satisfied: score  $\geq 9$ )
- Life stress (low: not at all stressful/not very stressful/a bit stressful)
- Work stress (low: not at all stressful/not very stressful/a bit stressful)

\*Based on the Government of Canada's Positive Mental Health Surveillance Indicator Framework and previous studies

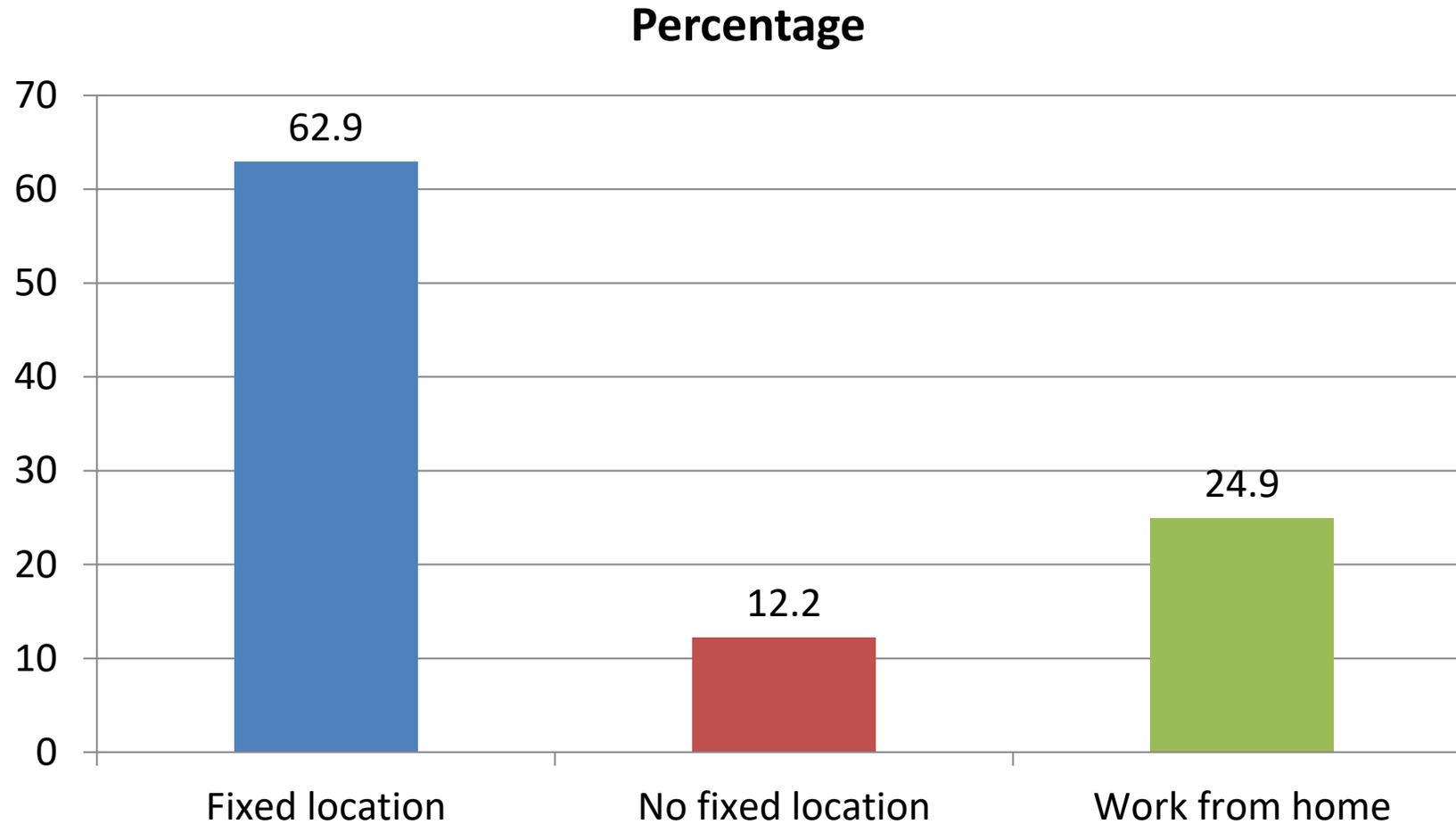
# Covariates

- Age (years)
- Gender (man/woman)
- Highest level of education
- Cultural/racial background
- BMI (kg/m<sup>2</sup>)
- Occupation
- Total working hours (hours/week)
- Family/living arrangement

# Statistical Analysis

- Weighted analyses to reflect population
- Chi-square tests
- Adjusted logistic regression models

# Work Location Distribution



# Characteristics of Home Workers

- Higher education levels
- Common in business/finance and sciences
- Similar working hours to office workers (37.9 h/week)

# Unadjusted results (chi-square tests)

## **High self-rated mental health**

- Slightly higher among no fixed location workers (60%)
- Similar between home and office workers (55%)

## **High life satisfaction**

- Highest among no fixed location workers (29%)
- Modest differences across locations (27% and 25%)

## **Low life stress**

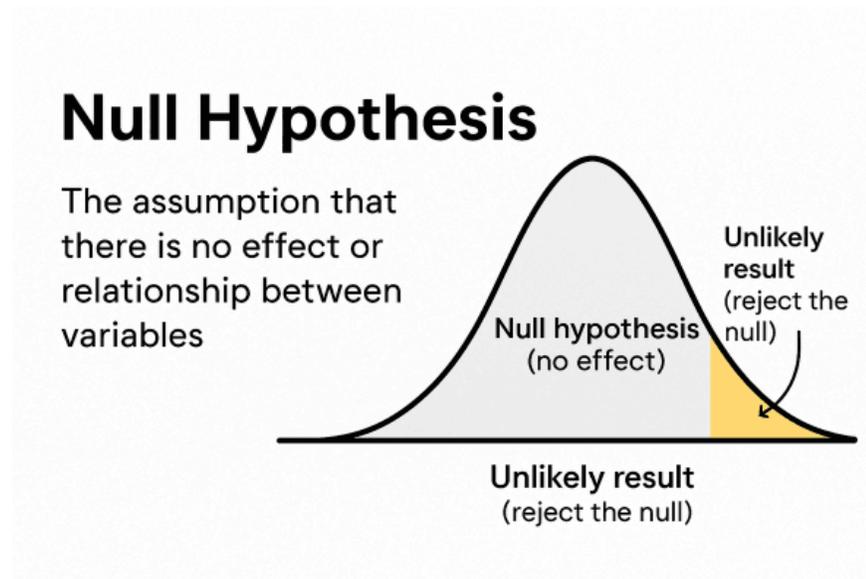
- No significant differences by work location
- High prevalence of low life stress overall (75%)

## **Low work stress**

- Highest among no fixed location workers (77%)
- Similar between home (73%) and office workers (72%)

# Adjusted Results (logistic regression models)

- No significant associations after covariate adjustment
- Work location alone not a key determinant



# Key Finding

- Work location not independently associated with mental health
- Other factors appear more influential

# Interpretation

- Mental health is multifactorial
- Work environment quality may matter more than location

# Post-Pandemic Context (2022)

- Workers adapted to remote and hybrid models
- Improved coping strategies and employer support



# Implications for Policy

- One-size-fits-all work policies may be ineffective
- Flexibility and individual preference are key



# Strengths

- Large nationally-representative sample
- Post-COVID-19 perspective
- Multiple mental health outcomes

# Limitations

- Cross-sectional design
- Self-reported, single-item measures
- No assessment of hybrid work

# Future Research

- Hybrid work arrangements
- Quality of work environment
- Longitudinal and qualitative studies to gather more contextual information about one's work arrangement

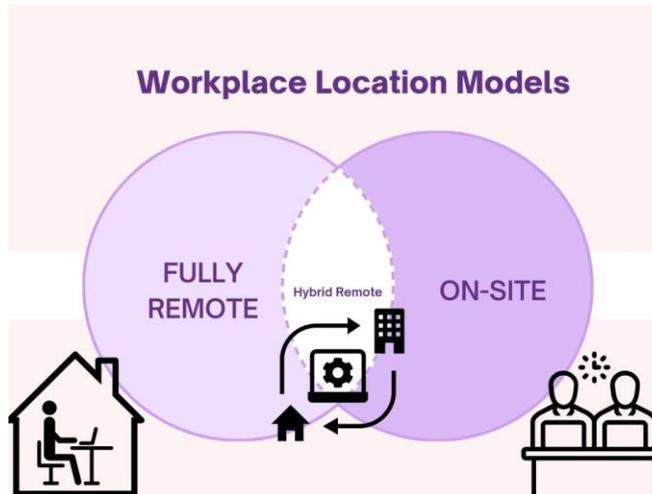
# Public Health Relevance

- Mental health achievable across work locations
- Focus on supportive work conditions



# Main Conclusion

- Work location alone does not determine mental health
- Alignment with preferences and job demands matters



# Take-Home Message

- Flexibility may be more important than place
- Supportive policies can enhance well-being



