

MIND YOURSELF

The Lundbeck Mental Health Barometer





**“Action may not always bring happiness;
but there is no happiness without action.”
Benjamin Disraeli**



INTRODUCTION

As specialists in psychiatry, Lundbeck is committed to education, through the provision of information, which will enhance the perception of people living with psychiatric conditions in the community. *Mind Yourself – The Lundbeck Mental Health Barometer*, was developed to investigate attitudes towards depression and anxiety disorder specifically, their perceived disruption to a person's daily life, and employer empathy towards the conditions.

The report, which is based on a nationally representative study, shows the different perceptions towards mental health among men and women, the young and old, as well as rural and urban communities. A great deal of misunderstanding and confusion continues to surround all areas of mental health, indicating a great deal of work remains in helping to break down the stigma surrounding conditions such as depression.

It is estimated that over 300,000 people in Ireland have depression. Unfortunately, depression, or any other psychiatric condition, is an illness often whispered about, or discussed behind closed doors. However, we in Lundbeck hope that this report will assist in opening dialogue among people on the subject, ultimately leading to an understanding that any medical condition of the mind should never leave a person feeling isolated, lonely or vulnerable in society.

Ms Eithne Boyan,
Managing Director,
Lundbeck Ireland Ltd

FORWARD

Mind Yourself – The Lundbeck Mental Health Barometer is fascinating as it provides us with an insight into Irish perceptions towards certain areas of mental health. The World Health Organisation has estimated that depressive illness will be ranked as the second most disabling medical disorder by 2010.

Depression is a condition that is characterised by feeling unhappy most of the time, a loss of interest in life, feeling anxious, agitated or irritable, feeling guilty, feeling tired a lot of the time, low energy levels and many more. Similar to any other medical condition, if left untreated, the symptoms of depression will persist or worsen which is why treatment is essential.

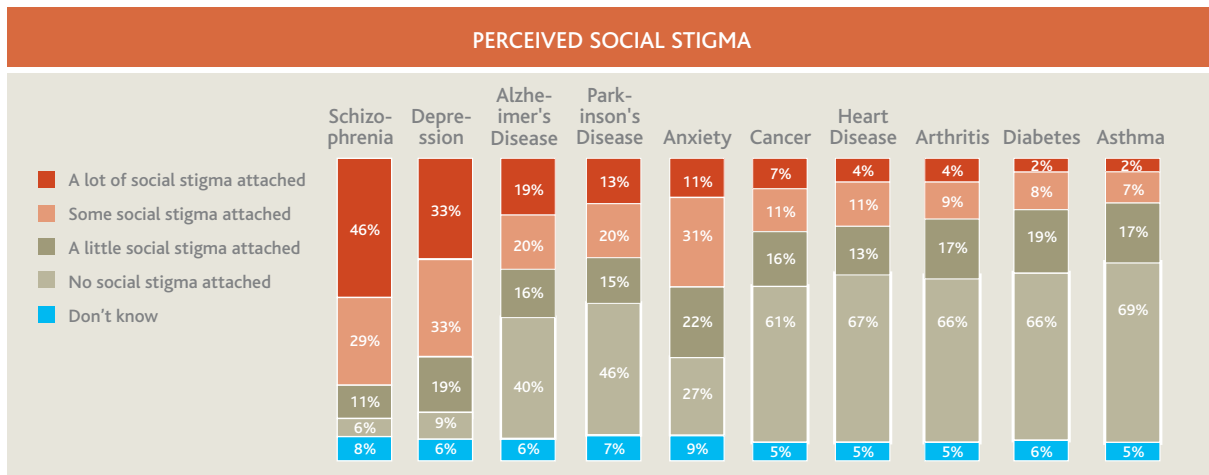
A person who believes they are experiencing depression should talk to their GP to seek advice. If diagnosed with depression, this can in most cases be effectively treated with medicines and cognitive behavioural therapy.

Professor Timothy Dinan,
Consultant Psychiatrist,
Cork University Hospital

Stigma and Mental Health

When mental health and other medical conditions were compared in terms of the perceived social stigma it is interesting to note that the 3 mental health conditions scored highest. 75% of people believe there was a lot/some social stigma attached to schizophrenia, depression (60%) and anxiety (42%) compared to Alzheimer's Disease (39%), Parkinson's Disease, cancer (18%), heart disease (15%), arthritis (13%), diabetes (10%) and asthma (9%).

57% of people who had experienced depression personally believed there was a lot/some social stigma attached to having the condition. In comparison, of those who had experienced anxiety, nearly 10% less believe there is a lot/ some social stigma attached to the condition at 46%. 65% who had ever suffered from anxiety disorder believed anxiety was an element of depression.



An Overview of Depression in Ireland

16% of the population know a family member or friend with depression, with a further 5% claiming to experience it personally, which contrasts with official figures that over 300,000 people have depression in Ireland. It seems the incidence of depression is under-reported in this instance, indicating that people are reluctant to admit to having the condition.

Women claim to experience depression more than men, with two women for every one man claiming to have personally suffered from the condition. Furthermore, women also seem to be more aware, or at least know of more people with depression when compared to men with 18% of women versus 13% of men having a family member or friend with depression.

Lower socio economic groups and farmers claim to have personally experienced or know a family member or friend with depression 19% respectively, compared to 16% of higher socio economic groups. In addition, those over 35 have a higher personal or family/friend incidence of depression (approximately 20%) when compared with those between 15-24 (12%) and 25-34 (15%).

AILMENTS EXPERIENCE X DEMOGRAPHICS

		GENDER												
		GENDER			AGE					CLASS			AREA	
		Total	Male	Female	15-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	ABC1	C2DE	F	Urban	Rural
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
DEPRESSION	Family/Friend	16	13	18	11	13	19	17	19	15	16	17	14	18
	Personally	5	3	6	3	5	5	7	3	4	6	5	4	6
	F/F or Personally	18	14	21	12	15	21	20	20	16	19	19	16	20

Ease of Talking about Depression

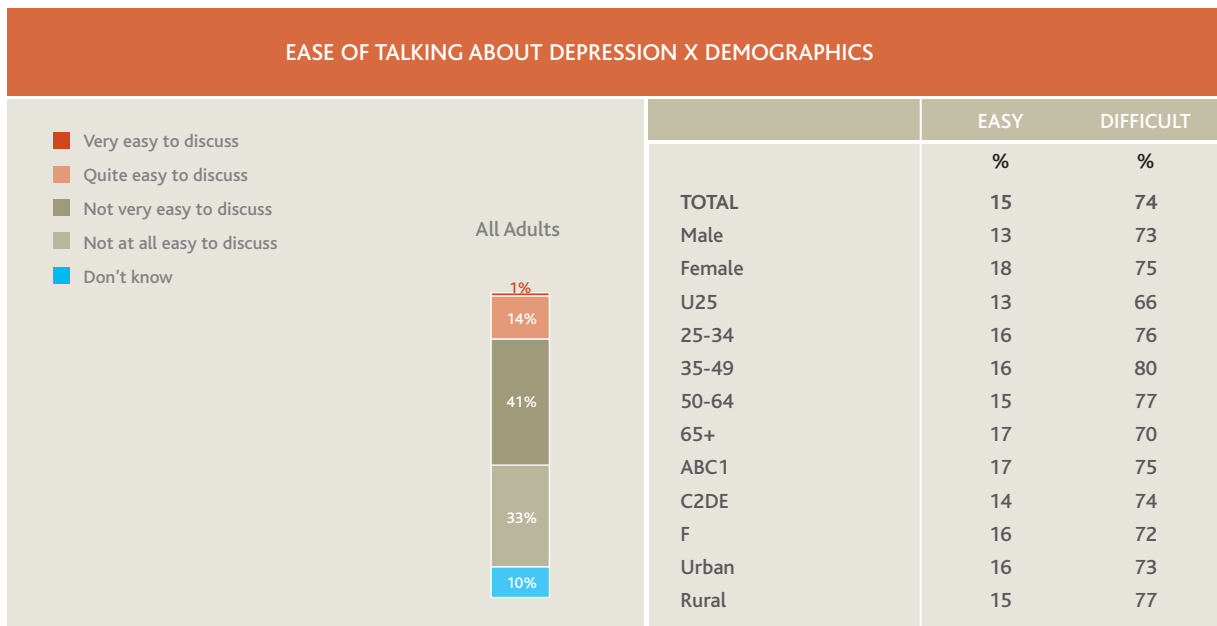
When asked how easy it is to discuss depression, 91% of Irish people believe it is important for depression to be openly discussed but 7 out of 10 said that it was not an easy topic to talk about. This again indicates that there is an ongoing stigma attached to depression which prohibits an openness which could help people deal with the condition.

Of interest is that the highest population group surveyed who said that they would find depression difficult to discuss were those who experienced depression personally. 41% said depression was not at all easy to discuss, 32% said it was not very easy to discuss with only 27% saying they would find depression easy to discuss.

Unsurprisingly, women would find discussing depression easier (18%) when compared to men (13%). Those between 35 - 49 claim they would find it difficult to discuss above all other age groups at 80%, compared to 66% under 25, 76% between 25-34, 77% between 50-64, and 70% 65 and over.

Possibly of surprise is that 64% would find depression a difficult subject to discuss with a doctor or health professional but not surprisingly, a further 62% claim it would be embarrassing to talk to a friend about.

38% of people who had depression found it difficult to discuss with others and the age group most embarrassed to discuss depression with others are those between 15-24 (30%) and 25-34 (25%). The group that would score highest when finding it difficult to talk to a doctor or health professional about depression are those aged 50-64 (29%).



Awareness of Depression

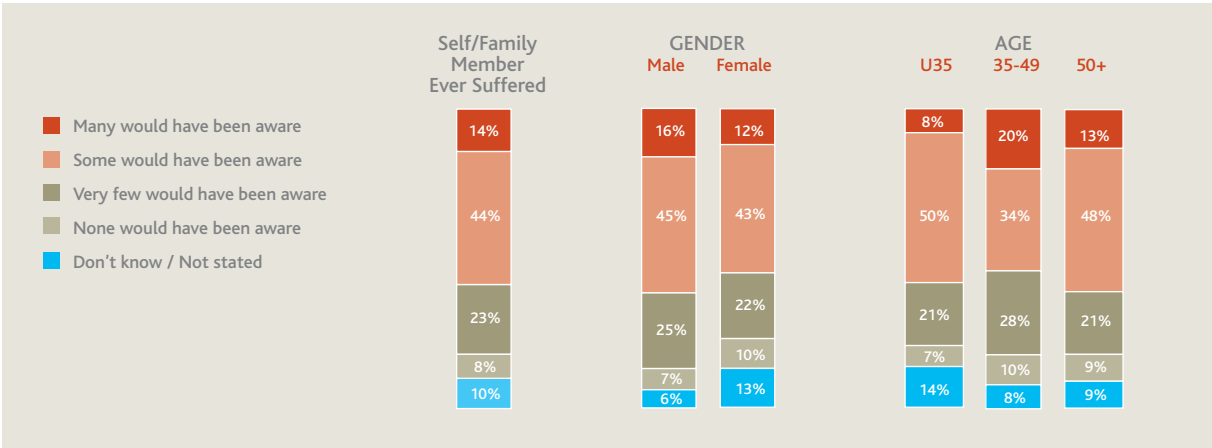
When discussing depression with those who personally experienced the condition, or knew of a family member with it, only 14% claim that many people would have been aware that they or a family member had depression. A further 44% believe some people would have known, 23% said few would have been aware and 8% stated that nobody would have known about their/family depression. Again, this highlights the lack of confidence in discussing this illness.

Interestingly, 61% of men say that people would have been aware of their/family depression versus 55% of women. Similar to finding depression difficult to discuss, only 20%, or 1 in 5 people between 35-49, said that many people would have been aware of their/family member having depression, indicating that there is the lowest openness among this age group.

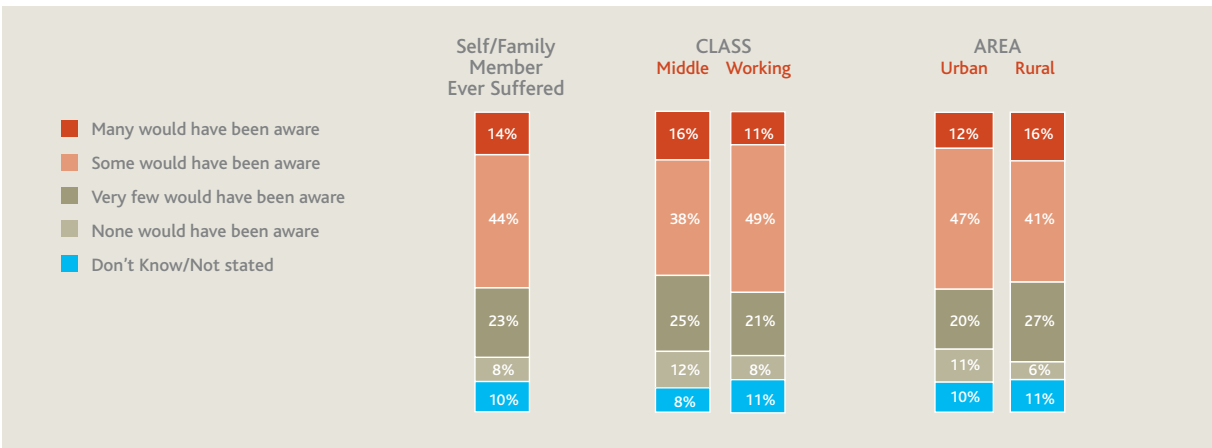
16% of higher socio-economic groups versus 11% of lower socio-economic groups said that many people would have been aware of their/family member's depression. In addition, 16% of those in rural, compared to 12% of people in urban areas, believe that many would have been aware of their/family depression. Furthermore, 11% of people in urban areas state that nobody would have been aware of the depression versus 6% of people in rural areas.

Similar to previous patterns, of the men and women surveyed who had experienced depression personally, only 10% believe that many would have been aware of their depression, 41% think that some would have known, 27% think that very few would have been very aware and 18% state that nobody would have known of their depression, indicating that one fifth of people with depression manage their condition without the knowledge and support of friends or family members.

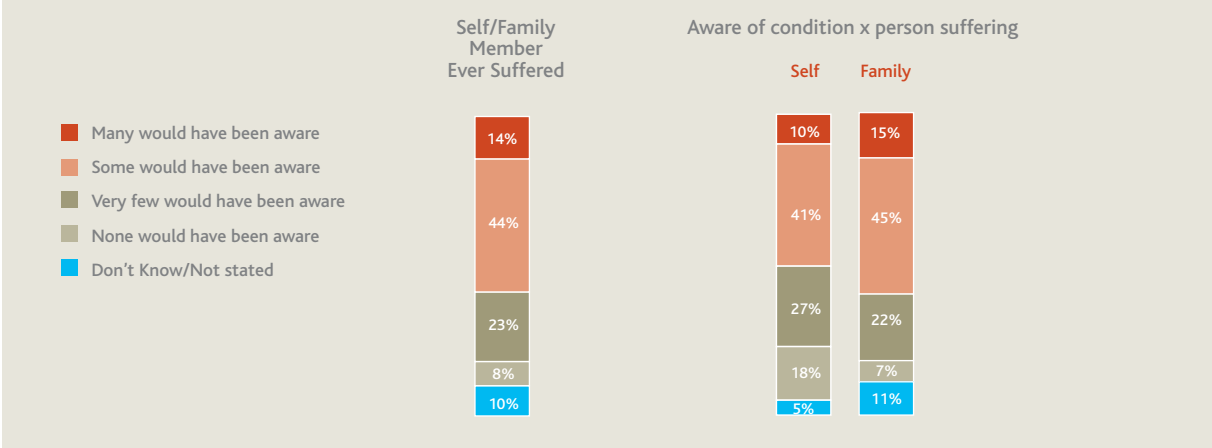
GENERAL AWARENESS OF DEPRESSION IN FAMILY X SEX & AGE



GENERAL AWARENESS OF DEPRESSION IN FAMILY X CLASS & AREA



GENERAL AWARENESS OF DEPRESSION IN FAMILY X SUFFERER



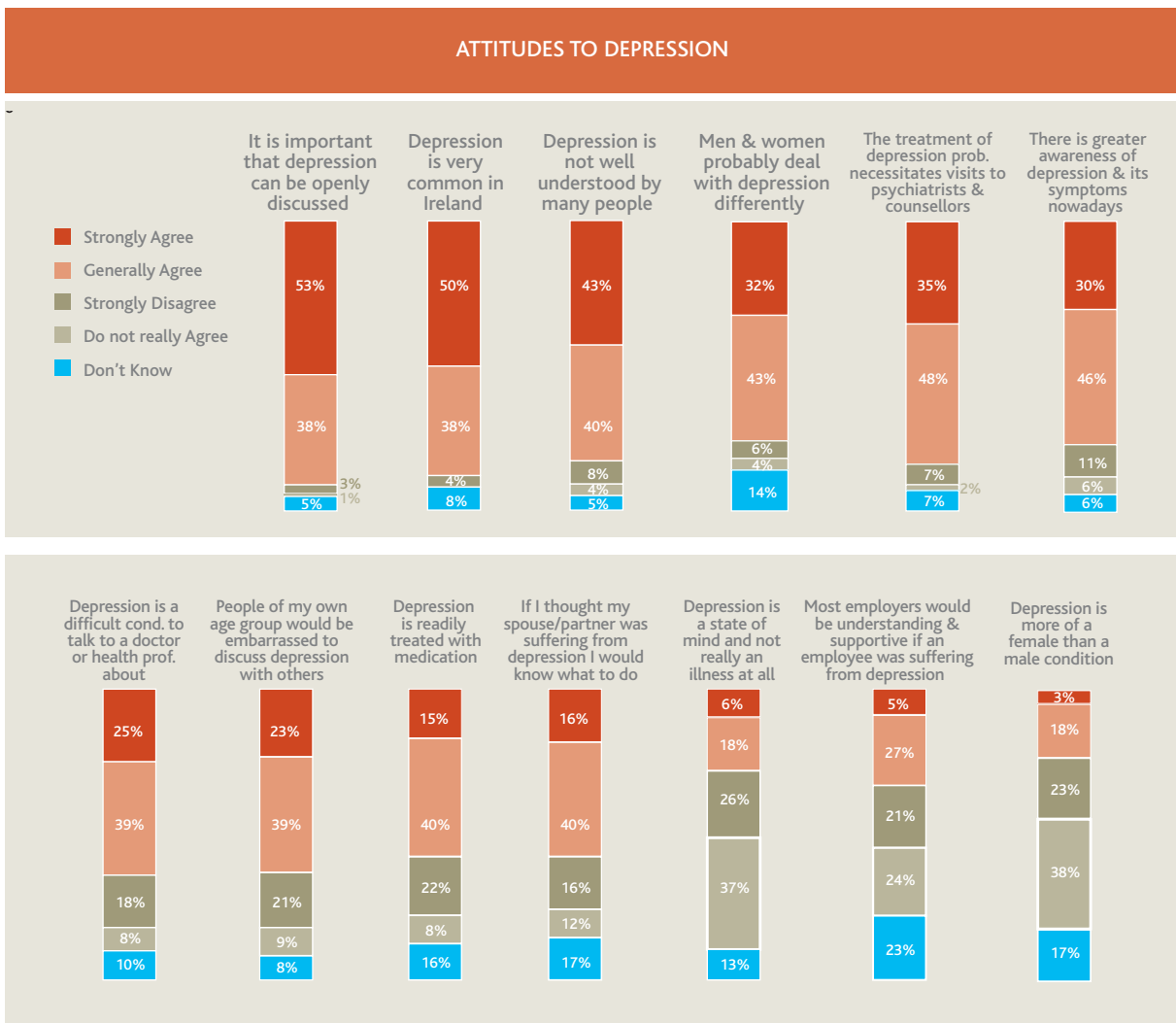
Attitudes to Depression

88% believe that depression is a very common condition in Ireland. Of this 88%, just over half of women (54%) believe depression is very common in Ireland compared to 47% of men.

Interestingly, 75% of those surveyed believe that men and women deal with depression differently. While 83% agree that having depression necessitates visits to a psychiatrist or counsellor, 55% would think depression is readily treated with medication.

Just over 20% of people believed that depression is more of a 'female than male' condition, with 24% believing it is a state of mind and not really an illness at all. It is important to note that 63% of people surveyed recognised that depression is a medical condition and not simply a 'state of mind'.

58% of women surveyed versus 49% of men thought it was important for depression to be openly discussed.



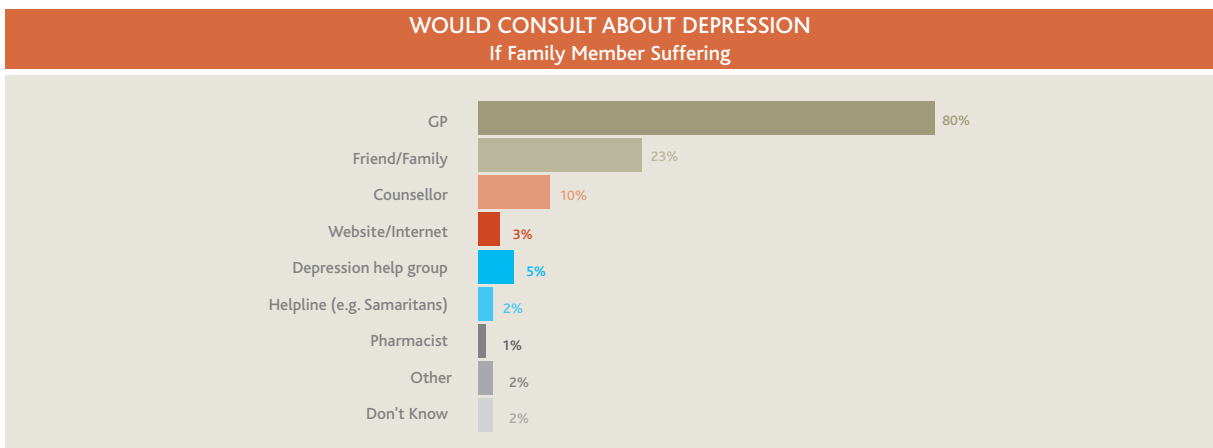
Disruptiveness of Depression

When asked about the disruptiveness of certain medical conditions, Irish people ranked depression highly. In order of perceived disruptiveness, Alzheimer’s Disease scored the highest at 79%, schizophrenia (74%), cancer and Parkinson’s Disease(69%), depression was comparatively high at 64%, followed by heart disease (54%), anxiety disorder (35%), arthritis (33%), diabetes (18%) and asthma (17%). It is interesting that people placed depression alongside serious medical conditions such as Parkinson’s Disease and cancer, when depression can be managed effectively with medication and/or psychotherapy, allowing those with the condition to lead a normal life. Of the people who have experienced depression personally, 81% claimed it was very disruptive.



Depression & Confidentiality

76% of people surveyed who had experienced depression had consulted with a GP about their depression, with 80% of the population saying they would consult with their GP if they or a family member had depression. 19% of people with depression said they would consult with a counsellor and 12% the internet or a website. Of those surveyed who were asked where they would consult for information if a family member had depression, 10% said they would talk to a counsellor and only 3% said they would seek information on the internet or from a website.



Employers and Mental Health

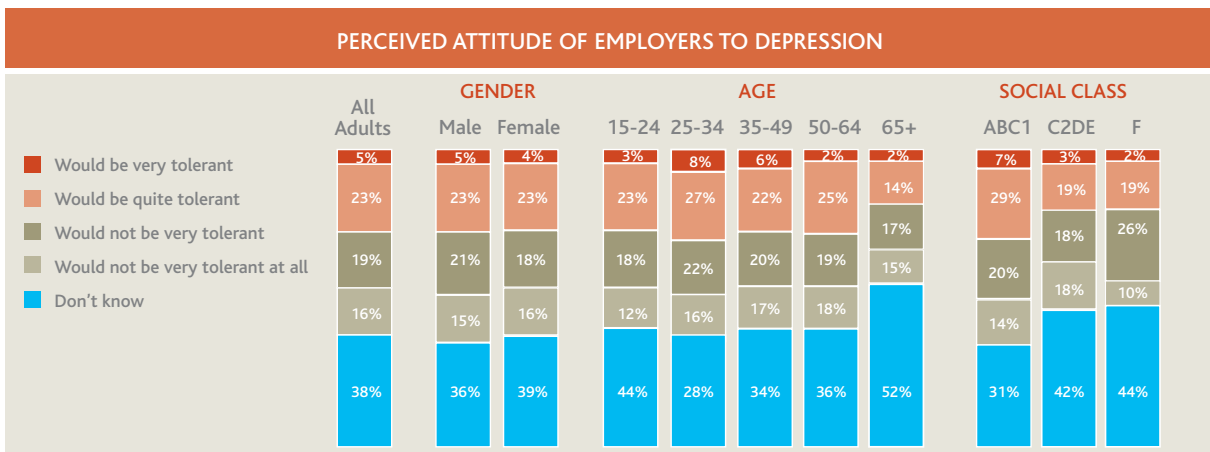
When asked if most employers would be understanding and supportive if an employee was suffering with depression, 5% of people strongly agreed and 27% generally agreed, leaving 68% unsure or disagreeing about employers being understanding or supportive of depression in the workplace.

When asked the same regarding anxiety, there was a similar response with 4% of people strongly agreeing, and 24% generally agreeing that an employer would be understanding/supportive, leaving 72% unsure or disagreeing that an employer would be understanding/supportive of an employee with anxiety disorder.

When asked if employers would be tolerant rather than understanding or supportive, only 28% of men and 27% of women thought their employer would be very or quite tolerant of their depression. This means that 72% of men and 71% of women would disagree or be unsure if their employer would be supportive if they had depression.

It is interesting to note that 36% of full time employees believe employers would be very or quite tolerant of depression in the workplace compared with 33% of part time workers, 26% of the self-employed, 23% of students, 19% of people working in the home, 16% of those retired and 15% of the unemployed.

Those aged 25-34 had the greatest faith in employers with 35% believing their employer would be very or quite tolerant followed by 28% of 34-49, 27% of 50-64, 26% of 15-24 and 16% of those 65 years old and over. However, there still remains a high level of distrust among all, that employers would be tolerant of employees experiencing a period of depression.



Anxiety

90% of people believed that having anxiety disorder would be very or somewhat disruptive to their life. 37% of women versus 33% of men thought it would be very disruptive as well as 41% of people aged 35-49, 38% of people aged 50-64, 35% of those aged 65 and over, 30% of those under 25 and finally 29% of those aged 25-34.

When asked if anxiety disorder was a condition separate to depression 26% thought anxiety disorder is separate, 39% thought it was an element of depression and 35% were unsure.

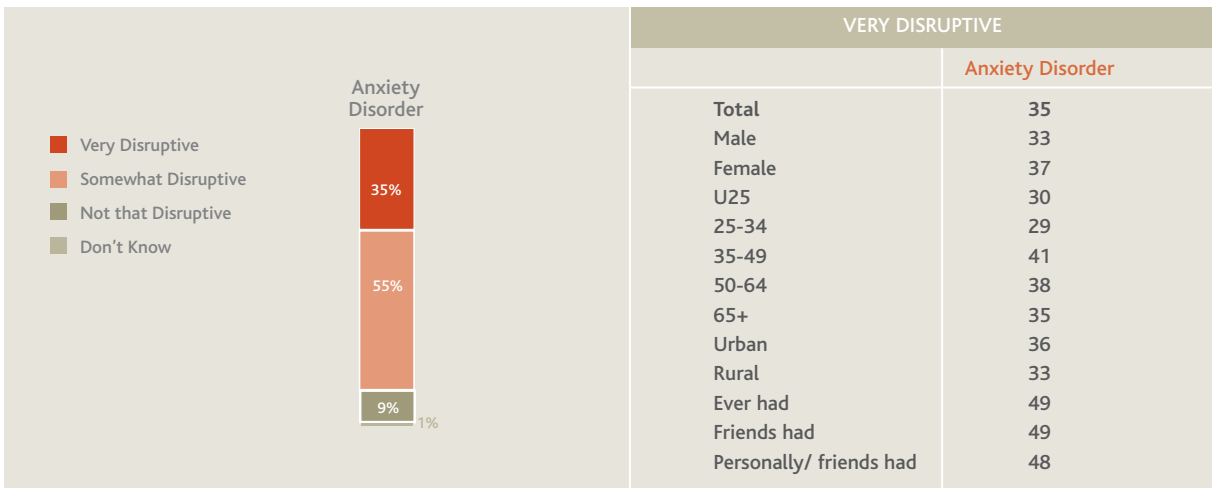
86% of Irish people believe it is important for anxiety to be openly discussed. A further 52% believe that anxiety is a very common condition in Ireland and 49% think there is greater awareness of anxiety and its symptoms nowadays, although 36% feel that it is not really that well understood by people.

Interestingly, 65% of those surveyed believe that men and women deal with anxiety differently. While 69% agree that having anxiety necessitates visits to a psychiatrist or counsellor, only 41% would think anxiety is readily treated with medication.

50% would find anxiety a difficult subject to discuss with a doctor or health professional with a further 56% claiming it would be embarrassing to talk to a friend about.

21% of people believed that anxiety was more of a 'female than male' condition, with 29% believing it was a state of mind and not really an illness at all. 43% of women surveyed versus 36% of men thought it was important for anxiety to be openly discussed.

PERCEIVED DISRUPTIVENESS OF ANXIETY DISORDER



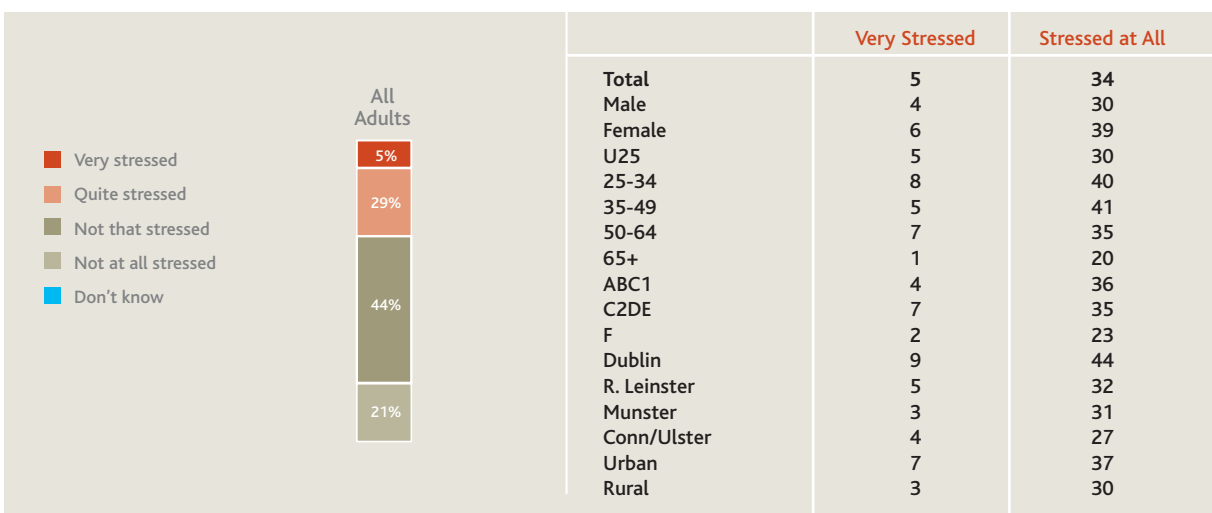
Stress

34% of Irish people claim to experience stress when asked to consider all aspects of life. 39% of women and 30% of men experience stress with the greatest levels appearing in Dublin (44%) in comparison to the rest of Leinster (32%), Munster (31%) and Connacht & Ulster (27%). More specifically 37% of people living in urban areas versus 30% in rural areas claim to experience stress.

36% of higher socio-economic groups, 35% of lower socio-economic groups and 23% of farmers say they experience stress. In terms of age profile, people between 25-34 (40%) and 35-49 (41%) experience the highest level of stress when compared to other age groups.

People who experience depression or anxiety are also more likely to have higher levels of stress. 77% of people with depression and 74% of people with anxiety disorder claim to experience stress.

PERSONAL STRESS LEVEL



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