



Why is work an important social determinant of health?

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UCLA Occupational Health Program

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Institute for Work & Health

VISION

Healthy, safe and inclusive work through excellent research

MISSION

To conduct and mobilize research that supports policy-makers, employers and workers in creating healthy, safe and inclusive work environments

VALUES

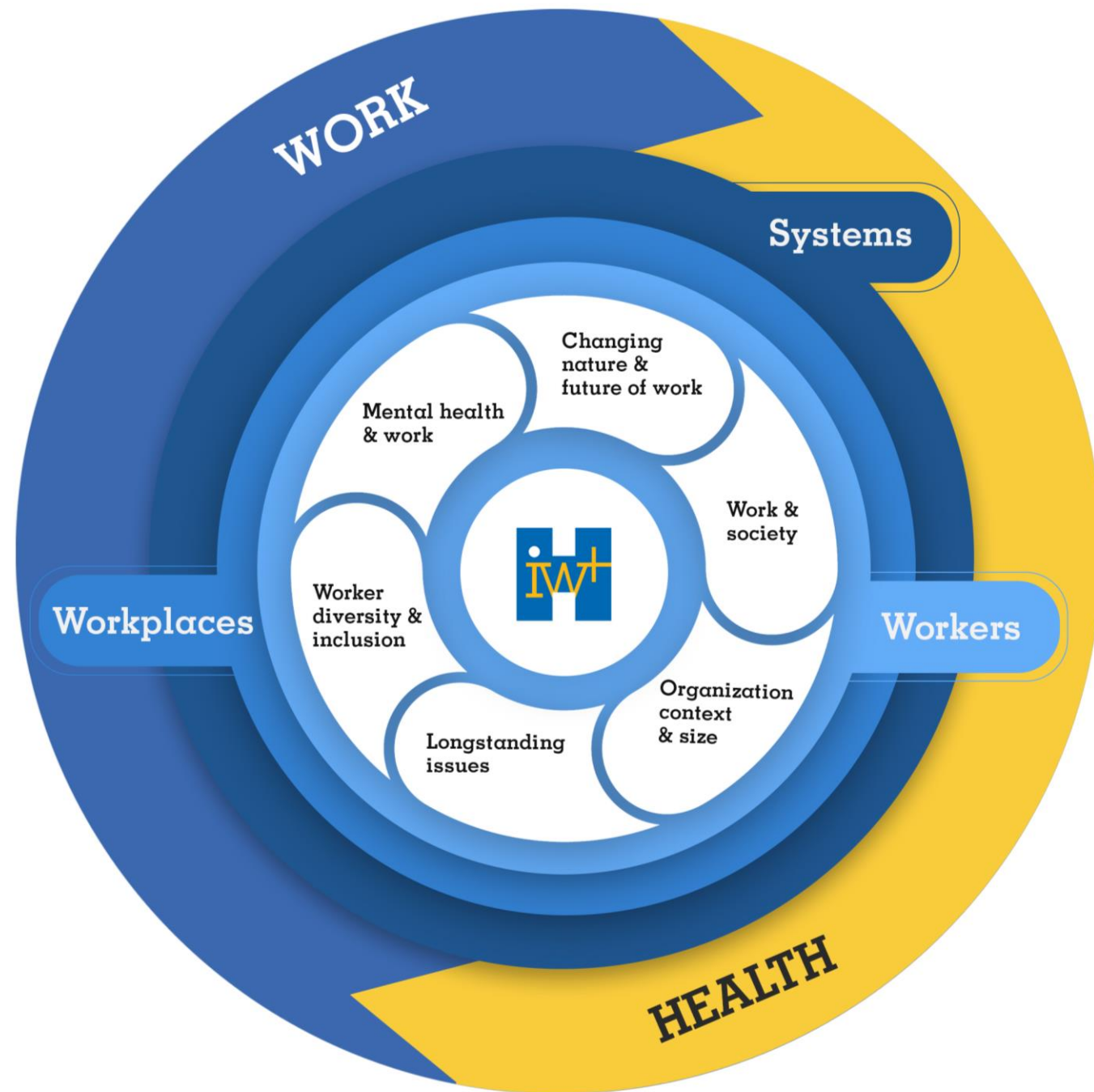
Excellence
Integrity
Innovation

Respect
Collaboration
Equity
Accountability

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS: 2023 – 2027

- 1 Advance the science of work and health
- 2 Expand the reach and impact of IWH research
- 3 Strengthen the work and health ecosystem
- 4 Ensure IWH is a safe and healthy workplace

**IWH's RESEARCH
FOCUS:
2023-2027**



Overview

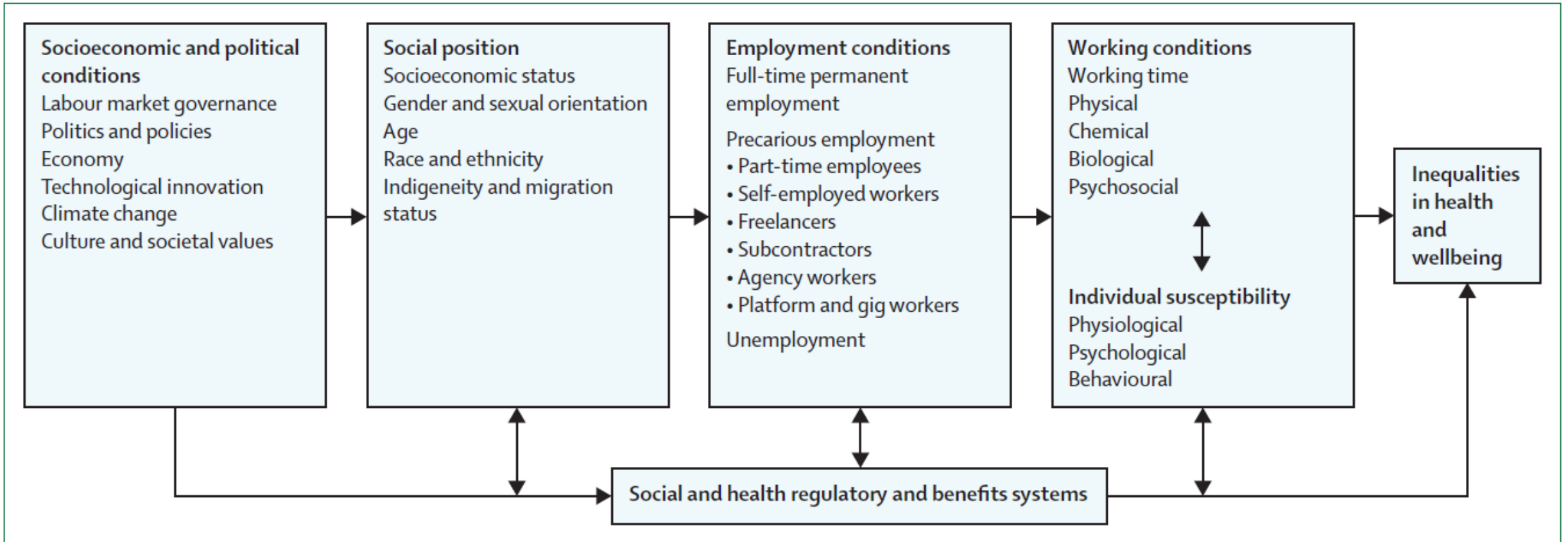
Why is work an important social determinant of health?

How does work and the labour market contribute to health inequities?

How can we better understand the negative and positive aspects of work?

Six emerging challenges for the future of work

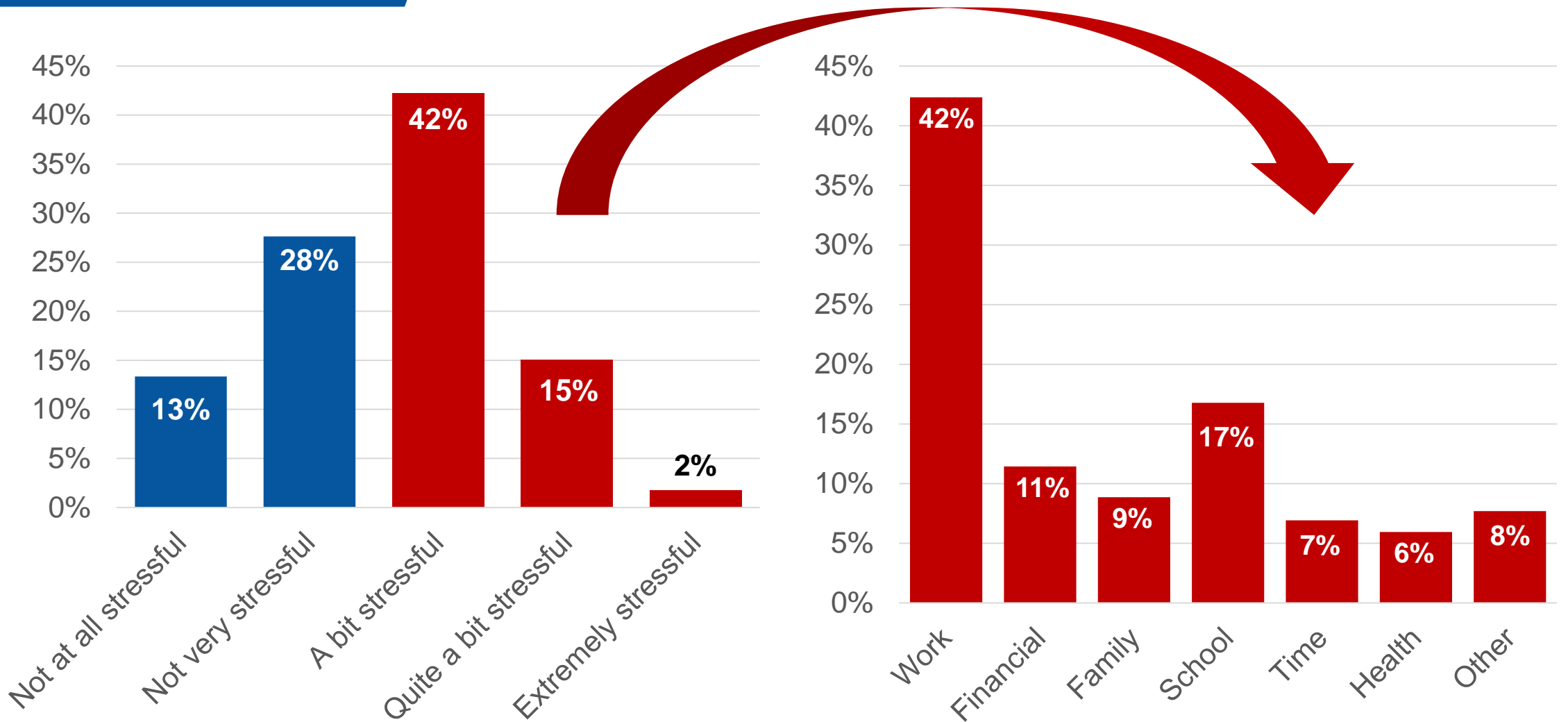
Conceptual framework of social determinants influencing work, health, and wellbeing



Key Message One

Among the working aged population, work is important

Level of stress and main source of stress among Canadians 20 to 64 years of age



Key Message Two

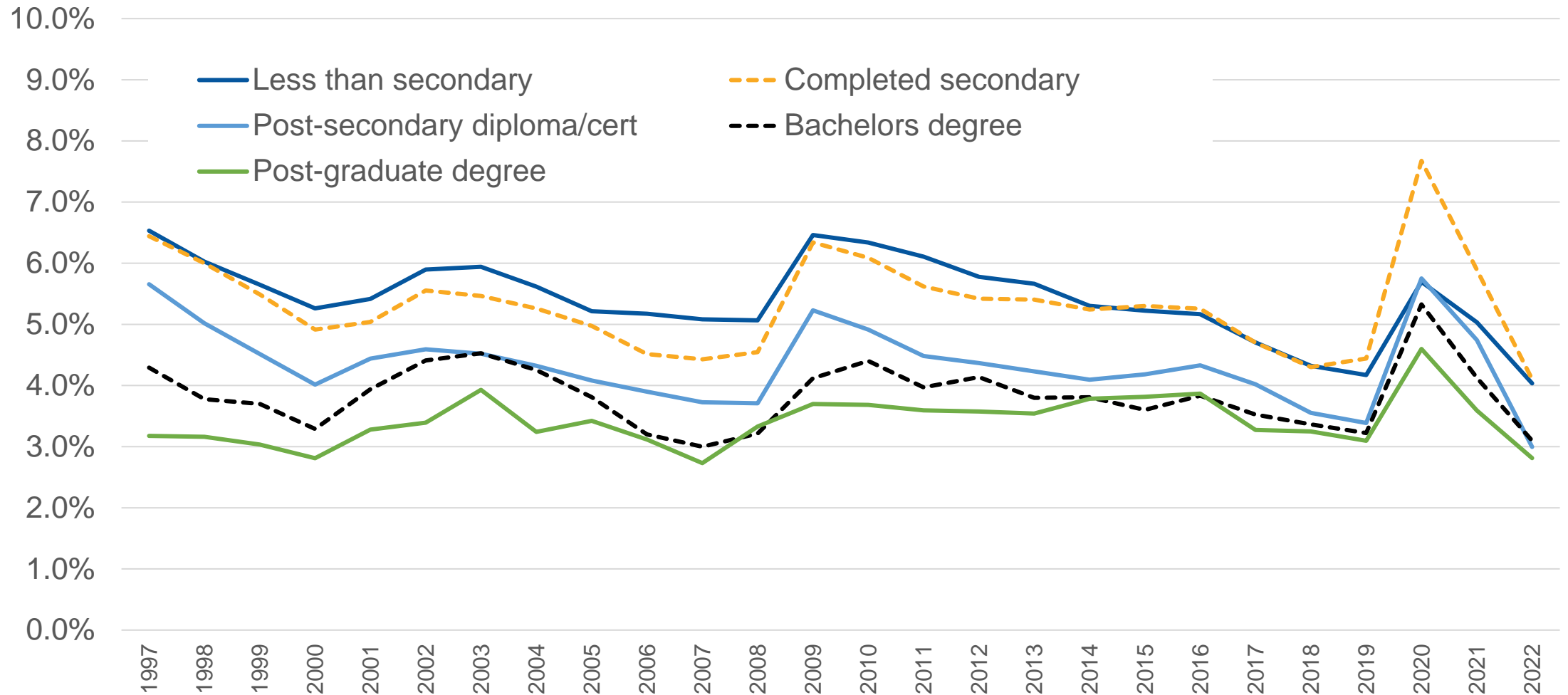
Labour market experiences (the availability and nature of work) can reinforce and exacerbate inequalities in health at the population level

A framework for considering labour market experiences

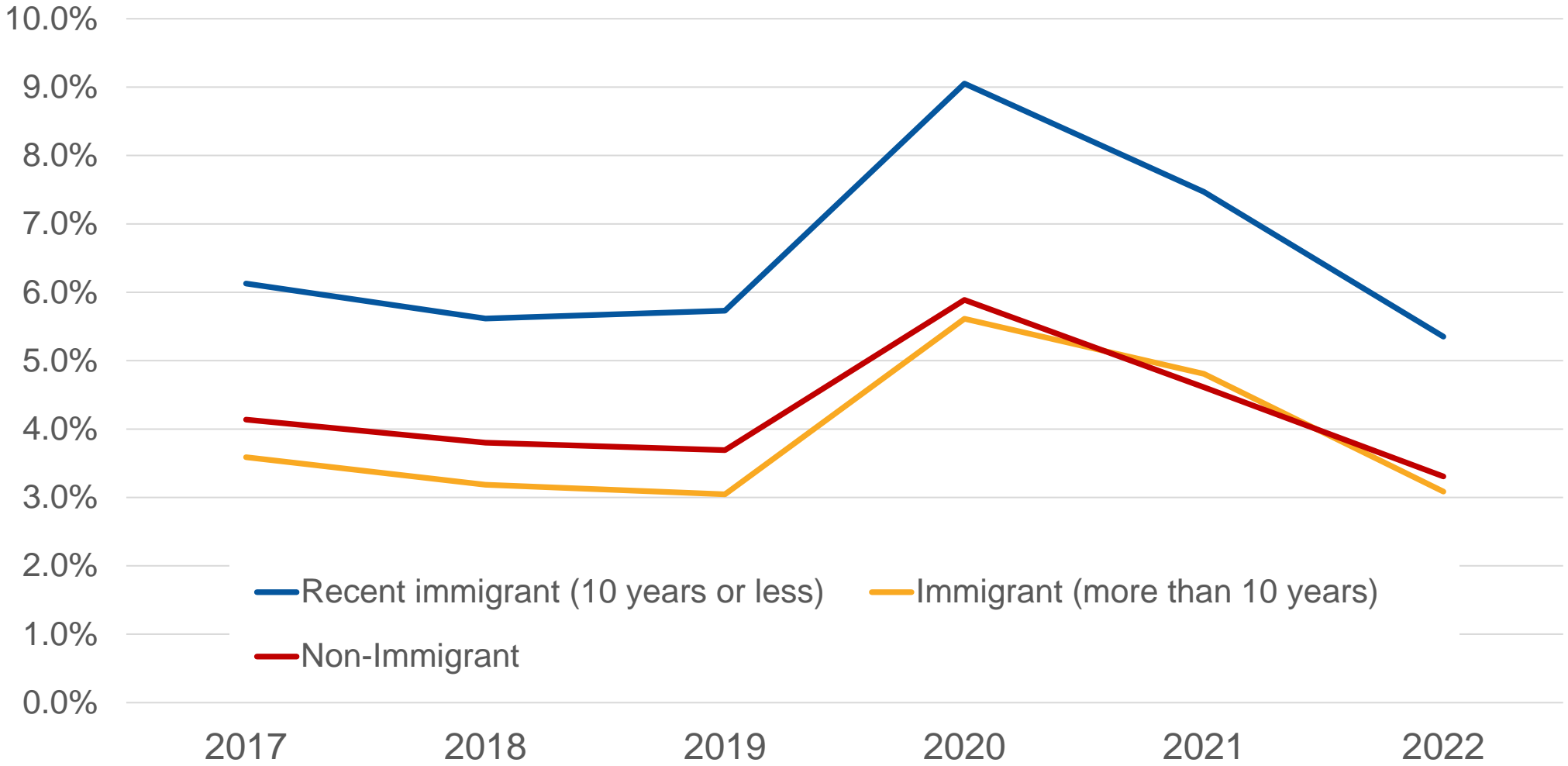
Labour market experiences can be related to:

- The availability of work (e.g. unemployment, underemployment)
- The nature of work (e.g. work exposures)

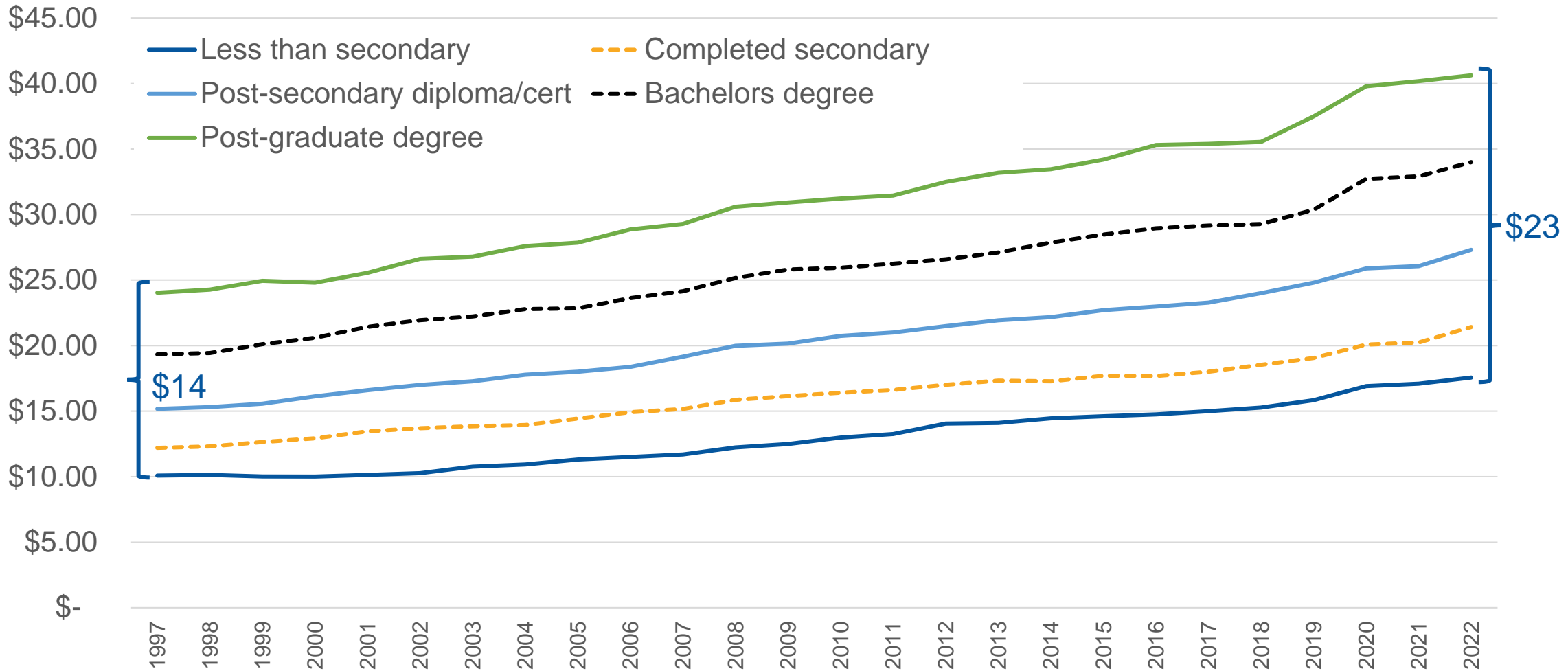
Percent of unemployment by education level. 1997 to 2021



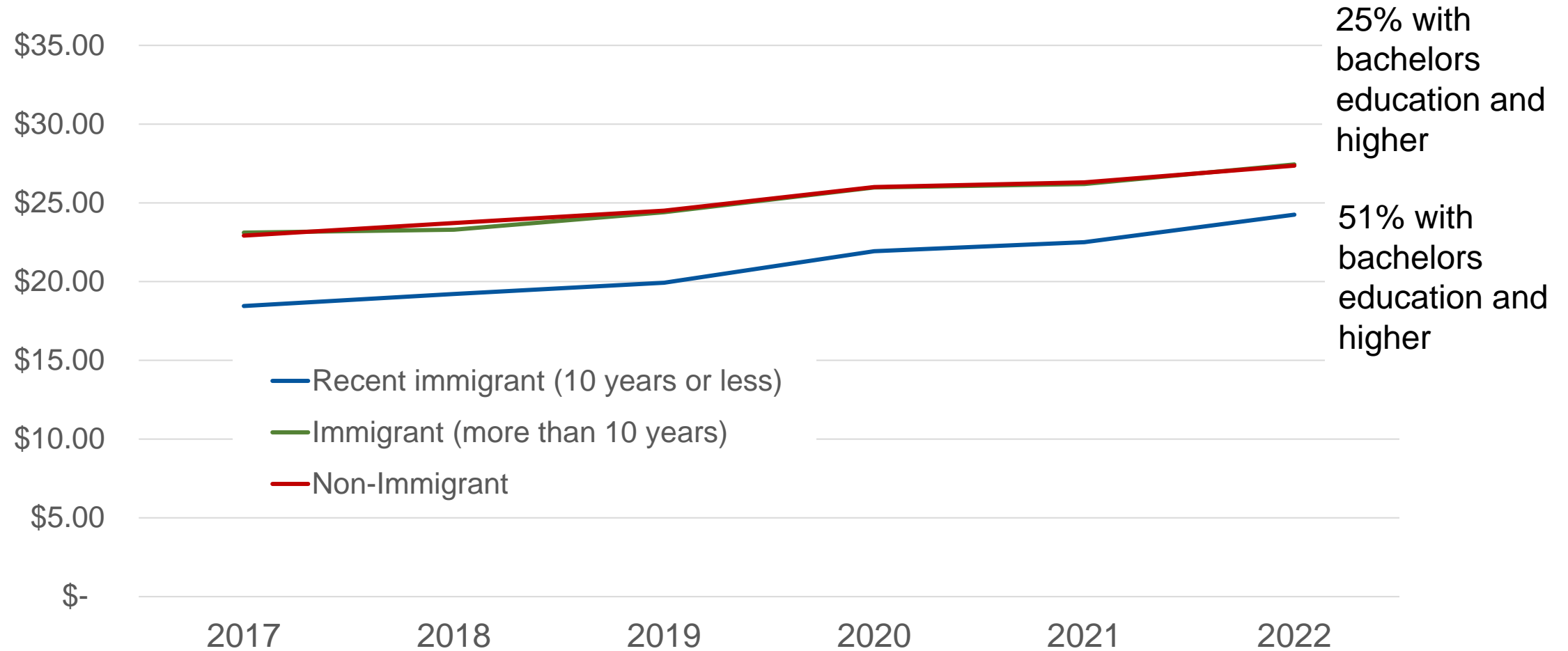
Percent of unemployment by immigrant status. 2017 to 2021



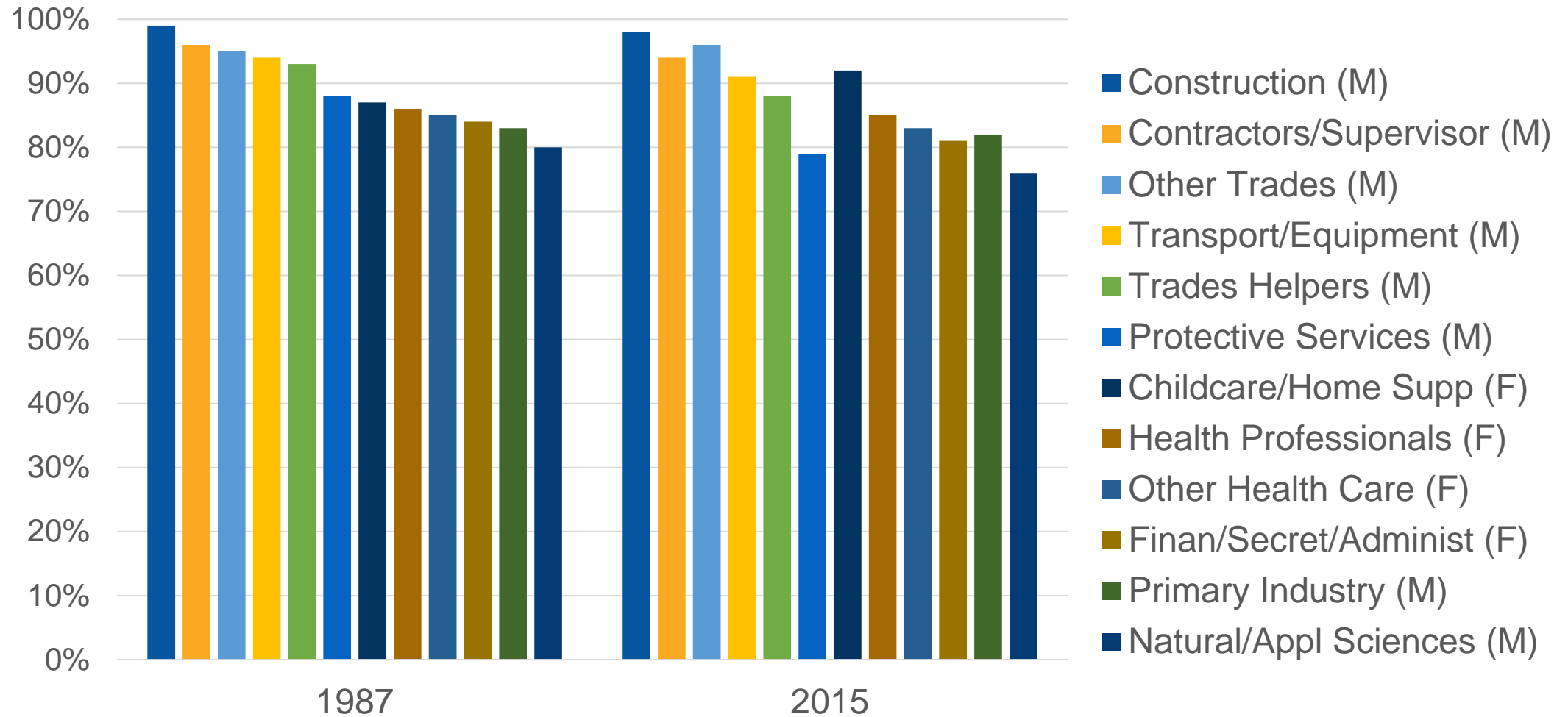
Median hourly wage by education level. 1997 to 2021



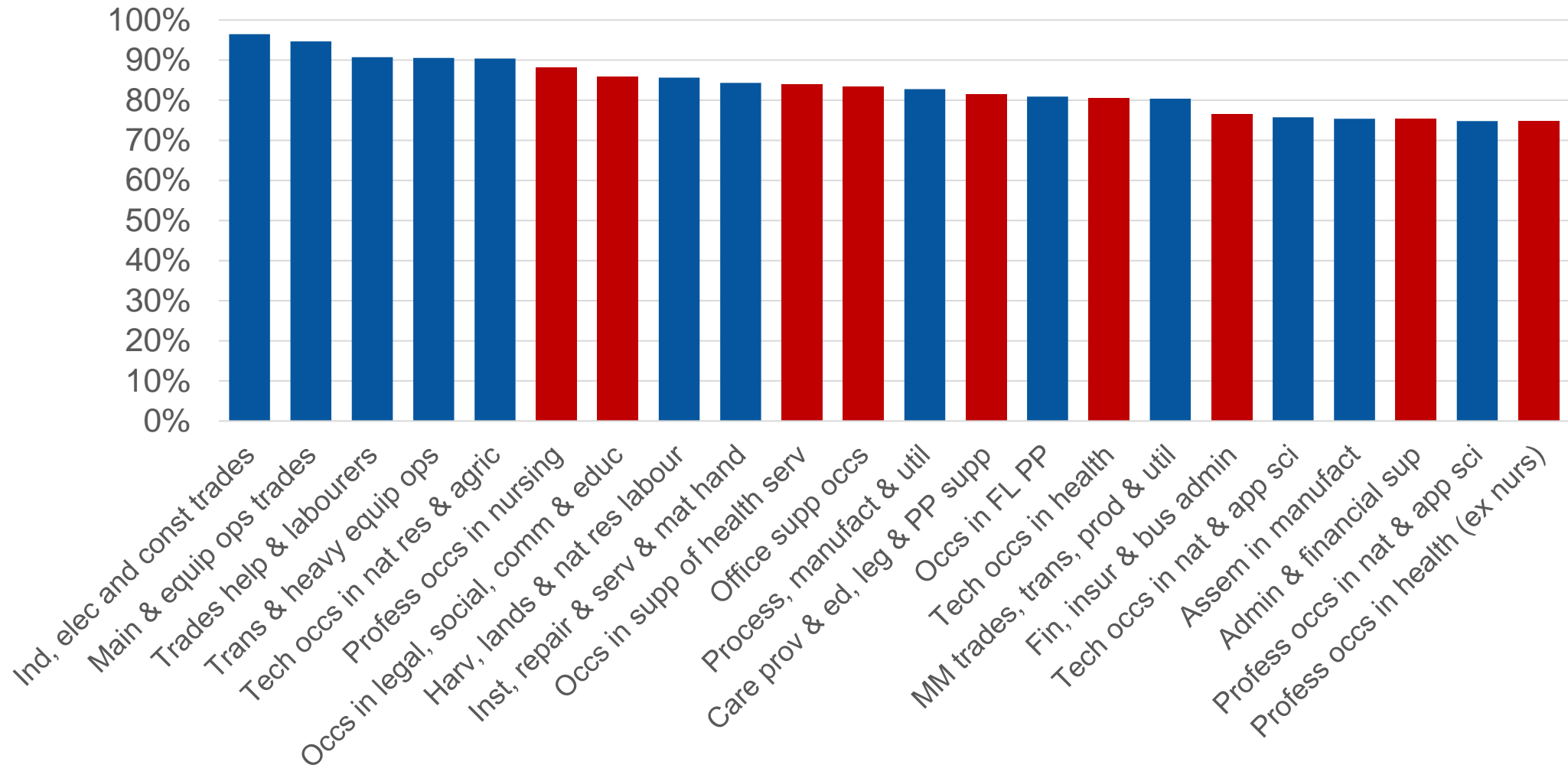
Median hourly wage by immigrant status. 2017 to 2021



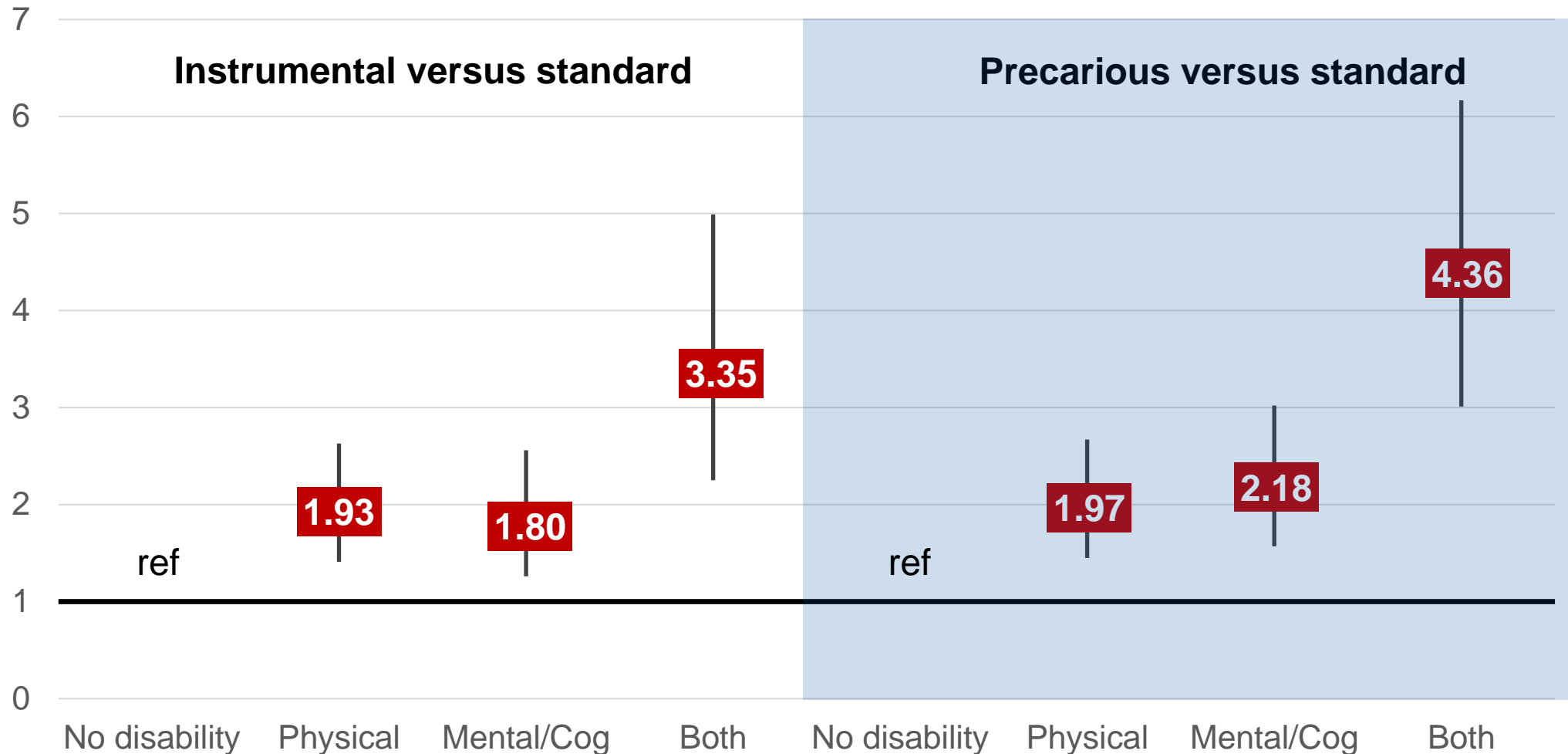
The 12 most sex/gender segregated occupations in Canada. 1987 to 2015



Gendered occupations in Canada (75% or more male/female). 2022



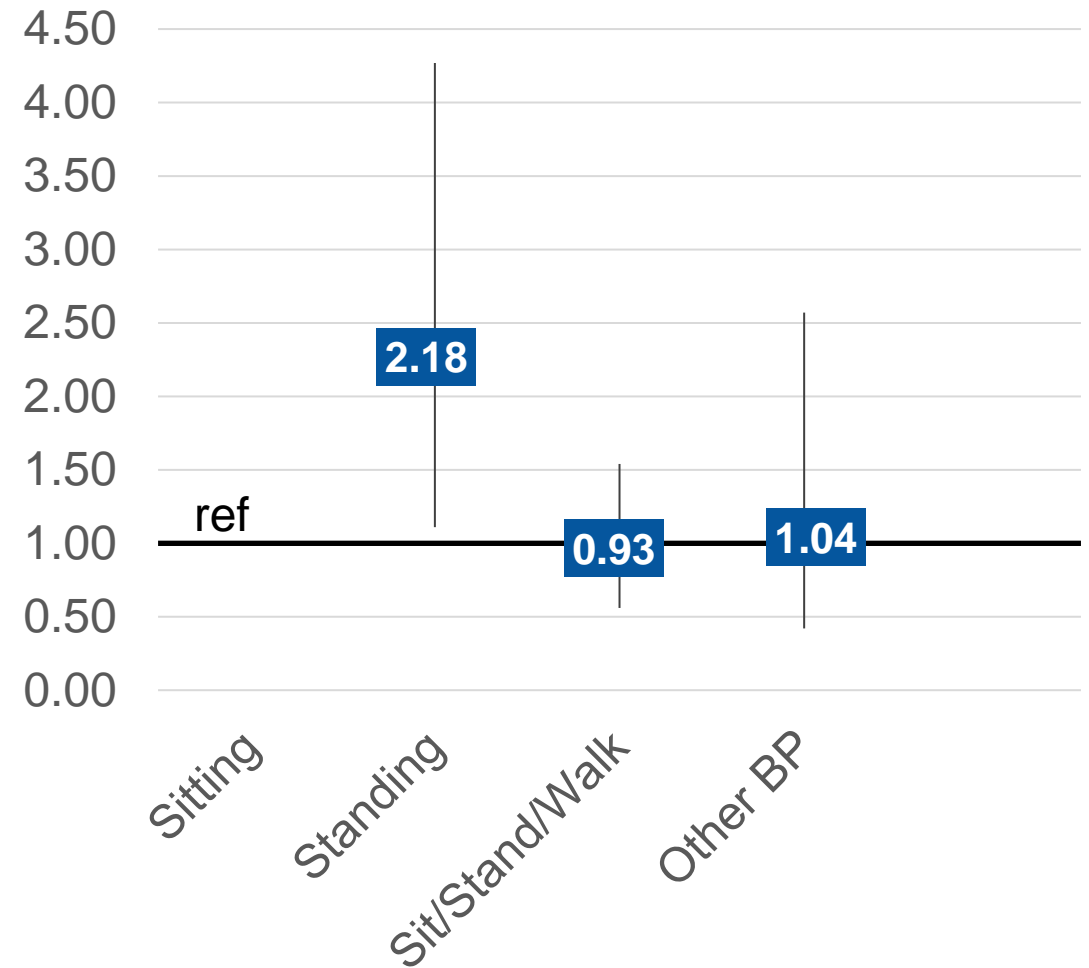
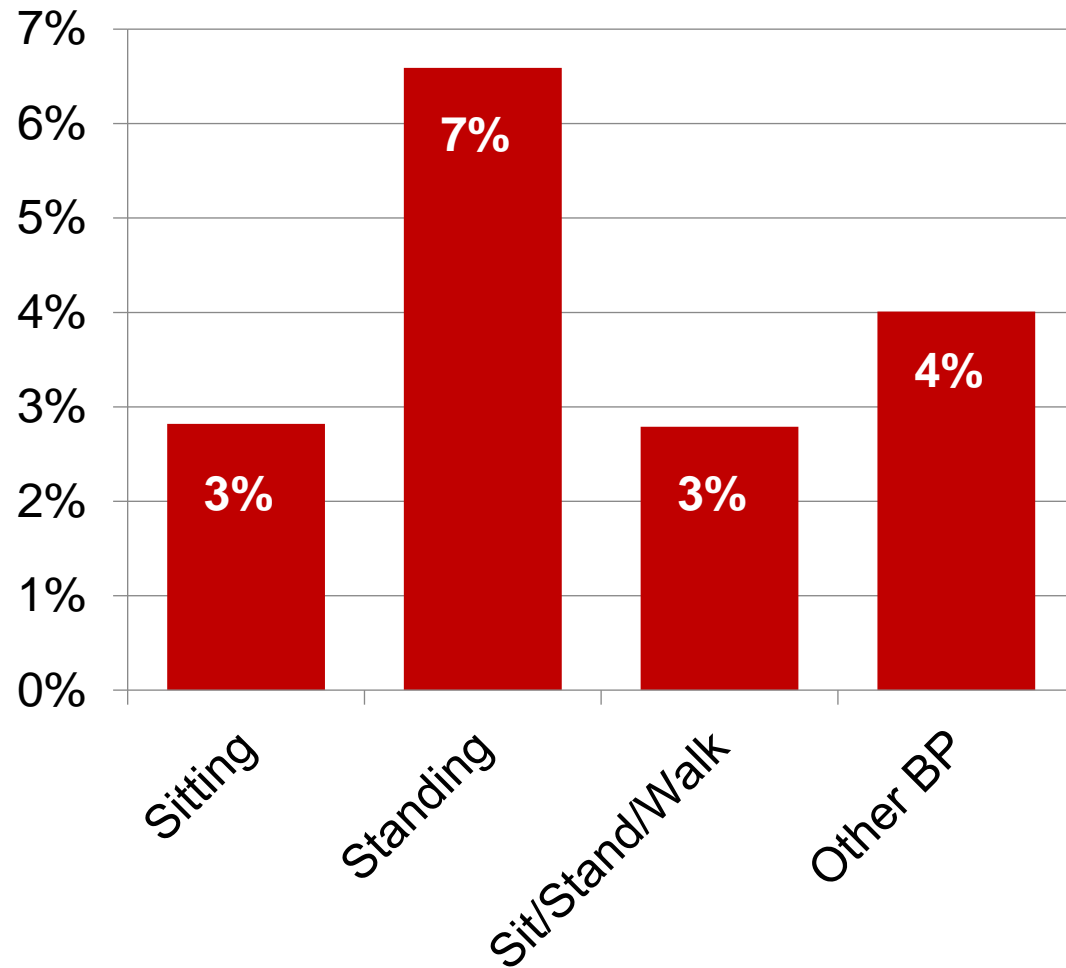
Adjusted prevalence ratio for disability type and employment quality. Canada, 2020



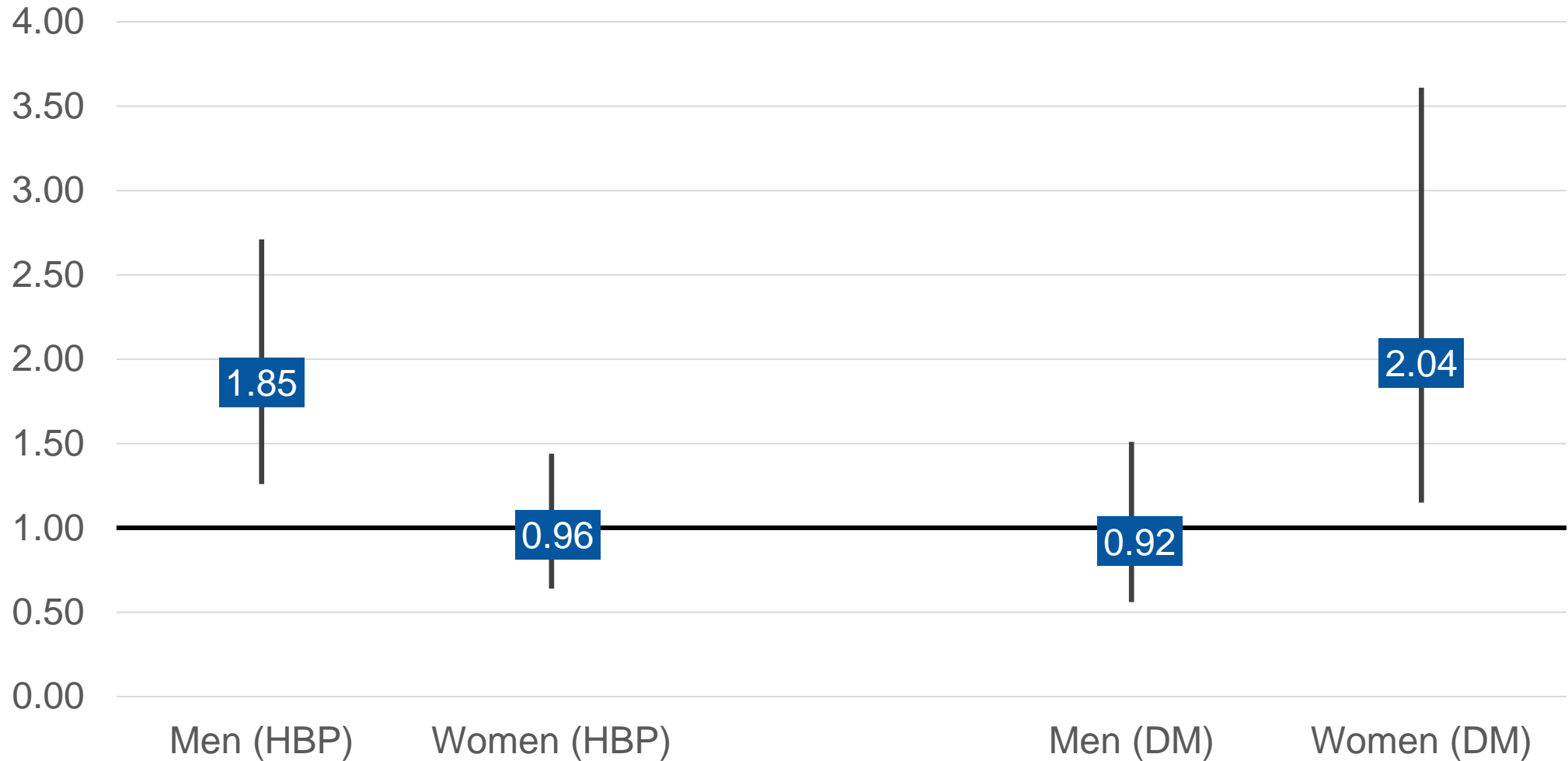
Key Message Three

The nature of work and health isn't just about work work-related injuries and illnesses – although work-related injuries and illnesses still contribute large costs to workers, their families and their communities.

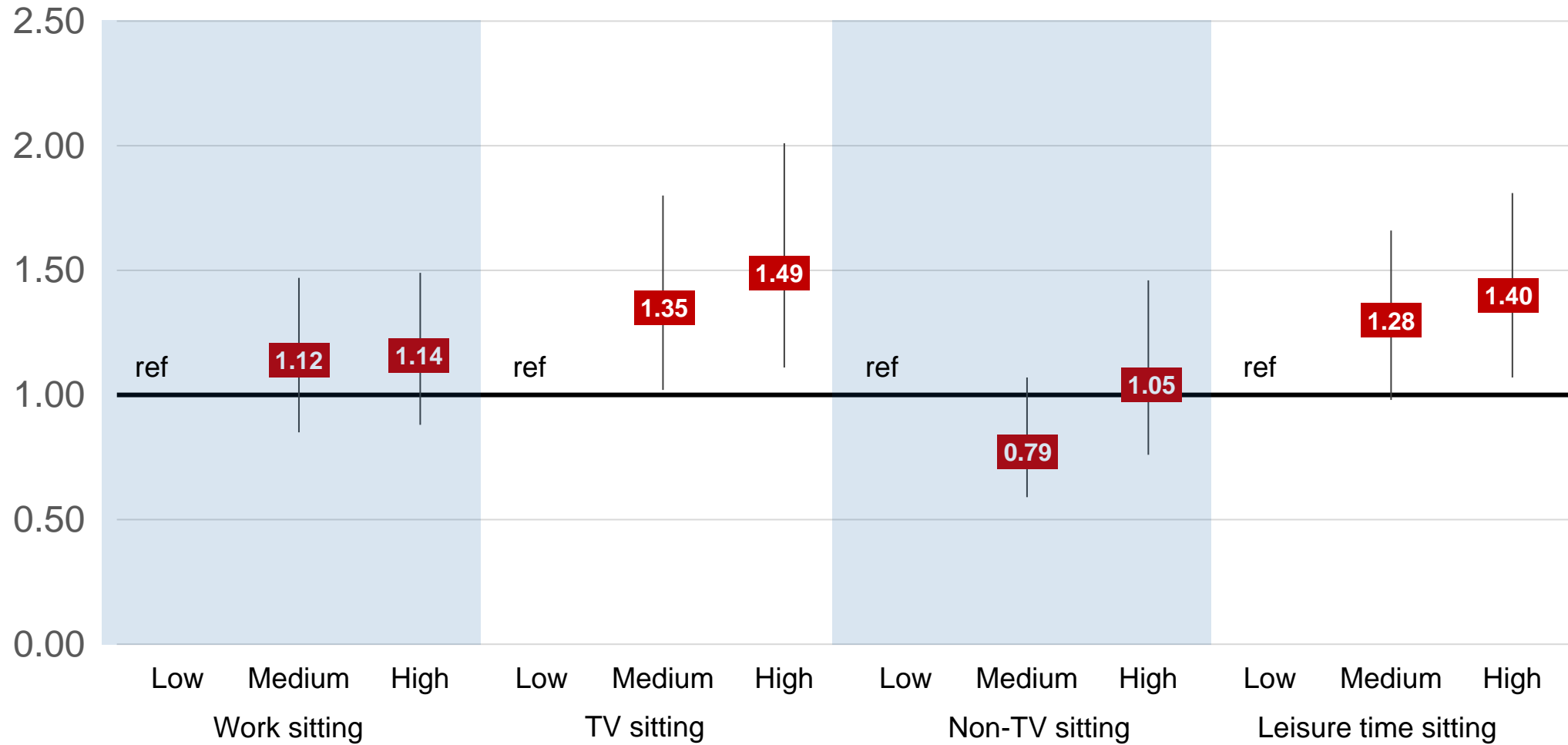
Incidence (left) and adjusted hazard ratio (right) of heart disease by sitting/standing at work. Ontario. 2003-2015



Adjusted HR for low job control and incident hypertension (left) and diabetes (right). Ontario



Relationship between different types of sitting and risk of diabetes (13 year follow-up) (N = 4,811)



Effect of high compared to low levels of occupational physical activity on all cause mortality (based on 17 studies with 193,696 participants)



Key Message Four

Understanding the risk of poor health from work requires focusing on more than individuals and individual hazards

Job tenure and work injury

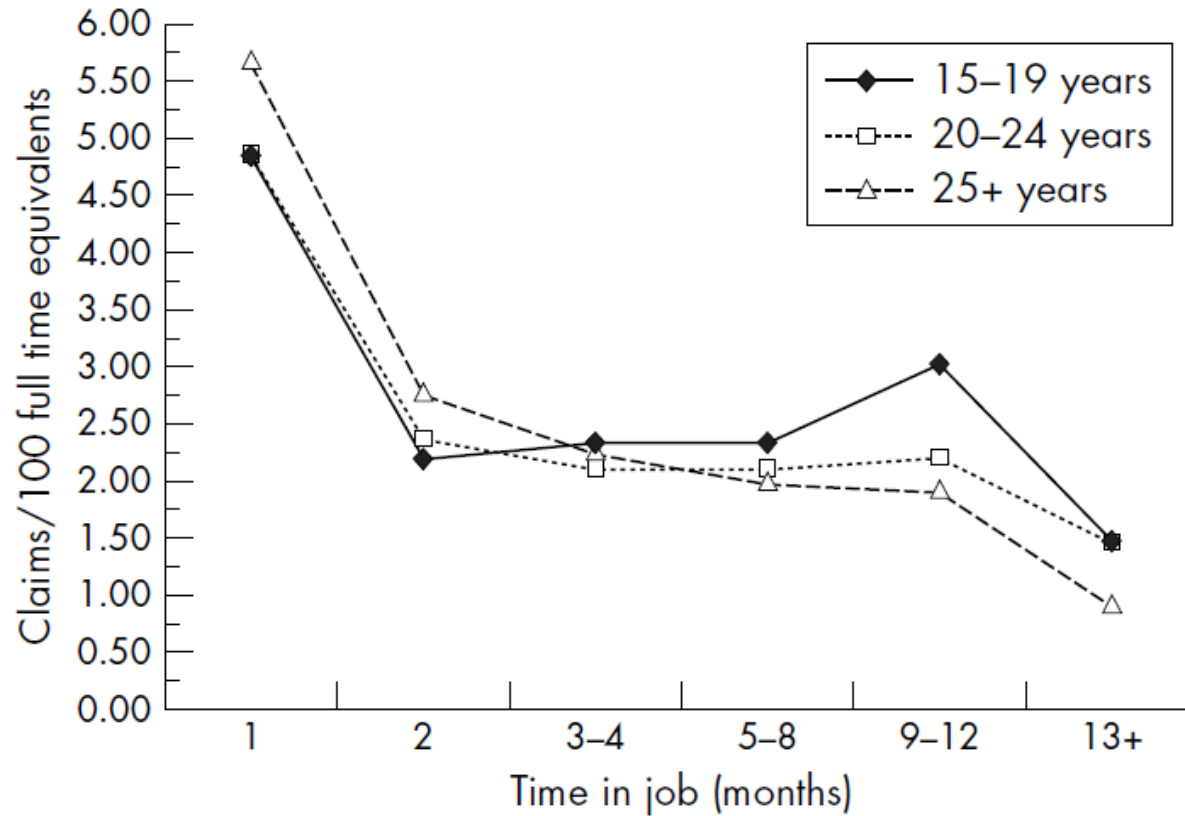


Figure 1 First-time claim rates per 100 full time equivalents by age and job tenure adjusting for occupation, industry, and sex.

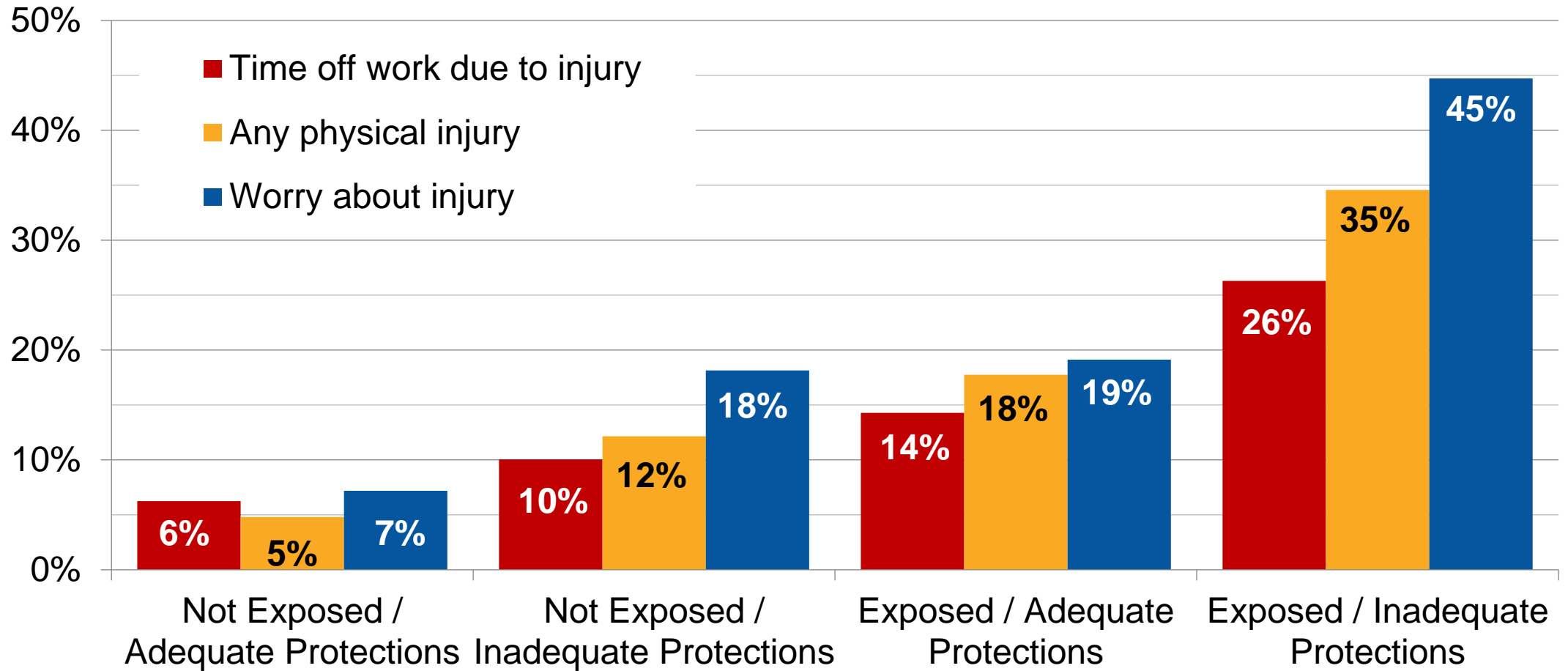
Breslin and Smith, 2006

Understanding work contexts that increase risk of injury or illness (OHS vulnerability)

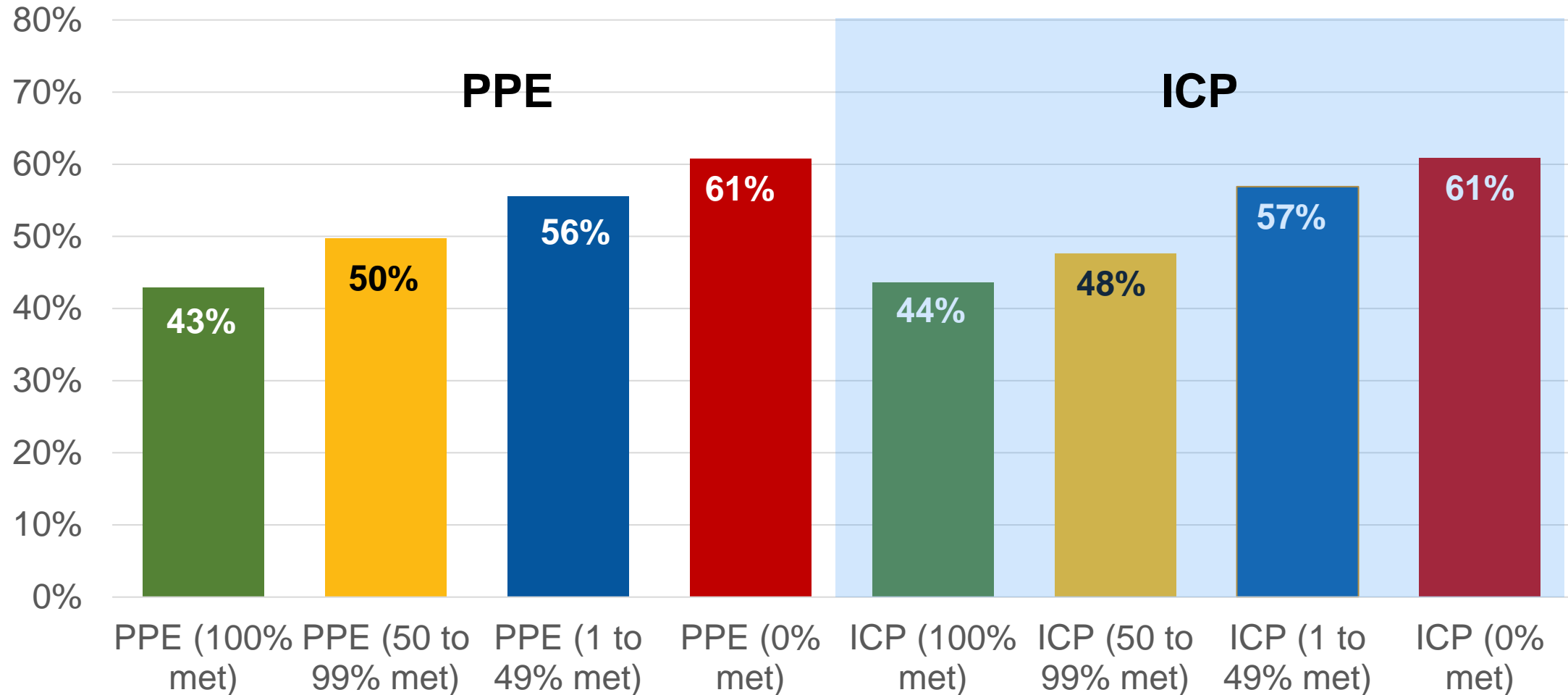
Workers are vulnerable when they are exposed to hazardous environments without adequate protections

		Protections	
		Adequate	Inadequate
Hazards	No	Least Vulnerable	Somewhat Vulnerable
	Yes	Somewhat Vulnerable	Most Vulnerable

Relationship between OHS vulnerability and work injury

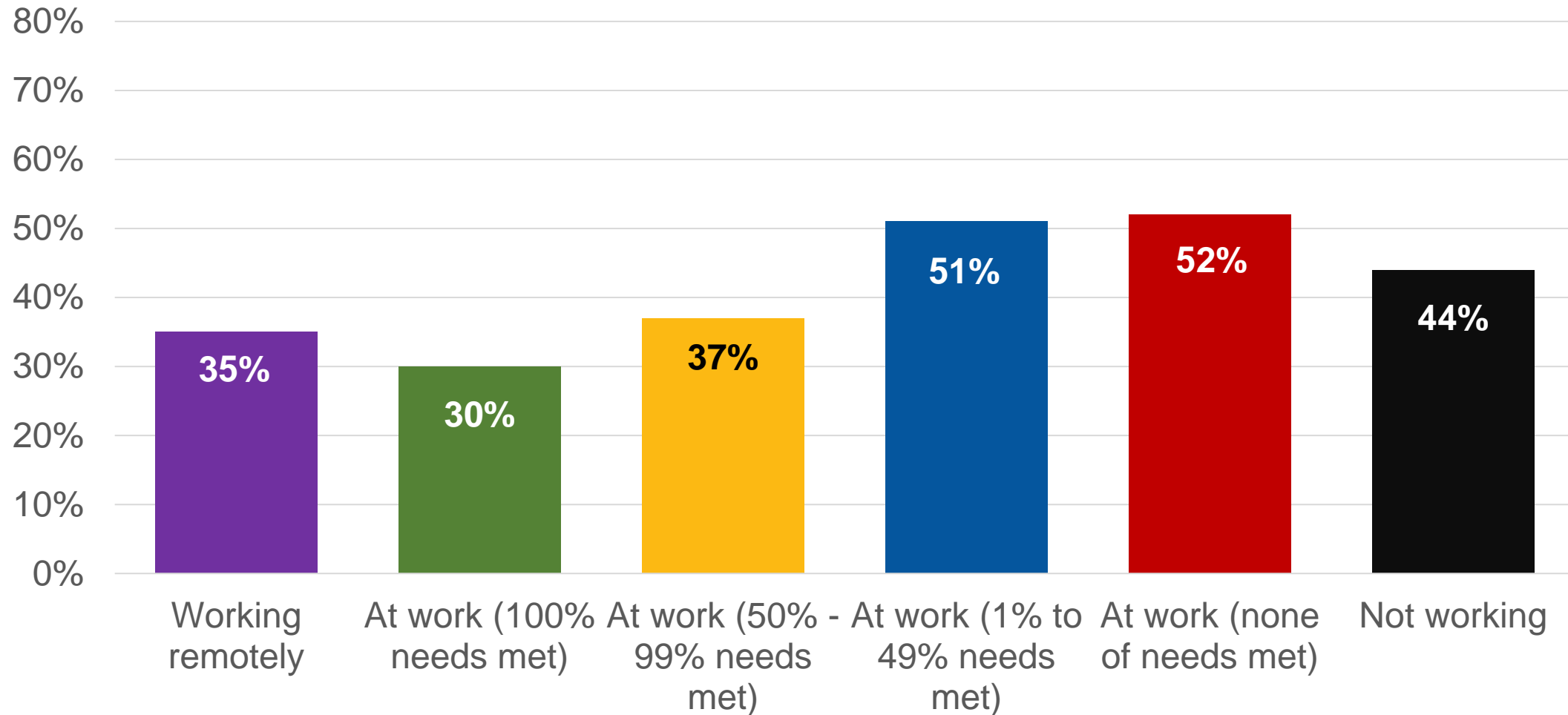


Adjusted prevalence of anxiety symptoms by PPE and ICP adequacy (N = 5,988 healthcare workers)

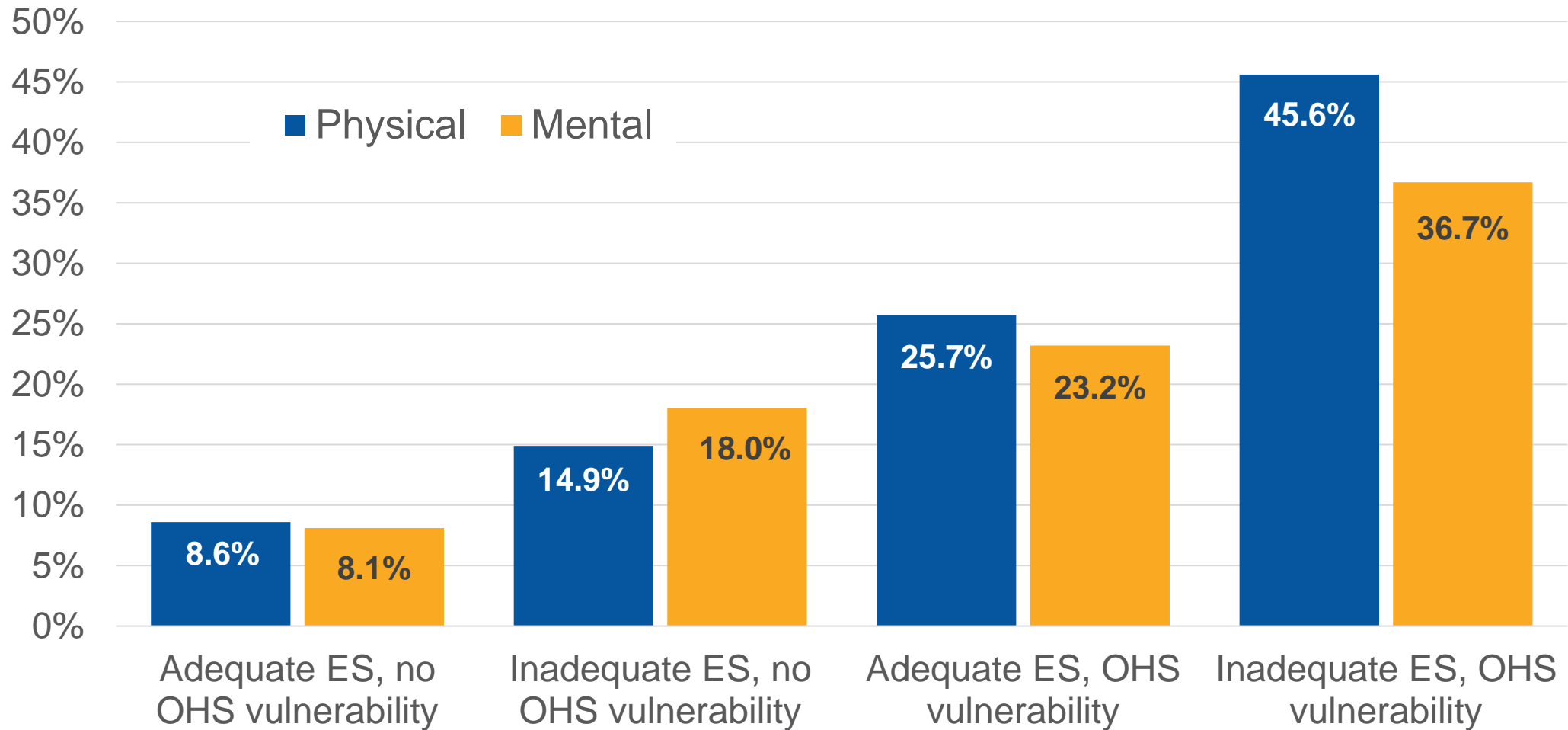


PPE = Personal protective equipment; ICP = infection control procedures

Adjusted prevalence of anxiety symptoms by work status and ICP adequacy (N = 3,305 non-healthcare workers)



OHS vulnerability, inadequate employment standards (ES) protections and prevalence of physical and mental work injury



Key Message Five

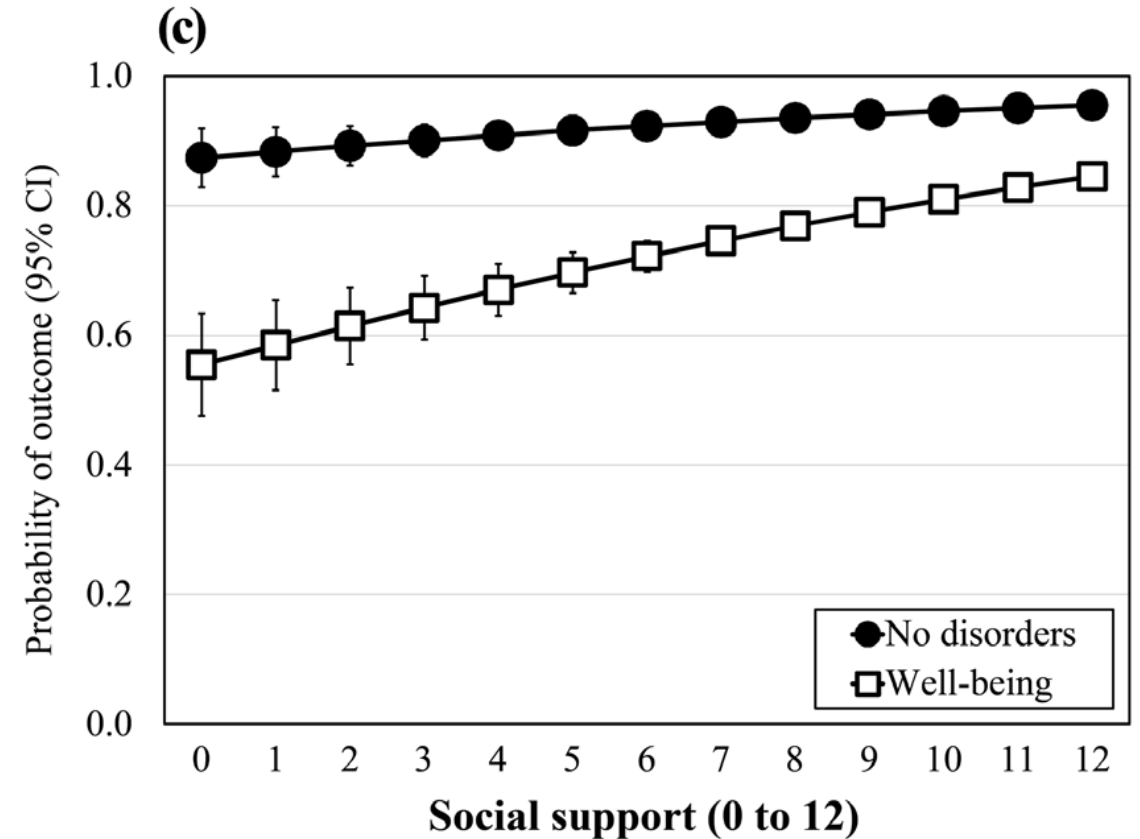
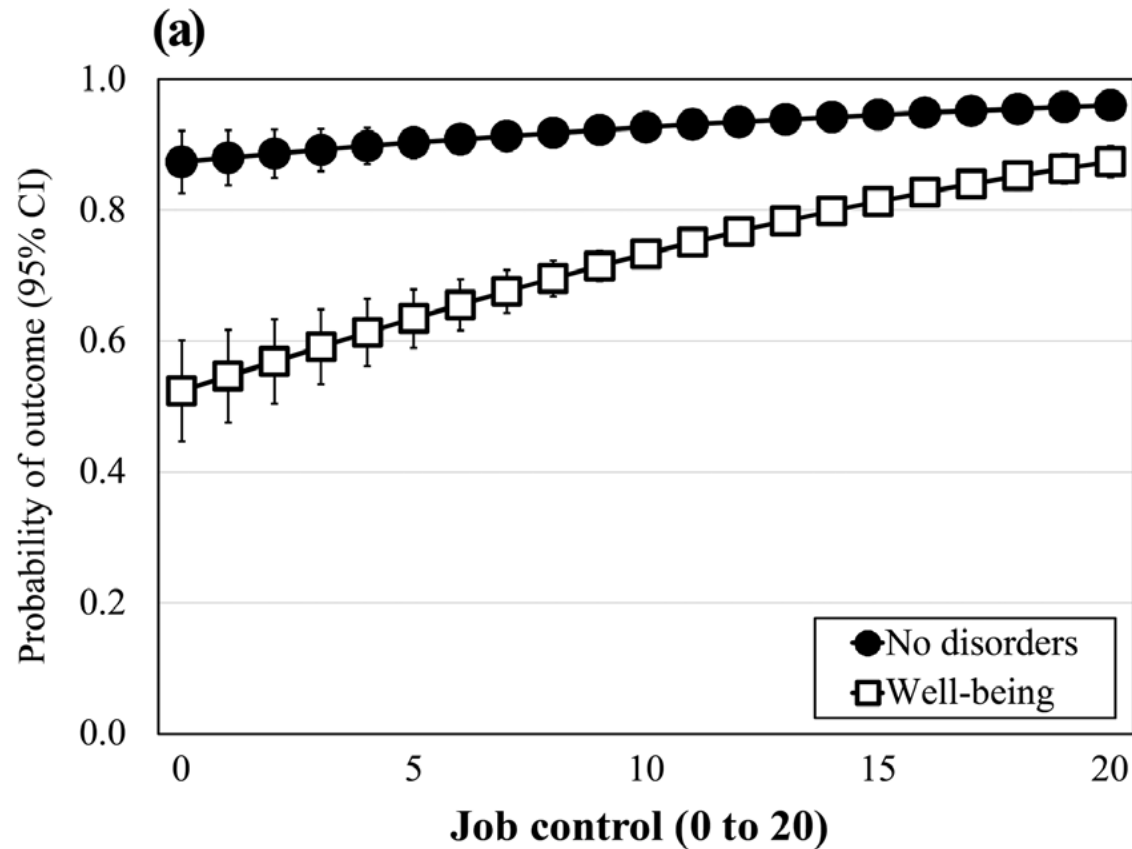
Understanding how work relates to health also requires focusing on more than just hazards, but also the positive aspects of work

An integrated approach to (mental) health

An integrated approach
to workplace mental health

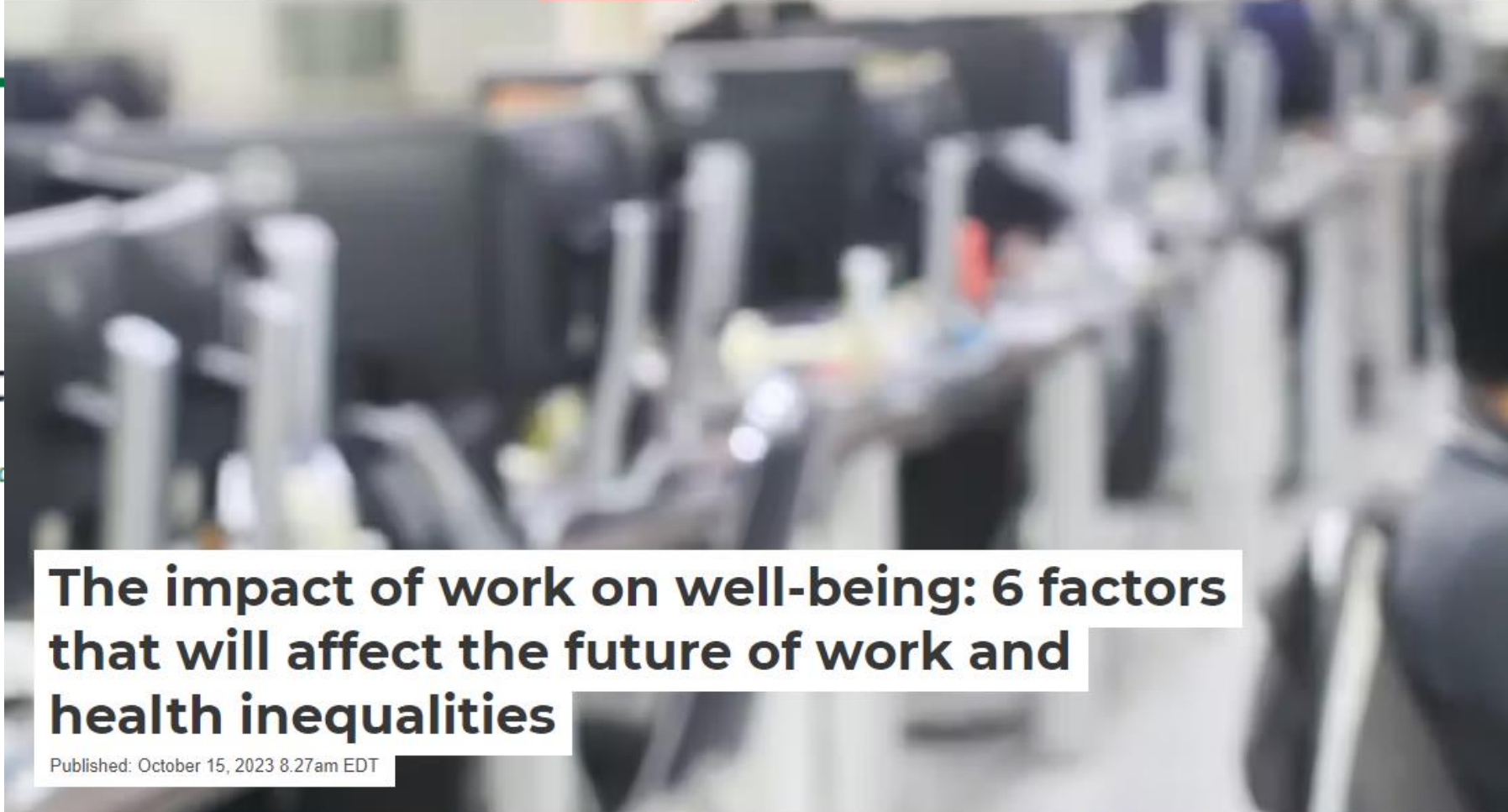


Relationship between job control and social support with risk of mental disorder symptoms and mental well being



Six emerging challenges for the future of work

1. The influence of technology
2. Intersectionality
3. Immigration
4. Precarious employment
5. Long and irregular hours
6. Climate change and work



Work
Work
count

John Frank, Co

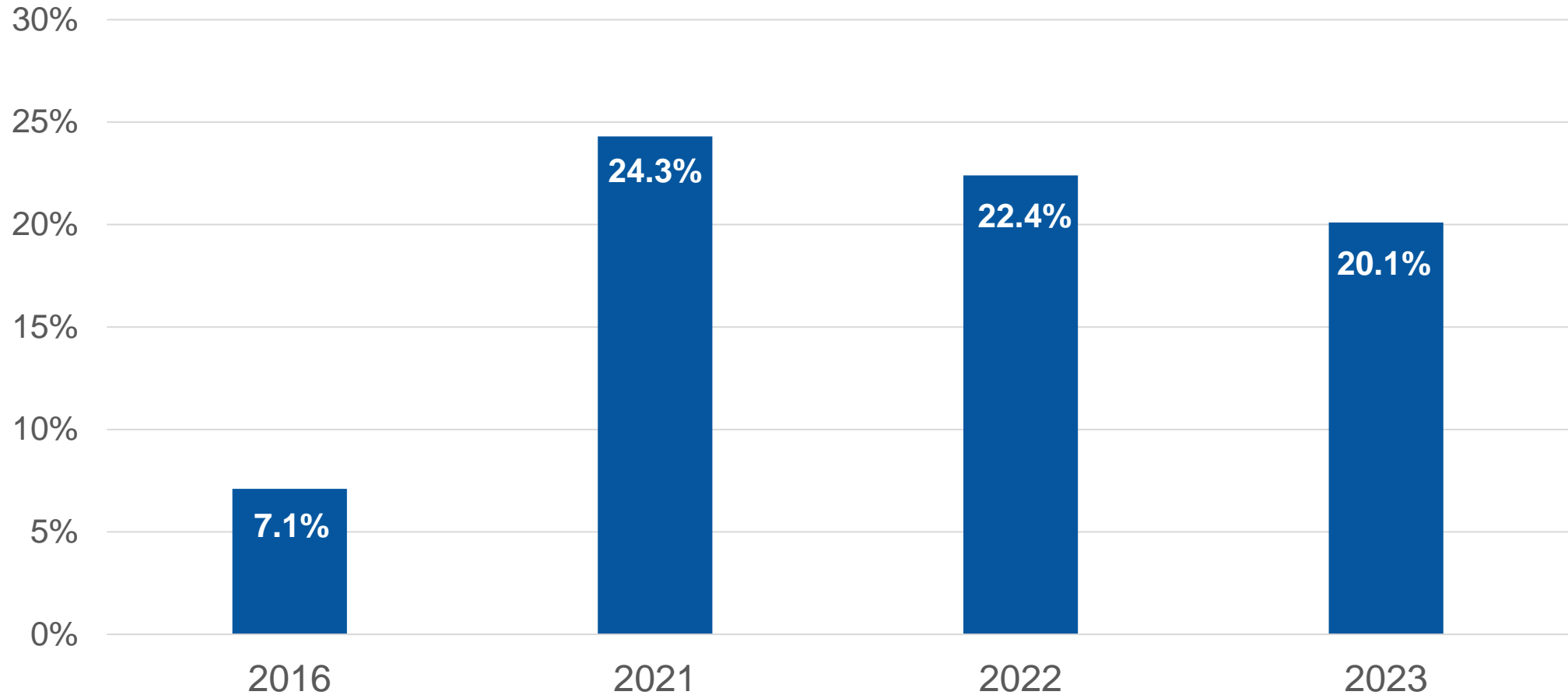
The impact of work on well-being: 6 factors that will affect the future of work and health inequalities

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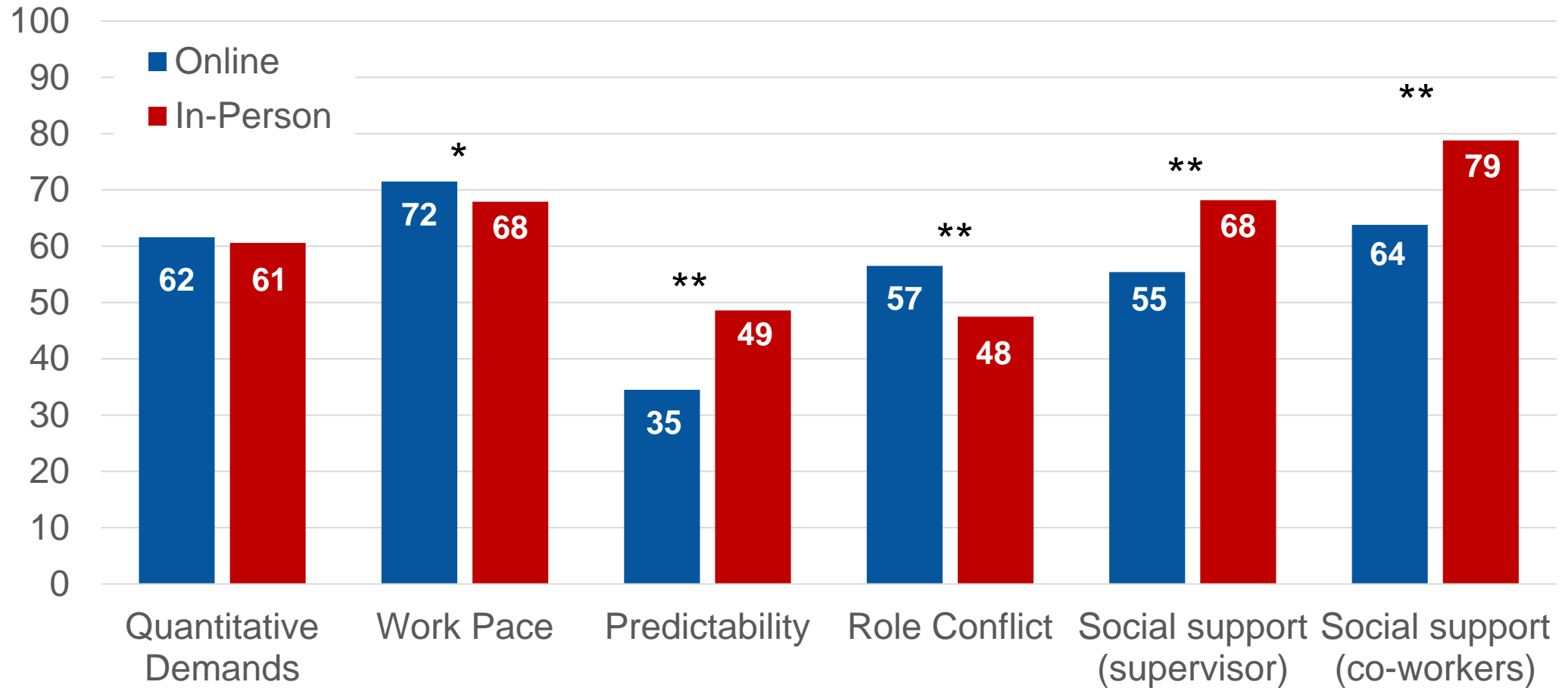
If public health bodies and policymakers put greater focus on improving the work environment, it could achieve major gains in population health and reduce health inequities. (Shutterstock)

Technology and occupational health and safety

Share of workers usually working from home, Canada, 2016 to 2023



Adjusted mean scores for psychosocial exposures between online and in-person educators (N = 5,438)

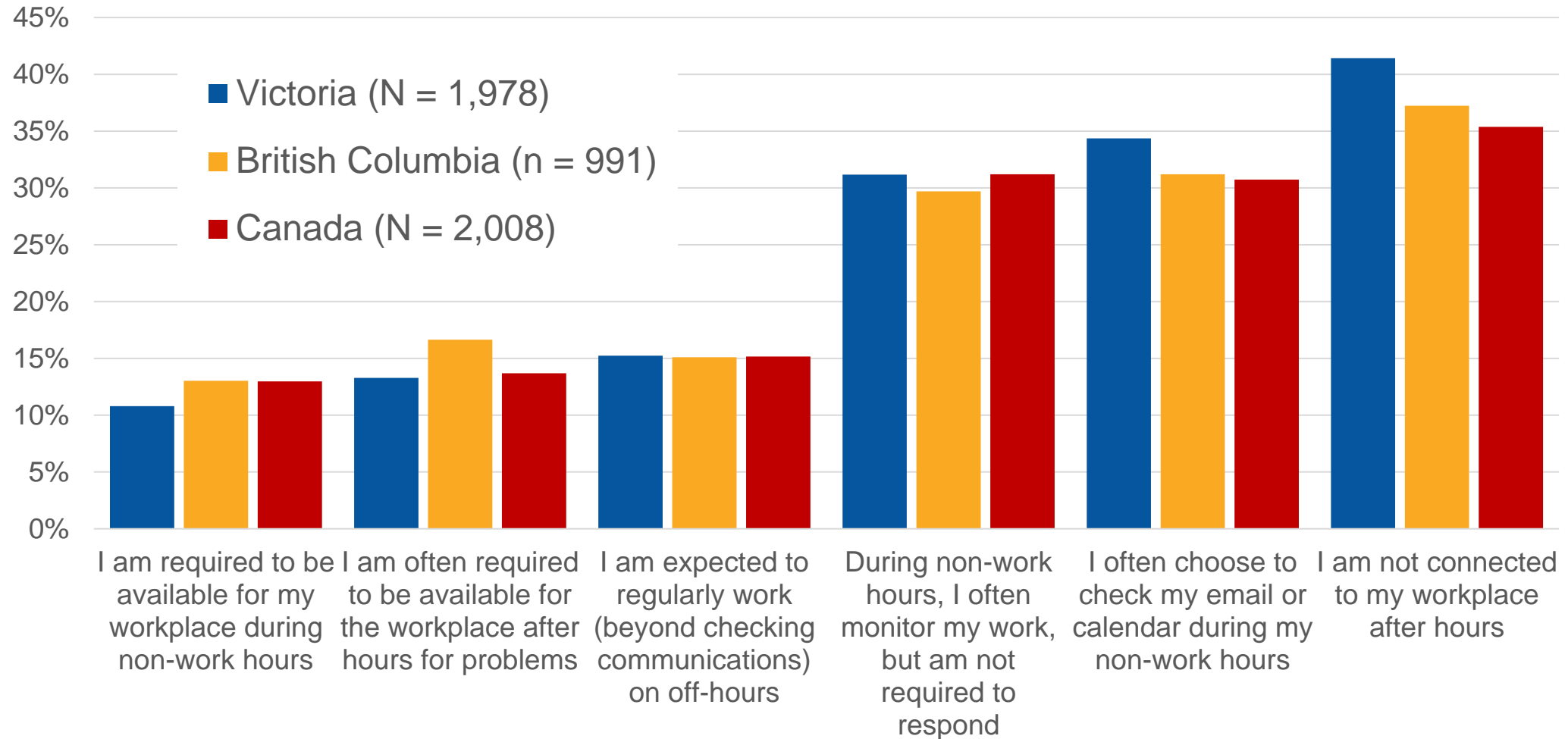


* = statistically significant; ** = statistically significant and practically important

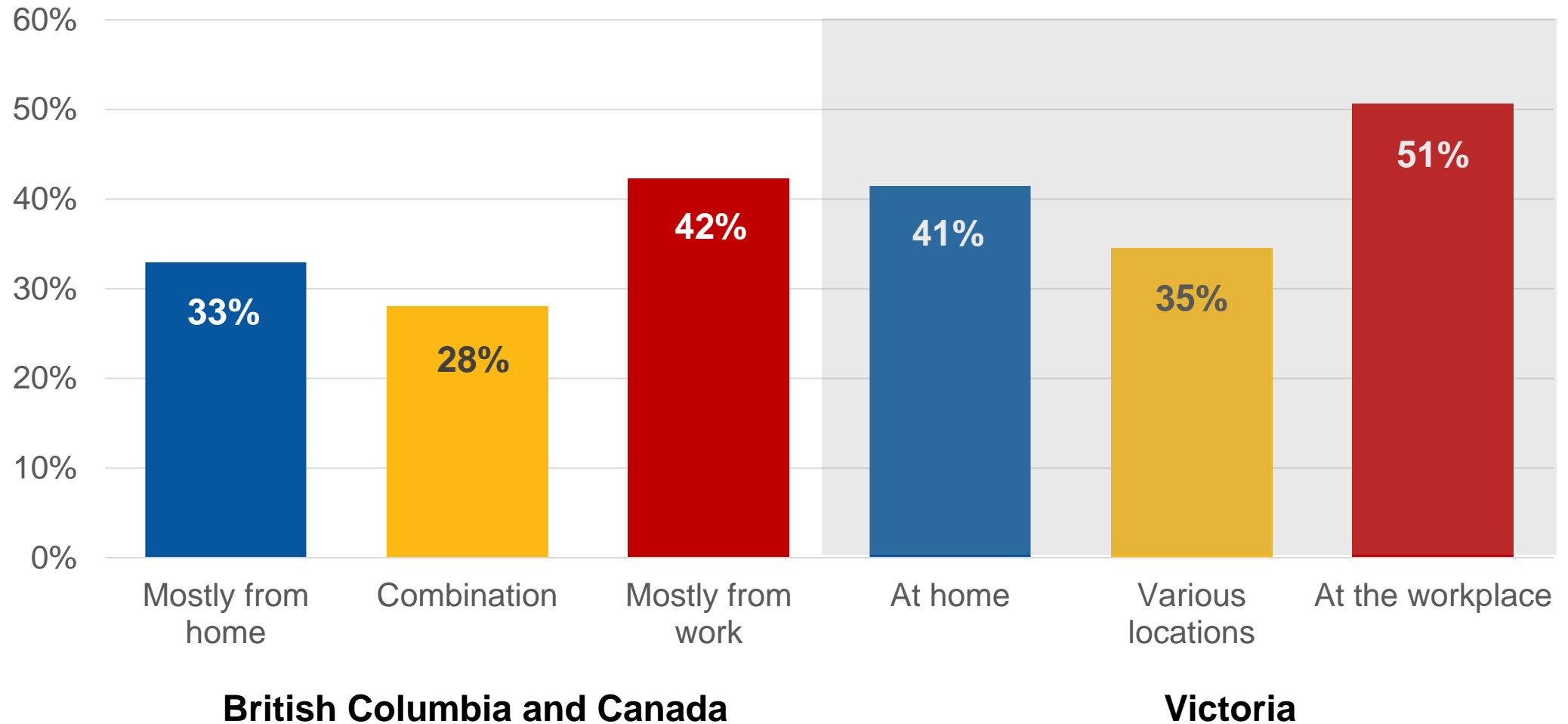
Artificial intelligence and the work–health interface: A research agenda for a technologically transforming world of work

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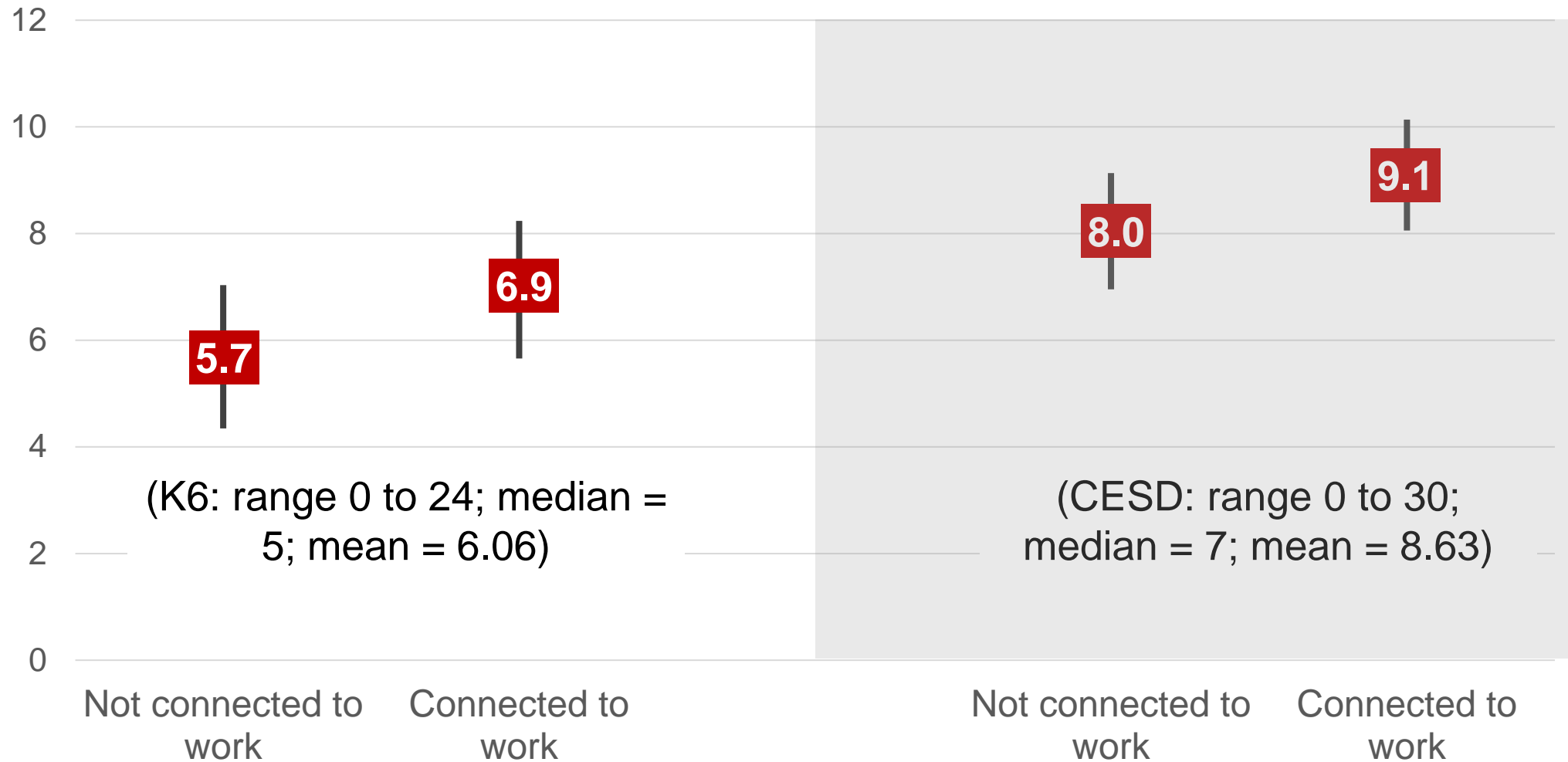
Connection to the workplace after hours. Victoria, British Columbia and Canada, 2023



Adjusted prevalence of 'not being connected to work', by work location. British Columbia and Canada, and Victoria, 2023



Connection to work outside of work hours and mental health (higher scores = worse mental health)



Key messages (1)

1. Among the working aged population work is important
2. Labour market experiences (the availability and nature of work) can reinforce and exacerbate inequalities in health at the population level
3. The nature of work and health isn't just about work work-related injuries and illnesses – although work-related injuries and illnesses still contribute large costs to workers, their families and their communities
4. Understanding the risk of poor health from work requires focusing on more than individuals and individual hazards
5. Understanding how work relates to health also requires focusing on more than just hazards, but also positive aspects of work

Key messages (2)

6. Addressing the work environment is an underused lever to address health inequalities.
7. As highlighted through the COVID-19 pandemic, greater collaboration and data sharing, as well as collaborative efforts to increase and improve data capacity, is required between occupational health and (at least) public health
8. The world of work will continue to change, and we need to make sure we have the data and the methods to evaluate these changes in relation to their impacts on health inequalities at the population level

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Thank you

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