OHCOW
Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers Inc.
Centres de santé des travailleurs (ses) de l'Ontario Inc.

EKOS 2023 Survey - Qualitative Comments

Daryl Stephenson

Importance of qualitative comments

- Provides in-depth insights into **experiences** and **perspectives** to gain a potentially deeper understanding of the data.
- Helps understand **complex** issues, by helping understand the importance of the **context** to the participants, as well as the **process** by which events and actions have taken place.
- Helps to clarify both independent and dependent variables, and help with theoretical explanations.

Importance of qualitative comments

- Puts “flesh to the bone” to compliment the quantitative results.
- Can help identify emerging themes that might not be addressed in the survey. Provides a breadth of coverage, capturing a wide range of possible responses.
- Can help explore workplace specific concerns and suggestions that can lead to more actionable findings.
- Can help to enhance the understanding of the organizational culture.

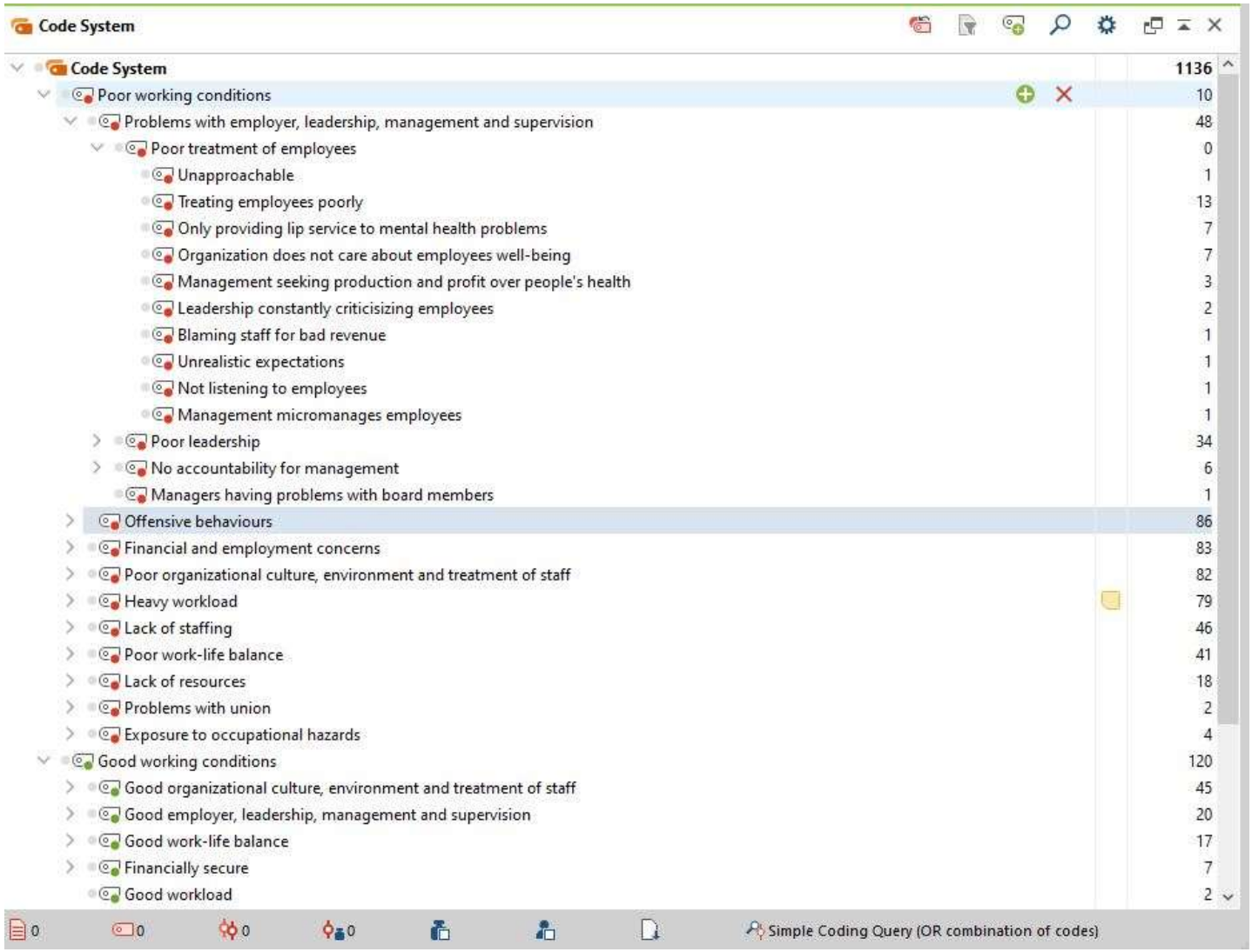
- *“I work in a stressful situation where the stress of others is often either my responsibility to solve or dumped on me by my staff. It is intense, deeply personal, stressful and high paced. It is service to others and the single most fulfilling job I have ever held. I have the support of my family in doing this job even when it comes at their expense. No survey like this adequately addresses situations where there is a moral imperative to do the job because it is the right thing to do.” EKOS 2019 survey comment*

Qualitative Data Analysis: Steps Involved

- Data preparation: cleaning and organizing data for analysis
- Coding: assigning labels or codes to segments of data based on their content
- Creating categories: Grouping similar codes
- Theme identification: identifying recurring patterns or themes in the coded data

Organization of analysis

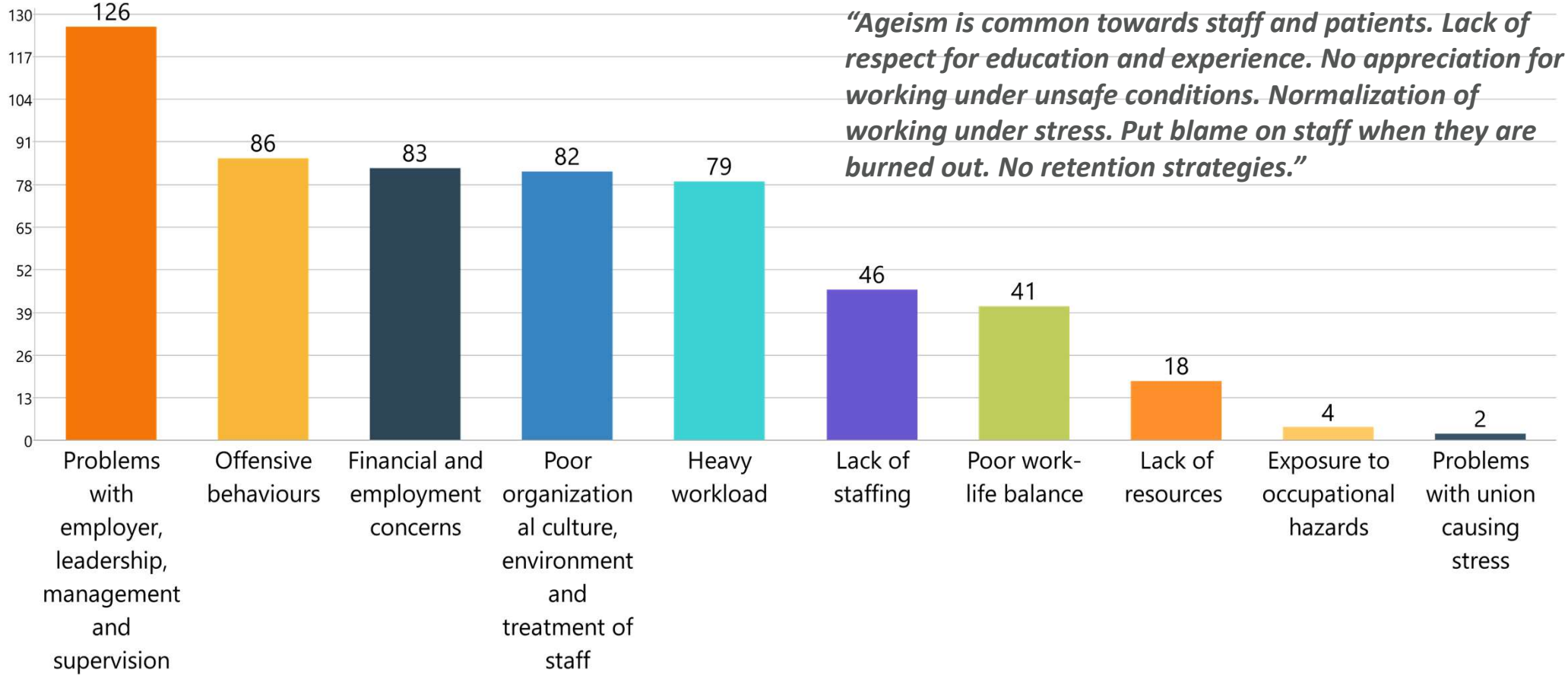
- MAXQDA



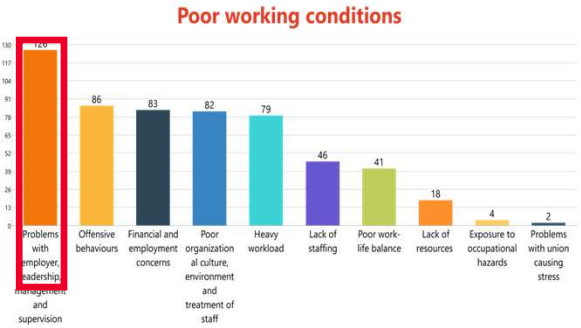
Qualitative comments analysis

- Question asked – “Further comments about your working conditions, stress, health, etc.”
- 1082 comments
- 24776 words – average 23 words per comment
- Thematic analysis of comments
  - MAXQDA for organization of data
- 1133 Codes
- Five main themes – Poor working conditions (577), Good working conditions (213), Mental health concerns (190), Impact of COVID-19 (44), Occupation specific comments (40).

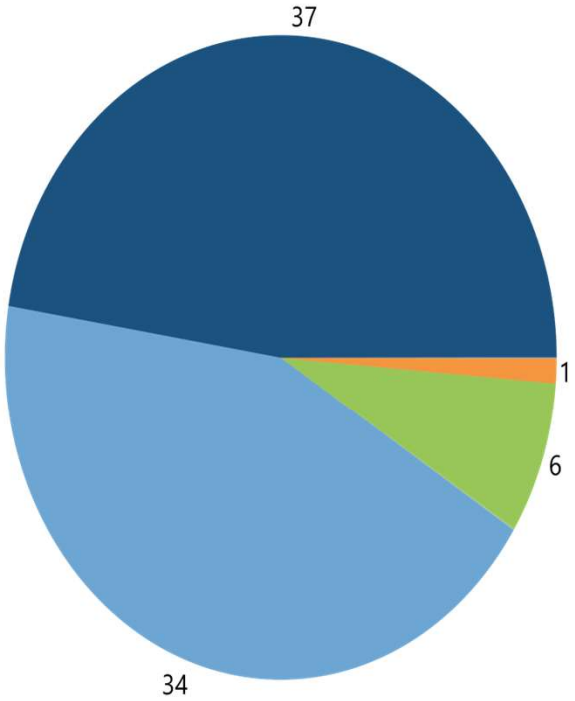
Poor working conditions



"Ageism is common towards staff and patients. Lack of respect for education and experience. No appreciation for working under unsafe conditions. Normalization of working under stress. Put blame on staff when they are burned out. No retention strategies."

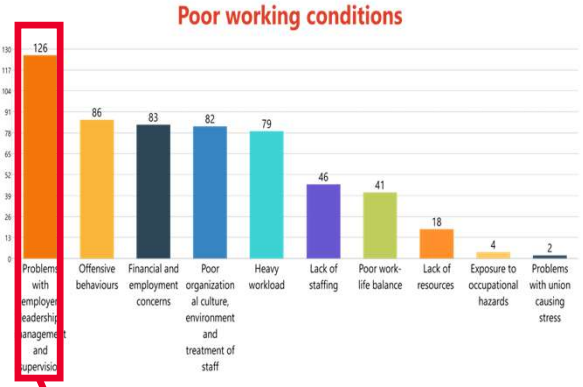


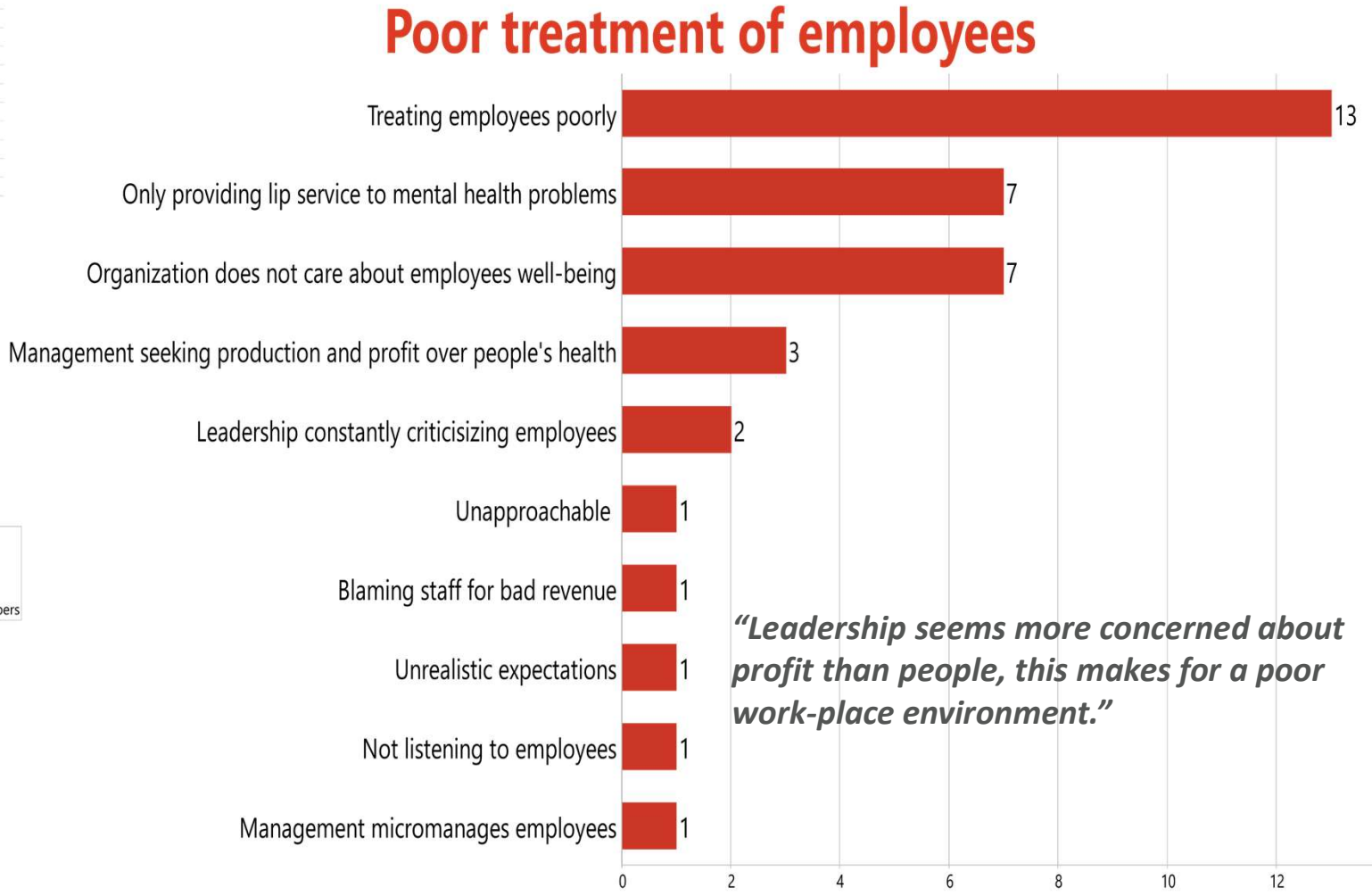
Problems with employer, leadership, management and supervision



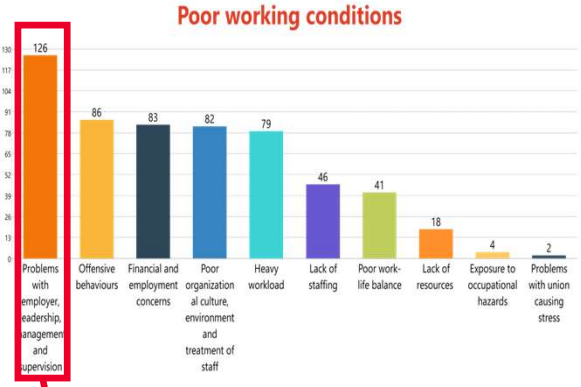
- Poor treatment of employees
- Poor leadership
- No accountability for management
- Managers having problems with board members

"Loved the customers (esp. the children), respected and liked and was treated well by 40% of my colleagues, was very poorly treated by the manager, was not backed up by a kind but ineffectual owner."



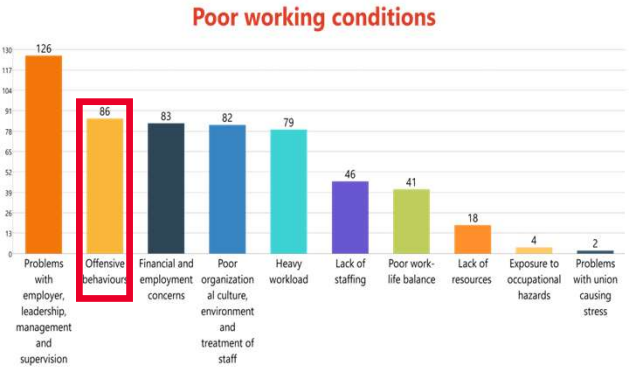


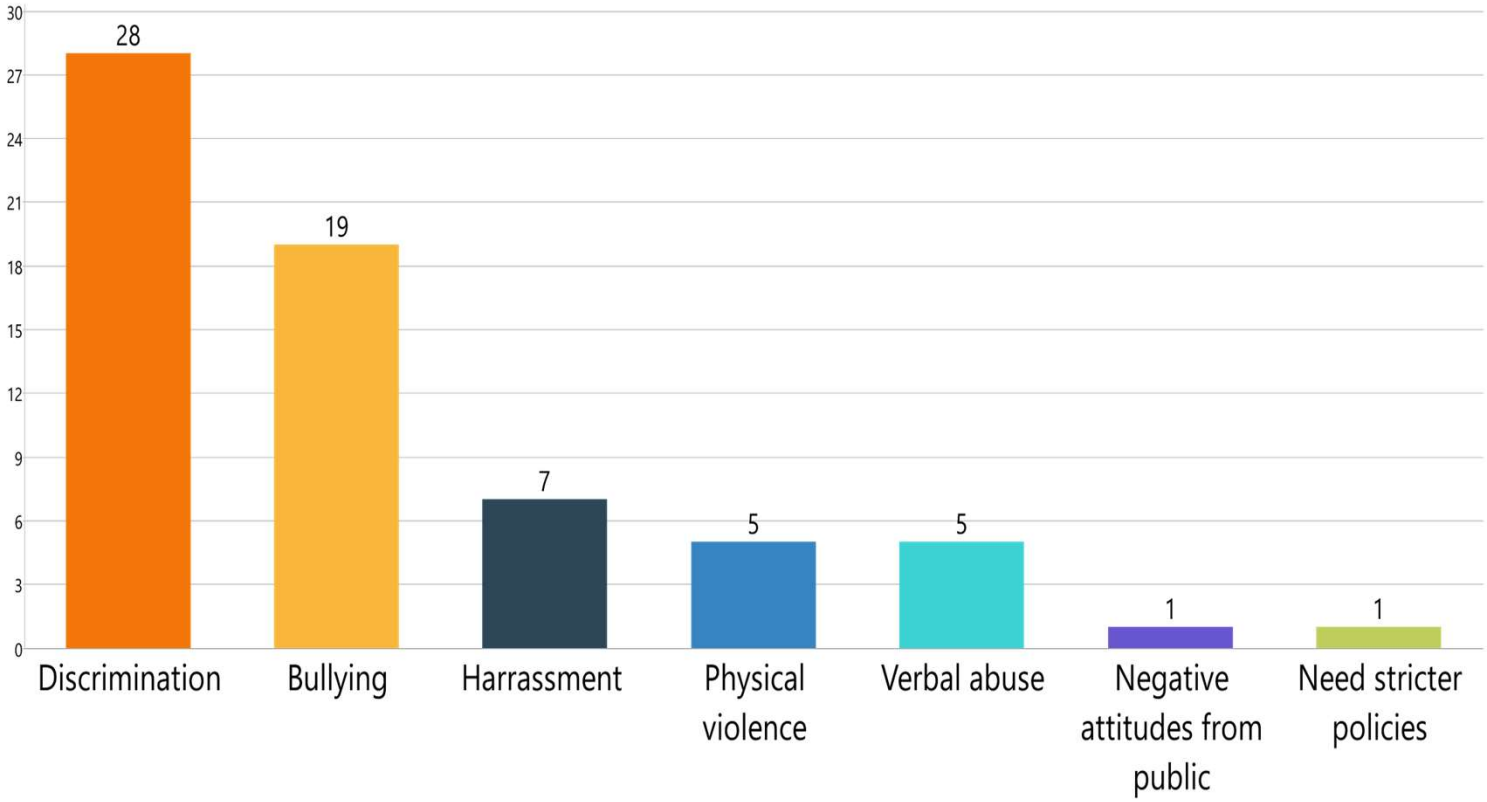
"Leadership seems more concerned about profit than people, this makes for a poor work-place environment."

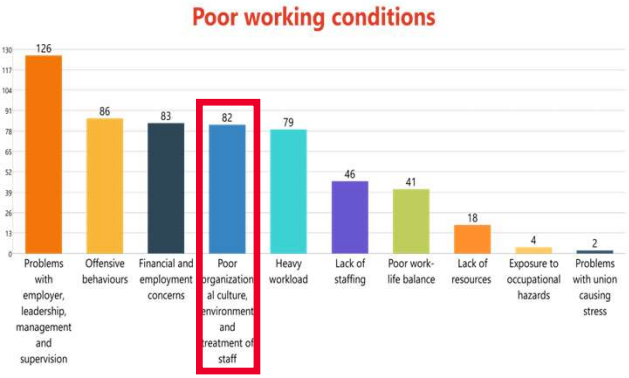

Poor working conditions
126
86
83
82
79
46
41
18
4
2
Problems with employer, leadership, management and supervision
Offensive behaviours
Financial and employment concerns
Poor organizational culture, environment and treatment of staff
Heavy workload
Lack of staffing
Poor work-life balance
Lack of resources
Exposure to occupational hazards
Problems with union causing stress

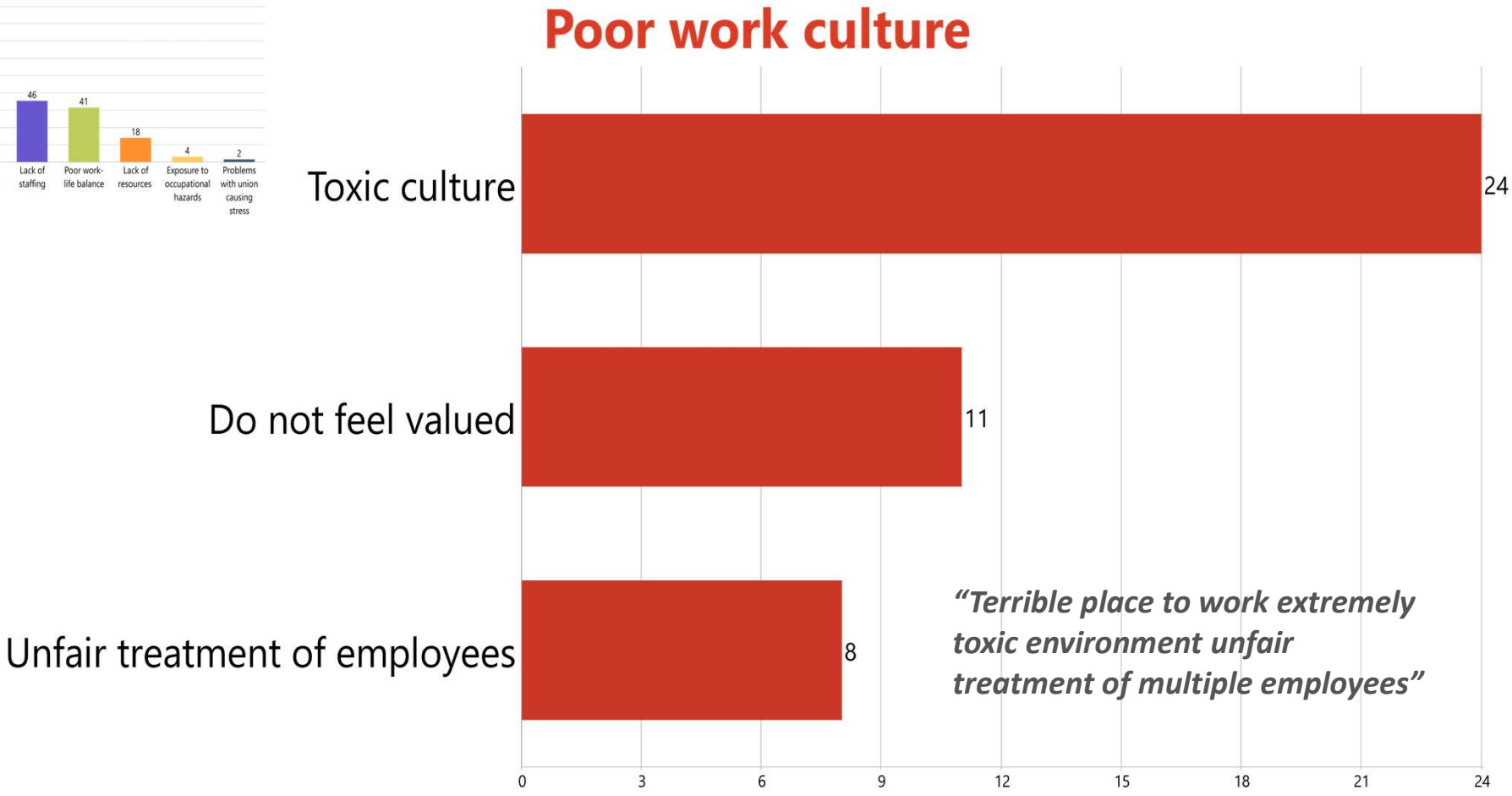
Problems with employer, leadership, management and supervision
37
34
6
1
Poor treatment of employees
Poor leadership
No accountability for management
Managers having problems with board members

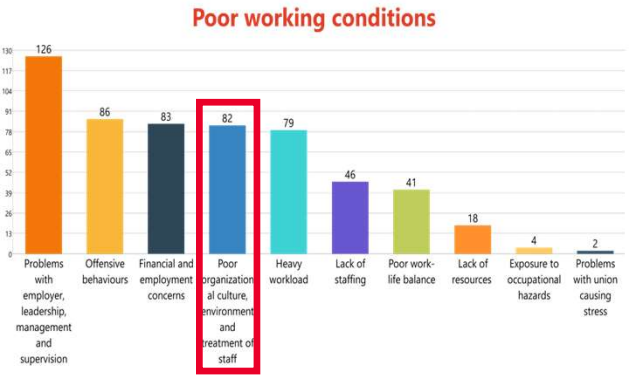
Poor leadership
Poor communication
10
Lacking experience or skills necessary
8
Nepotism in leadership positions
5
Management is innefficient
5
Lack of trust in management
1
Leadership rushing high impact decisions
1
Not taking care of problems in workplace
1
0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10


Poor working conditions
126
86
83
82
79
46
41
18
4
2
Problems with employer, leadership, management and supervision
Offensive behaviours
Financial and employment concerns
Poor organizational culture, environment and treatment of staff
Heavy workload
Lack of staffing
Poor work-life balance
Lack of resources
Exposure to occupational hazards
Problems with union causing stress

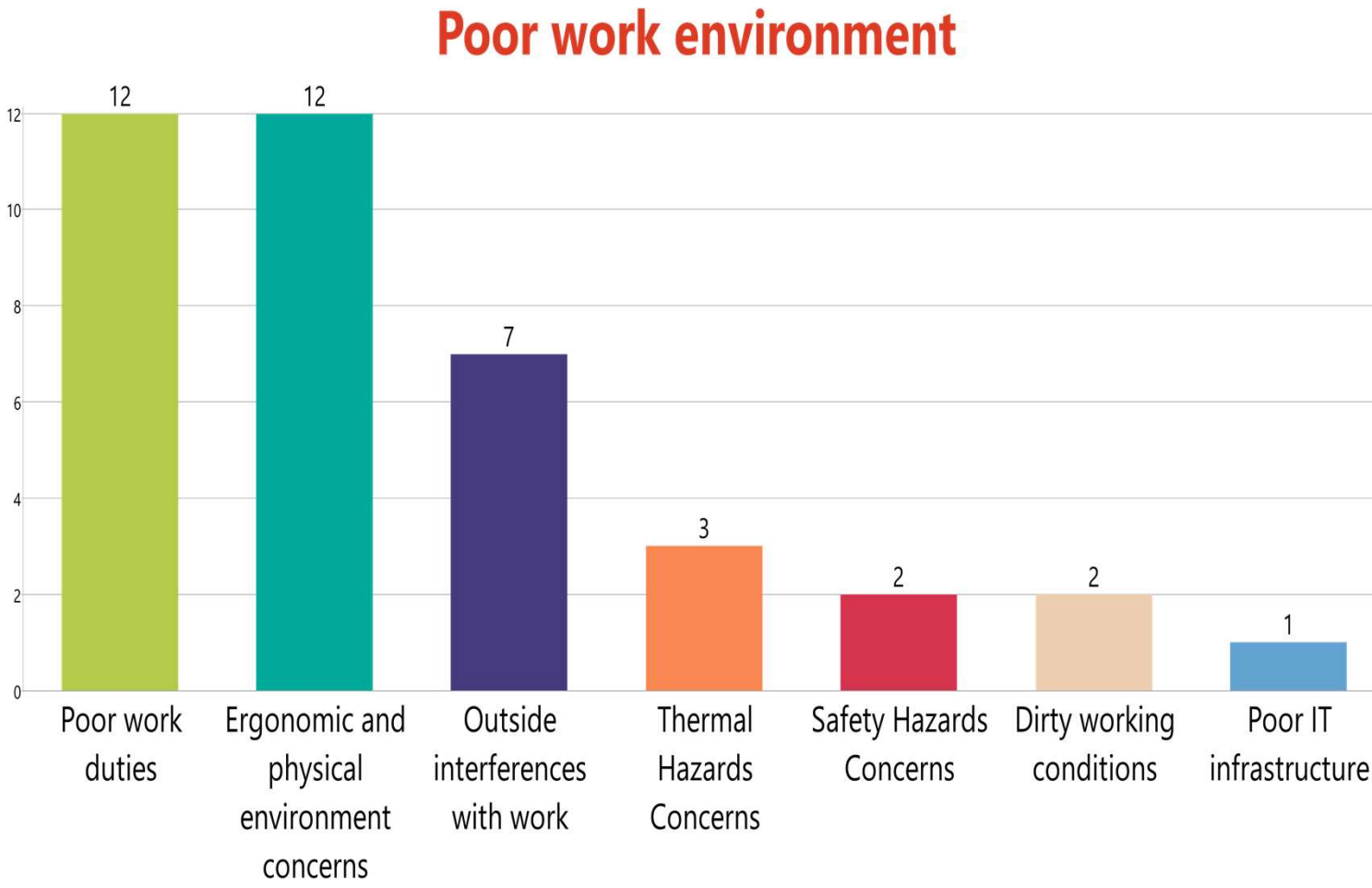

Offensive behaviours
30
27
24
21
18
15
12
9
6
3
0
28
19
7
5
5
1
1
Discrimination
Bullying
Harrassment
Physical violence
Verbal abuse
Negative attitudes from public
Need stricter policies

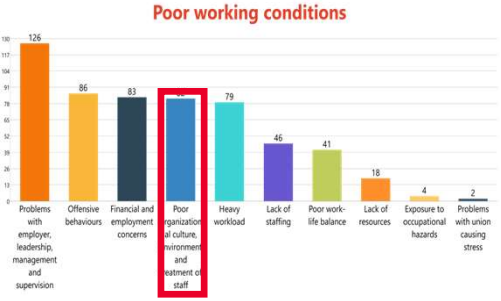

Poor working conditions
126
86
83
82
79
46
41
18
4
2
Problems with employer, leadership, management and supervision
Offensive behaviours
Financial and employment concerns
Poor organizational culture, environment and treatment of staff
Heavy workload
Lack of staffing
Poor work-life balance
Lack of resources
Exposure to occupational hazards
Problems with union causing stress

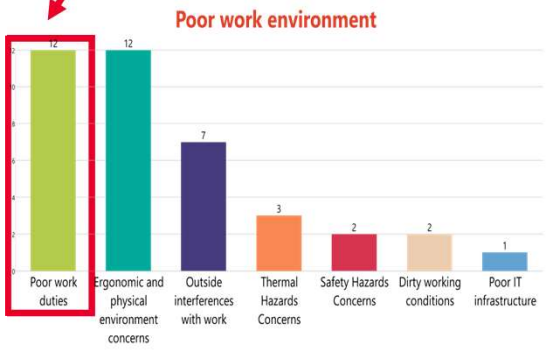

Poor work culture
Toxic culture
24
Do not feel valued
11
Unfair treatment of employees
8
0
3
6
9
12
15
18
21
24
"Terrible place to work extremely toxic environment unfair treatment of multiple employees"

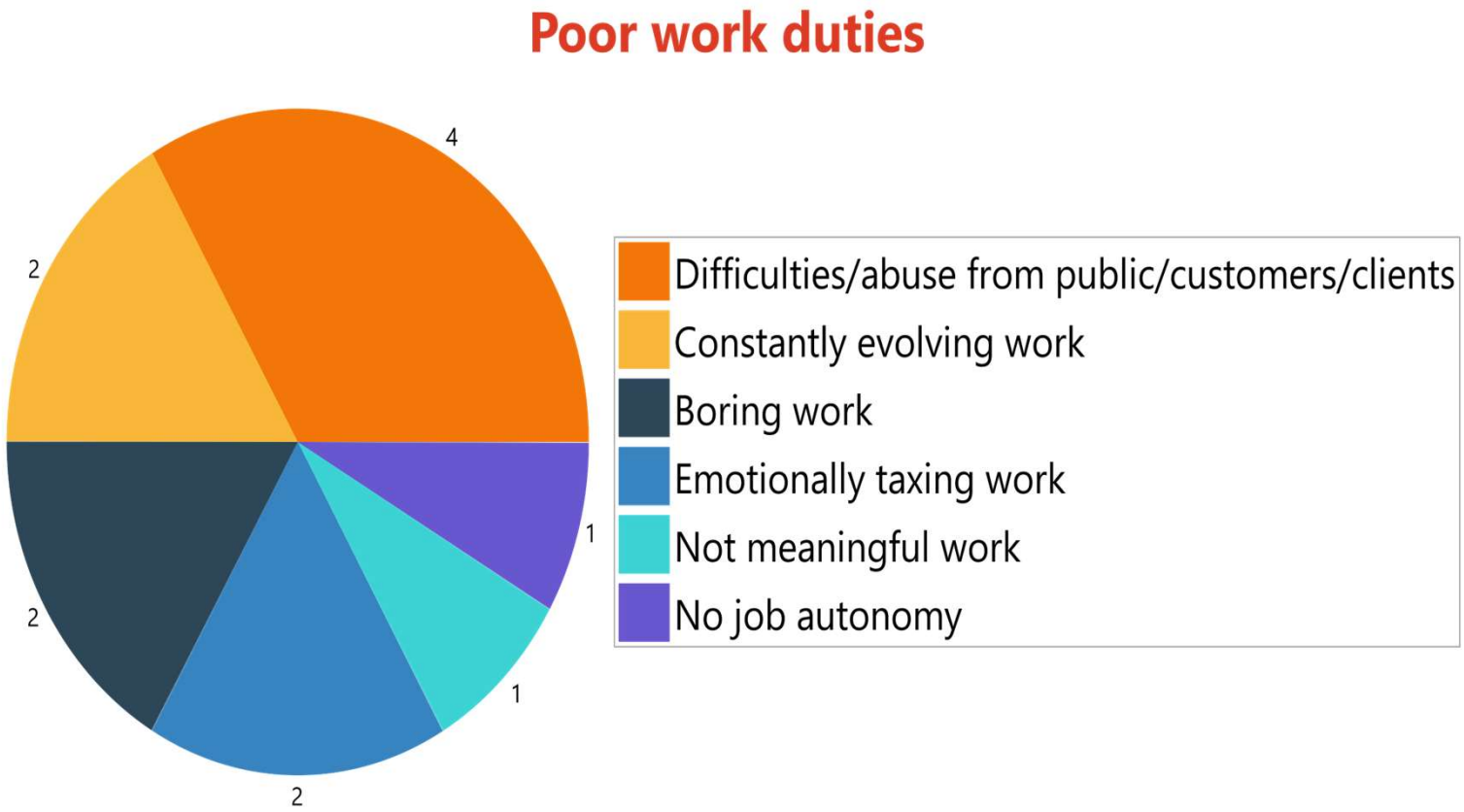


"Education has been through a roller coaster in the past 2 years. In class learning, shifting to online learning and back again has been extremely stressful."



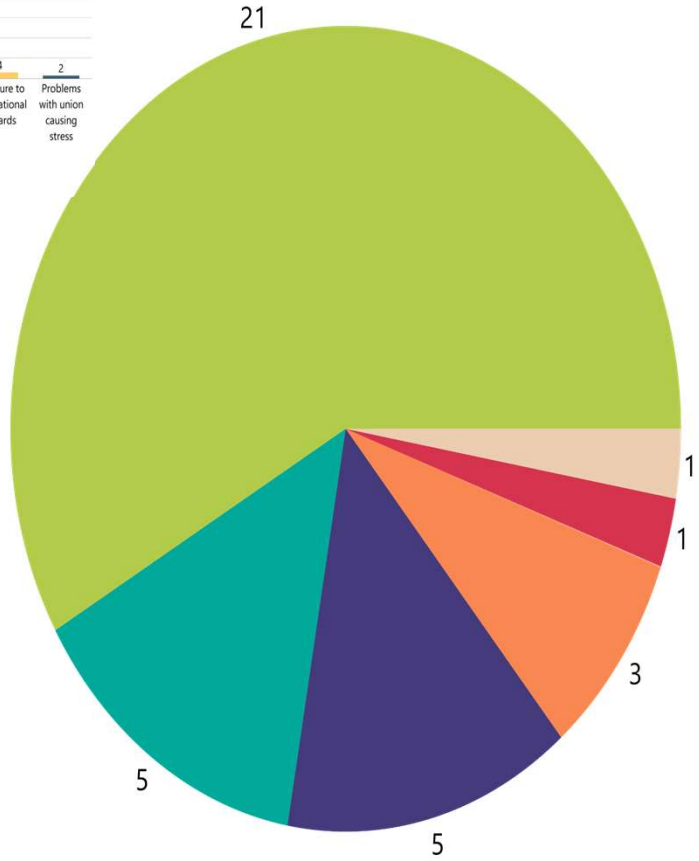

Poor working conditions
126
86
83
79
46
41
18
4
2
Problems with employer, leadership, management and supervision
Offensive behaviours
Financial and employment concerns
Heavy workload
Lack of staffing
Poor work-life balance
Lack of resources
Exposure to occupational hazards
Problems with union causing stress


Poor work environment
12
12
7
3
2
2
1
Poor work duties
Ergonomic and physical environment concerns
Outside interferences with work
Thermal Hazards Concerns
Safety Hazards Concerns
Dirty working conditions
Poor IT infrastructure

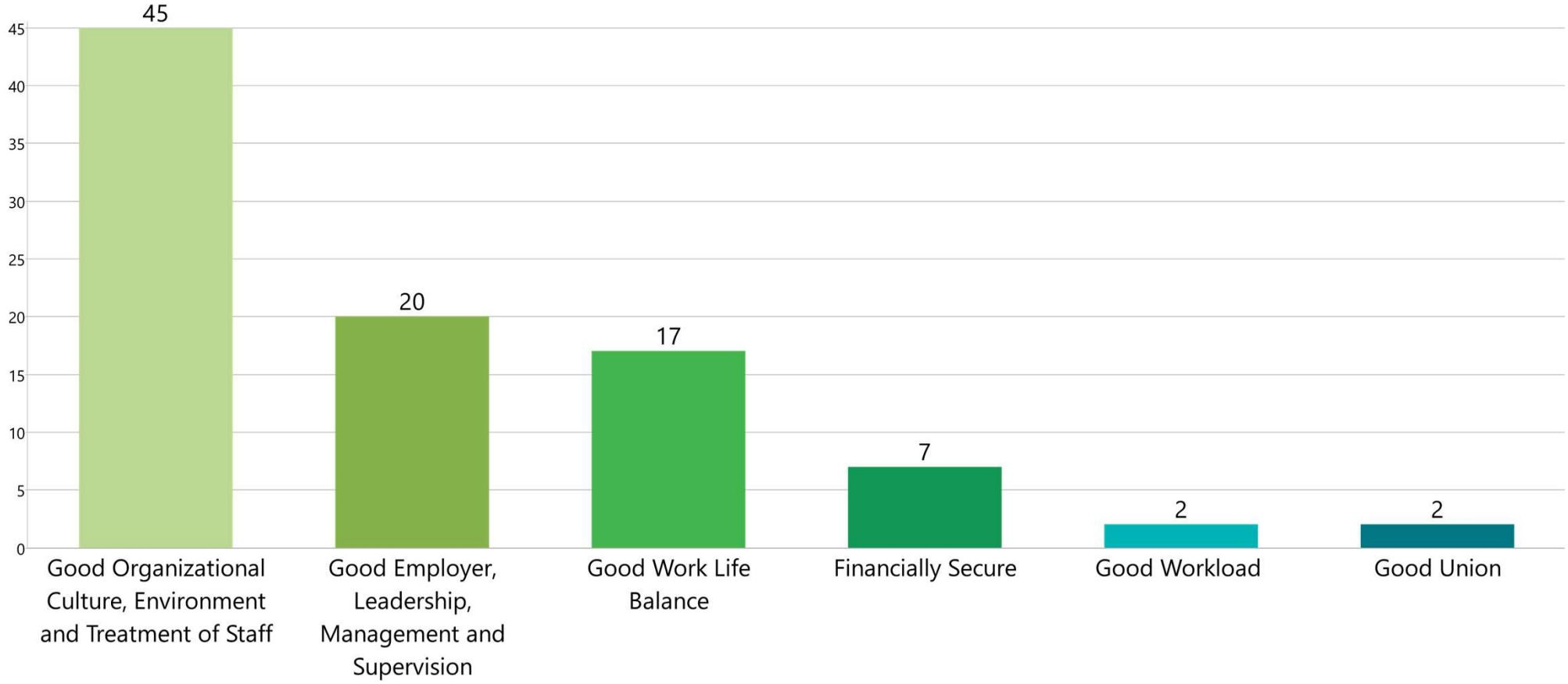

Poor work duties
4
2
1
2
1
2
Difficulties/abuse from public/customers/clients
Constantly evolving work
Boring work
Emotionally taxing work
Not meaningful work
No job autonomy

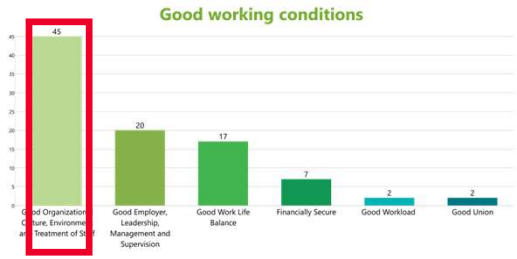
"work is stressful. we are so short staffed that patients suffer and it's hard to see that suffering. There is a lot of moral distress. Our vacations and time off are denied so there is no work-life balance."

Poor work-life balance



Good working conditions





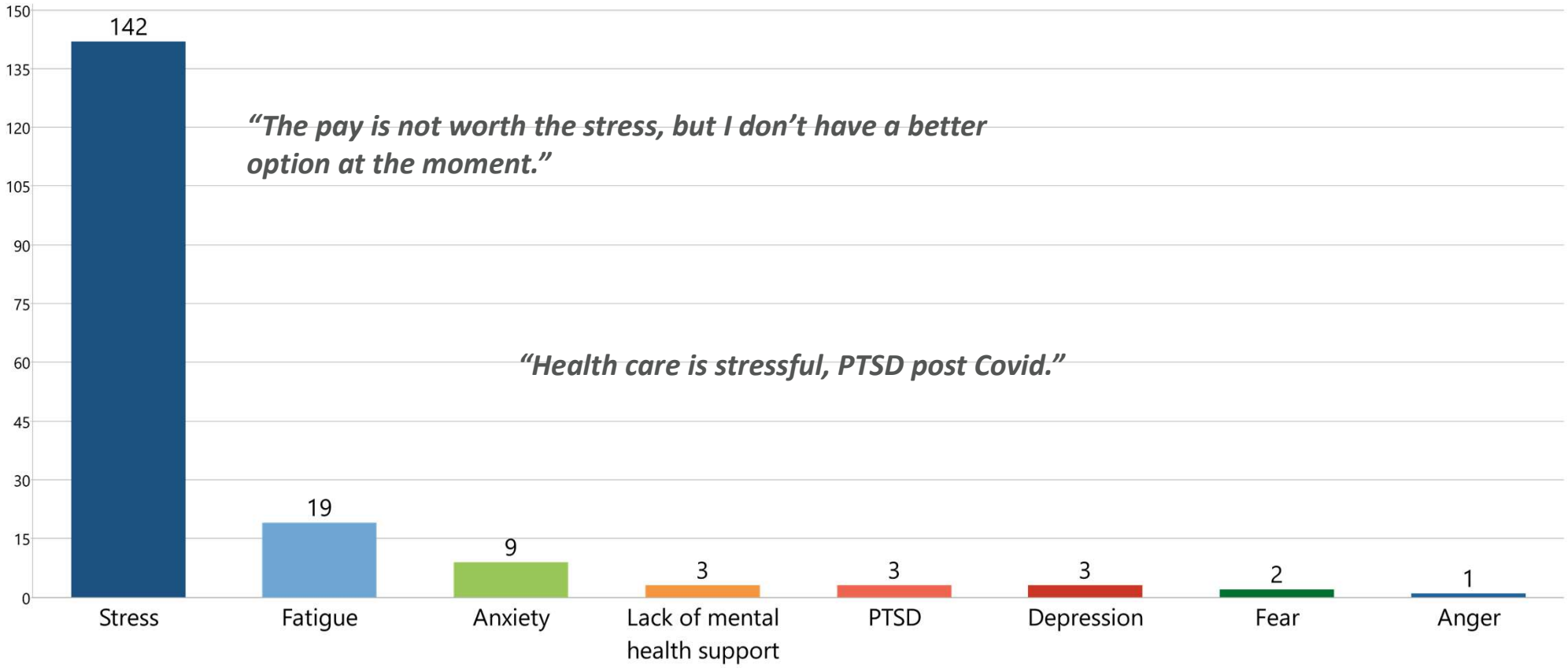
Good organizational culture, environment and treatment of staff

"I think my employer does a good job at managing working conditions and reducing stress while encouraging good, healthy habits. We also have access to an employee assistance program that is available 24/7 and is only a call away."

"Love my job, colleagues and Supervisor"

"Generally, work conditions are flexible, occasional crunch times when extra hours are needed but then we usually get that time back in lieu after."

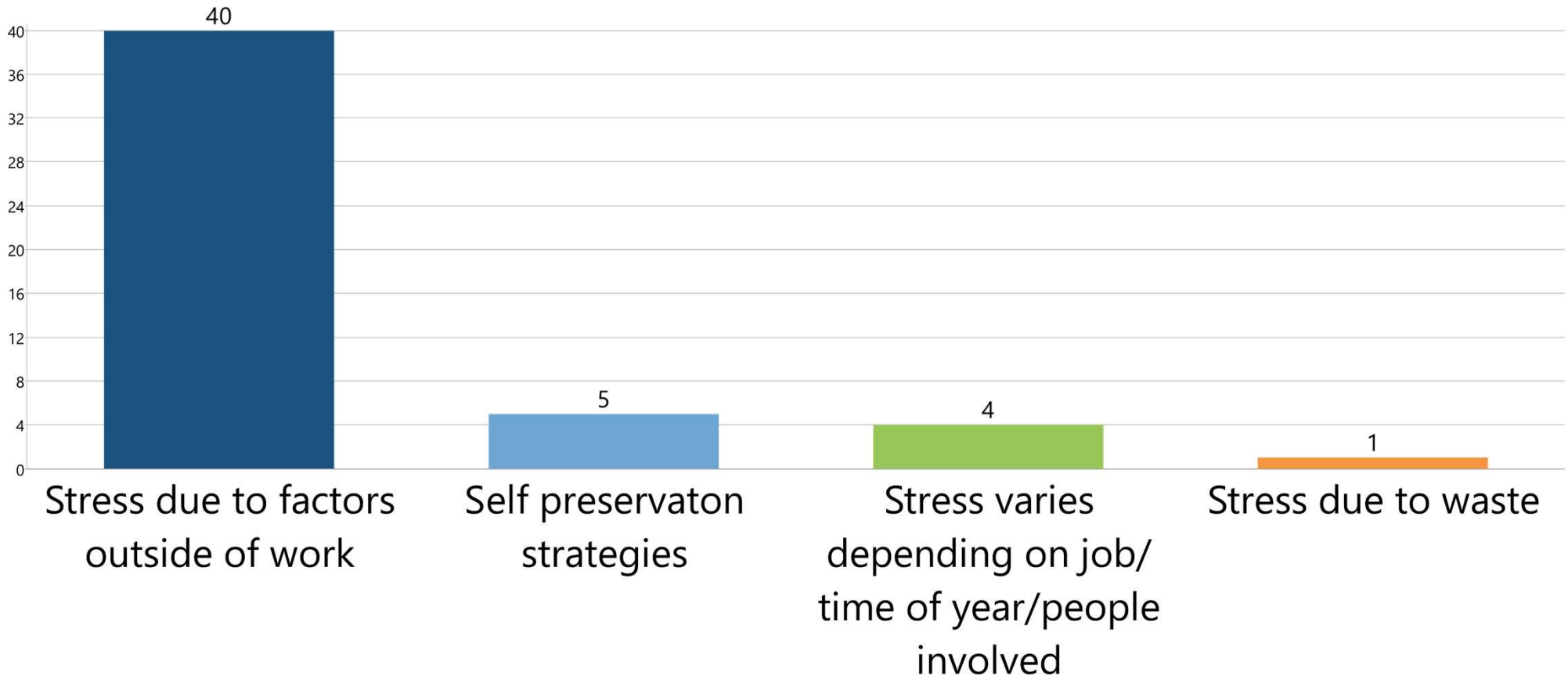
Mental health concerns



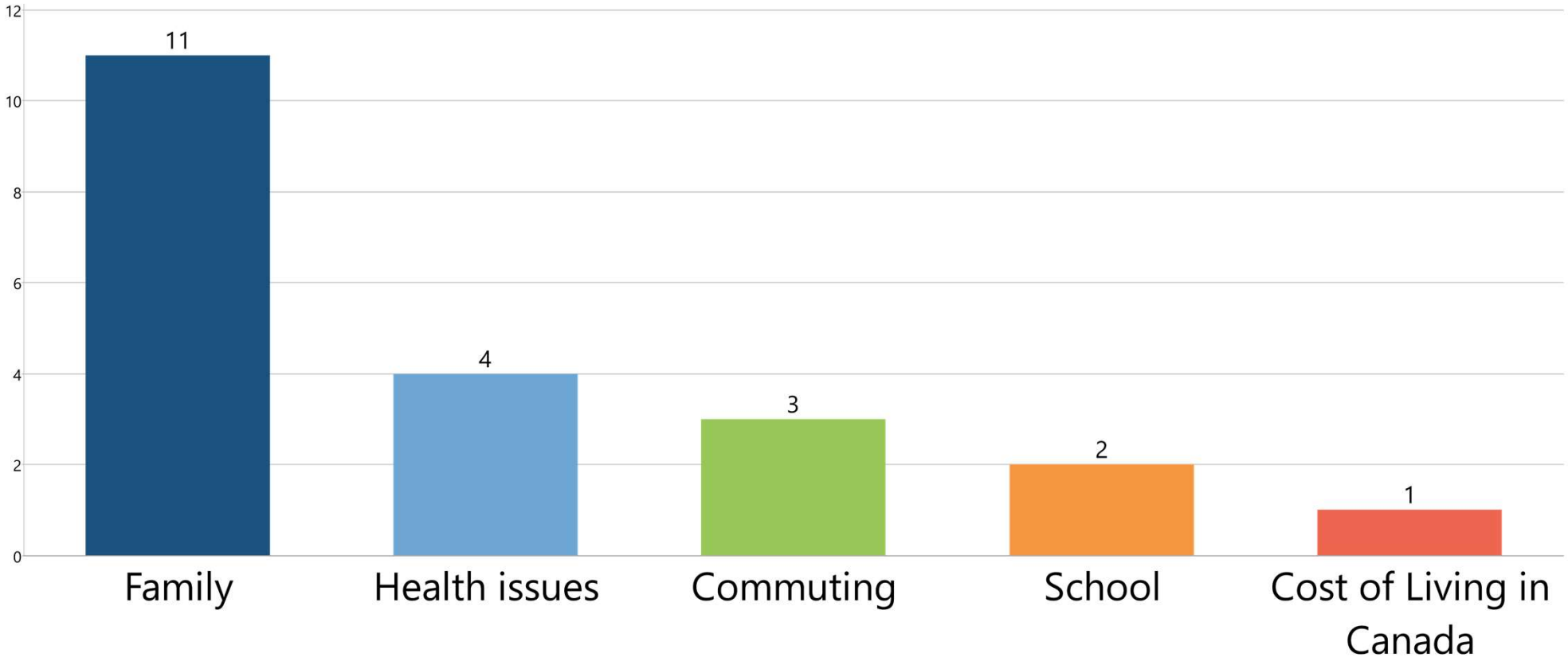
"The pay is not worth the stress, but I don't have a better option at the moment."

"Health care is stressful, PTSD post Covid."

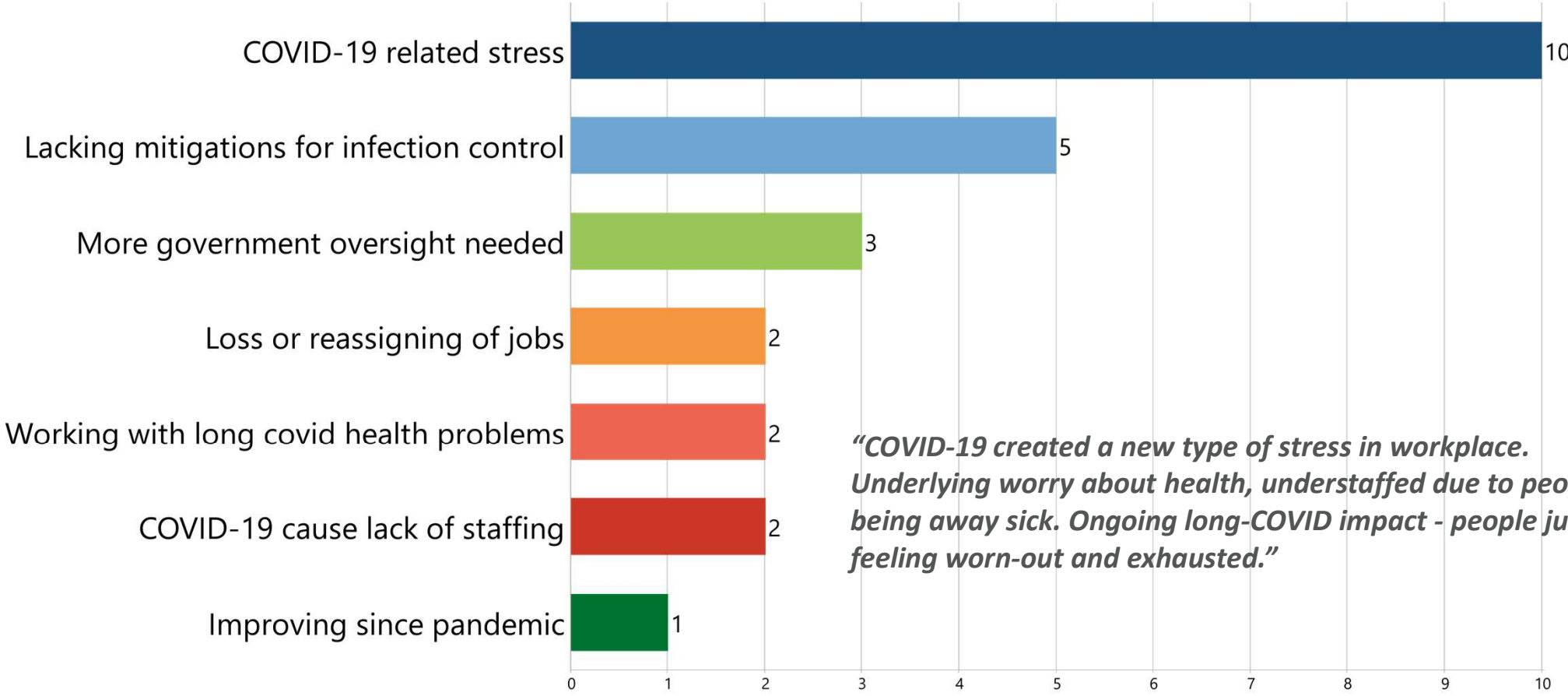
Stress


40
40
36
32
28
24
20
16
12
8
4
0
5
4
1
Stress due to factors outside of work
Self preservaton strategies
Stress varies depending on job/ time of year/people involved
Stress due to waste

Stress due to factors outside of work

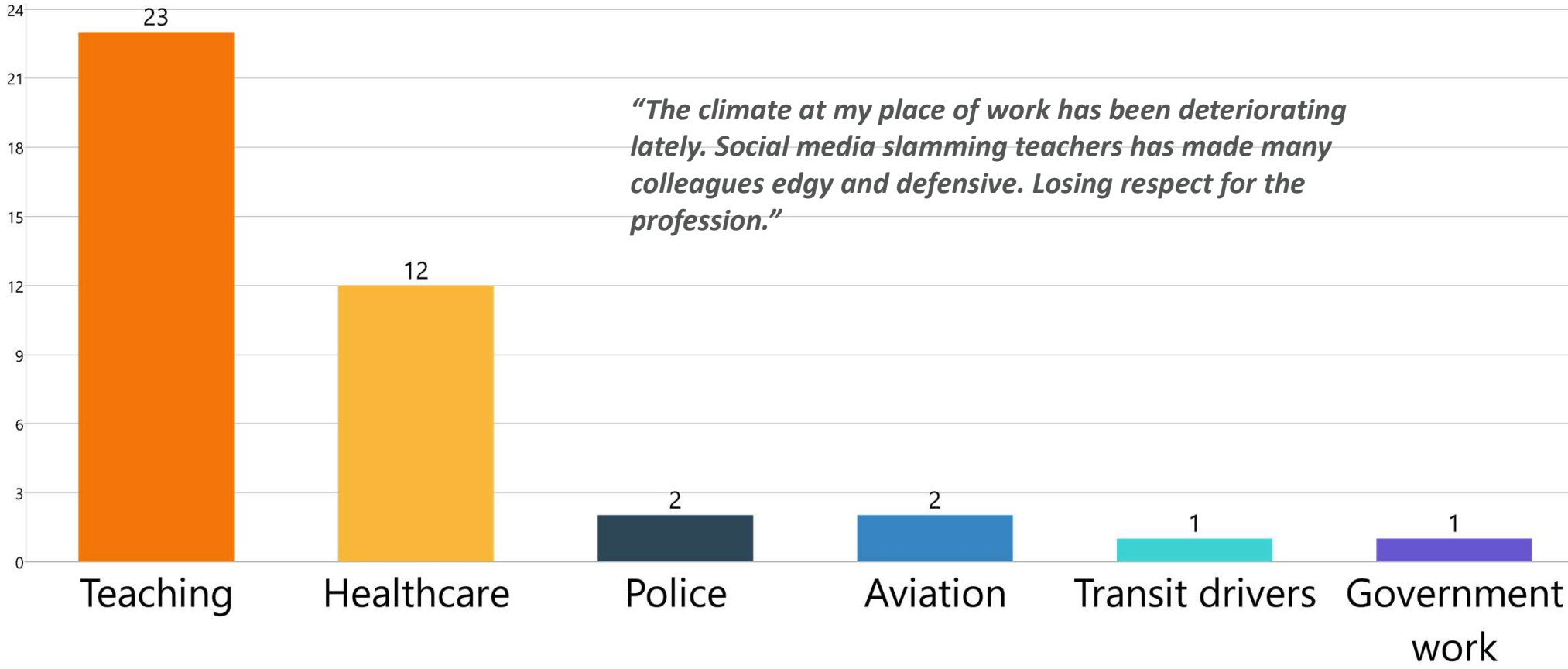


Impact of COVID-19

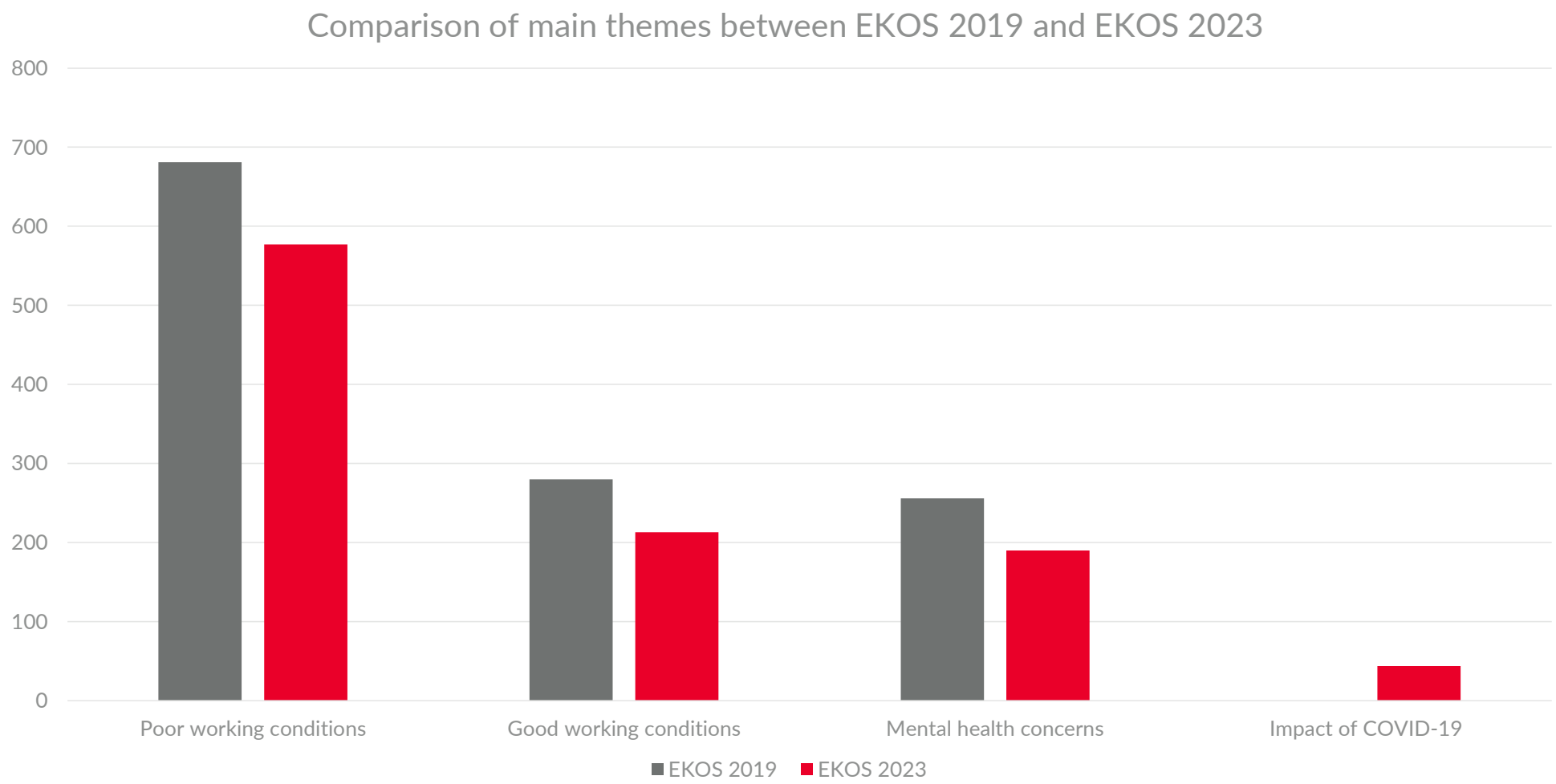


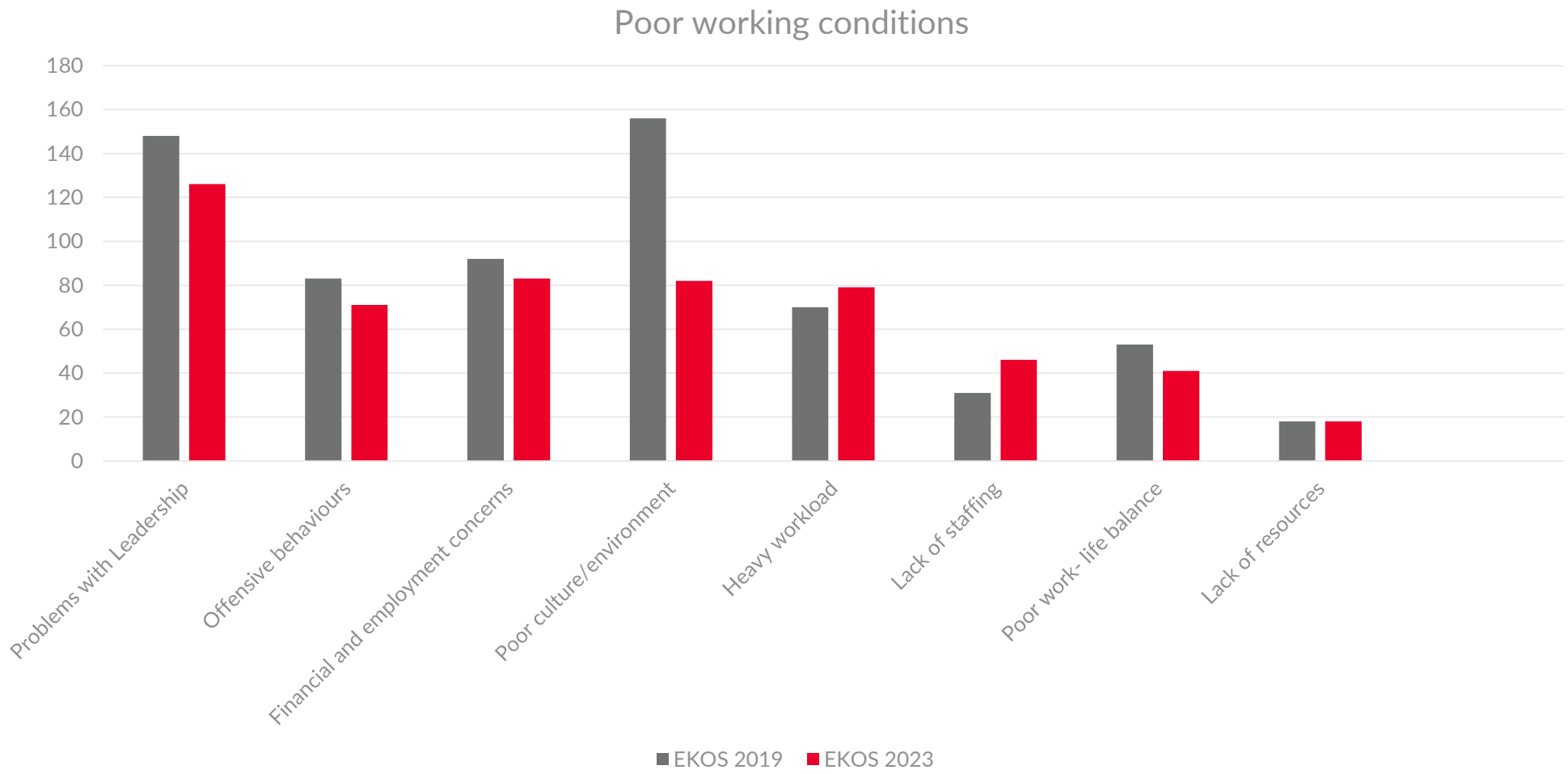
"COVID-19 created a new type of stress in workplace. Underlying worry about health, understaffed due to people being away sick. Ongoing long-COVID impact - people just feeling worn-out and exhausted."

Occupation specific



"The climate at my place of work has been deteriorating lately. Social media slamming teachers has made many colleagues edgy and defensive. Losing respect for the profession."


Comparison of main themes between EKOS 2019 and EKOS 2023
800
700
600
500
400
300
200
100
0
Poor working conditions
Good working conditions
Mental health concerns
Impact of COVID-19
EKOS 2019
EKOS 2023


Poor working conditions
180
160
140
120
100
80
60
40
20
0
Problems with Leadership
Offensive behaviours
Financial and employment concerns
Poor culture/environment
Heavy workload
Lack of staffing
Poor work- life balance
Lack of resources
EKOS 2019
EKOS 2023

- Part of the poor work environment that was discussed more in 2019 was the issues dealing with the public, clients, customers and students. There was also more discussion on safety hazard concerns.
- However, in 2019 there was no discussion of COVID-19, where as that was a larger topic with 44 coded segments in 2023.
- Lack of staffing was discussed as being impacted by COVID in 2023
- 16 discussing working from home in 2023 compared to 5 in the 2019, and more discussed liking working from home in 2023. There were two comments about social isolation due to working from home in 2023.
- There appeared to be more discussion of violence from students in the 2019 survey, where teachers were more focused on changes from COVID in the 2023 survey.
- Discussions of burnout were more frequent with healthcare workers in 2023, blaming the pandemic. Some burnout was blamed on the pandemic.
- More political comments in 2023.

Thank You

If you have any questions about this presentation, please contact me at the email below

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Or visit the OHCOW website @ www.ohcow.on.ca