



UNIVERSITY OF
GOTHENBURG

EPIDEMIOLOGY AND SOCIAL MEDICINE
THE SAHLGRENSKA ACADEMY

MANAGERS' PERSPECTIVE - THE MISSING PIECE

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New Ways – mental health at work





Managers' perspective - the missing piece

A survey about Swedish managers' knowledge, experiences and strategies in relation to employees with depression- and anxiety disorders

- web-based survey
- performed 2017
- grants from AFA Insurance, Sweden





Occupational exposures and symptoms of depression (evidence)

- job strain in combination with too high demands
- low social support at work
- bullying
- mentally stressful work
- workplace conflicts
- effort-reward imbalance
- job insecurity





What are expected from Swedish managers?

- far-reaching responsibility for the rehabilitation
- obligation to make a return-to-work-plan for employees (>60 days sickness absence)
- expected to facilitate return to work





What do we know about managers' views on common mental disorders in employees?

- prejudices against common mental disorders (CMD)
- finds CMD more problematic
- difficulties to understand the reduced work capacity
- difficulties to make work adjustments
- lack knowledge, support and resources





Manager perspective - the missing piece

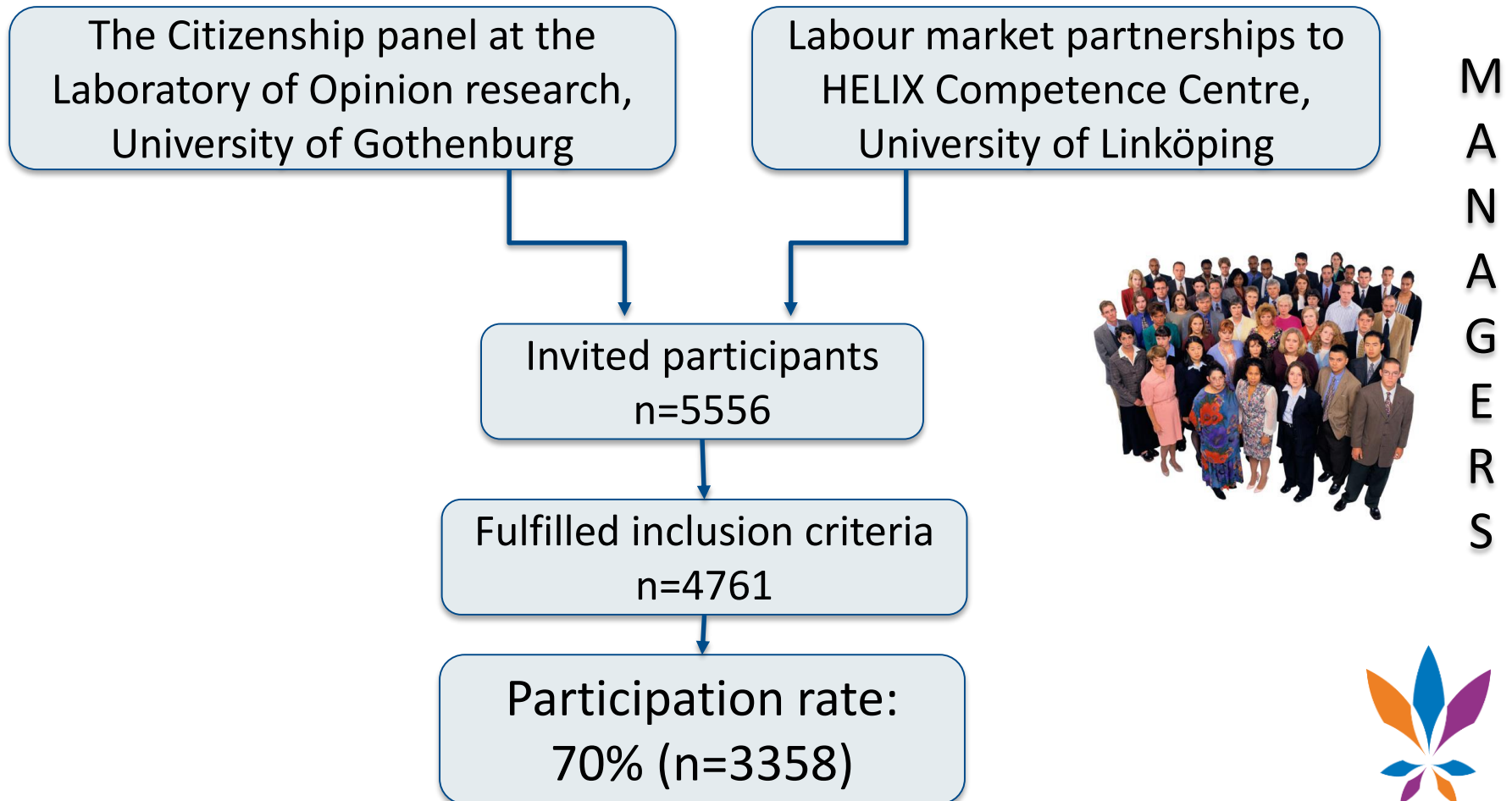
Study question:

How do managers approach sickness absence in employees with depression- and anxiety disorders



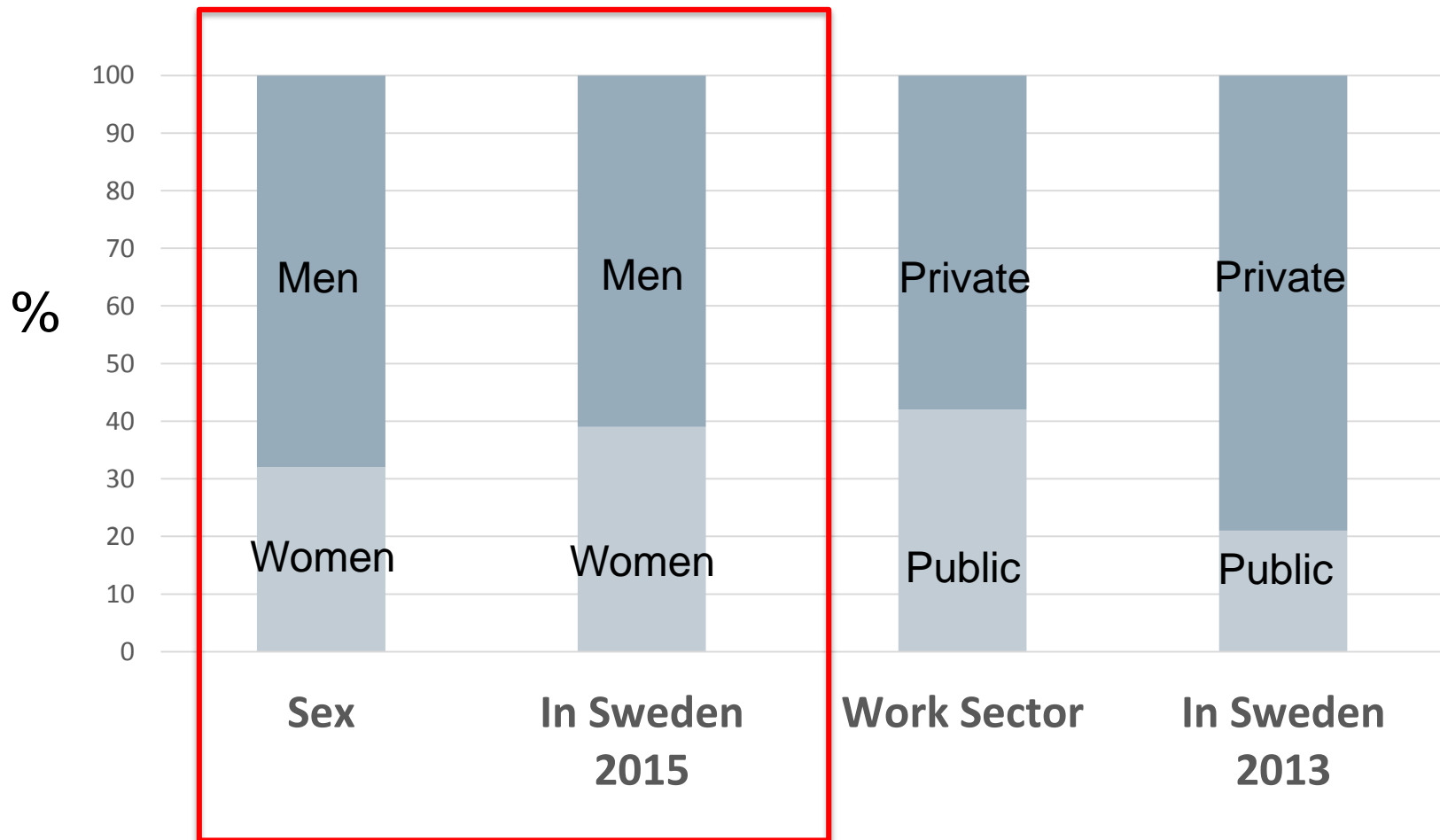


Study population



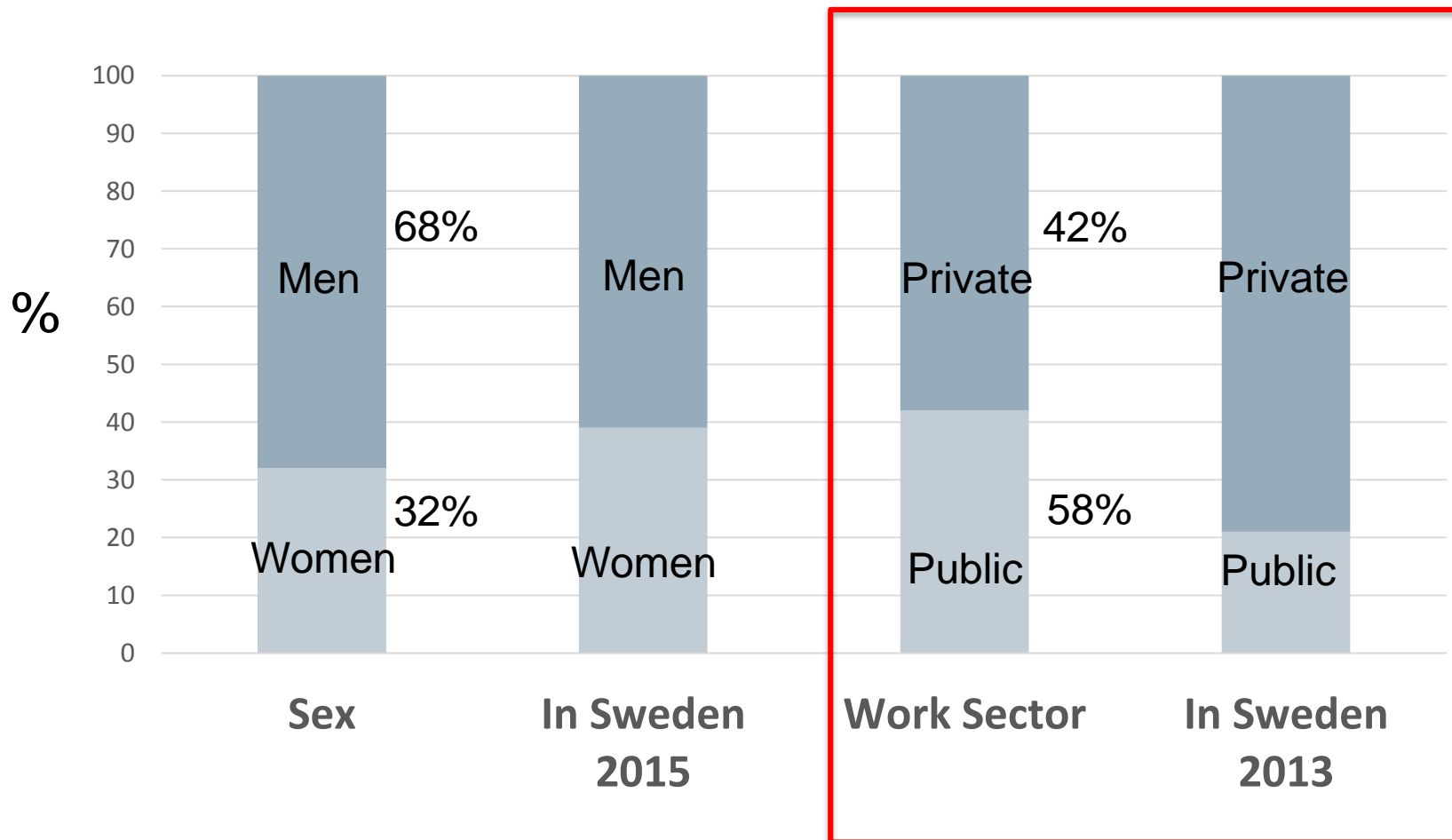


Demographics



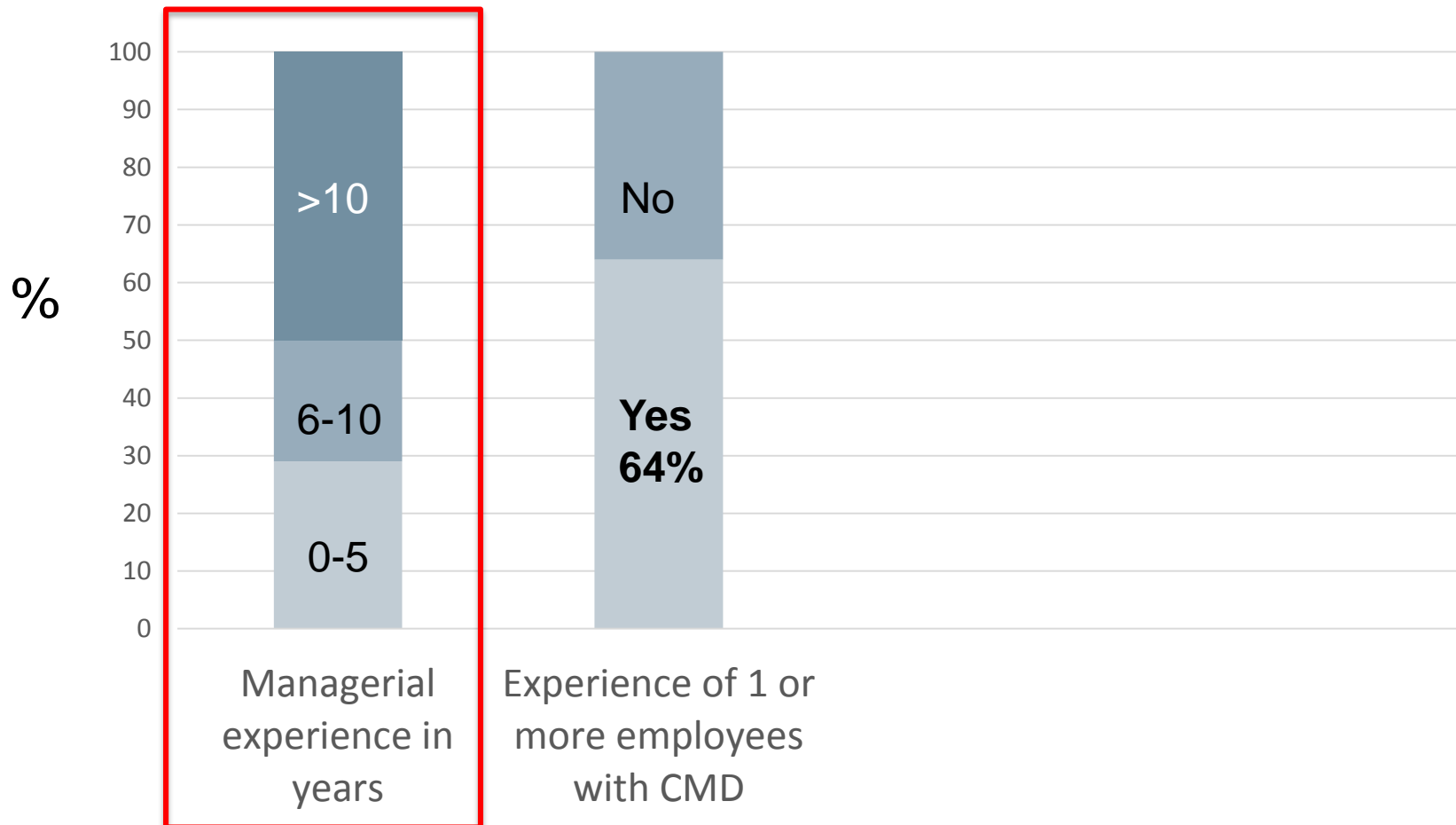


Demographics



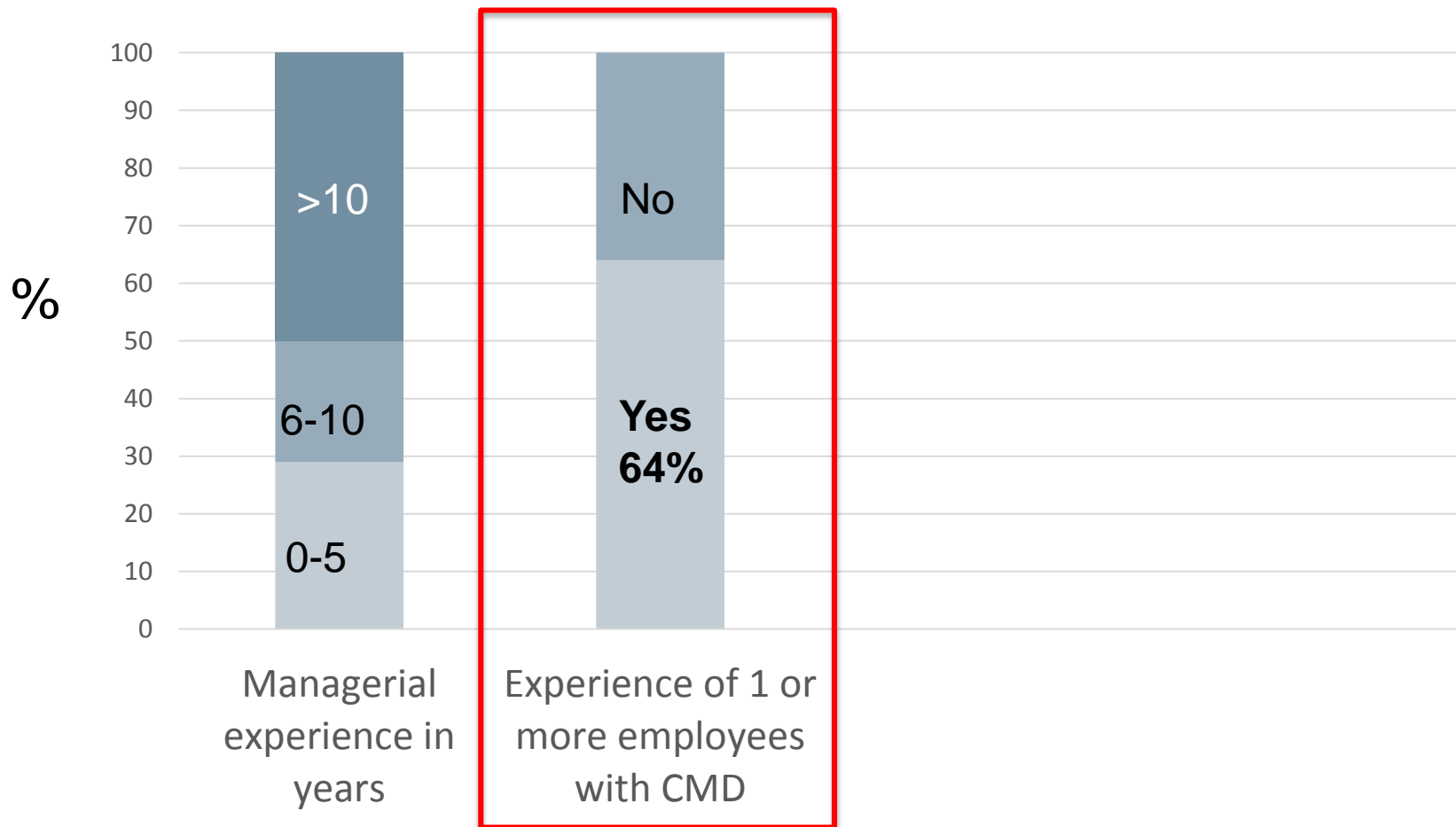


Demographics





Demographics





Have managers encouraged employees to go on sick-leave?





Have managers encouraged employees to go on sick-leave?

Earlier research:
- mainly return to work





Question asked:

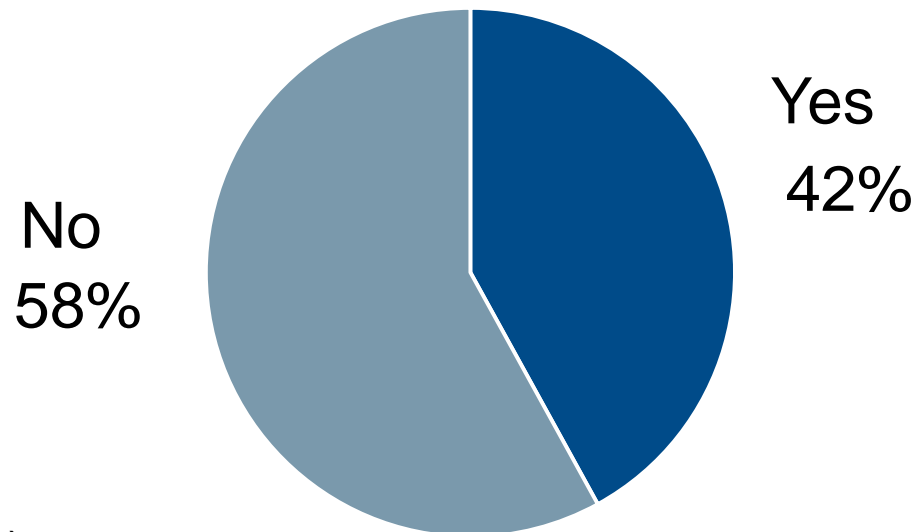
- During the last two years, have you encouraged any employee with depression or anxiety at your current work place to go on sick leave?

(n= 1819, 64%)



Question asked:

- During the last two years, have you encouraged any employee with depression or anxiety at your current work place to go on sick leave?



(n= 1819, 64%)





How do managers recommend sickness absence to a filmed case vignette?





The male vignette (in total 2 minutes):





Question asked:

Imagine that the man in the video is your staff member. Based on the narrative in the video, do you think that he needs to be granted sick leave?

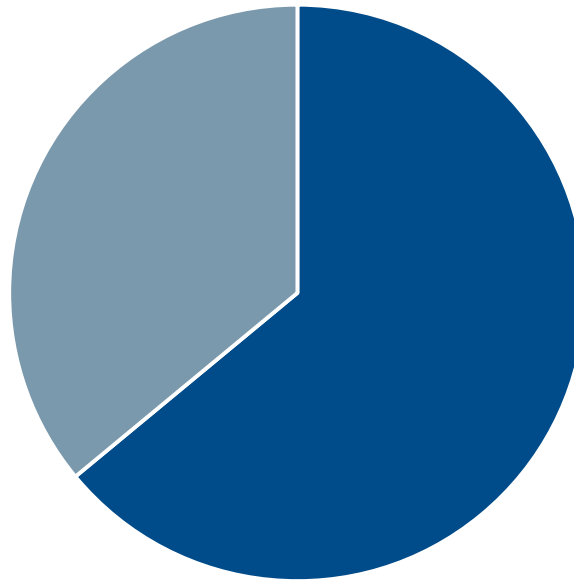
(n=3558)



Question asked:

Imagine that the man in the video is your staff member. Based on the narrative in the video, do you think that he needs to be granted sick leave?

No, absolutely not /
possibly not
36 %



Yes absolutely /
yes possibly
64 %

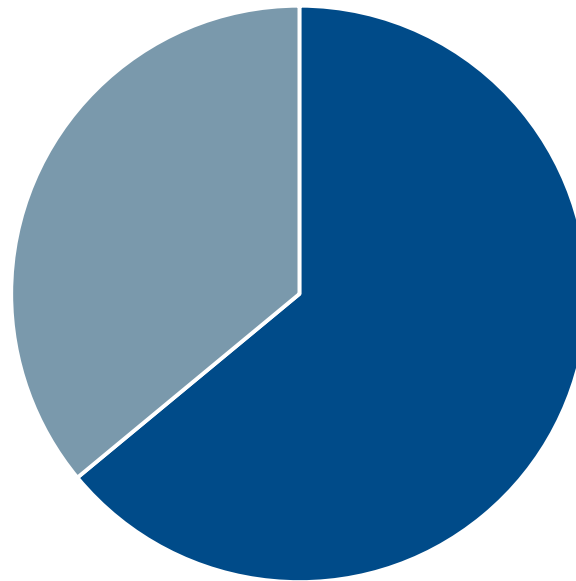
(n=3558)





Question asked:

Imagine that the man in the video is your staff member. Based on the narrative in the video, do you think that he needs to be granted sick leave?



Yes absolutely /
yes possibly

64 %

Part-time

60 %

Full time

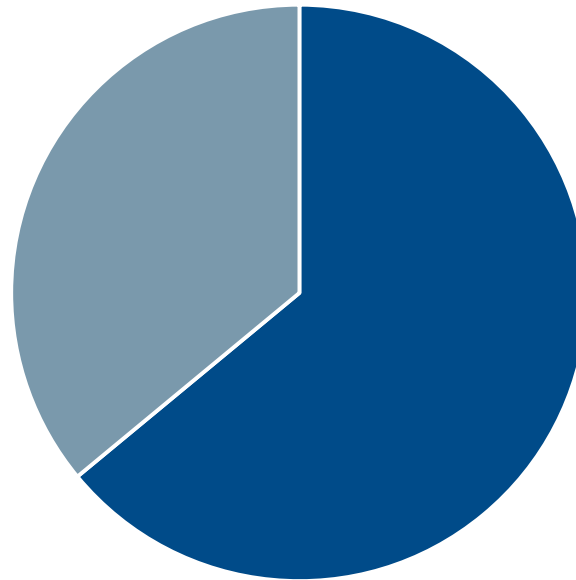
40 %

(n=3558)



Question asked:

Imagine that the man in the video is your staff member. Based on the narrative in the video, do you think that he needs to be granted sick leave?



Yes absolutely /
yes possibly
64 %

Length:

- 3 – 6 weeks: 44%
- > 6 weeks: 48%

(n=3558)

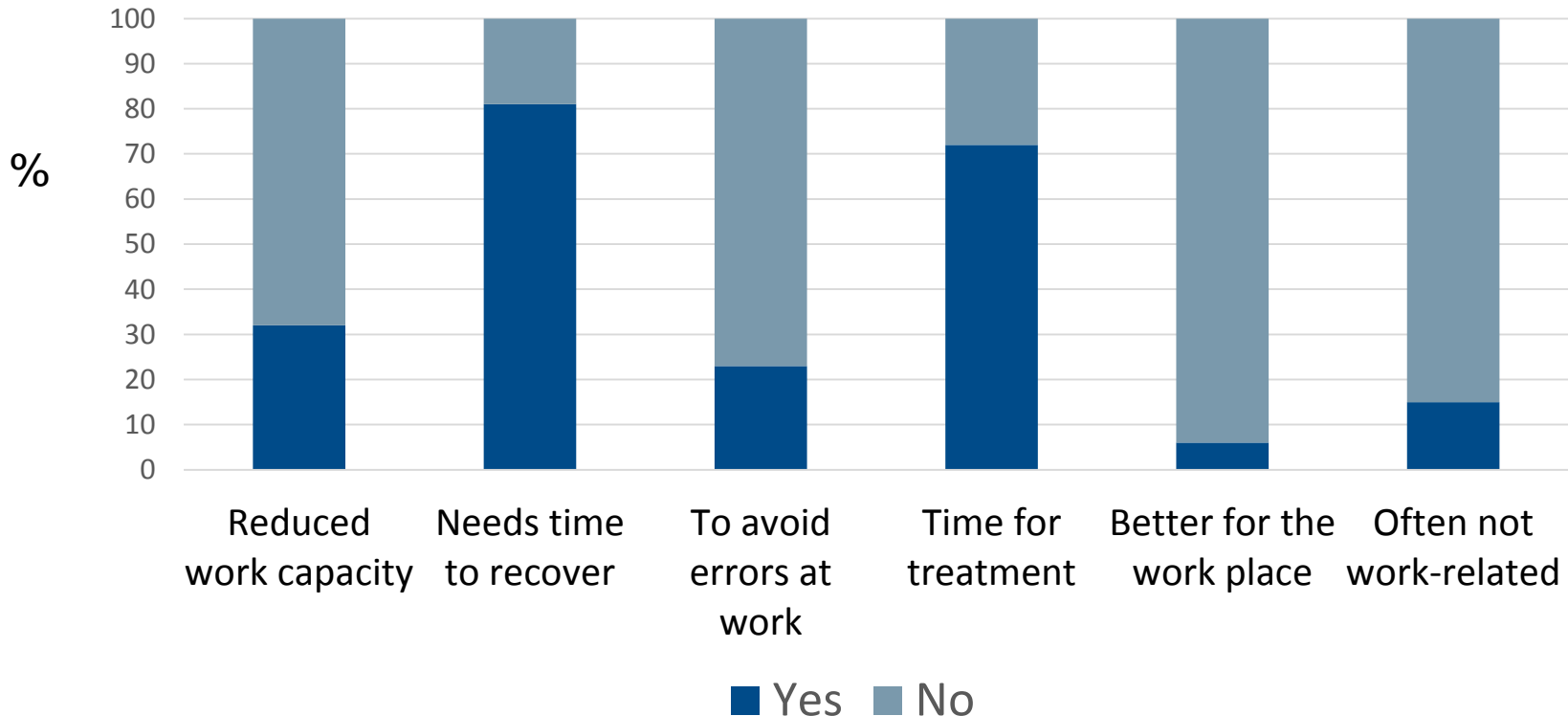


What are the employers reason for recommending sickness absence?





Question asked: Which of the following reasons do you think warrants sick leave in this case?

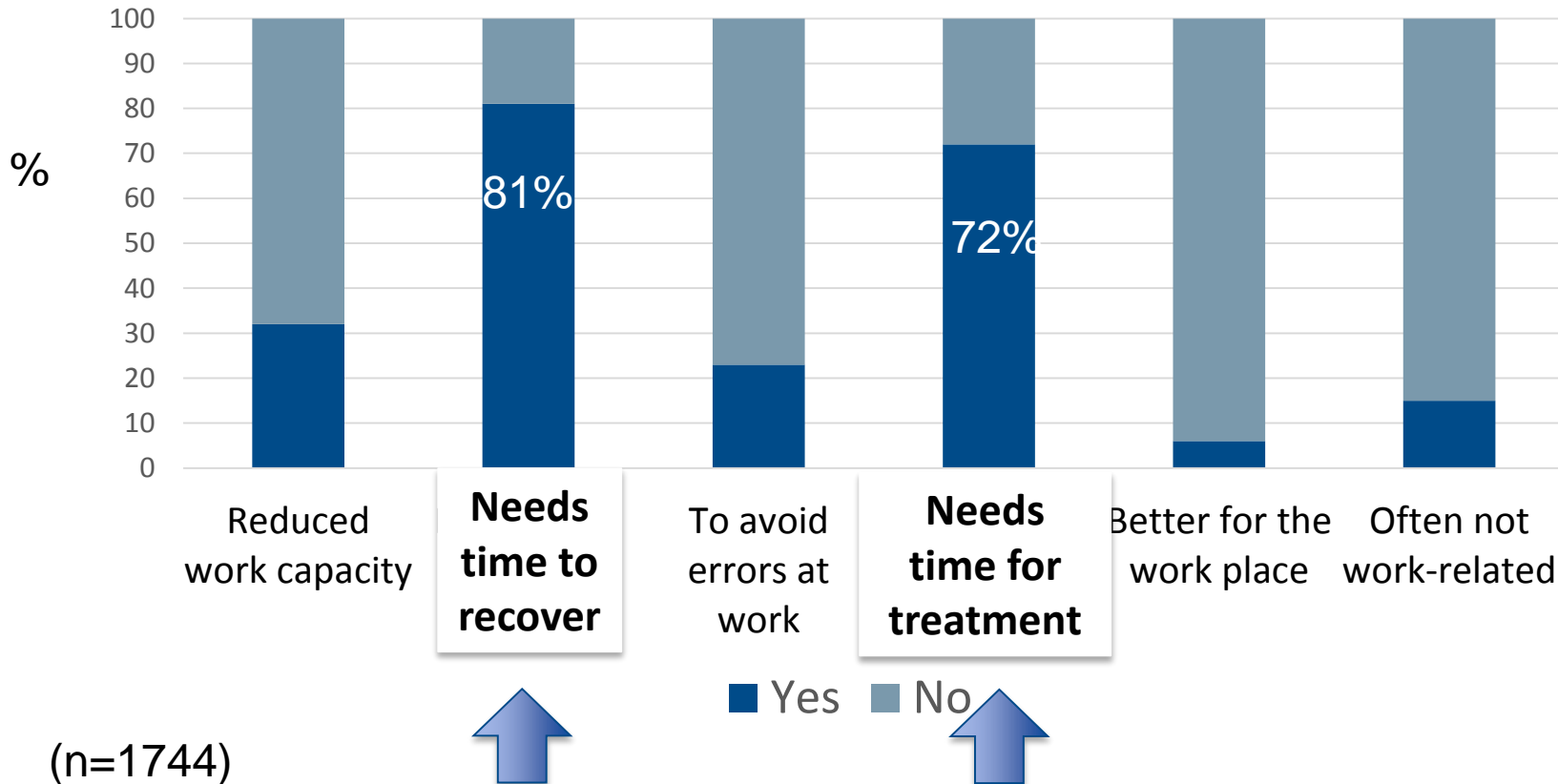


(n=1744)



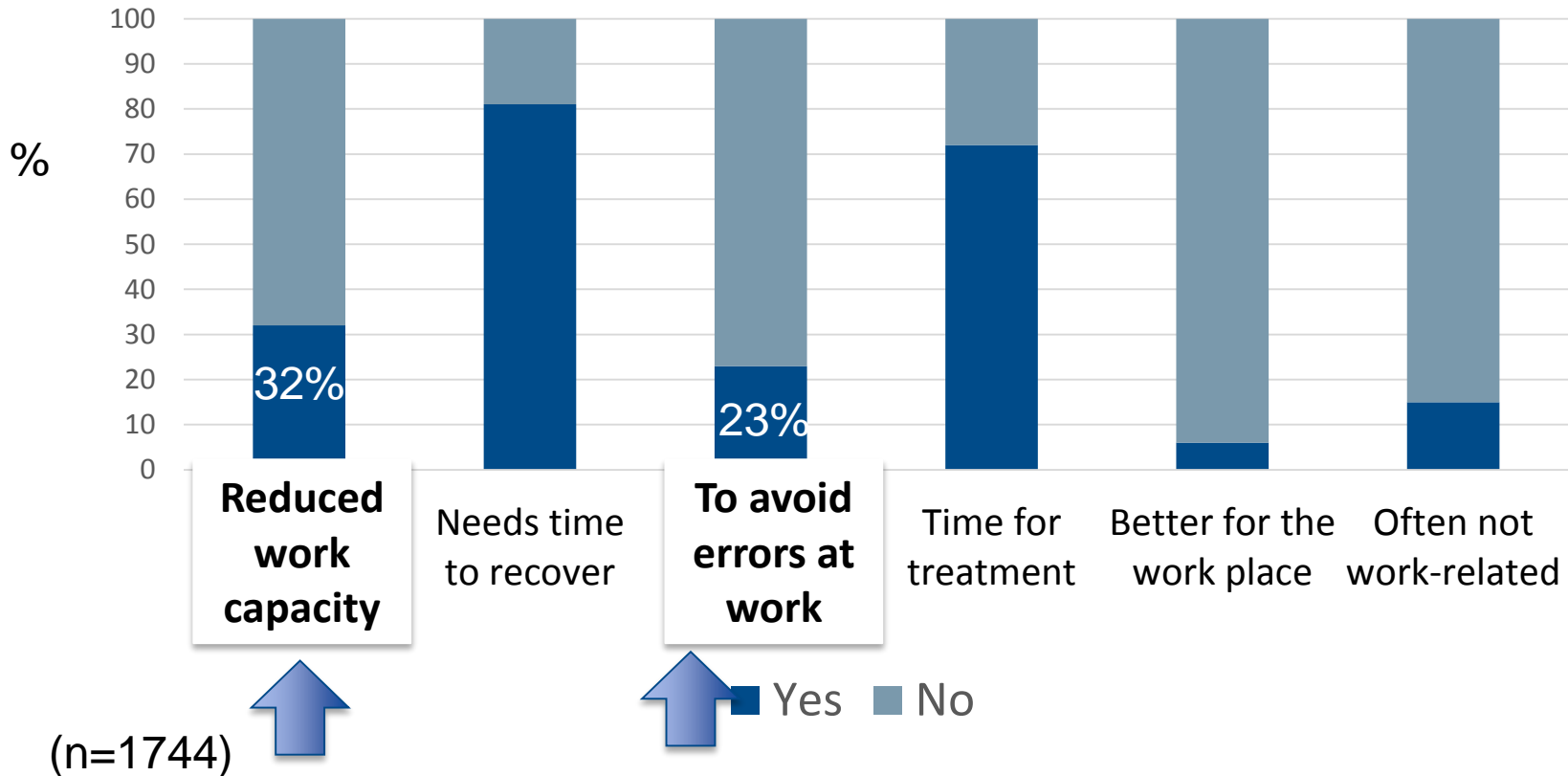


Question asked: Which of the following reasons do you think warrants sick leave in this case?





Question asked: Which of the following reasons do you think warrants sick leave in this case?





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Are managers aware of CMDs effect on capacity to work?





Are managers aware of CMDs effect on capacity to work?

Employees:

- CMDs decrease work capacity

Managers:

- difficult to understand
- invisible





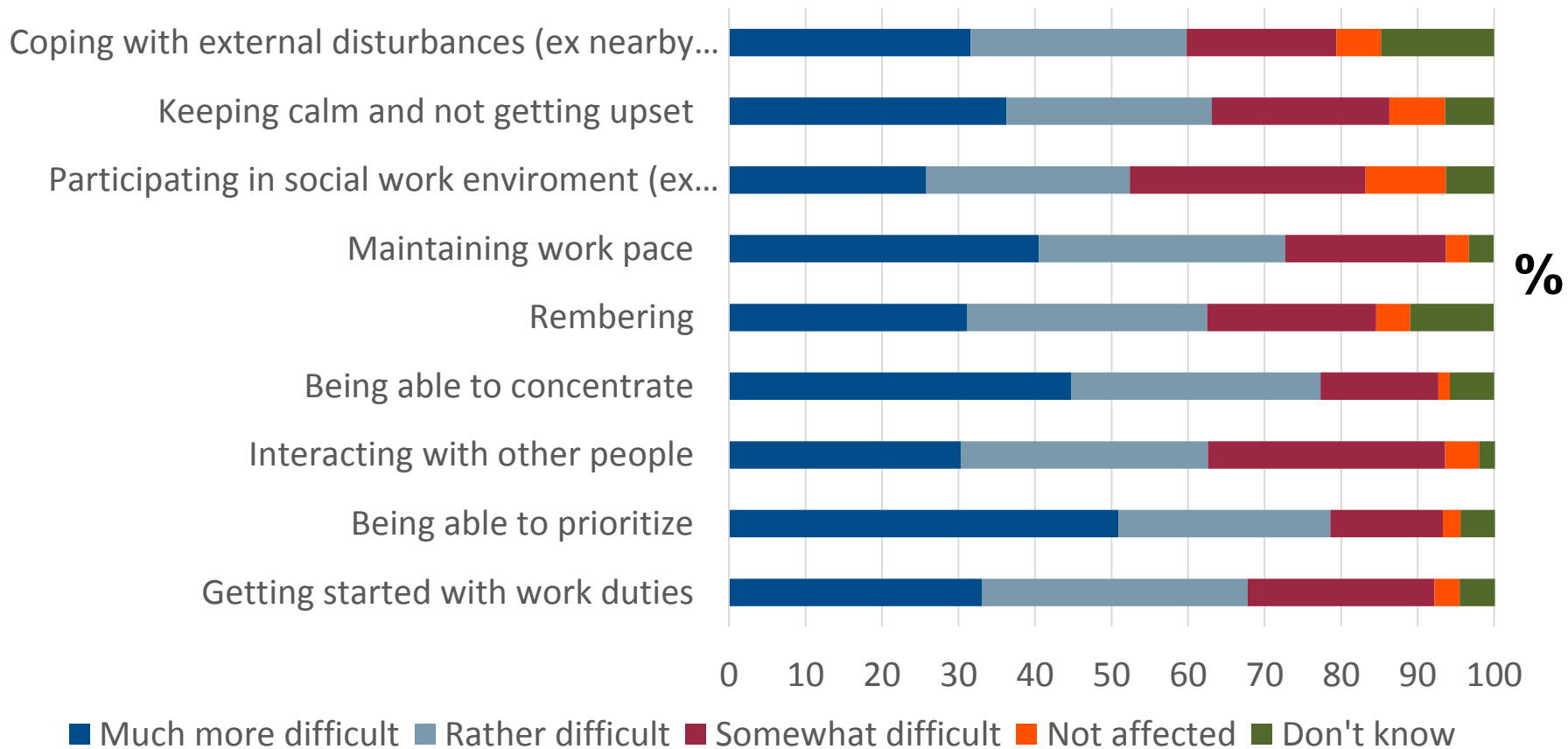
Question asked to the 64% with experience of 1 or more employees with depression/anxiety:

- Based on your perception, in what way was the capacity to work affected in these staff members?





Managers' report of how work capacity was affected in at least 2711 employees with CMD

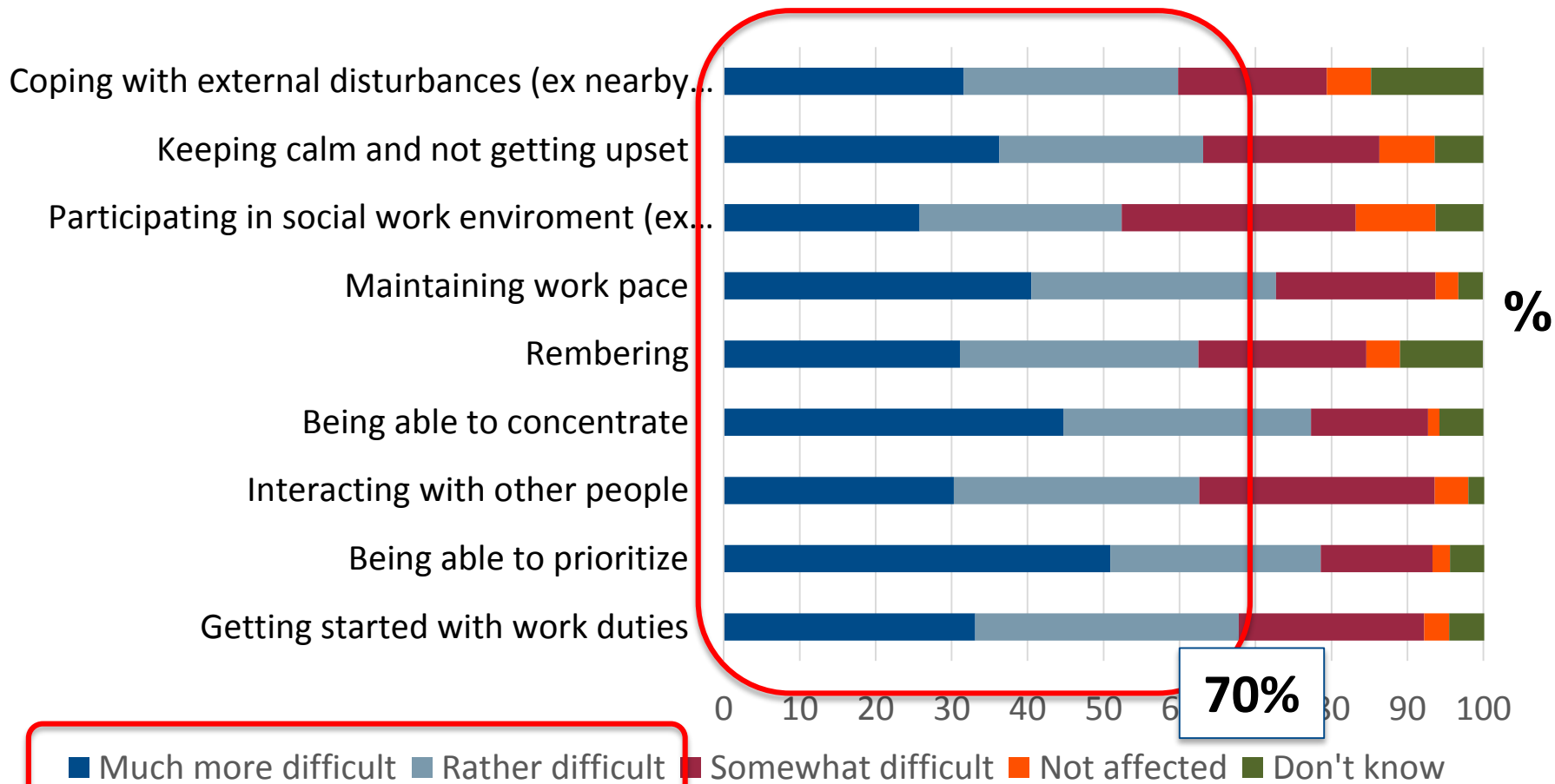


%

(n= 1819)



Managers' report of how work capacity was affected in at least 2711 employees with CMD



70%

■ Much more difficult ■ Rather difficult ■ Somewhat difficult ■ Not affected ■ Don't know

(n= 1819)



Conclusion

Managers:

- have encouraged employees to go on sick-leave
- 64% recommended sickness absence to a video vignette:
 - mainly part-time / mainly longterm
- main reason to recommend sickness absence was time to recover and time for treatment
- report highly reduced work capacity among employees with depression and anxiety disorders





Take home questions (future studies)

- Options to sickness absence?
 - Prevention at work?
 - What possibilities do managers have?
 - Use of work adjustments? What kinds?
- The expectation/obligation to take part in the sickness absence process
 - How do managers reason about that?
 - What support do managers want?
 - What kind of information do managers want?





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Thanks

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New Ways – mental health at work

epso.gu.se/newways