

Supporting the Supporters



We conducted a survey to explore the emotional impact of customer care and the resilience of those who deliver it.

In today's financial services landscape, supporting customers to achieve the best possible outcomes is a core priority. Increasingly, this means **engaging with individuals who may be vulnerable or experiencing distress**.

While frontline staff and managers are often equipped with the skills to provide effective support, the emotional toll of these interactions is less frequently acknowledged.

To perform at our best, and support those who need our help, we all need a **solid foundation of psychological wellbeing**. To have the skills to support one another, we each need to manage the challenges our roles present as well as the impact of these.

This survey, supported by the **Income Protection Task Force and the Association of British Insurers**, offers some interesting insights into the worlds of those supporting vulnerable customers on a day-to-day basis and suggests some colleagues are struggling at times, despite the perceived wealth of employee support resources available.

The results of this survey offer a snapshot into people's experiences and perceptions. There are many positives to take. It found that of the 139 people surveyed the majority felt confident in their ability to manage their own wellbeing.



95%

of respondents have never been absent from work as a result of the stresses of supporting vulnerable customers, speaking to great resilience amongst the workforce. The majority of respondents also report high levels of job satisfaction.

However, if we look at little deeper, we can see that some of those exposed to stressors specifically related to supporting vulnerable customers are adversely impacted, both in and out of work. The findings suggest that some are struggling in silence and that the support currently available to them isn't what they need or will engage with.

Key Findings

The survey uncovered a range of different insights which speak positively to the work organisations are doing to support their teams, but also highlights where clear gaps in provision and access lie.

68%

of those in customer facing roles are supporting customers in distress on **at least a weekly basis.**

1 in 4



do not have high levels of confidence in managing their emotional health and wellbeing whilst at work.

More than half

feel emotionally impacted or overwhelmed due to dealing with vulnerable customers.

1 in 5

managers, and **more than 50%** of those in customer facing roles, say that the effects of their role carries into their personal lives.

Only 6%

accessed wellbeing services available through their employer last year, and **1 in 4** report low levels of comfort in turning to their manager for emotional support.

Over 55%

felt very comfortable speaking to their manager about the emotional impact of the role on their wellbeing.

Many respondents were experiencing symptoms associated with poor emotional health and wellbeing as a direct result of the work undertaken. The most common being **trouble sleeping, burnout,** physical symptoms such as **headaches** and **fatigue,** and **anxiety.**