



香港城市精神健康聯盟

**City Mental Health Alliance** HK

## WHAT ARE COMPANIES DOING TO SUPPORT EMPLOYEES' WELLBEING? QUANTITATIVE RESULTS FROM 2021 SURVEY

**Following the results of 18 member organisations' Thriving at Work Assessments, The City Mental Health Alliance Hong Kong (CMHA HK) share their observations**

In April 2021 the City Mental Health Alliance Hong Kong (CMHA HK) released reports to 18 member companies who had completed the *Thriving at Work Assessment Survey*. This self-assessment survey gives companies an opportunity to measure their progress against initiatives in the Standards of our keystone document the CMHA HK Guide to Thriving at Work. (free for download [here](#)) The Guide covers workplace mental health strategy development and implementation, raising awareness, fostering an inclusive culture, creating a healthy working environment, managing people and data measurement.



### **Mental Health and Wellbeing Initiatives Accelerated by Global Pandemic**

The average level attained in the 2020/21 survey was Achieving (161 out of 300) ranging across the 18 companies from Committed to Excelling. This result indicates that companies are making definite progress to implement employee wellbeing policies in Hong Kong workplaces, with leading companies making significant changes. However, room for improvement remains.

Our data shows strong momentum from organisations focussed on developing and improving their employee wellbeing policies. In general, member companies who undertook the assessment in 2019/20 raised their scores in 2020/21 by 20%.

“...flexible working has been adopted by EY for some time - however the focus on initiatives such as flexibility and mental wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic has definitely refined and intensified, and the timing around some of these initiatives has accelerated.” - **Melanie Dale, EY Associate Director – Brand, Marketing and Communications and HK Wellbeing Committee member**

Feedback from survey respondents indicates Covid-19 was a key change driver, accelerating progress in numerous employee wellbeing initiatives. Among companies who had also completed the survey in 2019/20, flexible work arrangements, mental health awareness and addressing unhealthy workplace risks, showed an overall increase of 40% from 2020. Initiatives encouraging senior leaders to role model healthy behaviours improved by 152%.

More importantly, respondents indicated that these are not temporary changes with several commenting that flexible working arrangements are here to stay. Melanie Dale, EY Associate

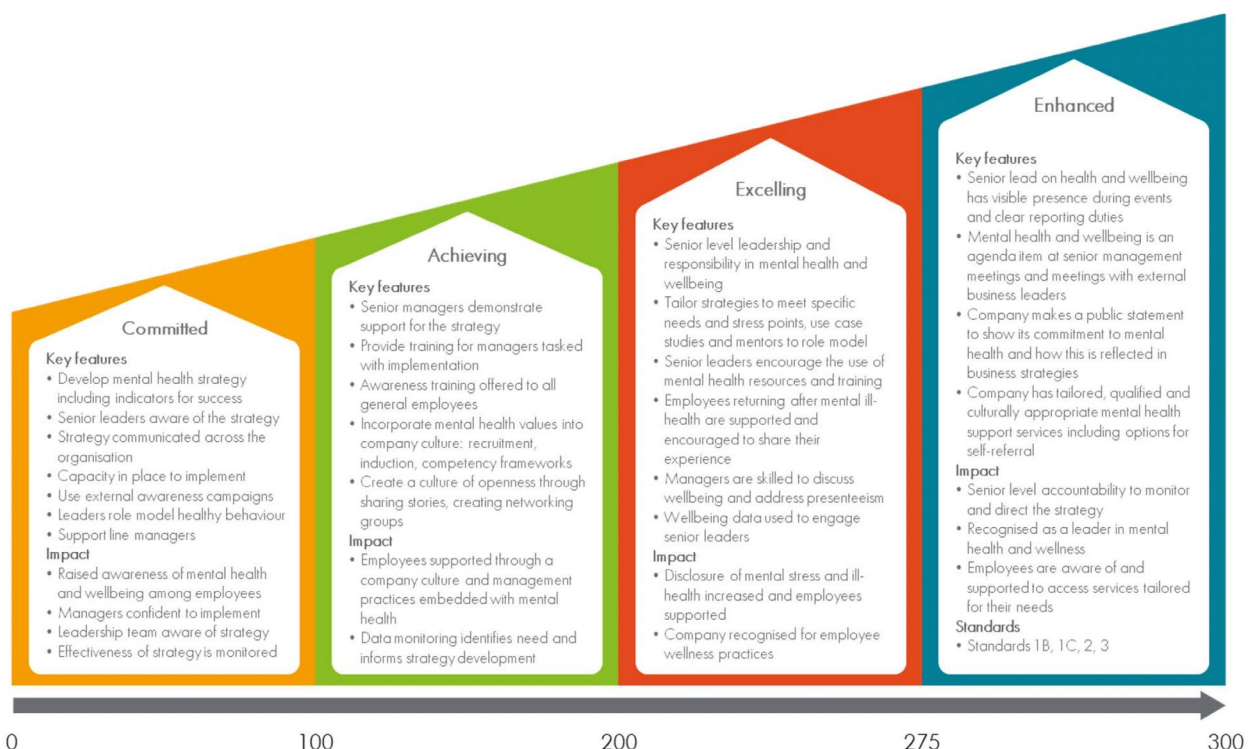
Director - Brand, Marketing and Communications and HK Wellbeing Committee member wrote that “...flexible working has been adopted by EY for some time - however the focus on initiatives such as flexibility and mental wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic has definitely refined and intensified, and the timing around some of these initiatives has accelerated.”

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The Thriving at Work Self-Assessment aims to give organisations data and insights in order to inform their mental health and wellbeing strategies as they strive towards creating a mentally healthy workplace.

### Maturity Scale

Depending on the complexity, each initiative is classified as **Committed**, **Achieving**, **Excelling** or **Enhanced**. Companies rate their progress as: Not planned, Planned, In progress, or Completed. Each initiative is then scored and aggregated to produce a quantitative value for each Standard and an overall score for the company.



### Increase in Effective People Management Line Manager Training

CMHA HK members are supporting line managers to develop the skills they need to initiate mental health-related conversations with direct reports. This is evidenced by an 82% increase in training provided to line managers on topics relating to effective people management.

### Key to Success? Senior Level Buy-in

Aside from the impact of Covid-19, the top 10% performing companies all agreed that senior level buy-in and engagement were key to the success of their workplace wellbeing strategies. Penny Barsha, Corporate Responsibility Manager, Asia, at Linklaters suggested that when it comes to strategy implementation “...as always, senior support, empathy and showing vulnerability are key.”

## The Importance of a Solid Foundation

In 2021, member companies performed strongly in Committed and Achieving level initiatives such as: strategy and implementation planning; using campaigns and training to increase mental health awareness; and making public statements to demonstrate their commitment to employee mental health. This solid foundation to their wellbeing strategy has allowed them to take on more complex initiatives such as providing in-house counselling for employees. Among our members, 89% are in progress or have established various forms of in-house and external psychological support. Moreover, all include EAP in their roadmap and 79% are providing (or plan to provide) medical insurance benefits with adequate support for mental health within their premiums.

### Areas for Improvement

The Thriving at Work Assessment results show that for most of our members, data driven decisions with regard to a wellbeing strategy and providing support for employees around mental health disclosure, remain areas that require further development. Just one-third of members are actively collecting and using data to review and revise their mental health strategy, and over 75% do not have processes in place to encourage employees to disclose their mental

ill-health. We believe that disclosure, if done well, can be a strong indicator of an open and inclusive culture, and using data to quantify the impact and progress as part of a mental health strategy is instrumental to facilitating and formalising meaningful discussions at senior leadership or Board level. By extending the survey to non-member companies we hope to support the creation of mentally healthy workplaces to the broader corporate community in Hong Kong.

The City Mental Health Alliance Hong Kong is a not-for-profit membership organisation. We are an alliance of businesses, working together with mental health experts and partner organisations, to achieve our vision that every workplace will protect, support and create positive mental health for their people.

As a member-led organisation, CMHA HK will continue to facilitate our members' progress through high quality training and regular best practice sharing, provided at the level and pace required by our members to support their development of employee wellbeing strategies.

For further information, please visit our [website](#) or [contact us](#) directly.



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The City Mental Health Alliance Hong Kong is a collaborative venture founded by city businesses. Championed by senior leaders, the Alliance is business led and expert guided and aims to create a culture of good mental health for workers in Hong Kong, share best practice and increase mental health understanding.