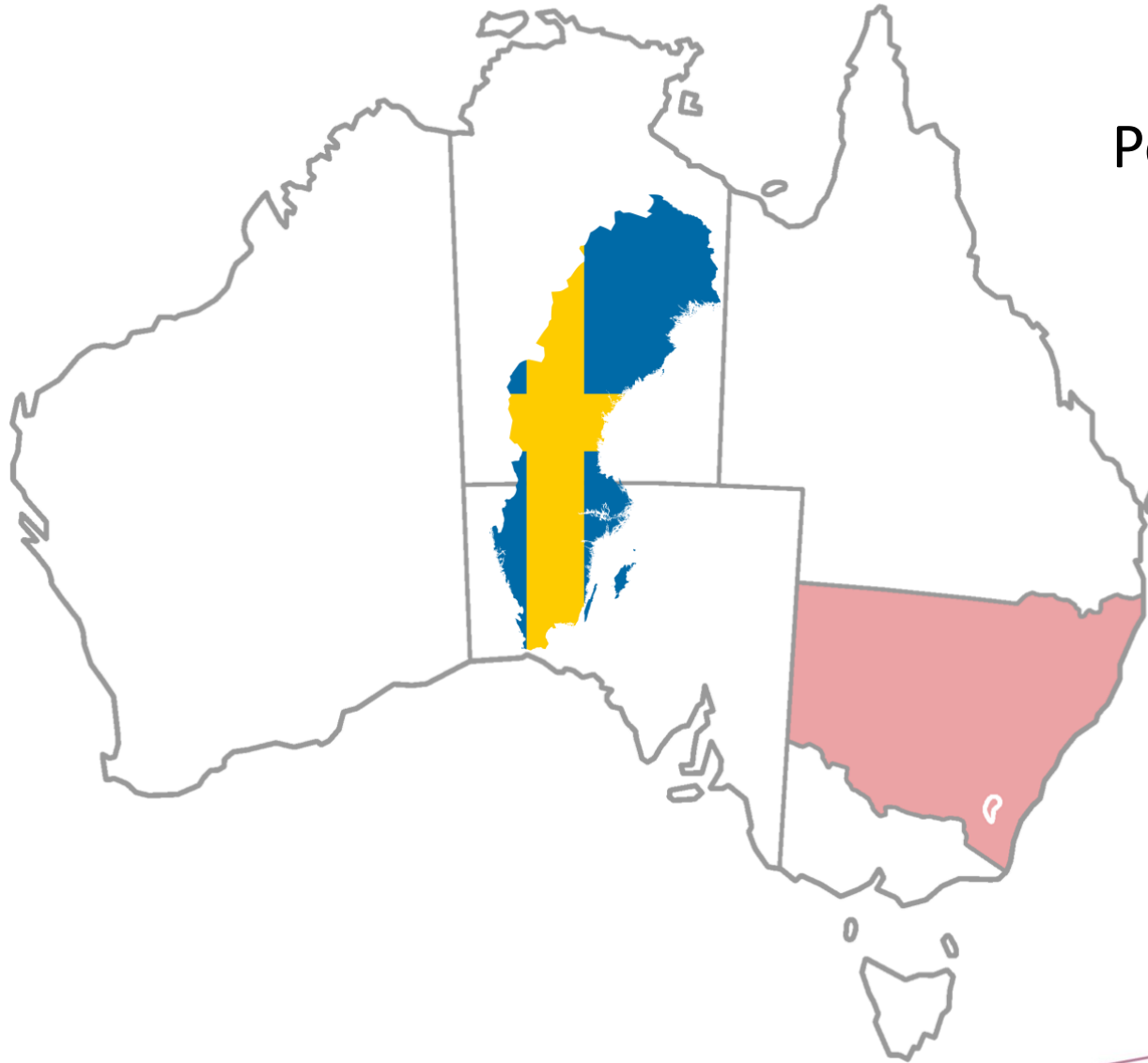


Carer friendly employment practices and associated outcomes

International Carer Conference

5th September, 2015

Carers in Australia



Population: 23.9 million
2.7 million carers

NSW: 7.5 million
857,200 carers

Sweden: 9.7 million
1.3 million carers

Carers NSW

Carers NSW is the peak non-government organisation for carers in NSW and a member of the National Network of Carers Associations

Our focus is on improving the lives of carers and our vision is an Australia that values and supports all carers

Carers NSW works with all carers regardless of their age, location, life-stage or circumstances. This includes caring for individuals with support needs relating to ageing, disability, health and mental illness

Carers NSW 2014 Carer Survey

Most extensive Carer Survey ever conducted

Developed in consultation with an expert reference committee

Main sections:

- The person you care for
- Your employment
- Service access and social support
- Your health and wellbeing
- About you (demographics)

Carers NSW 2014 Carer Survey

Employment

As well as being a carer, are you in paid employment?

Does your employer know that you have caring responsibilities?

Do you feel comfortable telling others in the workplace that you have caring responsibilities?

Does your workplace support you to combine work and care?

Which workplace practices are available to you, which have you used, and which have been helpful to you?

Profile of carers

		Working carers	TOTAL
Number		720	1684
Gender	Female	87.1%	84.0%
	Male	11.7%	14.9%
Age (average)		50.0 years	55.9 years
Years caring (average)		10.7 years	11.3 years
Hours per week (average)		39.5 hours	46.8 hours

Workplace supports – the Australian legal context

- *NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* – employers required to reasonably accommodate the caring responsibilities of their employees unless they can prove unjustifiable hardship.
- Employment Awards – various conditions – most contain carers leave
- *NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* – pertains to public sector
- *Commonwealth Carer Recognition Act 2010* – pertains to public sector and funded agencies.

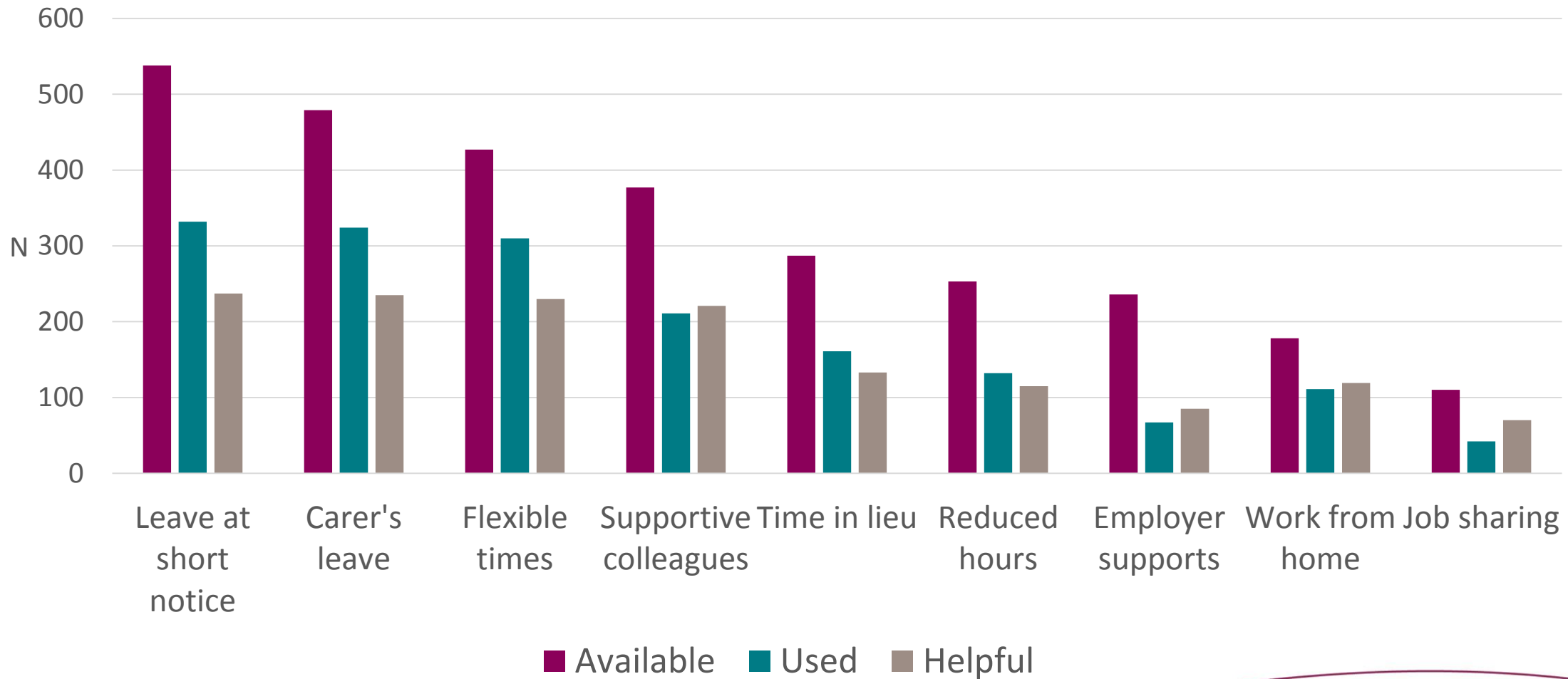
Legal context cont'd

Fair Work Act 2009 - the right to make a written request for flexible working arrangements by employees because they:

- are the parent, or have responsibility for the care of a child who is of school age or younger
- are a carer (within the meaning of the *Carer Recognition Act 2010*)

A request for flexible working arrangements can only be refused on reasonable business grounds.

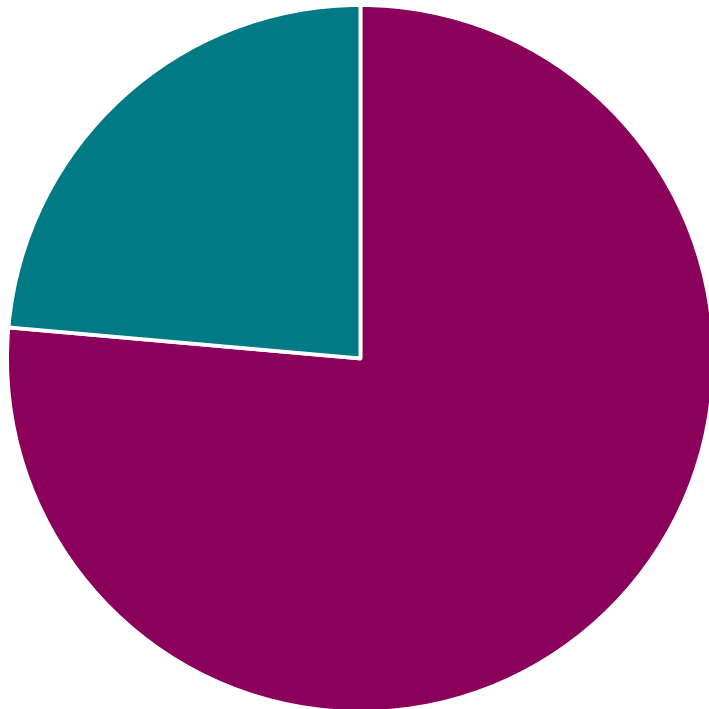
Workplace practices



Workplace support

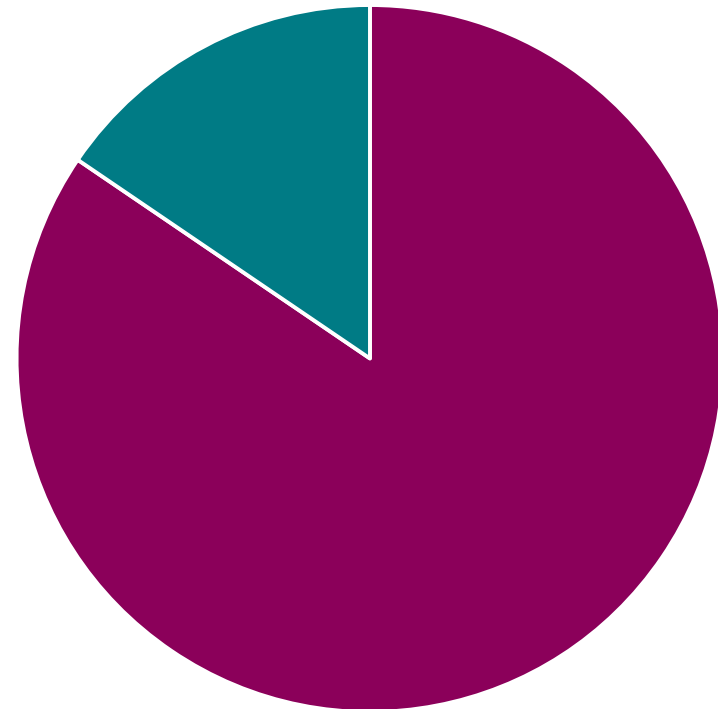
Does your workplace support you to combine work and care?

All working carers



■ Yes ■ No

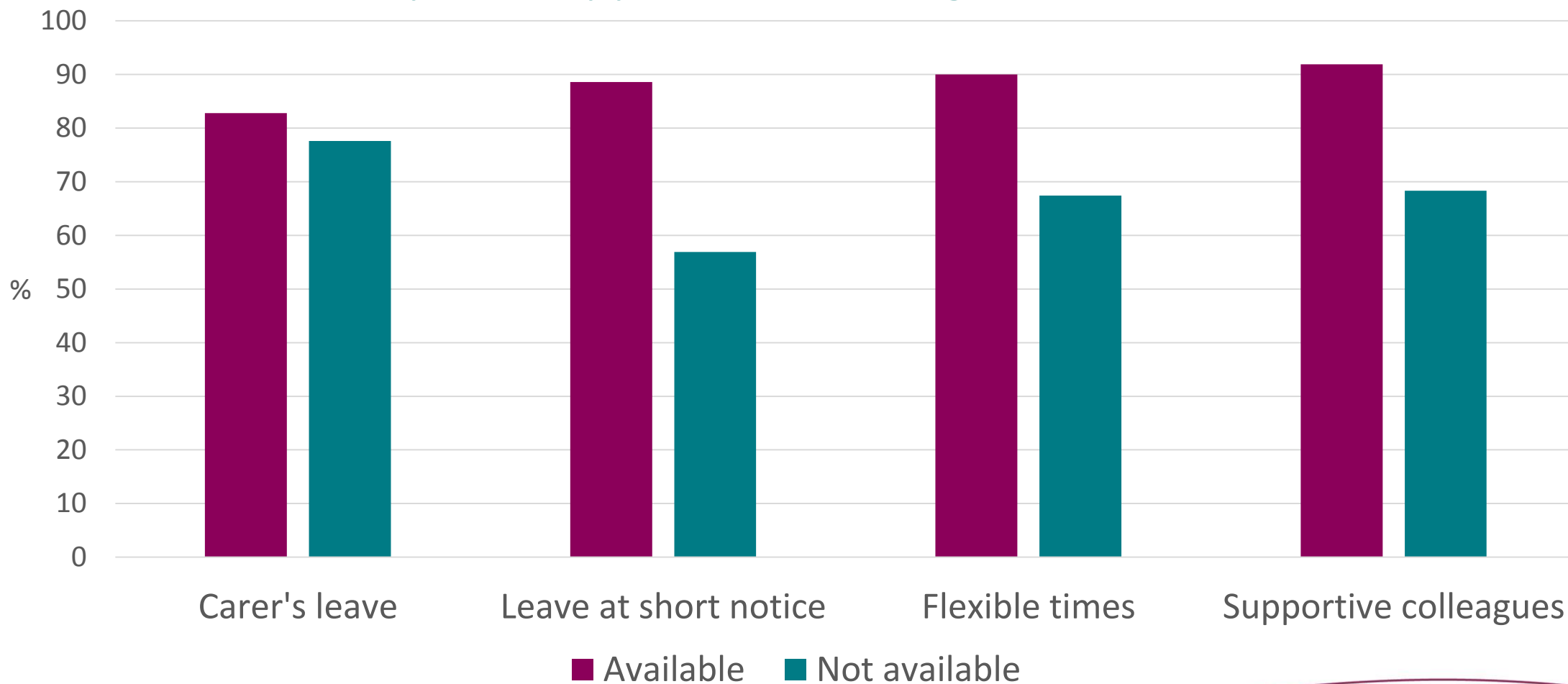
Used any support



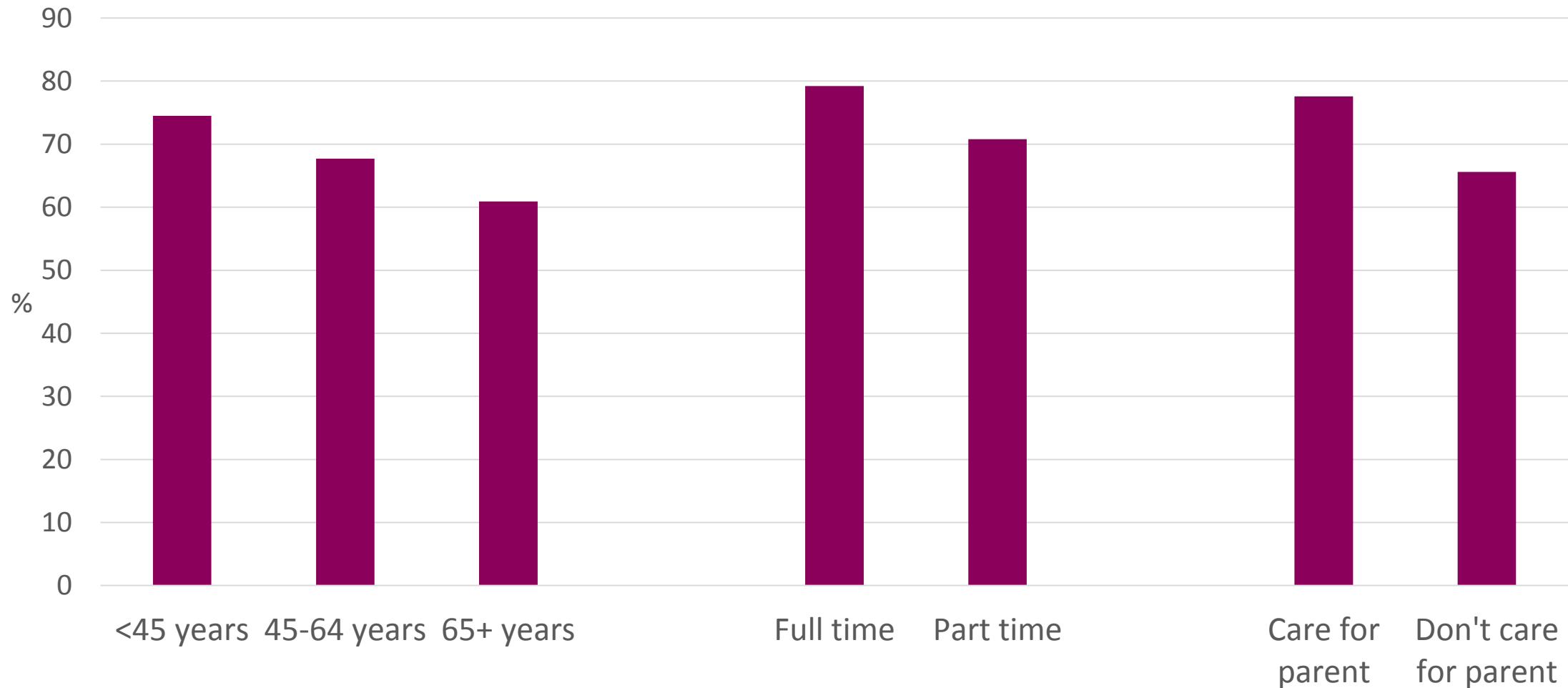
■ Yes ■ No

Workplace support

Workplace supports combining work and care

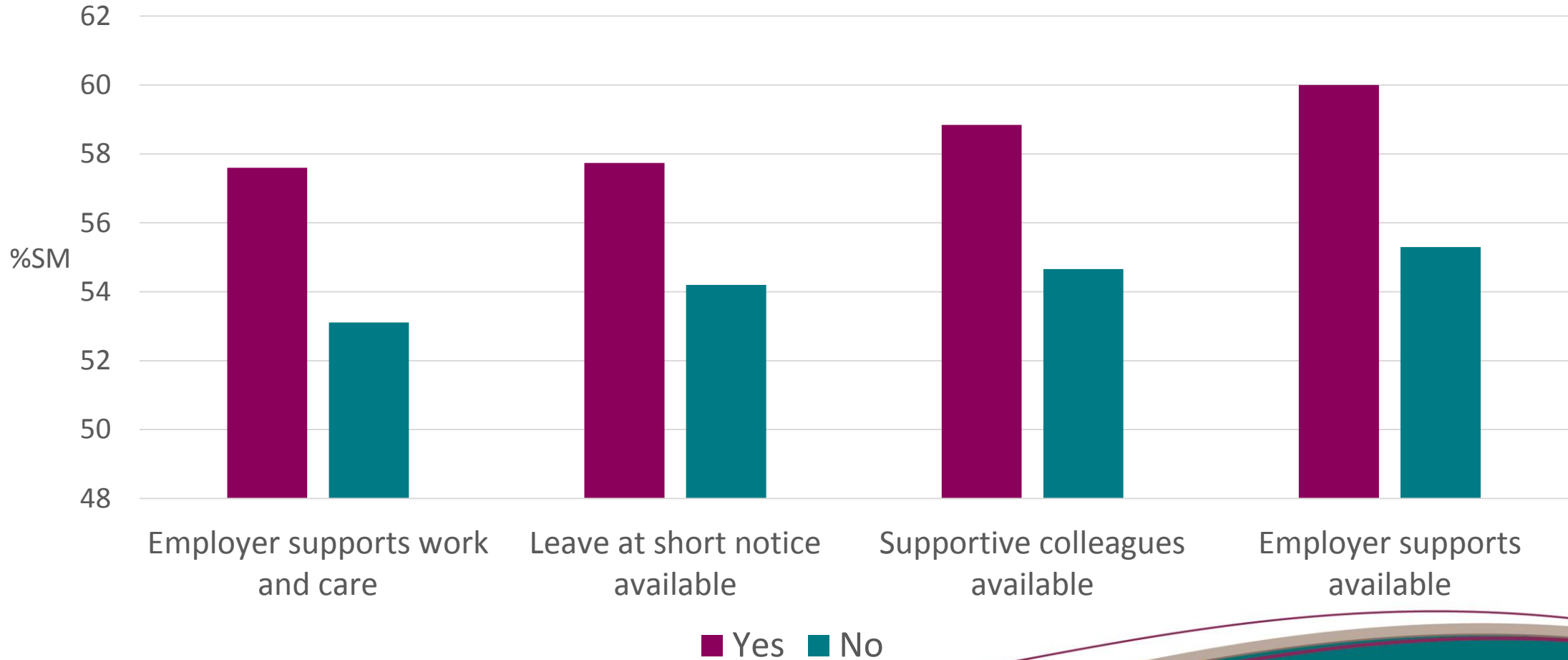


Using workplace practices



Workplace support and wellbeing

Personal Wellbeing Index



Workplace support and wellbeing

Majority of working carers had informed their employer (85%)

76% felt comfortable telling employer

76% felt supported to balance work and care

When comfortable telling employer:

- Lower psychological distress
- Higher wellbeing
- More positive aspects of caring

When workplace supports work and care:

- Higher wellbeing
- More positive aspects of caring

A Workplace Culture of Care

- Care is safe to talk about
- Care responsibilities are valued
- Carers are actively supported
- Colleagues understand that they all benefit from flexible practices
- Managers are well trained

Discussion

Working carers balance significant amounts of care with employment

Majority of workplaces are supportive
Substantial proportion are not

Importance of providing a range of supportive practices

- Different practices suit different carers
- Different groups access different supports
- Availability of supports linked with wellbeing
- Workplace culture

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