



Breastfeeding at Work

EMPLOYEES SURVEY RESULTS

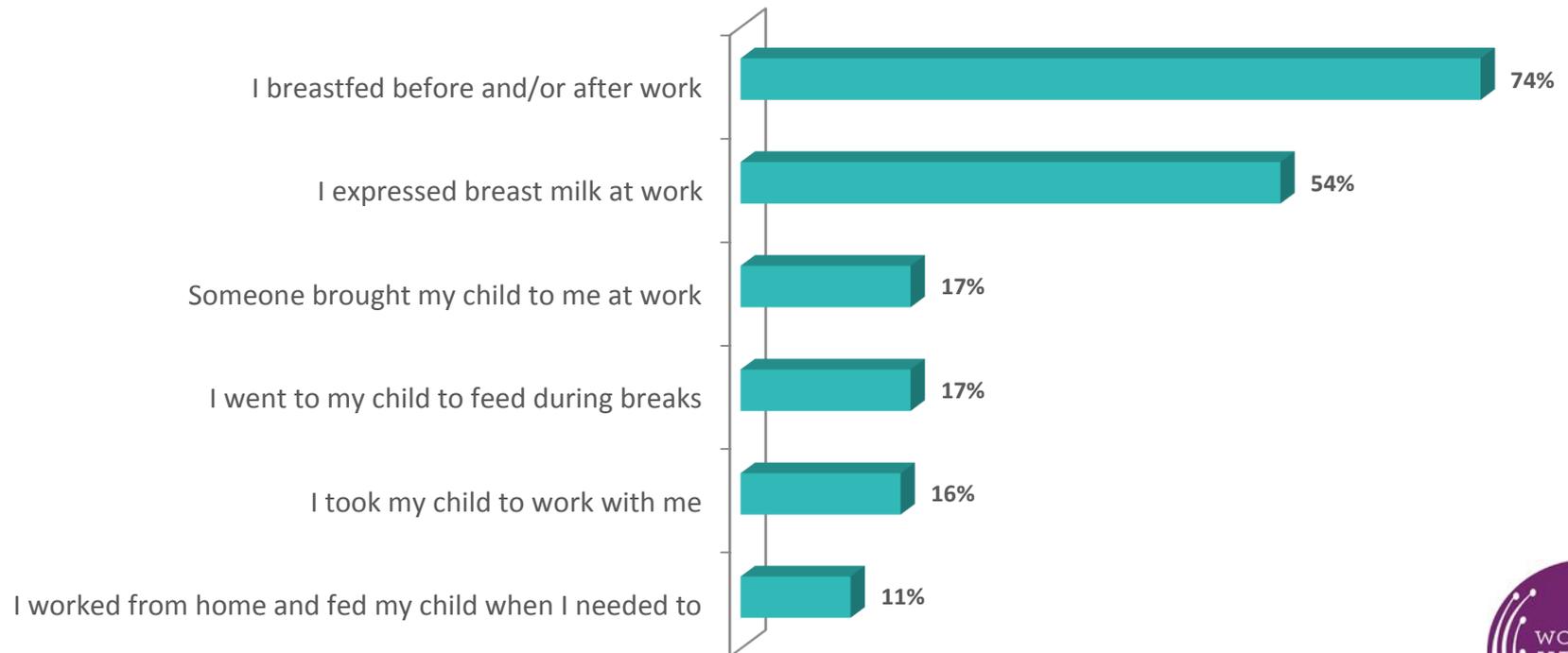
WOMEN'S HEALTH ACTION SURVEYED 527 WOMEN IN MAY AND JUNE 2015, ON THEIR EXPERIENCES OF BREASTFEEDING OR EXPRESSING IN THE WORKPLACE

- ▶ On average, survey respondents returned to work when their baby was 6 months old.
- ▶ Nearly two-thirds (62%) of women who answered the survey were still breastfeeding or expressing.
- ▶ Most (55%) were employed part-time.
- ▶ Most respondents identified as NZ European (95%), Māori (13%), Pasifika (3%), Asian (1%), Indian (1%) or other (10%).
- ▶ Most worked in health (26%), education (25%), professional, scientific, technical and administrative services (14%), retail (10%), financial and insurance services (7.1%), arts (4%), public administration (4%) or media and telecommunications (3%).



MOST RESPONDENTS MANAGED BREASTFEEDING AND WORKING BY EXPRESSING BEFORE AND/OR AFTER WORK

HOW DID YOU MANAGE BREASTFEEDING AND WORKING?

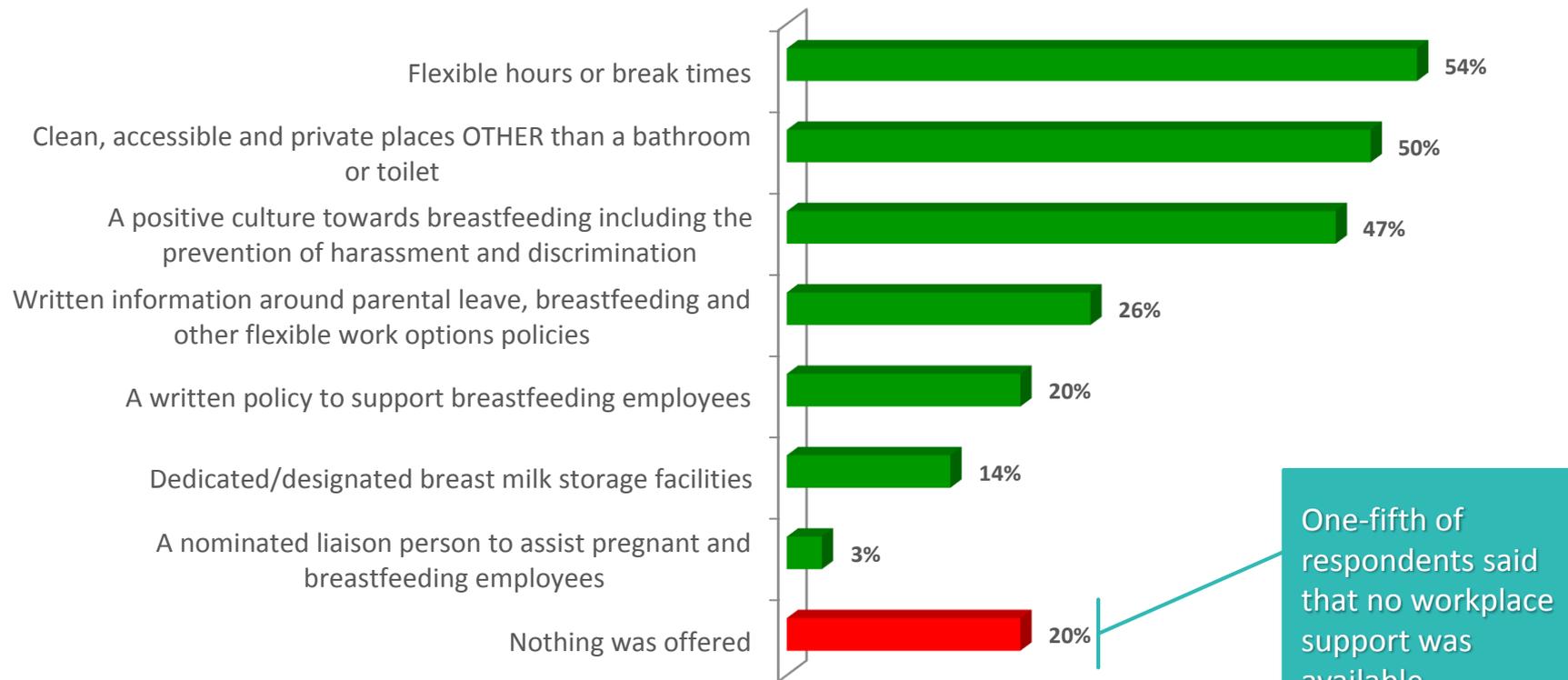


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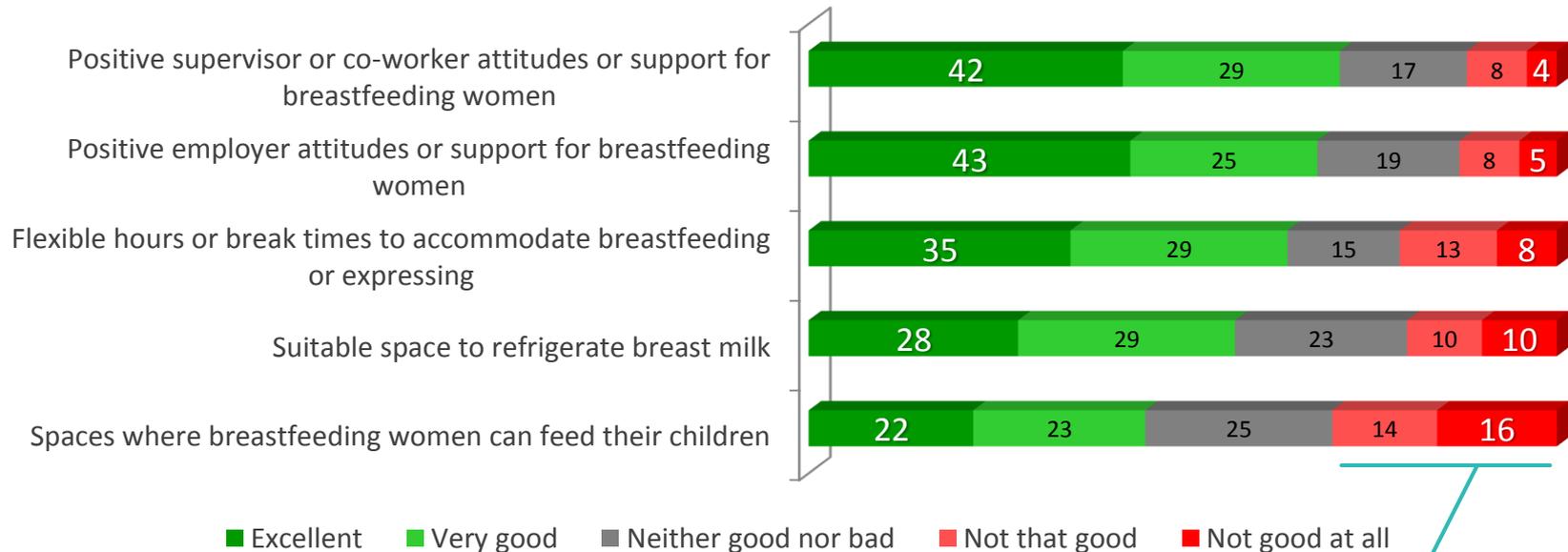
8 OUT OF 10 RESPONDENTS INDICATED THAT THEIR WORKPLACE HAD SOME SORT OF SUPPORT FOR BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS

WORKPLACE SUPPORT AVAILABLE FOR BREASTFEEDING OR EXPRESSING



WOMEN WERE MOST LIKELY TO RATE THEIR WORKPLACES POSITIVELY ON POSITIVE ATTITUDES TO BREASTFEEDING

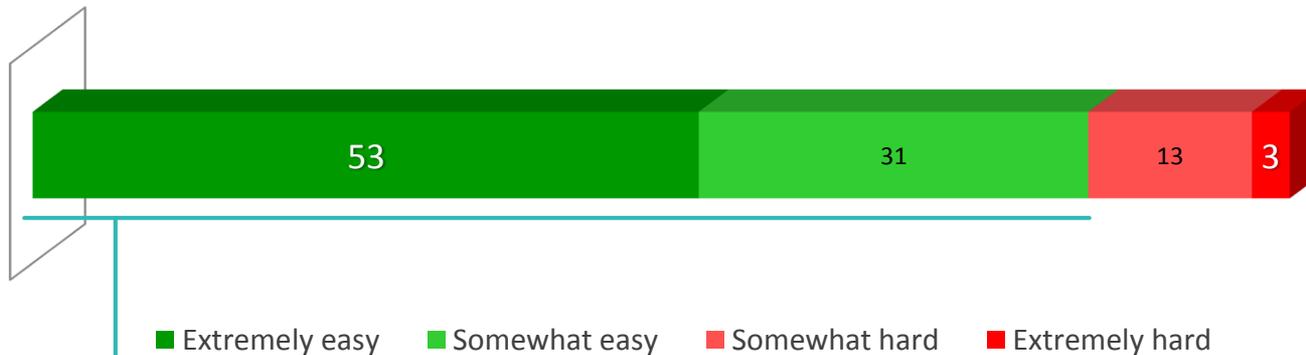
RATING ON AVAILABLE WORKPLACE SUPPORT



Respondents were least likely to rate their workplaces positively on spaces to breastfeed or express breast milk

4 OUT OF EVERY 10 WOMEN DID NOT DISCUSS THEIR BREASTFEEDING NEEDS WITH THEIR EMPLOYER BEFORE THEY RETURNED TO WORK

HOW EASY IT WAS TO DISCUSS BREASTFEEDING NEEDS WITH EMPLOYER



Of those who did, most (84%) found it somewhat or extremely easy

OF THOSE WOMEN WHO DID DISCUSS THEIR BREASTFEEDING NEEDS NEARLY THREE QUARTERS (72%) FOUND THE PROCESS A POSITIVE ONE.

This was because:

- ▶ Their places of work were flexible and supportive of their needs (135 comments from 205 respondents or 66%);
- ▶ Their employers were female, which they felt made the process easier (21%);
- ▶ They knew their rights and were prepared for the discussion (12%);
- ▶ They had good communication with their employer, and felt the issue was an easy one to discuss (10%); and
- ▶ They were not the first person in their workplace to have had this discussion (8%).

Note that some women made more than one comment, so percentages may exceed 100%. The percentages on this slide are based on the sample of positive comments (n=205)



Positive comments

At the job interview I made it clear I was breastfeeding and that I would continue to breastfeed while at work, they informed me of the office specifically for that use and were very positive about it.

They were very understanding and supportive of breastfeeding and they were aware of the benefits of breastmilk so they did all they could to allow me to feed

My manager was the one who asked me if I was breastfeeding or not and gave me all the information i needed to transition into work easily

I'm very confident and believe breast us best. Nothing will get in my way

These women told us:

My employer is father of 8 children and grandfather of 3. He talks openly about his family and raising them thus making me feel more comfortable to talk.

My manager was very supportive & immediately said my husband could bring my daughter in any time she needed me & that I was welcome to use her office if I wanted somewhere private to breastfeed

My employers were extremely supportive and sought out the information for me before my return to work.

(My boss) has 6 kids himself and very understanding (and) supportive ... (he) appreciated that I had returned to work and did what he could to make it as easy as possible

FOR JUST OVER ONE-QUARTER OF RESPONDENTS, HOWEVER (29%), THE EXPERIENCE WASN'T QUITE SO POSITIVE.

This was because:

- ▶ Their employers were not supportive or understanding (37%);
- ▶ They felt awkward bringing up breastfeeding (37%);
- ▶ Their employers were male, which they felt made it a harder issue to discuss (29%);
- ▶ They felt like a burden, and that breastfeeding was seen as unproductive and an inconvenience (17%); and
- ▶ They were unsure or worried (8%), and there were no areas to express or feed (7%).

Note that some women made more than one comment, so percentages may exceed 100%. The percentages on this slide are based on the sample of negative comments (n=59)



Negative comments

They were not supportive of me leaving work to go to day-care to feed my girl even though she was only a 5 minute drive away at the closest possible day-care

Male dominated workplace! The best they could offer was a lockable room but it is kept cool because it's where they store the spare IT parts

He did not know it was my right to breastfeed at work. Another manager complained when I breastfed in the staff room one day.

It felt like they thought I was requesting special treatment or more break times.

These women told us:

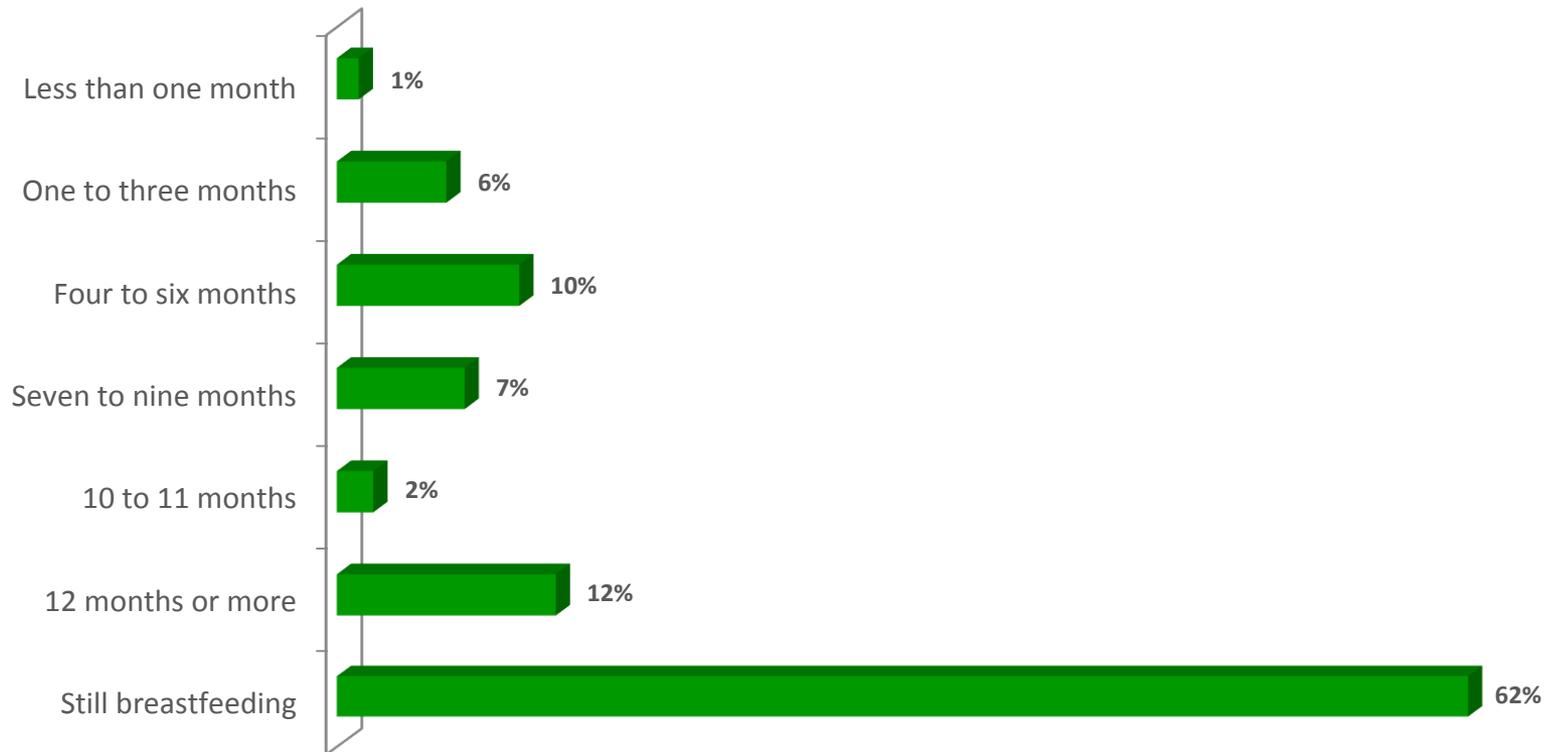
My boss is a male and didn't understand why I wanted to continue using breastmilk when I could just use formula. It was an extremely uncomfortable discussion.

They were not supportive at all. Did not want to provide me with suitable options... Male colleagues felt uncomfortable discussing the topic all together... I fought a fight not only for me but other colleagues also. It worked for a few weeks but I then had to give up. If they had been more accommodating I (would have) continued breastfeeding longer

They weren't able to understand why I didn't just switch to formula

MOST WOMEN WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE SURVEY WERE STILL BREASTFEEDING

STOPPED BREASTFEEDING AFTER RETURNING TO WORK



n=484



THERE ARE CLEAR AND SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE LENGTH OF TIME WORKING MOTHERS SPEND BREASTFEEDING, AND THE SUPPORT OFFERED IN THE WORKPLACE

COMPARISON BETWEEN WORKPLACE SUPPORT AND LENGTH OF BREASTFEEDING



■ Continued breastfeeding 12 months or more after returning to work (n=58)

■ Stopped breastfeeding 3 months or less after returning to work (n=35)



WHAT ELSE DID BREASTFEEDING MUMS HAVE TO TELL US?

Of those who chose to make a final comment...

- ▶ One quarter (24%) told us what a positive difference it made to have a supportive work environment
- ▶ Just over one-fifth (22%) wanted us to know how stressful and exhausting it is to breastfeed while working
- ▶ 37 mums, (15%) wanted us to know about the negative impacts on breastfeeding caused by lack of facilities, lack of privacy or lack of areas to express or feed.

