

Vocational Return to Work Programme



**Irish Heart
Foundation**

The National Stroke & Heart Charity

Disclosure Statement

There are no conflicts of interest to declare.

We are Ireland's National Heart and Stroke Charity

Established in 1966, our mission is to eliminate preventable death and disability from heart disease and stroke and to support and care for those living with these life-changing conditions.

We work to achieve our mission through:

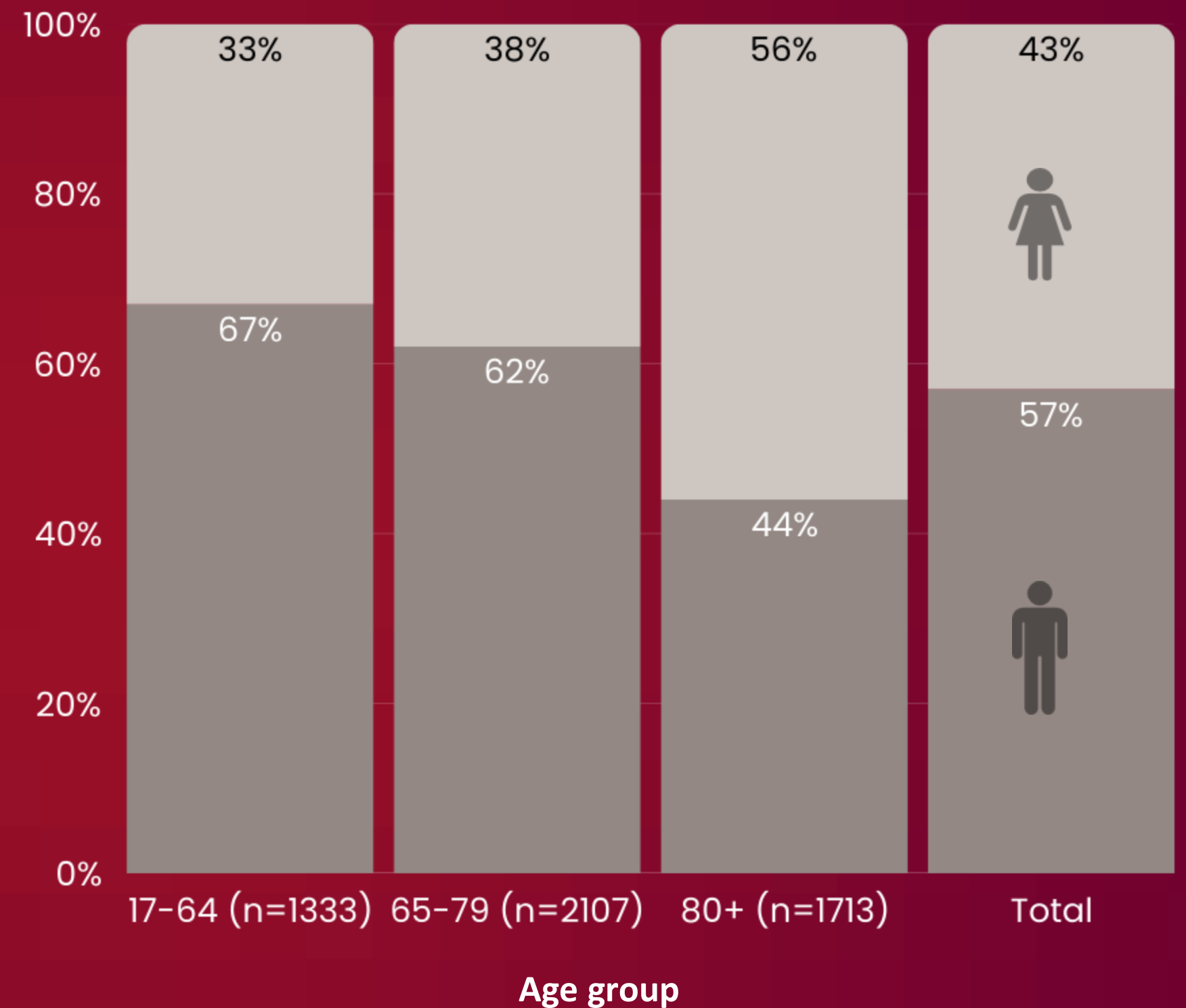
- Caring for and speaking out for people in the community living with stroke and heart conditions and their families
- Innovating and leading in health promotion and prevention to change health behaviours and reduce cardiovascular risk
- Building a nation of lifesavers through CPR training
- Campaigning and advocating for policies that support people to live healthier lives

Background

Approximately 7,500 people in Ireland suffer from a stroke each year.

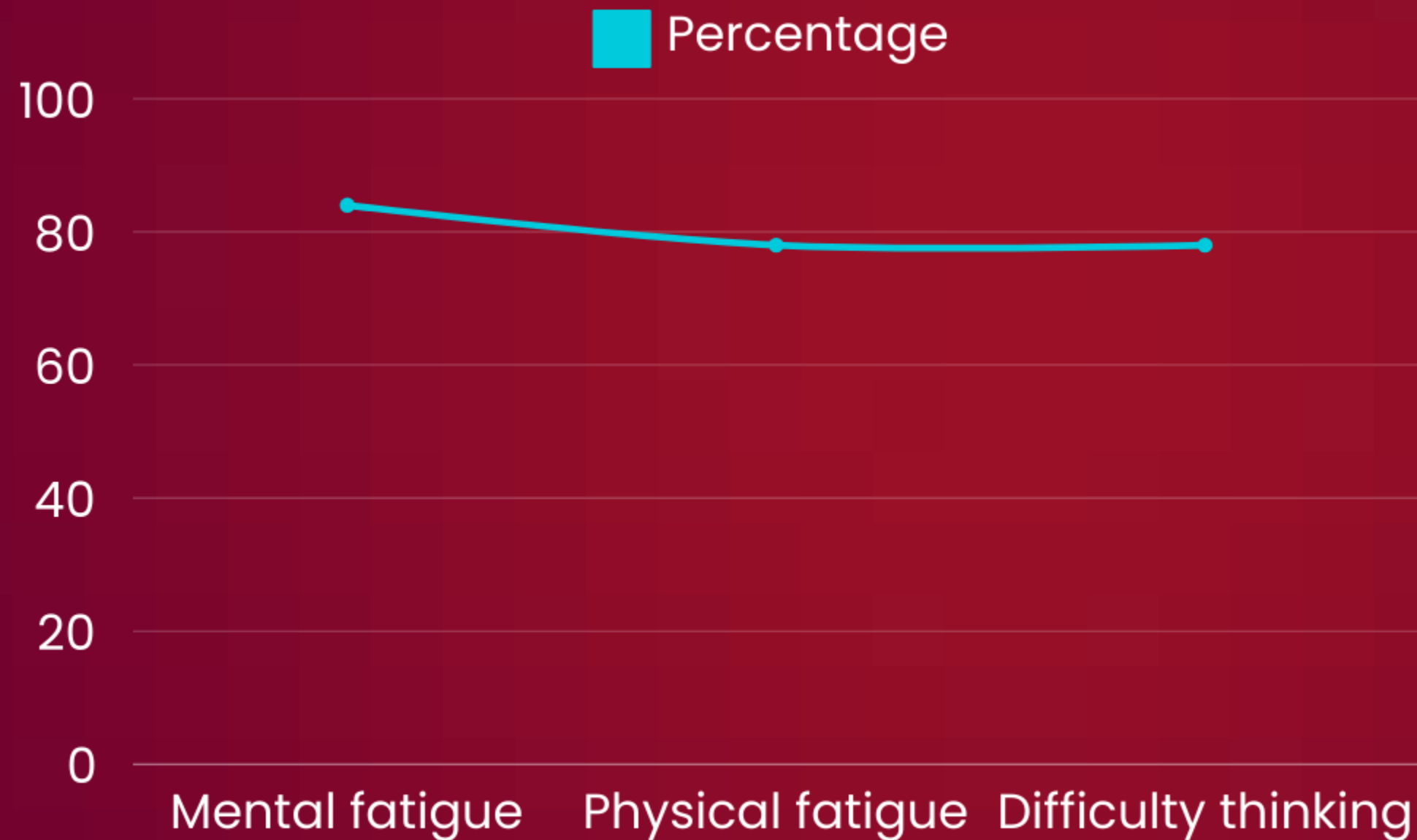
The proportion of strokes occurring in those under 65 years of age 33% were female and 67% were male.

Age and sex profile of stroke in Ireland - INAS National Report 2020



Stroke's impact on Young Stroke Survivors (YSS)

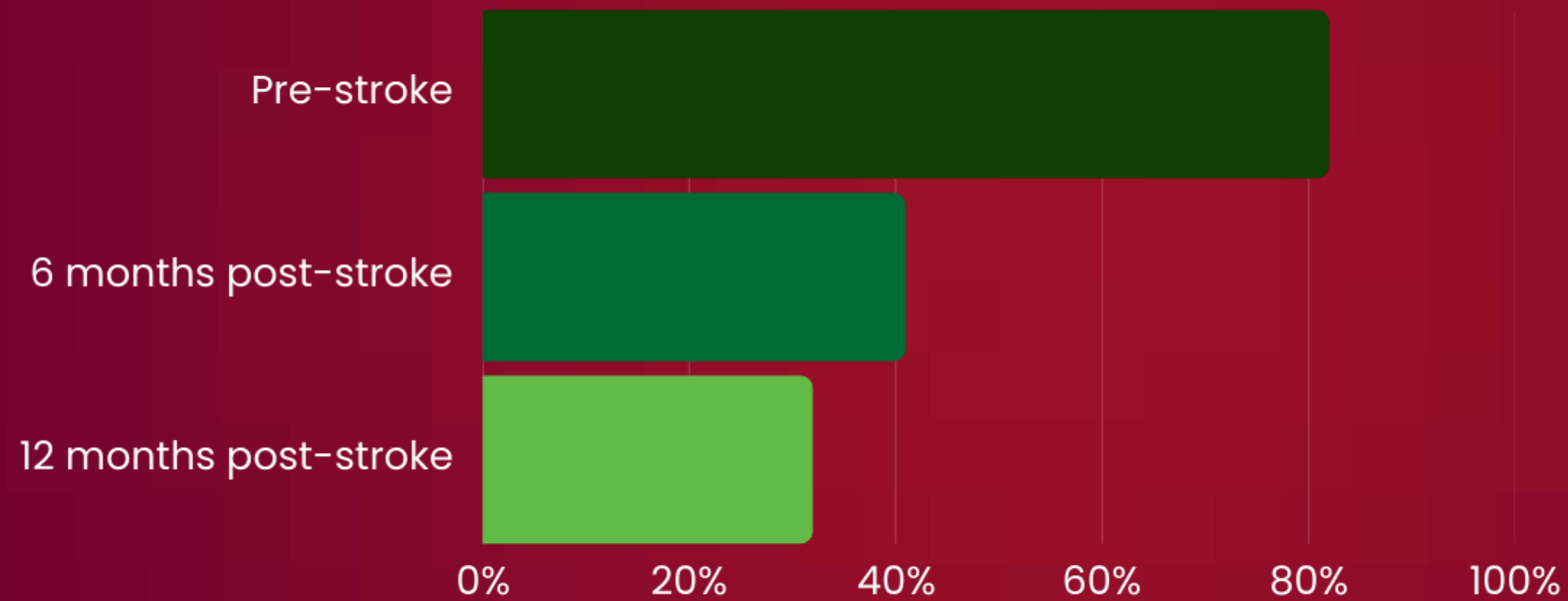
Key findings for stroke survivors of working age in Ireland, as highlighted by research conducted by Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI)



The most common problems limiting ability to work were mental fatigue (84%), physical fatigue (78%) and difficulty thinking (78%).

Stroke's impact on Young Stroke Survivors (YSS)

Key findings for stroke survivors of working age in Ireland, as highlighted by research conducted by Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI)



82% of stroke survivors were working prior to their stroke.

41% had resumed some work within six months after their stroke.

Only 32% were working full-time one year after their stroke.

Programme Summary



A structured initiative designed to address the unique **challenges** faced by young stroke survivors in re-entering the workforce.

Delivered through individual and group-based interventions tailored to participants' abilities and career goals.



Programme Summary



Comprehensive Survey

Evaluate cognitive, psychological, and vocational readiness pre- and post-programme.

Cognitive Rehabilitation

Tools and strategies to compensate for memory, focus, and problem-solving deficits.

Psychological & Emotional Resilience

Self-confidence, overcoming imposter syndrome & emotional fitness.

Vocational Coaching: career alignment, skill-building, and support with job-seeking.

A man with dark hair and a beard, wearing a maroon V-neck shirt, is shown in profile from the chest up. He is looking towards the left. The background is a soft-focus outdoor scene with green foliage and warm, golden light, possibly from the setting or rising sun. The overall mood is contemplative and hopeful.

Brian
34 years old
Stroke 2021

Brian return to work after his stroke and was **excelling** in his career and progressing well. Encouraged by his success, he decided to **change employment**.

However, after transitioning to the new role, Brian realised he wasn't fully ready for the change and found himself **struggling** and left his new job.

While participating in the Irish Heart Foundation's programme, he discovered his **transferable skills** which helped **rebuild his confidence**, allowing Brian to **trust in his abilities** and **take control** of his career path once again.

Case Study

Case Study

Workplace Accommodations



Anna
42 years old
Stroke 2022

After completing the course Anna returned to work. After just two days, she realised **working in a team environment was challenging.**

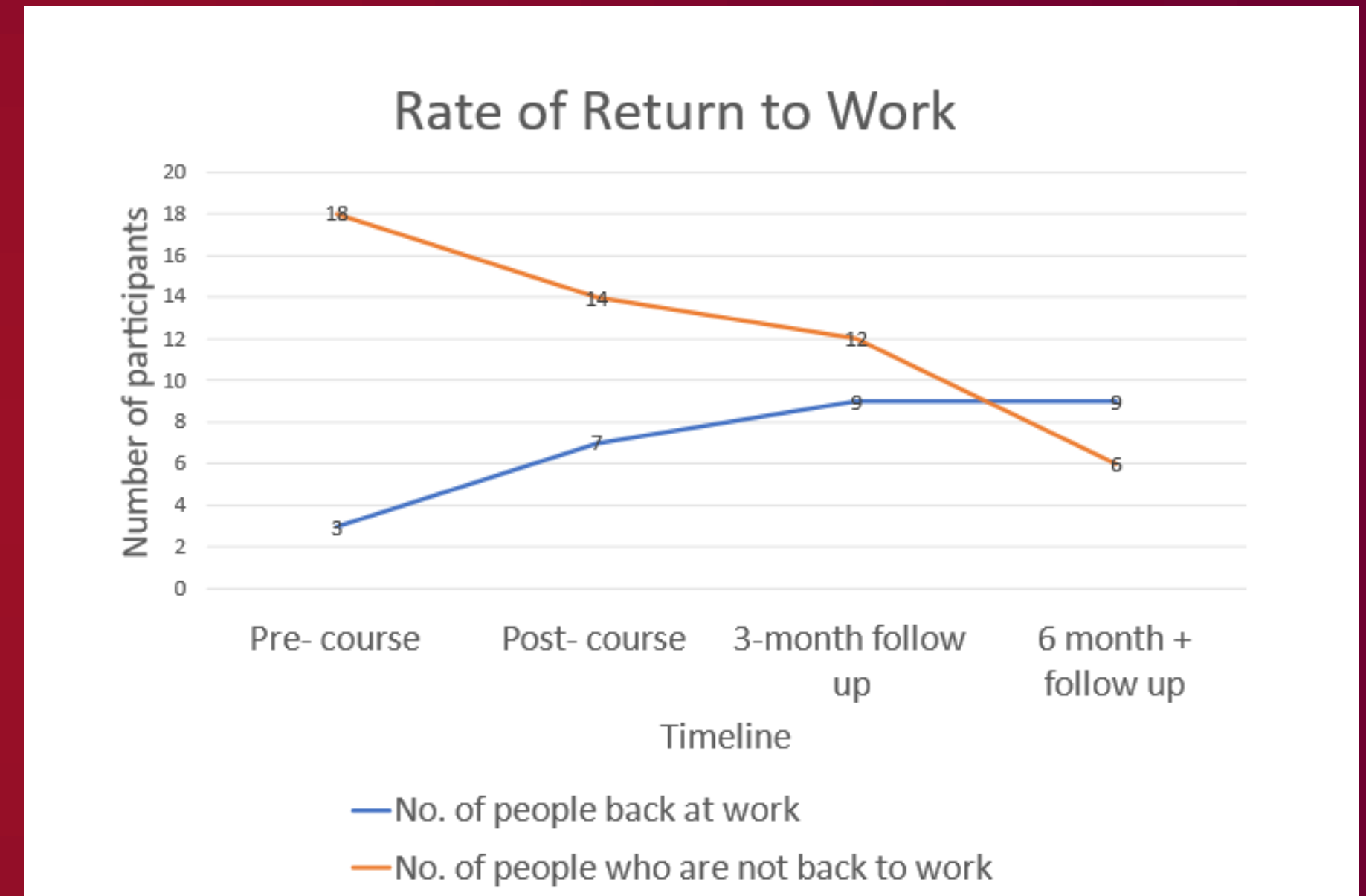
Using the skills she acquired on the course Anna was able to **effectively communicate her challenges** to her employer.

Anna's job recognised her needs and adapted the role to create a workspace that allowed for more independence, ultimately shaping a work environment that better suited Anna's strengths and abilities after her stroke.

Measurable Outcomes and Success Metrics

Rate of return to work:

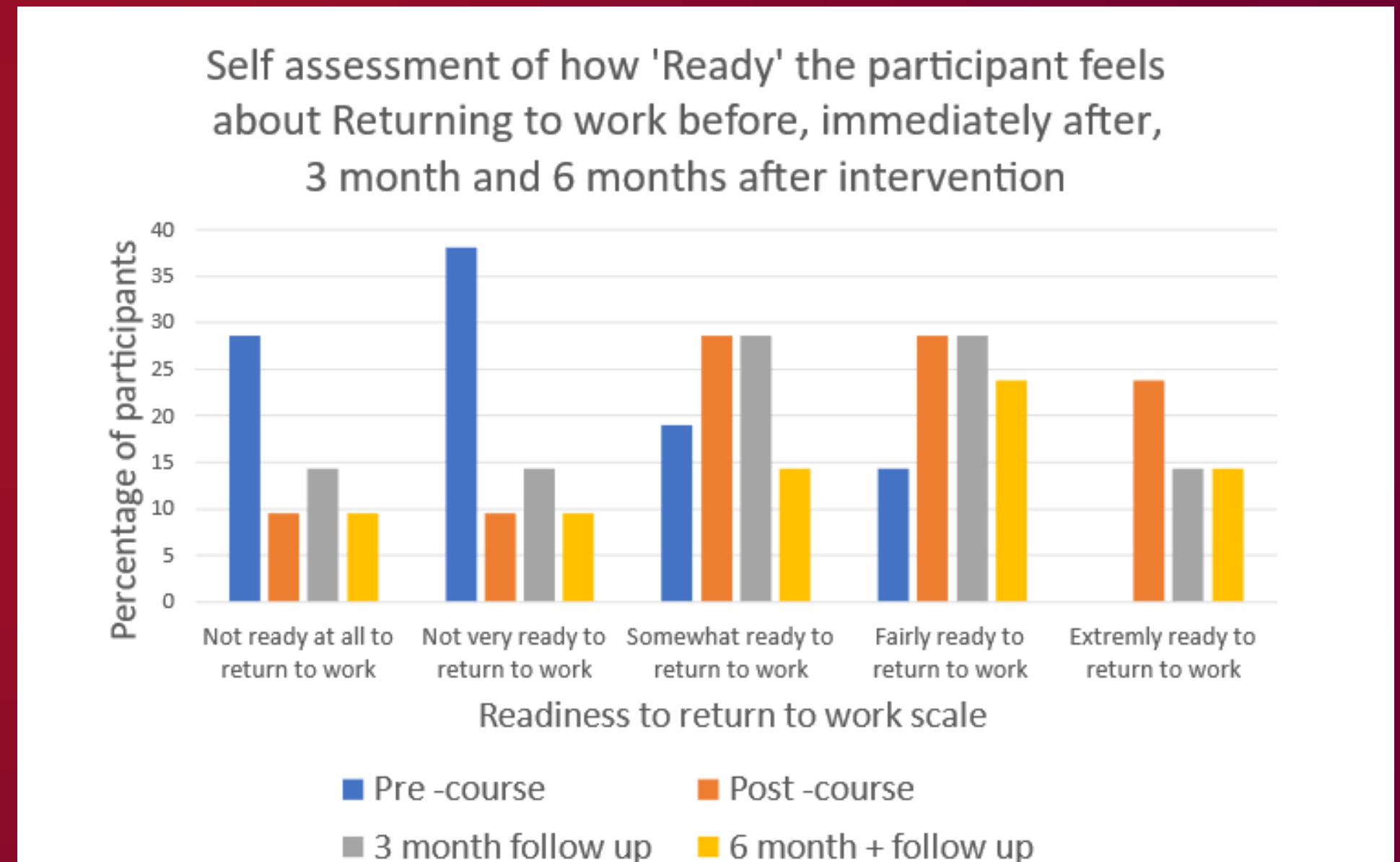
This graph shows the Return-to-Work Rate, representing the percentage of participants who have successfully re-entered employment after completing the program.



Measurable Outcomes and Success Metrics

Readiness to return to work:

This graph represents participants' self-assessment of their readiness to return to work. It illustrates their confidence levels and perceived preparedness, providing insight into their progress.





Arthur's vocational return to work

The Vocational Return to Work provides a place for participants to learn and develop key skills to support their return to work after a stroke.

It also develops awareness of the requirements of return to work and development of the personal & professional skills needed.

Topics covered include:

- CV development/interview skills**
- Preparation process**
- Workplace accommodations**
- Psychological factors e.g. self-awareness, confidence, stress management, resilience**

Testimonials

“My job involves a high level of cognitive complexity, and I feel I am slower and more limited post-stroke. Therefore, I am volunteering with Irish Heart Foundation to exercise my cognitive skills, this course gave me motivation to seek this opportunity.”

“The course gave me a better understanding of my limitations and that I may not be ready to go back to work yet.”

“I think the course was great, and I have all the materials saved cause I'm sure I will use them when I'm ready to pursue employment. I feel the course gave so much information and I'm better prepared.”



Thank You

Let's work together for better futures



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