# IMPLEMENTING POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVENTIONS IN AN ITALIAN HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATION

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# ITALIAN INTERVENTION SITE

- Intervention site: Italian Healthcare organisation operating in Northern Italy

- Healthcare departments:
    1. Medicine Department
    2. Emergency Department
    3. Institute of Neurological Science

- Work roles:
    1. Nurses
    2. Physicians
    3. Healthcare assistants

# INTERVENTIONS IMPLEMENTED IN AUSL

Based on the needs analysis conducted in the previous months, together with the intervention site the main intervention priorities have been identified:

| INTERVENTIONS | IGLO | O.U.s INVOLVED | N |
|---|---|---|---|
| POSITIVE STRESS MANAGEMENT | I | 18 O.U.s | 129 |
| POSITIVE SOCIAL INTERACTIONS | G | 10 O.U.s | 81 |
| SOCIOMAPPING | G | 7 O.U.s | 67 |
| POSITIVE LEADERSHIP and MICRO-COACHING | L | 15 O.U.s | 18 |
| HELLOBETTER | I | Available for all O.U.s | 17 |
| | | | 312 |

# ADAPTATION OF THE INTERVENTIONS

Due to the pandemic situation, the peculiarities of the Italian intervention site and its involvement in contrasting Covid-19 consequences, the implemented interventions had to be adapted to the context. If compared to the original version of the intervention provided by UJI, the following were the main distinguishing characteristics:

- **Online training**
- **Number of sessions**
- **Team composition**

# PSM - Positive Stress Management

# Positive Stress Management
## Intervention structure

- 3 online group sessions (9h)

- Time: 3 weeks (Sep - Nov 2021)

- Goal: understanding causes and consequences of stress and develop skills to proactively manage stressful situations

- Conducted by a team of 4 occupational psychologists and 1 clinical psychologist trained by UJI (4h)

- 8 editions (n=129)

# Positive Stress Management
## Intervention contents

- Participants first received inputs on what stress is (physiological and psychological perspectives on stress), and they were introduced to **Mindfulness** and fundamentals of Mindfulness.

- Participants were introduced to specific concepts such as **Reappraisal and Positive Coping Strategies, Acceptance and Mindfulness.**

- Proactive Stress Management inputs (mapping **sources of stress**, **values** and committed actions, visualizing **potential obstacles** and **alternative pathways** to deal with these obstacles) were provided.

- Participants were guided in defining **action plans** to put in practice their acquired skills.

- Participants were provided with 10-minutes audio recordings of **guided meditations** and were invited at practicing at home.

# PSI – Positive Social Interactions

# Positive Social Interactions
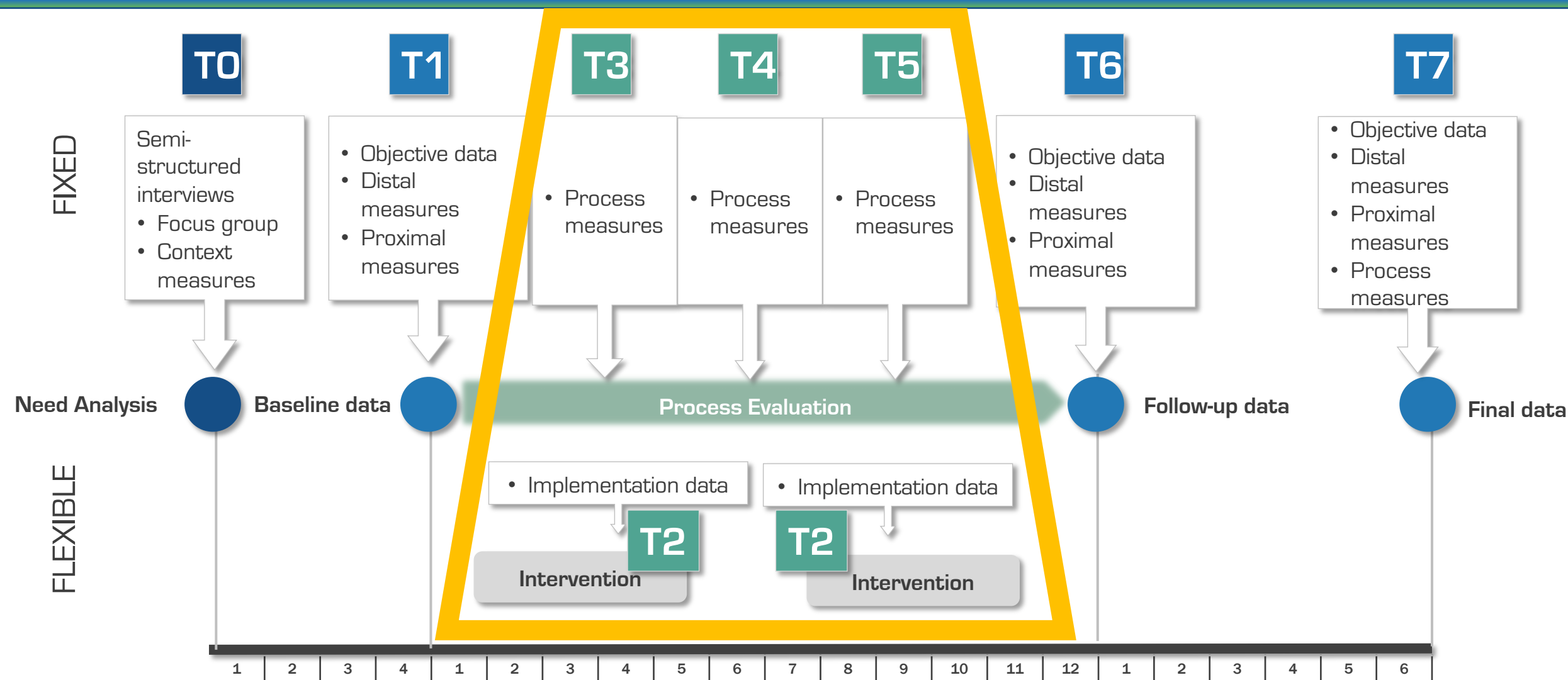## Intervention structure

- 3 online group sessions (9h)

- Time: 3 weeks (May - June 2021)

- Goal: understand the causes and consequences of conflicts at work and develop skills and tools to manage them successfully.

- Conducted by a team of 4 occupational psychologists and 1 clinical psychologist trained by UJI (4h)

- 7 editions (n=81)

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- Participants have received inputs on the **recurrent sources of conflict** within organizations (i.e., goals, roles, relations) emphasising the role of social interactions.

- Participants were asked to identify their most frequent sources of conflict, and explore their **associated feelings, thoughts and behaviours**.

- Effective social interaction skills have been introduced as tools to address conflict situations (i.e., **mindful self-awareness of thoughts and emotions, mindful listening, non-violent communication, and intentional acts of kindness**).

- Using the gathered knowledge and thinking to the most recurrent conflict situations, participants were invited and guided to make **action plans**.

- Participants were provided with 10-minutes audio recordings of **guided meditations** and were invited at practicing at home.

# EVALUATION OF INTERVENTIONS

Interventions results – T2-T5 questionnaires

# Evaluation outline

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**FIXED**

**T0**
Semi-structured interviews
- Focus group
- Context measures

**T1**
- Objective data
- Distal measures
- Proximal measures

**T3**
- Process measures

**T4**
- Process measures

**T5**
- Process measures

**T6**
- Objective data
- Distal measures
- Proximal measures

**T7**
- Objective data
- Distal measures
- Proximal measures
- Process measures

**Need Analysis** — **Baseline data** — Process Evaluation — **Follow-up data** — **Final data**

**FLEXIBLE**

- Implementation data

**T2**

Intervention

- Implementation data

**T2**

Intervention

1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6

# Interventions evaluation
## T2 implementation data – Satisfaction towards the intervention

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| Dimension | Description | Item example |
|-----------|-------------|--------------|
| **Transferability** | The degree to which participants perceive that what they have learnt in the intervention can be transferred to their daily work. | *"I believe what we have learned on the training can help us at work"* |
| **Voluntary participation** | The degree to which participants state that they participated voluntarily in the intervention. | *"Did you voluntarily participate in training?"* |
| **Training design** | Participants' perception of the quality of the materials used during the intervention. | *"The activities and exercises the consultants used helped us know how to apply learning on the job"* |
| **Acceptability** | The degree to which participants show a positive attitude towards the intervention. | *"I would recommend the training to others in a similar situation"* |
| **Integrity** | Participants' perception of the role of the facilitators and the general atmosphere during the intervention sessions. | *"Did the consultant(s) make you feel like your participation was valued?"* |
| **Usability** | The degree to which participants perceive the digital platform on which the intervention was held as usable. | *"The technology/platform used provided an acceptable way to receive the intervention"* |

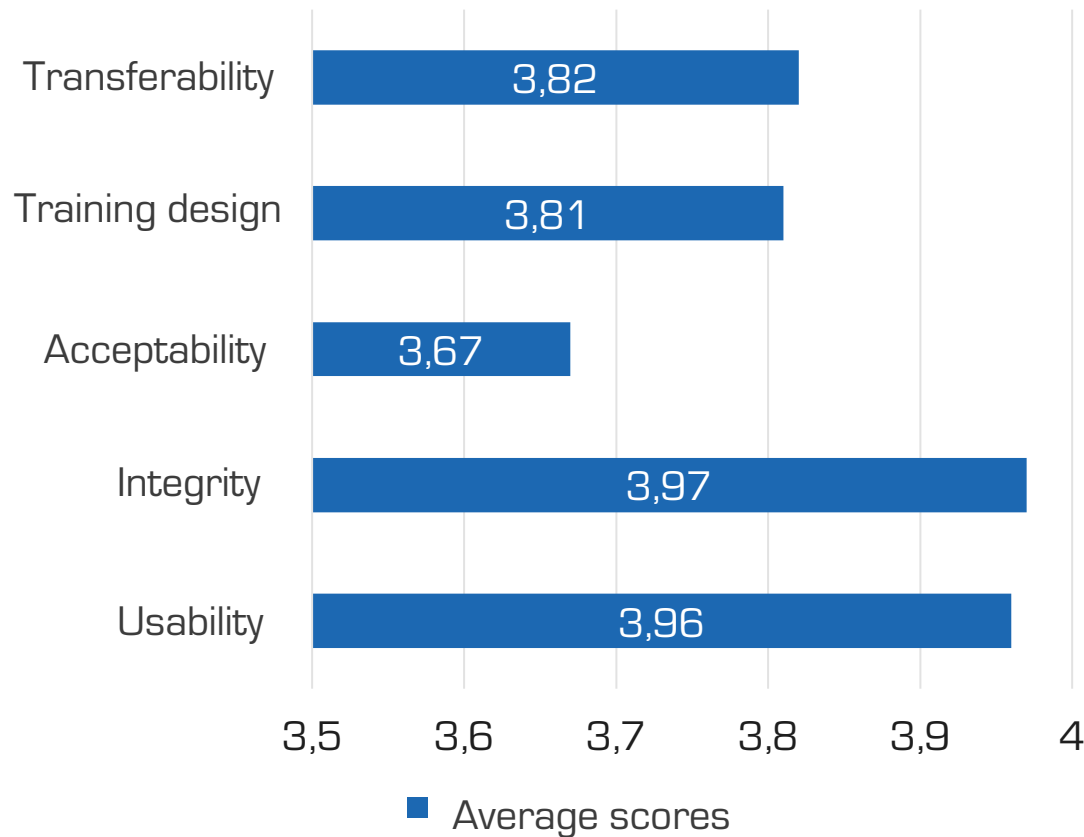# Interventions evaluation
## T3-T4-T5 process measures

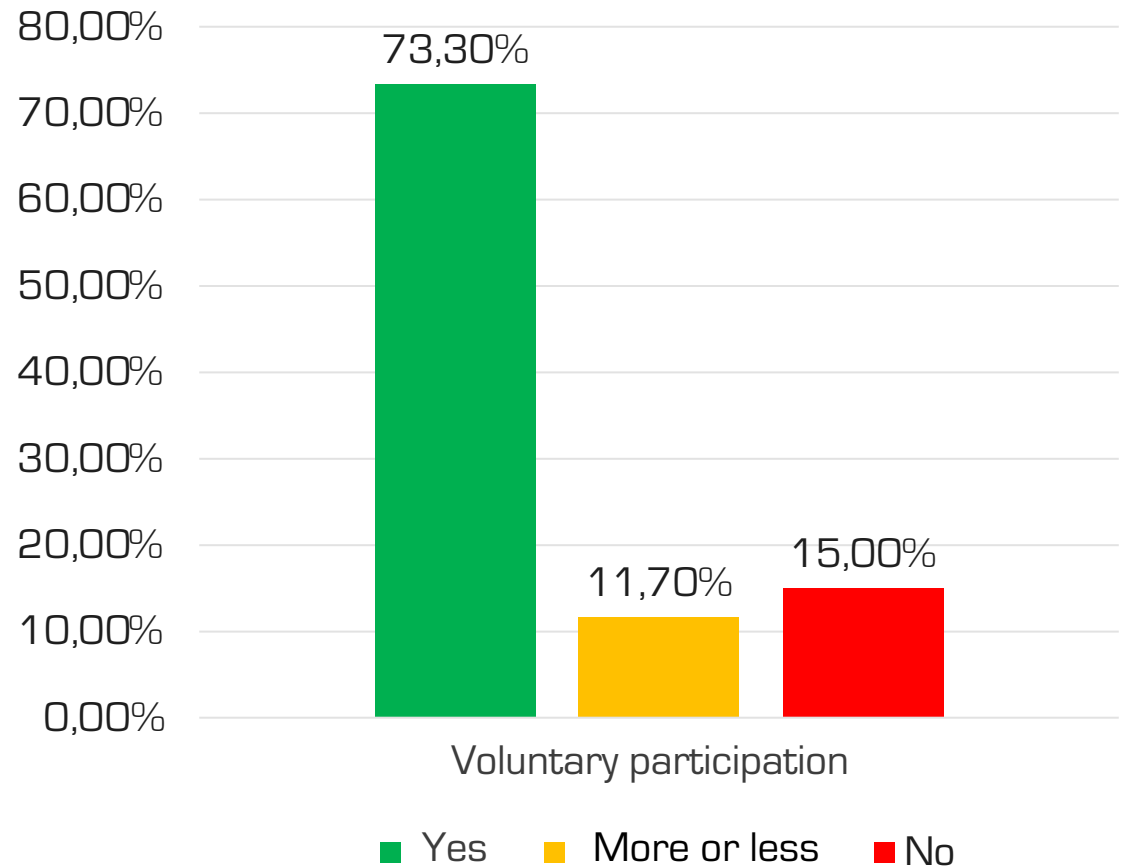| Dimensione | Definizione | Item example |
|---|---|---|
| **Opportunities to use learning** | The degree to which participants perceive that they have the opportunity to use the learning acquired during the intervention in their own work context. | *«We have been given the tasks necessary to apply the skills and knowledge we learned on the training»* |
| **Peer support** | The degree to which participants perceive that their colleagues support their attempts to use the learning acquired during the intervention in their own work context. | *«We encourage each other to use the skills we have learned in training»* |
| **Manager support** | The degree to which participants perceive that their direct supervisor supports their attempts to use the learning acquired during the intervention in their own work context. | *«My immediate manager helps to make our work easier»* |
| **Transfer** | The degree to which participants state that they use the learning acquired during the intervention in their daily work. | *«In our everyday work, we often use the knowledge we gained in the training»* |
| **Implementation** | The degree to which participants report to implement the action plans developed during the intervention. | *«We have implemented the planned action plan[s]»* |

# Results – Positive Stress Management
## T2 questionnaire – Satisfaction towards the intervention



n = 59 (response rate: 76%)
Response scale: «1 = Strongly disagree» a «5 = Strongly disagree»

Transferability: 3,82
Training design: 3,81
Acceptability: 3,67
Integrity: 3,97
Usability: 3,96

■ Average scores

n = 60 (response rate: 77%)

73,30%
11,70%
15,00%

Voluntary participation
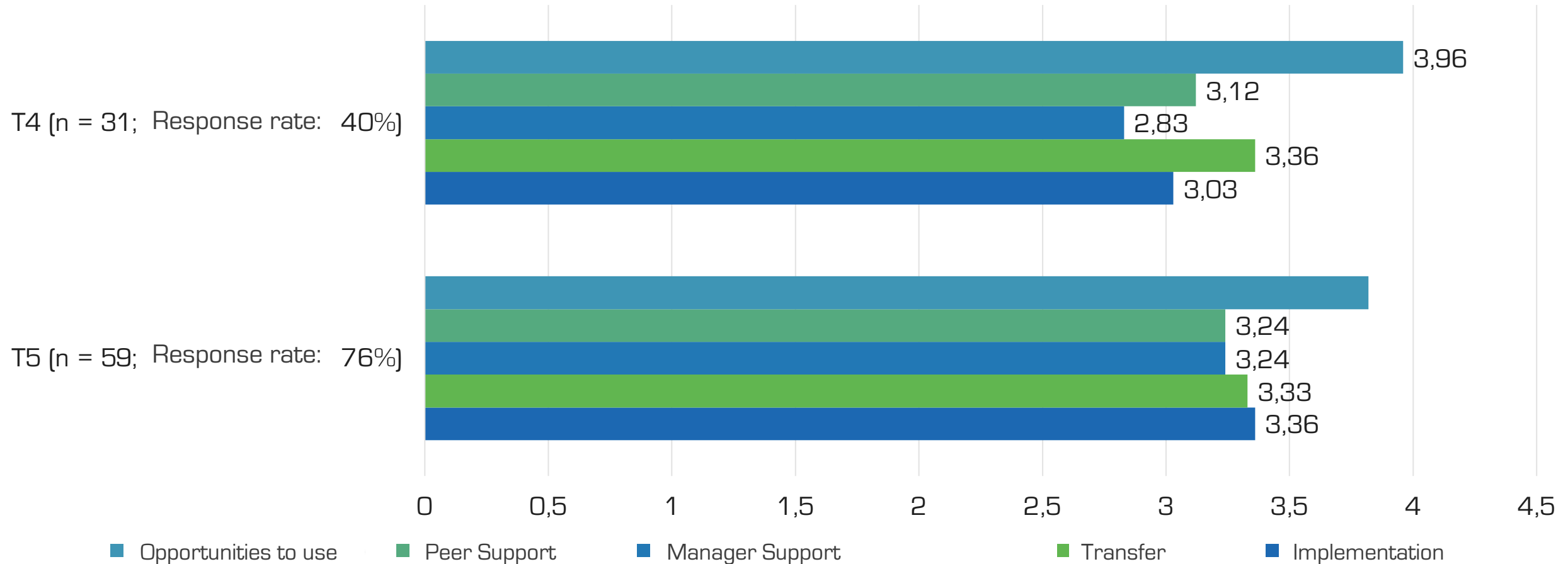
■ Yes   ■ More or less   ■ No

# Results – Positive Stress Management
## T4-T5 Questionnaires – Intervention integration



Average scores. Response scale: «1 = Strongly disagree» a «5 = Strongly disagree»
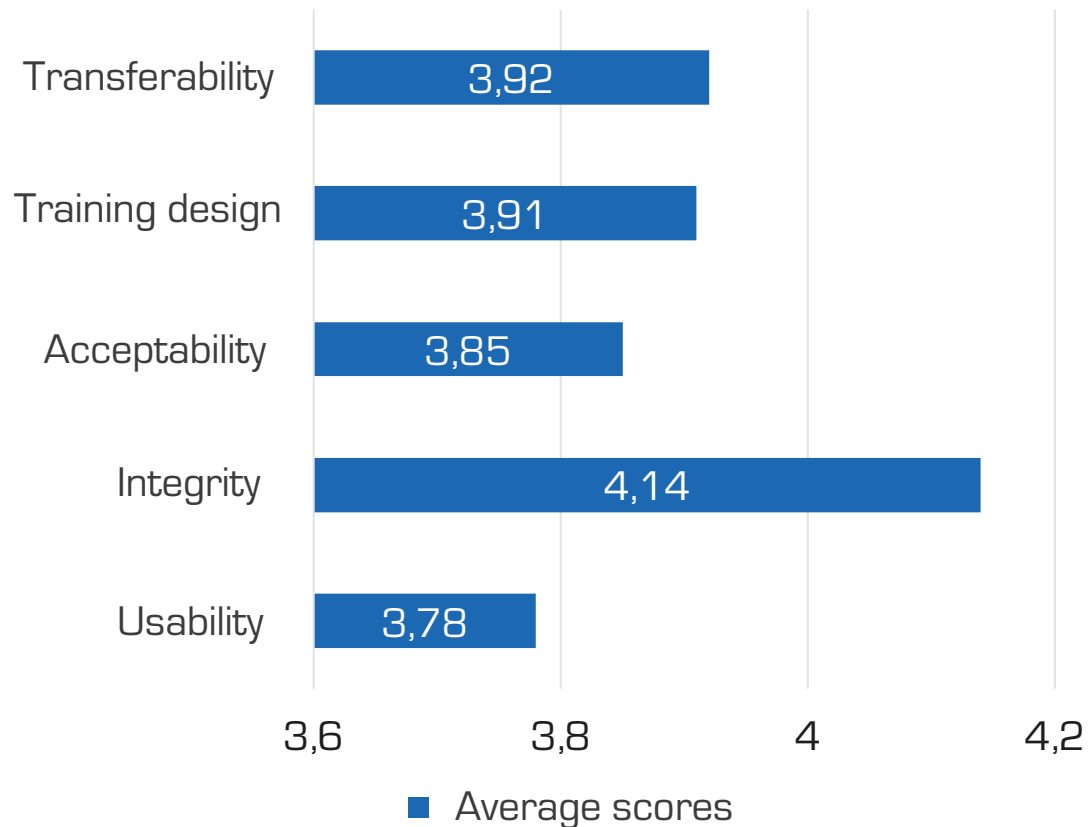
T4 (n = 31; Response rate: 40%)
- 3,96
- 3,12
- 2,83
- 3,36
- 3,03

T5 (n = 59; Response rate: 76%)
- 3,24
- 3,24
- 3,33
- 3,36

Legend: ■ Opportunities to use ■ Peer Support ■ Manager Support ■ Transfer ■ Implementation

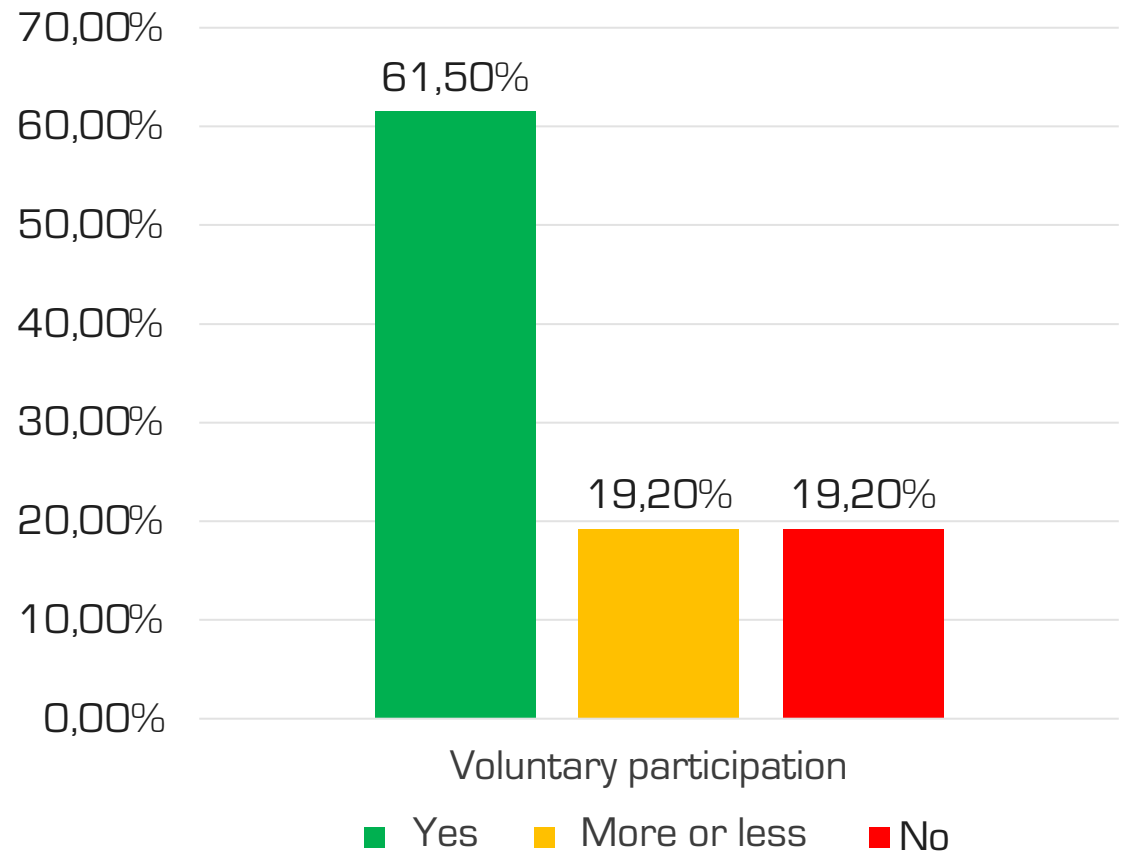# Results – Positive Social Interactions
## T2 questionnaire – Satisfaction towards the intervention

n = 26 (response rate: 41%)
Response scale: «1 = Strongly disagree» a «5 = Strongly disagree»



n = 26 (response rate: 41%)

# Results – Positive Social Interactions
## T3-T4-T5 Questionnaires – Intervention integration



Average scores. Response scale: «1 = Strongly disagree» a «5 = Strongly disagree»

**T3 (n = 22; Response rate: 35%)**
- Opportunities to use: 3,93
- Peer Support: 3,83
- Manager Support: 3,56
- Transfer: 3,59
- Implementation: 3,3

**T4 (n = 41; Response rate: 65%)**
- Peer Support: 3,65
- Manager Support: 3,53
- Transfer: 3,46
- Implementation: 3,08

**T5 (n = 15; Response rate: 24%)**
- Peer Support: 3,2
- Manager Support: 3,38
- Transfer: 3,11
- Implementation: 2,82

Legend: ■ Opportunities to use  ■ Peer Support  ■ Manager Support  ■ Transfer  ■ Implementation

# Qualitative feedbacks

- Interventions perceived as interesting and needed within the healthcare context, where really often high workload leads to perceived stress and interpersonal conflicts.

- Intervention perceived as useful but participants expressed the need for higher-level organisational and structural actions (e.g., workforce to reduce professionals' workload).

- Sometimes people perceived the online modality of intervention as less useful if compared to traditional face-to-face training, which would have potentially activate more resources and collaboration between colleagues.

- Would be preferable if both PSI and PSM would include whole teams from the same healthcare operative units.

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