

**Stress? I'll give him stress!**

# Workload Pressure and the Pharmacy Workforce

“Stress? I'll give him stress!”

John Murphy  
Director, PDA

General Secretary The PDA Union

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# Stress Reduction Kit

## Stress Reduction Kit



Directions:

1. Place kit on FIRM surface.
2. Follow directions in circle of kit.
3. Repeat step 2 as necessary, or until unconscious.
4. If unconscious, cease stress reduction activity.

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“Stress?  
I'll give him stress!”

= £64,000

# Stress? I'll give him stress!

## “Stress? I'll give him stress!”

- Is stress an issue in pharmacy – why?
- What have we found out
- How is it manifest in the work place?
- What should we be doing about it?

Stress? I'll give him stress!

# The PDA Stress Audit

## Why do it?

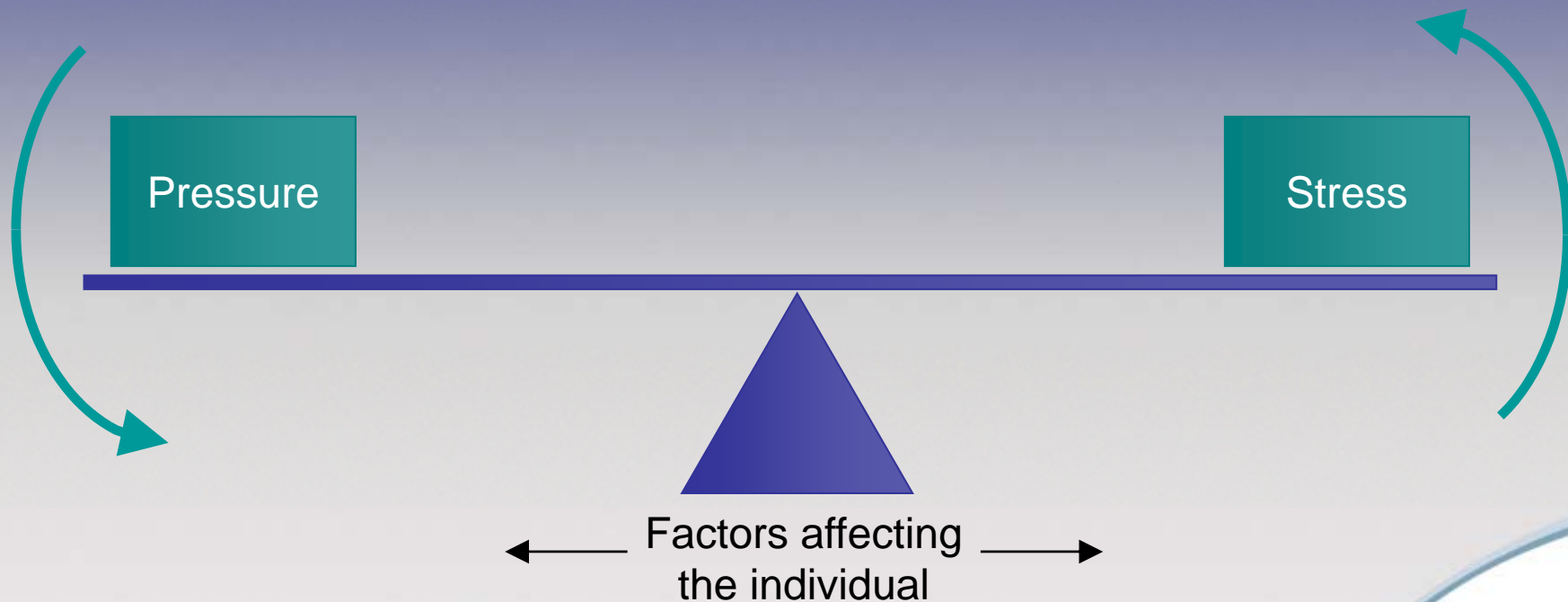
- Anecdotal evidence is compelling
- National evidence is strong
- Hard evidence in pharmacy is weak
- Focus on the causes
- Prioritising any actions.

## What is stress?

- We all need pressure to motivate us
- Stress is unwanted or unrealistic pressure
- Different people have different thresholds
- One day may not be the same as the next
- Different people have different pre-dispositions to mental ill-health
- People have different coping strategies.

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# Factors affecting the individual



## The PDA Stress Audit

- Health and Safety legislation imposes a duty of care on the Employer
- HSE model
  - Management behaviour
  - Organisational cultural dimensions
  - Consistent model.

## PDA Stress Audit

- 1562 Employee pharmacists
  - 989 Community (50.3% from the two of the largest pharmacy chains)
  - 340 Hospital
  - 88 PCO
  - 88 other
- 521 Self-employed pharmacists.

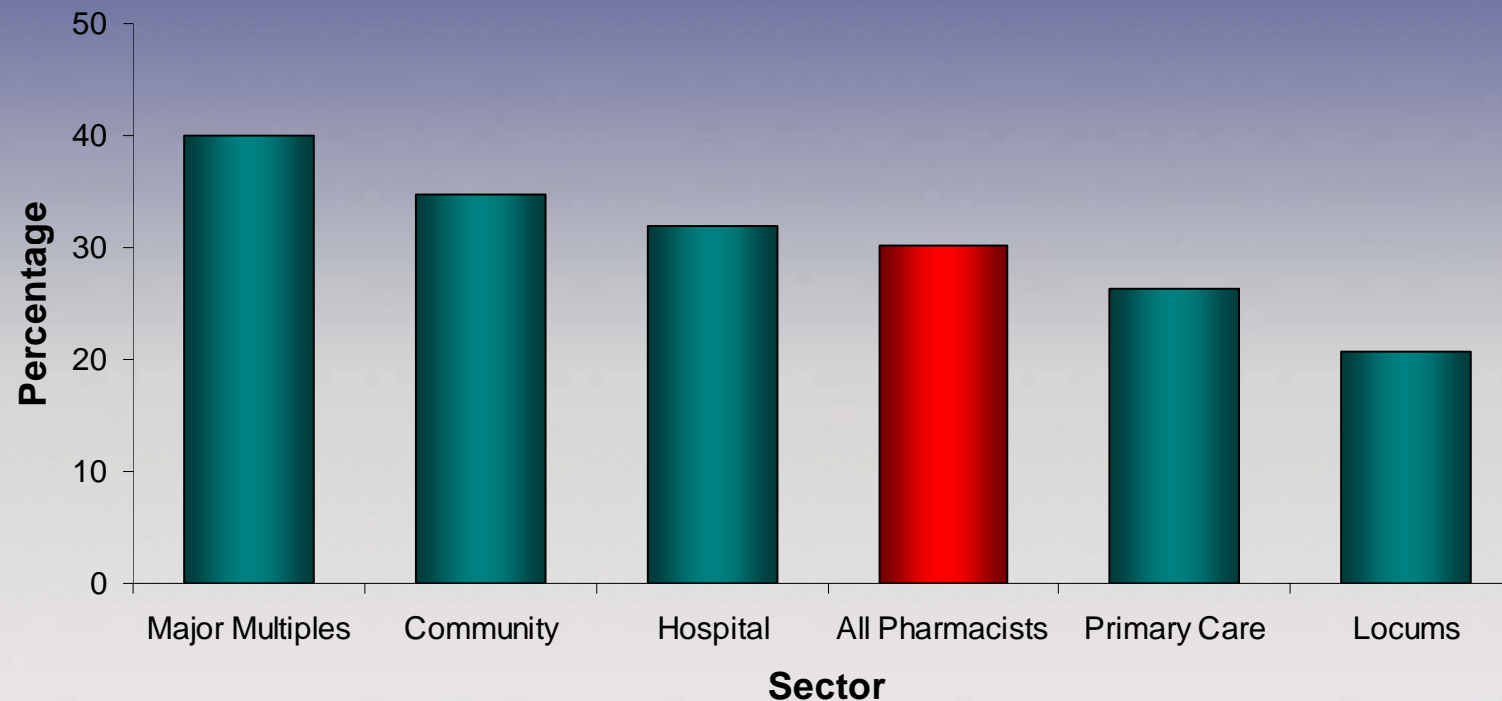
# Stress? I'll give him stress!

## PDA Stress Audit - Perceived stress in the job

	Level
Extremely stressful to the point at which I feel I cannot cope and want to give it up	5
Extremely stressful to the extent that I am losing sleep and or making myself ill	4
Stressful enough to leave me frequently worrying about whether my patients are safe	3
Stressful enough to leave me occasionally worrying about whether my patients are safe	2
Very occasionally stressful but not sufficiently frequent to unduly concern me	1
Not stressful at all	0

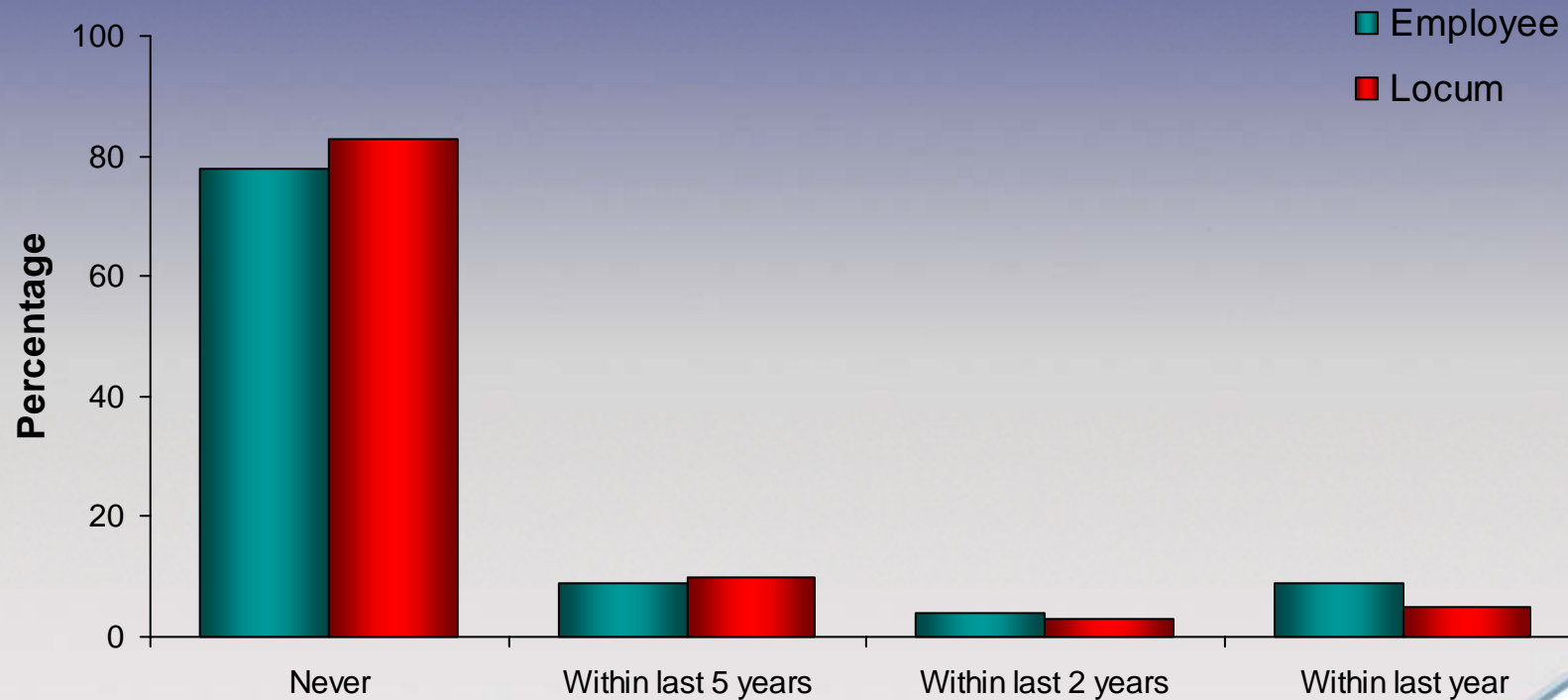
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## Pharmacists who perceived their stress levels to be at least level 4 or 5



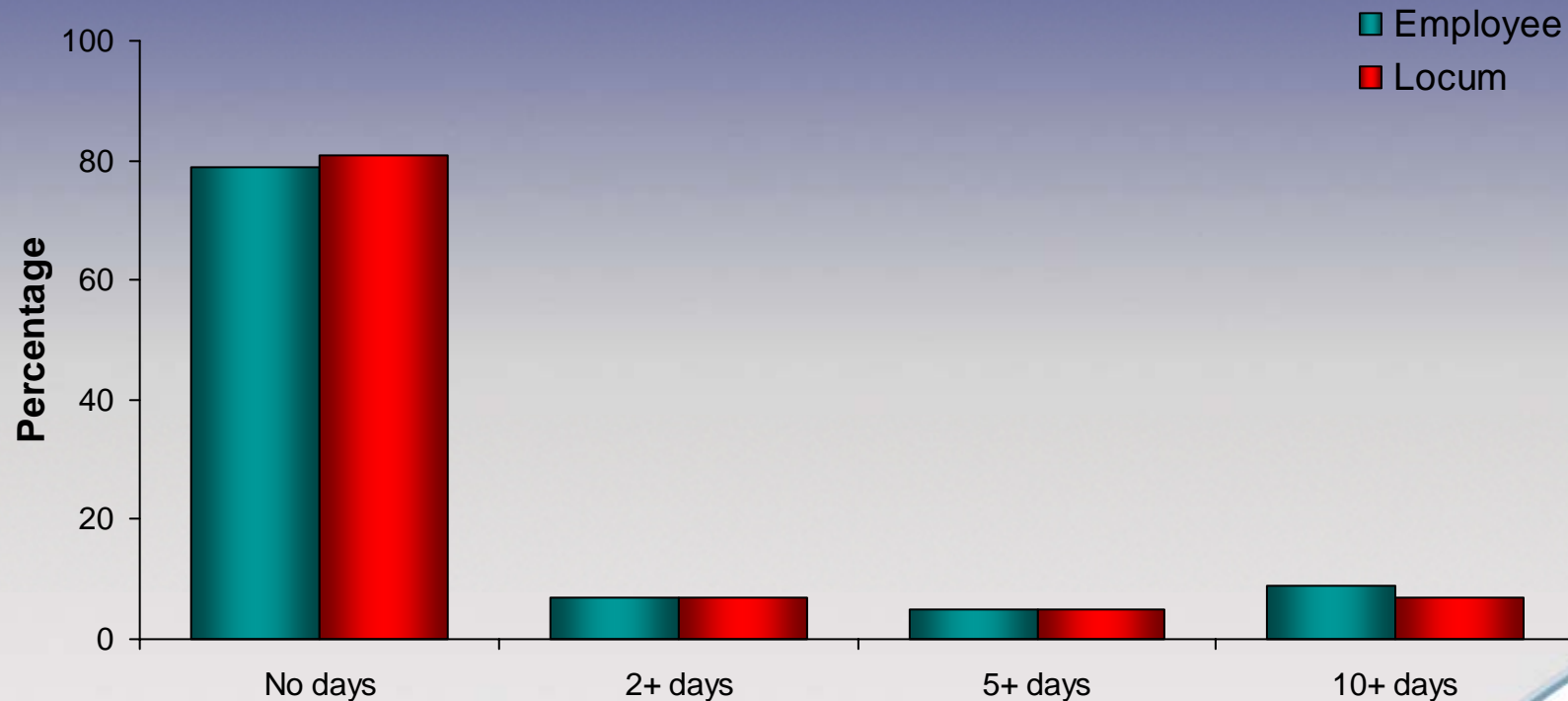
# Stress? I'll give him stress!

## Medical treatment for diagnosed stress symptoms



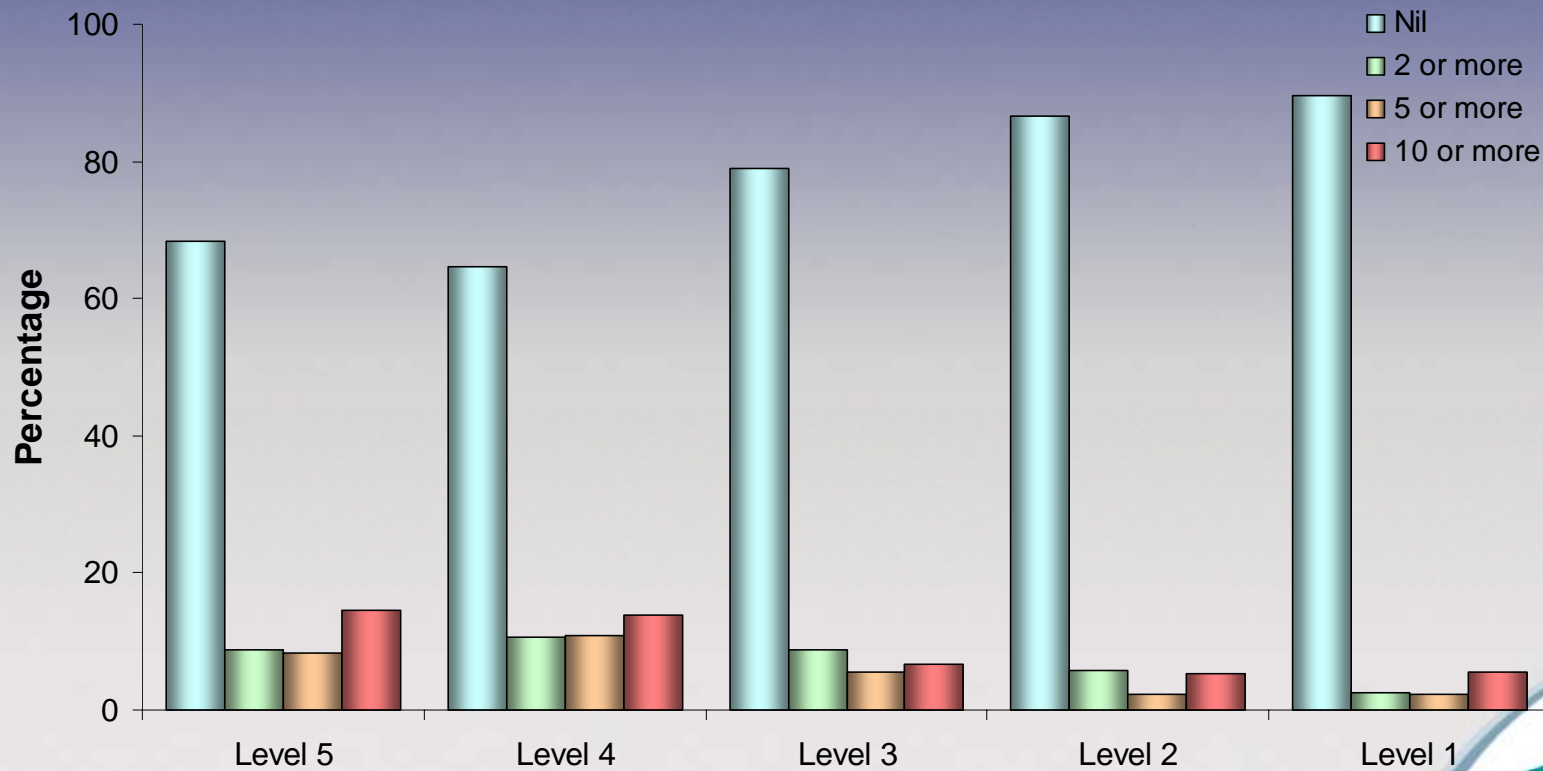
# Stress? I'll give him stress!

## Time unable to work because of work related stress



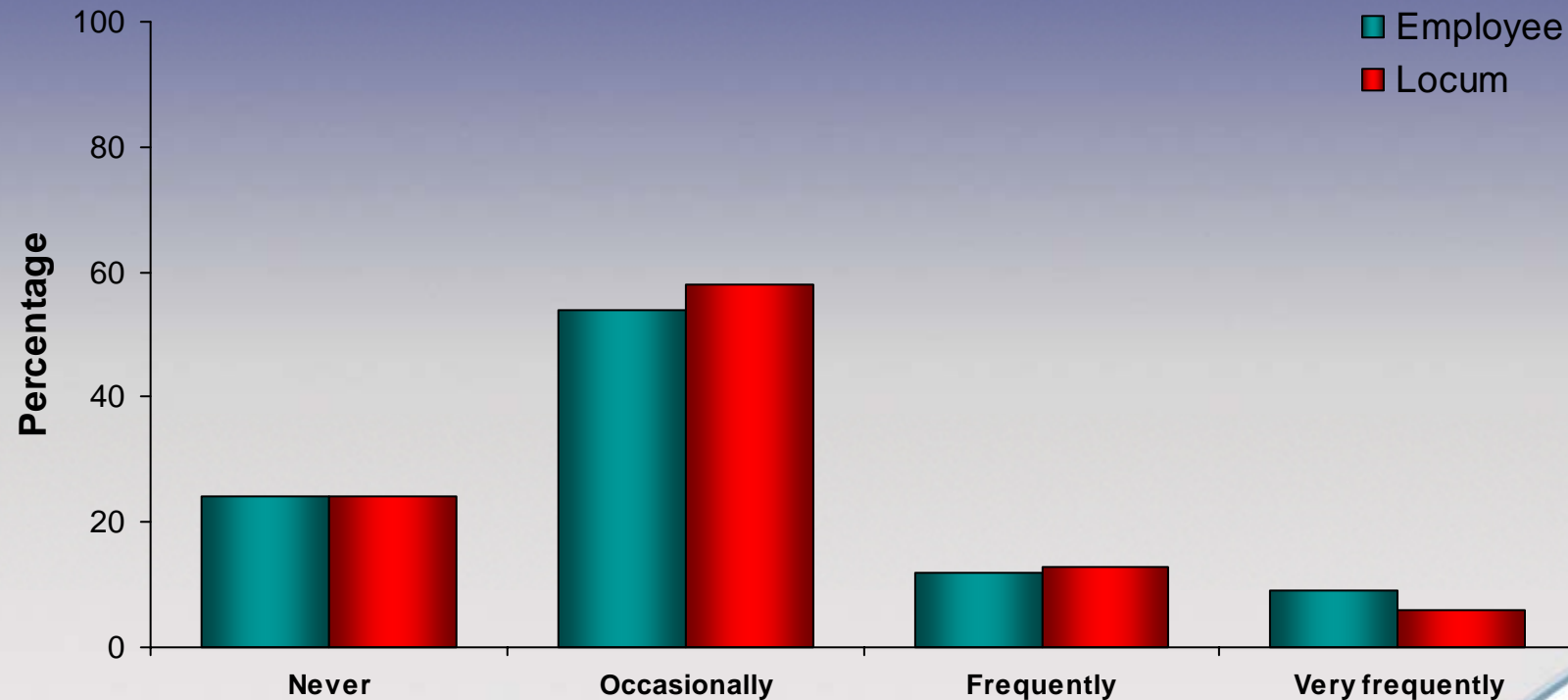
# Stress? I'll give him stress!

Employees - time off for W/R stress per perceived stress level in last five years – 'Presenteeism'



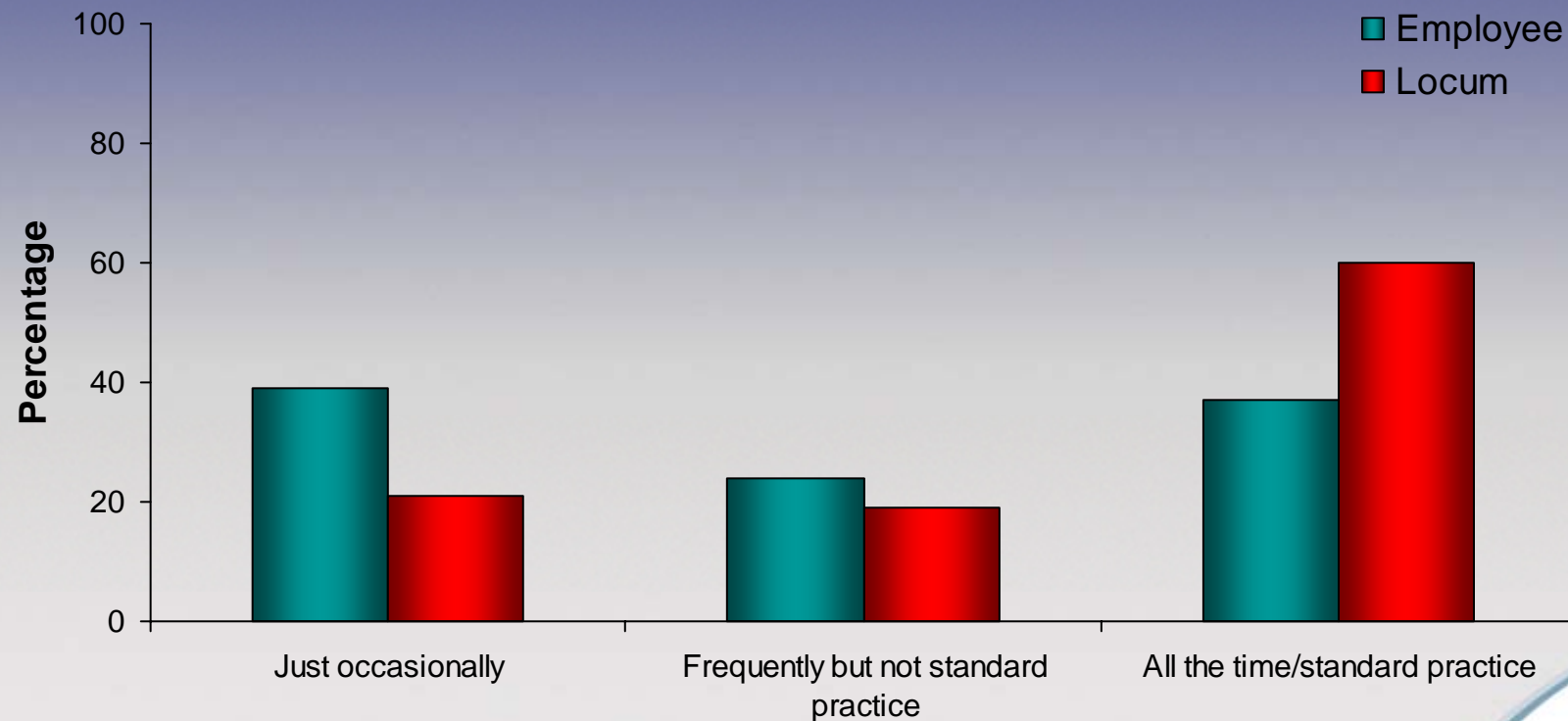
# Stress? I'll give him stress!

## Frequency of working 10+ hours in a single day



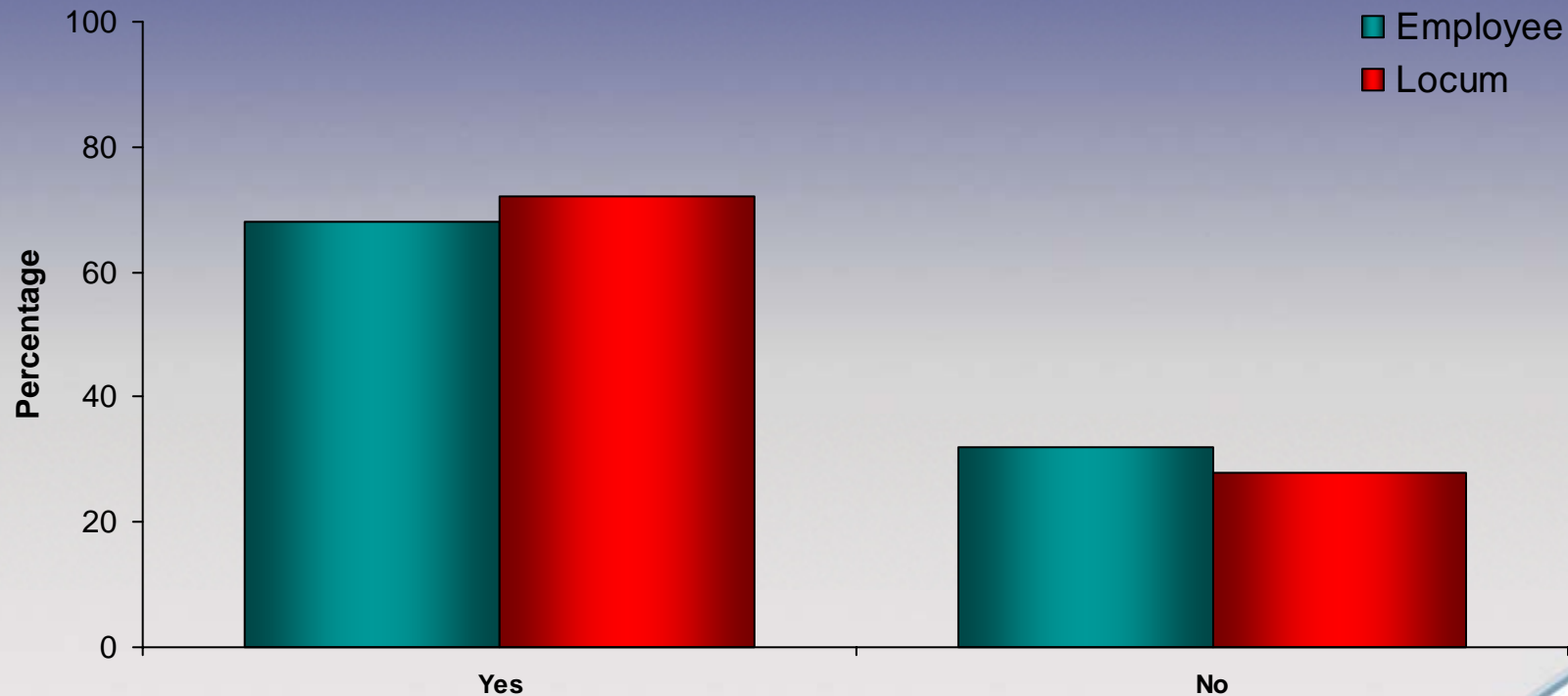
# Stress? I'll give him stress!

If you have been expected to work a day without a break, was it....:



# Stress? I'll give him stress!

If you worked through the day without a break, did you feel you were putting patient safety at risk







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# HSE Stress measurement tool

## Management standards

- Demands
- Control
- Management support
- Peer support
- Relationships
- Role
- Change.

## HSE measurement tool

- Doing very well 
- Good, but need for improvement 
- Clear need for improvement 
- Urgent action needed 

Data set; psychological working conditions in Britain 2004

# Stress? I'll give him stress!

“Stress? I'll give him stress!”

	All Employees	Multiple Employees	Self Employed	PCO Employees	Hospital Employees
Demands	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
Control	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Light Blue	Yellow
Manager Support	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
Peer Support	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow
Relationships	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
Role	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
Change	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red

# Stress? I'll give him stress!

## Causes

### - Demands

- Commercial pressures
- Less support staff
- Demands on time – Rx/Services/OTC/Staff
- Working without breaks
- Expanding roles
- Excessive regulation, legislation and litigation
- Patient expectations.

	All Employees	Multiple Employees	Self Employed	PCO Employees	Hospital Employees
Demands					

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## Causes

### - Demands

- 80% of all pharmacists say that they have to work intensively either always or often
- 68% of pharmacists say that they have to work "very fast" always or often.

	All Employees	Multiple Employees	Self Employed	PCO Employees	Hospital Employees
Demands					

# Stress? I'll give him stress!

## Causes - Control

- Approx 50% have no choice in deciding what they do at work
- Restrictions of exercising professional judgement;
- Accuracy checking technicians
- The weight of work and the organisational culture dictating pharmacists work patterns.

	All Employees	Multiple Employees	Self Employed	PCO Employees	Hospital Employees
Control	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Light Blue	Yellow

# Stress? I'll give him stress!

## Causes

### - Support and Relationships

- Relationship/Task dynamic
  - Only 30% Employees and 12% Locums get encouragement from managers at work
- Managers are under pressure too!
- Lack of training and appreciation of professional nuances
- Short cuts to short term success

	All Employees	Multiple Employees	Self Employed	PCO Employees	Hospital Employees
Manager Support	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
Peer Support	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow
Relationships	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red

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## Causes

### - Support and Relationships

- Easier to discipline than train and support
- Bullying is linked with higher stress
- Only 56.8% of all pharmacists get the respect that they feel they deserve

	All Employees	Multiple Employees	Self Employed	PCO Employees	Hospital Employees
Manager Support	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
Peer Support	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow
Relationships	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red

# Stress? I'll give him stress!

## Causes - Role

- Can you believe it!
- ACTs
- Management pressure to be subservient to the commercial agenda
- Confusion over roles, responsibilities and authority.

	All Employees	Multiple Employees	Self Employed	PCO Employees	Hospital Employees
Role					

# Stress? I'll give him stress!

## Causes

### - Change

- Change is upon us
  - Almost half (46%) are not clear how changes will work out in practice.
- Management needs to
  - Consult
  - Explain
  - Engage.

	All Employees	Multiple Employees	Self Employed	PCO Employees	Hospital Employees
Change	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red

# Stress? I'll give him stress!

## Key factors impacting on levels of stress?

Higher stress is associated with:

- Not being able to take breaks
- Conflicting demands
- Unachievable deadlines
- Neglecting tasks because of workload
- Pressured to work long hours
- Less choice in what to do at work
- Unrealistic time pressures
- Lack of help and support from colleagues and managers

## Proposals

- Research to assess;
  - The prevalence of debilitating stress in the work place by using the HSE management standards model (particularly community)
  - The true commercial impact on employers of the existence of any excessive stress in the work place environment.
  - The link between workload and error frequency (in community)
  - The link between long hours, lack of support staff and no breaks in pharmacy and its impact on patient safety.

## Proposals

- Working hours
  - Make it a professional imperative for pharmacists to take rest breaks; through formal professional guidance.

## Proposals

- Staffing levels
  - PDA 2003 survey
    - Quality and quantity of support staff
    - Working hours and breaks
    - Similar packaging
  - Working Together to Keep Patients Safe; Resource Pack

## Proposals

- Working Together to Keep Patients Safe; Resource Pack
  - Break the cycle staffing levels vs. items
  - RP provisions (responsible for safe and effective running of the pharmacy)
  - Transparent staffing levels policy (agreed by RP and SP)
  - Supported by regulation

## Proposals

- Educate and lobby the Government to understand;
  - the link between an under-funded over-worked service delivered by an over-stressed workforce and the impact on patient safety

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“I am carer for a child with special needs, my job is stressful but a welcome relief from caring role. However I feel unable to tell line managers that it is too stressful in my current position in case he feels I cant do my job and should leave or offers me poor quality job such as evenings in 100 hour pharmacy”

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“Harassment by area managers who phone me at home when ill due to pregnancy demanding my return to man the pharmacy and do MURs. I once had a call while in hospital he was not asking about my welfare but demanding my return to work on a bank holiday without offering any help at all. I felt obliged and bullied to do work when extremely unwell.”

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“Within the structure of the NHS in all the establishments that I have worked, staff are made to work long hours, late nights on-calls etc by way of being emotionally blackmailed and told that professional responsibility dictates that when it is needed; i.e. *you should provide the service required even if outside contracted hours*”

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“I currently work in primary care, having left hospital pharmacy as it made me so stressed and grumpy that my husband threatened to leave me unless I left my job”

“I have left one job [because of the stress] and I have started another. I can't manage this one being different either. I am beginning to worry about whether I can manage the families Sunday lunch!”

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“My replies would have been very different had I undertaken this survey a year ago: I quit working for XXXX in Dec precisely because I felt the pressure and bullying by the management was excessive and unacceptable. My current place of employment is much better, much lower stress levels even if the working hours are longer: there is more support staff, and their morale is much better too.”