



Counselling & Psychotherapy Experience & Attitudes

Quantitative Research

October, 2011

Prepared for:
Irish Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy

In Association with:
Carr Communications

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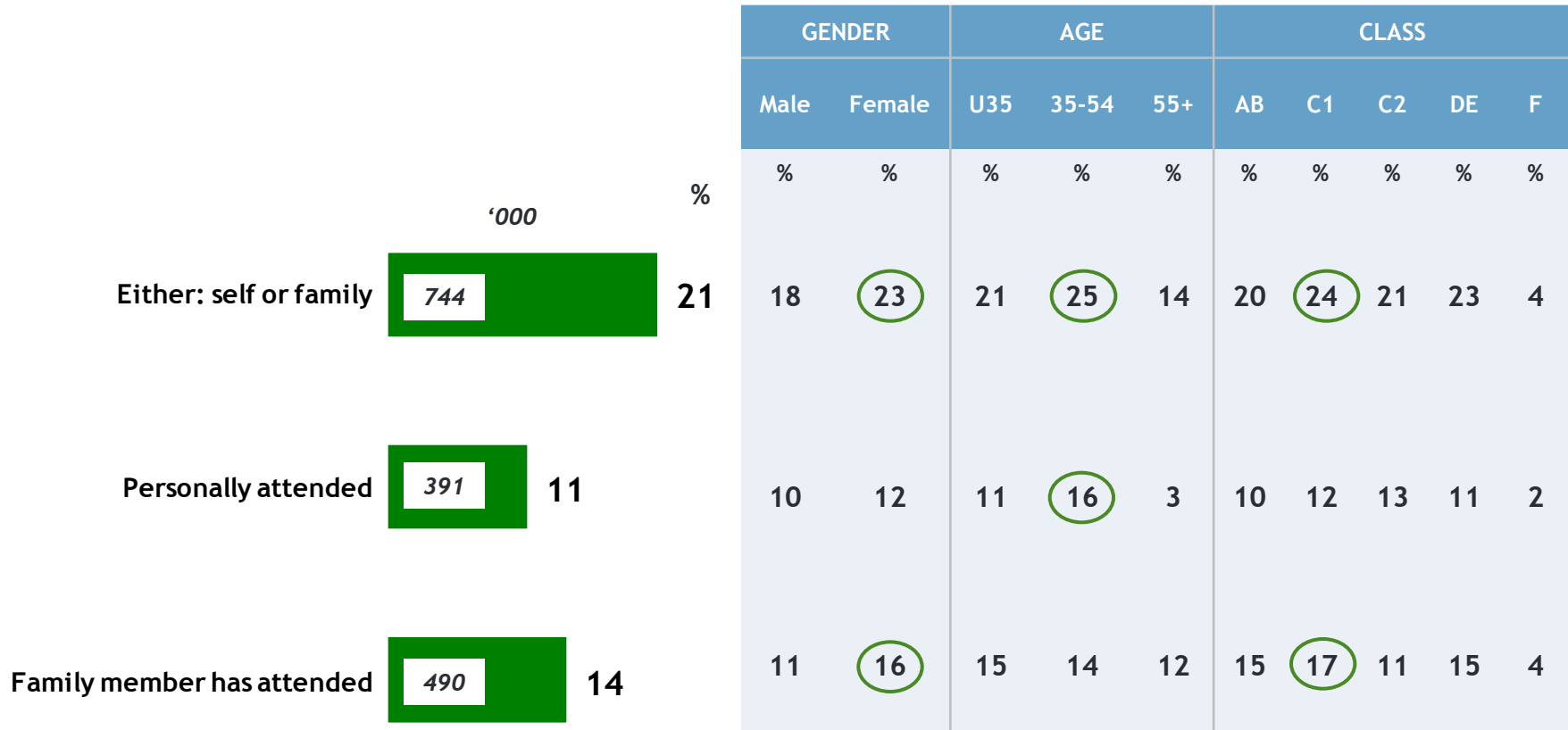


Introduction

- Report of a survey of attitudes to and experience of counselling & psychotherapy, undertaken for the Irish Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy, in association with Carr Communications, by Behaviour & Attitudes.
- Questions included on Behaviour & Attitudes October 2011 TeleBarometer survey and addressed to a nationally representative, quota controlled sample of 1,005 adults aged 16+, corresponding with a national population of 3,591,000.
- Data can be quoted with a statistical accuracy of +/- 3.2%
- Additional questions included on a second TeleBarometer survey addressed to a national sample of 1,001 adults.

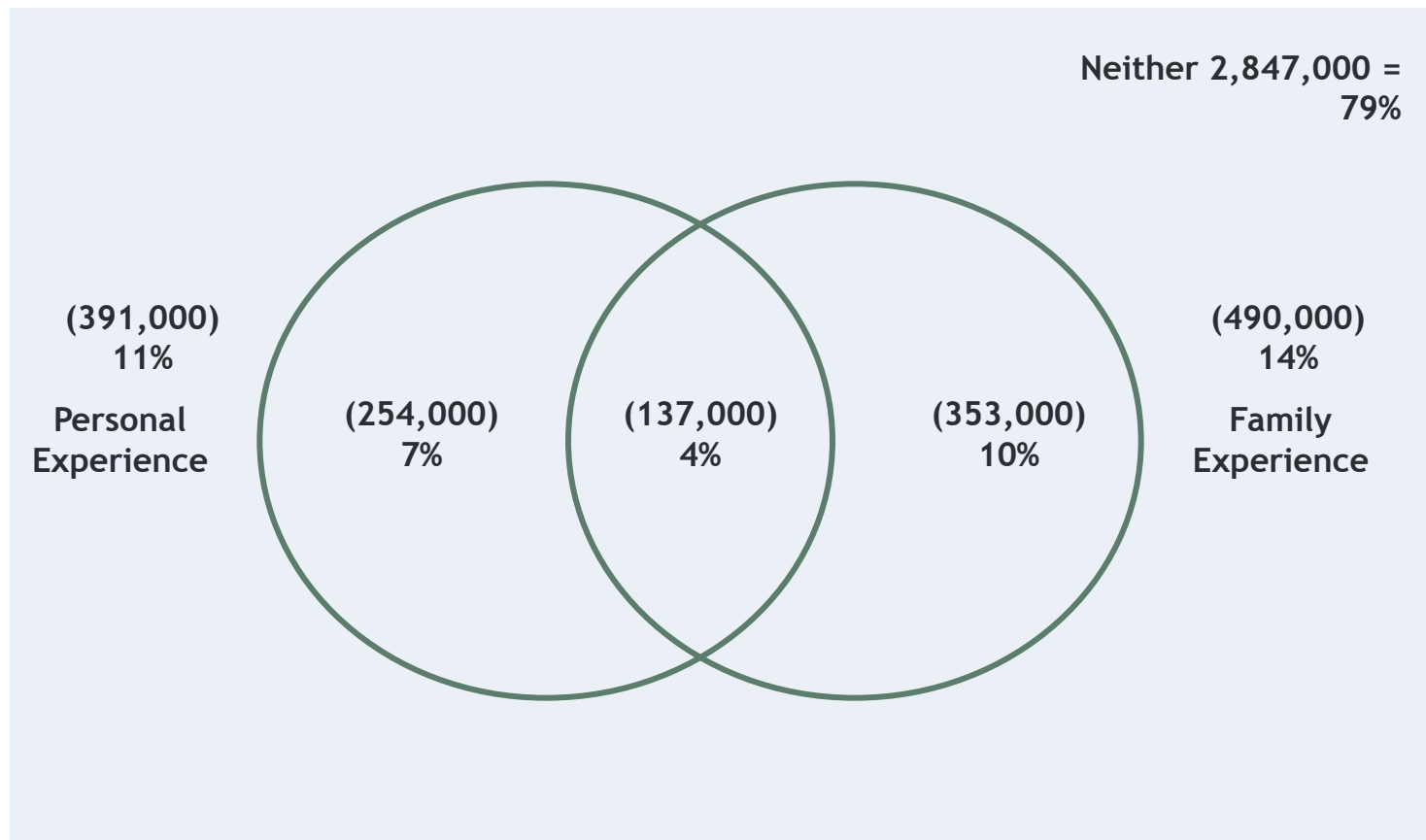
Attendance at a Counsellor or Psychotherapist

Base: Adults aged 16+, 1,005/3,591,000



There is a greater likelihood of admitting to attending (or being aware of family attendance) among women, those in the middle aged range and more particularly lower middle class.

Overlap of Personal/Family Experience of Counselling/Psychotherapy



21% have personal or family experience, and 4% have both personal and family experience.

Value of Counselling/Psychotherapy

Base: Experience of counselling/psychotherapy, self or family, 108/391,000

Q.2 Was your experience of this form of treatment valuable or not?



Perceptions of treatment value are highly favourable with only one in five questioning its worth.

Reasons Experience of Therapy Valuable

Base: Considered counselling/psychotherapy valuable - 87/312,000



A wide variety of benefits of psychotherapy suggested by participants with just 7% unable to nominate one.

Reasons Therapy Not Valuable

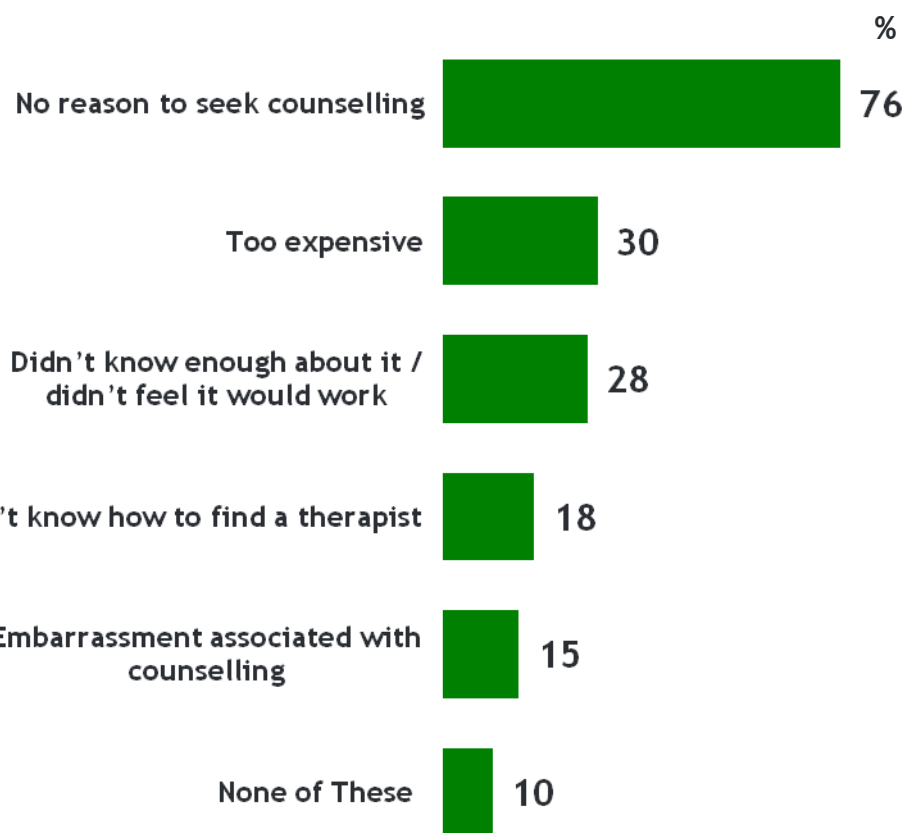
Base: All didn't find it valuable - 21 people only - small base



Among the small minority that didn't value the process, there was a tendency to feel that their issues were unresolved but also to not have felt an issue with the therapist.

Reasons for Never Attending a Counsellor

Base: Never attended - 792



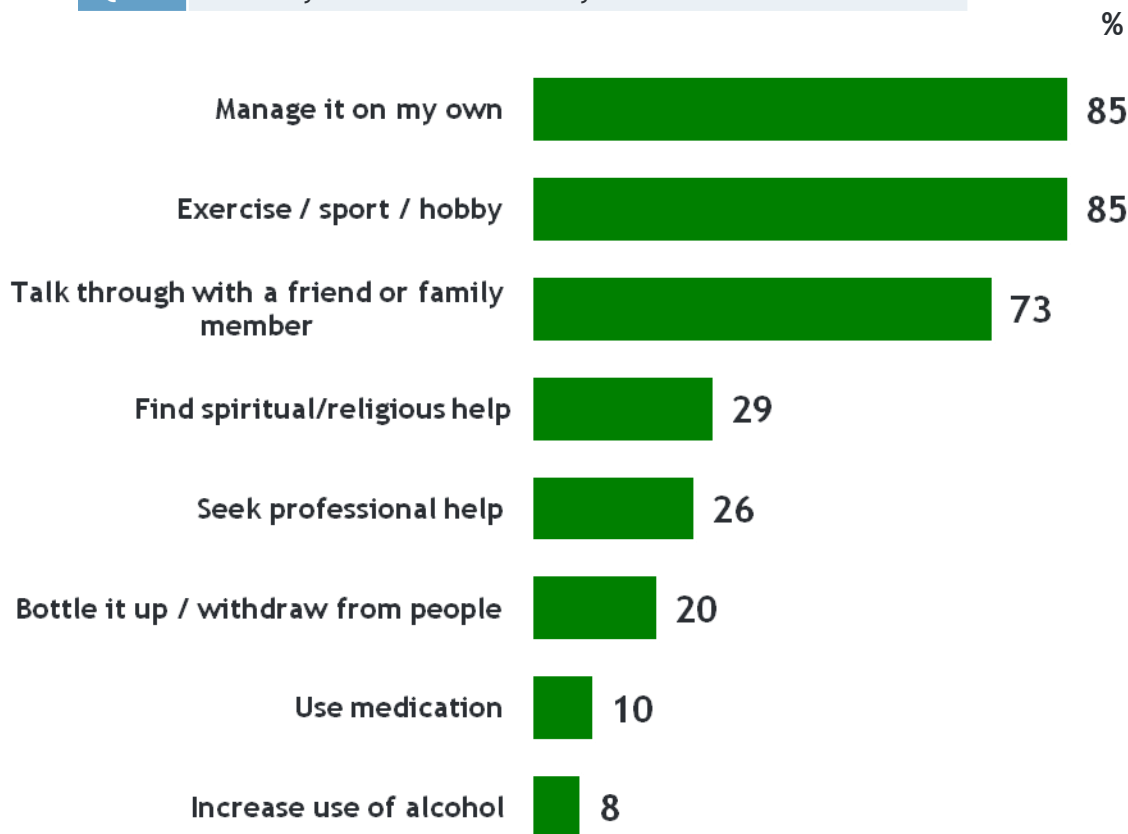
GENDER		AGE			CLASS			
Male	Female	U35	35-54	55+	AB	C1	C2	DE
%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
73	78	76	80	71	84	81	73	71
31	30	35	32	23	20	27	35	31
30	26	36	23	24	22	30	29	27
21	15	24	14	14	13	20	16	18
16	14	18	13	14	11	13	20	16
10	10	10	6	14	11	6	8	12

Three quarters of those who have not attended therapy say that they have no reason to do so, (more so middle class), but the most common other reasons relate to perceived expense (working class) and not knowing enough about it/scepticism.

Normal Approach to Stress

Base: Adults aged 16+, 1,005/3,591,000

Q.4 How do you deal with stress in your life?



	Personal Experience (11%)	Family Experience (14%)	Neither personal nor family experience (79%)
	%	%	%
Manage it on my own	77	83	86
Exercise / sport / hobby	85	87	85
Talk through with a friend or family member	74	71	73
Find spiritual/religious help	36	29	27
Seek professional help	58	33	21
Bottle it up / withdraw from people	41	29	16
Use medication	29	20	7
Increase use of alcohol	19	15	6

Self managing and participating in sport are very commonly claimed, while 3 in 4 indicate that they discuss problems, presumably when they can't manage on their own. A quarter seek professional help.

Normal Approach to Stress X Demographics

Base: Adults aged 16+, 1,005/3,591,000

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			SOCIAL CLASS				
		Male	Female	15-34	35-54	55+	AB	C1	C2	DE	F
<i>Base:</i>	1005	494	511	348	366	291	196	269	159	334	47
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Manage it on my own	85	85	85	83	84	89	85	83	84	86	89
Exercise / sport / hobby	85	86	84	90	88	74	86	88	89	78	84
Talk through with a friend or family member	73	64	82	80	74	62	80	76	74	66	72
Find spiritual/religious help	29	23	34	19	31	38	28	28	24	34	29
Seek professional help	26	24	27	19	33	25	28	20	27	27	31
Bottle it up / withdraw from people	20	20	19	20	21	17	18	22	17	22	11
Use medication	10	10	11	7	9	16	6	7	6	19	10
Increase use of alcohol	8	9	7	9	9	5	7	9	9	7	-
None of these	*	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-

There are notable difference by age etc with older adults tending to manage on their own, seek religious help or use medication. Younger adults are more likely to talk it through or take exercise. Older people and DE's behave similarly.

Duplication of Ways of Dealing with Stress

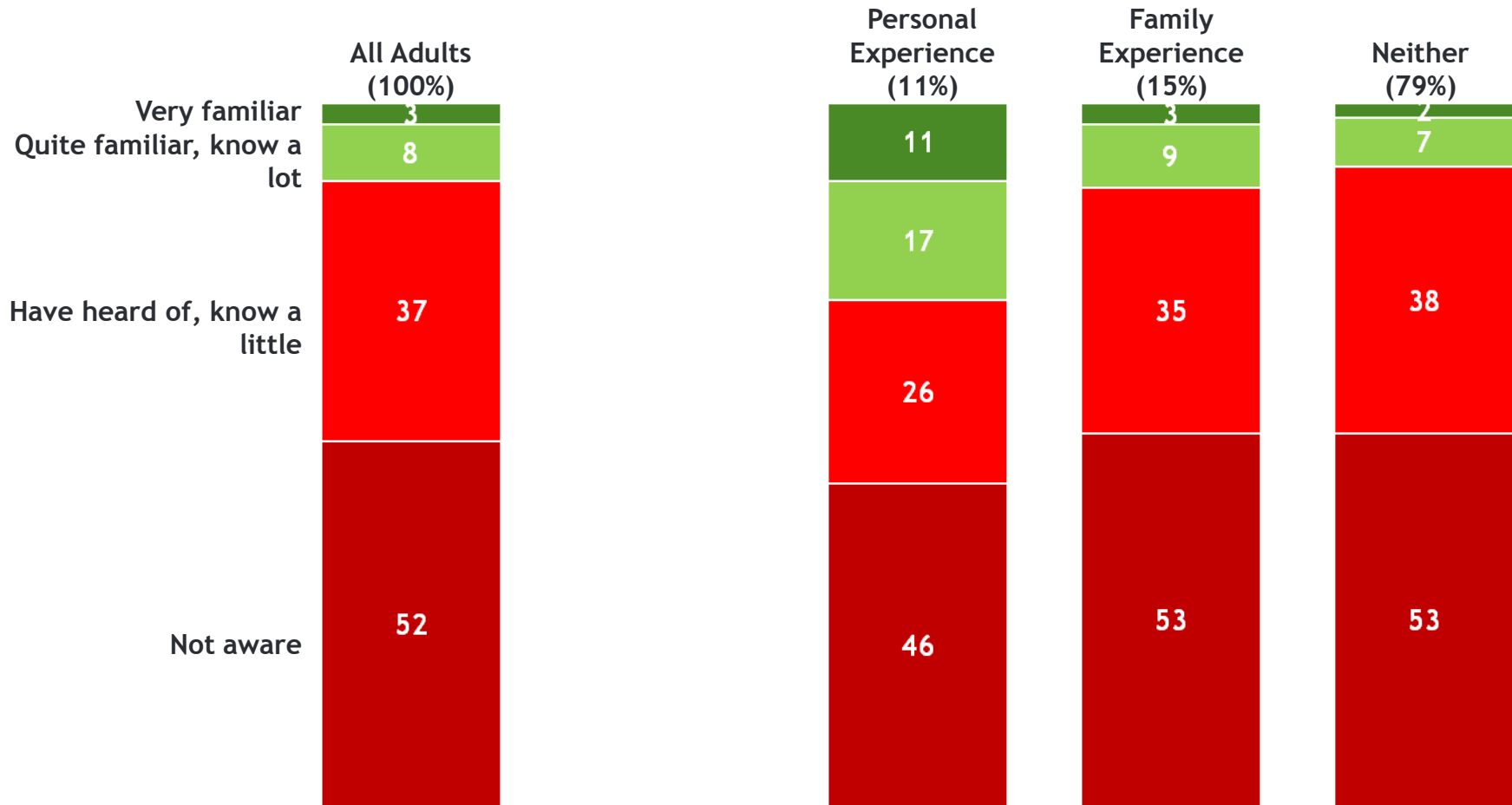
Base: Adults aged 16+, 1,005/3,591,000

i.e. of those who 'bottle it up', or withdraw from people, 18% find that they use medication, and 15% that they use alcohol more heavily.

	TOTAL	DEAL WITH STRESS IN YOUR LIFE							
	All Adults	Manage it on my own	Exercise/sport/hobby	Talk through with a friend or family member	Find spiritual/religious help	Seek professional help	Bottle it up/withdraw from people	Use medication	Increase use of alcohol
<i>Base:</i>	1005	852	846	740	296	262	195	110	83
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Manage it on my own	85	100	85	82	86	76	86	79	77
Exercise / sport / hobby	85	85	100	87	87	90	78	77	82
Talk through with a friend or family member	73	70	75	100	81	82	70	68	73
Find spiritual/religious help	29	29	29	32	100	45	31	38	26
Seek professional help	26	23	27	29	40	100	26	63	37
Bottle it up / withdraw from people	20	20	18	19	21	20	100	33	38
Use medication	10	10	9	10	14	26	18	100	18
Increase use of alcohol	8	7	7	8	7	11	15	14	100

Familiarity with Irish Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy

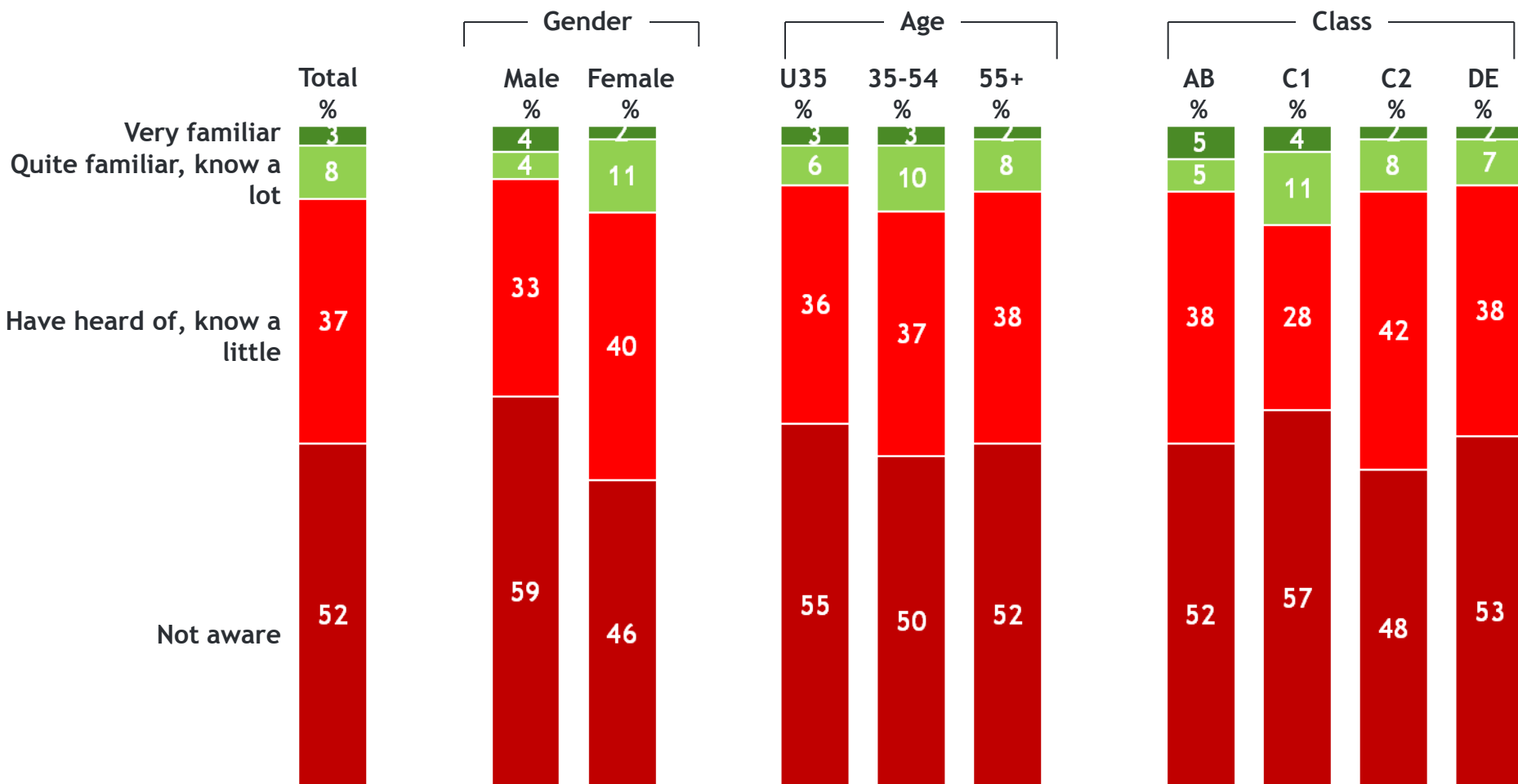
Base: Adults aged 16+, 1,005/3,591,000



Just under half the population has some knowledge of the IACP, with slightly more than one in ten professing more detailed knowledge.

Familiarity with IACP x Demographics

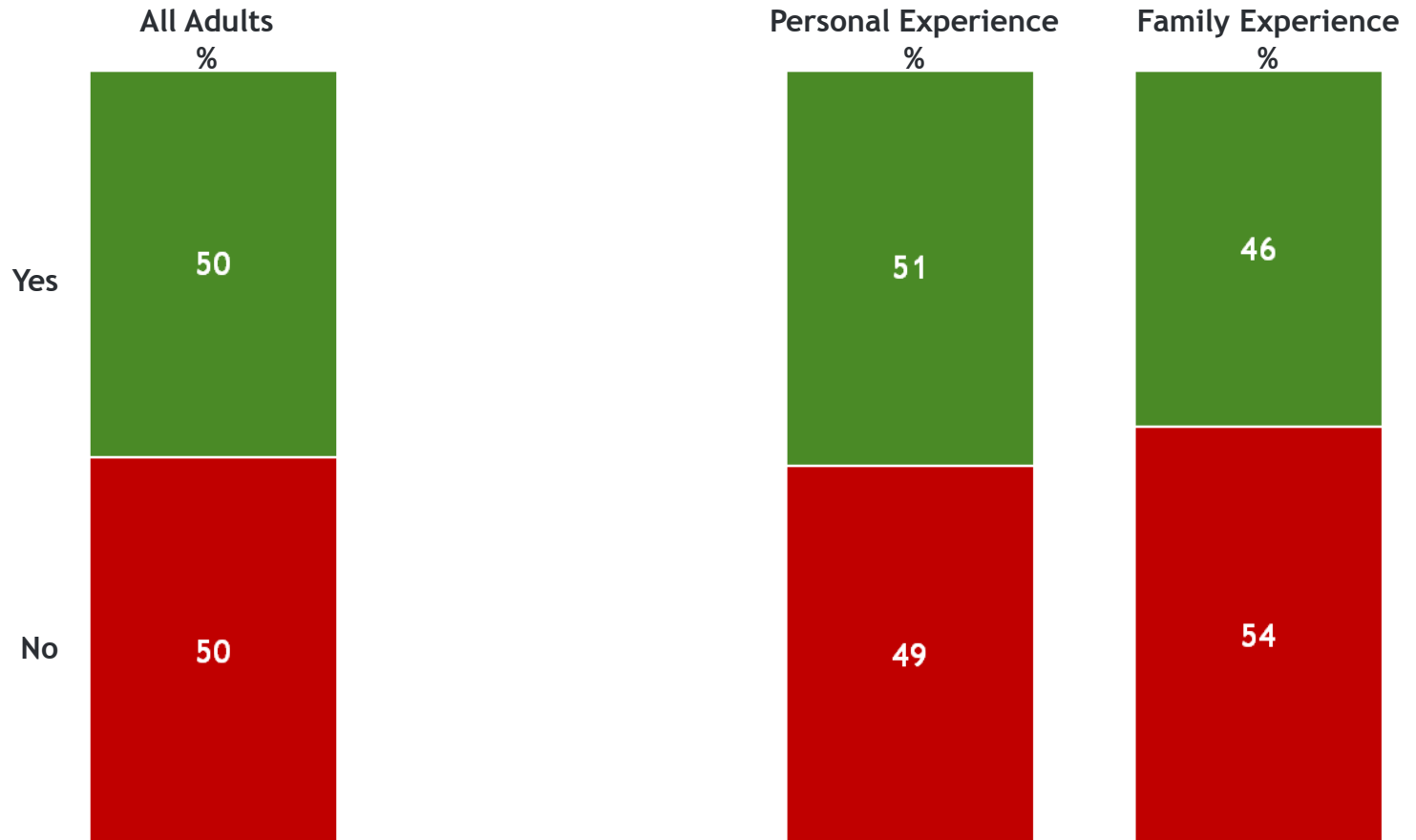
Base: Adults aged 16+, 1,005/3,591,000



Greater knowledge middle aged, female and C1.

Are Counsellors & Psychotherapists Regulated by the Government?

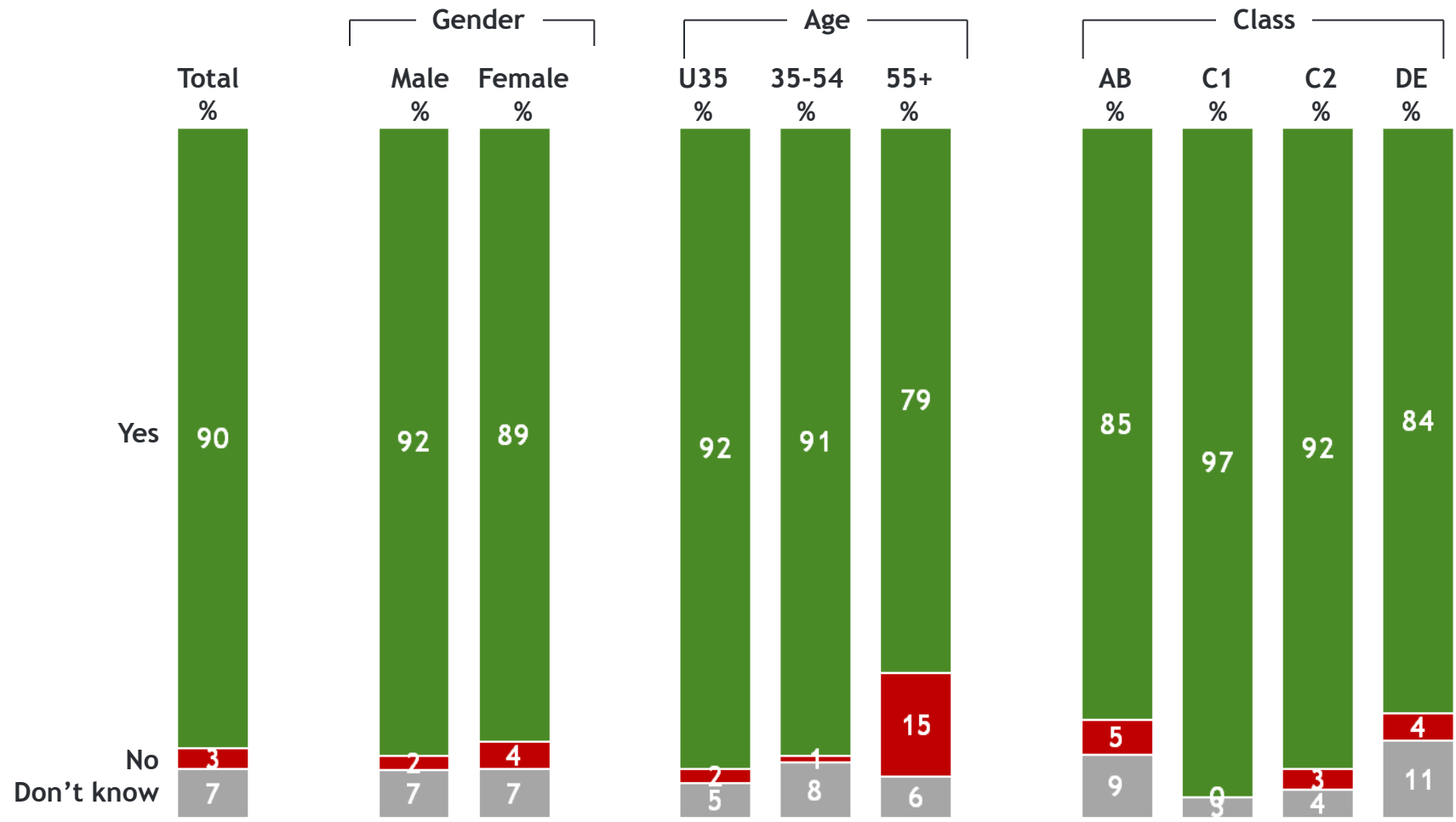
Base: Adults aged 16+, 1,005/3,591,000



There are almost evenly divided views as to whether the profession is regulated or not.

Qualification of Counsellor or Therapist

Base: All personally had therapy 108



The vast majority of those with experience of therapy know or assume their therapist to have been qualified.

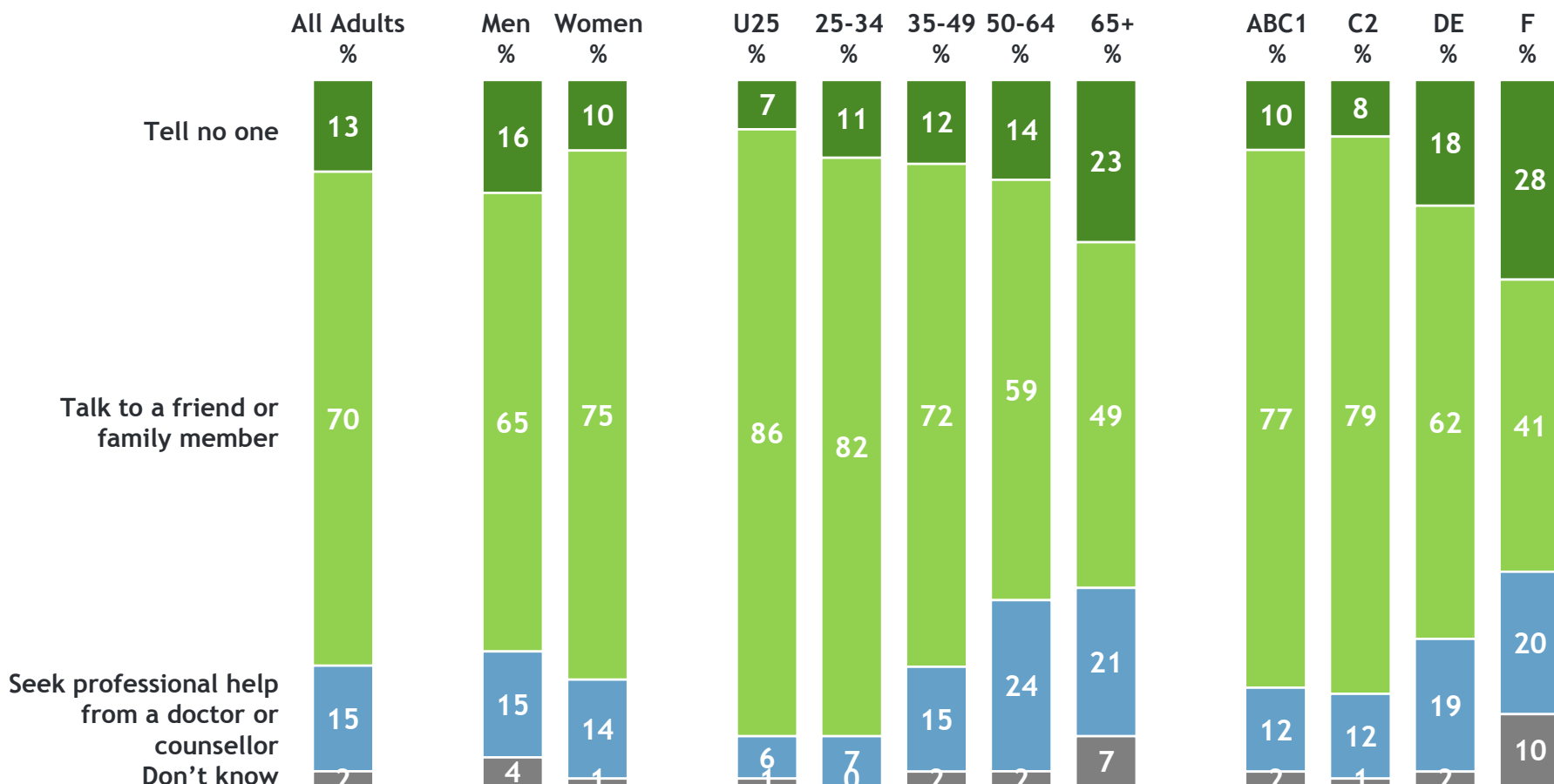


Q.7 If you ever did go to therapy, was your counsellor or psychotherapist qualified?

Approach to Personal Problems & Difficulties

Base: All adults n=1,001/3,591,000

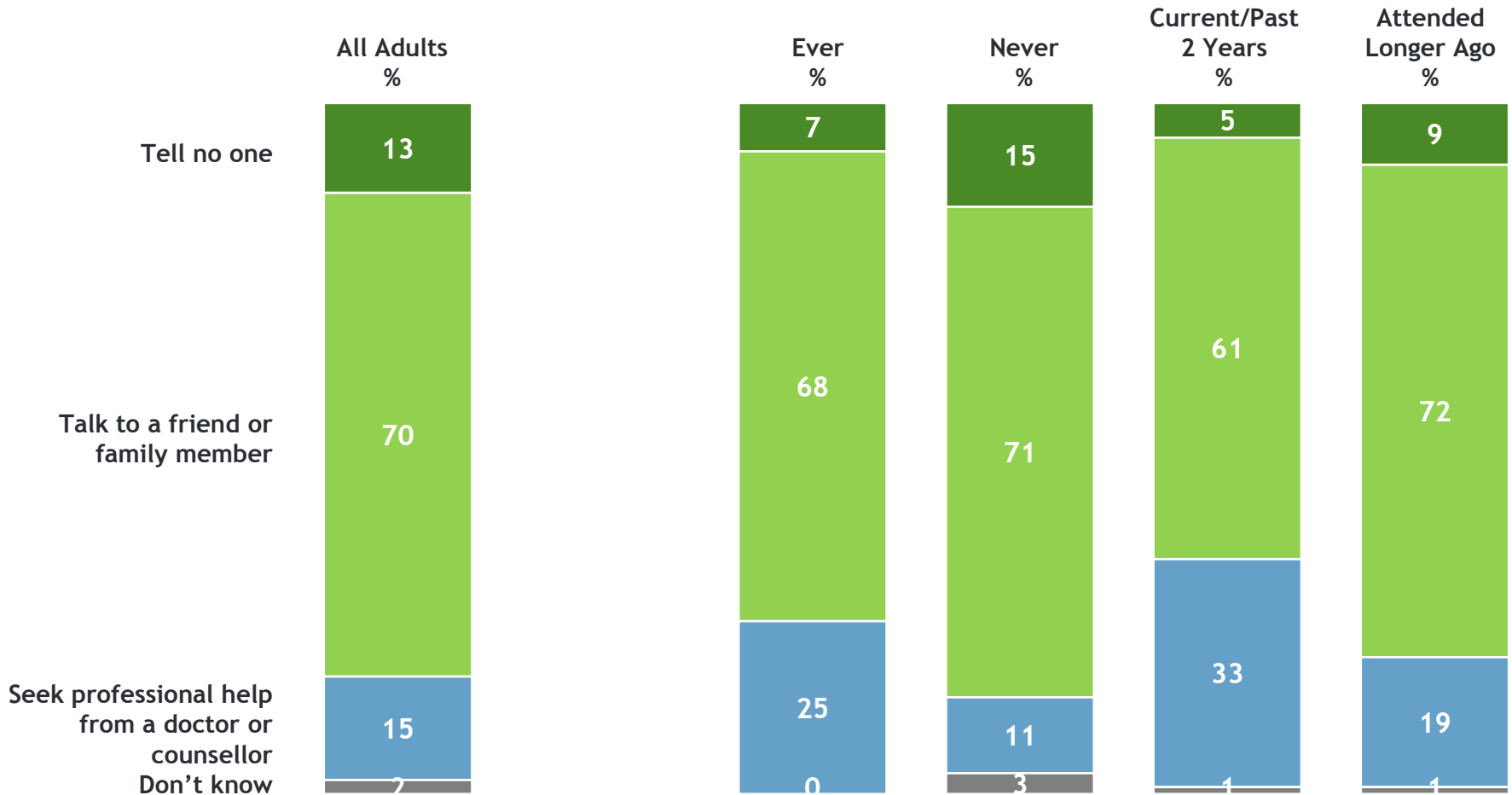
Q.1 Thinking about the personal problems and difficulties in your life, how are you most likely to deal with them?



Approach to Personal Difficulties x Counselling Experience

Base: All adults n=1,001/3,591,000

Q.1 Thinking about the personal problems and difficulties in your life, how are you most likely to deal with them?

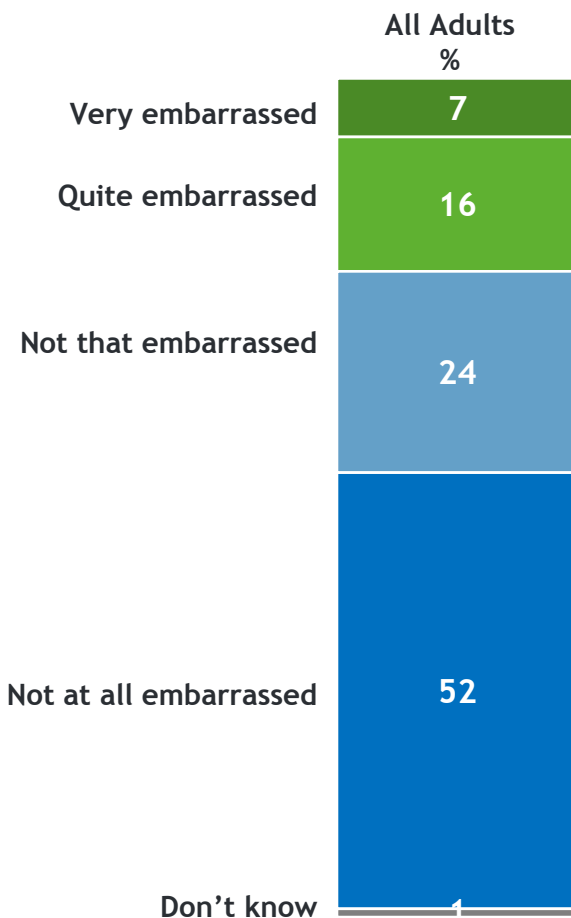


2nd Study

Embarrassment at Attending Therapy

Base: All adults n=1,001/3,591,000

Q.2 To what extent would you be embarrassed, if at all, if people knew you were attending a counsellor or psychotherapist?

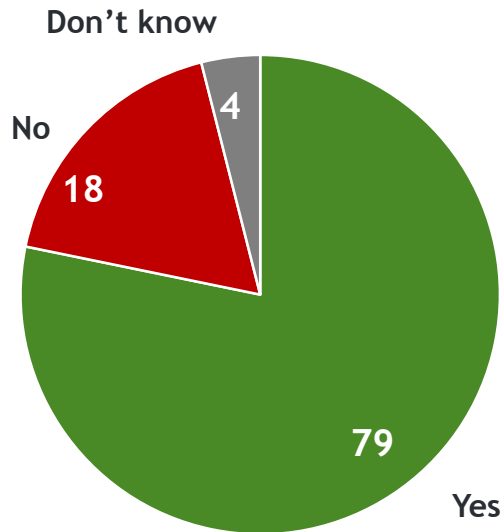


Embarrassed at all	
	%
Men	26
Women	18
U25	24
25-34	31
35-49	21
50-64	18
65+	17
ABC1	23
C2	28
DE	17
F	21
Ever Counselling	19
Never Counselling	23
Current/past 2 years	19
Longer ago	20

Qualifications

Base: All adults n=1,001/3,591,000

Q.3 Do you think that you need a qualification to call yourself a psychotherapist?



Demographics	
	%
Men	74
Women	83
U25	73
25-34	76
35-49	80
50-64	83
65+	78
ABC1	82
C2	76
DE	77
F	72

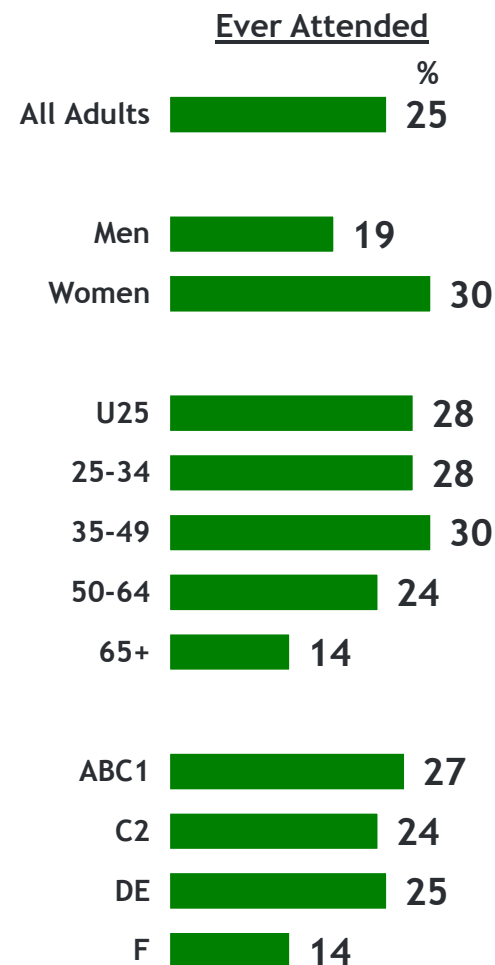
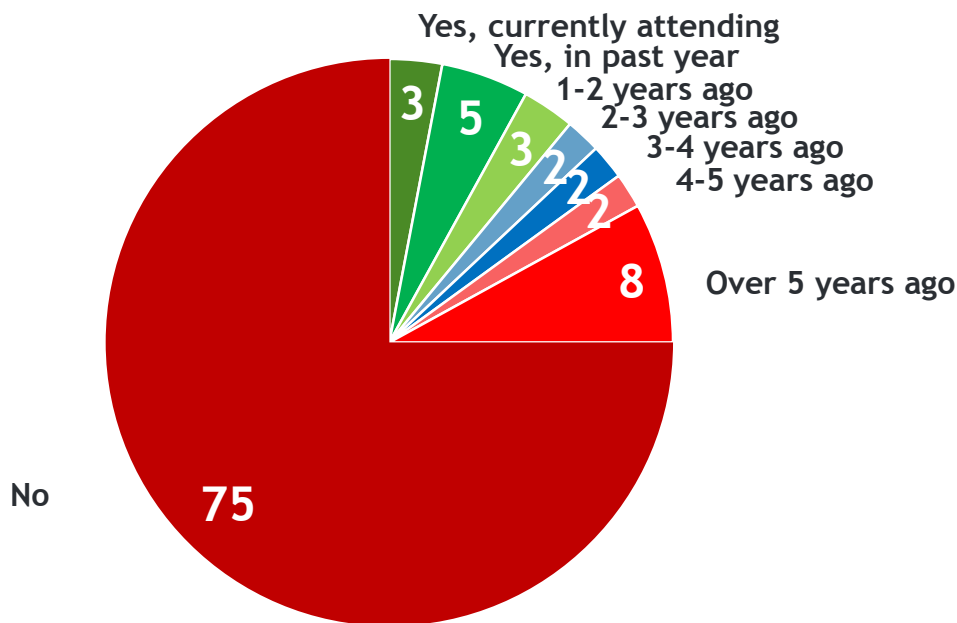
Men, younger and working class adults are more sceptical about the need for qualifications.

2nd Study

Experience of Counselling Psychotherapy

Base: All adults n=1,001/3,591,000

Q.4 Have you ever attended a counsellor or psychotherapist for any reason, and if so, how recently?



2nd Study

Summary & Conclusions

- 21% have personal or familial experience of counselling or psychotherapy, with 11% having personally attended.
 - ❖ Incidences (and indeed awareness of it in the family/peer group) higher among women, 35-54s and, to an extent, among C1s.
- 4 in 5 found the experience valuable, and 52% say it was very valuable:
 - ❖ Beneficial advantages include having someone listen/getting the sense of being on the right track, and being in emotional control.
 - ❖ Those who didn't value the process felt mainly that it didn't help them or that they didn't find common cause with the therapist.
- 3 in 4 of those who have never availed of counselling say that they have had no need of it, but 3 in 10 nominate expense and a similar number cite doubts that it might work.
- About 15% indicate that they would like to discuss personal problems with a counsellor or doctor.
 - ❖ 23% would be embarrassed to have to attend therapy.

Summary & Conclusions

- Most (85% in each instance) claim that they manage stress on their own, or that they can keep it at bay with exercise. Despite this apparent independence or stoicism, three quarters still claim that they talk their issues through with family or friends. About a quarter of all adults indicate that they seek professional help.
 - ❖ One in five bottle it up, one in ten use medication and just 1 in 12 claim to drink more.
- Just under half the population are, to some extent aware of the IACP and 11% know quite a lot, with women and those middle aged more aware.
- Half believe that counsellors are regulated by the Government and the balance do not think so, or don't know. Nine in ten imagine that the counsellor they saw was qualified, with most of the remainder not knowing.

Thank you