



# JET Health and Well-being Resources

## Spring 2018

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report analyses JET Programme participants' experiences with medical care, mental health care, privacy, and mental health resources. This analysis was made possible by distributing a survey with questions on these topics to current JET Programme participants.

The survey for this report was open for responses from all current JET Programme participants from March 19, 2018 to April 13, 2018. In total, 1,341 - or approximately 26.0% - of current JET Programme participants participated in the survey.

Over half of respondents indicate fellow participants in their prefecture, the Internet, and their supervisors as sources they used to find information about medical care in their prefecture. However, Contracting Organisations could provide additional information, as only 38.7% of respondents report that their Contracting Organisation provided them with information about local medical care options. Most respondents (82.4%) had visited a hospital or clinic while on the JET Programme. The conditions for using sick leave vary between each Contracting Organisation.

Information about local mental health resources is not widely known by respondents, and only 23.7% say their Contracting Organisation has provided them with this information. Sixty-seven respondents (5.0%) note that they had visited a counsellor or psychologist in Japan while on the JET Programme. Most of these respondents indicate that there were English-speaking staff at the counsellor or psychologist they visited.

Supervisors and other staff might occasionally learn confidential information about participants' health if participants ask them for information about local care options. Most respondents report feeling comfortable asking their supervisor or other staff for help making medical appointments, and 20.7% say they have felt their medical privacy has been disregarded in their workplace while on the JET Programme. Respondents indicate that they would not feel as comfortable asking their supervisor or other staff for help making appointments with counsellors or psychologists, and 6.8% said they have felt their mental health privacy has been disregarded in their workplace while on the JET Programme.

While on the JET Programme, participants have access to several mental health resources. CLAIR graciously provides the JET Mental Health Counselling Service and the JET Mental Health Counselling Assistance Programme. For each of these resources, about half of respondents indicate that they would not feel comfortable asking their Contracting Organisation or supervisor about them. National AJET offers the AJET Peer Support Group to JET Programme participants, which is a volunteer-led listening and referral service. Respondents that had used any of these resources provided suggestions for how these services could be improved.

Based upon the finding in this report, the AJET National Council offers recommendations relating to these topics. Access to effective resources can help participants as they encounter situations and stress that are unique to living in another country. As participants seek medical care or mental health care in Japan, it is imperative that they are provided with information so they can make informed decisions. Through this report and its recommendations, National AJET hopes to assist JET Programme participants in their roles as teachers, employees, and cultural ambassadors.

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# INTRODUCTION

JET Programme participants may need to seek medical care or mental health services while they live and work in Japan. It is necessary that they become familiar with the Japanese healthcare system so that they can receive effective care. The potential language barrier and unfamiliarity with the Japanese healthcare system could be obstacles for many participants. As such, Contracting Organisations (COs), supervisors, and fellow JET Programme participants can help participants understand their local options for receiving care. Additionally, there are JET Programme-specific resources for mental health that are available to participants. These resources are especially important where local options may not be available.

The goal of this report is to examine current JET Programme participants' experiences with medical care and mental health care in Japan, and to offer suggestions to interested parties in how to improve access to medical and mental health resources. By doing this, the AJET National Council hopes to assist JET Programme participants in maintaining their well-being.

## METHODOLOGY

The data used in this report came from a survey conducted by the Association for Japan Exchange and Teaching (AJET) over a period of 26 days, from March 19, 2018 to April 13, 2018. The survey was distributed to current JET Programme participants using an online survey development tool. The survey consisted of 69 questions that were written in English and Japanese. Questions were written in a variety of formats including yes/no, multiple choice, free response, and rating on a scale. The topics covered in the survey included respondents' experiences with healthcare, mental health consultations, privacy, and mental health resources while on the JET Programme. For the purposes of this report, survey percentages have been rounded to the nearest first decimal point.

# SURVEY SAMPLE

This survey collected responses from a total of 1,341 JET Programme participants, equivalent to approximately 26.0% of the total current JET Programme population in Japan. Of these respondents, 1,265 (94.3%) identified themselves as Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) and 76 (5.7%) as Coordinators for International Relations (CIRs). There were no responses from any Sports Exchange Advisors (SEA). These results are congruent with the overall breakdown of JET Programme participants: 91.3% are ALTs, 8.6% are CIRs, and less than 0.1% are SEAs.

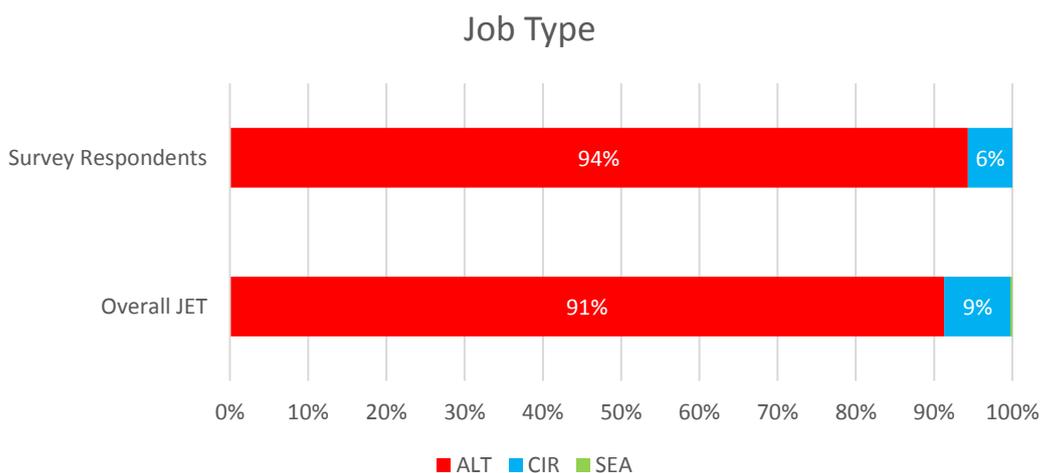


Chart 1

The largest proportion of respondents indicated that they are in their first year on the JET Programme (38.9%), with second and third year participants the next most populous groups (29.8% and 18.2% respectively). Overall, the results are comparable to the entire JET Programme participant population.

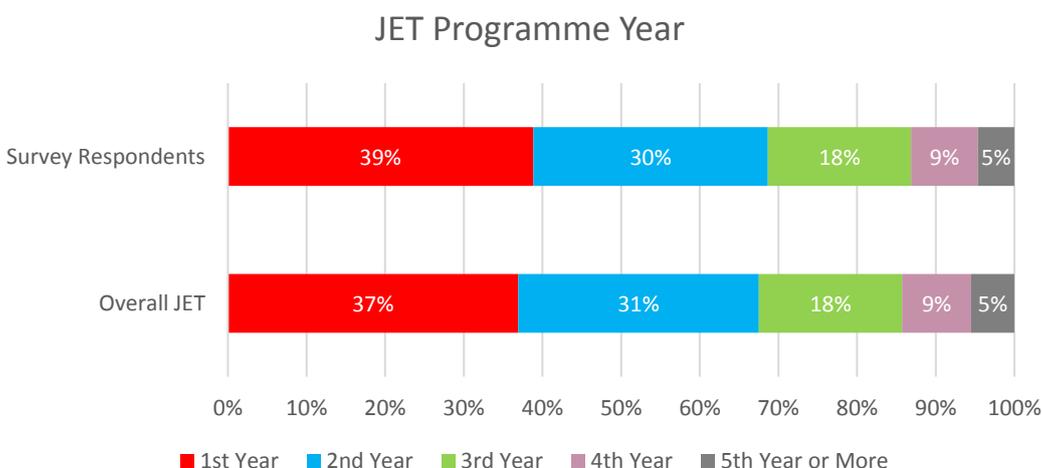


Chart 2

# RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

## MEDICAL CARE

As JET Programme participants live in Japan, they may need to seek medical care. They may require assistance due to language barriers and unfamiliarity with the Japanese healthcare system. The next section will include insights on this topic.

## LOCAL HEALTHCARE INFORMATION

Respondents were asked what sources they used to find information about hospitals or clinics in their prefecture. Respondents specified fellow participants in their prefecture (73.2%), the Internet (61.6%), and their supervisors (55.3%) as sources they used. Respondents noted these sources again when asked which source was the most helpful.

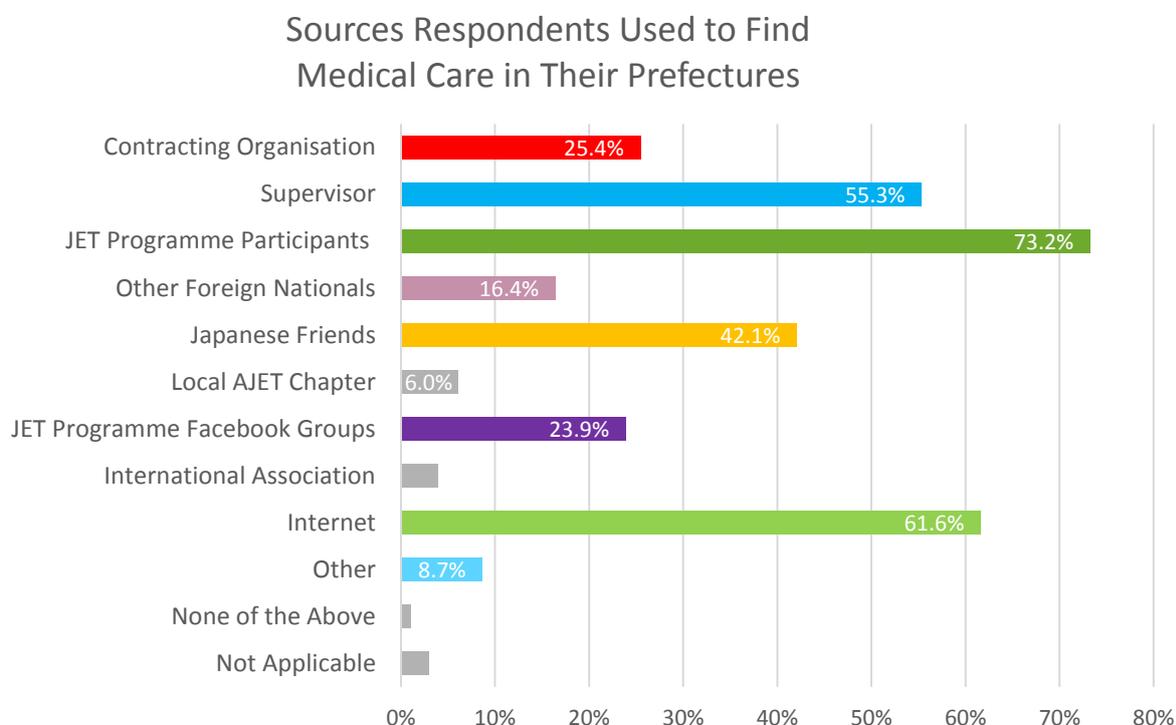


Chart 3

During participants' time on the Programme, COs can help participants by providing information about medical care in their prefecture. However, only 38.7% of respondents said their CO had provided them with this information, while 41.4% said their CO had not, and 19.9% were unsure.

Has your CO ever provided you with information about hospitals or clinics in your prefecture?

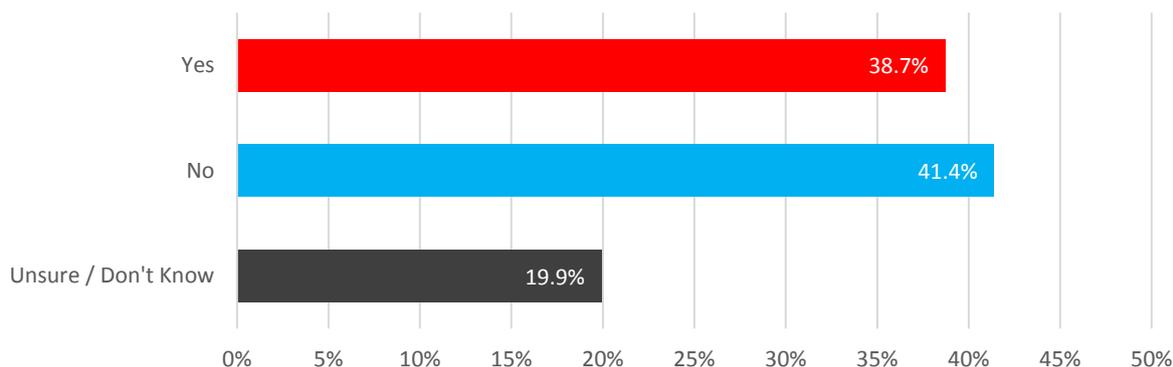


Chart 4

Respondents overwhelmingly reported that there is a hospital or clinic within 30 minutes of their current residence (95.1%). Over half of respondents stated their prefecture has English-speaking doctors, though 36.1% of respondents were unsure if their prefecture has any English-speaking doctors.

### MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

When asked if they had visited a hospital or clinic while on the JET Programme, 82.4% of respondents – or 1,105 – stated they had. Of these respondents, 44.5% said that no one had helped them set up their appointment(s) at a hospital or clinic. However, supervisors (37.7%) and staff at the respondents’ workplaces (26.3%) were the most common people that respondents specified as helping set up the appointments.

People Who Helped Respondents Set Up Medical Appointments

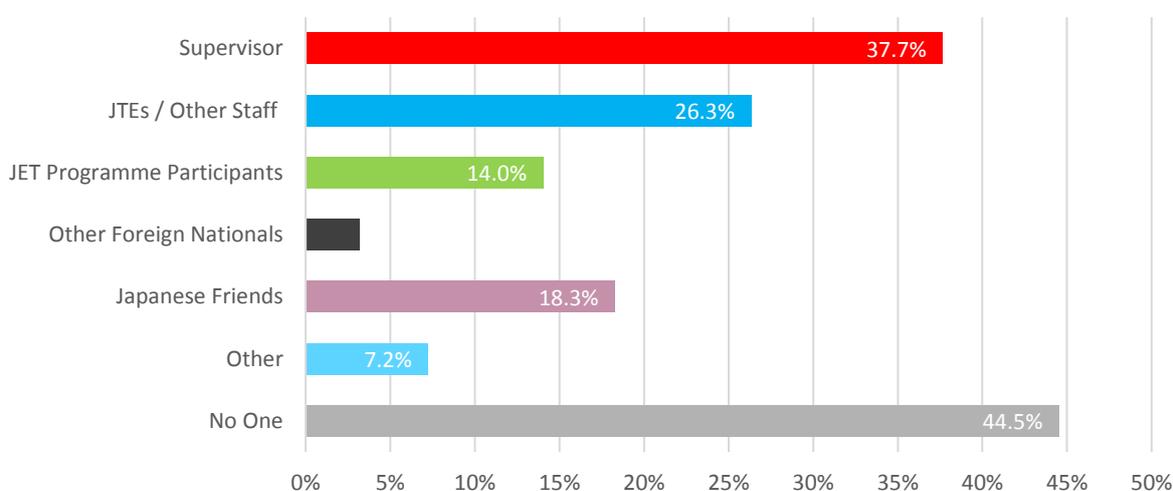


Chart 5

Supervisors (30.7%) and other co-workers (20.5%) were reported to go with the respondents to their appointments, with 38.6% of respondents saying that no one had ever gone with them to an appointment.

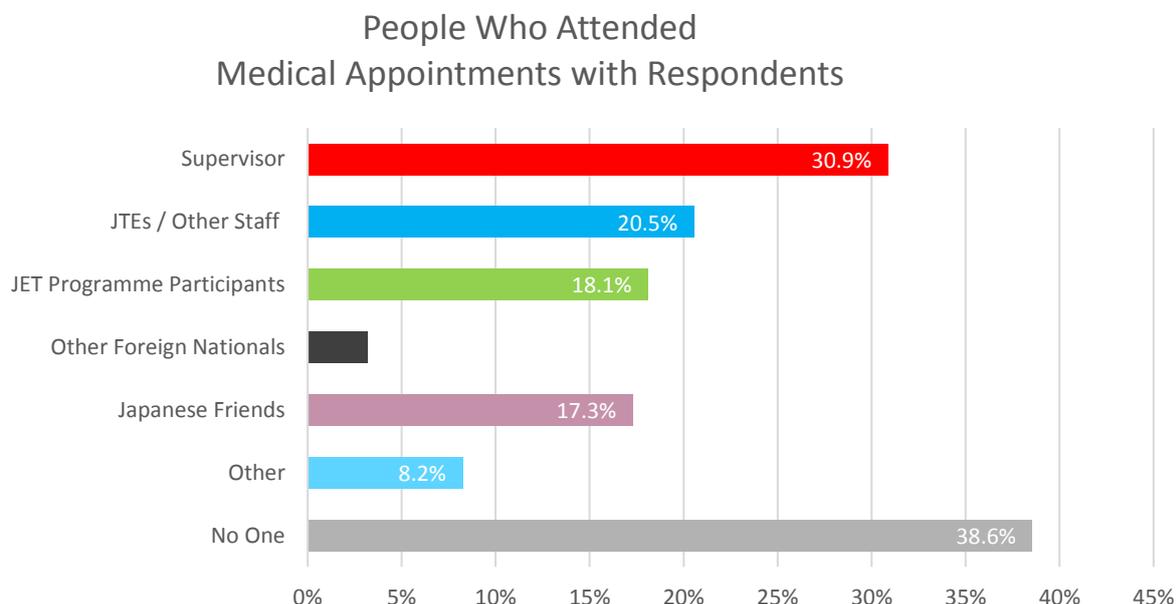


Chart 6

Respondents were asked about what services were available in other languages at the hospitals and clinics they visited, and 37.7% reported that English-speaking staff was available. Additionally, 26.5% noted that no services had been offered to them at any of their visits, and 33.7% said that while services in other languages had not been offered, their Japanese ability was sufficient.

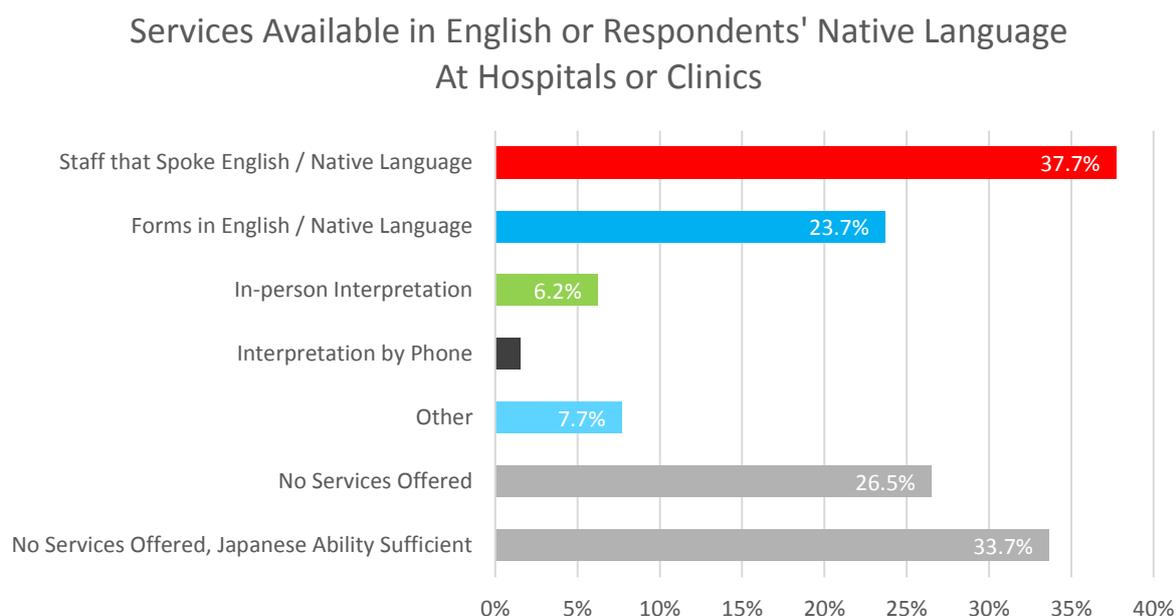


Chart 7

## SICK LEAVE

Each JET Programme participant has sick leave as part of their contract with their CO. The procedures regarding sick leave are under the discretion of each CO. In the Japanese school system, employees usually have to submit a *shindansho* (doctor's note) in order to use sick leave.

Over half of respondents (55.7%) indicated that they needed a doctor's note to use sick leave for short-term illnesses such as the cold or influenza, and 22.4% indicated that they could use sick leave without a doctor's note for these short-term illnesses.

### CO Allows Sick Leave for Short Term Illnesses With a Doctor's Note

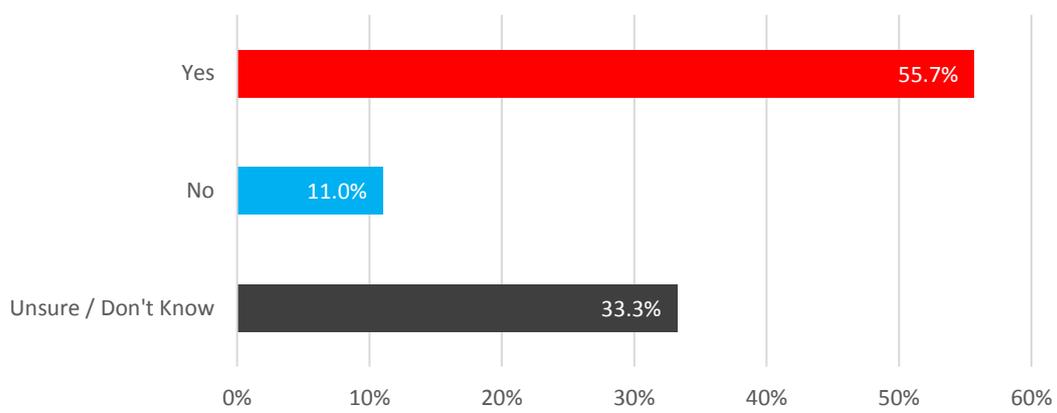


Chart 8

### CO Allows Sick Leave for Short Term Illnesses Without a Doctor's Note

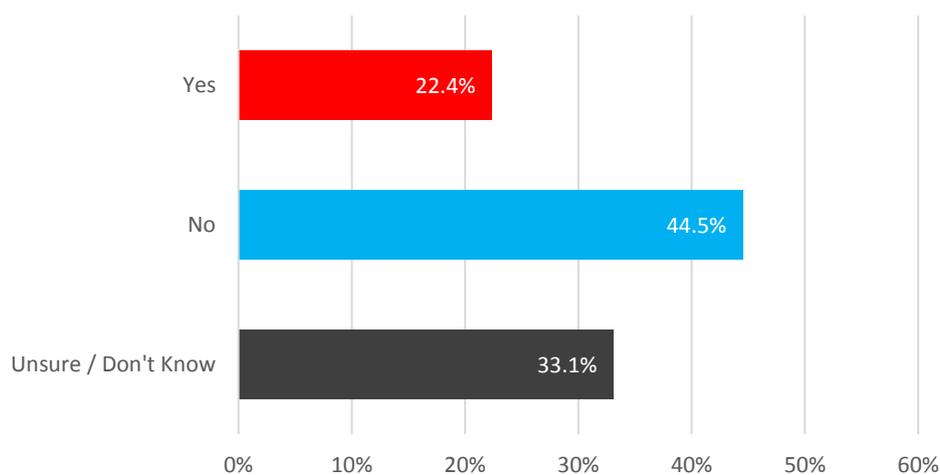


Chart 9

In Japanese work culture, employees will sometimes take annual leave instead of sick leave when they are ill. Respondents were asked if they were required to use annual leave instead of sick leave for any illness, and 29.2% said yes, and 28.7% said no. Additionally, 35.9% said

they had not been sick or they had not tried to use sick leave.

Has your CO required you to use vacation leave instead of sick leave for any illness?

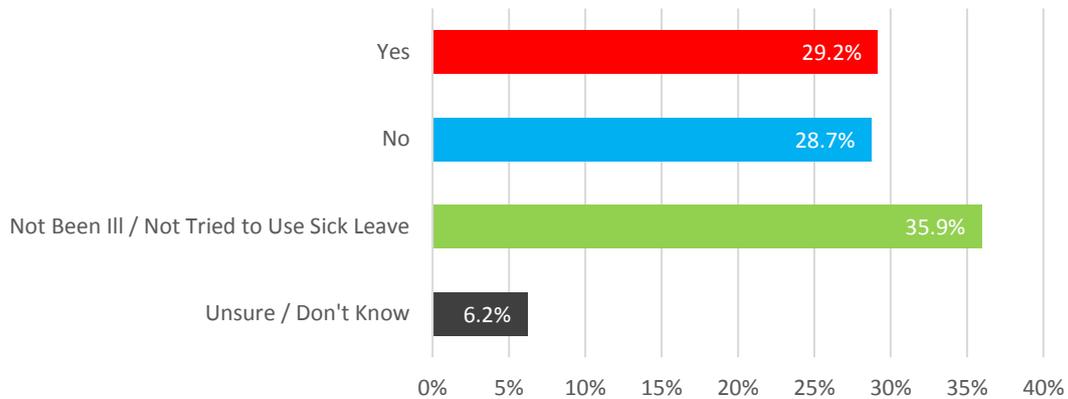


Chart 10

For the 1,105 respondents that had visited a hospital or clinic while on the JET Programme, 9.8% said they could use sick leave for regular doctor's appointments, and 30.9% said they could not.

CO Allows Sick Leave for Regular Doctor's Appointments

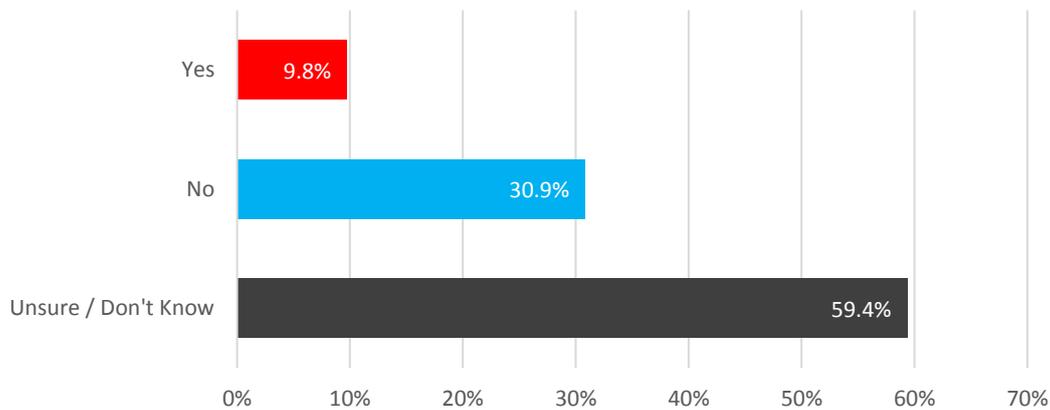


Chart 11

Sixty-seven respondents stated they had visited a counsellor or psychologist in Japan while on the Programme, and about half of these respondents (52.2%) said they were unsure if sick leave could be used for regular appointments with counsellors or psychologists.

In a comment box at the end of the survey, respondents could write additional comments concerning physical health while on the Programme. Eighty respondents wrote that their CO made it difficult to take sick leave, and five said they felt uncomfortable taking sick leave.

## MENTAL HEALTH CARE

While on the JET Programme, participants may need to seek mental health services. Due to potential language barriers and unfamiliarity with Japanese mental health services, participants may require assistance when acquiring these services. The availability of mental health professionals and respondents' experiences with consultations will be discussed below.

### LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH CARE INFORMATION

Respondents were asked what sources they used to find information about counsellors or psychologists in their prefecture. Fellow JET Programme participants in their prefecture, the Internet, and Facebook groups were specified as sources they used (28.5%, 27.4%, and 18.9% respectively). Some respondents (44.7%) stated that the question was not applicable to them.

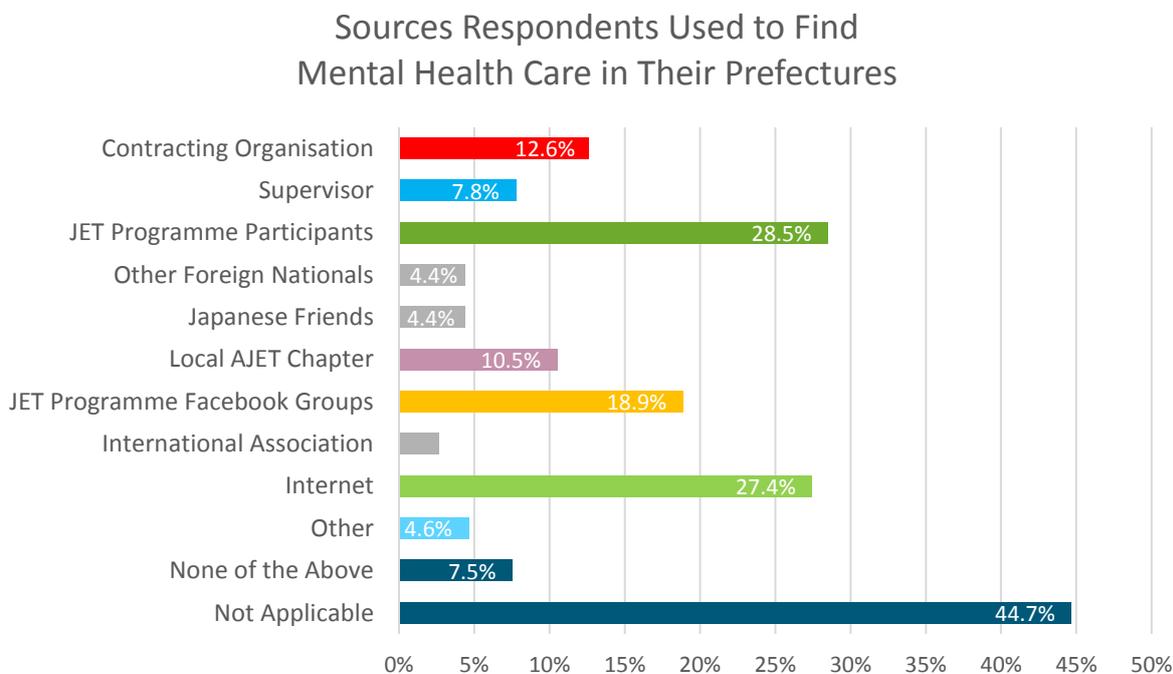


Chart 12

COs can assist participants by providing them with information about local mental health services. Only 23.7% of respondents said their CO has provided them information about counsellors or psychologists within their prefecture, and 55.1% said their CO had not.

Has your CO ever provided you with information about counsellors or psychologists in your prefecture?

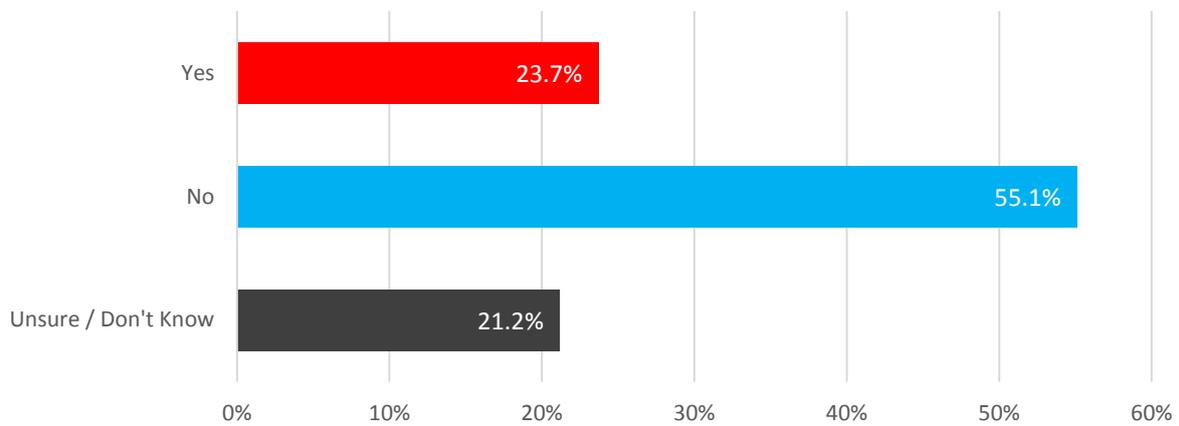


Chart 13

Respondents were not sure if there are counsellors or psychologists within 30 minutes of their current residence, with 79.8% saying they were unsure. Additionally, 78.2% were not sure if there are any English-speaking counsellors or psychologists within their prefecture.

## MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTATIONS

Five percent, or 67 respondents, stated they had visited a counsellor or psychologist in Japan while on the JET Programme. Of these respondents, 44 (65.7%) said that no one had helped them set up an appointment, and 54 (80.6%) said that no one has ever gone with them to an appointment. The graphs for this section are displayed in number of respondents.

People Who Helped Respondents Set Up Mental Health Consultations

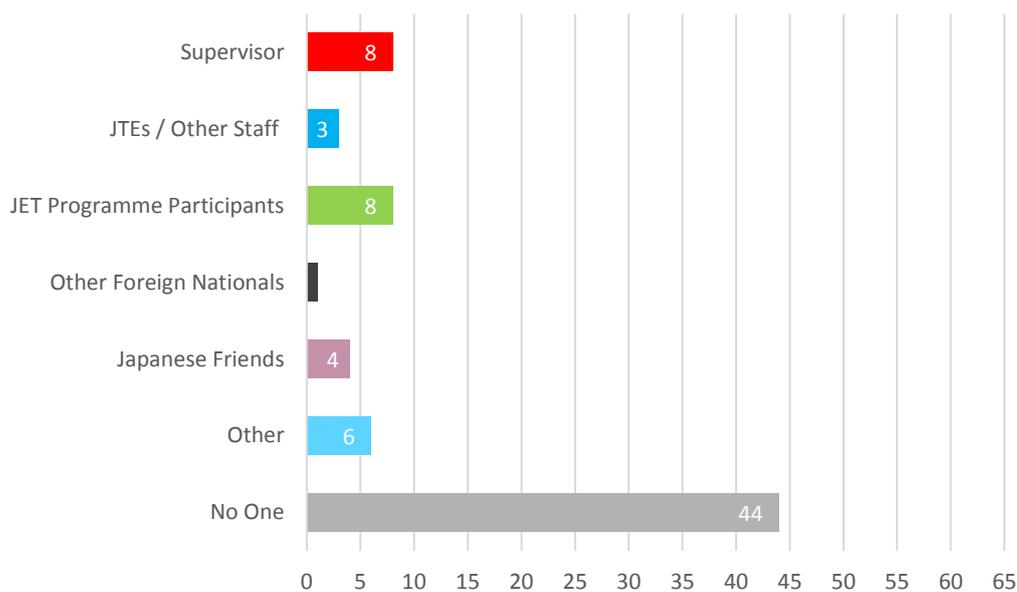


Chart 14

People Who Attended  
Mental Health Consultations with Respondents

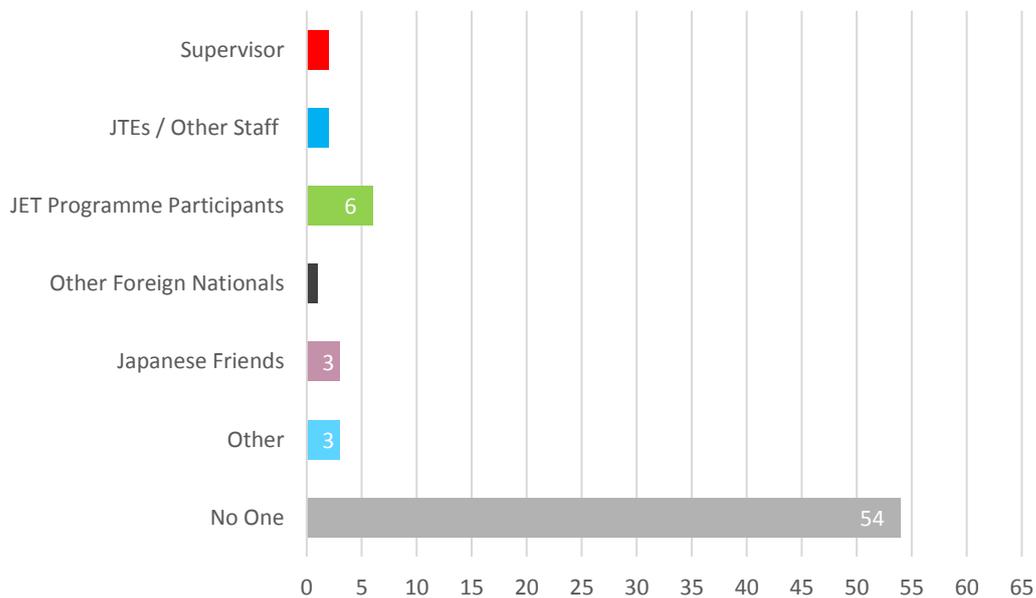


Chart 15

Respondents were asked about what services were available in other languages at the counsellor or psychologist they visited. Forty-four respondents (65.7%) specified that there were English speaking staff or staff that spoke their native language, and 29 (43.3%) said that there were forms in English or their native language. Eighteen respondents (26.9%) said that no services were offered in other languages, but their Japanese ability was sufficient.

Services Available in English or Respondents' Native  
Language At Mental Health Consultations

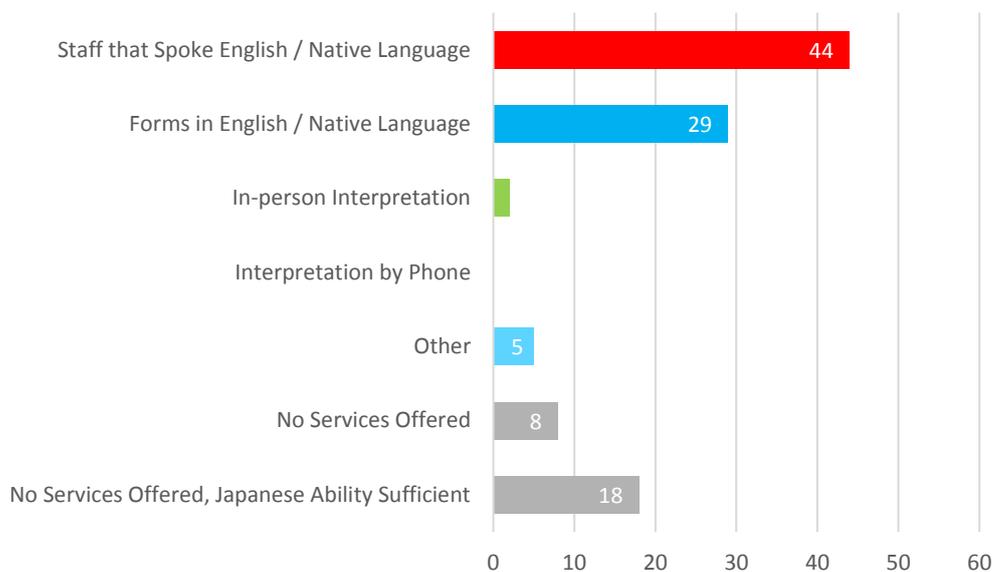


Chart 16

## PRIVACY

As supervisors and other staff work with JET Programme participants, participants may sometimes ask them for assistance with obtaining information about local care options or making appointments with doctors or mental health professionals. As such, supervisors and other staff might know confidential information about participants' health. The following section will include insights into respondents' experiences with medical and mental health privacy while on the Programme.

### MEDICAL PRIVACY

Occasionally, participants may need to ask for assistance with making appointments at hospitals or clinics. Over 50.0% of respondents reported feeling comfortable asking their supervisor, other staff, JET Programme participants, and Japanese friends to help them make appointments.

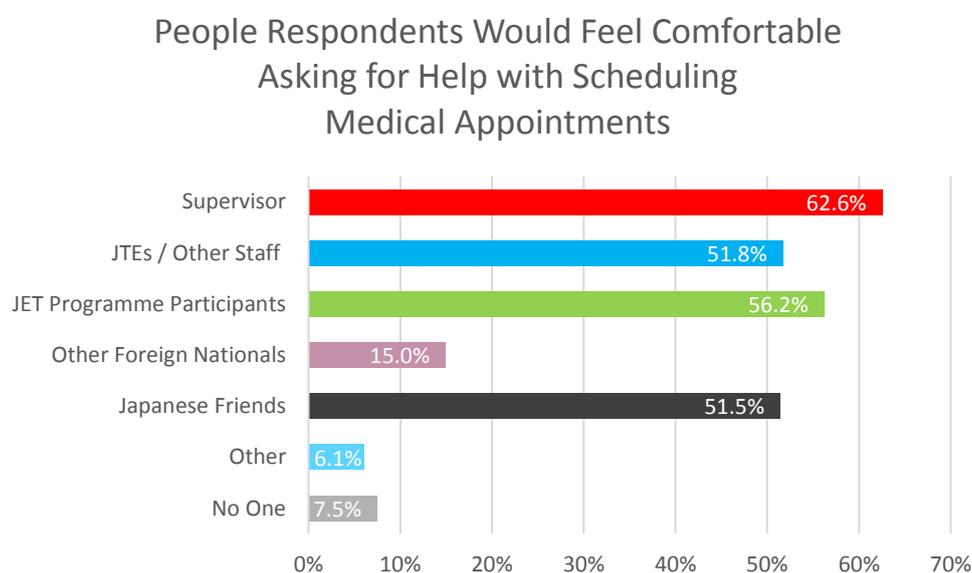


Chart 17

While most respondents had not felt their medical privacy had been disregarded in their workplace, 20.7% of respondents felt their privacy in regards to physical health had been disregarded in their workplace while on the Programme. Respondents shared some of the situations where they felt their medical privacy had been disregarded. While the responses were varied, there were some common situations. Some COs require a mandatory health check, and some respondents stated that their results were not kept confidential. When some respondents confided sensitive medical information to another co-worker or their supervisor, they reported that this information was not kept confidential and was shared with other staff, students, or the community.

Concerning your physical health while on the JET Programme, have you ever felt that your privacy has been disregarded in your workplace?

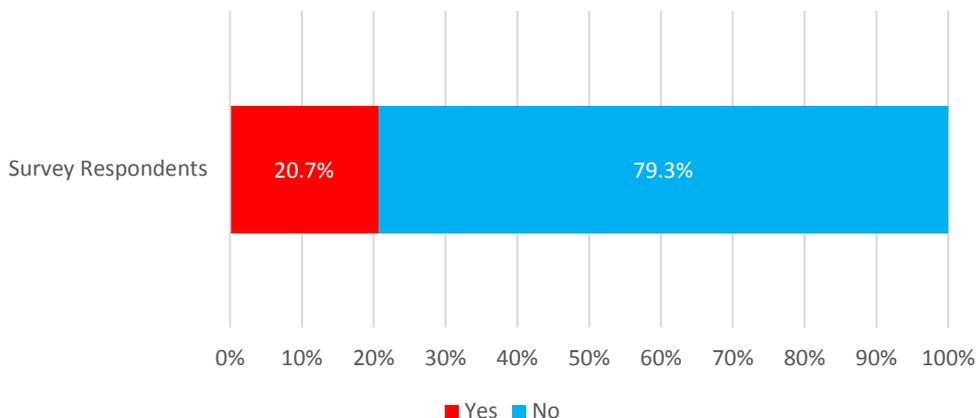


Chart 18

### MENTAL HEALTH PRIVACY

While the majority of respondents reported feeling comfortable asking their supervisor or other staff to help them make doctor’s appointments, respondents did not report feeling as comfortable asking for this assistance with mental health appointments. Respondents were asked to select the people that they would feel comfortable asking for help with scheduling these appointments. Only 33.9% selected their supervisor, and 22.2% selected other staff at their workplace. However, 55.3% selected fellow participants in their prefecture.

People Respondents Would Feel Comfortable Asking for Help with Scheduling Mental Health Consultations

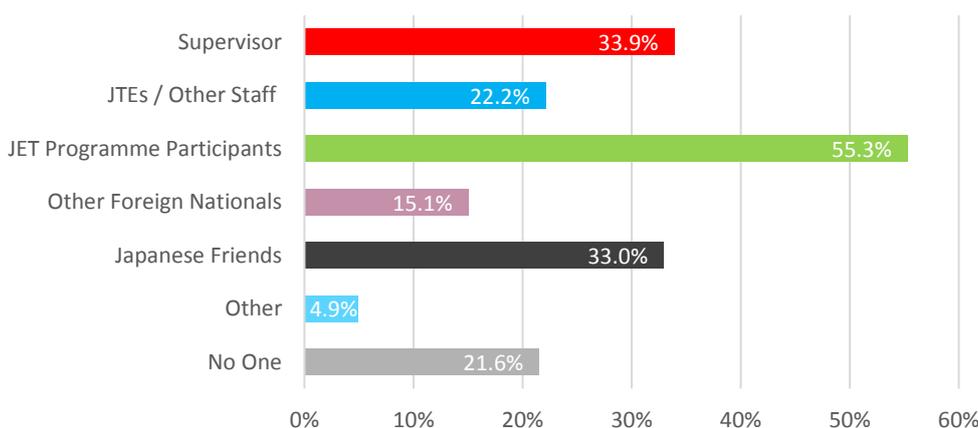


Chart 19

While most respondents had not felt their mental health privacy had been disregarded in their workplace, 6.8% of respondents felt their privacy in regards to mental health had been disregarded in their workplace while on the Programme. Respondents shared some of the situations where they felt their mental health privacy had been disregarded. While the

responses were varied, there were some common situations. Some reported that their mental health information was discussed or their mental health records were sent to other offices without their consent. Other respondents stated that there were privacy issues with stress tests.

Concerning your mental health while on the JET Programme, have you ever felt that your privacy has been disregarded in your workplace?

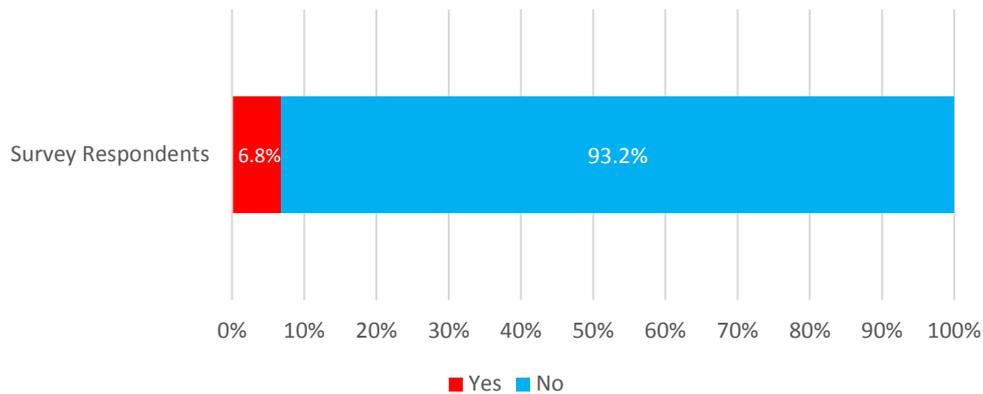


Chart 20

## MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

While on the JET Programme, participants have access to several mental health resources. In the following section, respondents' experiences with JET Online Counselling Service, the JET Mental Health Counselling Assistance Programme, and the AJET Peer Support Group (PSG) will be discussed.

### JET ONLINE COUNSELLING SERVICE

CLAIR offers the JET Online Counselling Service. As described on the Support section of the JET Programme website, this service allows participants to receive free, professional counselling through web mail and Skype.

Respondents were overwhelmingly familiar with the JET Online Counselling Service, with 91.1% of respondents saying they knew about the service. Respondents were about evenly split when asked if they would feel comfortable asking their CO about the service, with 50.4% saying yes and 49.6% saying no.

Were you aware of the JET Online Counselling Service?

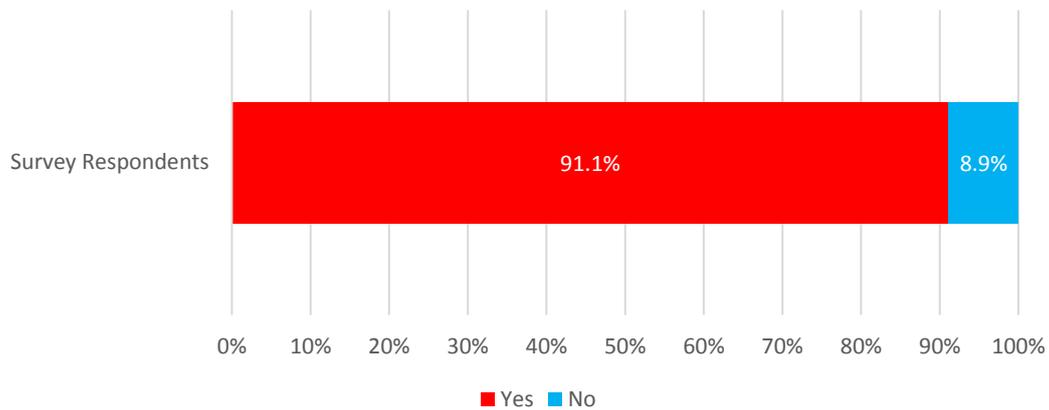


Chart 21

Would you feel comfortable asking your CO or supervisor about the JET Online Counselling Service if you needed to use it?

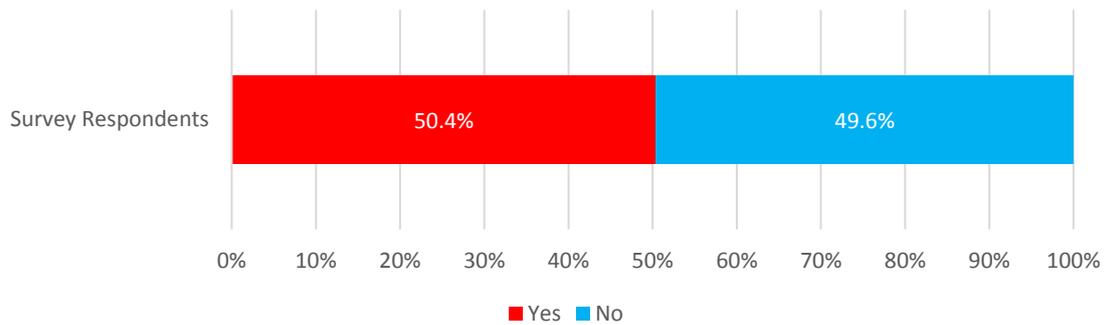


Chart 22

The service is accessible with a password. In previous years, participants had to request the password from their CO or supervisor in order to use the service. In 2017, incoming participants received the password at the Post-Arrival Orientation. COs were asked to distribute the password to all participants, even if the participants had not requested it.

Respondents were asked if they had received the password without requesting it. Only 12.6% stated they had received it from their CO without requesting it, and 58.6% stated they had not. Additionally, only 9.2% said a Prefectural Advisor had sent them the password without a request, and 59.4% said they had not.

Has your CO or supervisor given you the password for the JET Online Counselling Service without you requesting it?

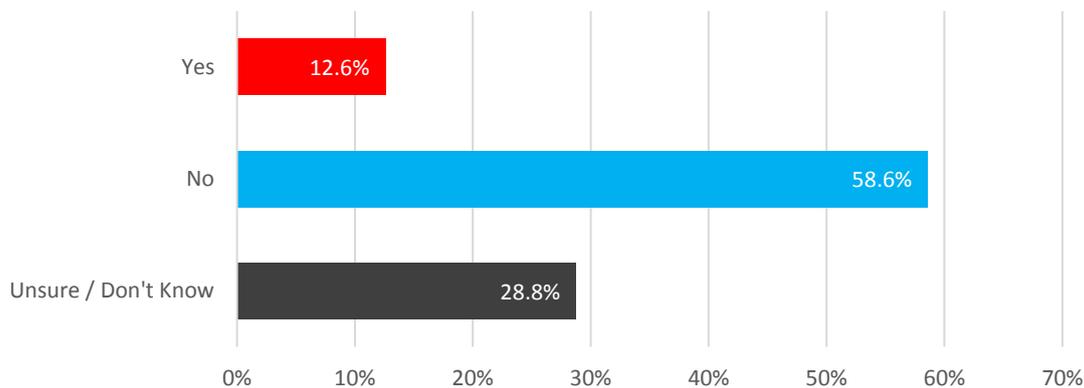


Chart 23

Sixty-four respondents (4.8%) stated that they had used the service. These respondents rated the helpfulness of the service on a weighted scale. Their ratings averaged 2.5, which indicates slightly helpful to moderately helpful. These respondents were also asked how they thought the service could be improved. They noted that the interface was not easy to navigate, and they would like additional sessions. They also suggested that the password for the service should be more widely available.

How helpful do you feel the JET Online Counselling Service is?

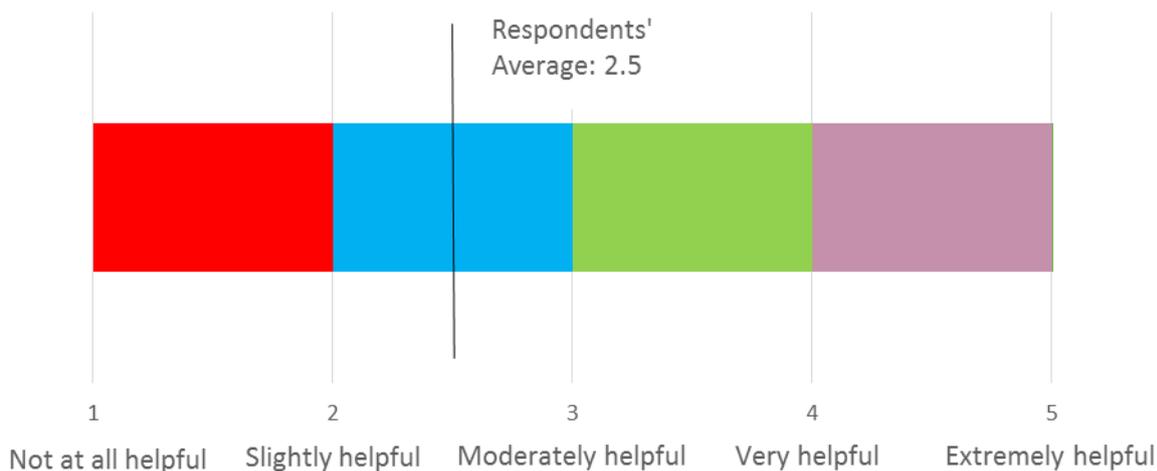


Chart 24

**JET MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELLING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME**  
CLAIR provides the JET Mental Health Counselling Assistance Programme. As described on the Support section of the JET Programme website, the assistance programme gives a partial subsidy to participants for counselling costs that are not covered by health insurance.

Respondents were also very familiar with the JET Mental Health Counselling Assistance Programme, with 73.0% of respondents saying they were aware of it. As with the service, respondents were about evenly split when asked if they would feel comfortable asking their CO about the assistance programme, with 49.9% saying yes, and 50.1% saying no.

### Were you aware of the JET Mental Health Counselling Assistance Program?

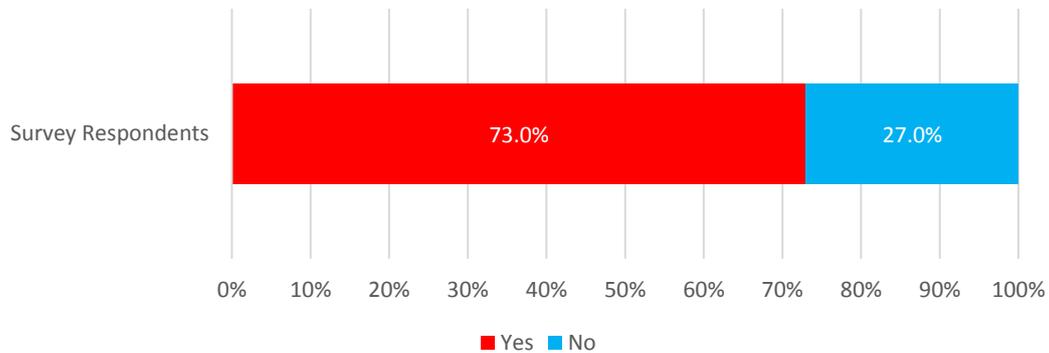


Chart 25

### Would you feel comfortable asking your CO or supervisor about the JET Mental Health Counselling Assistance Programme if you needed to use it?

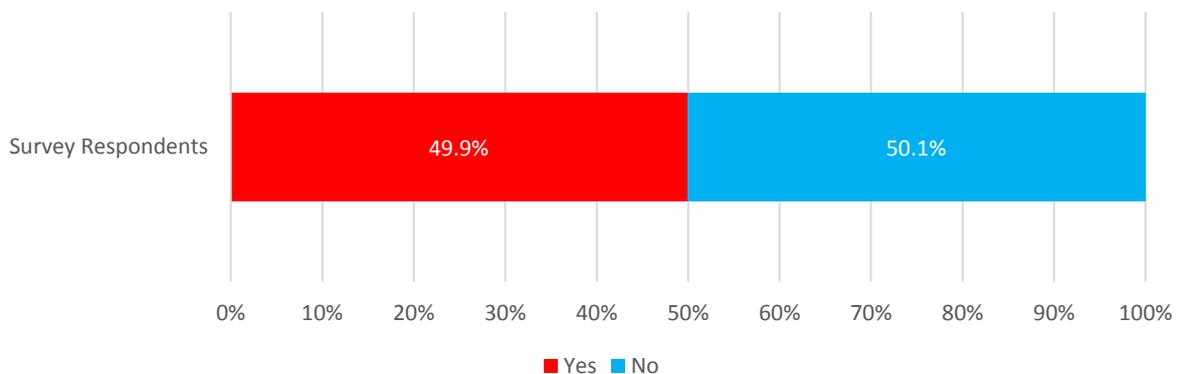


Chart 26

Nineteen respondents (1.4%) stated that they had used the assistance programme. These respondents rated the helpfulness of it on a weighted scale. Their ratings averaged 2.8, which indicates moderately helpful. These respondents were also asked how they thought the assistance programme could be improved. Six respondents wrote that a larger subsidy would be beneficial. Two respondents requested anonymity, such as not requiring participants to send information to their CO and submitting receipts anonymously.

How helpful do you feel the JET Mental Health Counselling Assistance Programme is?

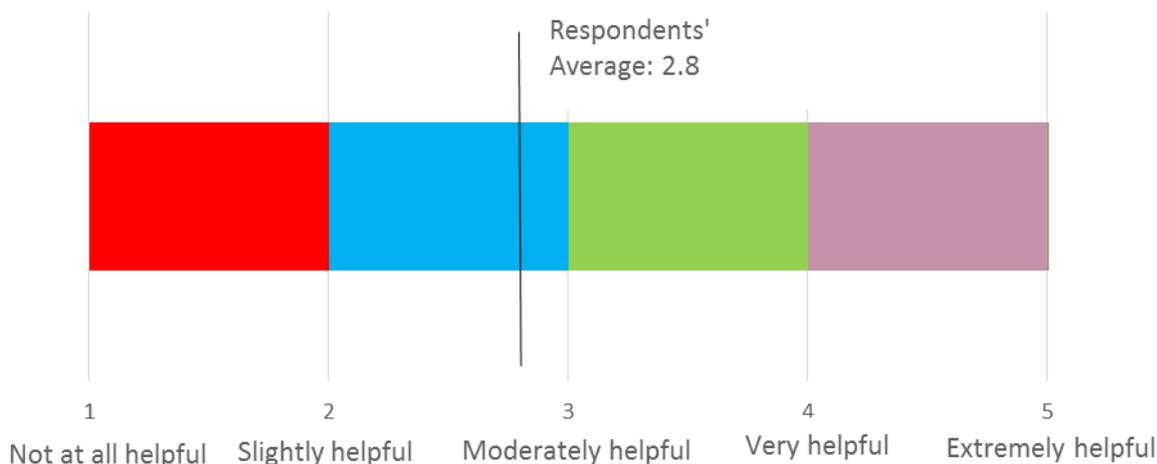


Chart 27

### THE AJET PEER SUPPORT GROUP (PSG)

National AJET provides the AJET Peer Support Group (PSG). As described on the AJET website, PSG is a listening and referral service for JET Programme participants that operates from 8 PM to 7 AM every day of the year. It is maintained through volunteers who are current JET Programme participants. PSG was also known by respondents, with 62.0% saying they were familiar with it.

Were you aware of the AJET Peer Support Group?

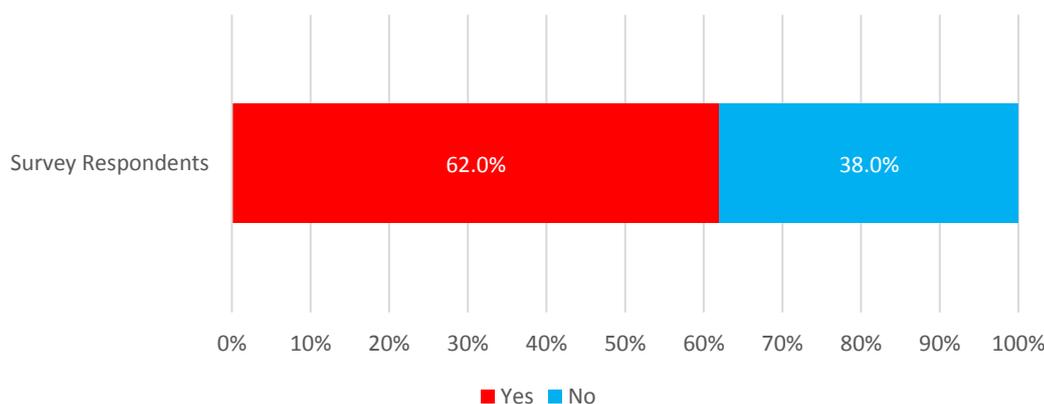


Chart 28

Forty-nine respondents (3.7%) stated that they had used PSG. These respondents rated the helpfulness of it on a weighted scale. Their ratings averaged 3.2, which indicates moderately helpful. These respondents were also asked how they thought PSG could be improved. More training for volunteers and greater availability were some suggestions for improvement.

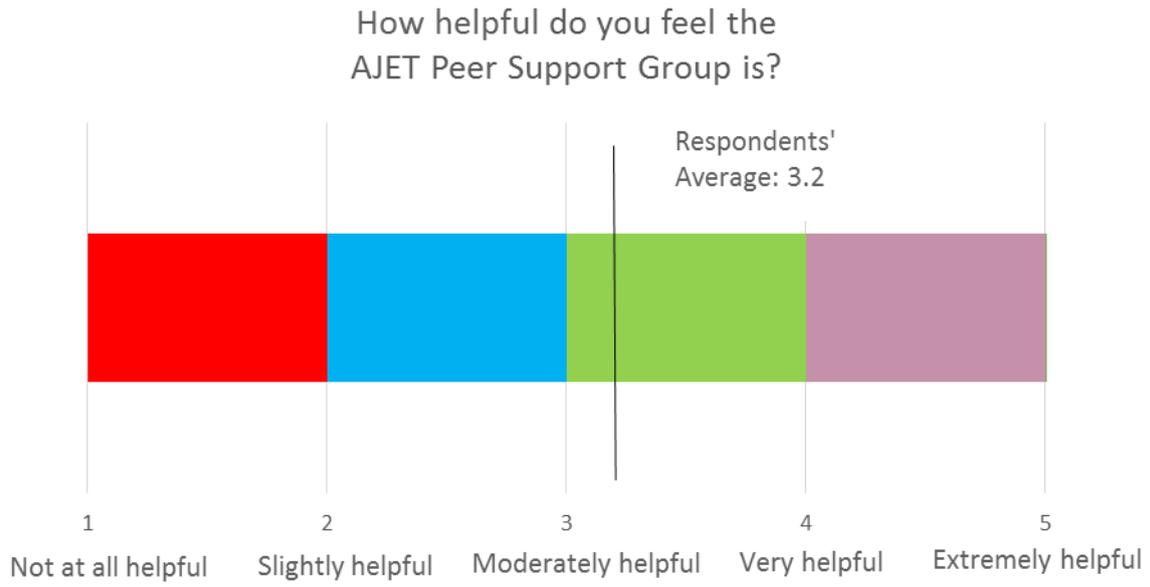


Chart 29

## OBSERVATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Respondents have had a variety of experiences with medical care and mental health care while on the Programme. Providing participants with more information about local options for receiving care can help participants as they seek medical care or mental health care. The majority of respondents are aware of the mental health resources that are available to JET Programme participants. Improving access to mental health resources may greatly increase the quality of life for JET Programme participants.

### OBSERVATIONS

#### MEDICAL CARE

Over half of respondents specified fellow participants in their prefecture, the Internet, and their supervisors as sources they used to find information about medical care in their prefecture. Only 38.7% of respondents stated that their CO had provided them with information about medical care in their prefecture. For respondents that had visited a hospital or clinic while on the Programme (1,105 respondents, or 82.4%), supervisors or other co-workers were some of the people listed as either helping respondents set up appointments or going with them to the appointments. There was variety in the procedures for using sick leave between each CO.

#### MENTAL HEALTH

Respondents stated that fellow Programme participants in their prefecture, the Internet, and Facebook groups were sources they used for information about local mental health care. Information about local mental health resources was not widely known by respondents, with 23.7% saying their CO had provided them with information about counsellors or psychologists in their prefecture. Five percent of respondents said they had visited a counsellor or psychologist while on the JET Programme. The majority of these respondents said that no one had helped them set up an appointment with a counsellor or psychologist, and no one had gone with them to their appointments.

#### PRIVACY

While the majority of respondents selected their supervisor or other staff as people they would feel comfortable asking to help them schedule medical appointments, respondents did not feel as comfortable asking their supervisor or other staff for this assistance with mental health appointments. Only 33.9% selected their supervisor and 22.2% selected other staff at their workplace as people they would feel comfortable asking for assistance with scheduling mental health appointments. Most respondents did not feel that their medical privacy or mental health privacy had been disregarded in their workplace while on the Programme. The mandatory health check and personal medical information not being treated as confidential were two areas of concern for those that felt their medical privacy had been disregarded. Stress tests and personal mental health information not being treated as confidential (or mental health records being sent to other offices without consent) were areas of concern for respondents who felt that their mental health privacy had been disregarded.

### **MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES**

Most respondents were familiar with the JET Online Counselling Service, the JET Mental Health Counselling Assistance Programme, and PSG. Only 12.6% stated they had received the password for the service from their CO without requesting it. For the service and the assistance programme, about 50.0% of respondents stated they would not feel comfortable asking their CO about the service or the assistance programme. For the service, respondents that had used it indicated that they felt it was slightly helpful to moderately helpful on average. For the assistance programme and PSG, respondents that had used them indicated that they felt these resources were moderately helpful on average. Some of the respondents that had used these resources provided suggestions for how these resources could be improved. Some of these suggestions will be discussed in the Recommendations section below.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **MEDICAL CARE**

The AJET National Council recommends that COs provide participants with more information about local healthcare options. It is also suggested that COs provide clearer guidelines for the use of sick leave. COs can discuss these guidelines with current participants and with incoming participants upon their arrival. COs may consider allowing participants to take at least one day of sick leave for short term illnesses without submitting a doctor's note, as it can be difficult for participants to obtain one due to language barriers or the nature of their short term illness. It is also recommended that COs allow participants to use sick leave for regular medical appointments and appointments with mental health professionals. Occasionally, COs may ask that a participant use annual leave instead of sick leave. This might dissuade participants from seeking the care they need because they may need or want to use their annual leave for other reasons beyond appointments. Allowing participants to use sick leave for regular appointments will help them seek the care they need, as they would not be concerned with using a lot of their annual leave for appointments.

#### **MENTAL HEALTH CARE**

The AJET National Council recommends that COs provide participants with more information about local mental health resources and mental health professionals. As English-speaking mental health professionals may be difficult to locate, COs can provide important support to their participants through this information. As suggested above, it is recommended that COs allow participants to use sick leave for appointments with mental health professionals.

#### **PRIVACY**

The AJET National Council recommends including sections on privacy and confidentiality in the supervisor's handbook. This can help supervisors as they assist with participants' medical or mental health questions and concerns. Including a section on privacy in the General Information Handbook would also be beneficial for participants. In Chapter 3: Work, section 3.5 (JET Related Issues and Concerns), a hypothetical situation in which a co-worker or supervisor discloses a participant's private health information could be included.

As recommended above, COs could provide participants with more information about local healthcare or mental health care options. By providing this information, participants might not need to ask their supervisors or other co-workers about their local options for receiving care.

### **MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES**

CLAIR provides the JET Online Counselling Service and the JET Programme Mental Health Counselling Assistance Programme, which are mental health resources. The AJET National Council is grateful for the mental health resources that CLAIR offers to JET Programme participants. The AJET Peer Support Group (PSG) is another mental health resource. With respondents' comments in mind, the AJET National Council has some recommendations for increasing access to these resources.

#### **JET ONLINE COUNSELLING SERVICE**

With regards to the JET Online Counselling Service, about half of respondents said they would not feel comfortable asking their CO or supervisor about the service. On the Support page of the JET Programme website, there is a brief description of the service, and participants are directed to ask their CO for more information. More detailed information about the service could be included on the Support page, in the General Information Handbook, or in the CLAIR News newsletters. With this additional information, participants would have a better understanding of the service, and they could make a more informed decision about requesting further information from their CO.

Over half of respondents stated their CO had not sent them the password to the service without a request. Increasing access to the password through alternative methods can enable participants to use the service without requesting the password from their CO. The AJET National Council has three suggestions for ways the password could be further distributed. First, an automated email account could be set up where participants could request the password. Second, the password could be distributed to all participants via the CLAIR News newsletter emails. Third, the interface of the service could be modified so that a participant's JET number acts as an individual password.

Respondents that had used the service had several suggestions for how it could be improved. Some suggestions were as follows: The service currently has a length limit on messages, which could be increased. The user interface could be improved. For those who are in a crisis, they may need faster access to the service. The system where participants exchange three messages with a counsellor could be improved. Counsellors with greater English proficiency could be provided. More counselling sessions beyond the current limit were requested.

#### **JET MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELLING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME**

Like the JET Online Counselling Service, about half of respondents said they would not feel comfortable asking their CO or supervisor about the JET Mental Health Counselling Assistance Programme. On the Support page of the JET Programme website, there is a brief description of the assistance programme, and participants are directed to ask their CO for more information. More detailed information about the assistance programme could be

included on the Support page, in the General Information Handbook, or in the CLAIR News newsletters. With this additional information, participants can have a better understanding of the process for using the assistance programme, and what information needs to be submitted in order to use it. This would allow participants to make a more informed decision about requesting further information from their CO.

Currently, participants who would like to apply for the subsidy must do so through their CO. This may cause privacy concerns for participants. The AJET National Council recommends a system where participants can apply for the assistance programme directly, in lieu of applying through their CO. This would allow participants to receive the subsidy while reducing potential privacy concerns.

Almost eighty percent of respondents were not sure if there were any English-speaking counsellors or psychologists in their prefecture, and only about thirty percent said they would feel comfortable asking their CO for help setting up appointments. Additionally, local options for English-speaking mental health professionals may not be near a participant's placement. Some respondents said they use websites or phone applications to meet with counsellors. Specifically, nine respondents said they use Better Help, a website which connects users with licensed counsellors via the Internet for online counselling. The AJET National Council recommends that the assistance programme be extended to these services. This would benefit participants who may not have English-speaking mental health professionals near their placement.

With respondents' comments in mind, the AJET National Council recommends the subsidy offered through the assistance programme be increased. Six respondents that had used the assistance programme gave this suggestion. Some of these respondents noted that the cost of each counselling session is often quite high. Expanding the subsidy to cover group therapy is another option for helping participants. Additionally, it may be possible for AJET and CLAIR to create a partnership with TELL where JET Programme participants can have their counselling fees discounted.

### **AJET PEER SUPPORT GROUP (PSG)**

The AJET National Council asks for CLAIR's assistance with informing participants about PSG. PSG is listed in the General Information Handbook in Chapter 3: Work, section 3.1 (Post-Arrival Checklist) and in the Appendix. Including a description of PSG could help participants understand more about this resource. PSG is included on the Support page of the JET Programme website. Listing this information in the CLAIR News newsletters could also be beneficial for participants.

## QUESTIONS

### QUESTION 1:

Would CLAIR consider partnering with an English help line that participants could call during medical appointments?

### QUESTION 2:

A recurring concern for JET Programme participants is the lack of clarity for *byoukyuu* rules, and being unable to take *byoukyuu*. While it is under the discretion of the Contracting Organisations, would CLAIR consider recommending certain *byoukyuu* rules to Contracting Organisations? When participants have short term illnesses, it may be difficult for them to visit a hospital and obtain a *shindansho* due to potential language barriers.

### QUESTION 3:

JET Programme participants sometimes have to rely on their supervisor when it comes to seeking medical care and mental health care. With this in mind, would CLAIR consider adding information to the supervisor's handbook about maintaining participants' confidentiality?

### QUESTION 4:

About 50 percent of respondents said they would not feel comfortable asking their CO or supervisor about the JET Online Counselling Service. Currently, the Support page on the JET Programme website has a description of the service, and asks participants to contact their CO for further information. Would it be possible to distribute additional information about the service to participants?

### QUESTION 5:

About 50 percent of respondents said they would not feel comfortable asking their CO or supervisor about the JET Online Counselling Service. Some COs distribute the password without participants requesting it. Other prefectures allow PAs and block leaders to distribute the password. The password for this year was distributed at the Post-Arrival Orientation. Would CLAIR consider other methods for distributing the password for the JET Online Counselling Service?

### QUESTION 6:

Currently, the JET Online Counselling Service is accessed through a password. Would it be possible to change the way the service is accessed? For example, participants could use their JET number as an individual password.

### QUESTION 7:

It is National AJET's understanding that the JET Online Counselling Service is maintained through a third party counselling service. If this is case, what service does CLAIR use? Would CLAIR consider using another service, such as Better Help?

### **QUESTION 8:**

About 50 percent of respondents said they would not feel comfortable asking their CO or supervisor about the JET Mental Health Counselling Assistance Programme. Currently, the Support page on the JET Programme website has a description of the assistance programme, and asks participants to contact their CO for further information. Would it be possible to distribute additional information about the assistance programme to participants?

### **QUESTION 9:**

In order to use the JET Mental Health Counselling Assistance Programme, participants must submit information to their CO. This could deter participants from using the programme, as they may want to keep this information confidential. Participants may also be concerned that if their CO has this information, it may affect their ability to recontract. Would it be possible for participants to apply for the programme without submitting information to their CO?

### **QUESTION 10:**

Some respondents said they use websites or phone applications to meet with counsellors. Specifically, nine respondents said they use Better Help, a website which connects users with licensed counsellors via the Internet for online counselling. Would CLAIR consider extending the JET Mental Health Counselling Assistance Programme to websites such as Better Help?

### **QUESTION 11:**

In an email from CLAIR to National AJET, it was mentioned that a seminar on self-care and mental health will be incorporated into this year's Post-Arrival Orientations. What information will be distributed in the seminar? What assistance can National AJET offer for this seminar?

### **QUESTION 12:**

We were very excited to hear the possibility of having National AJET's volunteer-run referral service, the Peer Support Group (PSG) attend this year's Post-Arrival Orientations. How can National AJET assist in introducing this valuable resource to our community?

### **QUESTION 13:**

It is National AJET's understanding that TELL Japan has attended the Post-Arrival Orientations in the past. What did their participation look like? Would CLAIR consider restarting their relationship with TELL to offer another resource to support the JET community?



