

Polling Results: 14 April 2020

This report

This report covers questions asked between 31st March and 14th April 2020, a week after the initial coronavirus lockdown measures were implemented on 23rd March 2020. Participants during this period were asked about which sector they worked in, the impact of coronavirus on their practice and their emotional wellbeing using the Office for National statistics (ONS) personal wellbeing questions.

Some of these questions form a part of our ongoing series of polls about the response of social workers and local authorities to the Coronavirus Pandemic.

129 Social Workers responded to this poll, with 58 (45%) giving additional qualitative information.

Employment Sector

Participants were asked to identify which sector they worked in. Most participants (92%) work within children and families.

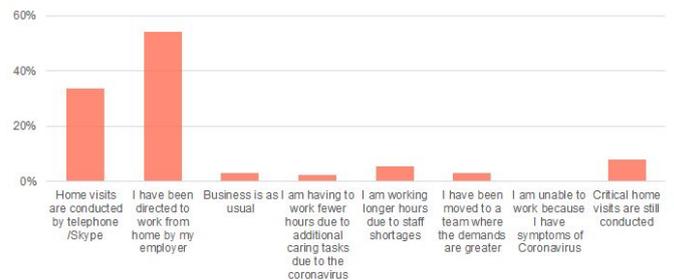
The impact of coronavirus on your working life

Participants were asked about how their practice may have been impacted by the coronavirus. Figure 2, below, shows an impact for the majority, with social workers being directed to work from home the most common impact (54%), followed by conducting home visits via telephone, Skype etc (34%).

Fig 2

POLL RESULTS

How is Coronavirus impacting your life?



Social workers in general commented positively on using technology to conduct virtual visits and meetings.

One social worker commented:

'It allows for that face to face contact', and 'most families have this facility'. Another social worker shared that: 'many families are able to adapt and work with us, for example, facilitating video calls'. Other benefits of using video calls include enabling social workers to 'check on home conditions' and 'the kids love it as it is something different'. However some social workers felt that; 'visits [are] now being completed by skype' and that this 'does not feel entirely adequate'.

Employers reactions to the coronavirus outbreak

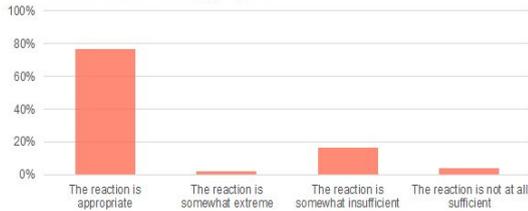
Participants were asked whether they thought their employer's reactions had been appropriate towards the outbreak. The majority of participants (77%) agreed the response was appropriate as can be seen in Fig 3 below.



Fig 3

POLL RESULTS

Do you think the reaction of your employer to the coronavirus outbreak is appropriate?



Of the responses provided, the general consensus was positive. One social worker summed it up with the following: *'I have found our daily team communications really good. We have pulled together as a team in relation to duty tasks etc. We have a daily team catch up every morning where we are able to check in with everyone which i feel has made our team grow stronger throughout this uncertain time'*.

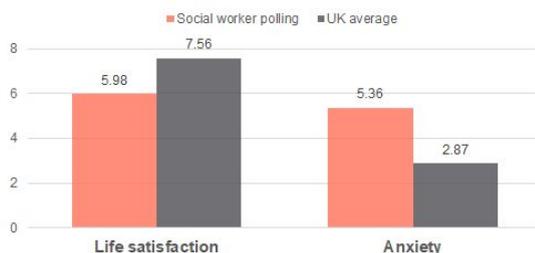
Wellbeing

Participants were asked to answer two out of the four personal wellbeing questions from the Office for National statistics. Please see figure 4, for the results.

Fig 4.

WELLBEING RESULTS

Average results for life satisfaction and anxiety scores of social workers compared to the overall UK average



Source: Social Worker Poll
Number of observations: 127 (life satisfaction), 128 (anxiety)

Social workers scored a mean of 5.36 out of 10 for anxiety. This is substantially

higher than the UK average of 2.87, last recorded 2018 - 2019.

Social workers scored a mean of 5.61 out of 10 for life satisfaction. This is lower than the UK average recorded in 2018 - 2019 and which was 7.56.

(Source:ONS- annual pop.survey 2019).

Wellbeing data is a new inclusion to the polling questions. Baseline information is not currently available, however inclusion of the ONS data provides some context to general wellbeing in the population. We will continue to poll well-being questions at regular intervals so that an overall picture both during and after the pandemic can be understood. It will become a regular feature to enable us to begin to chart well-being over time.

About WWCS Polling

What Works for Children's Social Care runs regular polls with social workers who have registered with us. Social workers are currently employed in a range of organisations and we canvas their opinions about our current and future research agenda as well as topics impacting on social work practice. There are 802 social workers currently registered to participate.