

Polling results report: 25th June 2020

This report

This report covers the period between the 9th June and 24th June 2020. Participants during this period were asked their views on returning to the office. They were also asked the office of national statistics (ONS) four wellbeing questions. Finally, they were asked how long they had been in their current employment.

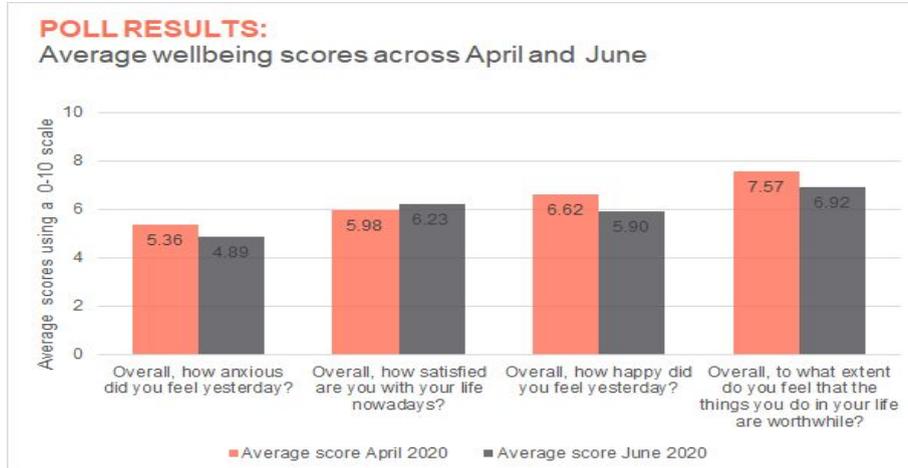
101 Social Workers replied to this poll.

Wellbeing

Participants were asked to complete the four questions regarding their wellbeing based on the four questions from the ONS. These questions are being asked regularly in order to chart participants wellbeing as the situation changes regarding during and after the pandemic. In the first table you will see the comparison between when the questions were asked in April and then again in June.

Please see Fig 1.

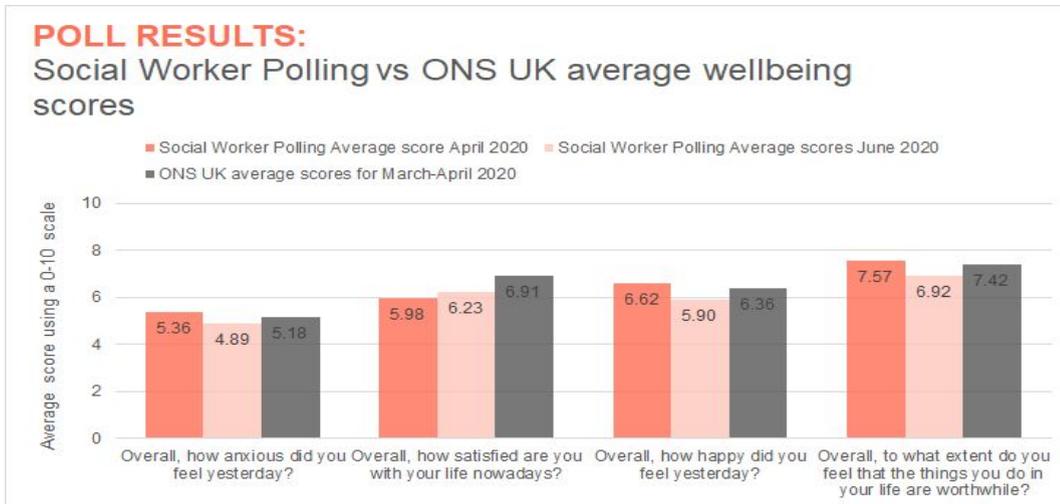
Fig 1



There is some movement in the scores between the two dates although they are minimal. Feelings of anxiety have reduced slightly but so has happiness and feeling life is worthwhile. The ONS has conducted their own survey of the general population during the Covid - 19 pandemic and in table 2 you will see how they compare to social workers results.



Fig.2



It appears that social workers wellbeing differs very little from the general public over the March - April period when the lockdown measures were first implemented.

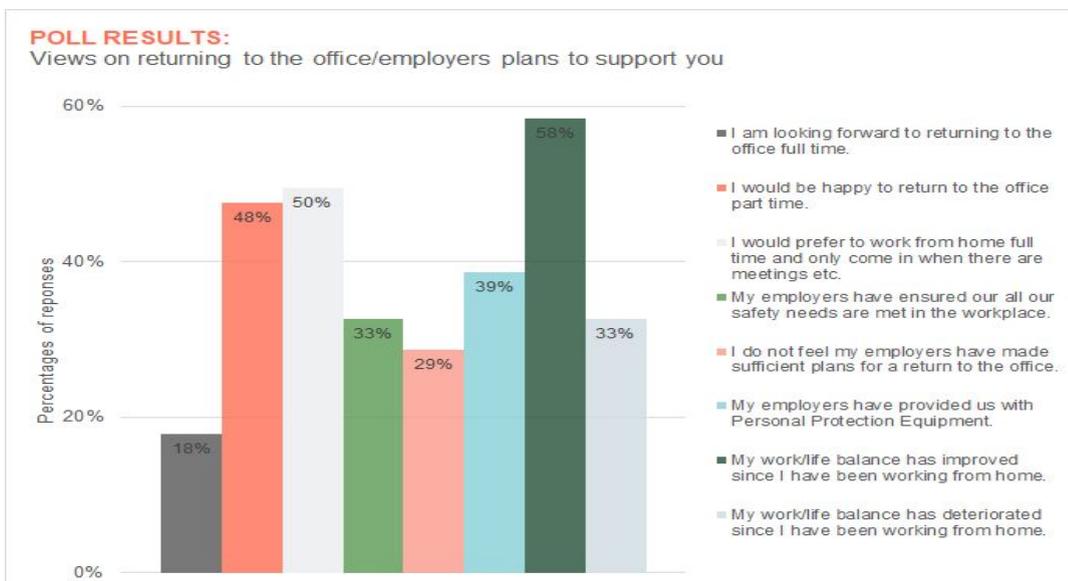
Wellbeing questions are being asked on a fortnightly basis to chart participants responses and measure any differences as lockdown measures are eased.

Returning to the office

Participants were asked their views on how they felt about returning to the office to work and whether they felt their employers had prepared for this appropriately. They were also asked their views about work/life balance since working from home.

Please see figure 3 below;

Fig 3





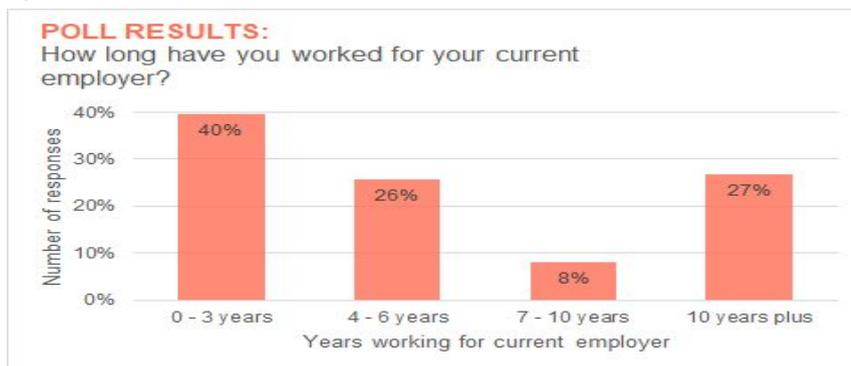
The most common response (58%) was that social workers feel their work/life balance has improved since working from home. Asked how they felt about returning to the office, 50% said they would prefer to work from home and only come in for meetings etc. With the move towards flexible/remote working very much on the agenda pre Covid-19 this may now become the reality for some departments especially for those who are not frontline services. There was very little difference in results between those who felt their employers had made sufficient plans for the return to the office vs those who felt they had not. Some participants might feel that it is not safe to return to the office at this time and so have felt more inclined to choose the option that employers had not done enough.

Overall participants were not enthused about returning to the office fulltime and felt they had a better balance of work vs life by working less time in the office.

Length of Service

Participants were asked how long they had worked for their current employer. In figure 4 you can see the results.

Fig 4.



Most participants have worked for their employers between 0-3 years. This reflects the data from the Department for Education (Source: children's social work workforce 2018 - 2019) which indicates the highest proportion of social workers have worked for their employer for two years or less. However, there is also a high proportion of participants who have worked for their employer for 10 years or over which does not reflect the national picture. The low number for the 7 - 10 years service might reflect the research regarding the average length of service for a social worker which is 7 years (Baginsky 2013).

About WW-CSC 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 815 social workers currently registered to participate.