Pulse Survey February 2021

High-level Results

February 2021

Purpose of the Pulse Survey

The main aim of the latest Pulse Survey is as follows:

- To provide a comparison against a number of benchmarked questions asked within the first Pulse Survey conducted in July 2020

- To understand if the support already provided has been the right kind of support, easily accessed, and if people need anything else.

- Identify examples of good practice for remote working that could be shared more widely

- At the end of the survey, there are a couple of extra questions relating to IT separation.

Results summary

- Overall, this survey has been very positive, and in a number of areas **scores have improved,** for example, confidence in SLT, CDM support, and communications; even though **people are slightly unhappier** overall. This is very encouraging, especially given the time of year the survey took place, and during the third national lockdown.

- Most staff are in contact with their colleagues on an almost a daily basis. There's **lots of best practice** being shared in terms of **connecting with others**.

- Working remotely is going 'OK', or slightly better, for most. There are many perceived advantages, the main one being the **lack of commute,** which has **improved work / life balance** for many. However, the downsides are that people are **missing social interaction** and are beginning to feel demotivated and tired with the monotony of every day being the same.

- Continued **high workload** seems to be an issue for many, and this is affecting their ability to **balance work with home-schooling** or other care related responsibilities.

- People are very **reliant on support provided by their CDMs** (listed as the number 1 route for support), and CDMs largely feel they are getting the support they need from the organisation (83%). However, a common concern for **CDMs** is that they **don't have enough time** to properly support the health and wellbeing of their staff.

- Whilst results on communication are excellent overall (89% believe it is effective), comments suggest that this is more at the higher levels, for example, from SLT, but this is not reflected at all levels of the organisation.

- The changes brought about by IT separation are largely positive - 80% agree that they are now better equipped.

Key headlines

- **Overall Response rate was 83%**

- **86%** say they **feel supported** while working remotely during the pandemic

- **94%** have **very regular contact** with the rest of their teams (either daily or a few times a week). This compares well to Royal Society for Public Health's (RSPH) study, which found that two-thirds (67%) of workers who shifted from the office to home during the pandemic felt less connected to their colleagues*

- **89%** have **confidence in the SLT** to support their health, safety and wellbeing and that of their colleagues. In a CIPD report, only 69% of respondents are satisfied with their organisation's response during the pandemic*

- **89%** believe communication and engagement within ONR has been effective during the pandemic

- The most useful support is reported as coming from CDMs, followed by more flexible hours and then 'my team'. 75% say it's easy to access the support they need. A CIPD report states that 67% of respondents say their employers have been supportive*

- Working remotely is going 'OK', or slightly better, for most (average score of 3.5 on a scale of 1-5)

- **80%** say that IT Separation has **better equipped** them with the tools they need to do their job

- **75%** say it's easy to access the support they need (10% disagree with this statement)

*Further benchmarking information can be found on the final slide

Recommendations and next steps

- Share Directorate level reports with Directors **(23rd Feb)** with ongoing support from OD if requested.

- Share specific role-related information with **CDMs on 24 February**, celebrate the fact that CDM results largely very positive and ask 2 key questions:

1. As CDMs/DLs, what examples & opportunities can you share around balancing the demands of your jobs with managing the health and wellbeing of your teams?

2. As CDMs/DL how can we help people manage their workload and balance this with other personal or care responsibilities?

- Share IT separation data with IT Directorate – to ensure lessons learnt and ongoing issues are considered **(w/c 1 March)**

- Share with Recovery Working Group - requests for equipment needs to be an easier and more consistent process

- Share with Recovery Working Group, HR, – key data on remote working including perceived benefits and disadvantages **(w/c 1 March)**

- Share full data with Policy and Communication Directorate on Communications questions, in particular how to improve communications throughout the organisation, not just at the top **(w/c 1 March)**

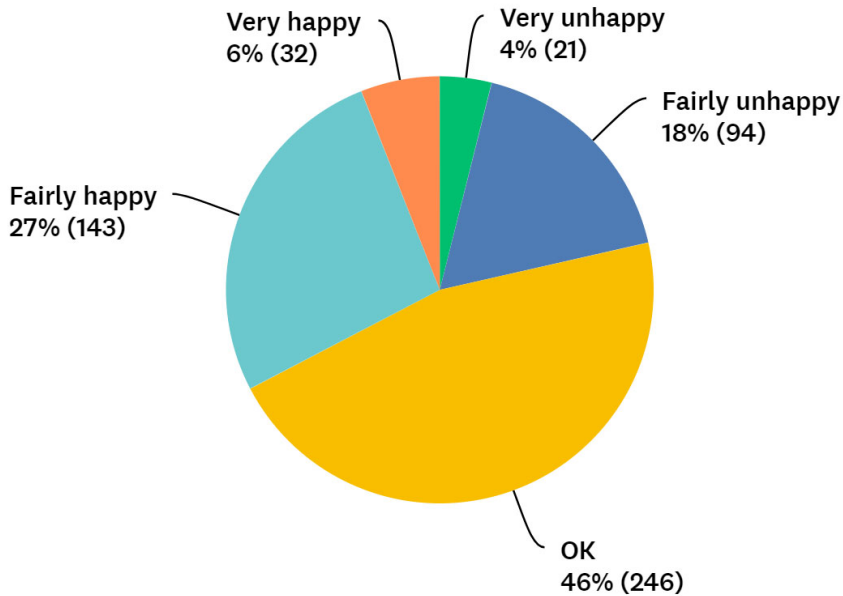- **Comms to all staff (wk 8th March tba)**
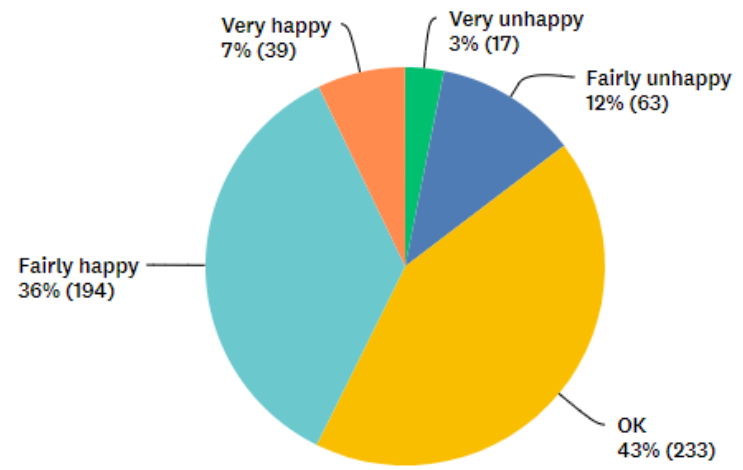
Pulse Survey – Data Set

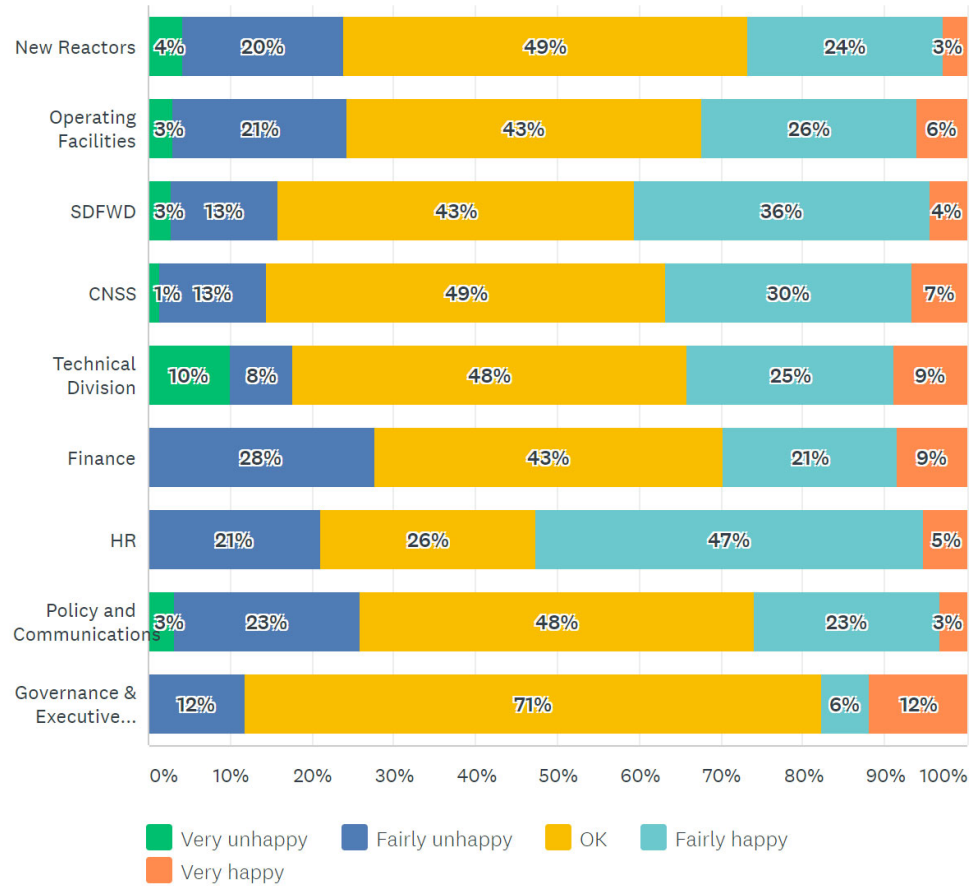# Q1. How are you feeling overall at the moment?

February 2021 results

People are *slightly* unhappier on the whole = 22%, compared with 15% in the previous Pulse Survey


Very happy
6% (32)

Very unhappy
4% (21)

Fairly unhappy
18% (94)

Fairly happy
27% (143)

OK
46% (246)

July 2020 results

Very happy
7% (39)

Very unhappy
3% (17)

Fairly unhappy
12% (63)

Fairly happy
36% (194)

OK
43% (233)

How are you feeling? (by Directorate / Division)

Pulse Survey February 2021: High-level results

2. How is working remotely going for you during the pandemic?

Pulse Survey February 2021: High-level results
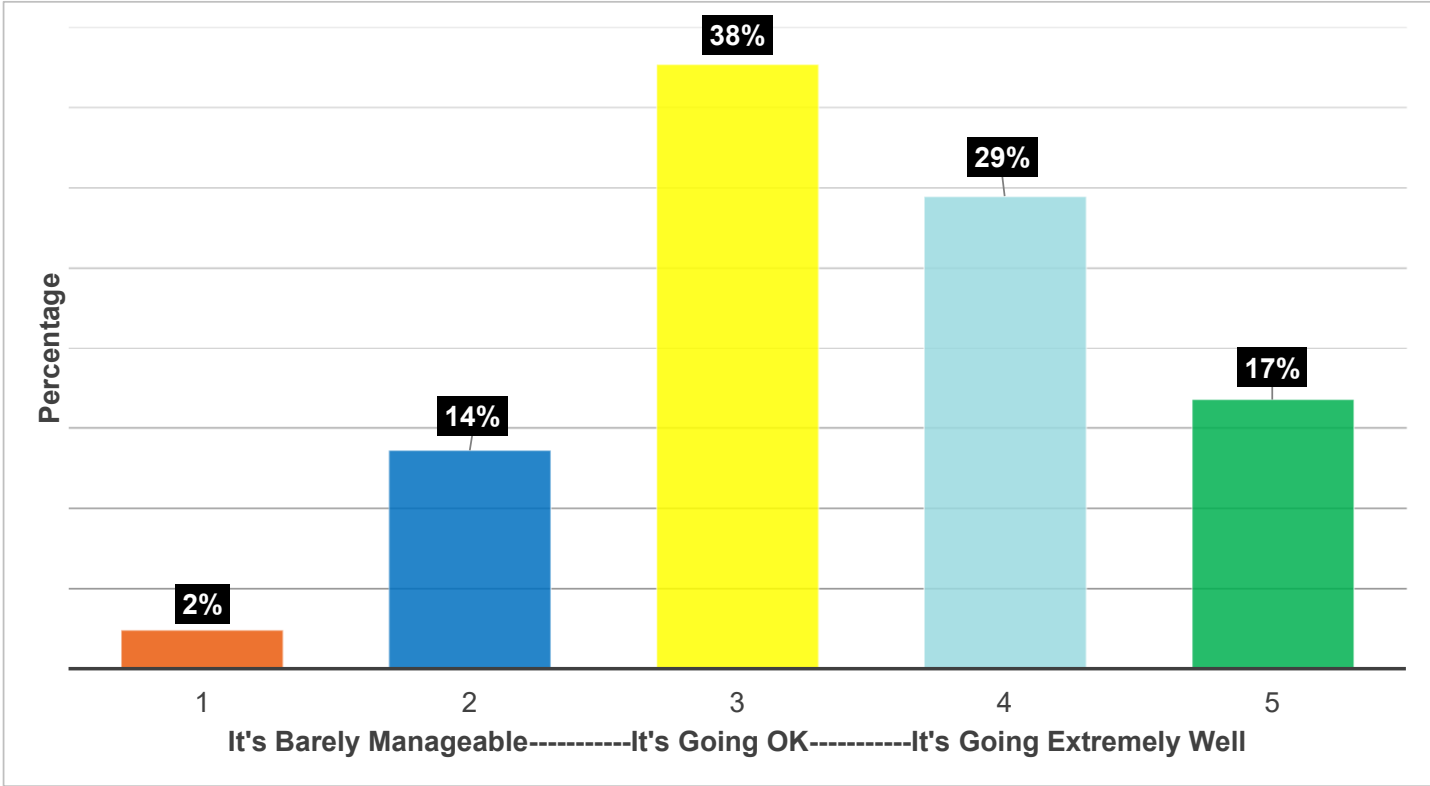
How is working remotely going?

Sentiment Analysis of Comments
(This is an analysis of the free text comments in answer to 'why is that?' and coding positive, negative and neutral comments)

No. of comments

Sentiment

- ■ Count of Positive
- ■ Count of Negative
- ■ Count of Neutral

Further Analysis of Comments

Theme		No. of Comments
• No commute	☺	86
• Missing social interaction	☹	48
• Good IT	☺	34
• Better working environment	☺	32
• Balancing workload and home-schooling	☹	30
• Heavy workload	☹	27
• Better Work / Life Balance	☺	22
• Health benefits	☺	20
• Efficient / Effective	☺	17
• Monotonous	☹	17
• Affecting mental health	☹	15
• Flexibility	☺	13
• Isolation	☹	13
• Missing interaction with dutyholders	☹	11

Summary of Positive Views

- The biggest advantage to remote working was reported as **not having to commute / reduced travel**. It has led to people feeling less stressed, healthier and happier as it also freed up time for exercise and hobbies.

- Many people reported a **better work / life balance** and increased flexibility in their working hours. This helps them manage any care responsibilities and home-schooling.

- Where people have a dedicated workspace, they report that this is much better than in the office due to levels of light and noise levels. This has led to health benefits such as reduced migraines and better ability to focus.

- Many people have said the improvements to IT have helped them to work more effectively and efficiently
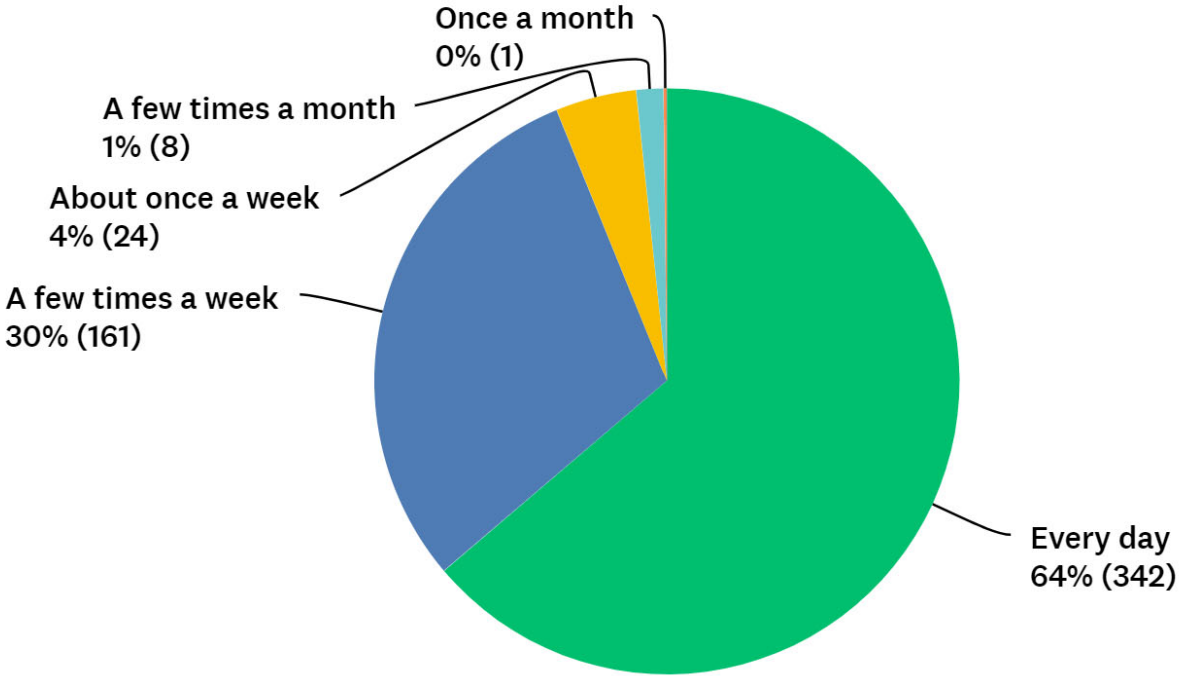
Summary of Negative Views

- People are really **missing social interaction** with both colleagues and with dutyholders. Some are feeling quite isolated now.

- A lot of people report a **very high workload** which is having a big impact on their ability to take any special leave for **home-schooling**. This includes unrealistic expectations of what can be achieved within the current environment, including some instances where people feel they have actually been penalised for taking special leave.

- A number of people **do not have dedicated workspace** due to lack of space at home.

- Some people say it's difficult to stay motivated, they are lacking focus, days blurring into each other (everyday is 'blursday'). This is impacting their productivity and health issues such as not being able to sleep.

Q4. I feel supported while working remotely during the pandemic
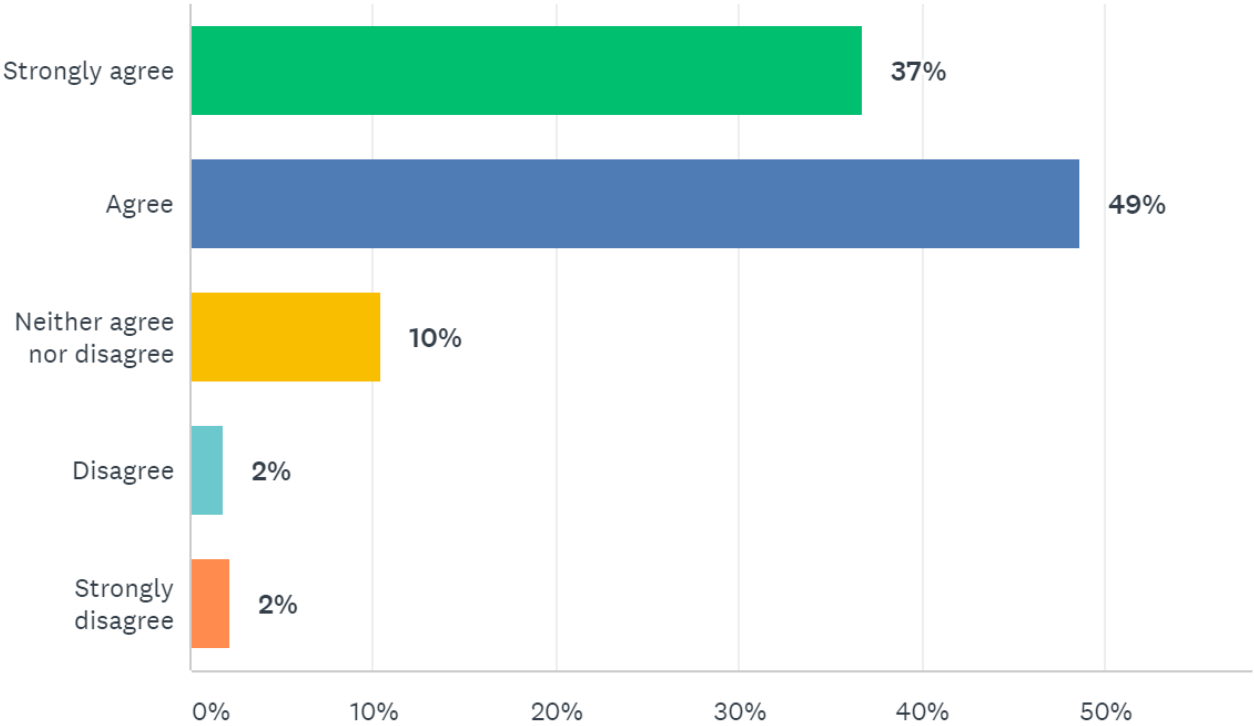
Q5. How often do you connect with any members of your team while working remotely during the pandemic?

Once a month
0% (1)

A few times a month
1% (8)

About once a week
4% (24)

A few times a week
30% (161)

Every day
64% (342)

Best Practice – Connecting with Colleagues

- Plan 45 minute meetings not the full hour to allow for natural breaks

- Meet up with a colleague for a socially distanced walk to catch up

- Utilise your calendar, block chunks of the day out where you can / must take a break

- Be conscious of others, allow time (15 minutes) between meetings

- Non-work related catch up's, coffee breaks or just a chat

- Give others the opportunity and time to talk, understand we are all different and have different personal situations

- Use Microsoft Teams tools for the benefit of everyone, turn your camera on, put your hand up if you want to speak, share documents

- Love your lunch - make time to have a break during the day and get fresh air

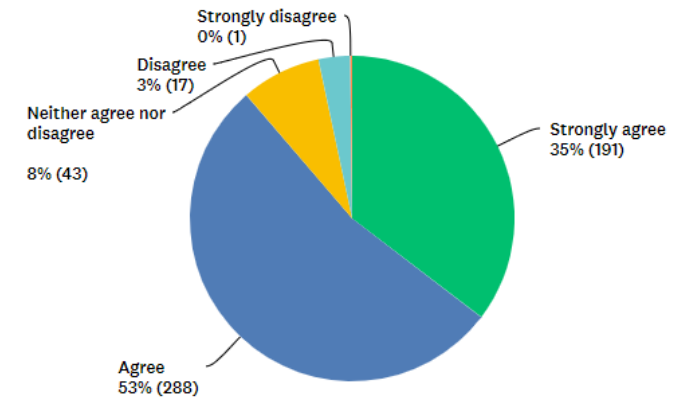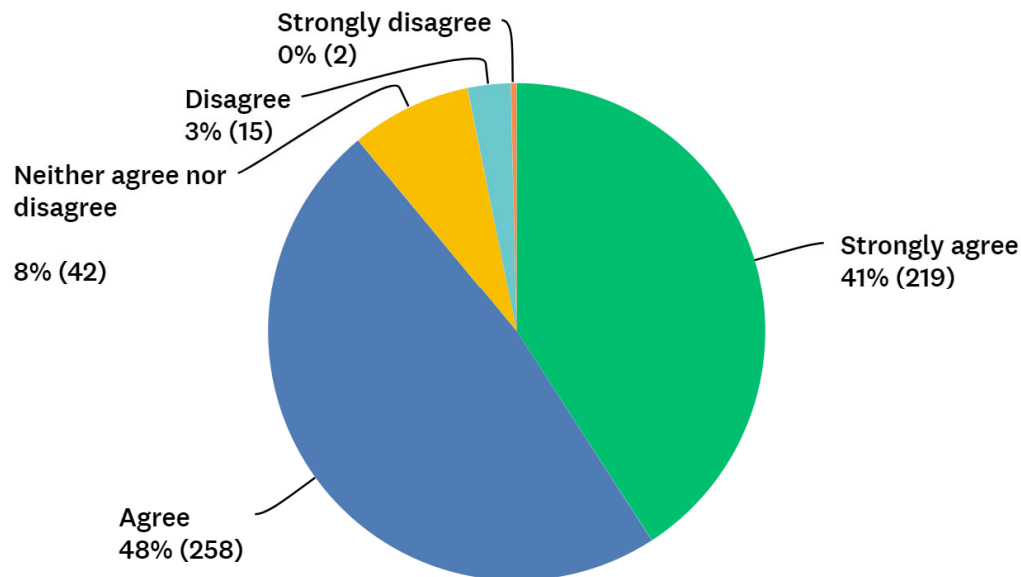- Send a message via Teams messenger before calling

Q7. I have confidence in the senior leadership team to support the health, safety and wellbeing of me and my colleagues during the pandemic
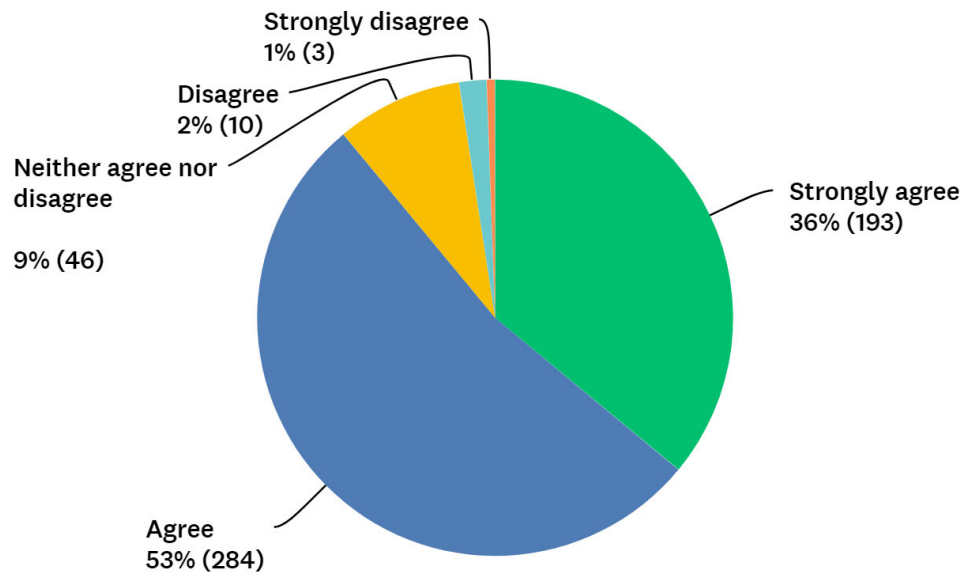
Febrary 2021 results

July 2020 results

22% strongly agree now compared to 15% in July 2020 (increased by 6%)

February 2021 pie chart:
- Strongly disagree 0% (2)
- Disagree 3% (15)
- Neither agree nor disagree 8% (42)
- Strongly agree 41% (219)
- Agree 48% (258)

July 2020 pie chart:
- Strongly disagree 0% (1)
- Disagree 3% (17)
- Neither agree nor disagree 8% (43)
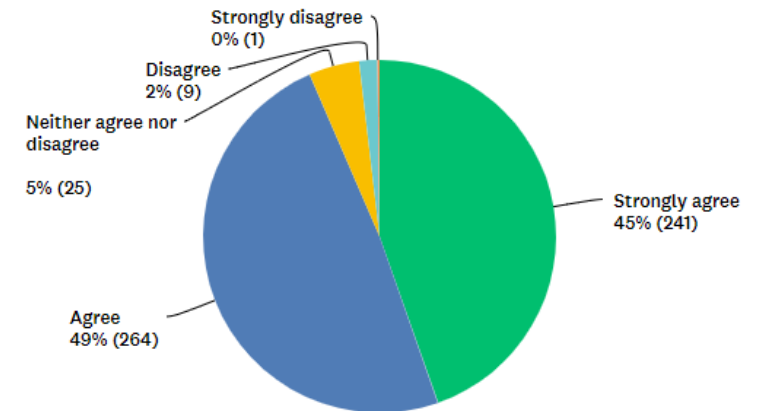- Strongly agree 35% (191)
- Agree 53% (288)

Q8. Communication and engagement within ONR has been effective during the pandemic

"Comms from SLT are frequent and useful. Communication needs to be more frequent at the lower level"
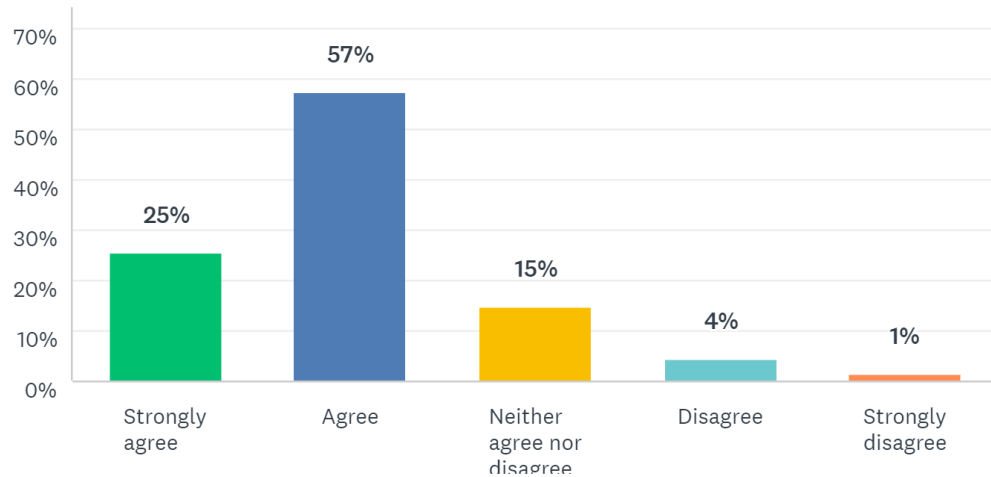
February 2021 results

July 2020 results

Strongly disagree
1% (3)

Disagree
2% (10)

Neither agree nor
disagree
9% (46)

Strongly agree
36% (193)

Agree
53% (284)

Strongly disagree
0% (1)

Disagree
2% (9)

Neither agree nor
disagree
5% (25)

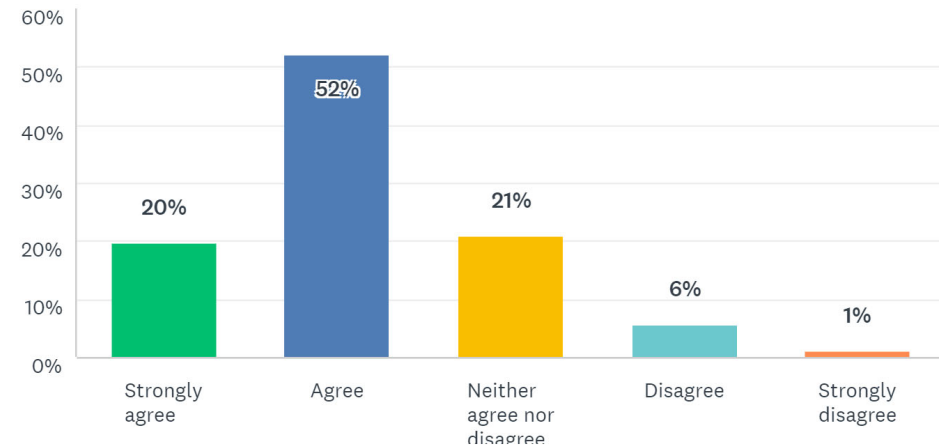Strongly agree
45% (241)

Agree
49% (264)

Questions 9 and 10

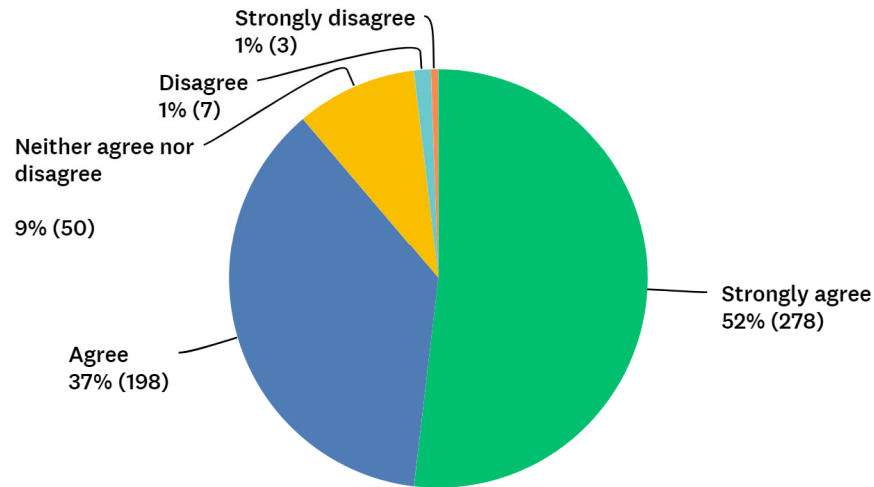**Q9. I am given the opportunity to share my views and give feedback at ONR**

Q10. I feel ONR has given me a genuine opportunity to share my views and shape our future new ways of working

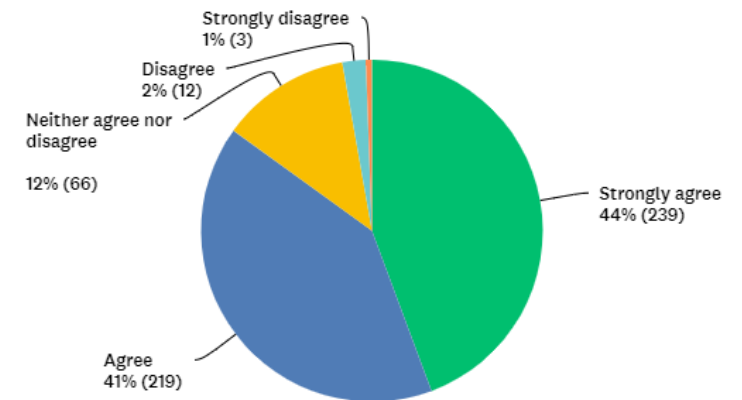Pulse Survey February 2021: High-level results

Q11. My CDM has supported me to balance work demands with my personal responsibilities during the pandemic

February 2021 results

Strongly agree increased from 44% in 2020 to 52% in this survey.
Overall increase in those who agree by 4% (from 85% to 89%)

July 2020 results

February 2021 pie chart:
- Strongly disagree 1% (3)
- Disagree 1% (7)
- Neither agree nor disagree 9% (50)
- Agree 37% (198)
- Strongly agree 52% (278)

July 2020 pie chart:
- Strongly disagree 1% (3)
- Disagree 2% (12)
- Neither agree nor disagree 12% (66)
- Strongly agree 44% (239)
- Agree 41% (219)

Pulse Survey February 2021: High-level results

Q12. Which of the following areas of support have you found most useful during the pandemic (tick any that apply)
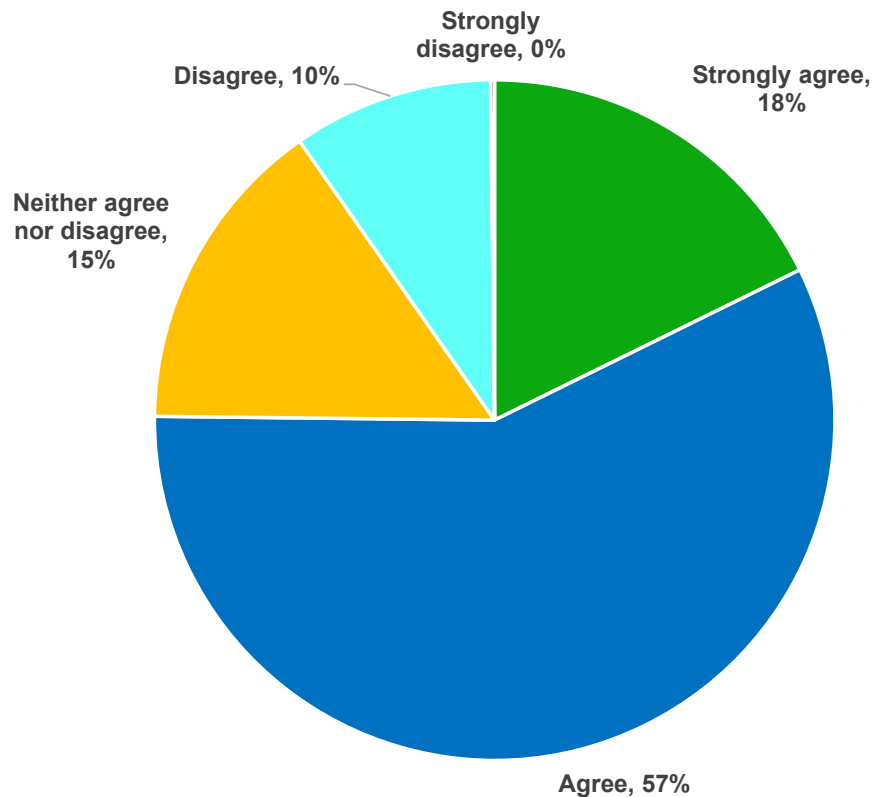

Category	Percentage
My CDM	66%
More flexible working hours	63%
My team	59%
New equipment (desk / chai...	57%
Special Leave	30%
Wellbeing support and...	26%
Training	20%
Other (please specify)	11%
Reducing workloads	8%
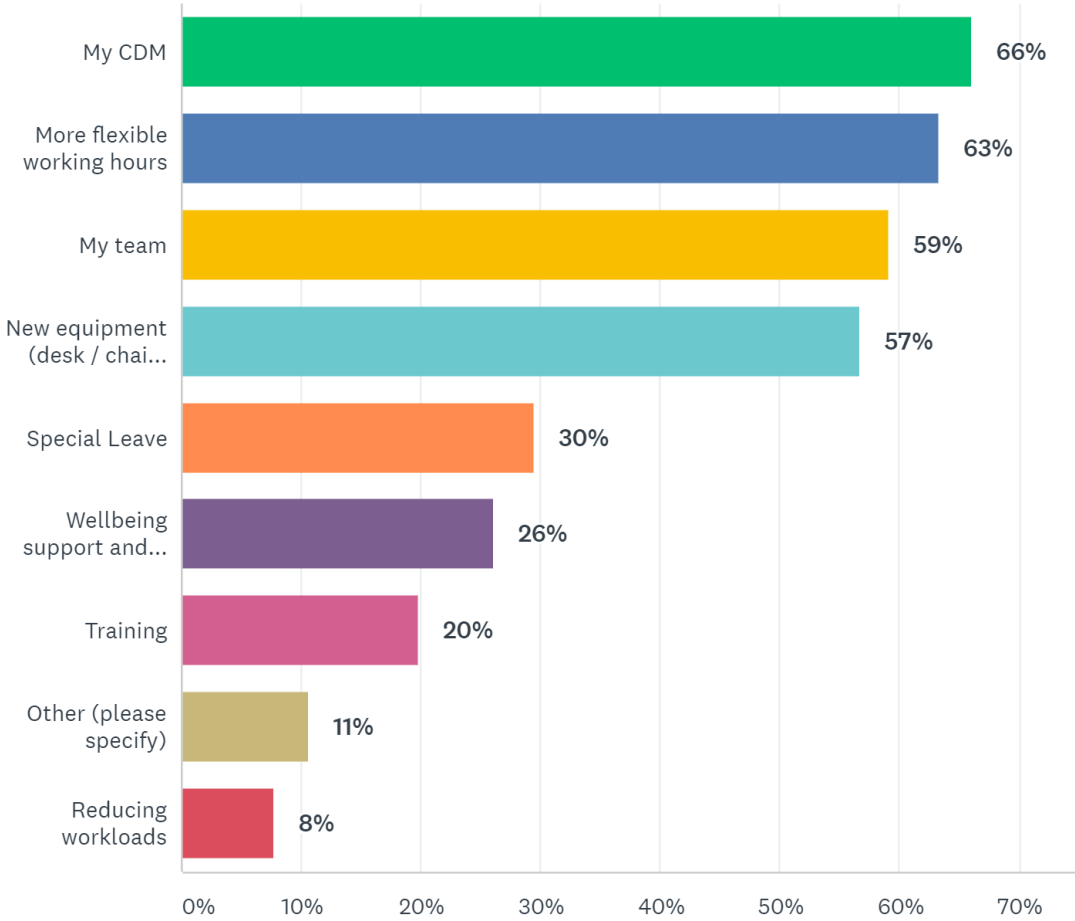
Pulse Survey February 2021: High-level results

Q13. It's easy to access the ONR support I need

Pie chart:
- Strongly agree, 18%
- Agree, 57%
- Neither agree nor disagree, 15%
- Disagree, 10%
- Strongly disagree, 0%

Reasons given why it's difficult to access support:

- Workload is too high (the offer of special leave is there but how do you balance the two things?)

- Other team members are taking special leave

- Support only aimed at those with children / care responsibilities

- Nucleus is difficult to navigate

- Accessing equipment needed has been very bureaucratic

- Personal reluctance to burden others

- Difficult to know who to ask

- CDM is blocking support
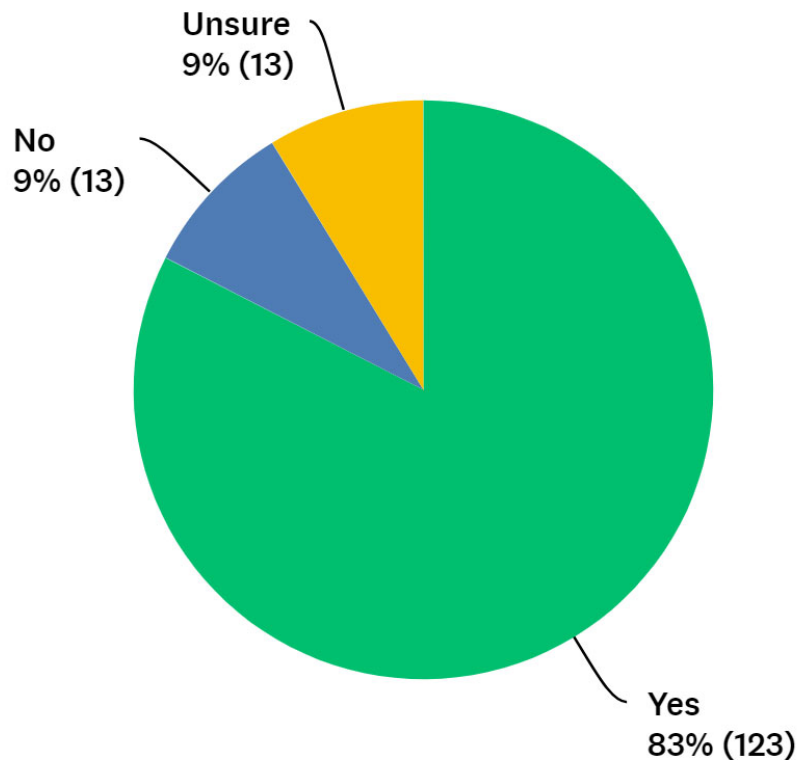
Q14. Impact of Training Courses
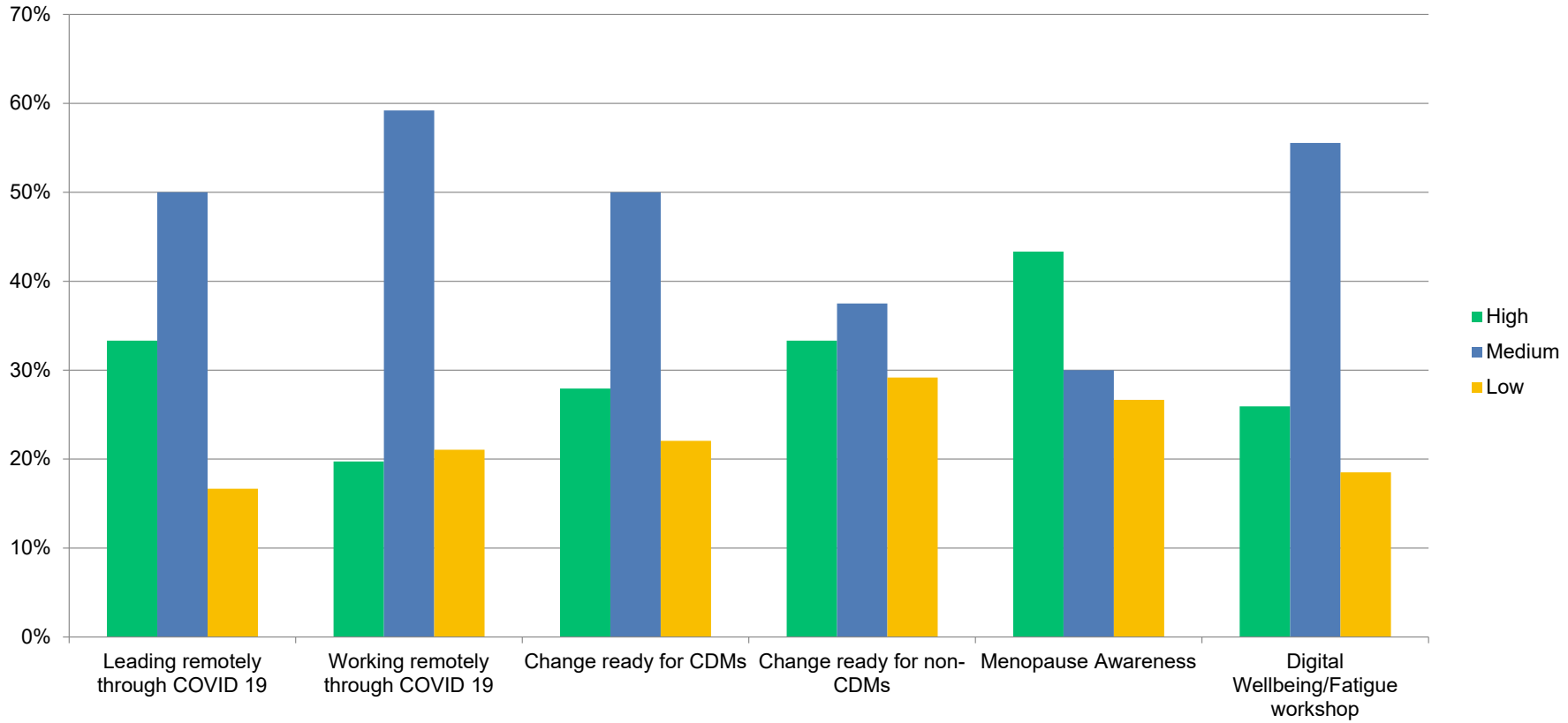
Pulse Survey February 2021: High-level results

Selection of comments on Training

- ████████████████████████████

- ████████████████████████████████

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Q9. If you're a CDM, do you feel you have the necessary tools and resources to support your team while working remotely?
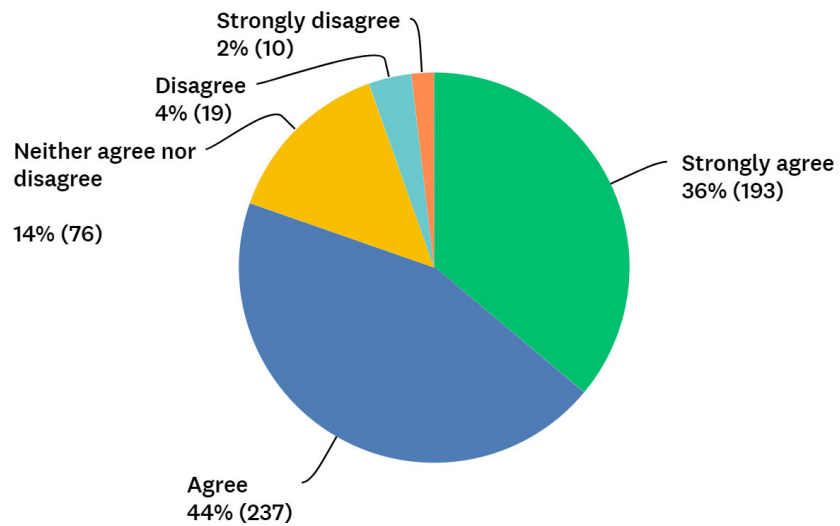
Other support needed:

- More time (not theoretical time) for managing people - this was a common concern
- Sort out PMRs
- Updated induction for remote working
- Better advice on how to manage poor performance, especially poor behaviours
- Regular updates on staff support services available and how to access them
- More space and time to consider team learning and development
- CDM Briefing on a more regular basis
- Need more support to undertake COVID risk assessments
- More virtual social get togethers
- Stress management guidance is useful but the process is bureaucratic
- More support for lower paid staff (eg. worried about heating costs)
- Continue with regular engagement events and focus on well-being element of role
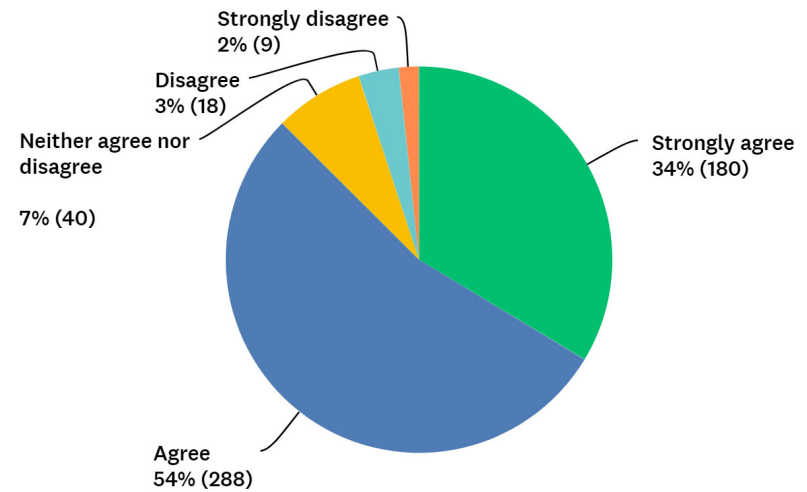
Unsure
9% (13)

No
9% (13)

Yes
83% (123)

Pulse Survey February 2021: High-level results

IT Separation

IT Separation has better equipped me with the tools I need to do my job

Strongly disagree
2% (10)

Disagree
4% (19)

Neither agree nor disagree
14% (76)

Strongly agree
36% (193)

Agree
44% (237)

I felt I had the information I needed to prepare me for IT Separation

Strongly disagree
2% (9)

Disagree
3% (18)

Neither agree nor disagree
7% (40)

Strongly agree
34% (180)

Agree
54% (288)

Pulse Survey February 2021: High-level results

IT Separation has better equipped me with the tools I need to do my job

Sentiment Analysis of Comments
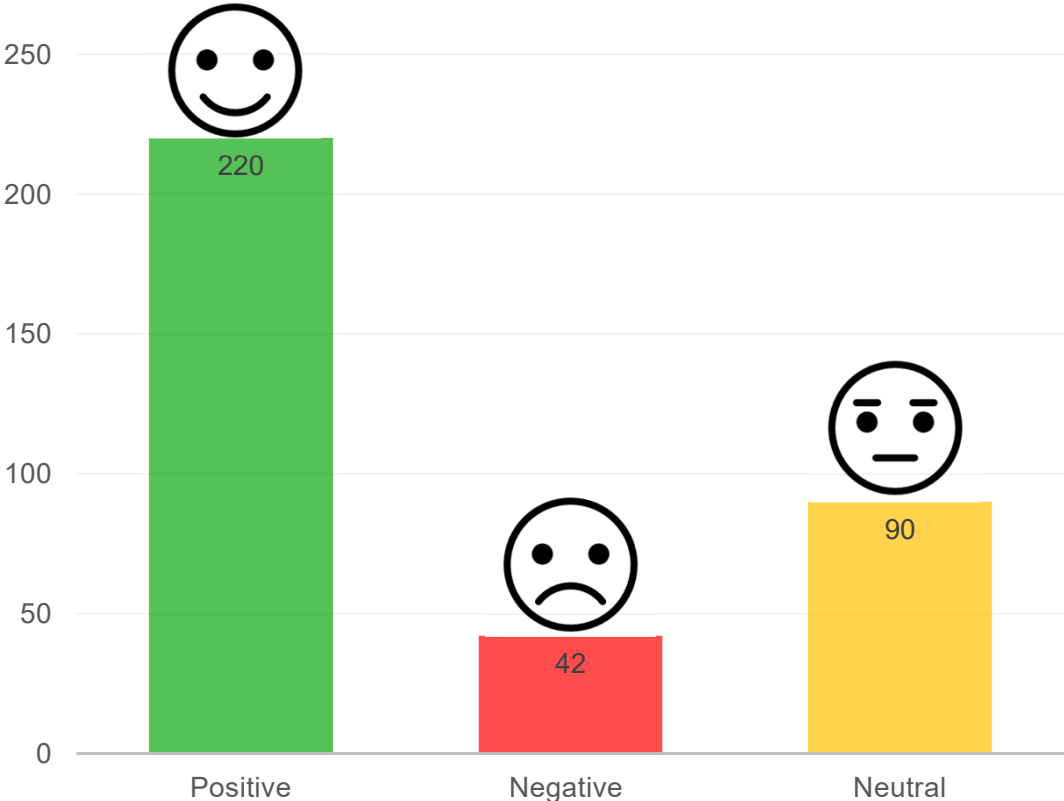
IT Separation has better equipped me with the tools I need to do my job

Positive Comments

- IT Separation has better equipped me with the tools I need to do my job

- More efficient and effective

- Supports Homeworking

- Communication and Teams

- Modern IT Kit

- Better Connectivity

Negative Comments

- Poor connectivity

- Software issues

- Poor support from CANCOM

- Poor Hardware

- Loss of databases eg. vetting and NNPPI

- No printing

- Burdensome processes

- Unable to continue working relationship with HSE

I felt I had the information I needed to prepare me for IT Separation

Positive Comments

- Good communication

- Clear instructions and guidance

- Good CANCOM / Hypercare support

- Well planned and organised separation

- Training

Negative comments:

- Poor communications

- Poor training / too early

- Problems with NNPPI

- Disruptions to vetting

- Not enough information

- Not well organised / planned

- Difficult and time consuming

Pulse Survey February 2021: High-level results

Research / Benchmarks

- A poll of workers conducted by the Royal Society for Public Health's (RSPH) found that two-thirds (67 per cent) of workers who shifted from the office to home during the pandemic felt less connected to their colleagues. 94% of ONR staff have very regular contact with the rest of their teams (either daily or a few times a week). However many are missing social interaction with colleagues and this was mentioned 48 times.

- The RSPH report also revealed that more than half (56 per cent) of those who started working from home said they found it harder to switch off, while almost two in five (38 per cent) said the change had disturbed their sleep. Negative affects on mental health, particularly problems sleeping, were mentioned 15 times in the Pulse Survey, however the health benefits (less stress, more time for exercise) of working remotely were also mentioned 20 times.

- Research by London South Bank University (LSBU) showed people are suffering from 'Zoom fatigue', with increased tiredness, with video calls being more tiring to deal with than other forms of digital communication, such as emails, texts and chats. This is also reflected in our survey: having too many video calls is mentioned a number of times.

- According to the CIPD, workload has a strong influence on mental and physical health, so employers need to ensure workload is managed properly and distributed fairly accordingly. High workload was mentioned frequently throughout this Pulse Survey and this is also affecting people's ability to access support they need such as courses and special leave. High workload is also affecting CDMs ability to manage the health and wellbeing of their direct reports.

- The CIPD survey also showed that the majority of workers are satisfied with their organisation's response during the pandemic (69%) and agree that their employers have been supportive (67%). In our survey the figures compare very favourably - 89% have confidence in the SLT to support their health, safety and wellbeing and that of their colleagues and 75% say it's easy to access the support they need.

- One of the major benefits of working at home is seen as not having to commute.This is very much in line with other surveys on remote working undertaken in 2020 Hive 2020 Remote Work Survey.

According to XpertHR, over half of UK employers are considering increasing the number of staff working from home permanently.

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