

Menopause Survey Thames Valley Police April 2019

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Security classification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not protectively marked	May be published openly / immediately
	<input type="checkbox"/> Protected	Review whether broader publication
	<input type="checkbox"/> Restricted	Not for open publication. Restricted to:
	<input type="checkbox"/> Confidential	

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1. Introduction

The Menopause Survey 2018 was the first of its kind to examine the experiences and awareness of the menopause amongst police officers and police staff at a national level in England and Wales. In particular, it looked at the experiences of individuals who have either gone through or are going through the menopause and the experiences, as well as awareness of managers and supervisors in terms of supporting individuals who are going through the menopause.

This report provides an overview of some of the key findings from the survey for Thames Valley Police.

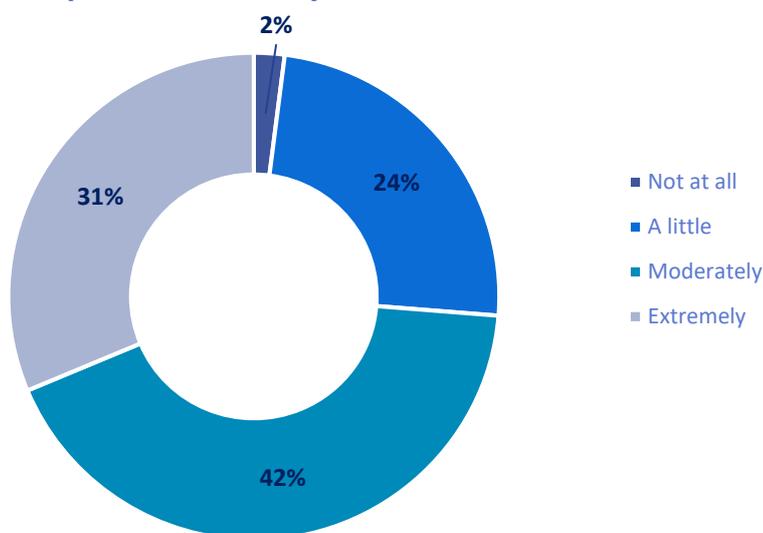
2. Participants and procedure

Overall 307 responses were received from respondents in Thames Valley Police. 50% of responses were from police officers and 50% were from police staff. 206 respondents completed questions about their experiences of the menopause at work. 100 respondents answered questions relevant to line managers and supervisors (there was an overlap of 52 respondents who completed both sets of questions. A further 53 responses were received from other respondents within Thames Valley Police (i.e. respondents without personal experience of the menopause or managerial responsibilities. Due to the smaller number of respondents within this latter group, these responses have not been reported below, however they have been included within the national statistics.

3. Experience of the menopause at work

73% of respondents in Thames Valley Police said that symptoms of the menopause were either moderately or extremely problematic. This is lower than the national average, where 76% of respondents reported that symptoms of the menopause were moderately or extremely problematic.

Chart 1: Overall, how problematic have symptoms of the menopause been for you at work?



Respondents were asked about the aspects of their working environment that made coping with symptoms of the menopause moderately or extremely difficult. The proportion of respondents in Thames Valley Police who reported that these aspects of their working environment made coping moderately or extremely difficult are presented in Table 1 below, along with the corresponding proportions for the country as a whole.

Table 1: Aspects of the working environment (where applicable) that made coping with symptoms of the menopause moderately or extremely difficult

	Thames Valley Police	National Sample
Recalling detailed information	49%	50%
Having to work shifts	23%	33%
Having fixed working hours	18%	20%
The temperature of your working environment	59%	61%
Inadequate opportunity to control ventilation in your working environment	57%	57%
Inadequate access to toilet facilities	13%	16%
Shared offices/workspaces	27%	27%
The physical demands of the job	25%	26%
The design of uniforms	22%	23%
The pressure of tight deadlines	34%	32%
Your workload	39%	38%
Not being office-based	6%	9%
Having to make difficult decisions within your job	29%	26%
Having to attend formal meetings	21%	18%
Having to maintain your position for long periods without relief	14%	18%

4. Experiences of working during the menopause

49% of respondents in Thames Valley Police said that they felt that their job performance had been negatively affected by the menopause. This is higher than the national sample, where 46% felt that their job performance had been negatively affected by the menopause.

26% of respondents felt that the menopause had negatively affected their manager's and colleagues' views on their competence at work. Within the national sample, 21% of respondents who had either gone through or were going through the menopause felt this way.

22% of respondents in Thames Valley Police said that they had considered leaving because they have found it difficult to deal with the menopause at work. This is higher than the national average, where 20% of respondents said that they had considered leaving as a result of the menopause.

Chart 2: Experiences of work as a result of the menopause



5. Disclosure and absence due to the menopause

52% of respondents in Thames Valley Police said that they had disclosed to their line manager that they were experiencing symptoms of the menopause. 46% said that they had not disclosed to their line manager (the remainder did not feel this was applicable to them). Respondents in Thames Valley Police were more likely to have told their line manager that they were experiencing symptoms of the menopause compared to the national sample, where 47% had disclosed to their line manager.

19% of respondents in Thames Valley Police said that they had taken sickness absence because they were experiencing symptoms of the menopause. In addition, 63% said that they had attended work despite feeling that they should have really taken sick leave because of their symptoms (i.e. menopause-related “presenteeism”) and 37% said that they had taken annual leave or rest days to take time off because they were experiencing symptoms of the menopause (i.e. menopause-related leaveism).

Comparison of the proportions of respondents in Thames Valley Police reporting menopause-related sickness absence, presenteeism and leaveism compared to the national average are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Menopause-related sickness absence, presenteeism and leaveism

	Thames Valley Police	National Sample
Menopause-related sickness absence	19%	18%
Menopause-related presenteeism	63%	62%
Menopause-related leaveism	37%	35%

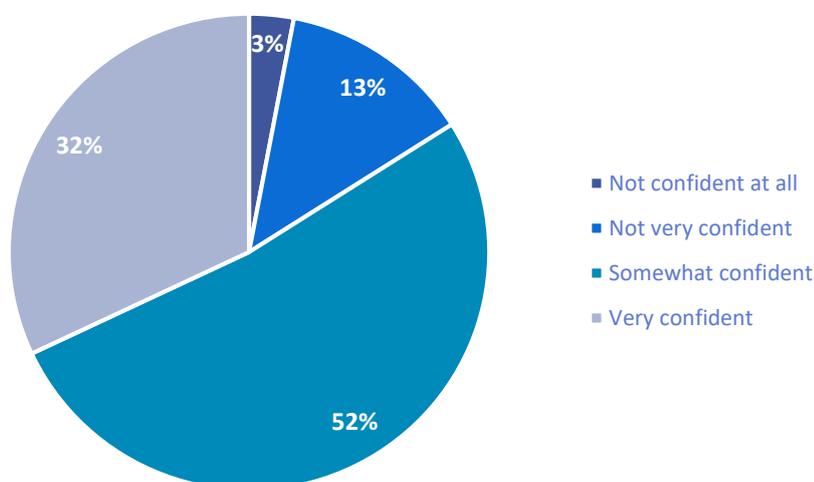
6. Experiences and awareness of managers

63% of managers in Thames Valley Police who responded to the survey felt that they had a good level of awareness of the menopause. In contrast 14% did not feel that they had a good level of awareness¹. The proportion of managers in Thames Valley Police is lower than the national average, where 65% of managers said that they had a good level of awareness of the menopause.

32% of managers in Thames Valley Police said that they would be very confident in their ability to support someone they line managed who was going through the menopause. This compares to 16% who said that they would either be not at all or not very confident that they would be able to support someone.

Nationally, 34% of respondents felt very confident in their ability to support someone who was going through the menopause, whereas 15% said that they would either be not at all or not very confident.

Chart 3: How confident would you be in your ability to support someone you line manage who was going through the menopause?



¹ As noted in the report of national statistics R004/2019 differences in awareness do exist between managers with and without personal experience of the menopause. However due to smaller sample sizes for force-level analysis these differences are not presented within this report.