

Menopause Survey Avon and Somerset Constabulary April 2019

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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 Avon and Somerset Constabulary.

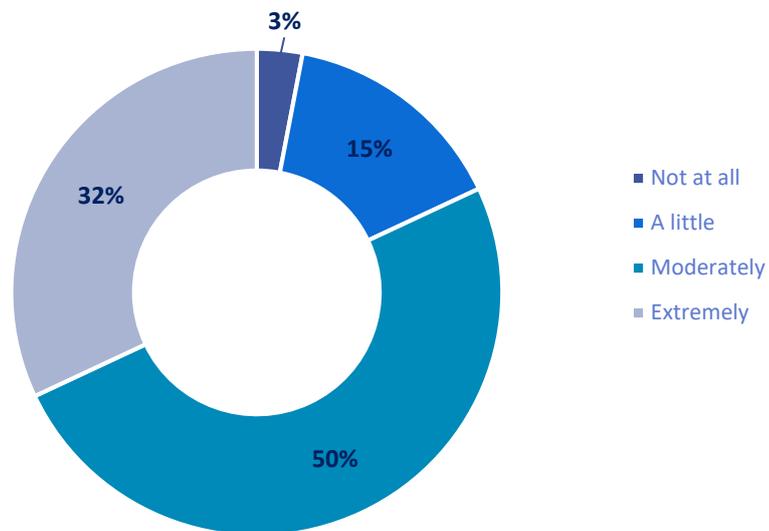
2. Participants and procedure

Overall 164 responses were received from respondents in Avon and Somerset Constabulary. 55% of responses were from police officers and 45% were from police staff. 123 respondents completed questions about their experiences of the menopause at work. 54 respondents answered questions relevant to line managers and supervisors (there was an overlap of 32 respondents who completed both sets of questions. A further 19 responses were received from other respondents within Avon and Somerset Constabulary (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

82% of respondents in Avon and Somerset Constabulary said that symptoms of the menopause were either moderately or extremely problematic. This is higher 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 Avon and Somerset Constabulary 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

	Avon and Somerset Constabulary	National Sample
Recalling detailed information	59%	50%
Having to work shifts	34%	33%
Having fixed working hours	16%	20%
The temperature of your working environment	66%	61%
Inadequate opportunity to control ventilation in your working environment	67%	57%
Inadequate access to toilet facilities	21%	16%
Shared offices/workspaces	34%	27%
The physical demands of the job	28%	26%
The design of uniforms	24%	23%
The pressure of tight deadlines	39%	32%
Your workload	48%	38%
Not being office-based	13%	9%
Having to make difficult decisions within your job	29%	26%
Having to attend formal meetings	19%	18%
Having to maintain your position for long periods without relief	19%	18%

4. Experiences of working during the menopause

56% of respondents in Avon and Somerset Constabulary 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.

32% 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.

28% of respondents in Avon and Somerset Constabulary 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

47% of respondents in Avon and Somerset Constabulary said that they had disclosed to their line manager that they were experiencing symptoms of the menopause. 49% said that they had not disclosed to their line manager (the remainder did not feel this was applicable to them). Respondents in Avon and Somerset Constabulary were equally 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.

21% of respondents in Avon and Somerset Constabulary said that they had taken sickness absence because they were experiencing symptoms of the menopause. In addition, 61% 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 32% 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 Avon and Somerset Constabulary 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

	Avon and Somerset Constabulary	National Sample
Menopause-related sickness absence	21%	18%
Menopause-related presenteeism	61%	62%
Menopause-related leaveism	32%	35%

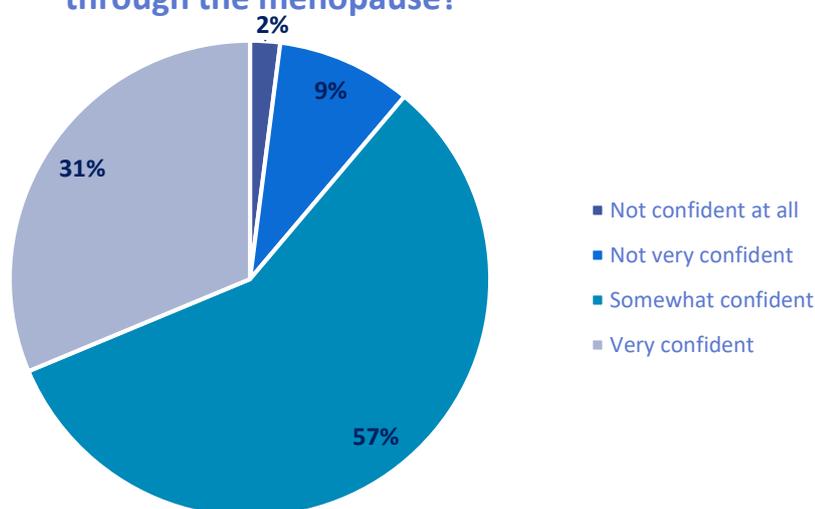
6. Experiences and awareness of managers

70% of managers in Avon and Somerset Constabulary who responded to the survey felt that they had a good level of awareness of the menopause. In contrast 6% did not feel that they had a good level of awareness¹. The proportion of managers in Avon and Somerset Constabulary is higher than the national average, where 65% of managers said that they had a good level of awareness of the menopause.

31% of managers in Avon and Somerset Constabulary 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 11% 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.