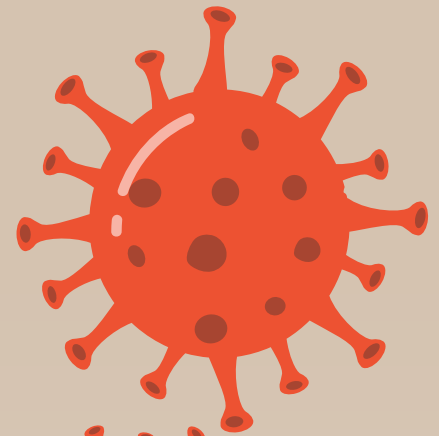
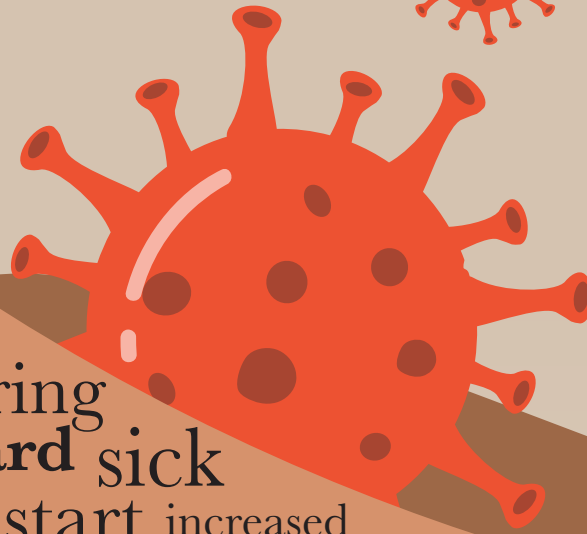
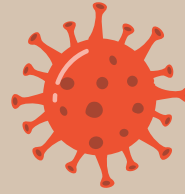


Covid-19 pandemic and the impact on Mental Health



wearing
has **hard** sick
caused start increased
place **depression** suffered
especially little impact normal
much masks management day take
see **struggle** tough company
trains isolated stressful still
effect managers life anxiety feel people
worried Covid pandemic time
quite stress us catching lockdown
keep pay lack ok **health** yes
mental home badly going
risk care worse affected leave
support **negatively** job deal
helped lots family colleagues change
pressure months
long passengers really
office **issues**

**Don't let your work harm your health,
don't suffer in silence – join RMT**

About the survey



At the end of 2021, RMT surveyed members asking a series of questions relating to their employers' provision of Mental Health support services, how effective they found these services and how the Covid-19 pandemic had affected their mental health.

The questions were a mixture of multiple choice, an opportunity for respondents to comment and questions that allowed for respondents to both give multiple choice answers and to comment.

Over 4000 RMT members responded to the survey.

Mental Health

In a question about **measures employers have in place to protect the mental health of their staff**, 80% of respondents said they were aware of their employer's mental health policies – which they said were a mixture of employee assistance programmes, counselling, confidential phone lines, mental health champions and mental health awareness training.

41% of members said they thought that the processes their employer had in place to protect the mental health and wellbeing of their staff **were poor/terrible.**

32% thought their employer's procedures **were average.**

One member wrote of the impact of the pandemic:

"It's affected me pretty badly to be honest and coming out of lockdown seems to of made my mindset worse towards people with how we are being treated as front line staff."

Another explained:

"It has been very stressful with constant roster changes etc and confidence knocked in large crowds now social distancing doesn't exist. Constant concern about what I may be taking home to spread to family and friends."

A bus driver wrote:

"the recent abuse bus drivers are receiving verbally and physically just trying to do your daily work, leaves you feeling vulnerable and suspicious when people board your bus."



A maritime member commented:

"Working offshore with poor internet and not being able to contact family and having the internet cut off has been hard; also not being allowed off the boat when in port has led to feeling very much like being in prison being onboard for 3 months and not allowed to leave is not good for mental health."

Coronavirus

Members were evenly split when questioned about their **employer's response to the coronavirus pandemic.**

32% said their employer's response was **excellent/good.**

32% said their employer's response was **poor/terrible.**

36% of members said their employer's response was **average.**

Differences in how staff were valued...

One member said that train drivers **were working in bubbles and were tested** whereas as the **train managers were not.** There's definitely a noticeable difference in how we are valued.

PPE A member wrote that during the onset of coronavirus in 2020, **measures were extremely slow** to be brought in to protect traincrew. Masks were at first discouraged and then subsequently various insufficiently protective masks have been supplied by the company. **Not having correct PPE caused anxiety.** I have ordered my own at my own expense to ensure my safety on board.

In relation to the **Government's handling of the coronavirus pandemic**

66% of RMT members ticked boxes indicating that they thought the **Government's response** to the coronavirus crises was **average/poor/terrible.**

A member commented:

"After the news about the party at number 10, a week before my very close relative died, I am just totally disgusted with the behaviour of the government full stop, especially having worked through it all. They've no clue about working class people and sacrifices that were made – completely heartless."

Another member wrote of the Government's double standards:

"Absolutely shocking. We would not be in this position if the government had treated it seriously in the first instance two years ago. They've lined their pockets whilst we have pay freezes. The wealth gap is increasing further. We've followed the poorly explained "guidance" (a term I shall use loosely) as best as we could."

Fears about the impact of the pandemic on jobs

It was very noticeable from the survey results that **many members feared for their job security.**

One respondent wrote that the impact of the pandemic will be that:

"there will no longer be a job for me affecting anxiety levels".

Another wrote that he was doing...

"very badly along with the threat of redundancy which has been put back time and again".

Conclusion

RMT front line workers played a vital role during the pandemic of keeping the country moving – yet now they are rewarded with the **threat of job cuts** and **attacks on their terms and conditions**. The results to this survey show that these issues are damaging their mental health.

To address this we need to organise, both to address the immediate issues of stress and mental health problems, and the broader one of attacks on terms and conditions. As RMT National Executive Committee explained when it met to discuss the survey results:

“We recognise that when employers threaten job cuts, this will impact the mental health of our members. As the full impact of the coronavirus pandemic is felt in the coming months, we will see unprecedented attacks on jobs and terms and conditions and we will do everything necessary to fight such attacks and their impact on the mental health of our members.”

What to do if you or your colleagues are suffering from mental health problems...

Stress

If you are suffering from stress you should request a stress risk assessment (your RMT safety rep is entitled to be involved in the assessment process).

If you are a RMT safety rep and aware that a problem causing stress for an individual member is also problematic for other members, then ask your line manager for a team stress risk assessment. Meet with your employer to discuss the problems shown by the assessment to cause high stress levels – and to agree suitable ways of addressing these issues.



Mental health

The RMT National Executive Committee have committed to engage with various mental health charities, including MIND and in Scotland, SAMH, who members can contact for help if in needed in relation to health, support or advice as regards mental health issues.

For more information, please see RMT's guide ***Campaigning for Mental Wellbeing at Work*** which you can download at <https://bit.ly/3INEAAp> or by scanning the QR code opposite.



Serious About Safety

To join RMT or for more information

call our **FREEPHONE** Helpline: 0800 376 3706
or the switchboard number: 020 7387 4771
and ask for the **Membership Department**.

www.rmt.org.uk