

2020 CORONER ATTITUDE SURVEY

Report of findings covering all coroners in England & Wales

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Executive summary

Coroner Attitude Survey and response rate

- The Coroner Attitude Survey (CAS) 2020 is the first survey conducted with all serving coroners in England and Wales. It assesses coroners' views and experiences of their working lives and was modelled on and run in conjunction with the UK Judicial Attitude Survey, a longitudinal survey of all UK salaried judges.
- Almost all coroners in England and Wales (89%) took part in the 2020 CAS, including 100% of Senior Coroners, 100% of Area Coroners and 85% of Assistant Coroners. This high response rate means the 2020 CAS findings are highly reliable, reflecting the views of almost all coroners in England and Wales.

Being a member of the coroner service

- Virtually all coroners feel they provide an important service to society (97%), have a strong personal attachment to being a member of the coroner service (89%), and are committed to doing their job as well as they possibly can (98%). These findings reflect a deep commitment to their job by virtually all coroners.
- A quarter (24%) of coroners feel that members of the judiciary are respected less by society at large than they were 5 years ago, but the majority (63%) feel that the level of respect for coroners is about the same as it was 5 years ago.
- Coroners feel most valued by families in inquests they conduct (96%), court staff (92%) and coroner colleagues at their courts (90%). A majority also feel valued by the public (78%), the Chief Coroner (68%), counsel in inquests they conduct (65%) and their local authority (56%).
- Only a minority of coroners feel valued by the Government (17%), the courts and tribunal judiciary (25%) and the media (37%).

Being part of the judiciary of England and Wales

- Almost all coroners (81%) consider themselves judges, but only 34% of coroners feel that they are part of the judiciary of England and Wales.
- Coroners are divided in their view of whether legal representatives at inquests consider coroners to be judges: 40% said legal representatives do not see coroners as judges and 37% said legal representatives do see coroners as judges.

Working conditions

- Amongst those coroners who were in the coroner service in 2015, the largest proportion (43%) said working conditions were about the same in 2020 as they were in 2015, 39% said working conditions were better and 18% said they were worse
- A majority of coroners (70%) said their caseload over the last 12 months had been manageable. Half (50%) of Area Coroners and 44% of Senior Coroners said their case workload was too high. More Assistant Coroners said their workload was too low (13%) than too high (11%).
- Five working conditions were rated as either Good or Excellent by half or more coroners: quality of administrative support (72%), amount of administrative support (65%), morale of court staff (56%), maintenance of the building (51%), physical quality of the building (50%) and physical quality of judges' personal work space (50%). The one working condition rated Poor by almost half of all coroners (45%) was security at court.

Security concerns and sources of stress for coroners

- Almost half of all coroners (44%) said that they were concerned about their personal safety in court, but there were differences by coroner post.
- While most Area Coroners (77%) and a majority of Senior Coroners (56%) said they are sometimes concerned for their personal safety in court, only 33% of Assistant Coroners had these concerns.
- A third of Senior Coroners and Area Coroners also have concerns for their personal safety *out* of court, while Senior Coroners are more likely than other coroners to have concerns for their personal safety on social media.
- More female than male coroners said they have concerns about their personal safety in court, out of court and on social media.
- Almost half of all coroners said they would like more guidance on how to deal with internet and social media coverage of their work as a coroner (47%), how to ensure their safety in court (45%) and how to safely use the internet/social media as a coroner (44%). Over a third (38%) also said they would like guidance on how to ensure their safety out of court.
- A majority of coroners identified one specific aspect of their work as a significant source of stress: the isolation of the job (57%). Just under half also identified the pressure of making rulings (44%) and their concern about letting families at inquests down (43%) as significant sources of stress.

Digital working

- Virtually all coroners (96%) are on e-Judiciary, and most coroners rated e-Judiciary as either Excellent to Good (49%) or Adequate (43%). Most coroners (81%) report that Wi-Fi is available in their court rooms, and 75% said that it is available in all other parts of the court building.
- Almost all coroners (85%) are regularly required to use an electronic case system. A majority of coroners (61%) rated the usability of the case system as excellent/good, but coroners' views are divided over the availability and quality of training on the electronic case system.
- Coroners report a mixed experience with the quality of IT resources and support they have at court. A majority rated as Adequate, Good or Excellent the standard of IT equipment provided for coroners personally to use (71%), IT support at court (70%), internet access in the court building (64%) and the standard of IT equipment used in their court (57%). But almost half (43%) rated the standard of IT equipment used in their court as either Poor or Non-existent.

Working during the Covid-19 emergency

- During May-June 2020, the extent to which coroners were working in their courts during lockdown varied substantially by coroner post. A majority of both Area Coroners (53%) and Senior Coroners (51%) were working in their courts all or most of the time, while almost half (48%) of all Assistant Coroners were not working in their courts at all.
- While the quality of the internet access coroners had when working remotely was mostly Excellent/Good (41%) or Adequate (34%), almost half of all coroners said that the standard of IT equipment available for working remotely was Poor or Non-existent (42%), and 39% of coroners said that IT support for working remotely was Poor or Non-Existent.
- Just over half of all coroners (53%) said that the judiciary was managing change well during the Covid-19 emergency.

Pay and pensions

- The CAS explored coroners' views of pay and pension arrangements based on whether they were salaried (almost all Senior and Area Coroners) or fee-paid (most Assistant Coroners).
- Prior to appointment, 37% of salaried coroners were earning more than their coroner's salary on appointment, 44% were earning less and 19% were earning about the same amount.
- A majority of salaried coroners (70%) feel they are paid a reasonable salary for the work they do, and a majority (62%) said they had not had a loss of net earnings over the last 2 years. A majority of coroners also said that the salary issue was not affecting their morale (71%) or the morale of coroners they work with (57%).
- Half (50%) of salaried coroners said the amount of out of hours work required to their job was affecting them. Almost half (43%) said their pay and pension entitlement did not adequately reflect the work they have done and will do before retirement. A majority of Senior and Area Coroners (59%) said they would not pursue earning additional income through out of court work if this option was open to them.
- Over half of all salaried coroners follow closely developments about judicial pensions (51%) and the tax implications on pension contributions for coroners (54%). Most salaried coroners (73%) would like to know more about developments in judicial pensions.
- Fee-paid Assistant Coroners were asked about their fee income and their pension (if they were part of the local authority pension scheme). A majority (59%) of fee-paid Assistant Coroners said that their fee and pension entitlement does not adequately reflect the work they have done and will do before retirement. A majority (56%) also said that they did not feel they were paid a reasonable fee for the work they do.
- A majority of fee-paid coroners (54%) said the fee issue was not affecting their morale, and they were fairly evenly divided about whether they felt the fee issue was affecting the morale of coroners they work with and whether the pension was reasonable for the work done.

Opportunities and support for coroners

- In the 3 areas most important to coroners, the availability of opportunities did not meet demand: 92% of coroners said time to discuss work with colleagues was important, but only 43% said these opportunities were Good/Excellent; 77% said support for dealing with stressful work conditions was important, but 43% said this was Non-existent/Poor; 55% said career progression was important, but only 16% said these opportunities were Good/Excellent.
- There were high levels of satisfaction amongst coroners on three aspects of their work: 93% were satisfied with the challenge of the job, 89% were satisfied with the variety of their work and 86% were satisfied with the sense of achievement in their job.
- Less than a third of coroners (30%) said they were satisfied with cross-deployment opportunities. Just over half of all coroners (52%) said they were satisfied with the opportunities they had to regularly review their role with someone in a leadership position.

Training and personal development

- Almost all coroners in all posts said that training opportunities were important to them (93%). Just over half of coroners (55%) said the availability of these training opportunities was Good or Excellent, 33% said they were Adequate and 12% said these training opportunities were either Poor or Non-existent
- Coroners are most satisfied (83%) with the quality of the training they receive; 76% are satisfied with the range of training available; 67% are satisfied with the time available to undertake training; 65% are satisfied with the time they have to prepare for training courses.
- While 61% of coroners are satisfied with their local authority support for coroner training, 30% said it could be better and 9% were not satisfied with this at all.

- During the early stages of the pandemic most coroners (73%) said they would welcome training on conducting remote hearings and “hands on” training for using IT in court (59%)> There was also interest in media handling training (56%); training on understanding statistics in inquests (50%); leadership & managing others (46%), presentation & communications skills (42%), joint local training with courts (41%) and wellbeing training (41%).

Change in the coroner service

- Most coroners (78%) feel their job has changed since they were first appointed in ways that affect them.
- The changes coroners are most concerned by are stressful working conditions (62%), a lack of a national coroner service (56%), lack of a common software programme for their cases (55%) and personal security for coroners and staff (53%).
- A majority of coroners (69%) said that the judiciary needs to have control over policy changes that affect them; and 58% said more change was still needed in the judiciary.
- But almost all coroners (89%) said that despite any reservations they may have about changes to the judiciary they still enjoyed their job as a coroner.

Future planning

- A quarter (26%) of coroners are considering leaving the coroner service early in the next 5 years, and half (50%) are currently undecided about this.
- Over a third (35%) of Area Coroners and 32% of Senior Coroners (32%) said they intend to leave the coroner service early between 2020 and 2025. Assistant Coroners had the highest proportion (54%) who said they did not intend to leave the coroner service in this period.
- Coroners were divided over whether they should be required to retire at 70 years of age (46% agreeing, 40% disagreeing).
- A majority of coroners said that stressful working conditions (52%) was the factor that would make them more likely to leave the coroner service early; 50% said limits on pay awards and 49% said a reduction in administrative support were the factors that would make them more likely to leave the coroner service early.
- The one factor that would make most coroners more likely to remain in the coroner service is higher remuneration (71%).

Recruitment

- Almost every coroner (91%) said that, knowing what they know now, they would still have applied to be a coroner, and almost every coroner (93%) said they would encourage suitable people to apply to be a coroner.
- A majority of coroners gave 4 reasons they would encourage people to apply to be a coroner: the challenge of the work (88%), public service (82%), intellectual satisfaction (78%) and the chance to contribute to justice being done (71%).
- There were only 2 reasons that a majority of coroners identified for discouraging suitable people to apply to join the coroner service: the isolation of the job (58%) and the feeling of being second best compared with courts and tribunals judges (53%).

Leadership

- Only 25% of coroners hold formal leadership positions, and 17% undertake additional responsibilities that are not formal leadership roles. This varies considerably by coroner post.
- A majority of coroners (65%) said they are interested in taking on a leadership role, but for 19% there are no leadership roles available in their jurisdiction and 13% would only be interested if leadership roles were properly rewarded. While 45% are not interested in taking

on more leadership responsibilities, for 16% this is because they already have enough leadership responsibilities and 24% are not currently interested but could be in future.

- There were some differences by gender in willingness to take on leadership roles. More female coroners (69%) than male coroners (57%) said they would be interested in taking on more leadership responsibilities, and more female coroners (24%) than male coroners (15%) said they would be interested in more leadership but none were available.
- A majority of coroners (68%) say they do not know enough about how leadership roles are allocated to say whether the process is fair. Assistant Coroners were most likely to say they did not know enough about it (75%); Area Coroners had the highest proportion (28%) who said they did not feel that leadership roles were allocated fairly; and Senior Coroners had the highest proportion (25%) who said leadership roles were allocated fairly.
- A majority of coroners feel they receive good support from their immediate leadership judge (65%), and that case allocation is done fairly by their local leadership judge (54%). A majority of coroners said they would like to be able to discuss their career development with their immediate leadership judge (66%); and would like their immediate leadership judge to help them evaluate how they are performing (60%).

The Chief Coroner

- Almost every coroner (96%) feels that the creation of the position of the Chief Coroner has been beneficial in providing guidance to coroners.
- Most coroners (70%) feel the creation of the Chief Coroner role has been beneficial for increasing consistency across the coroner service and in establishing leadership within the coroner service.
- Just over half of all coroners feel the creation of a Chief Coroner has been helpful in creating stronger links with the courts and tribunals judiciary (54%) and in enhancing the public perception of the role of coroners (51%).
- More coroners feel the creation of the position of the Chief Coroner has increased coroners' welfare (48%) than think it has not been helpful for this (17%) with 35% not sure.

The role and function of coroners and inquests

- Three specific coroner functions were identified as the most important by almost all coroners: to publicly investigate deaths (97%), to prevent future deaths (96%) and to provide answers to the families and the public about how the deceased died (93%). A majority of coroners also identified facilitating closure for families (70%) and providing accountability for deaths (63%) as the most important functions of the coroner.
- On the purpose and conduct of inquests: almost every coroner (95%) felt the inquest was a cathartic process for families and others involved in a death, and that it is the role of the coroner to level the playing field when the family is unrepresented (90%). A majority of coroners said there was no need for all inquests to be concluded with a hearing (60%), and that PFDs were effective in preventing future deaths (55%).
- On the use of specific practices at inquests: most coroners said that they never or rarely used special measures (75%) or ground rules hearings (72.5%); but most said that they used juries at inquests either occasionally (44%) or frequently (28%).
- There is one specific practice that almost all coroners (94%) feel is appropriate at inquests: for family members to provide pen portraits of the deceased when giving evidence. Only very small proportions of coroners said it was appropriate for family members to display a photograph of the deceased (27%) or for the bereaved to explain how the death has affected them (23%) or for others to do so (12%).

Demographics of coroners

- Gender: Female representation in the coroner service varies by coroner post, with the smallest proportion of female coroners (38%) found in the highest coronial post (Senior Coroner); 41% of Assistant Coroners and 44% of Area Coroners are female.
- Ethnicity: There is no coroner post that reflects the current ethnic distribution within the population of England and Wales. The largest proportions of ethnic minority coroners are amongst Senior Coroners (7%) and by Assistant Coroners (6%).
- Disability: 2.6% of coroners had a declared disability and had requested that reasonable adjustments be made at their court to enable them to do their job to the best of their ability.
- Education: Two thirds or more of coroners in all posts attended a UK state school for their secondary education, and a majority of coroners in all posts were the first generation in their family to attend university.
- Professional background: at least half of coroners in all posts are solicitors. Area Coroners have the highest proportion of solicitors (71%), and Assistant Coroners have the highest proportion of barristers (37%). Medical professionals make up only a small minority in all coroner posts.
- Professional background of fee-paid coroners: coroners who are currently in post on a part-time, fee paid basis are almost all practicing solicitors (43%) or barristers (42%).
- Age: Assistant Coroners have the most diverse age distribution, with 12% under 40 years old 31% aged 40-49 and 34% aged 50-59. A majority (56%) of Senior Coroners are between 50-59 years old. Over half of all Area Coroners (51%) are under 50 years old.
- Tenure: Almost all Area Coroners (87%) have been in their current post for five years or less (reflecting the fact that the post was only created in 2009). The majority of Assistant Coroners (55%) have also been in post for five years or less. Most Senior Coroners (64%) have been in their current post for 10 years or less, but 19% have been in post for 16 years or more.
- Regional distribution: The total numbers of coroners are fairly evenly distributed across the regions, but per region the largest number of Assistant Coroners is in the North West (37) and London (32), the largest number of Area Coroners is in North West (10) and the largest number of Senior Coroners is in the South East (11).
- Other judicial roles: Almost a quarter of all coroners (22%) hold other judicial posts in addition to their coroner post: Assistant Coroners (25%), Area Coroners (23%) and Senior Coroners (14%).

1. Coroner Attitude Survey 2020

1.1 The survey

The Coroner Attitude Survey (CAS) 2020 is a survey conducted with all serving coroners in England and Wales. The aim of the CAS is to assess the attitudes of coroners in key areas of their working lives including the experience of being a coroner, morale, working conditions, remuneration, training and personal development, retention and leadership.

This is the first Coroner Attitude Survey conducted in England and Wales. It was modelled on and run in conjunction with the UK Judicial Attitude Survey, a longitudinal survey of all UK judges run in 2020¹, 2016² and 2014³. The target group for the CAS was all serving coroners in England and Wales, including both full-time and part-time coroners and salaried and fee-paid coroners. This report includes combined results for all coroners who took part in the survey, and it also highlights those areas where there may be differences between coroners in different coronial posts.

Like the UK Judicial Attitude Survey, the CAS 2020 was an online survey conducted by the Judicial Institute of University College London (UCL JI) via the web-based survey tool Opinio. The survey was designed, administered and analysed by Professor Cheryl Thomas, Co-Director of the UCL JI and Terry McGuinness, PhD candidate and Fellow of the UCL Judicial Institute. A Working Group comprised of two Senior Coroners and a member of the Chief Coroner's Office assisted Professor Thomas and Mr McGuinness in the design of the 2020 questionnaire.

The survey was voluntary and all participants remained completely anonymous. The survey ran from 27 May 2020 through 22 June 2020. All coroners in England and Wales were invited to take part in the survey through personal communications from the Chief Coroner inviting coroners to contribute to the survey.

The survey included 50 questions covering the following general subject areas:

- working conditions
- coroner welfare
- pay and pensions
- resources and digital working
- training and personal development
- change in the coroner service
- future planning
- being a member of the coroner
- recruitment
- leadership

¹ 2020, *UK Judicial Attitude Survey*, Cheryl Thomas (2020) UCL Judicial Institute (separate reports for England & Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland)

² 2016 *UK Judicial Attitude Survey*, Cheryl Thomas (2016) UCL Judicial Institute (separate reports for England & Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland)

³ 2014 *Judicial Attitude Survey*, C. Thomas (2015) UCL Judicial Institute (separate reports for England & Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland)

Some questions in the 2020 CAS mirrored questions from the 2014 JAS, 2016 JAS and 2020 JAS, where this was appropriate for coroners. But other questions on the 2020 CAS were tailored specifically to the working lives of coroners, including a specific section on the function of inquests and the role of the coroner. Given that the 2020 CAS ran during the early months of the Covid-19 emergency, several questions were included to enable coroners to provide information about their experiences of working during the Covid-19 emergency.

In addition, there were a number of demographic questions⁴ covering coroner:

- gender
- ethnicity
- education
- age
- disability
- caring responsibilities
- financial dependents
- professional background
- tenure in current post
- regional base as a coroner

1.2 Response rates

Almost all coroners in England and Wales (89%) took part in the 2020 Coroner Attitude Survey (CAS). (see Table 1.1 below). This high response rate means the 2020 CAS findings are highly reliable, reflecting the views of almost all coroners in England and Wales.

Table 1.1: Response rates by post to the Coroner Attitude Survey 2020

	Coroners in post May 2020	2020 CAS number of responses	2020 CAS response rate
Senior coroners*	75	75	100%
Area coroners	30	30	100%
Assistant coroners**	301	257	85%
totals	406	362	89%

* includes 2 Deputy Chief Coroners and the Chief Coroner

** includes 6 Assistant Coroners acting up as Senior Coroners at the time of the survey

1.3 Running the CAS during Covid-19

The Coroner Attitude Survey was scheduled to run in spring 2020. When the Covid-19 emergency occurred, it was decided that the survey should still be run. Despite the challenges coroners faced with working during the emergency, it was felt that it was important to understand how coroners felt about their role, their working lives and their plans for the future. The questions in the survey were not altered as a result of being run during the pandemic. Instead a number of specific questions about working in the Covid-19 emergency were included, and coroners were encouraged to say whether their answers to any questions had been affected by Covid-19 and would have been different before the pandemic. Part 4 of this report includes a specific section on coroners' experiences of working during the Covid-19 emergency.

⁴ There were also two questions about the survey. A copy of the survey is included in Part 12 of this report.

2. Being a Member of the Coroner Service

The Coroner Attitude Survey explored coroners' views about what it means to be a coroner, the relationship between the coroner service and the courts and tribunal judiciary, as well as with other groups in society.

2.1 Providing an important service to society

Virtually all coroners (97%) in all coroner posts feel they provide an important service to society (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Providing an important service to society

<i>As a coroner I feel I provide an important service to society</i>	
Agree	97%
Not sure	1%
Disagree	2%

2.2 Personal attachment to being a member of the coroner service

Almost all coroners (89%) in all posts feel a strong personal attachment to being a member of the coroner service (Table 2.2).

Table 2.2: Personal attachment to coroner service

<i>I feel a strong personal attachment to being a member of the coroner service</i>	
Agree	89%
Not sure	7%
Disagree	4%

2.3 Commitment to the job

Table 2.3 shows that almost every coroner who took part in the survey (98%) feels they have an important job to do and expressed a commitment to doing this job as well as they possible can. This reflects a deep underlying strength of the coroner service across all posts.

Table 2.3: Commitment to the job

<i>I feel I have an important job that I am committed to doing as well as I possibly can</i>	2020 CAS		
	Strongly Agree	72%	Agree total
Agree	26%		
Not sure	1%	Not sure	1%
Disagree	0%		
Strongly Disagree	1%	Disagree total	1%

2.4 Societal respect

Most coroners (63%) feel that there has been little change in the extent to which coroners are respected by society at large today compared with 5 years ago (Table 2.4).

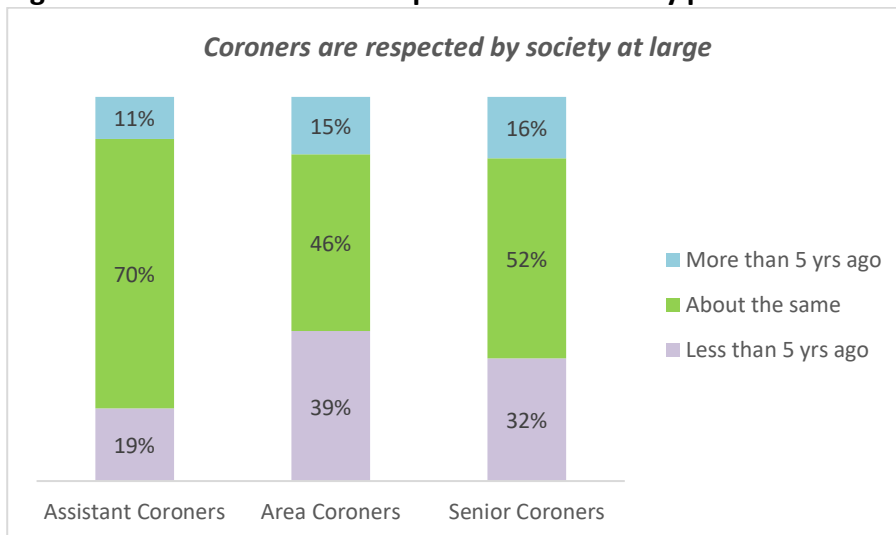
Table 2.4: Societal respect

<i>Coroners are respected by society at large</i>	
Less than they were 5 years ago	24%
About the same as they were 5 years ago	63%
More than they were 5 years ago	13%

By Post

A majority of Assistant Coroners (70%) and Senior Coroners (52%) felt that coroners were respected by society about the same as they were 5 years ago (Figure 2.1). Area Coroners were more divided in their views and had the largest proportion of coroners (39%) who felt that coroners are respected by society less than they were 5 year ago.

Figure 2.1: View of societal respect for coroners by post



2.5 Feeling valued

As Figure 2.2 and Table 2.5 show, a majority of coroners feel valued by all groups except the media, government and courts & tribunal judiciary. Coroners feel most valued by families in inquests they conduct (96%), court staff (92%), coroner colleagues at their courts (90%), the public (78%), the Chief Coroner (68%), counsel in inquests they conduct (65%) and their local authority (56%). Just over a third (37%) feel valued by the media, a quarter (25%) feel valued by the courts and tribunal judiciary, and only 17% feel valued by the government.

Figure 2.2: Extent to which judges feel valued by different groups

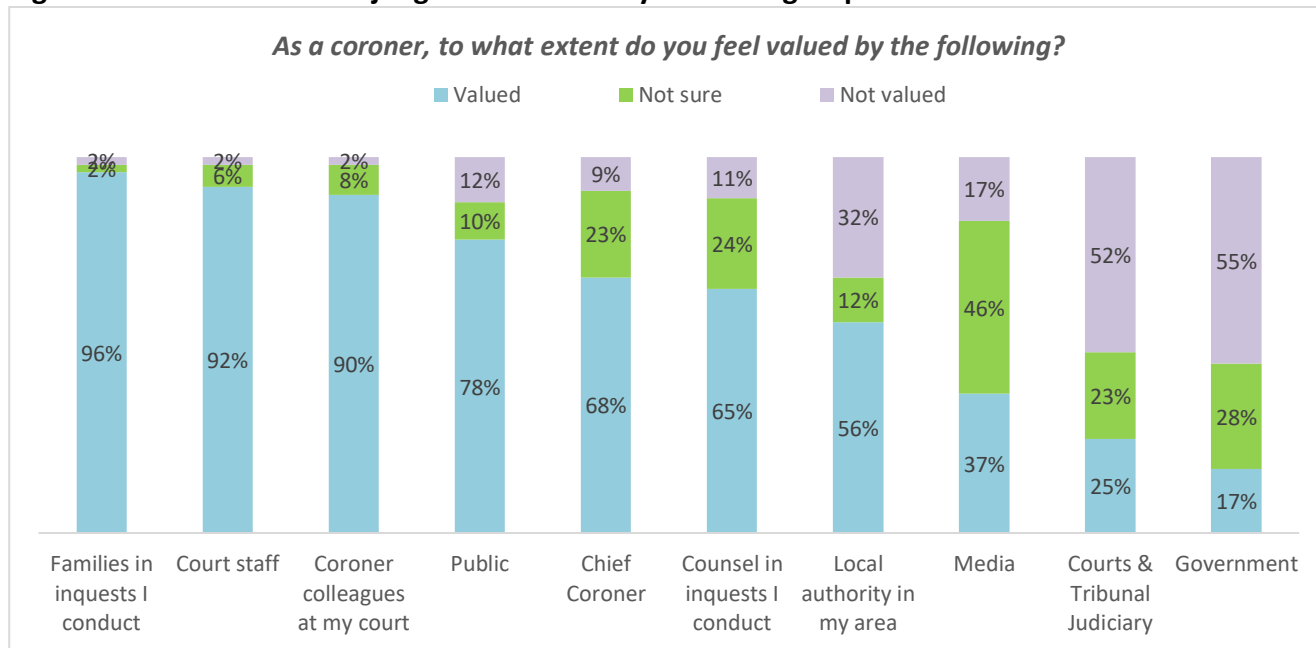


Table 2.5: Extent to which judges feel valued by different groups

<i>As a coroner, to what extent do you feel valued by the following?</i>	Greatly valued	Generally valued	Not sure	Generally not valued	Not valued at all
Families in inquests I conduct	32%	64%	2%	2%	0%
Court staff	30%	62%	6%	2%	0%
Coroner colleagues at my court	32%	58%	8%	2%	0%
Public	11%	67%	10%	10%	2%
Chief Coroner	26%	42%	23%	7%	2%
Counsel in inquests I conduct	6%	59%	24%	11%	0%
Local authority in my area	10%	46%	12%	22%	10%
Media	4%	33%	46%	13%	4%
Courts & tribunal Judiciary	0%	25%	23%	38%	14%
Government	1%	16%	28%	43%	12%

2.6 Coroners and judges

Almost all coroners (81%) consider themselves judges (Table 2.6).

Table 2.6: Whether coroners consider themselves judges

<i>I consider myself to be a judge</i>	2020 CAS		
	Strongly Agree	44%	Agree total
Agree	37%		
Not sure	9%	Not sure	9%
Disagree	8%		
Strongly Disagree	2%	Disagree total	10%

But only a third (34%) of all coroners feel that they are part of the judiciary of England and Wales (Table 2.7).

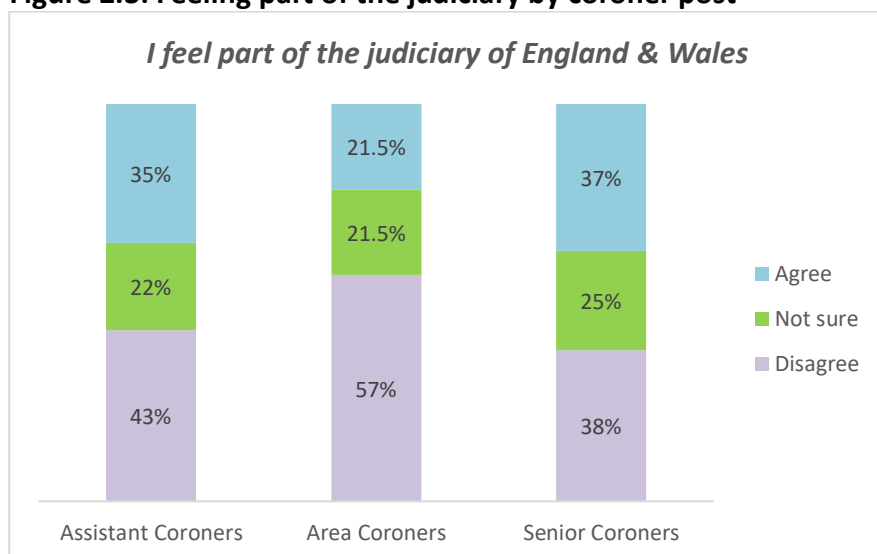
Table 2.7: Feeling part of the judiciary

<i>I feel part of the judiciary of England and Wales</i>	2020 CAS		
	Strongly Agree	11%	Agree total
Agree	23%		
Not sure	22%	Not sure	22%
Disagree	31%		
Strongly Disagree	13%	Disagree total	44%

By post

There are some clear differences by coroner post in terms of the extent to which coroners feel part of the judiciary of England & Wales. A majority of Area Coroners (57%) do not feel part of the judiciary, whereas Assistant Coroners and Senior Coroners are more divided in their view on this issue (Figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3: Feeling part of the judiciary by coroner post



Coroners are also divided in their view of whether legal representatives at inquests consider them to be judges (Table 2.8), with 40% saying they do not believe legal representatives see them as judges and almost the same amount (37%) saying that the feel legal representatives do see them as judges.

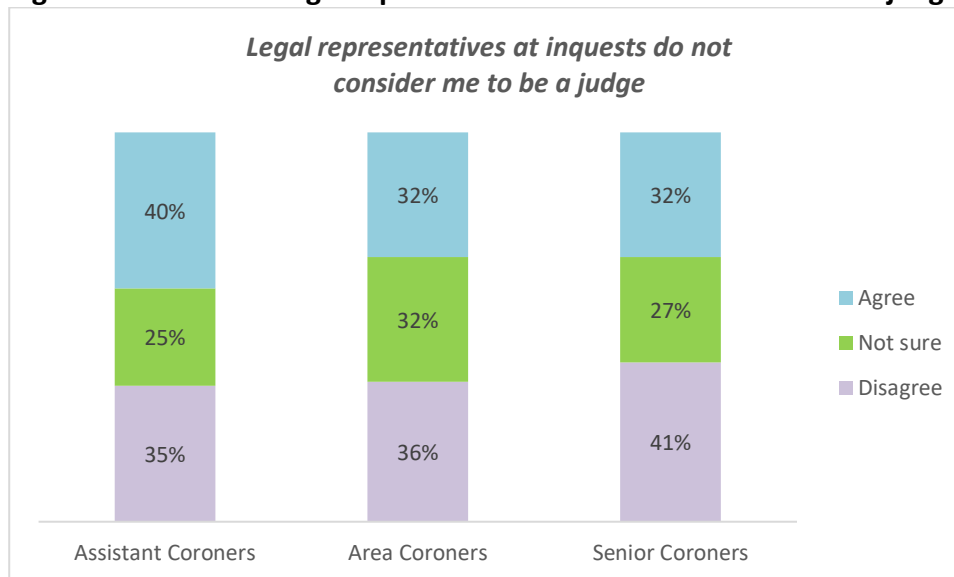
Table 2.8: Whether legal representatives at inquests consider coroners to be judges

<i>Legal representatives at inquests do not consider me to be a judge</i>	2020 CAS		
Strongly Agree	9%	Agree total	40%
Agree	31%		
Not sure	23%	Not sure	23%
Disagree	31%		
Strongly Disagree	6%	Disagree total	37%

By post

Coroners in all 3 posts were fairly evenly divided in their views on whether legal representatives at inquests consider them to be judges (Figure 2.4). A larger proportion of Assistant Coroners (40%) than Area or Senior Coroners (32%) felt that legal representatives at inquests did not see them as judges. Senior Coroners had the larger proportion (41%) that felt legal representatives at inquests saw them as judges.

Figure 2.4: Whether legal representatives consider coroners to be judges



3. Working Conditions

The 2020 CAS examined a wide range of working conditions for coroners. It should be noted that many of the working conditions examined in the survey are not within the Chief Coroner’s control, but instead fall within the responsibility of local authorities.

3.1 Current working conditions compared with 5 years ago

Amongst those coroners who were in the coroner service in 2015 (28% were not), the largest proportion (43%) said working conditions were about the same in 2020 as they were in 2015, 39% said working conditions were better and 18% said they were worse (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Working conditions for coroners in 2020 compared with 2015

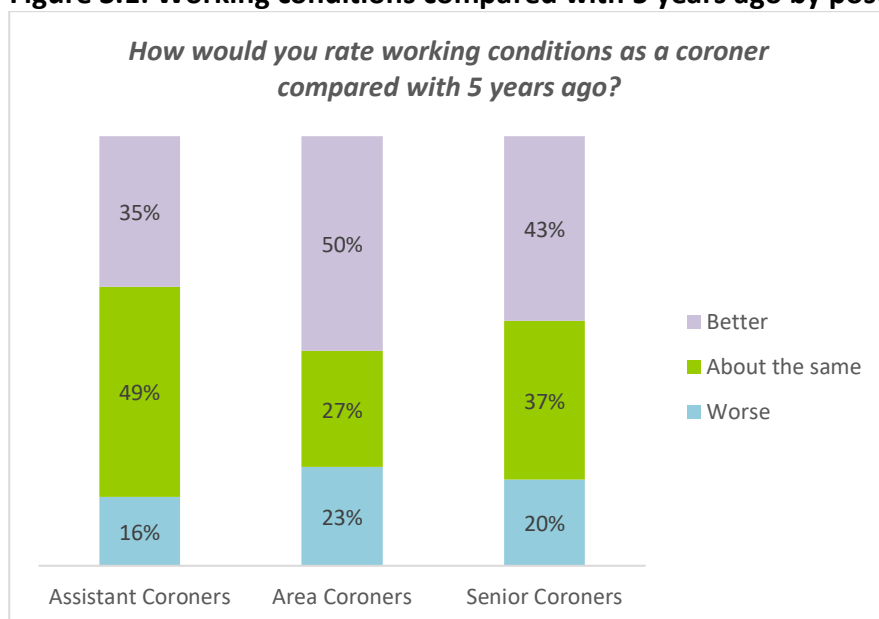
<i>How would you rate working conditions as a coroner now compared with 5 years ago?</i>	2020 CAS		
Significantly better	13%	Better total	39%
Better	26%		
About the same	43%	About the same	43%
Worse	12%		
Significantly worse	6%	Worse total	18%

By post

There were some differences by coroner post (Figure 3.1):

- Area Coroners had the largest proportion of coroners that said working conditions were better now than 5 years ago (50%), although they also had the largest proportion to say working conditions were worse (23%).
- Almost half of all Senior Coroners (43%) said working conditions were better now.
- Almost half of all Assistant Coroners (49%) said working conditions were about the same now as 5 years ago.

Figure 3.1: Working conditions compared with 5 years ago by post



3.2 Workload

The 2020 CAS survey explored several aspects of working conditions with coroners in more detail, including coroners' case workload and non-case workload.

3.2.1 Case workload

In 2020, a majority of coroners (70%) said their caseload over the last 12 months had been manageable (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Case workload over the last 12 months (May 2019-2020)

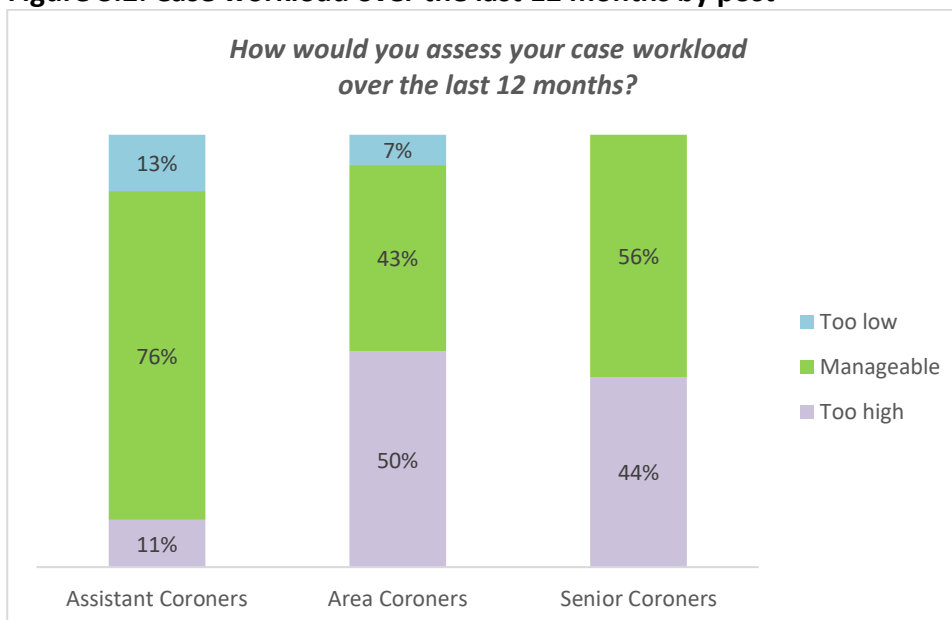
<i>How would you assess your case workload over the last 12 months?</i>	2020 CAS
Too high	22%
Manageable	70%
Too low	8%

By Post

There were some differences by coroner post in terms of the manageability of case workload (Figure 3.2):

- Almost all Assistant Coroners (76%) said their case workload was manageable; and more Assistant Coroners said their workload was too low (13%) than too high (11%).
- Half of all Area Coroners (50%) said their case workload was too high.
- A majority of Senior Coroners (56%) said their case workload was manageable, but 44% said it was too high and none said it was too low.

Figure 3.2: Case workload over the last 12 months by post



3.2.2 Non-case workload

A majority of coroners (61%) who have **non-casework** said that this non-case workload has been manageable over the 12 months from May 2019 to May 2020 (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3: Workload not including casework over the last 12 months (May 2019-2020)

<i>How would you assess your workload that does not include your casework over the last 12 months?</i>	2020 CAS
Too high	19%
Manageable	61%
Too low	3%
I do not have any work outside of my casework	17%

By Post

A majority of coroners in all coroner posts said that the workload they had in the last 12 months beyond their casework was manageable, but there were differences by coroner post (Figure 3.3).

- Almost half of all Senior Coroners (41%) said this non-casework was too high.
- Almost a third of Area Coroners (30%) also said it was too high.
- Almost a quarter of Assistant Coroners (22%) said they did not have any work that was not casework.

Figure 3.3: Workload not including caseload over the last 12 months by post



3.3 Quality of specific working conditions

Five specific working conditions were rated as either Good or Excellent by half or more coroners (Table 3.4 and Figure 3.4):

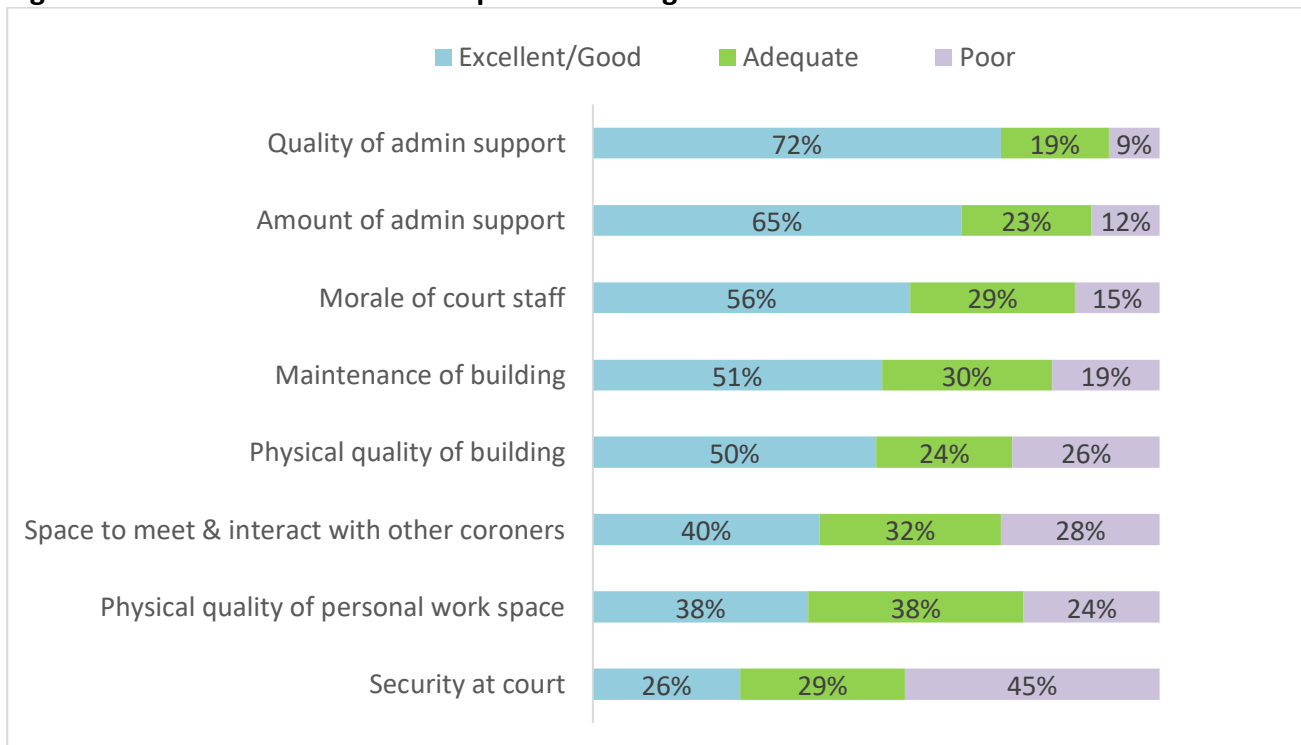
- quality of administrative support (72%)
- amount of administrative support (65%)
- morale of court staff (56%)
- maintenance of the building (51%)
- physical quality of the building (50%)
- physical quality of coroners' personal work space (50%).

The one working condition rated Poor by almost half of all coroners (45%) was security at court.

Table 3.4: Assessment of specific working conditions of coroners

<i>Please provide an assessment of the following working conditions at your main court or coroner's office where you work</i>	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Poor
Quality of administrative support	30%	42%	19%	9%
Amount of administrative support	24%	41%	23%	12%
Morale of court staff	13%	43%	29%	15%
Maintenance of the building	16%	35%	30%	19%
Physical quality of the building	16%	34%	24%	26%
Physical quality of your personal work space	12%	26%	38%	24%
Space to meet and interact with other coroners	10%	30%	32%	28%
Security at your court	6%	20%	29%	45%

Figure 3.4: Coroner assessment of specific working conditions



3.4 Personal safety and security concerns

Coroners were asked about the extent to which they are concerned about their personal safety arising from being a coroner (Table 3.5).

- Almost half of all coroners (44%) said that they were concerned sometimes about their personal security at court.

Table 3.5: Coroners’ concerns about personal security

<i>Are you ever concerned about your personal security as a result of your work as a coroner?</i>	2020 CAS
Yes, sometimes in court	44%
Yes, sometimes outside of court	22%
Yes, sometimes on social media	13%
No	47%

By Post

There were differences between coroners in different posts and also in **where** different coroners have security concerns (Figure 3.5).

- Over three-quarters of Area Coroners (77%), a majority of Senior Coroners (56%) and 33% of Assistant Coroners are sometimes concerned for their personal security in court.
- At least a third of Senior Coroners and Area Coroners have concerns for their personal security out of court.
- Senior Coroners are more likely than other coroners to have concerns for their personal security on social media.
- A majority of Assistant Coroners do not have concerns for their personal security as a result of their work as a coroner.

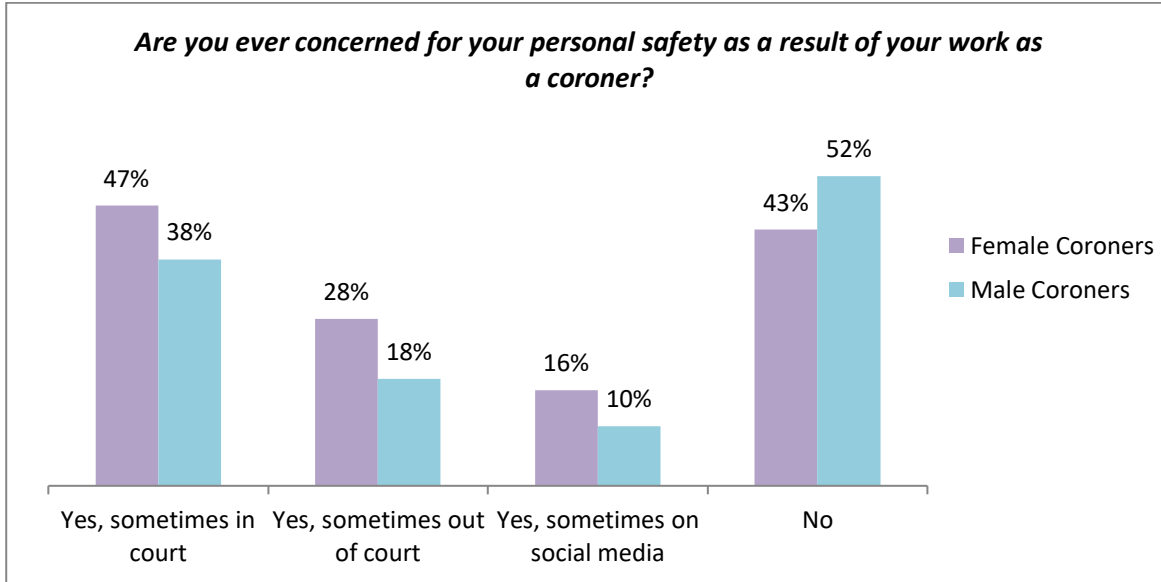
Figure 3.5: Concerns for personal safety in court by post



By Gender

There were also differences between male and female coroners in the extent to which and the location where they sometimes have concerns for their personal safety (Figure 3.6). Female coroners said they have concerns about their personal safety in court, out of court and on social media more often than male coroners.

Figure 3.6: Coroners' concern for personal safety by gender

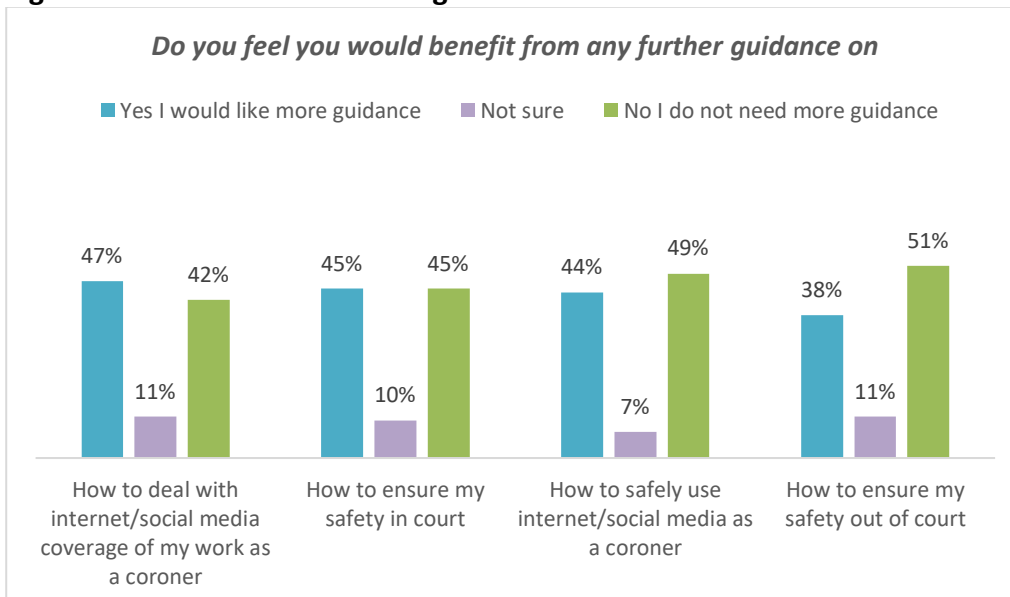


3.5 Guidance and advice on personal safety

Coroners were asked whether they felt they would benefit from further guidance on how to ensure their personal safety and deal with social media (see Figure 3.7).

- Almost half of all coroners said they would like more guidance on how to deal with internet and social media coverage of their work as a coroner (47%); how to ensure their safety in court (45%); and how to safely use the internet/social media as a coroner (44%).
- Over a third (38%) said they would like guidance on how to ensure their safety out of court.

Figure 3.7: Desire for additional guidance

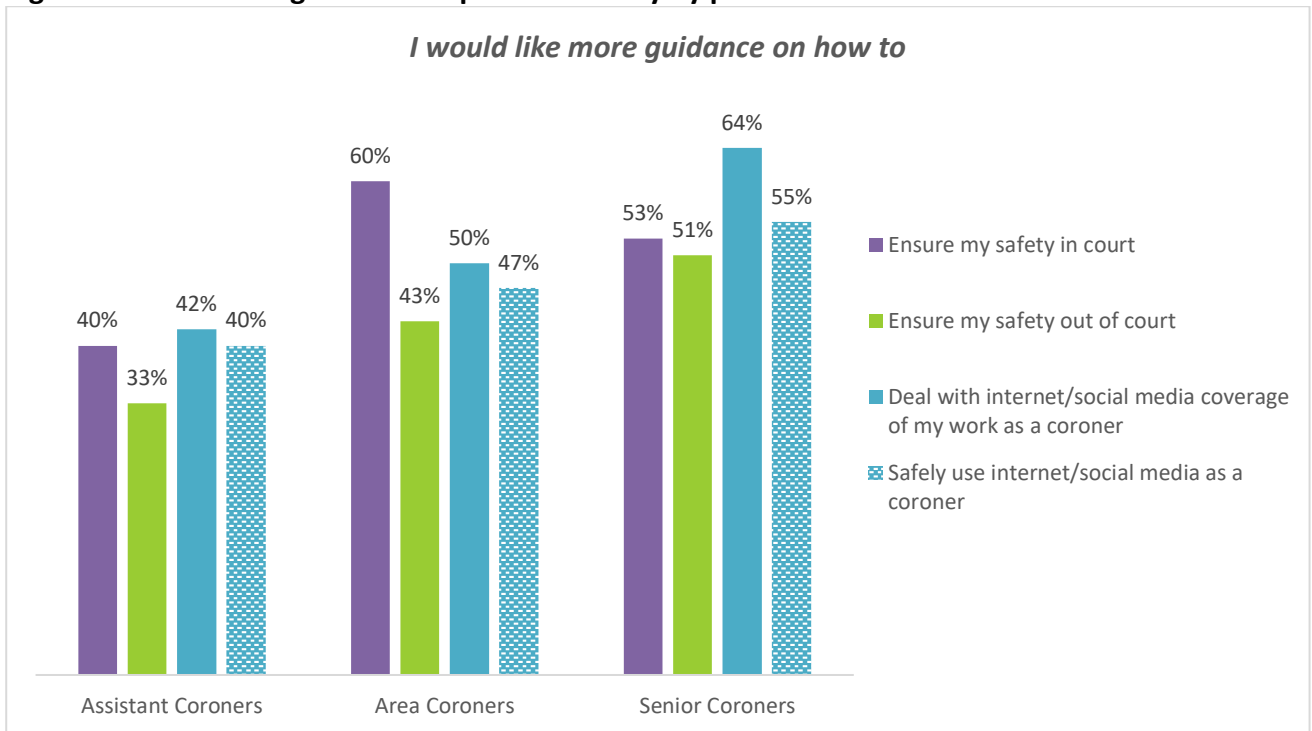


By post

There were some differences by coroner post on the desire for more guidance on personal safety (Figure 3.8):

- A majority of Senior Coroners would like guidance on all four aspects of ensuring their personal safety.
- A clear majority of Area Coroners (60%) would like more guidance on how to ensure their personal safety in court, half would like further guidance on how to deal with internet and social media coverage of their work as a coroner.
- While there is interest amongst Assistant Coroners in further guidance, there is a lower level of interest in the four areas compared with Area and Senior Coroners.

Figure 3.8: Desire for guidance on personal safety by post



3.6 Significant sources of stress for coroners

Coroners were asked to identify those aspects of their job as a coroner that present significant sources of stress (Table 3.6).

- A majority of coroners identified one specific aspect of their work: the isolation of the job (57%).
- Just under half also identified the pressure of making rulings (44%) and their concern about letting families at inquests down (43%).

Table 3.6: Sources of stress for coroners (all posts combined)

<i>Which of the following do you consider significant source of stress in your job as a coroner?</i>	2020 CAS
Isolation of the job	57%
Pressure of making rulings	44%
Concern about letting families down	43%
Likelihood of decisions being challenged	39%
Lack of professional support network	34%
24/7 nature of the work	29%
Sole focus on death	26%
Dealing with media coverage of inquests	19%
Criticism for delay in releasing the body	14%
Having to watch graphic visual evidence	9%

By post

There were some substantial differences by post on the most significant sources of stress in their job as a coroner (Table 3.7).

- For Senior Coroners the isolation of the job (79%) and the 24/7 nature of the work (51%) were the most significant sources of stress.
- For Area Coroners the pressure of making rulings (60%) was the most significant source of stress.
- For Assistant Coroners concern about letting families down (43%), the pressure of making rulings (42%) and the isolation of the job (42%) were all equally significant sources of stress.

Table 3.7: Sources of stress for coroners by post

<i>Which of the following do you consider significant sources of stress in your job as a coroner?</i>	Assistant Coroners	Area Coroners	Senior Coroners
Isolation of the job	42%	47%	79%
Pressure of making rulings	42%	60%	40%
Concern about letting families down	43%	40%	42%
Likelihood of decisions being challenged	35%	37%	32%
Lack of professional support network	28%	17%	42%
24/7 nature of the work	14%	43%	51%
Sole focus on death	21%	30%	29%
Dealing with media coverage of inquests	15%	23%	22%
Criticism for delay in releasing the body	9%	20%	20%
Having to watch graphic visual evidence	7%	10%	8%

4. Digital Capacity, IT Resources, Support and Remote Working

The survey covered coroners' general experience of digital working as a coroner, and a number of specific questions were included in the CAS to take account of the need for many coroners to work remotely during the Covid-19 emergency (Section 4.3).

4.1 Digital capacity in coroners' courts

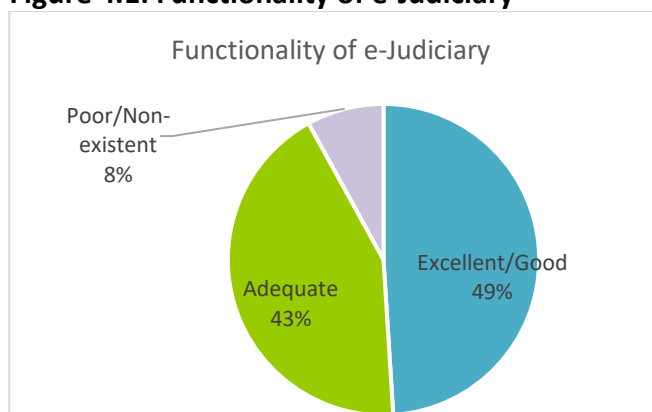
4.1.1 Coroners' digital working

Virtually all coroners (96%) are on e-Judiciary, and most coroners rated e-Judiciary as either Excellent to Good (49%) or Adequate (43%) (Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1).

Table 4.1: Levels of coroners' digital working

Are you?	2020 CAS
On e-judiciary	96%
Regularly required to use an electronic case system	85%

Figure 4.1: Functionality of e-Judiciary

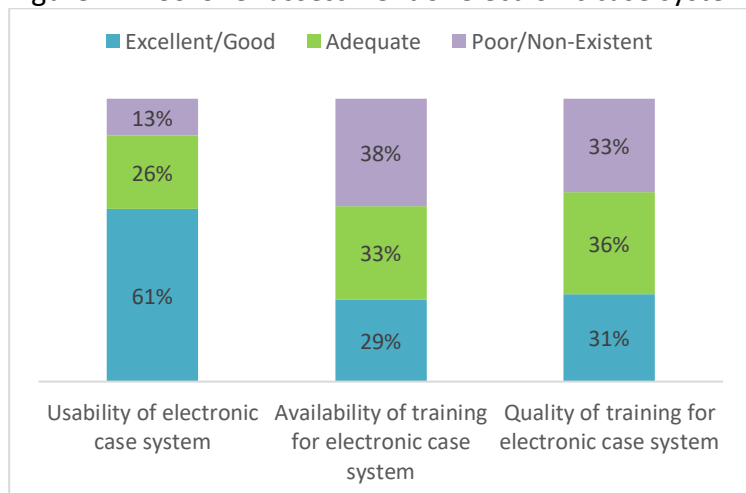


4.1.2 Electronic case system

Electronic case systems are designed to reduce the amount of paperwork in the coroners' courts by creating electronic case files and bundles. Almost all coroners (85%) are regularly required to use an electronic case system (Table 4.1), and Figure 4.2 shows that:

- A majority of coroners (61%) rated the usability of the system as excellent/good.
- Coroners' views are divided over the availability and quality of training in the case system.

Figure 4.2: Coroner assessment of electronic case system



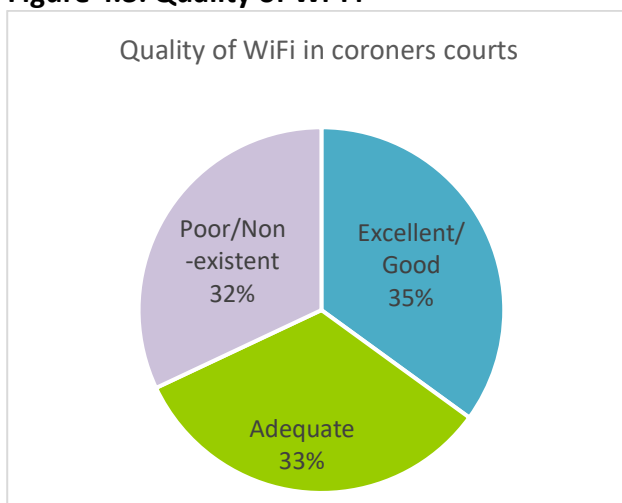
4.1.3 Wi-Fi

- Most coroners (81%) report that Wi-Fi is available in their court rooms, and three-quarters (75%) said that it is also available in all other parts of the court building where they sit (Table 4.2).
- The quality of Wi-Fi in coroners' courts is mixed, with 35% saying it is Excellent/Good, 33% saying it is Adequate and 32% saying it is Poor/Non-Existent (Figure 4.3).

Table 4.2: Availability of Wi-Fi

<i>Availability of Wi-Fi</i>	2020 CAS
In the court rooms	81%
In all other parts of the court building	75%

Figure 4.3: Quality of Wi-Fi



4.2 Quality of IT resources and IT support for coroners

4.2.1 In-court IT resources and support

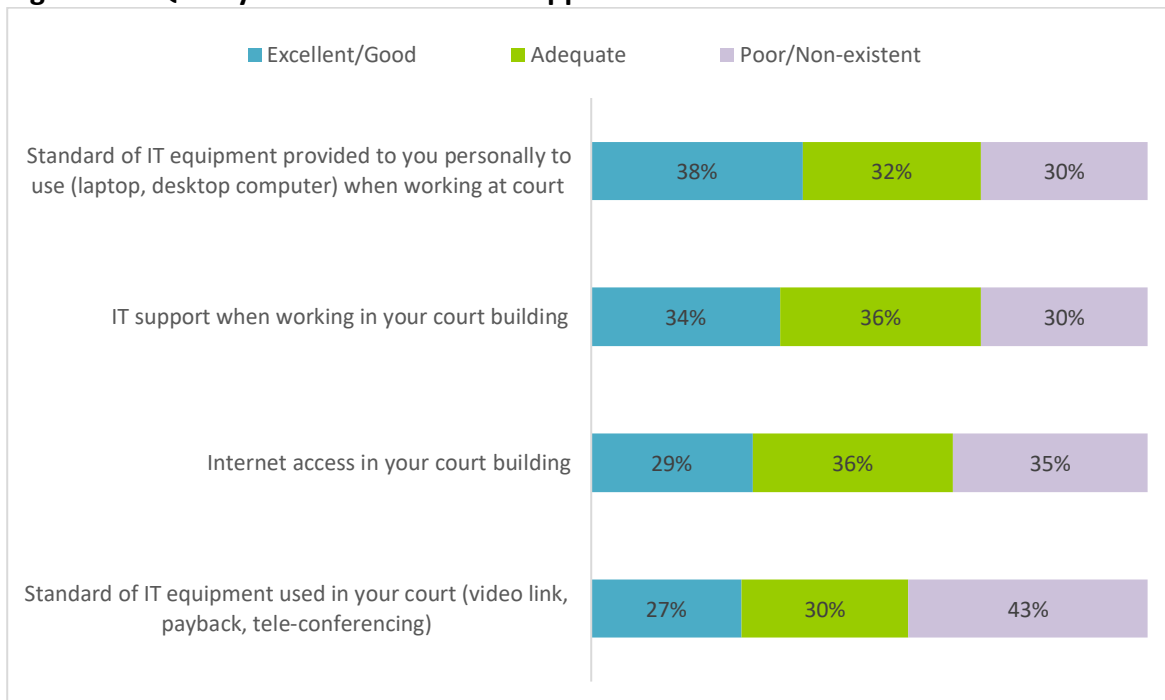
Coroners reported a mixed experience with the quality of IT resources and support at court (Table 4.3 and Figure 4.4):

- A majority rated as Adequate, Good or Excellent the standard of IT equipment provided for coroners personally to use (71%), IT support at court (70%), internet access in the court building (64%) and the standard of IT equipment used in their court (57%).
- But almost half (43%) of coroners rated the standard of IT equipment used in their court as either Poor (28%) or Non-existent (15%).

Table 4.3: Quality of IT resources and support in courts

<i>Please provide an assessment of the following resources available at your main court</i>	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Poor	Non-existent
Standard of IT equipment provided to you personally to use (laptop, desktop computer) when working at court	13%	26%	32%	15%	14%
Standard of IT equipment used in your court (video link, payback, tele-conferencing)	6%	21%	30%	28%	15%
IT support when working in your court building	8%	26%	36%	22%	8%
Internet access in your court building	9%	20%	35%	30%	6%

Figure 4.4: Quality of IT resources and support for coroners

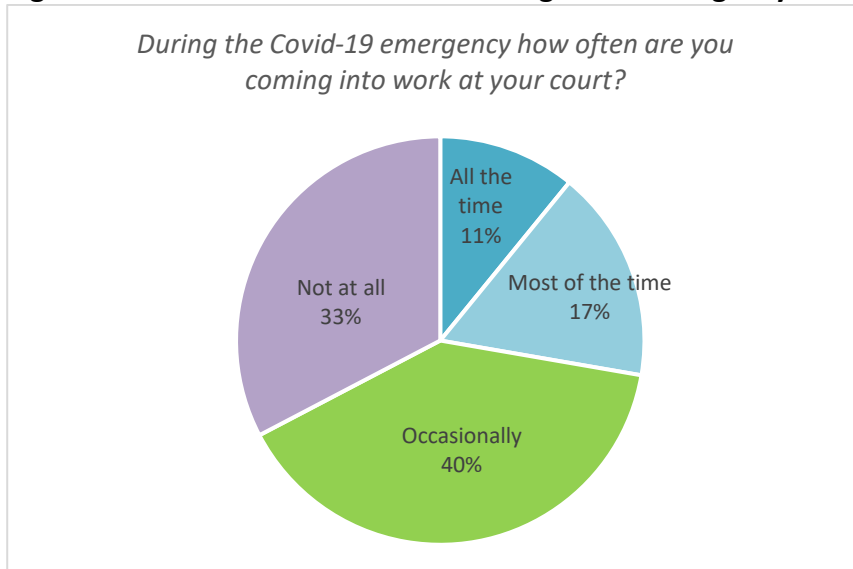


4.3 Working during the Covid-19 emergency

4.3.1 Extent of remote working during the emergency

In the early period of the Covid-19 emergency from the end of March to late June 2020, just over a quarter of coroners (28%) said they were going in to work all or most of the time; the largest proportion of coroners (40%) were going in to work occasionally; and a third (33%) were not going in at all (Figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5: Extent of work at court during Covid emergency

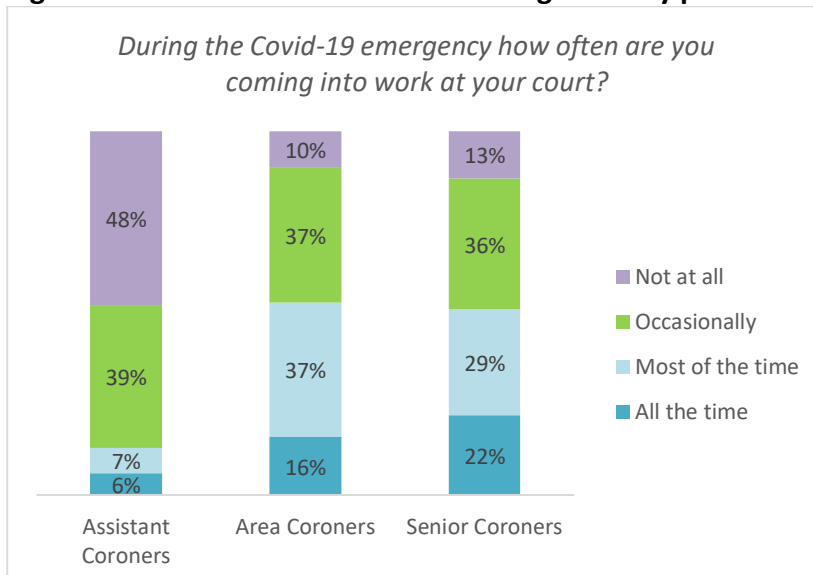


By post

However, the extent to which coroners were working in their courts during lockdown varied substantially by coroner post (Figure 4.6).

- Almost half (48%) of all Assistant Coroners were not working in their courts at all during the early months of the Covid emergency.
- A majority of both Area Coroners (53%) and Senior Coroners (51%) were working in their courts all or most of the time during the early months of the Covid emergency.

Figure 4.6: Extent of in court work during Covid by post

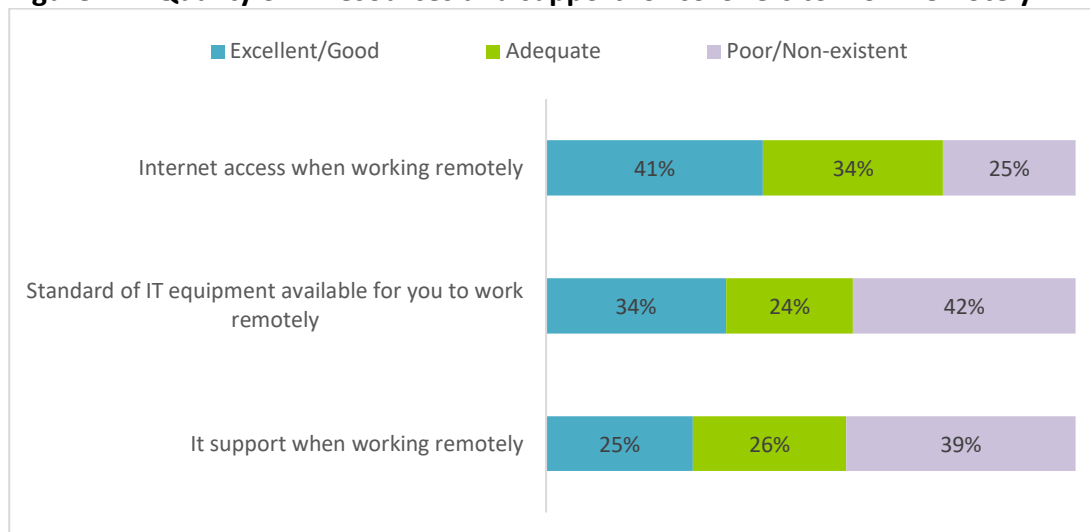


4.3.2 Resources and support for remote working

Coroners were also asked about the equipment and support available to them for remote working (Figure 4.7).

- While the quality of the internet access when working remotely was mostly Excellent/Good (41%) or Adequate (34%), almost half of all coroners said that the standard of IT equipment available for working remotely was Poor/Non-existent (42%) and 39% of coroners said that IT support for working remotely was Poor/Non-Existent.

Figure 4.7: Quality of IT resources and support for coroners to work remotely



4.3.3 Managing change during Covid-19

Just over half of all coroners (53%) said that the judiciary was managing change well during the Covid-19 emergency (Figure 4.8). There were some differences by coroner post (Figure 4.9):

- Area Coroners were more likely than Senior and Assistant Coroners to say that the judiciary was managing change well during the early months of the Covid emergency (61%), but they also had the largest proportion (32%) who said the judiciary was not managing change well in this period.
- Assistant and Senior Coroners had higher proportions who said they were not sure.

Figure 4.8: Judicial management of change during Covid-19

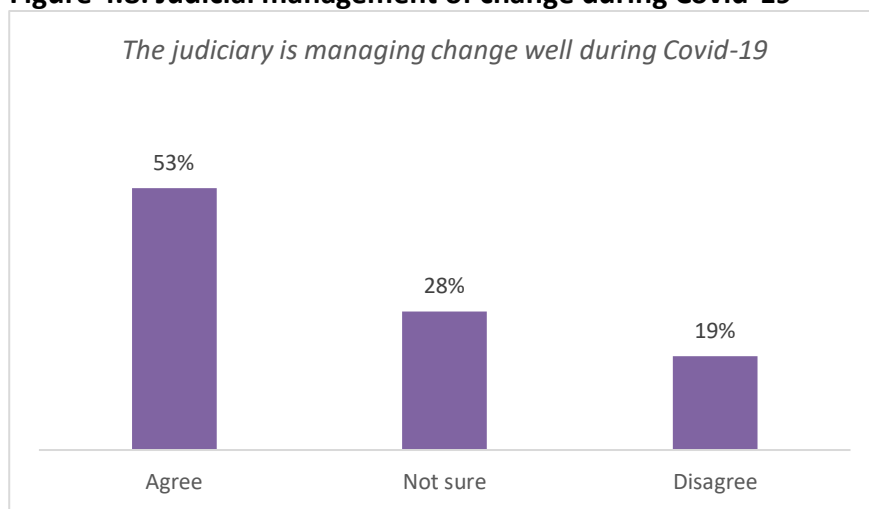
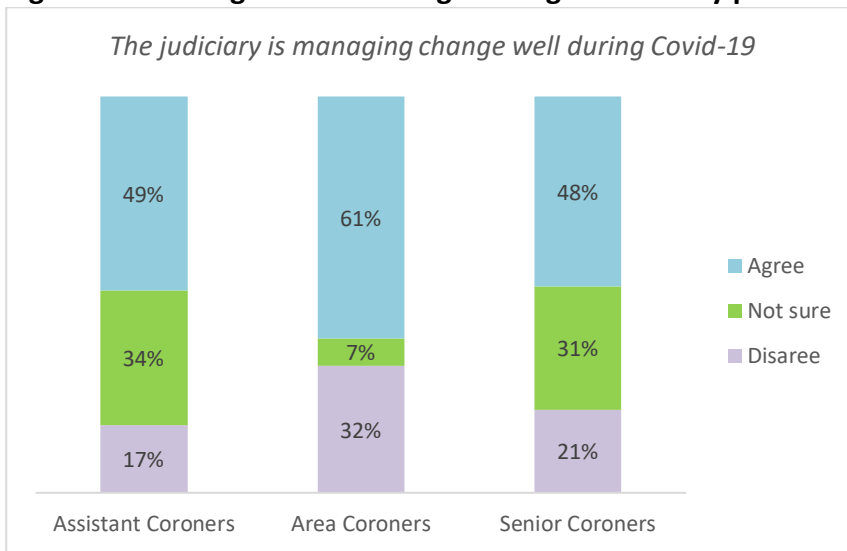


Figure 4.9: Management of change during Covid-19 by post



5. Pay and Pensions

The CAS explored coroners' views of their pay and pension arrangements. The questions were separated out according to whether coroners were salaried (Senior Coroners and almost every Area Coroners) or fee-paid (almost all Assistant Coroners). Table 5.1 shows the breakdown of coroners by pay and work position (of the 355 coroners who responded to the CAS question on work and pay position).

Table 5.1: Coroner offices by pay and work position

	Salaried (full-time)	Salaried (part-time)	Salaried (unstated)	Fee-paid	Other
Assistant Coroners	3	13	0	224	7
Area Coroners	24	4	1	1	0
Senior Coroners	69	8	1	0	0

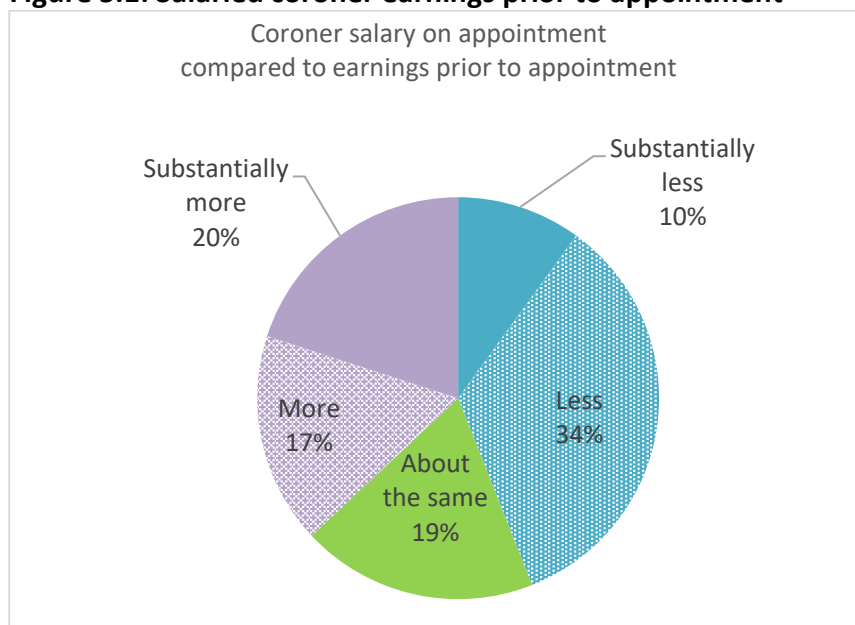
5.1 Salaried coroners

The following sections cover coroners' salaries and salaried coroners' view on pay and pensions.

5.1.1 Earnings compared with pre-appointment earnings

Salaried coroners were asked about their level of earnings prior to their appointment to a salaried coroner post (Figure 5.1). Prior to appointment, 37% of salaried coroners were earning more than their coroner's salary on appointment, 44% were earning less and 19% were earning about the same amount.

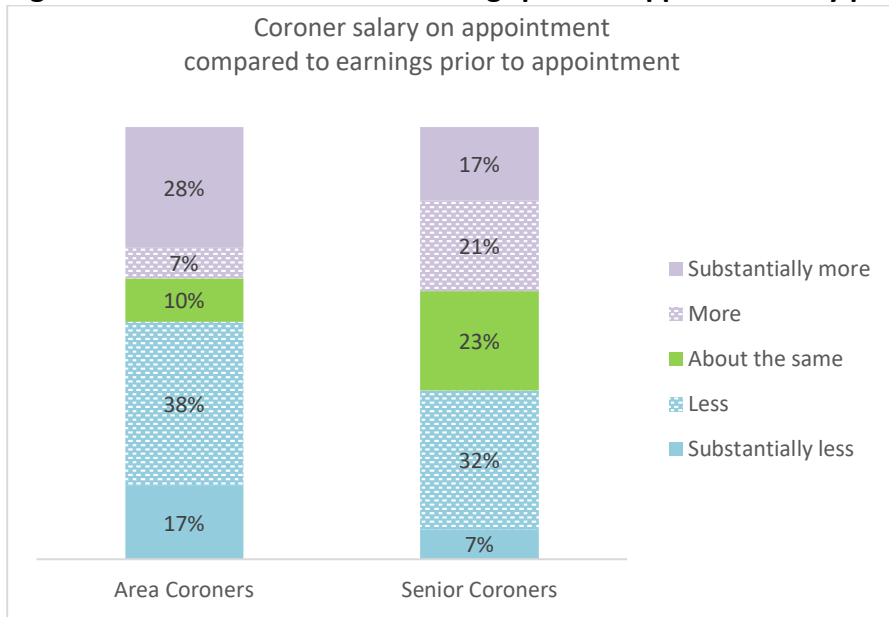
Figure 5.1: Salaried coroner earnings prior to appointment



There were differences by salaried post (Figure 5.2):

- A majority of Area Coroners (55%) were earning less prior to their appointment to a salaried coroner post, but over a third (35%) were earning more and over a quarter (28%) were earning substantially more.
- Senior Coroners were more evenly split, with 39% earning less and 38% earning more prior to their appointment to a salaried post.

Figure 5.2: Salaried coroners' earnings prior to appointment by post



5.2 Salaried coroner pay

A majority of salaried coroners (70%) feel they are paid a reasonable salary for the work they do, and a majority (62%) said they had not had a loss of net earnings over the last 2 years (Figure 5.3 and Table 5.2). A majority of coroners also said that the salary issue was not affecting their morale (71%) or the morale of coroners they work with (57%).

Figure 5.3: Salaried coroners' views on pay

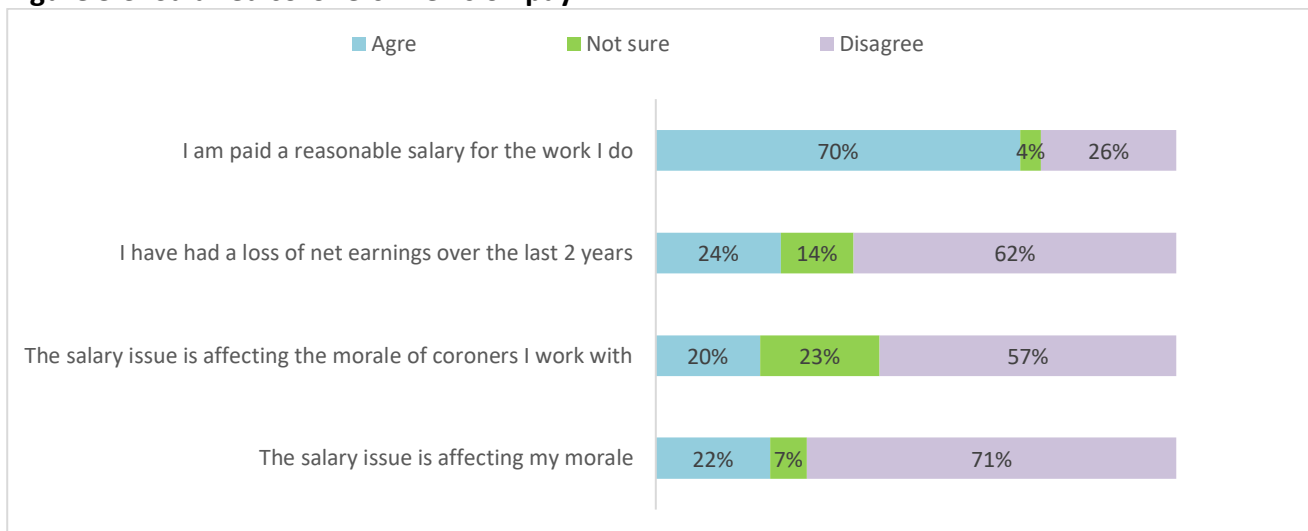


Table 5.2: Salaried coroners' views on pay

<i>Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following</i>	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am paid a reasonable salary for the work I do	14%	56%	4%	20%	6%
I have had a loss of net earnings over the last 2 years	9%	15%	14%	47%	15%
The salary issue is affecting the morale of coroners I work with	6%	14%	23%	45%	12%
The salary issue is affecting my morale	9%	13%	7%	46%	25%

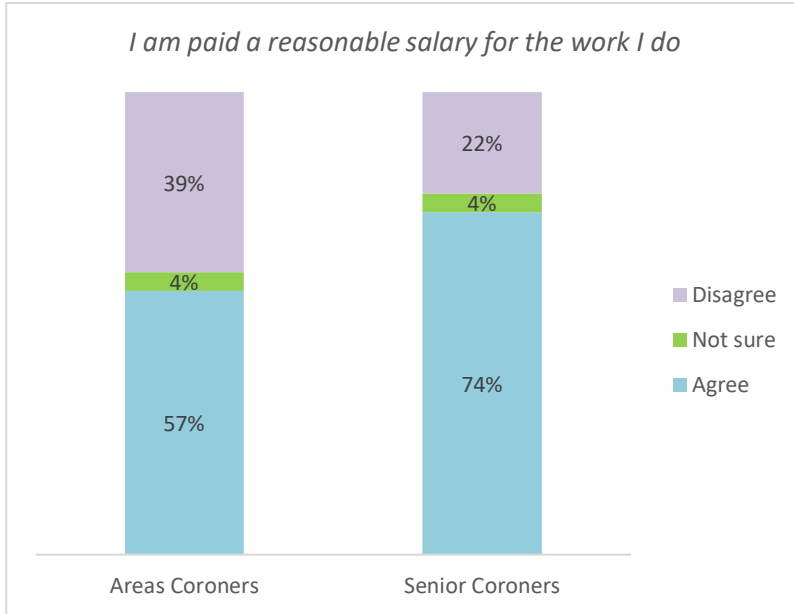
By post

Some differences do emerge when these results are broken down by post.

“I am paid a reasonable salary for the work I do”

While a majority of both Area Coroners (57%) and Senior Coroners (74%) feel they are paid a reasonable salary for the work that they do, a larger proportion of Senior Coroners agreed (74%) and a larger proportion of Area Coroners disagreed (39%) (Figure 5.4).

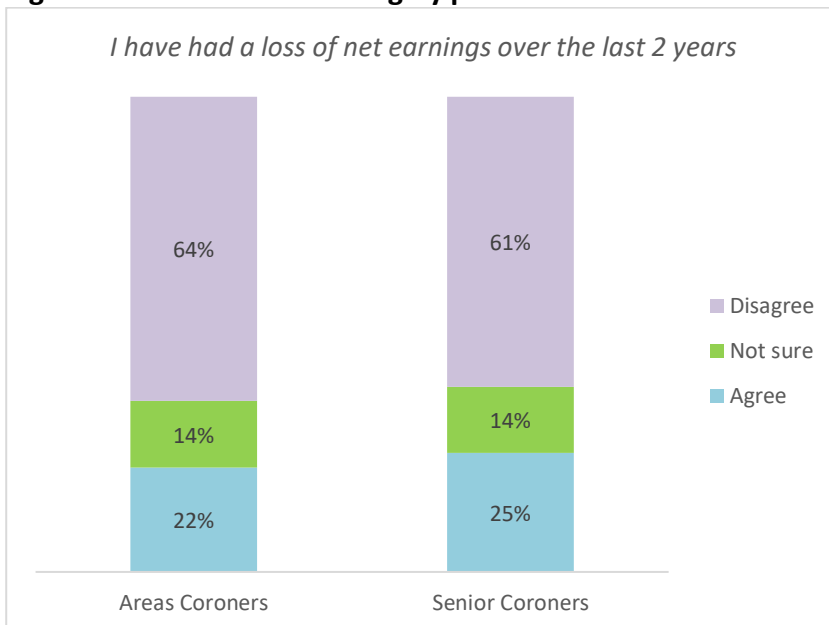
Figure 5.4: Reasonableness of salary by post



“I have had a loss of net earnings over the last 2 years”

There are no real differences between Area Coroners and Senior Coroners on the issue of whether they have had a loss of net earnings over the last two years, with almost two-thirds saying they have not, and a quarter saying they have (Figure 5.5).

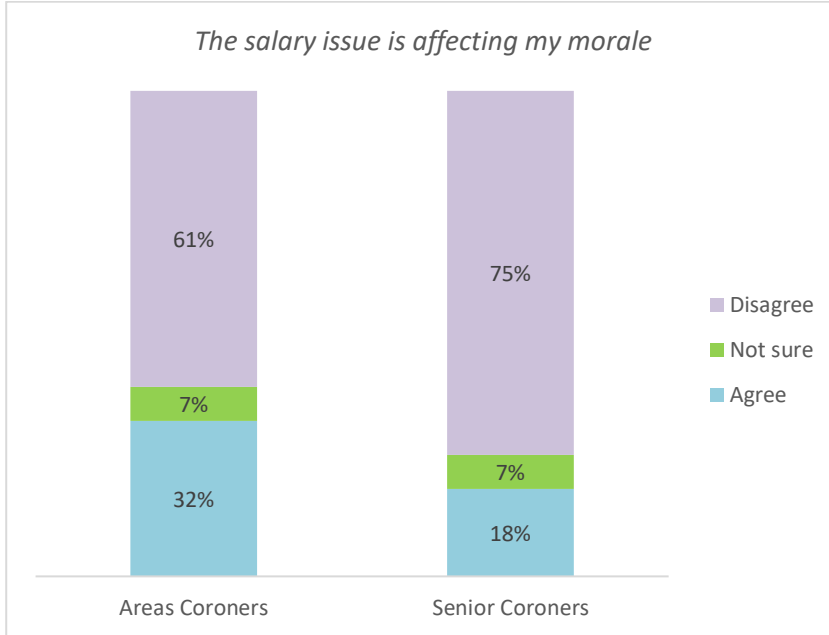
Figure 5.5: Loss of net earning by post



“The salary issue is affecting my morale”

While a majority of both Area Coroners (61%) and Senior Coroners (75%) said that the salary issue was not affecting their morale, a third of Area Coroners (32%) said it was affecting their morale (Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.6: Salary affecting my morale by post



“The salary issue is affecting the morale of coroners I work with”

There were no real differences between Area Coroners and Senior Coroners in their view of whether the salary issue was affecting the morale of the coroners with whom they work (Figure 5.7).

Figure 5.7: Salary affecting morale of other coroners by post



5.3 Combined effects of pay & pensions reform, out of hours work & employment options

The 2020 CAS looked at how the pay and pension issues combined were affecting coroners, and explored the extent to which coroners would take certain actions to address this if they were able (Figure 5.8 and Table 5.3).

- Half (50%) of Senior and Area Coroners said the amount of out of hours work required to their job was affecting them.
- Almost half (43%) said their pay and pension entitlement did not adequately reflect the work they have done and will do before retirement.
- A majority of Senior and Area Coroners (59%) said they would not pursue earning additional income through out of court work if this option was open to them.

Figure 5.8: Salaried coroners' views on pay/pension, out of hours work, employment options

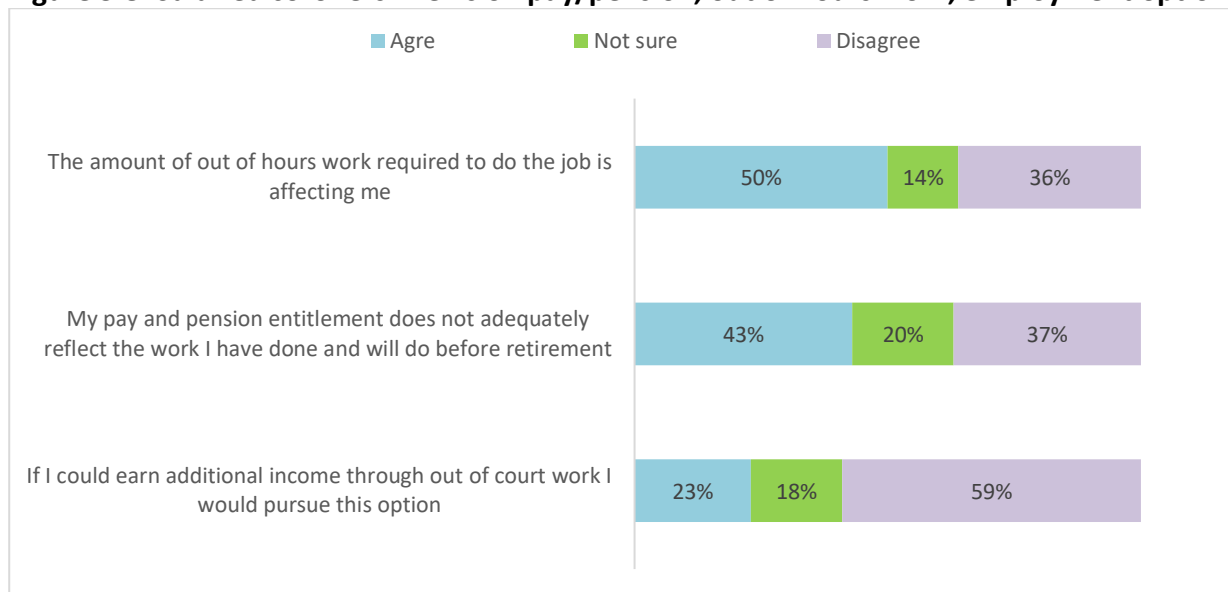


Table 5.3: Salaried coroners' views on pay/pension, out of hours work, employment options

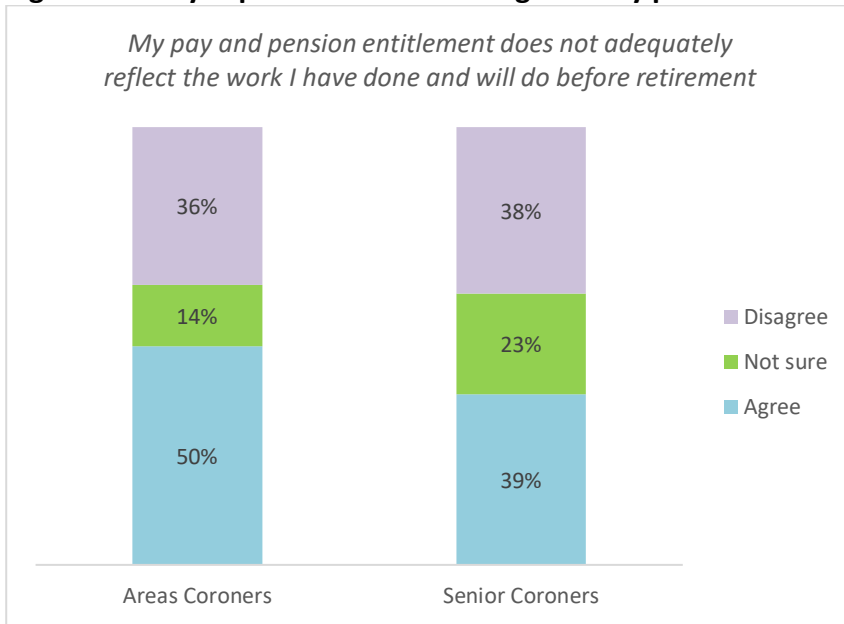
<i>Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following</i>	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The amount of out of hours work required to do the job is affecting me	18%	32%	14%	29%	7%
My pay and pension entitlement does not adequately reflect the work I have done and will do before retirement	19%	24%	20%	28%	9%
If I could earn additional income through out of court work I would pursue this option	8%	15%	18%	33%	26%

“My pay and pension entitlement does not adequately reflect the work I have done and will do before retirement”

There were some differences by coroner post on this issue (Figure 5.9):

- Half of all Area Coroners (50%) said that their pay and pension entitlements did not adequately reflect the work they have done and will do before retirement
- Senior Coroners were more evenly split on this issue, with 39% agreeing and 38% disagreeing that their pay and pension entitlements did not adequately reflect the work they have done and will do before retirement.

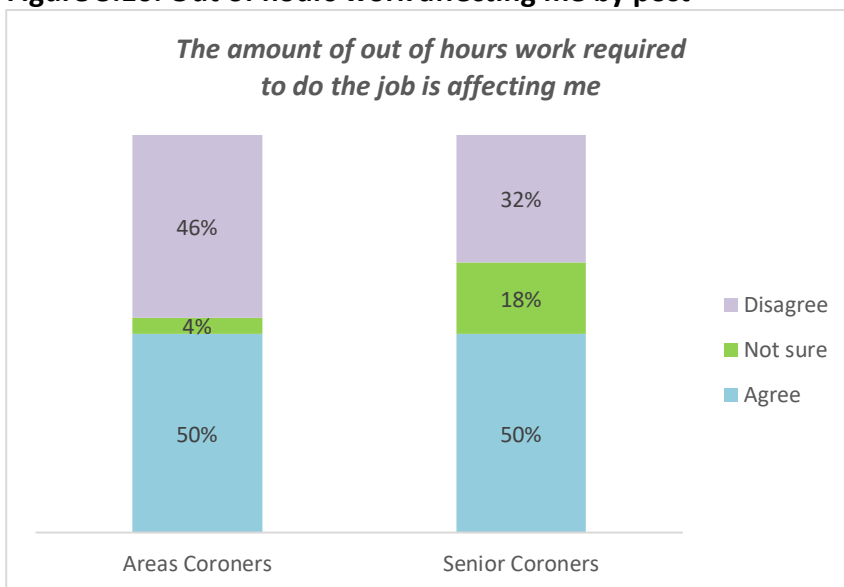
Figure 5.9: Pay & pension not reflecting work by post



“The amount of out of hours work required to do the job is affecting me”

Half (50%) of all Area Coroners and Senior Coroners said that the amount of out of hours work required to do their jobs as coroners was affecting them (Figure 5.10).

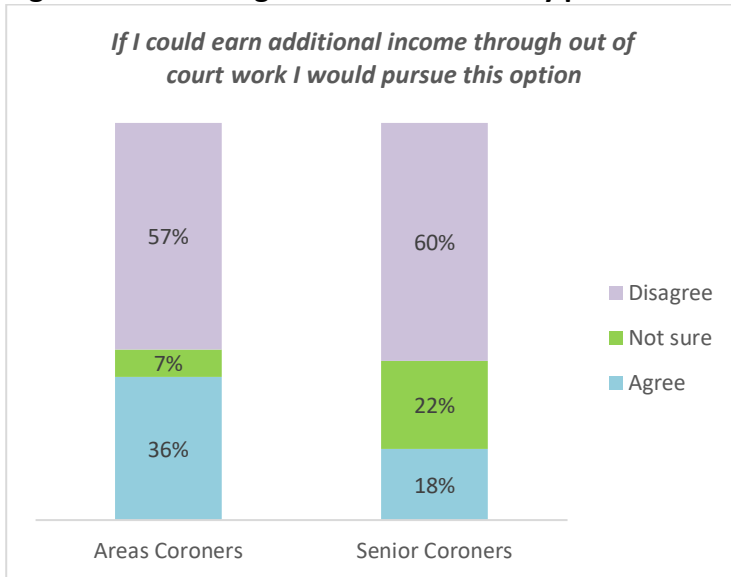
Figure 5.10: Out of hours work affecting me by post



“If I could earn additional income through out of court work I would pursue this option”

- While a majority of both Area Coroners (57%) and Senior Coroners (60%) said they would not pursue out of court work if this was an option, only a small proportion of Senior Coroners (18%) said they would pursue this if they were able but over a third of Area Coroners (36%) said they would pursue this option (Figure 5.11).

Figure 5.11: Earning additional income by post



5.4 Pension information

The Coroner Attitude Survey included three questions about developments in judicial pensions for salaried coroners (Table 5.4).

- Over half of all salaried coroners (51%) follow closely developments about judicial pensions.
- Over half of all salaried coroners (54%) follow closely developments about the tax implications on pension contributions for coroners.
- Almost three-quarters of salaried coroners (73%) would like to know more about developments in judicial pensions.

Table 5.4: Coroner awareness and interest in judicial pension developments

<i>Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following</i>	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I follow closely the developments about judicial pensions	16%	35%	12%	25%	12%
	Agree	51%		Disagree	37%
I follow closely the developments about the tax implications on pension contributions for coroners	17%	37%	13%	23%	10%
	Agree	54%		Disagree	33%
I would like to know more about developments in judicial pensions	35%	38%	11%	9%	7%
	Agree	73%		Disagree	16%

5.5 Fee-paid coroners

In contrast to Senior and Area Coroners, Assistant Coroners are fee-paid.

5.5.1 Pay and pension

Fee-paid Assistant Coroners were asked a series of similar but distinct questions about their fee income and their pension (if they were part of the local authority pension scheme) (Figure 5.12 and Table 5.5):

- A majority (59%) of fee-paid Assistant Coroners said that their fee and pension entitlement does not adequately reflect the work they have done and will do before retirement.
- A majority (56%) also said that they did not feel they were paid a reasonable fee for the work they do. But a majority (54%) said the fee issue was not affecting their morale.
- Fee-paid Assistant Coroners were fairly evenly divided about whether they felt the fee issue was affecting the morale of coroners they work with and whether the pension was reasonable for the work done.

Figure 5.12: Fee-paid coroners' views on pay and pension

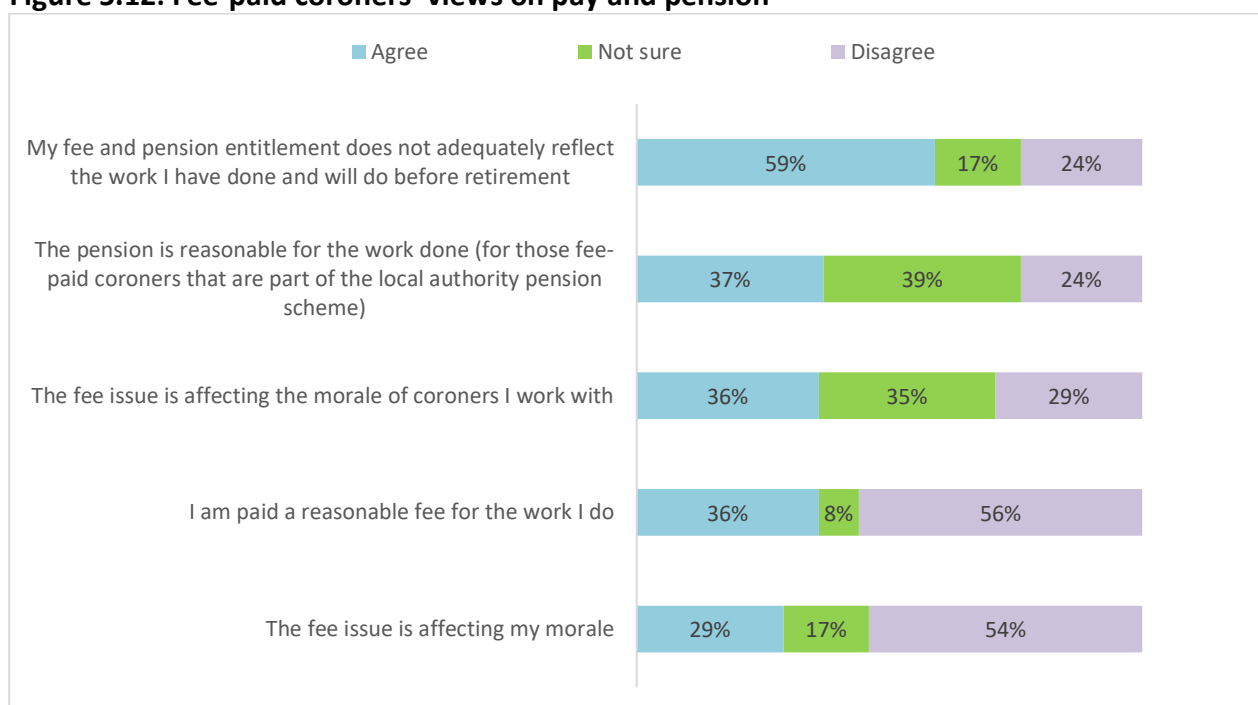


Table 5.5: Fee-paid coroners' views on pay and pension

<i>Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following</i>	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I am paid a reasonable fee for the work I do	4%	32%	8%	35%	21%
The fee issue is affecting my morale	10%	19%	17%	40%	14%
The fee issue is affecting the morale of coroners I work with	14%	22%	35%	21%	8%
My fee and pension entitlement does not adequately reflect the work I have done and will do before retirement	25%	34%	17%	16%	8%
The pension is reasonable for the work done (<i>for those fee-paid coroners that are part of the local authority pension scheme</i>)	6%	31%	39%	16%	8%

6. Opportunities, Support, Training and Personal Development

6.1 Opportunities and support in coroners' working lives

Coroners were asked about the availability of certain opportunities in their working lives (work flexibility, career progression, etc.), and were also asked to say how important these opportunities were to them. This provides a useful indication of whether those specific aspects that are most important to coroners in their working life are being provided.

6.1.1 Importance of opportunities and support

A majority of coroners said **5 opportunities and support measures were most important** to them (Table 6.1):

- Time to discuss work with colleagues was identified as important by almost every coroner (92%).
- More than three-quarters of coroners (77%) said support for dealing with stressful conditions at work was important.
- Two-thirds (67%) of coroners said opportunities for flexible working hours were important.
- 60% said opportunities to work part-time were important, and 55% said opportunities for career progression were important.

Table 6.1: Importance to coroners of specific opportunities

<i>To what extent do you feel the following are important to you?</i>	Important	Not sure	Not important
Time to discuss work with colleagues	92%	4%	4%
Support for dealing with stressful conditions at work	77%	10%	13%
Opportunities for flexible working hours	67%	7%	26%
Opportunities to work part-time	60%	9%	31%
Opportunities for career progression	55%	11%	34%
Opportunities to sit in other jurisdictions	45%	20%	35%

6.1.2 Availability of opportunities and support

In 3 areas important to coroners, the availability of these opportunities did not meet demand

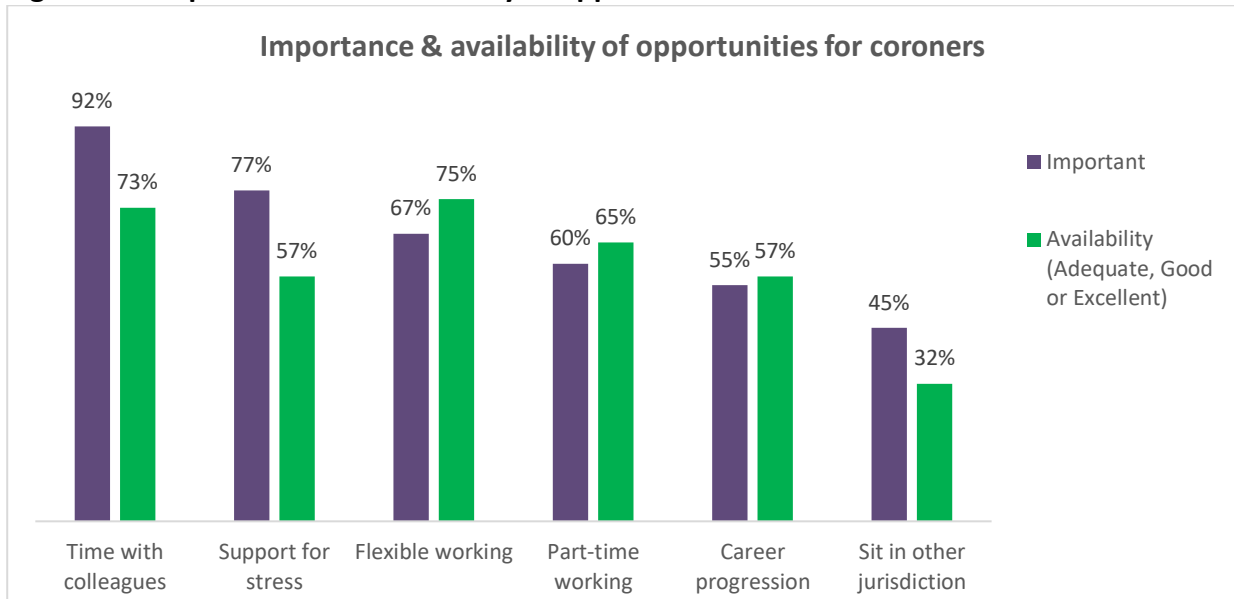
(Table 6.2 and Figure 6.1):

- Even though almost all coroners (92%) said time to discuss work with colleagues was important, less than a half said the opportunities for this were Good or Excellent (43%).
- Even though over three-quarters (77%) said support for dealing with stressful work conditions was important, almost half (43%) said this support was either Non-existent or Poor.
- Even though over half of all coroners (55%) said opportunities for career progression were important, only 16% said these opportunities were Good or Excellent.

Table 6.2: Availability of opportunities or support for coroners

<i>Rate the availability of the following opportunities or support</i>	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Poor	Non-Existent
Time to discuss work with colleagues	13%	30%	30%	24%	3%
Support for dealing with stressful conditions at work	1%	15%	41%	31%	10%
Opportunities for flexible working hours	19%	32%	24%	9%	16%
Opportunities to work part-time	22%	29%	15%	6%	29%
Opportunities for career progression	1%	15%	41%	31%	12%
Opportunities to sit in other jurisdictions	5%	12%	15%	15%	53%

Figure 6.1: Importance and availability of opportunities for coroners



6.2 Job satisfaction

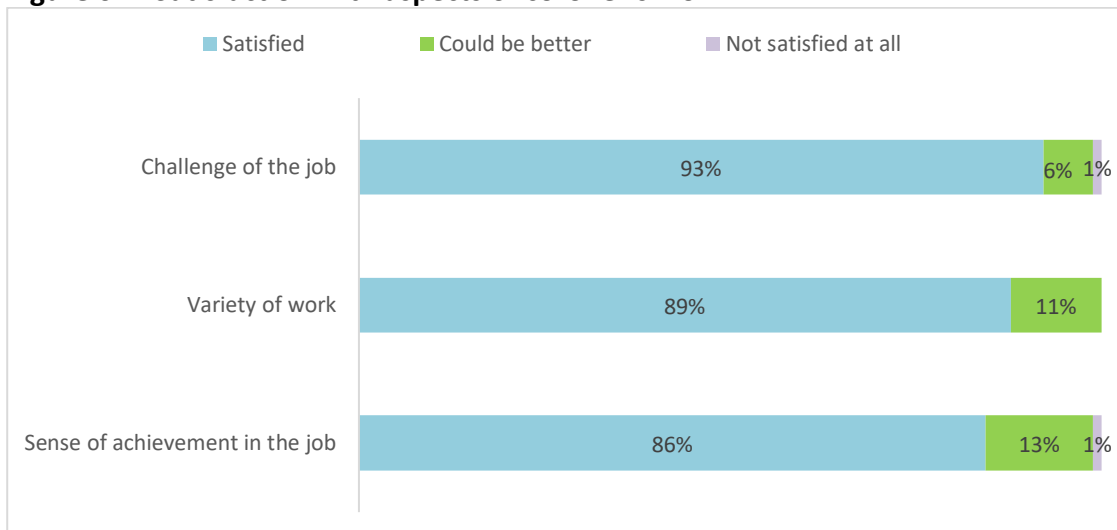
Coroners were asked about how satisfied they are with 3 aspects of their job: the sense of achievement in the job, the challenge of the job and the variety of work (Table 6.3 and Figure 6.2). There were high levels of satisfaction amongst coroners on all three aspects of their work:

- Almost all (93%) of coroners said they were satisfied with the challenge of the job (either satisfied or completely satisfied).
- 89% said they were satisfied with the variety of their work.
- 86% said they were satisfied with the sense of achievement in their job.

Table 6.3: Satisfaction with aspects of coroner’s work

To what extent are you satisfied with the following?	Completely satisfied	Satisfied	Could be better	Not satisfied at all
Sense of achievement in the job	34%	52%	13%	1%
Challenge of the job	41%	52%	6%	1%
Variety of work	37%	52%	11%	0%

Figure 6.2: Satisfaction with aspects of coroner’s work



6.3 Personal development

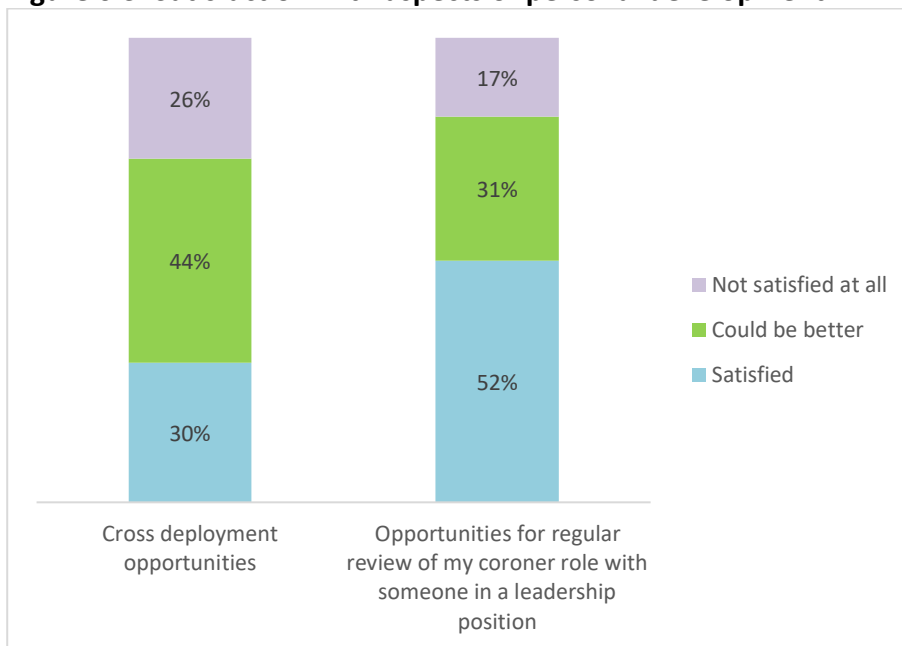
The CAS included a number of questions exploring coroners' satisfaction with two aspects of their personal development as coroners: (1) cross deployment opportunities and (2) opportunities for regular review of their coroner role (Table 6.4 and Figure 6.3).

Table 6.4: Satisfaction with aspects of personal development

<i>To what extent are you satisfied with the following?</i>	Completely satisfied	Satisfied	Could be better	Not satisfied at all
Cross deployment opportunities	3%	27%	44%	26%
Opportunities for regular review of my coroner role with someone in a leadership position	15%	37%	31%	17%

- Less than a third of coroners (30%) said they were satisfied with cross-deployment opportunities.
- Just over half of all coroners (52%) said they were satisfied with the opportunities they had to regularly review their coroner role with someone in a leadership position.

Figure 6.3: Satisfaction with aspects of personal development



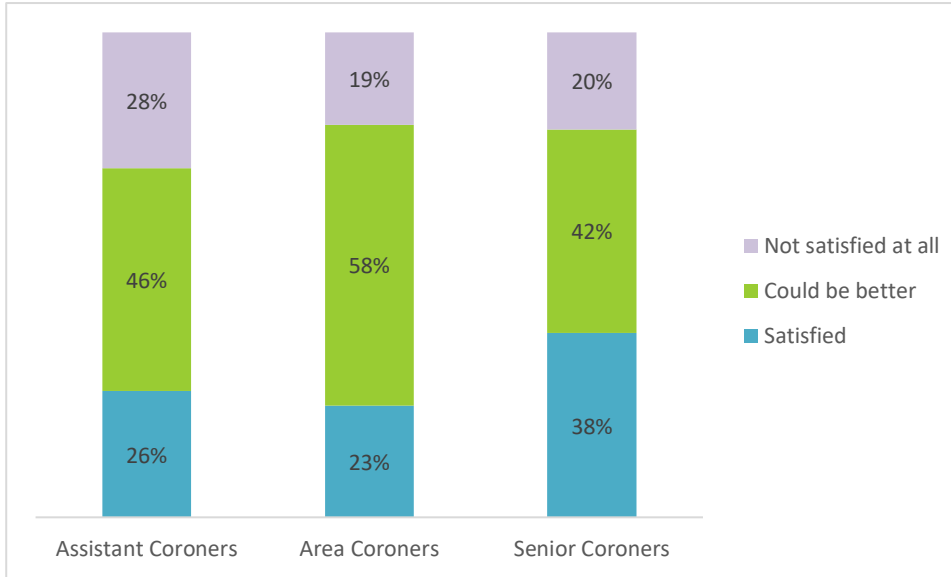
By post

There were some limited differences when these results were broken down by coroner post (Figures 6.4 and 6.5).

6.3.1 Cross deployment opportunities

The largest group in each coroner post said that cross deployment opportunities could be better (Figure 6.4). The highest level of satisfaction with cross deployment opportunities was amongst Senior Coroners (38%) and the highest level of dissatisfaction was amongst Assistant Coroners (28% not satisfied at all).

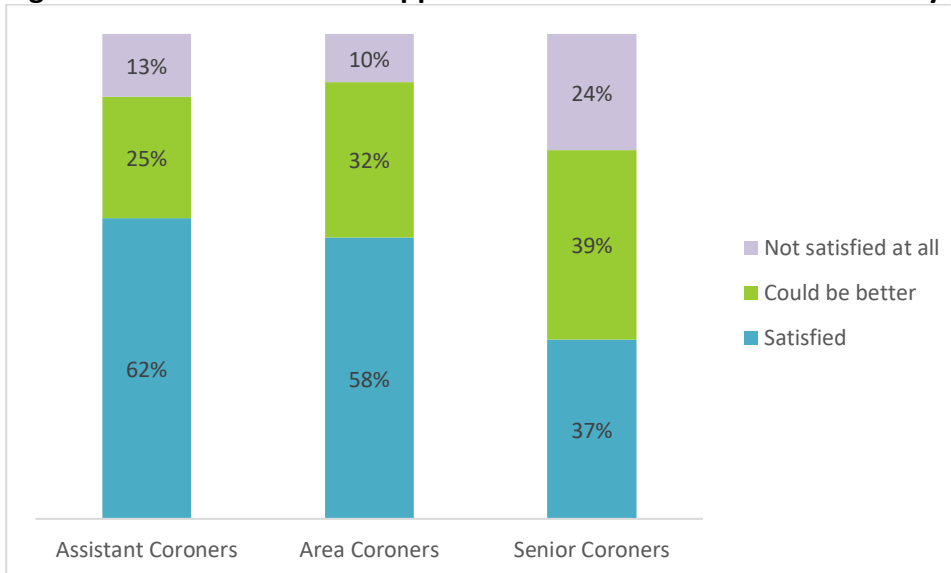
Figure 6.4: Satisfaction with cross deployment opportunities by post



6.3.2 Opportunities for regular review of role with someone in a leadership position

A majority of Assistant Coroners (62%) and Area Coroners (58%) are satisfied with the opportunities they have to review their coroner role with a leadership judge (Figure 6.5). Just over a third of Senior Coroners (37%) said they were satisfied with this opportunity, and a quarter (24%) of Senior Coroners were not satisfied at all with the opportunities they currently have to review their role.

Figure 6.5: Satisfaction with opportunities of review of coroner role by post



6.4 Training

Coroners were asked about both the importance and availability of training, as well as their satisfaction with various aspects of training and any new types of training they would be most interested in undertaking in future.

6.4.1 Training opportunities

Importance and availability of training opportunities

Almost all coroners in all posts (93%) said that training opportunities were important to them (Table 6.5 and Figure 6.6). And while 88% said the availability of these training opportunities was Adequate, Good or Excellent, 12% said these training opportunities were either Poor or Non-existent (Table 6.6 and Figure 6.6).

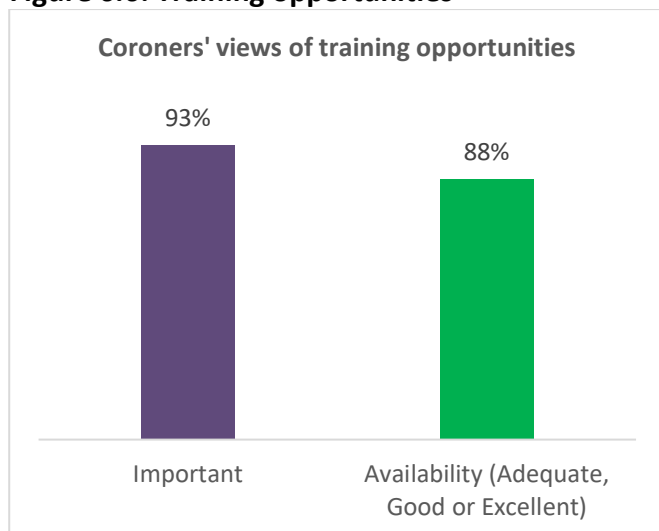
Table 6.5: Importance of training opportunities for coroners

<i>To what extent do you feel the following are important to you?</i>	Important	Not sure	Not important
Training opportunities	93%	4%	3%

Table 6.6: Availability of training opportunities for coroners

<i>Rate the availability of the following opportunities or support</i>	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Poor	Non-Existent
Training opportunities	15%	40%	33%	8%	4%

Figure 6.6: Training opportunities



6.4.2 Satisfaction with coroner training

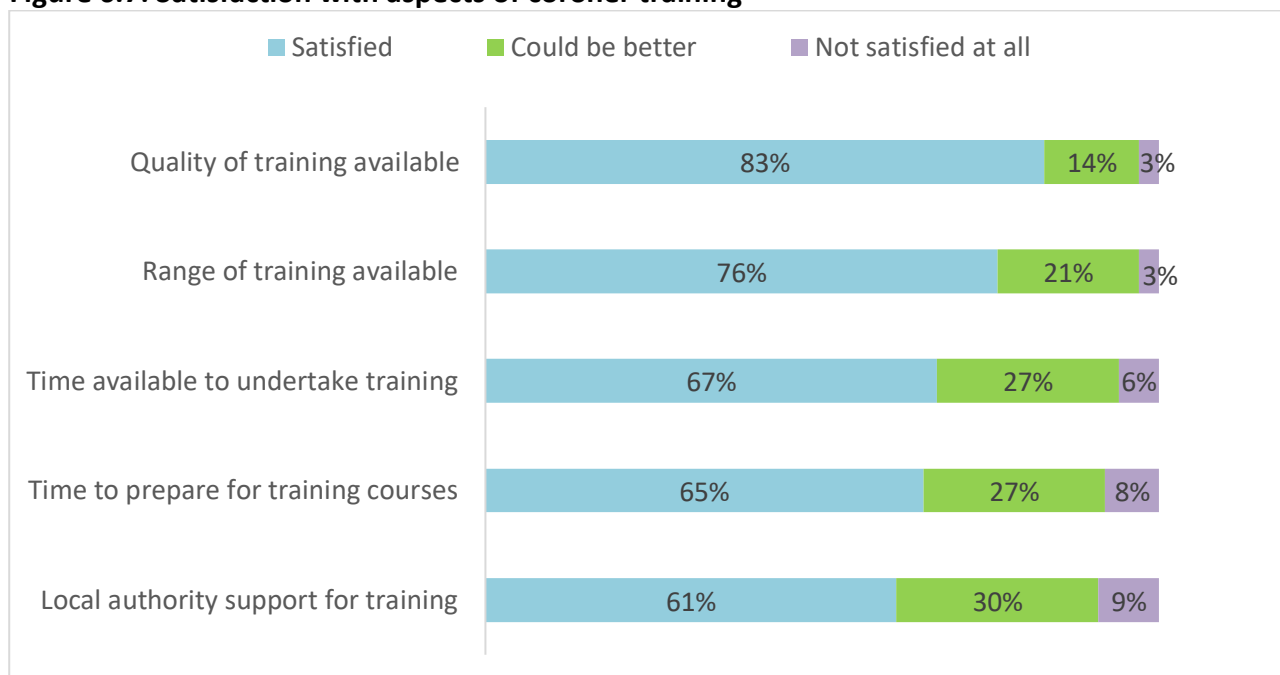
Coroners were also asked to indicate how satisfied they are with aspects of their current training (Table 6.7 and Figure 6.7):

- Coroners are most satisfied (83%) with the quality of the training they receive.
- Three-quarters of coroners (76%) are satisfied with the range of training available.
- Two-thirds of coroners (67%) are satisfied with the time available to undertake training.
- Two-thirds of coroners (65%) are satisfied with the time they have to prepare for training courses.
- While 61% of coroners are satisfied with their local authority support for coroner training, almost a third (30%) said it could be better and 9% were not satisfied with this at all.

Table 6.7: Satisfaction with training

<i>To what extent are you satisfied with the following?</i>	Completely satisfied	Satisfied	Could be better	Not satisfied at all
Range of coroner training available	18%	58%	21%	3%
Quality of coroner training	26%	57%	14%	3%
Time available to undertake training	17%	50%	27%	6%
Time to prepare for training courses	14%	51%	27%	8%
Local authority support for coroner training	14%	47%	30%	9%

Figure 6.7: Satisfaction with aspects of coroner training

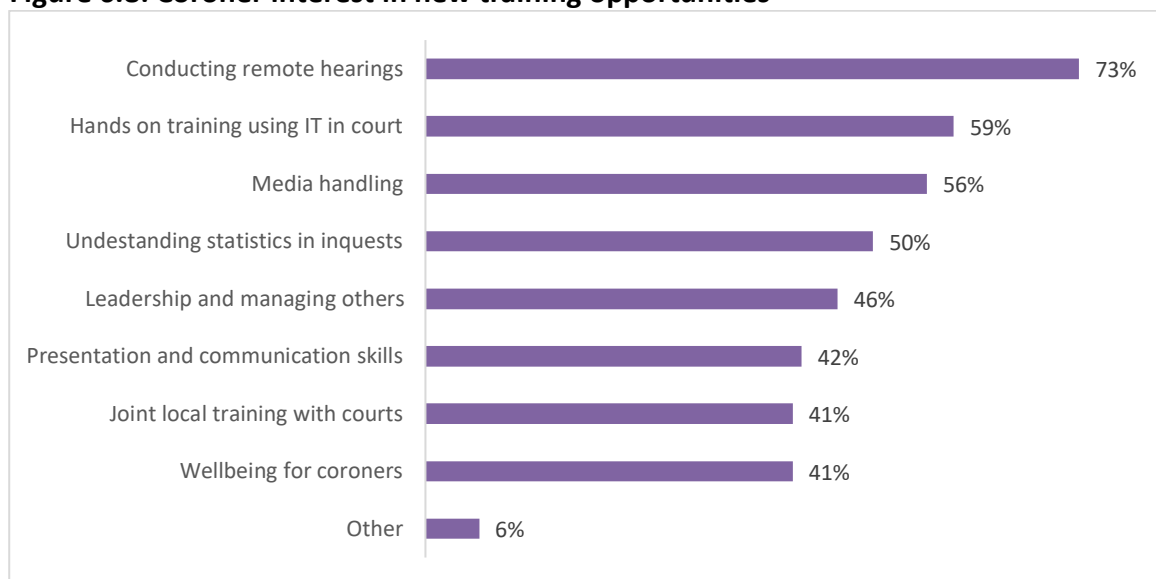


6.4.3 Interest in types of training

The 2020 CAS asked coroners to indicate those areas where they would welcome new training opportunities. Four areas were identified by half or more coroners (Figure 6.8):

- Almost three-quarters of all coroners (73%) said they would welcome training on conducting remote hearings
- 59% also said they would like new “hands on” training for using IT in court.
- Over half of all coroners (56%) said they would welcome media handling training.
- 50% said they would like training on understanding statistics in inquests.
- There were also high levels of interest in training on leadership and managing others (46%), presentation and communications skills (42%), joint local training with courts (41%) and wellbeing training for coroners (41%).

Figure 6.8: Coroner interest in new training opportunities



Amongst those who indicated that there were other new training areas of interest, topics suggested included:

- Medical training
- Working with juries
- Court craft, writing judgments
- Working with other institutions (local authorities, prisons, NHS, police)
- Strategic management for Senior Coroners
- Witness handling
- Equal Treatment Bench Book

7. Change in the Coroner Service

The 2020 CAS included a number of questions that explored coroners' views about change in the coroner service.

7.1 Change since appointment

Most coroners (78%) feel their job as a coroner has changed since they were first appointed in ways that affect them (Table 7.1).

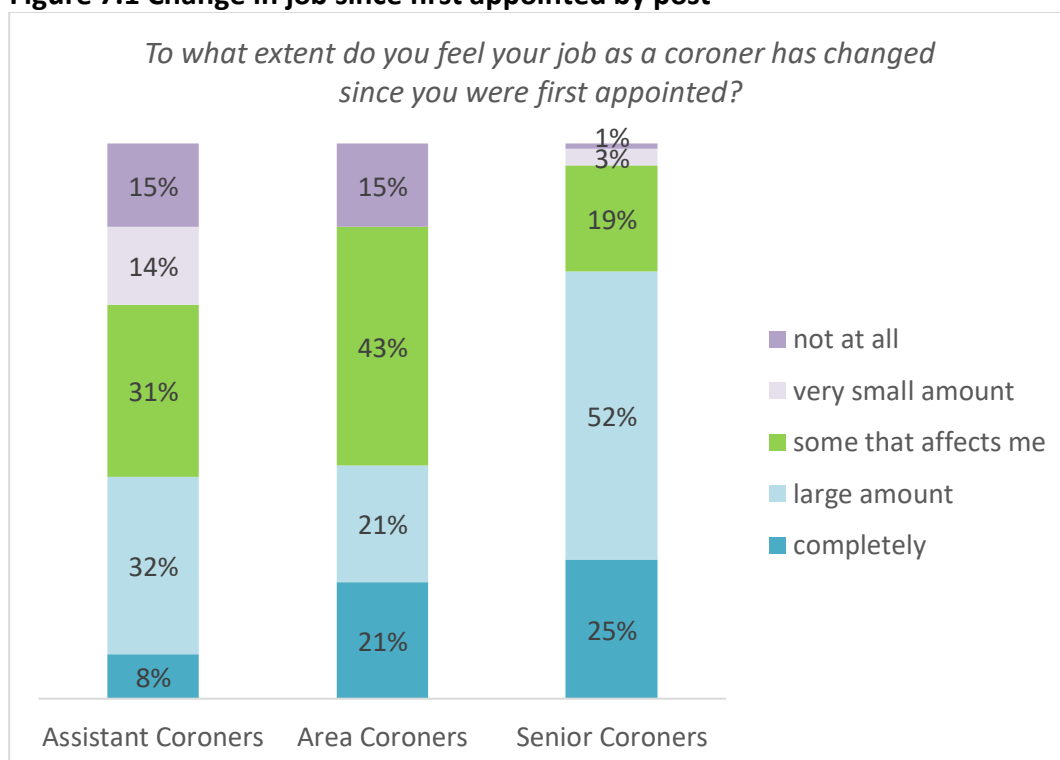
Table 7.1: Change in the job since first appointed

<i>To what extent do you feel your job as a coroner has changed since you were first appointed?</i>	2020 CAS
It has changed completely	13%
There has been a large amount of change	39%
There been some change which affects me	26%
It has only changed a small amount & does not affect me	11%
It has not changed at all	11%

There were some differences in view by coroner post (Figure 7.1):

- Almost all Senior Coroners (77%) said that their job as a coroner had change completely or a large amount since they were first appointed.
- The large proportion of Area Coroners (43%) said their job as a coroner has changes in some ways that affected them.
- Assistant Coroners were more evenly divided in their views, with 40% saying their job had changed completely or a large amount, 31% saying it had changed in some ways that affected them and 29% saying it had only changed a small amount or not at all.

Figure 7.1 Change in job since first appointed by post



7.2 Views on change in the coroner service

Coroners were also asked to respond to a number of statements about change in the coroner service (Table 7.2):

- Almost all coroners (89%) said that despite any reservations they may have about changes to the judiciary they still enjoyed their job as a coroner.
- Over two-thirds of coroners (69%) said that the judiciary needs to have control over policy changes that affect judges.
- A majority of coroners (58%) said the more change was still needed in the judiciary.
- Coroners were more divided over whether the judiciary manages change well, whether too much change has been imposed on the judiciary in recent years, and whether the amount of change in recent years has brought judges to breaking point.

Table 7.2: Coroners general views on change in the judiciary

<i>To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?</i>	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree
The judiciary is managing change well ⁵	17%	35%	48%
Too much change has been imposed on the judiciary in recent years	38%	39%	23%
More change is still needed in the judiciary	14%	28%	58%
The amount of change in recent years has brought judges to breaking point	30%	50%	20%
The judiciary needs to have control over policy changes that affect judges	6%	25%	69%
Despite any reservations I may have about changes in the judiciary I still enjoy my job	5%	6%	89%

7.3 Changes that concern coroners most

Coroners were asked to indicate how concerned they were by changes affecting the role of the coroner from a list provided. Table 7.3 shows the proportion of coroners that are extremely concerned and somewhat concerned by a range of changes:

- Amongst the topics listed, coroners are most concerned by stressful working conditions (62%), a lack of a national coroner service (56%), lack of a common software programme for their cases (55%) and personal security for coroner's officers and staff (53%).

Table 7.3: Changes of greatest concern to coroners

<i>To what extent are you concerned by specific changes affecting the role of the coroner?</i>	"extremely concerned"	"somewhat & extremely concerned"
Stressful working conditions	24%	62%
Lack of a national coroner service	25%	56%
Lack of common software programme for cases	16%	55%
Personal security for coroner's officers and staff	14%	53%
Low morale amongst coroners	14%	48%
Personal security for coroners	12%	47%

⁵ This was phrased as "The judiciary was managing change well before Covid-19"

8. Future Planning

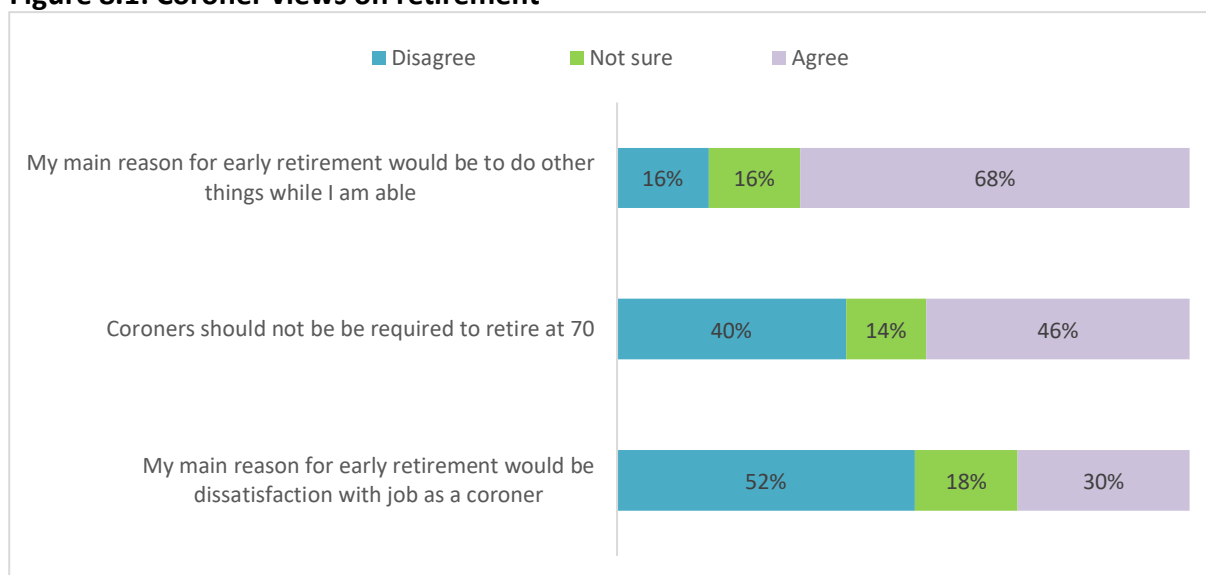
The 2020 CAS asked a number of questions about coroners' plans for staying in the coroner service until they reached compulsory retirement age and coroners' attitudes to retirement more generally.

8.1 Coroners' views on retirement

Coroners' were asked a number of questions designed to understand their attitudes to retirement. As Figure 8.1 shows:

- Over two-thirds of coroners (68%) said that the main reason they would take early retirement would be to do other things while they are able to do so.
- Coroners were divided over whether they should be required to retire at 70 years of age (46% agreeing, 40% disagreeing).
- Less than a third of coroners (30%) said the main reason for taking early retirement would be as a result of dissatisfaction with their job as a coroner.

Figure 8.1: Coroner views on retirement



8.2 Plans for early departure from the coroner service

Coroners were asked if they were considering leaving the coroner service in the next 5 years other than by reaching compulsory retirement age (Table 8.1):

- Just over a quarter (26%) of coroners are considering leaving early in the next 5 years, and half (50%) are currently undecided about this.

Table 8.1: Plans for early departure from the coroner service

Are you considering leaving the coroner service early in the next 5 years?	2020 JAS
Yes	26%
I am currently undecided	50%
No	17%
I will reach compulsory retirement age in the next 5 years and plan to leave early	2%
I will reach compulsory retirement age in the next 5 years and plan to leave early	5%

8.3 More detailed analysis of coroners' early departure intentions

The following provides a more detailed analysis of coroners' early departure intentions.

By Post

There were some differences by coroner post in intentions to leave the coroner service earlier by 2025 (Figure 8.2):

- Over a third (35%) of Area Coroners and almost a third of Senior Coroners (32%) said they intend to leave the coroner service early between 2020 and 2025.
- Assistant Coroners had the highest proportion (54%) who said they did not intend to leave the coroner service early between 2020 and 2025.

Figure 8.2: Intentions to leave early within the next 5 years by post

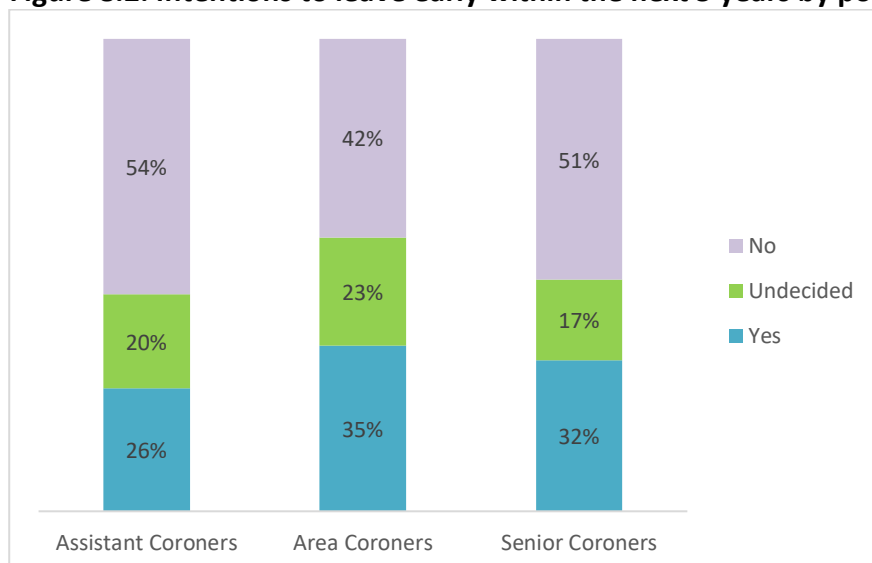


Table 8.2 provides the total number of coroners in each post who will reach compulsory retirement age or intend to leave early by 2025.

Table 8.2: Numbers of coroners planning to leave by 2025 (by post)

	<i>Considering leaving the coroner service early by 2025</i>	<i>Will reach compulsory retirement age by 2025</i>	Totals
Assistant Coroners	9	15	24
Area Coroners	57	2	59
Senior Coroners	22	7	29
Totals	88	24	112

8.4 Factors promoting early departures

Table 8.3 shows the factors that a third or more of coroners said were those that would make them **more likely to leave the coroner service early**.

- A majority of coroners said that stressful working conditions (52%) was the factor that would make them more likely to leave the coroner service early.
- Half of all coroners (50%) said limits on pay awards and almost half of coroners (49%) said a reduction in administrative support were the factors that would make them more likely to leave the coroner service early.

Table 8.3: Factors promoting early departures

<i>What factors would make you more likely to leave the coroner service early?</i>	2020 CAS
Stressful working conditions	52%
Limits on pay awards	50%
Reduction in administrative support	49%
Reduction in pension benefits	43%
Increase in workload	43%
Lack of respect for coroners by government	42%
Personal health issues	42%
Further demands for out of hours work	40%
Limited opportunities for promotion	33%

8.5 Factors encouraging retention

Table 8.4 below shows all the other factors identified by between a third and a half of all coroners as important in their decision to remain in the coroner service.

- There is one factor that would make most coroners **more likely to remain in the coroner service**: higher remuneration (71%).

Table 8.4: Factors encouraging judicial retention

<i>What factors would make you more likely to remain in the coroner service until compulsory retirement?</i>	2020 CAS
Higher remuneration	71%
Appointment to a higher post	46%
Better administrative support	43%
Increased flexibility in working hours	39%
Greater respect for the work coroners do	38%
Incorporation of coroner service into Courts & Tribunals	34%
Support for dealing with stressful conditions at work	33%
Greater certainty over the future of my part of the judiciary	33%
Reduction in workload	33%

9. Joining the Coroners Service

The 2020 CAS asked a number of questions exploring coroners' attitudes to their own and others' decisions to apply to join the coroners service.

9.1 In retrospect would you have applied for a coroner post?

All coroners were asked: *Knowing what you know now about your job as a coroner would you still have applied for a coroner's post?*

- Almost every single coroner (91%) said they would still have applied (Table 9.1).

Table 9.1: Retrospective view of applying to the coroner service

<i>Knowing what you know now, would you still have applied to be a coroner?</i>	2020 CAS
Yes	91%
Not sure	6%
No	3%

9.2 Recommending the coroner service as a job

9.2.1 Willingness to encourage applications

All coroners were asked: *Would you encourage suitable people to apply to be a coroner?*

- Again, almost every single coroner (93%) said they would encourage suitable people to apply (Table 9.2).

Table 9.2: Willingness to encourage applications

<i>Would you encourage suitable people to apply to be a coroner?</i>	2020 CAS
Yes	93%
Not sure	2%
No	5%

9.2.2 Reasons why coroners would encourage applicants

When asked the reasons why they would encourage suitable people to apply to join the Coroner's Service, a majority of coroners gave **4 reasons** (Table 9.3): the challenge of the work (88%), public service (82%), intellectual satisfaction (78%) and the chance to contribute to justice being done (71%).

Table 9.3: Reasons coroners would encourage people to apply to be a coroner

<i>The reasons I would encourage suitable people to apply to join the Coroner's Service</i>	2020 CAS
Challenge of the work	88%
Public service	82%
Intellectual satisfaction	78%
Chance to contribute to justice being done	71%

9.2.3 Reasons why coroners would discourage applicants

When asked the reasons why they would discourage suitable people from applying to join the Coroner's Service (Table 9.4), there were only 2 reasons that a majority of coroners identified: **the isolation of the job (58%) and the feeling of being second best compared with judges (53%).**

Table 9.4: Reasons coroners would discourage people from applying

<i>The reasons why I would discourage suitable people from applying to join the Coroner's Service are</i>	2020 JAS
Isolation of job	59%
Feeling of being second best compared with judges	53%
Lack of support from local authorities	37%
Poor quality of physical work environment	37%
Reduction in income	34%
Lack of respect for coroners	30%

10. Leadership

The 2020 CAS asked a number of questions about leadership roles within the coroner service.

10.1 Extent of leadership work undertaken

Only a quarter of coroners (25%) hold formal leadership positions, and even fewer (17%) undertake additional responsibilities that are not formal leadership roles (Table 10.1).

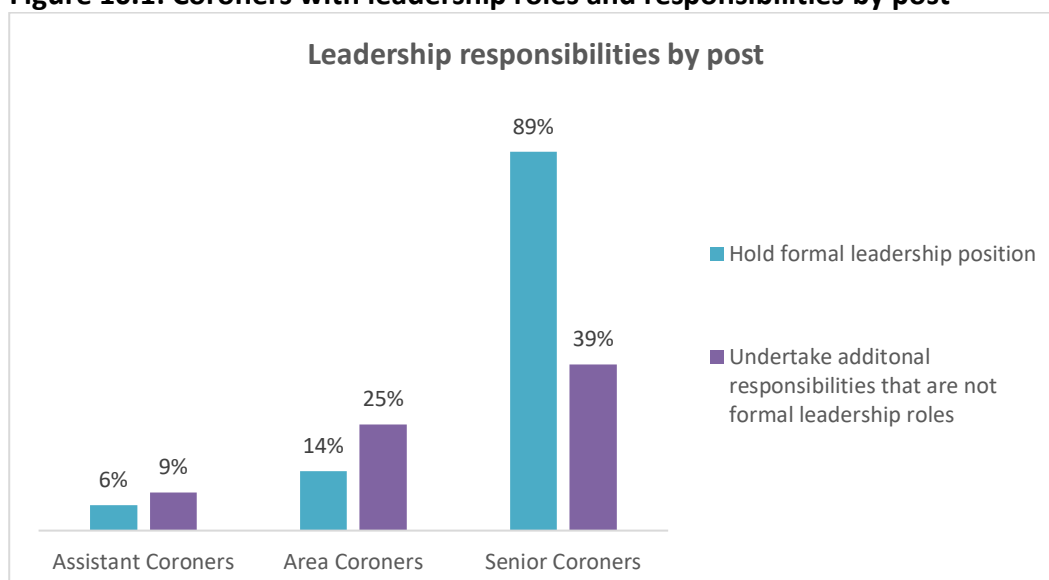
Table 10.1: Coroners with leadership responsibilities (formal and informal)

<i>Coroners with leadership responsibilities</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>
I hold a formal leadership position in the judiciary (e.g., as a Senior Coroner, an officer in the CSEW, chairing a regional group of coroners, part of one of the specialist cadre of coroners on DVI, Military Deaths, etc)	81	25%
I undertake additional responsibilities as a judge that are not formal leadership roles (e.g., Judicial College duties as a Course Director, Syndicate leader, part of a local resilience forum or local trainer, etc.)	55	17%

However, this varies considerably by coroner post (Figure 10.1):

- Almost all Senior Coroners (89%) hold a formal leadership position, and over a third (39%) undertake additional responsibilities that are not formal leadership roles.
- Very few Assistant Coroners (6%) or Area Coroners (14%) hold any formal leadership roles, but slightly higher proportions in each of these two posts (9% of Assistant Coroners and 25% of Area Coroners) undertake additional responsibilities that are not formal leadership roles.

Figure 10.1: Coroners with leadership roles and responsibilities by post



10.2 Willingness to take on a leadership role

- Two thirds of coroners (65%) said they are interested in taking on a leadership role, but for 19% of these coroners there are no leadership roles available in their jurisdiction and 13% would only be interested if they felt leadership roles were properly rewarded (Table 10.2).
- Almost half of coroners (45%) are not interested in taking on more leadership responsibilities, but for 16% it is because they already have enough leadership responsibilities and 24% are not interested at the present time but could be interested in future.

Table 10.2: Willingness to take on leadership responsibilities

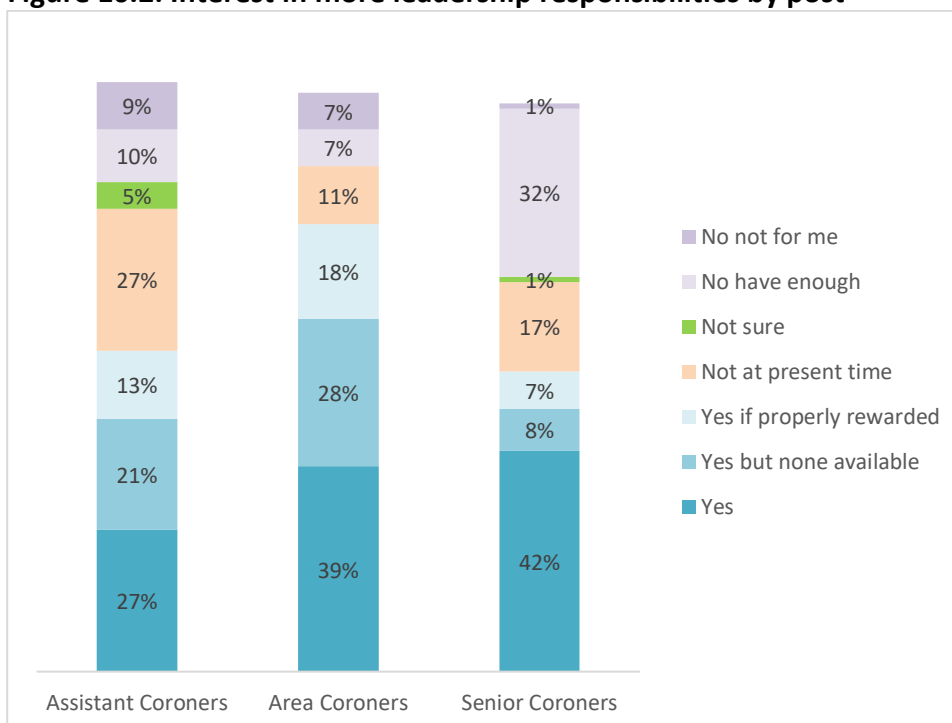
<i>Are you interested in taking on more leadership responsibilities?</i>	2020 JAS
Yes	33%
Yes, but none are currently available in my jurisdiction	19%
Yes, I would be interested if roles were properly rewarded	13%
No, a leadership role is not for me	5%
No, I have (or have had) enough leadership responsibilities already	16%
Not at the present time but possibly in future	24%
Not sure	3%

By Post

There are some differences in coroners' interest in taking on more leadership roles when this is broken down by post (Figure 10.2).

- Almost all Area Coroners (85%) said they would be interested in taking on more leadership responsibilities, but 28% said none were available and 18% said yes but only if such roles were properly rewarded.
- Almost half of all Senior Coroners (42%) said an unqualified yes to being interested in more leadership responsibilities, while 32% said they had enough leadership responsibilities already.

Figure 10.2: Interest in more leadership responsibilities by post

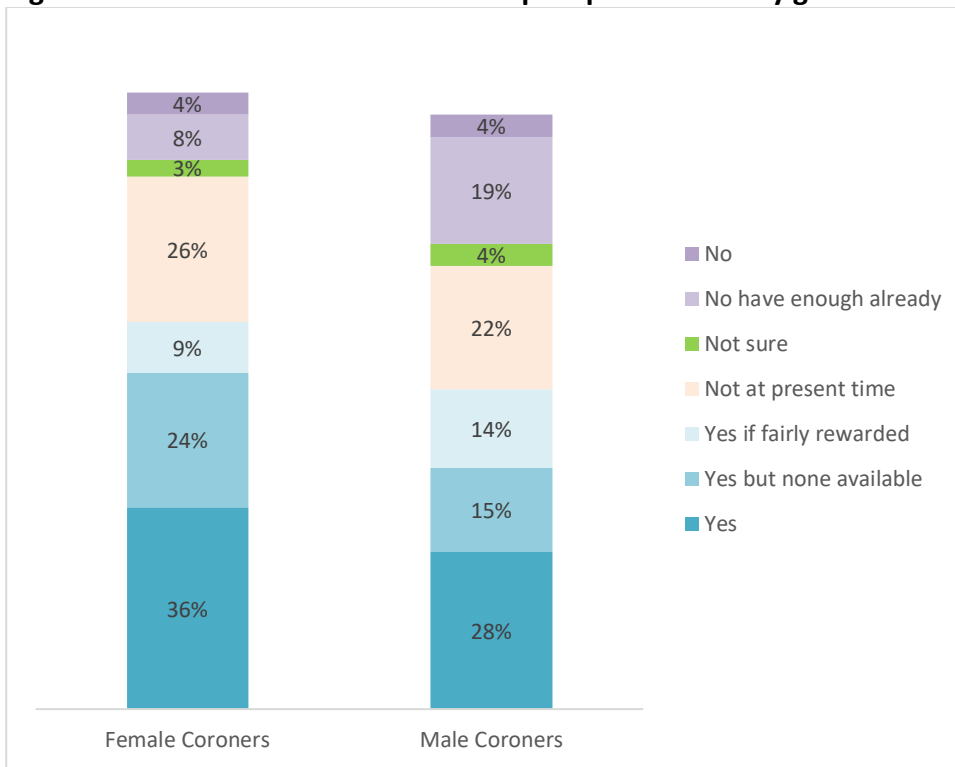


By Gender

There were some differences by gender in the extent to which coroners were interested in taking on more leadership responsibilities (Figure 10.3).

- More female coroners (69%) than male coroners (57%) said they would be interested in taking on more leadership responsibilities.
- A larger proportion of female coroners (24%) than male coroners (15%) said they would be interested in more leadership but none were available.
- A larger proportion of male coroners (14%) than female coroners (9%) said they would be interested in more leadership responsibilities but only if such roles were properly rewarded.
- A larger proportion of male coroners (19%) than female coroners (8%) said they had enough leadership responsibilities already.

Figure 10.3: Interest in more leadership responsibilities by gender



10.3 Allocation of leadership roles

Coroners were asked if they felt leadership roles were allocated fairly (Table 10.3):

- Over two-thirds of coroners (68%) say they do not know enough about how leadership roles are allocated to say whether the process is fair.

Table 10.3: Fairness of allocation of leadership roles

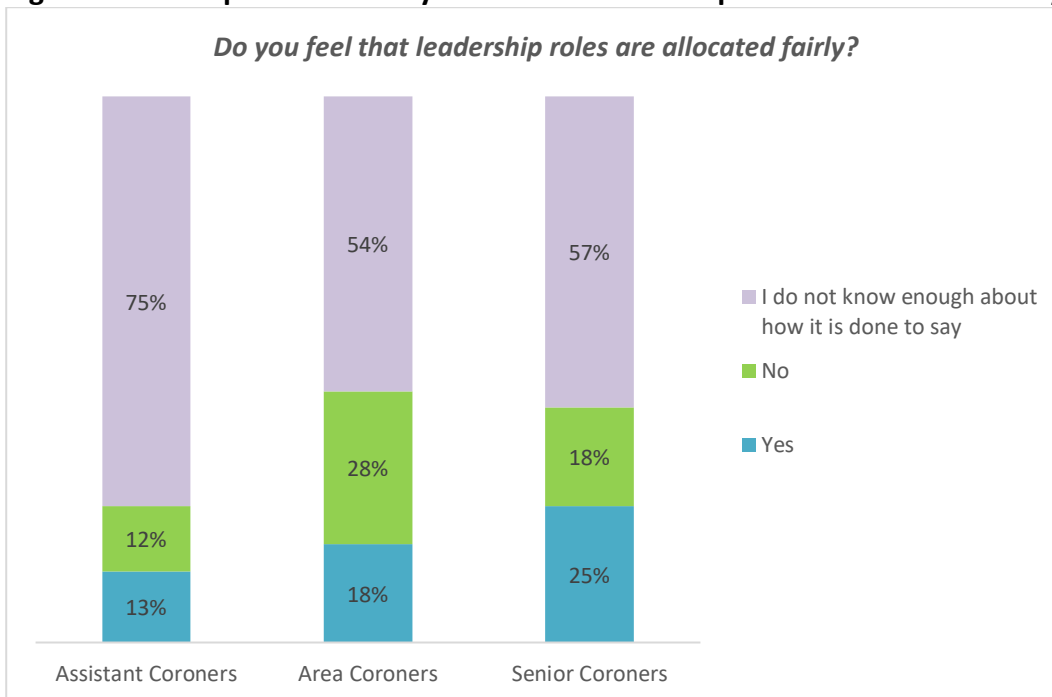
<i>Are leadership roles allocated fairly?</i>	2020 CAS
Yes	17%
No	15%
I do not know enough about how it is done to say	68%

By Post

There are differences between coroner posts in relation to this issue (Figure 10.4).

- While a majority of coroners in all three posts said they did not know enough about how leadership roles were allocated to say whether the process was fair or not, Assistant Coroners (75%) were most likely to say they did not know enough about how it was done to say if it was fair.
- Area Coroners had the highest proportion (28%) who said they did not feel that leadership roles were allocated fairly.
- Senior Coroners had the highest proportion (25%) who said they felt leadership roles were allocated fairly.

Figure 10.4: Responses to “Do you feel that leadership roles are allocated fairly?”

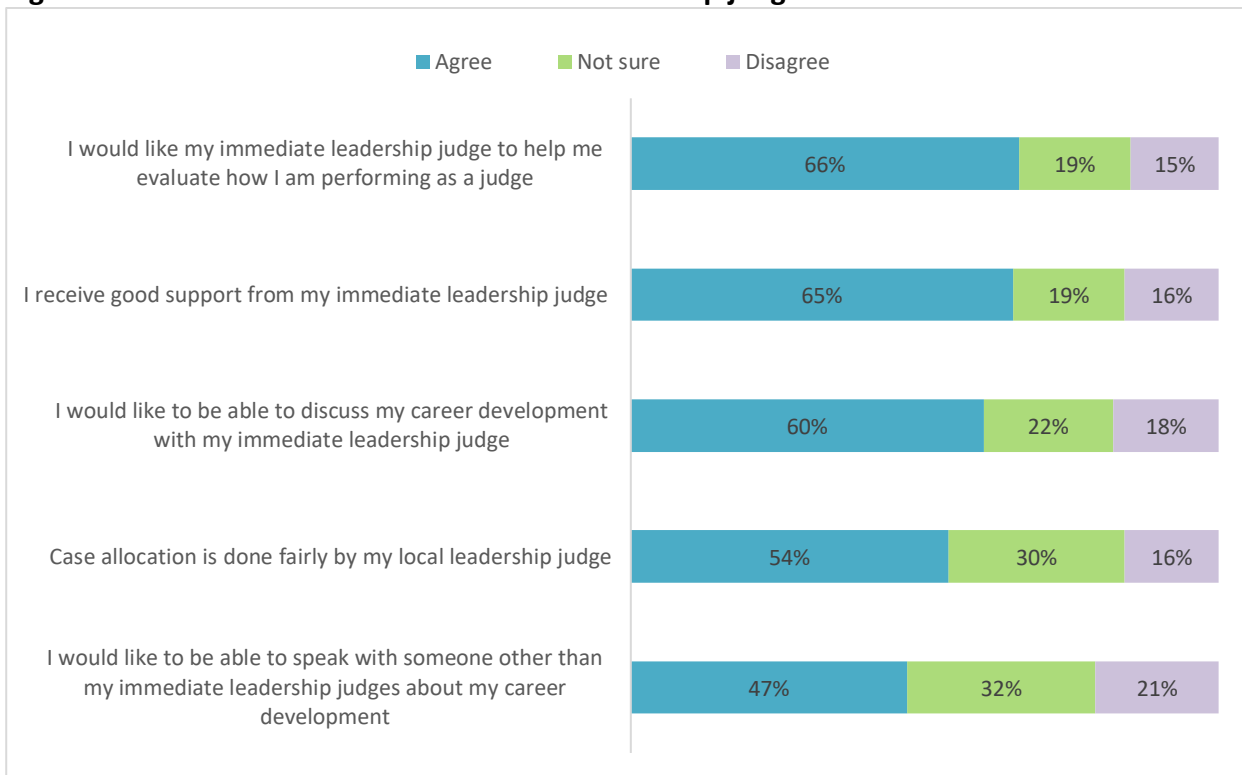


10.4 Immediate leadership judges

The CAS explored coroners' experiences of and views about their immediate leadership judge (Figure 10.5). "Immediate leadership judge" refers to the judge whose role includes direct responsibility for individual coroners, in particular with regard to pastoral support and advice.

- Two-thirds of coroners (66%) said they would like to be able to discuss their career development with their immediate leadership judge.
- Two-thirds of coroner (65%) feel they receive good support from their immediate leadership judge.
- 60% of coroners said they would like their immediate leadership judge to help them evaluate how they are performing.
- Just over half of coroners (54%) feel that case allocation is done fairly by their local leadership judge, but almost a third (31%) said they were not sure.
- Coroners were divided over whether they would like to speak with someone other than their immediate leadership judge about their career development.

Figure 10.5: Coroners' views on immediate leadership judges

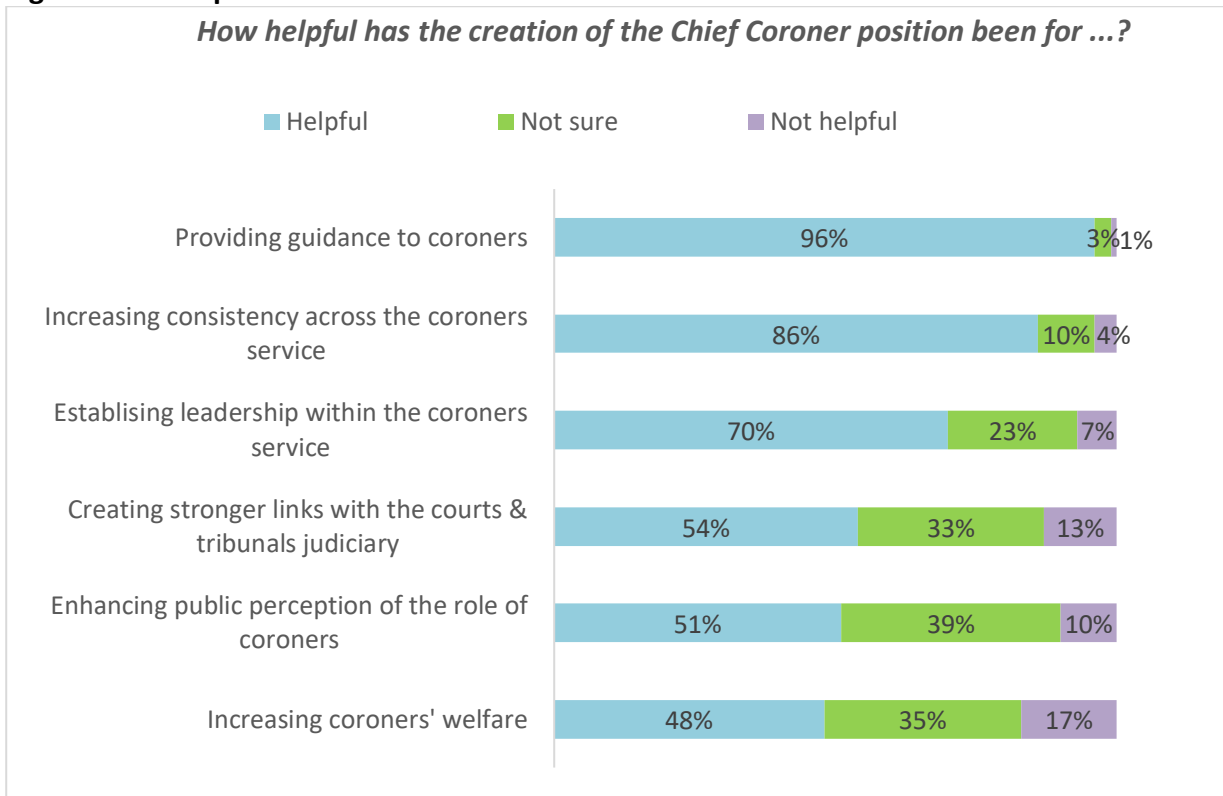


10.5 The Chief Coroner

All coroners were also asked about how helpful the creation of the position of Chief Coroner has been in relation to their work as coroners (Figure 10.6).

- Almost all coroners (96%) feel that the creation of the position of the Chief Coroner has been beneficial for providing guidance to coroners.
- The overwhelming majority of coroners feel it has been beneficial for increasing consistency across the coroner service (70%) and establishing leadership within the coroner service (70%).
- Just over half of all coroners feel the creation of a Chief Coroner has been helpful in creating stronger links with the courts and tribunals judiciary (54%) and in enhancing the public perception of the role of coroners (51%).
- Coroners are less certain about whether the creation of the position of the Chief Coroner has increased coroners' welfare: (48%) think it has been helpful, 35% are not sure and 17% think it has not been helpful.

Figure 10.6: Helpfulness of Chief Coroner



11. The Role and Function of Coroners and Inquests

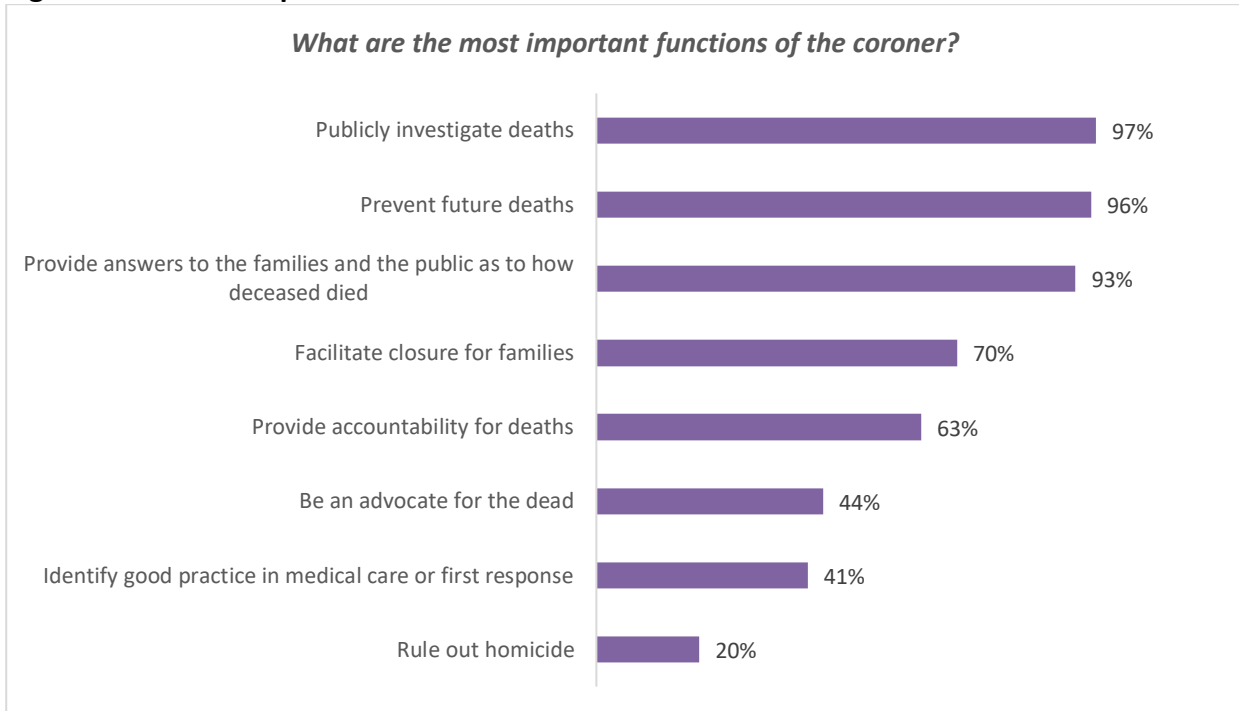
The 2020 CAS included a section designed specifically to explore coroners' view about what their most important functions are, what the purpose of an inquest is and should be, what practices they use and which are most appropriate to use in conducting inquests.

11.1 Function of the coroner

The CAS asked coroners what they thought were the most important functions of the coroner. (Figure 11.1):

- Three specific coroner functions were identified as the most important by almost all coroners: to publicly investigate deaths (97%), to prevent future deaths (96%) and to provide answers to the families and the public about how the deceased died (93%).
- A majority of coroners also identified facilitating closure for families (70%) and providing accountability for deaths (63%) as the most important functions of the coroner.
- Under half of coroners said to be an advocate for the dead (44%), to identify good practice in medical care or first response (41%) or to rule out homicide (20%).

Figure 11.1: Most important functions of the coroner



11.2 The conduct of inquests

Coroners were asked to respond to a number of statements about how inquests are conducted and how they should be conducted (Table 11.1):

- Almost all coroners (95%) felt the inquest was a cathartic process for families and others involved in a death, and that it is the role of the coroner to level the playing field when the family is unrepresented (90%).
- More than half of coroners said there was no need for all inquests to be concluded with a hearing (60%), while over half said PFDs were effective in preventing future deaths (55%)
- Almost half of all coroners (47%) disagreed that it was not useful to use juries at inquests.

Table 11.1: Coroner views on conducting inquests

<i>What is your view of the following statements about the conduct of inquests?</i>	Agree	Not sure	Disagree
The inquest can be a cathartic process for families and others involved in a death	95%	3%	2%
When the family is unrepresented and other interested persons are represented, my role requires me to level the playing field	90%	5%	5%
There is no need for all inquests to be concluded with a hearing	60%	8%	32%
PFD reports are effective in preventing future deaths	55%	31%	14%
It is not really useful to use juries at inquests	39%	14%	47%

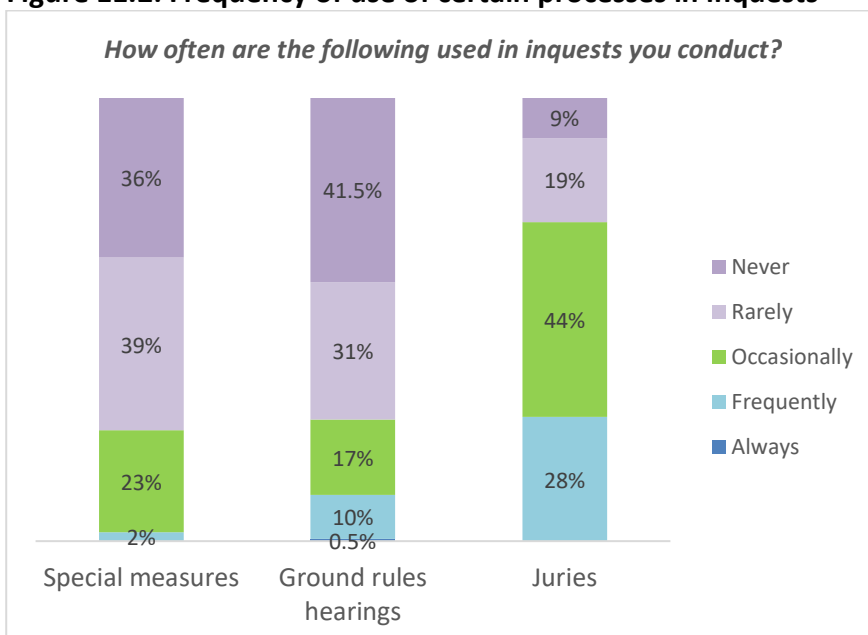
11.3 Coroner practices at inquests

The CAS asked coroners how often they use specific practices and processes in the inquests they conduct and how appropriate they feel specific practices and processes are in inquests.

11.3.1 Use of specific processes and practices at inquests

- Most coroners said that they never or rarely used special measures (75%) or ground rules hearings (72.5%). (Figure 11.2)
- Almost three-quarters of coroners said that they used juries at inquests either occasionally (44%) or frequently (28%).

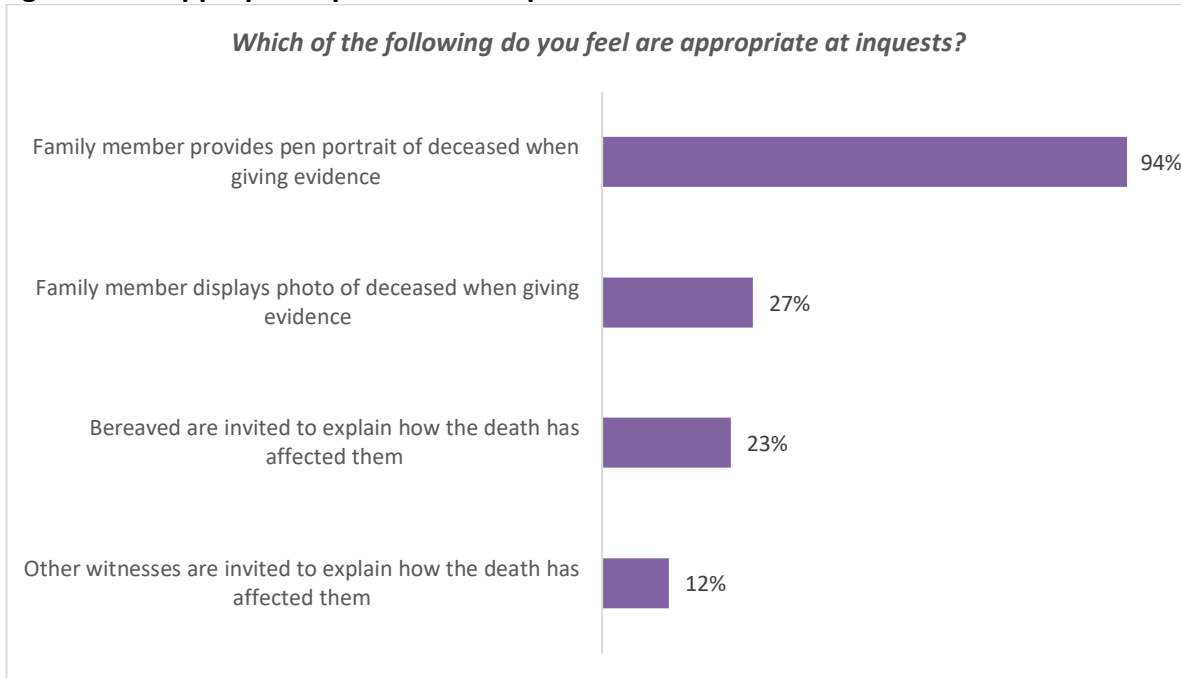
Figure 11.2: Frequency of use of certain processes in inquests



11.3.2 The appropriateness of specific practices at inquests

- There is one specific practice that almost all coroners (94%) feel is appropriate at inquests: for family members to provide pen portraits of the deceased when giving evidence (Figure 11.3).
- Only very small proportions of coroners said it was appropriate for family members to display a photograph of the deceased (27%) or for the bereaved to explain how the death has affected them (23%) or for others to do so (12%)

Figure 11.3: Appropriate practices at inquests



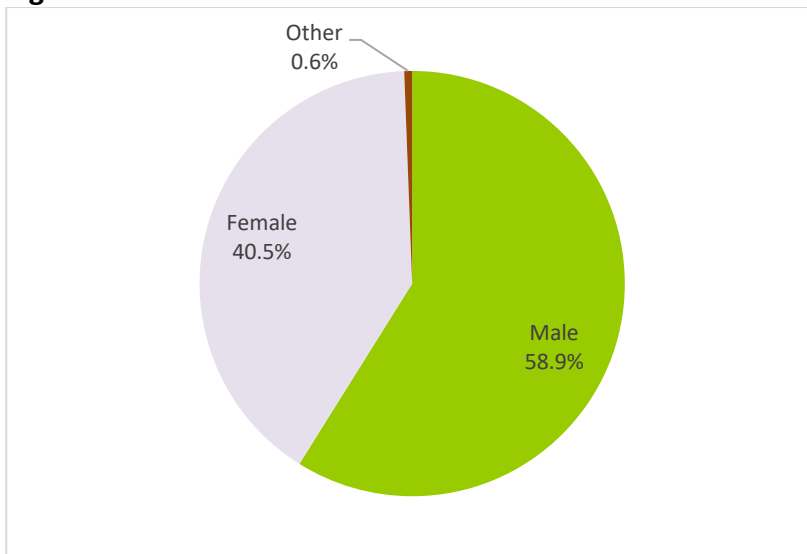
12. Coroner Demographics: Survey Respondents

This section provides a demographic analysis of the CAS respondents. Given the very high response rate to the CAS amongst all coroners in England and Wales (85%), this section enables a detailed look at the background of coroners.

12.1 Gender

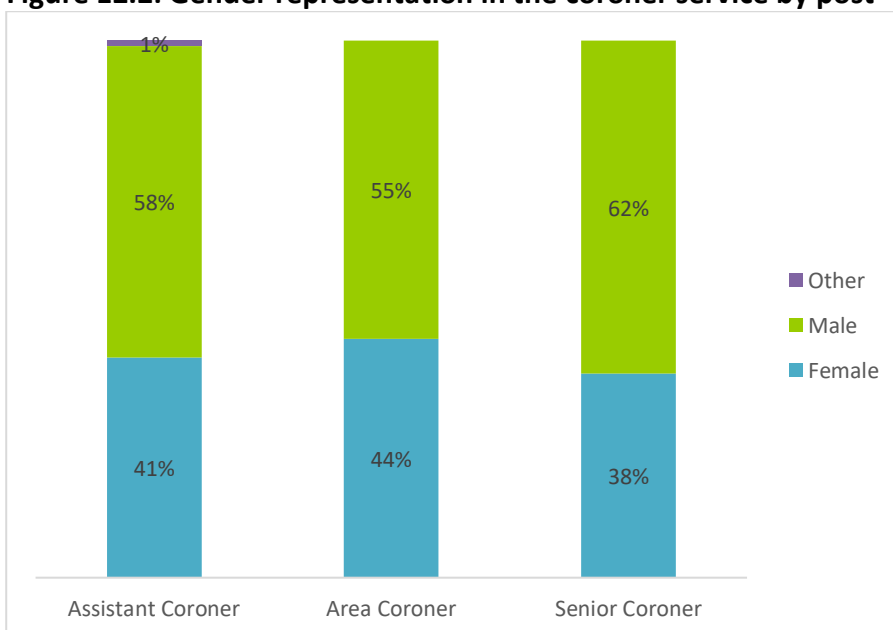
- Female coroners (40.5%) are under-represented in the coroner service in relation to their representation in population of England and Wales (50.8%) (Figure 12.1).
- The 2020 CAS enabled coroners to identify their gender as Other: 0.2% of all coroners identified as Other.

Figure 12.1: Gender distribution in the coroner service



Female representation in the coroner service varies by coroner post, with the smallest proportion of female coroners (38%) found in the highest coronial post (Senior Coroner) (Figure 12.2).

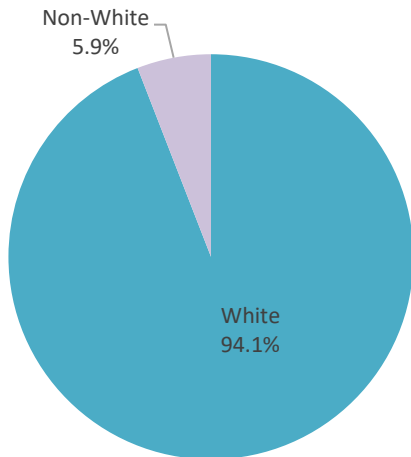
Figure 12.2: Gender representation in the coroner service by post



12.2 Ethnicity

In the last census in 2011, 86% of the England and Wales population self-identified as White and 14% self-identified as Asian, Black, Mixed and Other non-White ethnicities. In the 2020 CAS, non-White coroners comprised 5.9% of the coroner service that self-identified their ethnicity (Figure 12.3).

Figure 12.3: Ethnicity of coroners



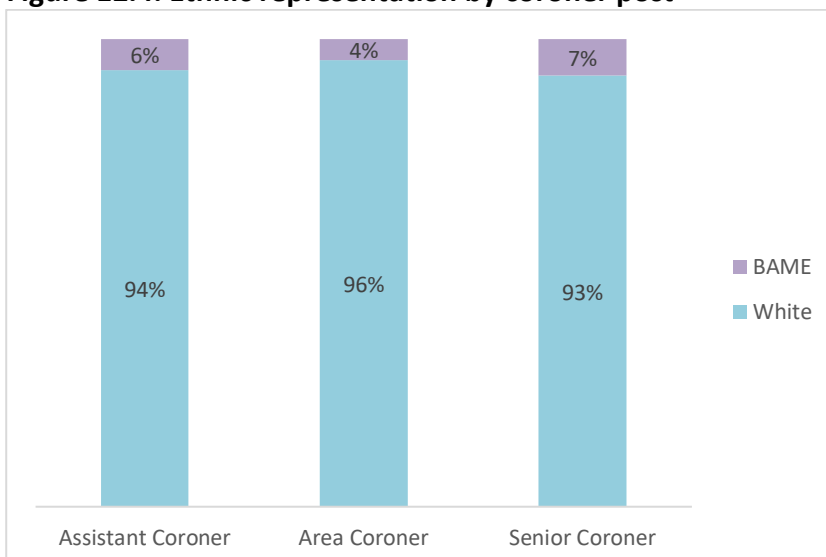
Coroners who self-identify as Asian comprise the largest proportion of non-White coroners (2.2%) (Table 12.1).

Table 12.1: Ethnicity of coroners

White	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
	2.2%	0.9%	1.6%	1.2%
94.1%	5.9%			

There is no coroner post that reflects the ethnic distribution within the population of England and Wales. The largest proportion of non-White coroners is amongst Senior Coroners (7%) followed closely by Assistant Coroners (6%) (Figure 12.4).

Figure 12.4: Ethnic representation by coroner post

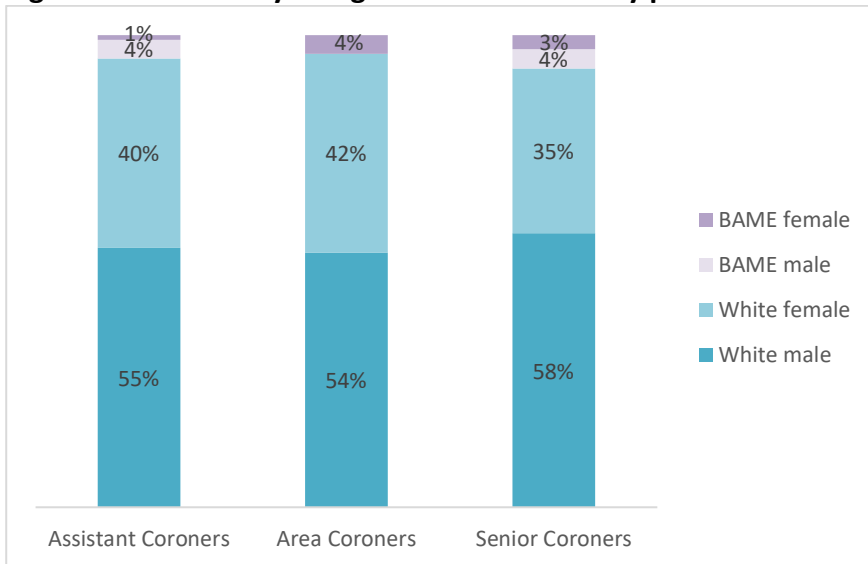


12.3 Gender and ethnicity combined

There are not substantial differences in the combined gender and ethnicity profile of coroners by post (Figure 12.5).

- There are no BAME male coroners amongst Area Coroners, but the largest proportion of female BAME coroners is amongst Area Coroners (4%).
- Male BAME coroners make up 4% of both Assistant and Senior Coroners.
- The largest proportion of White female coroners is amongst Area Coroners (42%).
- The largest proportion of White male coroners is amongst Senior Coroners (58%).

Figure 12.5: Ethnicity and gender of coroners by post



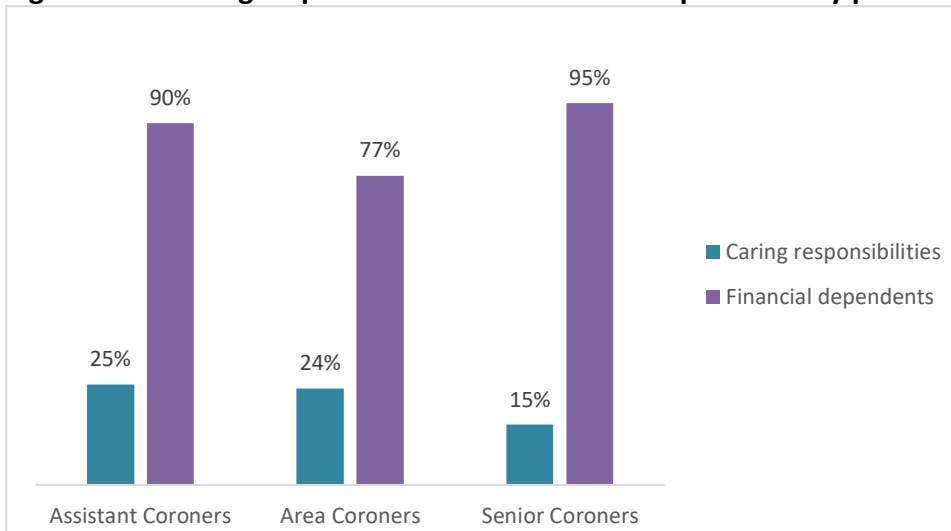
12.4 Disability

A total of 2.6% of coroners who took part in the survey said they had a declared disability and had requested that reasonable adjustments be made at their court to enable them to do their job to the best of their ability.

12.5 Caring responsibilities and financial dependents

Only a minority of coroners in all posts have caring responsibilities for a family member, but the vast majority of coroners in all posts have children that they support financially (Figure 12.6).

Figure 12.6: Caring responsibilities and financial dependents by post

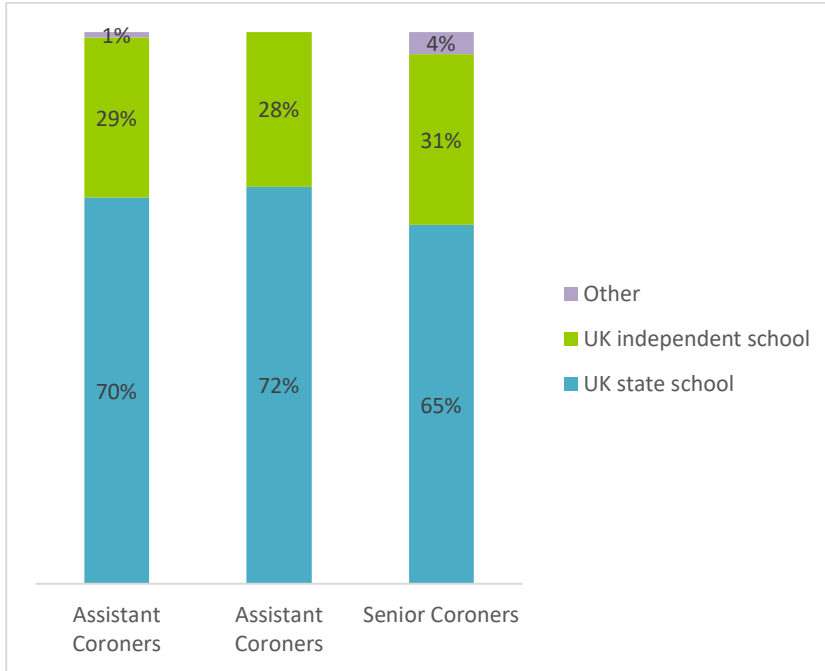


12.6 Education

12.6.1 Secondary education

Two thirds or more of coroners in all coronial posts attended a UK state school for their secondary education (Figure 12.7).

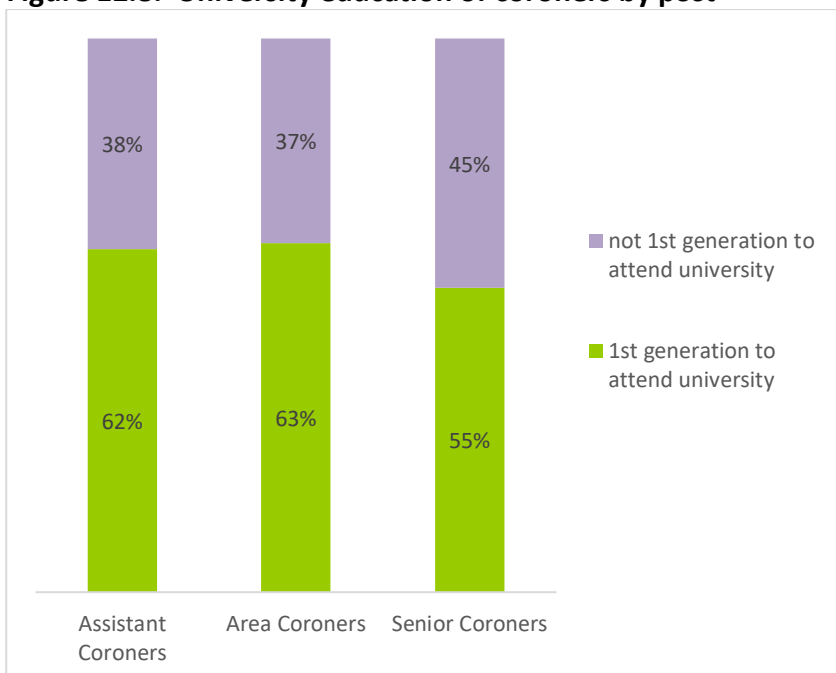
Figure 12.7: Secondary education of coroners by post



12.6.2 University education

A majority of coroners in all coronial posts were the first generation in their family to attend university (Figure 12.8).

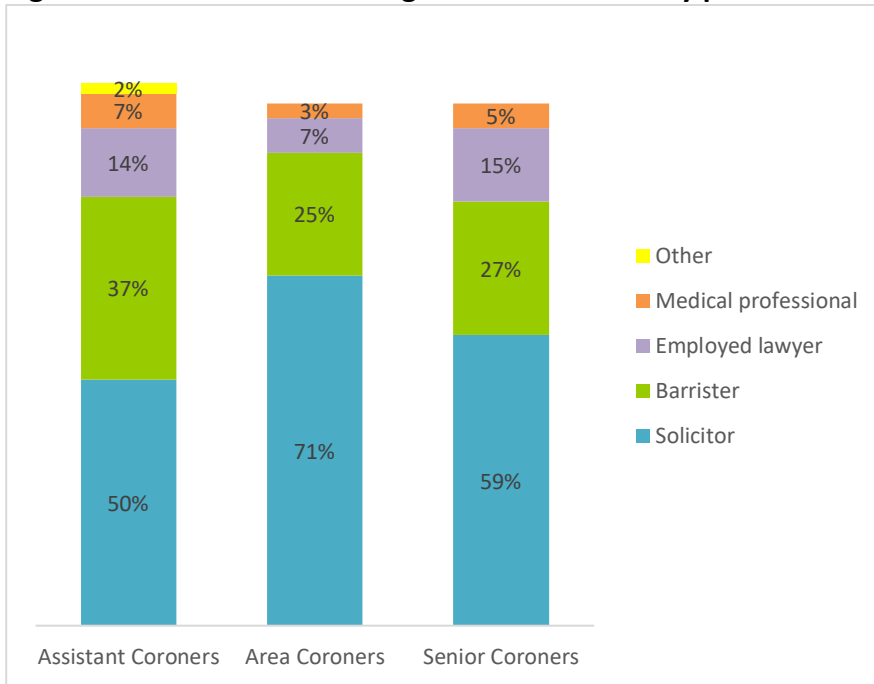
Figure 12.8: University education of coroners by post



12.7 Professional background

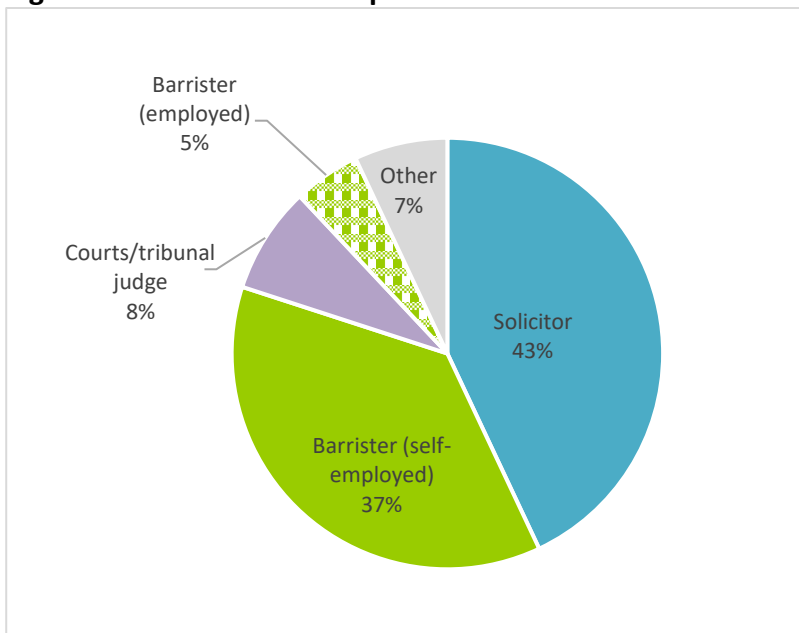
- Half or more of coroners in all coronial posts are solicitors by professional background (Figure 12.9).
- Area Coroners have the highest proportion of solicitors (71%), and Assistant Coroners have the highest proportion of barristers.
- Medical professionals make up only a small minority of coroners in all three coroner posts.

Figure 12.9: Professional background of coroners by post



Those coroners who are currently in post on a part-time, fee paid basis are almost all practicing solicitors (43%) or barristers (42%: with 37% self-employed barristers and 5% employed barristers). A small proportion of coroners (8%) are also judges in the courts or tribunals (Figure 12.10).

Figure 12.10: Part-time fee paid coroners current role

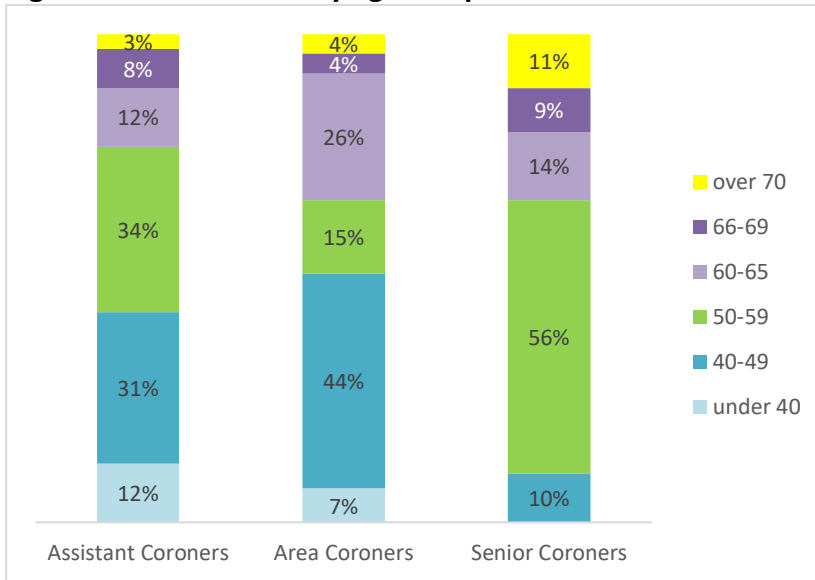


12.8 Age group

There are some age differences by coroner post (Figure 12.11):

- Assistant Coroners have the most diverse age distribution, with 12% under 40 years old and almost a third (31%) 40-49 years old and another third (34%) 50-59 years old.
- The majority (56%) of Senior Coroners are between 50-59 years old.
- Over half of all Area Coroners (51%) are under 50 years old.

Figure 12.11: Coroners by age and post

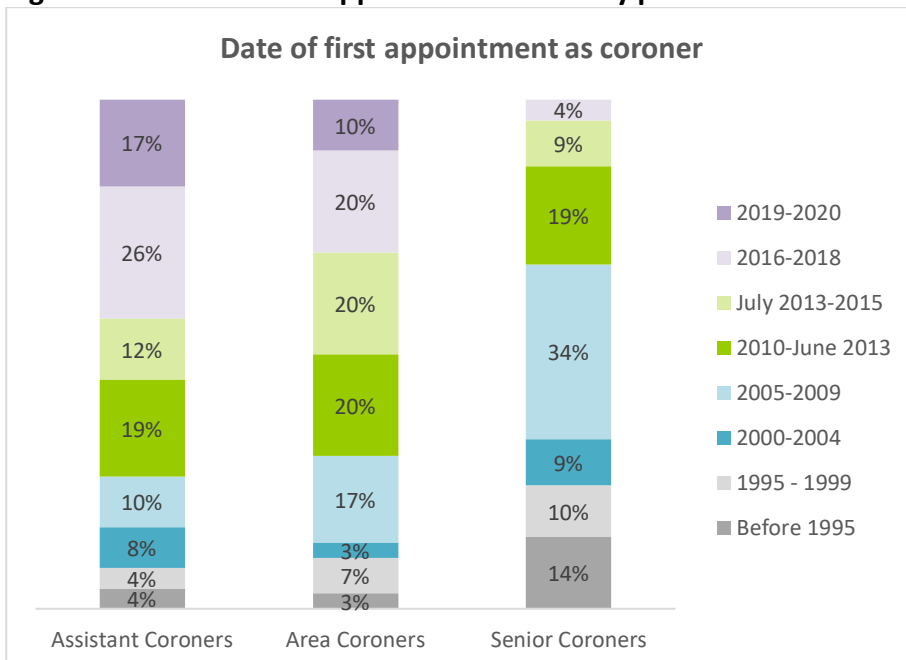


12.9 Date of first appointment to a coroner post

There are also differences by coroner post in the date of first appointment (Figure 12.12):

- The majority of Senior Coroners (67%) were first appointed to a coroner post before 2010, with 24% appointed before 2000.
- Almost half (43%) of Assistant Coroners were first appointed to coroner post in the last 5 years
- Almost all Area Coroners (70%) were first appointed to a coroner post in the last 10 years.

Figure 12.12: Date first appointed as corner by post

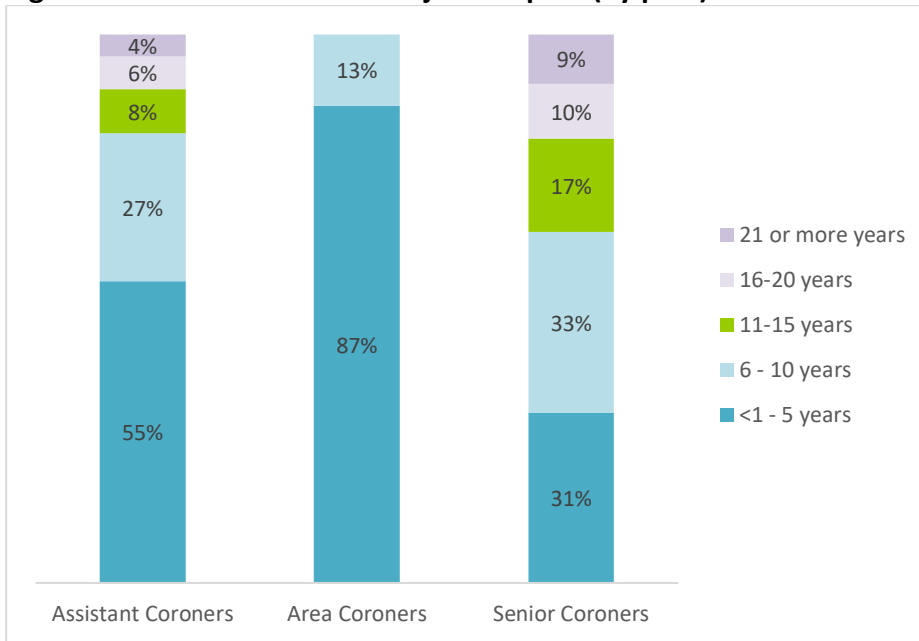


12.10 Tenure in current post

There is some substantial variation across posts in the tenure of coroners in their current post (Figure 12.13):

- As the post of Area Coroner was a newly created one in the Coroners and Justice Act 2009, it is not surprising that the overwhelming majority of Area Coroners (87%) have been in their current post for five years or less.
- The majority of Assistant Coroners (55%) have also been in post for five years or less.
- Most Senior Coroners (64%) have been in their current post for 10 years or less, but 19% have been in post for 16 years or more.

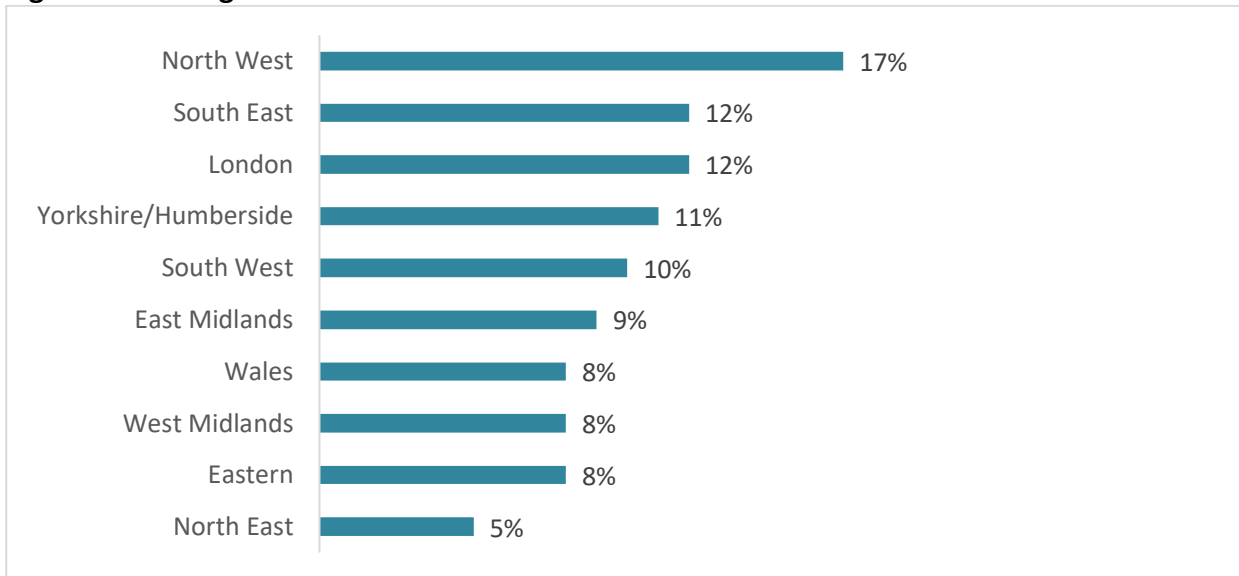
Figure 12.13: Tenure in current judicial post (by post)



12.10 Regional distribution

A total of 330 coroners provided information on the main geographic region where they sit. Figure 12.14 shows that coroners are relatively evenly distributed across regions in England and Wales, with the largest proportion of coroners sitting in the North West (17%) and the smallest proportion sitting in the North East (5%).

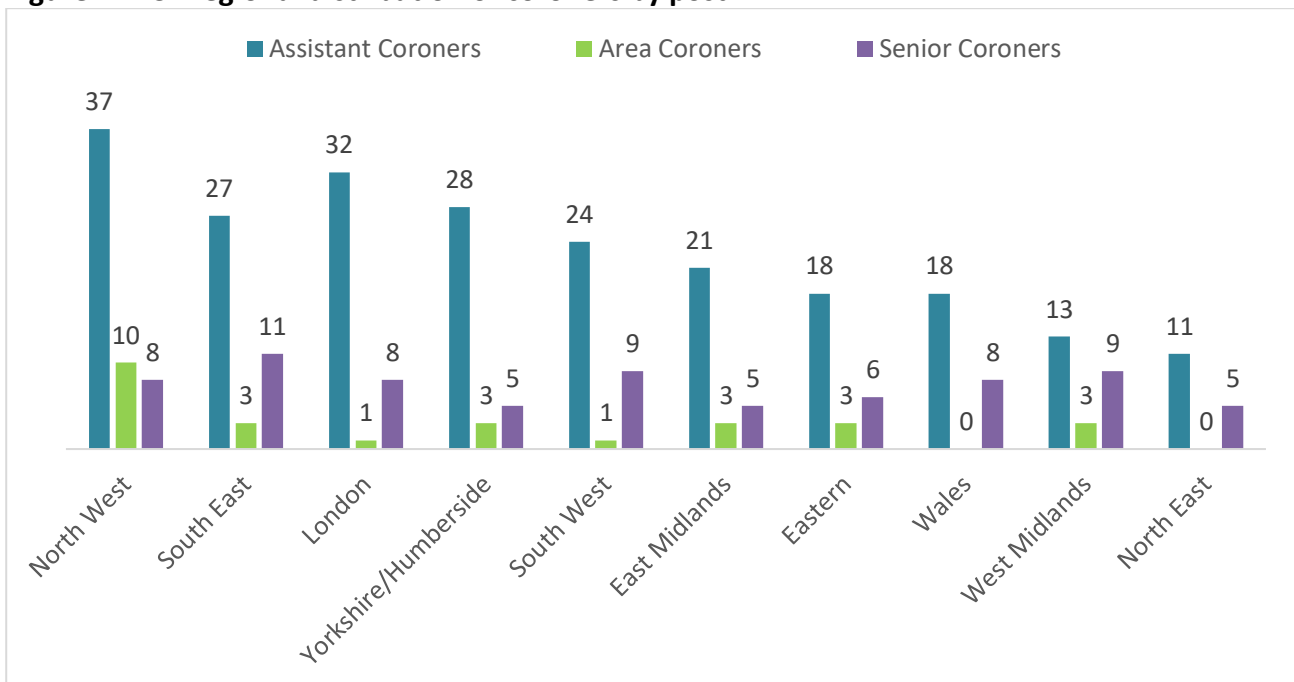
Figure 12.14: Regional distribution of coroners



By post

There were differences across the regions in the distribution of different coroner posts (Figure 12.15). While the largest numbers of Assistant Coroners are in the North West (37) and London (32), the largest number of Area Coroners is in North West (10) and the largest number of Senior Coroners is in the South East (11).

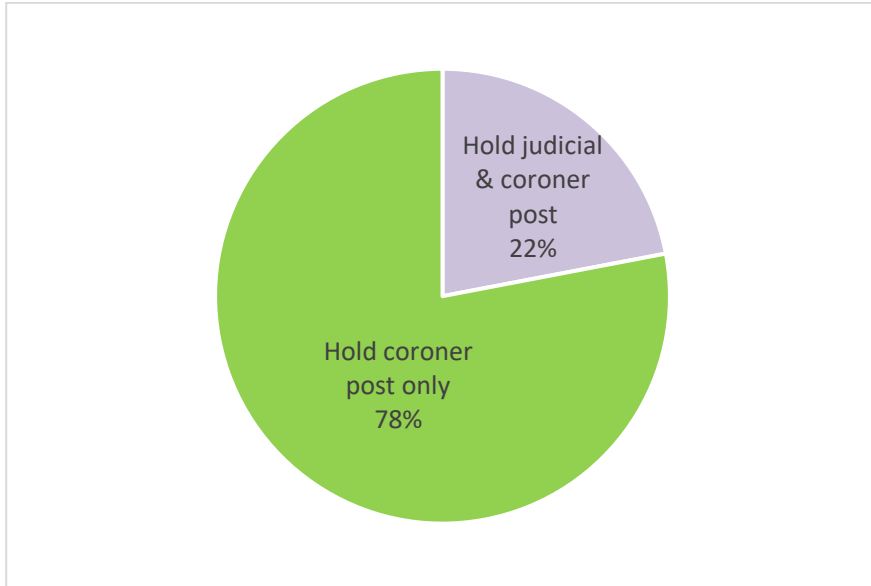
Figure 12.15: Regional distribution of coroners by post



12.11 Holding other judicial posts

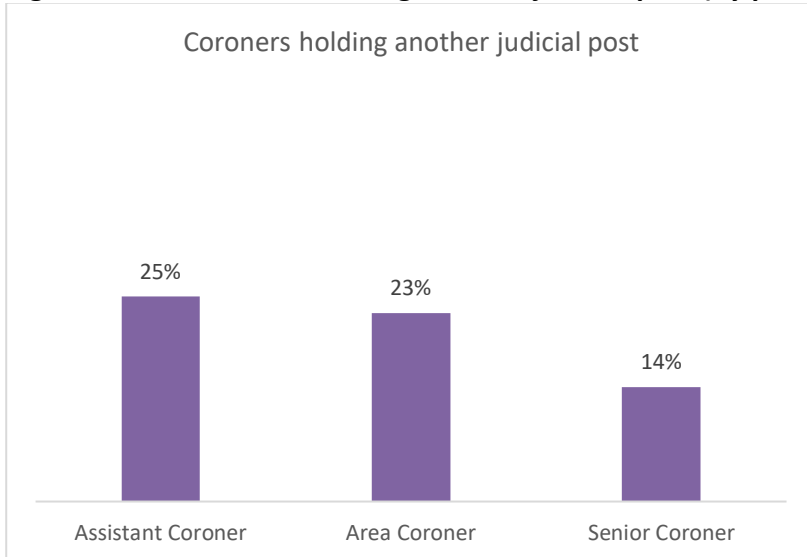
Almost a quarter of all coroners (22%) hold judicial posts in addition to their coroner posts (Figure 12.16). These judicial posts include Deputy High Court Judge, Recorder, Deputy High Court Master, Deputy District Judge, Tribunal Judge, Magistrate as well as other coroner posts.

Figure 12.16: Whether holding judicial post as well as coroner post



A quarter of both Assistant Coroners (25%) and Area Coroners (23%) hold additional judicial posts alongside their main coroner post, while a smaller proportion of Senior Coroners (14%) hold additional judicial posts (Figure 12.17).

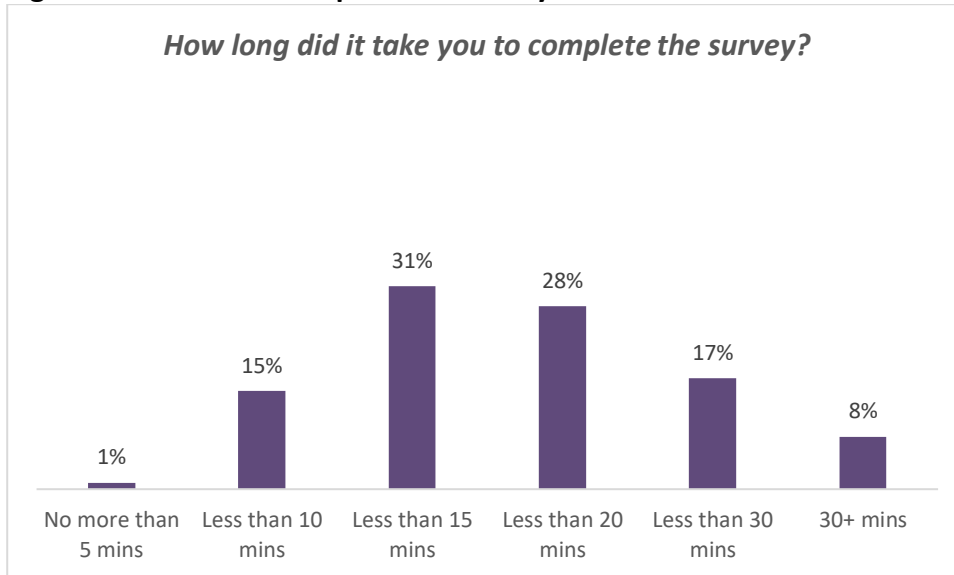
Figure 12.17: Coroners holding another judicial post (by post)



13. The Survey

Most of the coroners who completed the survey said it was about the right length (75%), and most (75%) said it took them under 20 minutes to complete (Figure 12.1).

Figure 12.1: Time to complete the survey



Coroner Attitude Survey 2020

2020 Coroner Attitude Survey

The Judicial Institute of University College London (UCL) has been asked by the Chief Coroner to conduct the first ever **Coroner Attitude Survey (CAS)** in England and Wales. This **survey** has been developed through a Working Group with representatives from the Coroners Service.

Why it is important for you to take part in this survey

By completing this survey you will be ensuring that coroners' views are taken into account in important decisions about the future of the service. Although there have been surveys of this type conducted with other branches of the judiciary in the past, this is the first time the survey has been extended to coroners. The 2020 CAS is running alongside the **2020 Judicial Attitude Survey (JAS)** for salaried judges in the Courts and Tribunals across the UK. Both the Chief Coroner and the Lord Chief Justice agree it is important that this survey and one for the courts and tribunals judiciary run at the same time.

The Survey and COVID-19

The 2020 Coroner Attitude Survey was scheduled to run this spring, and despite the challenges we all face as a result of Covid-19, it was felt that it was important to carry on with the survey. Our work as coroners has carried on through the emergency, and it remains as important as ever to understand how coroners feel about their role, their working lives and their plans for the future. Most of the survey questions include "free text" boxes where you can leave additional comments, and you may wish to use these boxes to say whether your answers to specific questions have been affected by Covid-19 and would have been different before the pandemic.

Confidentiality

The survey is **completely voluntary and anonymous**. Your survey responses **cannot be traced back** to you personally. In order to ensure full anonymity in the survey, it is not possible for you to start the survey, save some responses and return to complete the survey later. This would require the survey system to be

able to identify you by your email or IP address. So you need to complete the survey in one go.

Thank you for taking the time to do the survey, which should take 5-10 minutes.

Use of the Survey

UCL has undertaken in writing not to use any information collected in its research, save with the express consent of the Chief Coroner. The anonymised, collated data will be held by the Chief Coroner's Office.

Publication or disclosure, either in whole or in part, of any survey findings may be included in materials submitted to public bodies. Disclosure of submitted information may also be requested in accordance with, for instance, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2001. Where such disclosure is sought UCL and/or the Chief Coroner's Office undertake to take such steps as appropriate and as they believe applicable to seek exemptions from such disclosure.

Your participation in this survey and your answers to the following questions will be extremely helpful.

Start

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Coroner Attitude Survey 2020

Your Judicial Post

1. Please indicate which is the main post you currently hold.

(If you have multiple posts please select what you consider is your main post and you can provide any further details in the box below)

- Assistant Coroner
- Area Coroner
- Senior Coroner
- Other (please specify in box below)

2. Are you:

- Salaried full-time coroner
- Salaried part-time coroner
- Fee paid coroner
- Other (please specify in the box below)

3. When were you first appointed to a coroner's post?

- Before 1995
- 1995 - 1999

- 2000 - 2004
- 2005 - 2009
- 2010 - June 2013
- July 2013 - 2015
- 2016 - 2018
- 2019 - 2020

4. How long have you been in your current coroner post (ie, the post you indicated in Question 1)?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- 21-25 years
- 26-30 years
- Over 30 years

5. Do you currently hold any judicial post in addition to the coroner post you have indicated in Question 1 above?

- No
- Yes (please feel free to provide details in the box below - but it is not required)

Coroner Attitude Survey 2020

Working Conditions

6. How would you rate working conditions as a coroner compared with 5 years ago?

- Significantly better
 Better
 About the same
 Worse
 Significantly worse
 Not applicable to me (I was not a coroner 5 years ago)

7. Please provide an assessment of the following working conditions at the main court or coroner's office where you work (and NOT in relation to remote working from home).

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Poor
Amount of administrative support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of administrative support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Morale of court staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Physical quality of the building	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Maintenance of the building	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Physical quality of your personal work space	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Space to meet and interact with other coroners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Security at your court	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. How would you assess your case workload over the last 12 months?

- Too high
- Manageable
- Too low

9. How would you assess your workload that does not include your casework over the last 12 months?

- Too high
- Manageable
- Too low
- I do not have any work outside of my casework

10. To what extent do you feel the following are important to you?

	Important	Not sure	Not important
Opportunities for flexible working hours	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunities to work part-time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time to discuss work with colleagues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunities to sit in other jurisdictions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunities for career progression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support for dealing with stressful conditions at work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Training opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. Please assess the availability of each of the following in your current coroner post:

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Poor	Non-existent
Opportunities for flexible working hours	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunities to work part-time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Time to discuss work with colleagues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunities to sit in other jurisdictions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunities for career progression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support for dealing with stressful conditions at work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Training opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please feel free to provide any further comments on these issues

12. During the Covid-19 emergency how often are you coming into work at your court or coroner's office?

- All of the time
- Most of the time
- Occasionally
- Not at all

Please feel free to provide any further comments

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Coroner Attitude Survey 2020

Welfare

13. Are you ever concerned about your personal security as a result of your work as a coroner?

(Please select as many options as apply to you)

- Yes, sometimes when I am in court
- Yes, sometimes outside of court
- Yes, sometimes on social media
- No

Please feel free to comment about your personal security as a coroner

14. Do you feel you would benefit from more guidance or assistance on any of the following?

	Yes I would like more guidance on this	Not sure	No I don't need more guidance on this
How to ensure my safety in court	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How to ensure my safety out of court	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How to deal with internet and social media coverage about my work as a coroner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How to safely use the internet and social media as a coroner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please feel free to comment about assistance on these or any other welfare issue

15. Which of the following do you consider significant sources of stress in your job as a coroner?

Please select as many options as reflect your view.

- Isolation of the job
- Lack of a professional support network
- Pressure of making rulings
- Dealing with media coverage of inquests
- Concern about letting families down
- Likelihood of decisions being challenged
- Having to watch graphic visual evidence
- 24/7 nature of the work
- Sole focus on death
- Criticism for delay in releasing the body
- Other (please specify in the box below)

16. If you have a declared disability, have you requested that reasonable adjustments be made at your court to enable you to do your job to the best of your ability?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable to me

If you answered YES, please indicate in the box below if the adjustments

requested have been made to your satisfaction:

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Coroner Attitude Survey 2020

Questions 16 and 17 are for Senior Coroners and Area Coroners only

Question 18 is for fee-paid Assistant Coroners only

Salary and Pensions

17. This question is for Senior and Area Coroners only

Senior and Area Coroners: Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements

	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I am paid a reasonable salary for the work I do.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have had a loss of net earnings over the last 2 years.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The salary issue is affecting my morale.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The salary issue is affecting the morale of coroners I work with.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My pay and pension entitlement does not adequately reflect the work I have done and will do before retirement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The amount of out of hours work required to do the job is affecting me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If I could earn additional income through out of court work I would pursue this option.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I follow closely the developments about judicial pensions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I follow closely the developments about the tax implications on pension contributions for coroners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like to know more about developments in judicial pensions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

18. **This question is for Senior and Area Coroners only.**

Prior to my appointment as a salaried coroner, I was earning:

- Substantially less than my coroner salary on appointment
- Less than my coroner salary on appointment
- About the same as my coroner salary on appointment
- More than my coroner salary on appointment
- Substantially more than my coroner salary on appointment
- I am not a salaried coroner

19. **This question is for fee-paid Assistant Coroners only**

Assistant Coroners: Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I am paid a reasonable fee for the work I do	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The fee issue is affecting my morale	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The fee issue is affecting the morale of coroners I work with	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My fee and pension entitlement does not adequately reflect the work I have done and will do before retirement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(If you are part of the local authority pension scheme) The pension is	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

reasonable for the work done

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Coroner Attitude Survey 2020

Resources & Digital Working

20. Please provide an assessment of the following IT resources available to you at the main Coroner's Court where you work:

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Poor	Non-existent
Standard of IT equipment provided for you personally to use (ie, laptop, desktop computer) when working at court	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Standard of IT equipment available to you for working remotely	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Standard of IT equipment used in your court (eg, video playback and live link equipment)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Internet access in your court building	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Internet access when working remotely	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IT support when working in your court building	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IT support when working remotely	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please feel free to provide any further details

21. This question asks about your access to different digital resources:

	Yes	No
Are you regularly required to use an electronic case system?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Are you on e-Judiciary?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Does your court have Wi-Fi available in court?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Does your court have Wi-Fi in all other parts of the court building?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please feel free to provide any further details

22. Please rate the following:

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Poor	Non-existent
Usability of the electronic case system	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of training on electronic case systems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of training on electronic case system	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Functionality of e-Judiciary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of Wi-Fi in your court	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please feel free to provide any further details

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Coroner Attitude Survey 2020

Training and Personal Development

23. To what extent are you satisfied with the following aspects of your coroner role:

	Completely satisfied	Satisfied	Could be better	Not satisfied at all
Sense of achievement in the job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Challenge of the job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Variety of work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunities for career progression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cross deployment opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunities for regular personal review of my coroner role with someone in a leadership position	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please feel free to provide any further comments on these specific issues

24. To what extent are you satisfied with the following aspects of training as a coroner:

	Completely satisfied	Satisfied	Could be better	Not satisfied at all
Range of training available	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of training available	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time available to undertake training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Time to prepare for training courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local authority support for coroner training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please feel free to provide any further comments on these specific issues

25. In which, if any, of the following areas would you welcome coroner training opportunities?

(Please select as many options as apply to you)

- Wellbeing for coroners
- Media handling
- Presentation and communication skills
- Leadership and managing others
- Joint local training with courts
- Understanding statistics in inquests
- Hands on training using IT in court
- Conducting remote hearings
- Other (please specify in the box below)

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Coroner Attitude Survey 2020

Change in the Coroners Service

26. To what extent do you feel that your job as a coroner has changed since you were first appointed to a coroner post? *(This question should be answered without taking into account any recent changes that may have occurred in your job as a result of Covid-19)*

- It has not changed at all
- It has only changed a very small amount and this does not affect me
- There has been some change which affects me
- There has been a large amount of change
- It has changed completely

27. The following explore your view of changes in your job as a coroner.

(If possible please provide a response to each statement)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
The judiciary was managing change well before Covid-19.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The judiciary is managing change well during Covid-19.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Too much change has been imposed on the judiciary in recent years.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
More change is still needed in the judiciary.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The amount of change in recent years has brought judges to	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

breaking point.					
The judiciary needs to have control over policy changes that affect judges.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Despite any reservations I may have about changes in the judiciary I still enjoy my job as a judge.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

28. How concerned are you by each of these issues affecting the role of the coroner?

	Not concerned at all	Only slightly concerned	Not sure	Somewhat concerned	Extremely concerned
Lack of a national coroner service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal security for coroners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal security for coroner's officers and staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of a common software programme for cases	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Low morale amongst coroners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stressful working conditions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please feel free to provide any further comment:

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Coroner Attitude Survey 2020

Future Planning

29. Might you consider leaving the coroners service in the next 5 years?

- Yes
- No
- I am currently undecided about this
- I will reach compulsory retirement age in the next 5 years but plan to leave before that date.
- I will reach compulsory retirement age in the next 5 years and plan to stay until that date.

30. On 1 April 2020, what was your age in YEARS and MONTHS?

On 1 April 2020, my age was years and months

31. The following explore your views on retirement from the coroners service:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
Coroners should not be required to retire at 70.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The main reason I would leave the coroners service before the compulsory retirement age is to do other things while I am able.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The main reason I would leave the coroners service before compulsory retirement age is dissatisfaction with my job as a coroner.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please feel free to provide any further comments

32. Which of the following factors would make you more likely to leave the coroners service before reaching compulsory retirement age?

(Please select as many options as apply to you).

- Increase in workload
- Limited opportunities for promotion
- Limits on pay awards
- Reduction in pension benefits
- Lack of respect for coroners by government
- Reduction in administrative support
- Further demands for out of hours working
- Introduction of online courts
- Lack of stimulating work
- Increase in unrepresented interested persons
- Lack of effective leadership of the judiciary
- Stressful working conditions
- Inability to move to salaried part-time working
- Requirement to sit in a location too far from home
- Attacks on coroners by the media
- Court closures
- Personal health issues
- Inability to work more flexible hours
- Personal security concerns

- 24/7 nature of the work
- Sole focus on death
- Nature of the evidence heard
- Attitudes of judges in related proceedings in criminal or family courts
- Uncertainty over the future of my part of the judiciary
- Other (please specify in the box below)

Please feel free to provide a further comment:

33. Which of the following factors would make you more likely to remain in the coroners service until compulsory retirement age?

(Please select as many options as apply to you).

- Appointment to a higher post
- Change of work location
- Higher remuneration
- Better administrative support
- Reduction in workload
- Increased flexibility in working hours
- Greater variation in work
- Having more leadership responsibilities
- Greater certainty over the future of my part of the judiciary
- Support for dealing with stressful working conditions
- Opportunity for sabbatical
- Opportunity to work part-time
- Increase in families being represented at inquests

- Better security for coroners
- Greater respect for the work coroners do
- Incorporation of Coroners Service into Courts & Tribunals Service
- Other (please specify in the box below)

Please feel free to provide a further comment:

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Coroner Attitude Survey 2020

Being a Member of the Coroners Service

34. As a coroner, to what extent do you feel valued by the following groups?

	Greatly valued	Generally valued	Not sure	Generally not valued	Not valued at all
Public	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Government	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Courts & Tribunal judiciary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local authority in my area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Families in inquests I conduct	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Counsel in inquests I conduct	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Court staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Media	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Coroner colleagues at my court	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Chief Coroner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please feel free to provide any further comments

35. Coroners are respected by society at large

- Less than they were 5 years ago
- About the same as they were 5 years ago

More than they were 5 years ago

Please feel free to provide any further comments

36. The following explore your views of your work as a coroner.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree
As a coroner I feel I provide an important service to society	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel a strong personal attachment to being a member of the coroners service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel I have an important job that I am committed to doing as well as I possibly can	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I consider myself to be a judge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel part of the judiciary of England and Wales	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Legal representatives at inquests do not consider me to be a judge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Coroner Attitude Survey 2020

Inquests and the Coroner's Role

37. Which of the following do you feel are the most important functions of the coroner?

Please select as many options as reflect your view

- To publicly investigate deaths
- To prevent future fatalities
- To be an advocate for the dead
- To facilitate closure for families
- To identify good practice in medical care or first response
- To provide accountability for deaths
- To rule out homicide
- To provide answers for the family and the public as to how the deceased died
- Other (please specify in the box below)

38. How often are the following used in inquests you conduct?

	Always	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
Special measures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ground rules hearings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Juries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

39. Which of the following do you feel are appropriate at inquests?

Please select as many options as reflect your view

- A family member provides a pen portrait of the deceased when giving evidence
- A family member displays a photograph of the deceased when giving evidence
- The bereaved are invited to explain how the death has affected them
- Other witnesses are invited to explain how the death has affected them

Please feel free to provide any further comments here

40. The following statements explore your views on inquests and the role of the coroner?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
When the family is unrepresented and other interested persons are represented, my role requires me to level the playing field.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The inquest can be a cathartic process for families and others involved in a death.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is no need for all inquests to be concluded with a hearing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
PFD reports are effective in preventing future deaths.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is not really useful to use juries at inquests.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There should be a national coroner service.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Coroner Attitude Survey 2020

Joining the Coroner's Service

41. Knowing what you know now about your job as a coroner would you still have applied for a coroner's post?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

42. Would you encourage suitable people to apply to be a coroner?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Please feel free to provide any further comments

43. The reasons I would encourage suitable people to apply to join the Coroner's Service are:

(Please select as many options as reflect your view)

- Challenge of the work
- Sense of collegiality
- Job security
- Intellectual satisfaction
- Salary

- Public service
- Respect in the community
- Pension
- Administrative support
- Less pressurised environment than practice
- Prestige of the job
- Chance to contribute to justice being done
- Supportive local authority
- Supportive police force
- Other (please specify in the box below)

Please feel free to provide a further comment:

44. The reasons I would discourage suitable people from applying to join the Coroner's Service are:

(Please select as many options as reflect your view)

- Isolation of the job
- Constant policy changes
- Lack of variety in the work
- Lack of respect for coroners
- Experience of changes to pension entitlements
- Lack of personal control over working time
- Reduction in income
- Lack of administrative support
- Poor quality of physical work environment

- Feeling of being an employee or civil servant
- Appointments process
- Too much out of hours work required to do the job
- Lack of support from local authorities
- Lack of support from police
- Rigid hierarchical work environment
- Too few opportunities for promotion
- Feeling of being second best compared to judges
- Constant dealing with death and grief
- Other (please specify in the box below)

Please feel free to provide a further comment:

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Coroner Attitude Survey 2020

Leadership

45. Please indicate if you currently:

(Please tick as many answers as apply to you)

- hold a formal leadership position in the judiciary (e.g., as a Senior Coroner, an officer in the CSEW, chairing a regional group of coroners, part of one of the specialist cadre of coroners on DVI, Military Deaths, etc)?
- undertake any additional responsibilities as a judge that are not formal leadership roles (e.g., Judicial College duties as a Course Director, Syndicate leader, part of a local resilience forum or local trainer, etc.)?

46. Would you be interested in taking on more leadership responsibilities in your judicial role?

- Yes
- Yes but there are none available in my jurisdiction
- I would be interested if leadership roles were properly rewarded
- No a leadership role is not for me
- No I have (or have had) enough leadership responsibilities already
- Not at the present time but possibly in future
- Not sure

47. Do you feel that judicial leadership roles are allocated fairly?

- Yes
- No
- I do not know enough about how it is done to say

If you answered No please feel free to provide reasons why

48. The following explore your views of your immediate leadership judge(s):

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I would like my immediate leadership judge to help me evaluate how I am performing as a judge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like to be able to discuss my career development with my immediate leadership judge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like to be able to speak with someone other than my immediate leadership judge about my career development.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Case allocation is done fairly by my local leadership judge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I receive good support from my immediate leadership judge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please feel free to provide any further comments

49. How helpful has the creation of the position of Chief Coroner been for any of the following?

	Helpful	Not sure	Not helpful
Increasing coroners' welfare	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increasing consistency across the coroners service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Providing guidance to coroners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Enhancing public perception of the role of coroners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creating stronger links with the courts & tribunals judiciary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Establishing leadership within the coroners service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please feel free to provide any further comments on this issue here

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Coroner Attitude Survey 2020

Covid-19 and this Survey

50. The 2020 Coroner Attitude Survey is being run during the Covid-19 emergency, and you are welcome to provide any further comments in the box below about how, if at all, your answers to this survey may have been affected by Covid-19.

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Coroner Attitude Survey 2020

General Information

51. What is the main geographic region where you sit as a coroner?

- London
- Eastern
- East Midlands
- West Midlands
- North East
- North West
- South East
- South West
- Yorkshire and the Humber
- Wales

Please feel free to provide a further comment:

52. Before joining the Coroner's Service what type of legal engagement or other work were you in?

(Please tick as many answers as apply to you)

- Barrister
- Employed lawyer
- Legal academic
- Legal executive

- QC
- Solicitor
- Medical professional (please indicate your medical specialism in the box below)
- Other (please specify in the box below if you would like to)

53. This Question is for PART-TIME FEE PAID Coroners ONLY

As well as being a part of the Coroner's Service, what type of legal engagement or other work do you continue to engage in?

Please tick as many answers as apply to you

- Barrister (self employed)
- Barrister (employed)
- Solicitor
- Legal Executive
- Legal Academic
- Other (please specify in the box below)

54. Are you:

- Male
- Female

Other

55. What is your age group?

Under 35

35-39

40-44

45-49

50-54

55-59

60-62

63-65

66-67

68-69

70 or over

56. Do you have any of the following?

Children you support financially

Caring responsibilities for a family member(s)?

57. This question asks about your education experience

(Please tick as many boxes as apply to you)

Secondary education - I attended a UK state school

Secondary education - I attended a UK independent/fee-paying school

Secondary education - I attended a school outside the UK

Secondary education - other

University - I was part of the first generation of my family to attend university

- University - I was not part of the first generation of my family to attend university
- Other (please specify in the box below)

58. What is your ethnic group?

- White - English
- White - Welsh
- White - Scottish
- White - Irish
- White - Other
- Mixed - White and Black Caribbean
- Mixed - White and Black African
- Mixed - White and Asian
- Mixed - any other mixed background
- Asian - Indian
- Asian - Pakistani
- Asian - Bangladeshi
- Asian - Chinese
- Asian - any other Asian background
- Black - Caribbean
- Black - African
- Black - any other Black background
- Arab
- Any other ethnic group

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Coroner Attitude Survey 2020

The Survey

59. This survey was:

- Too long
- About the right length
- Not long enough

60. How long did it take you to complete this survey?

- No more than 5 minutes
- Less than 10 minutes
- Less than 15 minutes
- Less than 20 minutes
- Less than 30 minutes
- 30 minutes or longer

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Coroner Attitude Survey 2020

Thank you for taking part in the 2020 Coroner Attitude Survey. Your answers have now been received.

Your participation has been extremely valuable and very much appreciated.

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