

QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW EXTENDED CONTENT

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During the course of the lockdowns, many staff left positions and significant number of vacancies remained unfilled leading to a lack of continuity required for trials lacking. Redeployment of some staff meant remaining staff had a sharp increase to their work.

'We were briefly redeployed again, which was very stressful. Having to go to a new area and work with strangers on something I really didn't know a lot about which was stressful' [006]. 'The inability to recruit other members and roles as they might be attracted to other sectors ... no lack of money, just lack of staff' [002]. Some teams had made efforts to ensure a team spirit continued throughout by organising 'teams' social events and having weekly catch-up calls or online problem-solving forums where questions could be answered quickly by other team members. This was not universal across all teams however'

Not all participants commented on whether their colleagues were more or less tolerant however of those that did, responses were mixed;

'I wouldn't say it was all plain sailing because that's not the case but I do think, yeah, we understand each other better' [003].

Some participants experienced more pressure than others to catch up. There was a sense of transition, and it was difficult to tease out whether the pressure came from the need to catch up or whether pressure had simply increased due to the nature of the role. Similarly, some participants felt things had become more efficient in terms of delivering the standard of work they did before; ...

'... being able to jump into a meeting easily, no distractions ..' [002]' 'The university have gone down a blended approach ... giving people the flexibility People being more responsible for their own workloads ... getting more out of people' [003].

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCRIPT

Semi Structured Interview Questions:
Impact of SARS-Cov-2 on CTU Staff – EPIC CTU Observational Study

Hello, thank you very much for agreeing to take part in this interview and for taking the time to speak to me today. My name is (first name, surname) . . . , I am a (profession) . . .

Can I just check that you are expecting this interview to last approximately 45 minutes?

As you know, this interview will be recorded to ensure that I fully capture your answers. The recordings will be transcribed and all personal identifiers removed before the data is analysed. You will not be identifiable at all from the transcripts of this interview.

We would like to know a little bit more about your experiences of taking part in the study. As participant in this study, you*[insert details of participation here]*, is that right?

I'd just like to remind you that you are free to withdraw from the interview at any time. You do not need to give any reasons for withdrawing and you will not be put under pressure to continue the interview if you do not wish to do so.

So if this is ok for you, let's start the interview.

On a scale of 1-10 (1 least, 10 highest), where would you say your work-related stress levels are at?

- How would you say that has changed since life before COVID?

Tell me about a normal day, if there is such a thing, before COVID

- What would you say were 'normal' stressors / irritations?
- What were your stress levels like?
- What was the atmosphere in the office like?
- Did you find the job fulfilling / enjoyable / satisfying /

Tell me about a normal day at the height of COVID

- What new stressors did you experience?
- What were your stress levels like?
- Did you find the job fulfilling / enjoyable / satisfying /

Tell me about a normal day now, as it is increasingly obvious COVID is going to be with us for a long time.

- What would you say the stressors in your working life look like now?

87 - What are your stress levels like?
88 - What is the atmosphere in the office like?
89 - Do you find the job fulfilling / enjoyable / satisfying /
90
91 At what point into the pandemic did you realise things were going to be very different?
92
93 When, if at all, did you start to work from home?
94
95 Tell me about that transition
96 - Do you have a dedicated workspace at home?
97 - How did it feel merging home/work space?
98 - What were the specific challenges, if any, around home working eg with family;
99 connectivity; ability to communicate with colleagues etc
100
101 What does your working life look like now in terms of daily/weekly routine?
102 - Did you feel under pressure to return to the office?
103 - Do you feel the office is a safe environment with all of the necessary
104 precautions in place?
105
106 Would you say it has pretty much returned to what it was before the COVID pandemic?
107 - How is that working out for you?
108 - What's good about it, if anything?
109 - What's difficult, if anything?
110 - If you could change anything, what would it be?
111
112 Would you say you were more or less tolerant of colleagues now than you were before or
113 no different?
114 - If more, in what ways?
115 - If less, how so?
116
117 Have you noticed that some of your colleagues are more or less tolerant?
118 - If yes, how does that make you feel? [walking on eggshells, scared to share
119 views]
120
121 Would you say you felt under more pressure to 'catch up' on clinical trials that had to be
122 paused due to COVID?
123
124 Would you say you felt more anxious about being in the workplace because of COVID?
125 - If so, what would need to happen for that anxiety to be reduced?
126 - Who is responsible for that to happen?
127 - Do you feel confident to share your concerns with colleagues?
128
129 Do you think it's more difficult to deliver the standard of work you did before?
130 If yes -
131 - What factors contribute to that?
132 - How does that make you feel?
133 - Do you think it will go back to how it was before?
134 - What resources do you need for things to improve?

135 - What support do you need from line management or the Trust?
136
137 If there was one thing – no matter how big or how small – that would reduce your burden
138 at work, what would that be?
139
140 One more question – is there anything else I should have asked? Please tell me if I've
141 missed something that you think is relevant/important to share.
142
143 Closing statement reiterating confidentiality and right to withdraw.
144