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Use and availability during the COVID-19 pandemic

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This publication contains information, advice and guidance to help members of the RCN. It is intended for use within the UK but readers are advised that practices may vary in each country and outside the UK.

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The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) developed and distributed an online survey to all RCN members exploring respondent's experiences of personal and protective equipment (PPE) across all settings in

- 78% of respondents work in England, 11% in Scotland, 4% in Northern Ireland and 6% in Wales.
- 5% of respondents identify as having a disability.
- 90% identify as female, 8% as male, 2% prefer not to say and, finally, 0.1% have selected 'other' as gender identity.



England	%
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Arh Arh B hlr .	%
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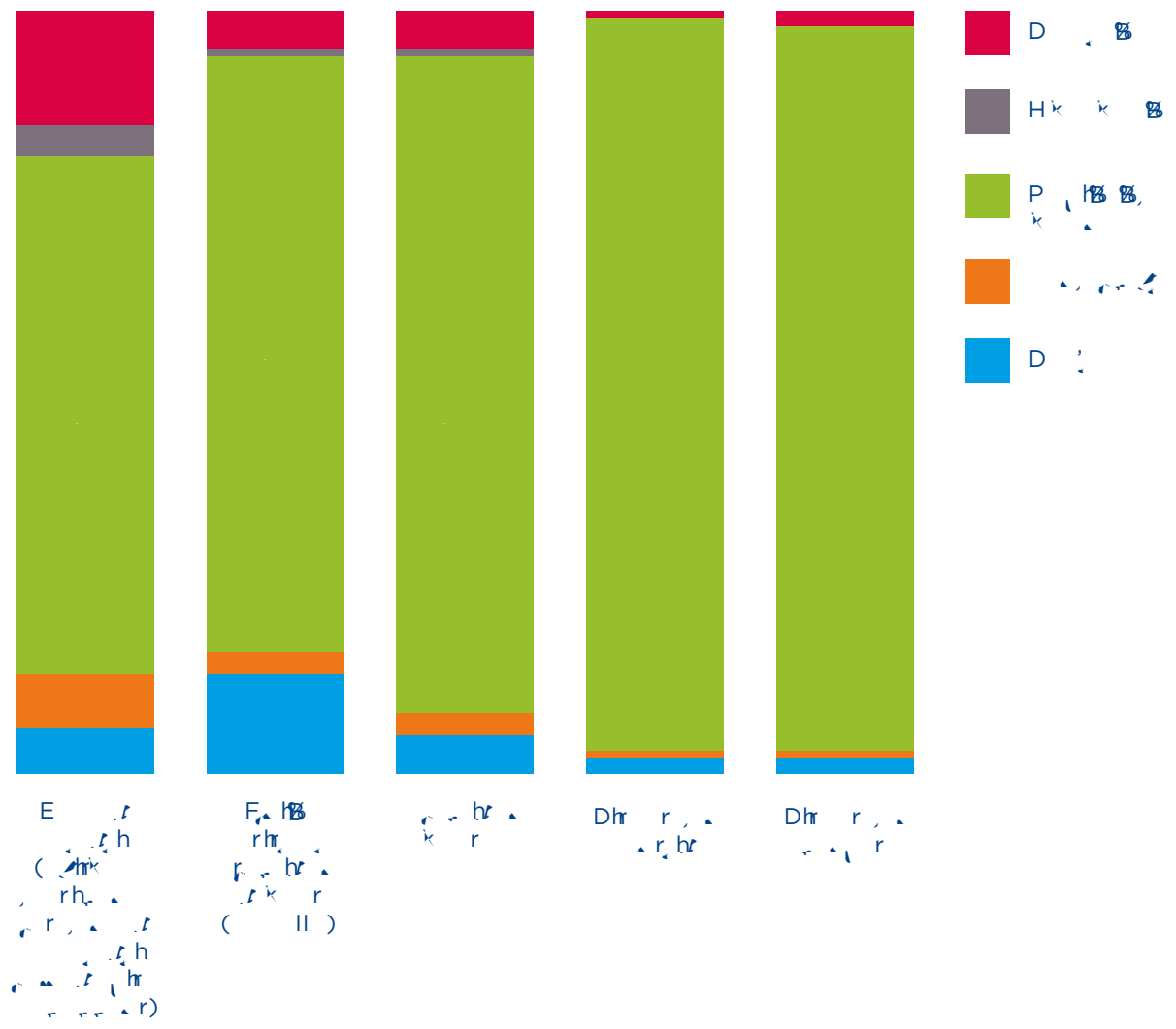
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Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- The majority of PPE was reported to be provided by the employer.
- However, 7% of respondents said they bought their own eye/face protection, and 5% said they made their own eye/face protection. A further 15% reported that their eye/face protection had been donated.
- Respondents reported that 5% of fluid resistant masks and 5% of surgical masks had been donated. Whilst 3% reported that they had bought each of these themselves.

Data



RESULTS

- While 58% of respondents reported having training, more than 40% have received no training on what PPE to wear and when to wear it.
- 46% of respondents have not received training on donning, doffing and disposing of standard PPE.
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4,446 respondents told us they work in environments where AGPs or other high-risk procedures are undertaken. According to the guidance (see Methodology) working in such environments requires the following items of personal protective equipment:

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PPE and AGP

- While the majority of those whose work involves taking part in AGPs or other high-risk procedures have received training, 30% of respondents reported not having received training on what PPE to wear and when to use it and 34% reported not having received training on donning, doffing and disposing of PPE.
- Where they had received training, 82% had received it within the last month.
- 34% of those whose work involves taking part in AGPs or other high-risk procedures, reported not having their mask fit-tested.

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These questions were asked to all respondents. Anecdotal evidence from our members revealed that they were concerned with being pressured by their employers to care for confirmed or possible COVID-19 patients without suitable PPE. We wanted to explore the extent to which this was a problem for nursing professionals. We have also received calls about specific issues our members had with using the prescribed PPE equipment, so we wanted to use this survey to explore the range of issues with PPE.

In addition, we wanted to understand how far nursing professionals had access to materials and facilities to help address i

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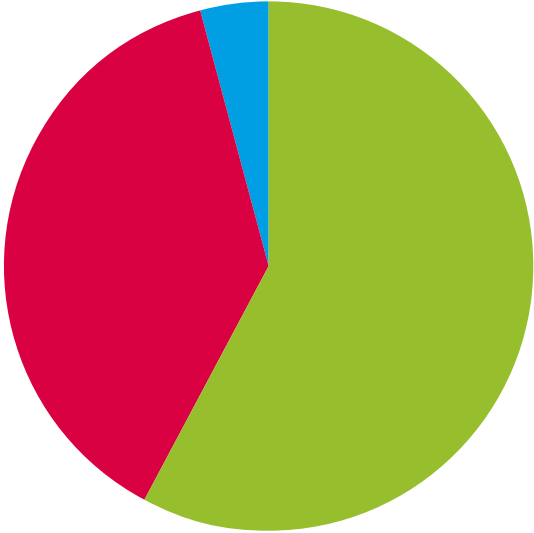


Table 1. The distribution of the respondents by gender

Gender	Percentage
Male	75.0%
Female	25.0%
Female (with children)	10.0%
Female (without children)	15.0%
Male (with children)	10.0%
Male (without children)	65.0%



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Access to appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Our members across the UK have been telling us they are unable to access adequate and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for use when caring for patients with possible or confirmed COVID-19. We have developed a survey aiming to explore whether you have access to the correct PPE to allow you to comply with the recommended guidance.

Please fill in this short survey to share your experiences with us. It will take no longer than ten minutes to complete. These results will allow us to understand which issues need to be addressed to ensure you are protected while doing your work, and will inform our lobbying and campaigning in this area.

Your responses are anonymous and if you have any questions about the survey please email: evidence@rcn.org.uk

The survey closes at 11pm on Monday 13 April 2020.

If you need further information on PPE including what you should be provided with depending on the circumstances, please follow this [link](#). In your workplace this guidance should be incorporated into your local infection control policies and procedures to support your role and practice.

Questions marked with a * must be answered to move on through the survey.

Where do you mainly work? *

- GP practice
- NHS trust or NHS Board
- Local authority care agency
- Local authority residential home/care home
- Local authority nursing home/care home
- Higher education institution
- Hospice
- Private care agency
- Private residential home/care home
- Private nursing home/care home
- Private community employer
- Private hospital
- Prison
- Police custody
- Social enterprise health care provider
- Other (please specify):

What is your role? *

Registered nurse/midwife

Aerosol Generating Procedures (AGPs) and PPE

Do you have enough of the following personal protective equipment (PPE) items, as recommended for supporting aerosol generating procedures (AGPs) or other high-risk procedures, for the duration of your shift? *

	I have enough to use in my workplace	I have enough at the moment but am concerned about the supply for my next shift	There is not enough for me to use	I don't know	Not needed
Eye/face protection (This may be single or reusable face/eye protection/full face visor or goggles)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Filtering face piece respirator (FFP3 or FFP2/N95)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Disposable fluid-repellent coverall/gown	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Disposable gloves	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

During this Covid-19 pandemic, have you been asked to re-use single use equipment?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Have you received training on what PPE to wear, as recommended for supporting aerosol generating procedures (AGPs) or other high-risk procedures, and when you should wear it? *

- Yes
- No

When did you receive this training? *

- Within the last month
- Within the last 2 months
- Within the last 3 months
- More than 3 months ago

Have you received training on donning, doffing and disposing of PPE, as recommended for supporting aerosol generating procedures (AGPs) or other high-risk procedures? *

G. Have you felt pressured to care for a patient without adequate PPE?

During this COVID-19 pandemic, have you felt pressured to care for a patient without adequate protection as outlined in the current PPE guidance? *

Yes

No

Have you had any issues with supplied PPE due to specific individual needs, this could be through having disabilities, religious and cultural practices, having facial hair or wearing glasses etc? *

Yes

No

Don't know

Please tell us what was the issue and how has it impacted on your ability to use PPE? *

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During the COVID-19 pandemic, have you raised any concerns you have had about personal protective equipment (PPE)? *

- Yes
- No
- I don't have any concerns

What method did you use to raise your concerns? Select all that apply *

- Raised it verbally with my manager
- Raised it in writing with my manager
- Filled in an incident form/near miss form or equivalent
- Raised it with the RCN or other trade union workplace representative
- Raised it formally with someone more senior (e.g Nursing Director, Managing Director, etc.)
- Raised it with RCN Direct or equivalent

Have your concerns been addressed? *

- Yes, they were addressed fully
- Yes, they were addressed partially
- No, they were not addressed

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Which country do you mainly work in? *

- England
- Northern Ireland
- Scotland
- Wales

Which region do you mainly work in? *

Do you identify yourself as having a disability? *

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

How would you describe your gender? *

Male

Female

Prefer not to say

Other (please specify):

