Targeted CPA Survey – Business Continuity
Abridged Report - 10 June 2020

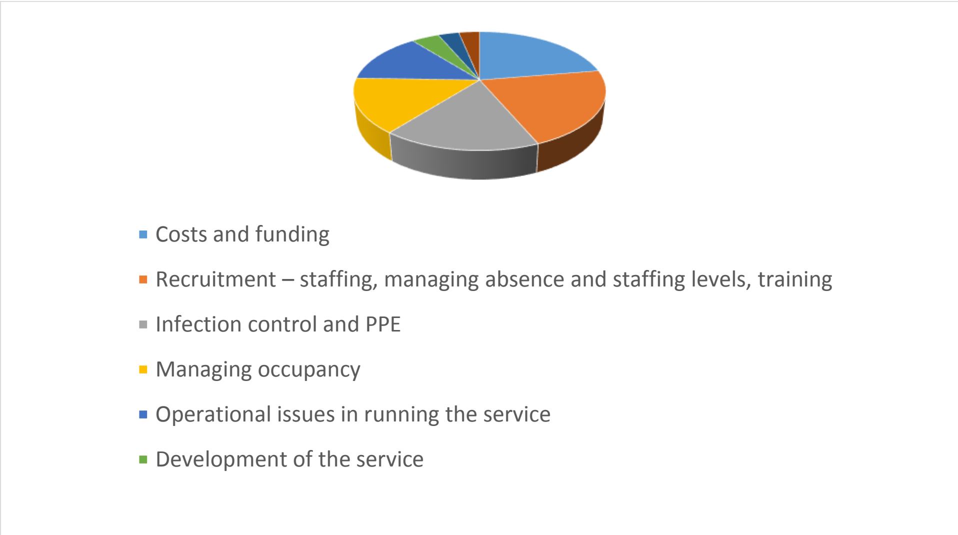
The Care Provider Alliance (CPA) carried out a survey with members on 20th May to 27th May. A total of 40 care providers took part. The online survey was detailed taking an average 17 minutes to complete. This is reflected in the number of people taking part. However, the findings were helpful and provided useful insights. At least one provider from each of the 10 CPA membership associations took part to give a broad perspective in the responses.

Key findings

Business Continuity Planning

What are your key business continuity priorities over the next 6 months?

A series of questions were asked to understand the key business continuity planning priorities for providers over the next 6 months. As can be seen from the chart, costs and funding is the number one priority, alongside issues relating to the care workforce, infection control and PPE, managing occupancy and operational issues in running the service.

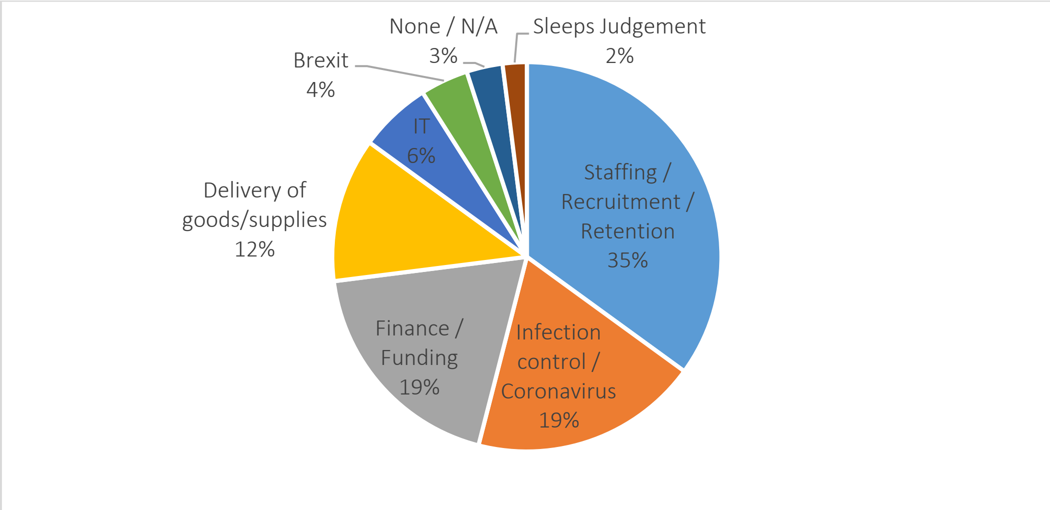


Providers raised concerns relating to the distribution of the emergency funding from local authorities, whilst others were particularly concerned with the impact of low occupancy on the financial health of their business model. A few others raised the issue of the forthcoming Supreme Court ruling on sleep-ins and how this could impact costs.

With regards to occupancy, many were particularly concerned about the impact of care home deaths on public perception of care homes and how this might affect services in the future. COVID-19 testing, in particular access to ongoing and regular testing, and the guidance relating to positive results for the workforce and how this is to be managed featured widely.

The same question on priorities was asked in a similar survey carried out between 2nd - 10th March 2020 at which 90 providers responded, that time looking at priorities over a 12-month period. The key priorities noted then was the workforce, with recruitment and retention being a key priority; the management of COVID-19 and minimising its impact on service continuity, concerns around delivery of goods and supplies especially PPE; and managing costs. These issues remain key concerns for providers and will continue to be so over the coming months.

Business Continuity Survey – 2nd – 10th May 2020. 90 participants



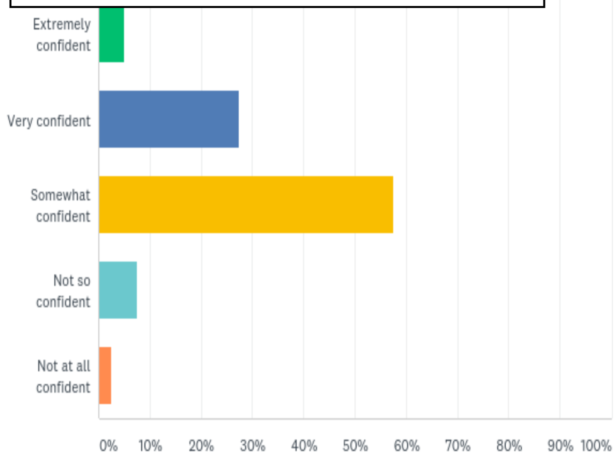
Indemnity and insurance

Providers were asked to comment on a series of questions on the availability and access to indemnity insurance. The questions in this survey were similar to the questions asked in the survey solely focused on indemnity and insurance and the findings were consistent. Please refer to that report for further information on key findings.

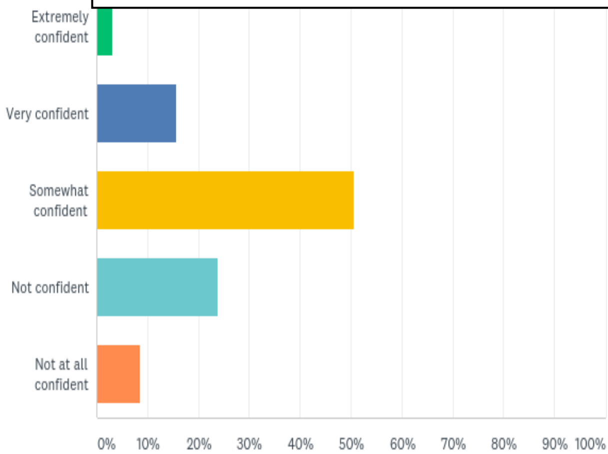
The care workforce

How confident are you to manage significant staff absence in worst-case scenario?

Business Continuity Survey – 20th – 27th May 2020. 40 participants



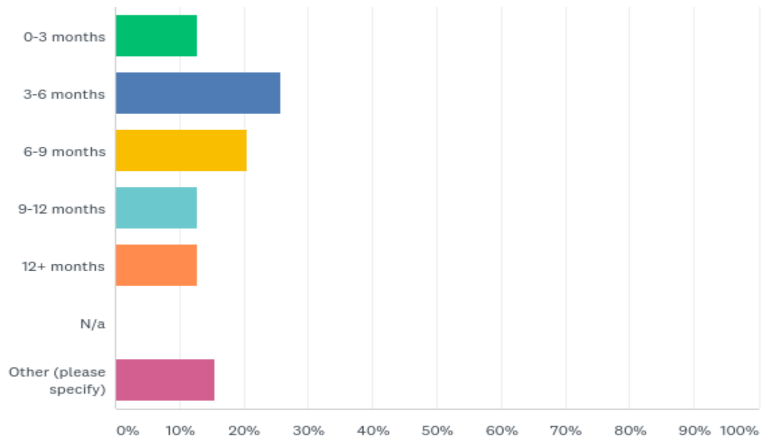
Contingency Planning survey – 17th – 26th March 2020. 223 participants



We can see from the above charts that confidence levels have increased compared to the results in March. Having gone through the peak of the pandemic outbreak, providers have tested their contingency plans, made adjustments and are now confident in the measures they have in place to manage worst-case scenarios.

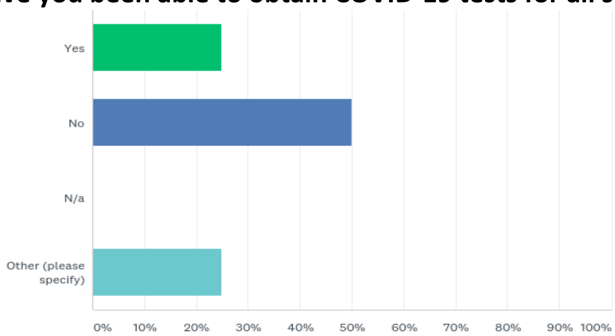
However, key issues related to managing the workforce were noted. The ongoing requirement for recruitment and management of staff absence relating to sickness or staff self-isolating is a key issue. Providers reported some success in recruitment during the pandemic and raised concerns around training and use of agency staff as key issues. Supporting staff wellbeing and managing anxiety, particularly the need to give reassurance for staff to return to work; Infection control to prevent further outbreaks in care settings; and costs and funding were all key issues.

When asked how long providers could sustain additional staffing and PPE costs – 59% stated that additional costs could be sustained for 6-9months if using reserves or capital investments. For those providers without access to such funds the period of time was much less, as shown in the chart with over 12% stating less than 3 months.



Infection control

Have you been able to obtain COVID-19 tests for all staff and residents with or without symptoms?



At the time of the survey 50% of providers were yet to obtain COVID-19 tests for all staff and residents with or without symptoms. Of the 25% who had received tests the verbatim comments indicated confusion in guidance, and access and speed of test results. Most providers were confident in managing and controlling an infection outbreak in their care setting with a few raising complaints about government guidance. Training and support was felt required for different types of service users as an ongoing concern.

Other

What guidance or communication resources would you find useful to help you tackle the COVID-19 pandemic, and its wider impact on your organisation, staff and service users?

The resounding response to this question was the need for clear and accurate government guidance. Providers felt that the number of conflicting national guidance and lack of clarity was unhelpful. Also access to regular testing and clinical support into services was raised as essential.