

Analysis of survey of members in the private and independent healthcare sectors



Executive Summary

In September 2010, the Society and College of Radiographers (SCoR) surveyed members working in the private and independent healthcare sectors with the aim of improving the knowledgebase of members in these sectors to further improve our services. Over 200 members responded to an anonymous online questionnaire covering a range of questions about their employment and SCoR membership. This document presents the results of this survey and the following bullet points highlight the main findings:

- Responses were received from employees of private, independent and charitable organisations of varying sizes from across the UK. Most of the respondents to the survey are employed in organisations with more than 50 employees. Nearly half of respondents work in London or the south east of England.
- Respondents were asked how much training, other than mandatory training, they have received, paid for or provided by their employer over the past year in order to improve their skills. There is no statistically significant difference between the responses in this survey and the responses to a similar question in a recent survey of NHS members, except that members in the private and independent healthcare sectors are more likely to report that their employer paid for none of their training (20% of respondents).
- Nearly two-fifths of respondents report that their employment terms and conditions have changed in the last year.
- Just over two thirds of respondents who have experienced changes to terms and conditions in the last year said that they do not feel their SoR membership was of value during these changes.
- Nearly one third of respondents have had contact with the SoR in the last year and were generally very positive about the SoR response to their contact.
- There is a feeling that SoR focus on NHS members sometimes to the detriment of members in other sectors even though they pay the same membership fee. Some respondents questioned the value of their membership of the Society. Other respondents commented on how pleased they were to receive the email asking them to participate in the survey. A number described how highly they value membership of the Society.

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1. Introduction

In September 2010, the Society and College of Radiographers (SCoR) surveyed members working in the private and independent healthcare sectors with the aim of improving the knowledgebase of members in these sectors to further improve our services.

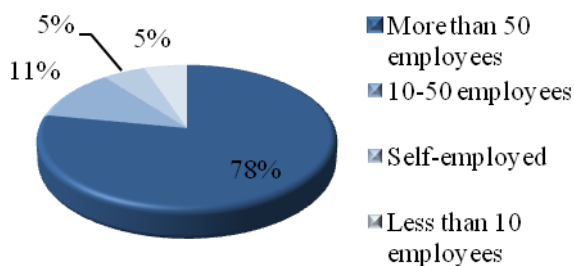
An email containing a link to an anonymous online questionnaire was sent to all 1054 members in the independent or private healthcare sectors with a known email address. 210 members (20%) responded to the survey, answering a range of questions about their employment and membership of the Society.

The results are mainly displayed using descriptive statistics. In section 3, where there are apparent differences from NHS members, a statistical test (chi-squared) is used to determine with 95% confidence if the differences are statistically significant or could just be explained by chance.

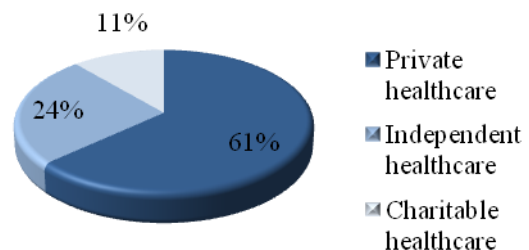
2. Profile of employers

Responses were received from employees of organisations of varying sizes from across the UK. Most of the respondents to the survey are employed in organisations with more than 50 employees. 45% of respondents work in London or the south east of England. Over half are employed in the private healthcare sector and 12% of employers have undergone a merger or acquisition process in the last year. Nearly 20% of respondents are intending to move jobs in the next 12 months.

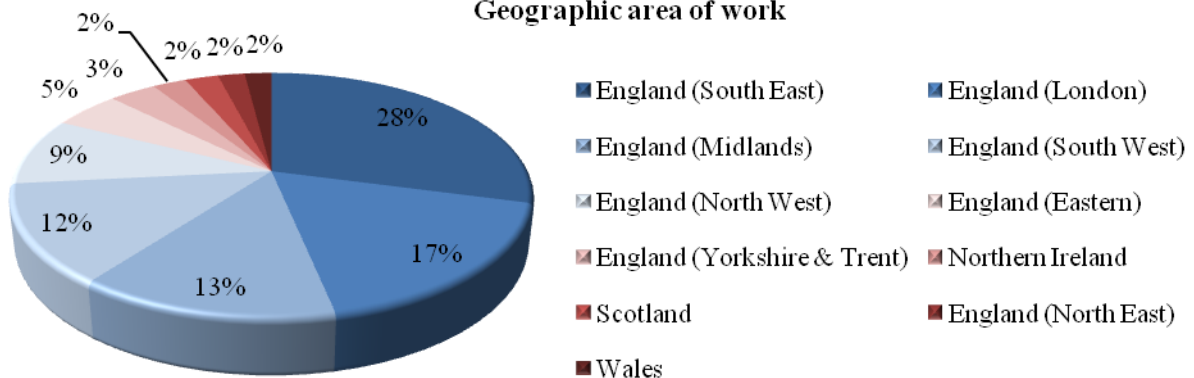
Approximate size of employer



How would you describe the sector in which you work?



Geographic area of work

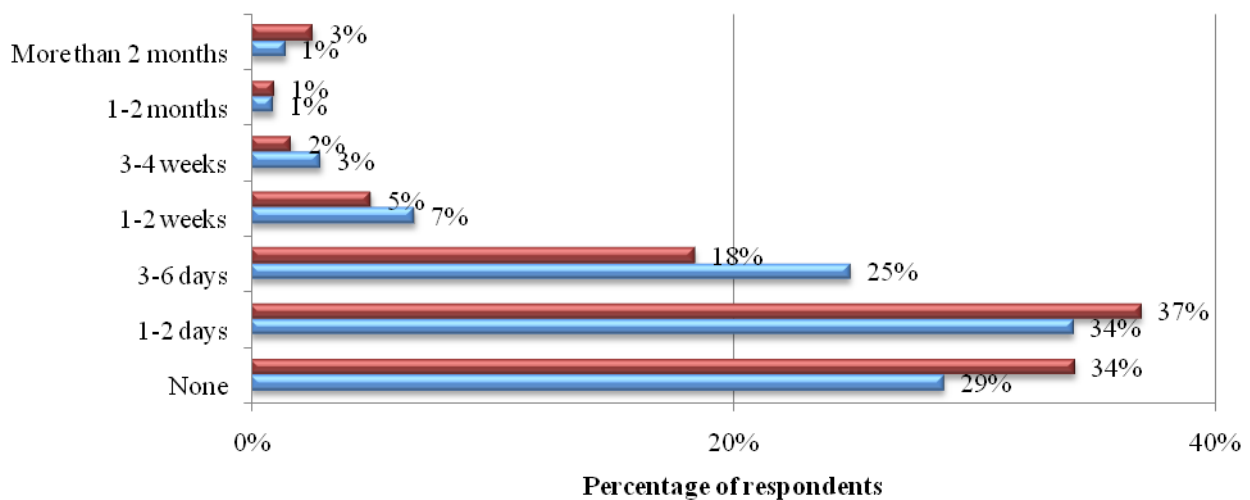


3. Training

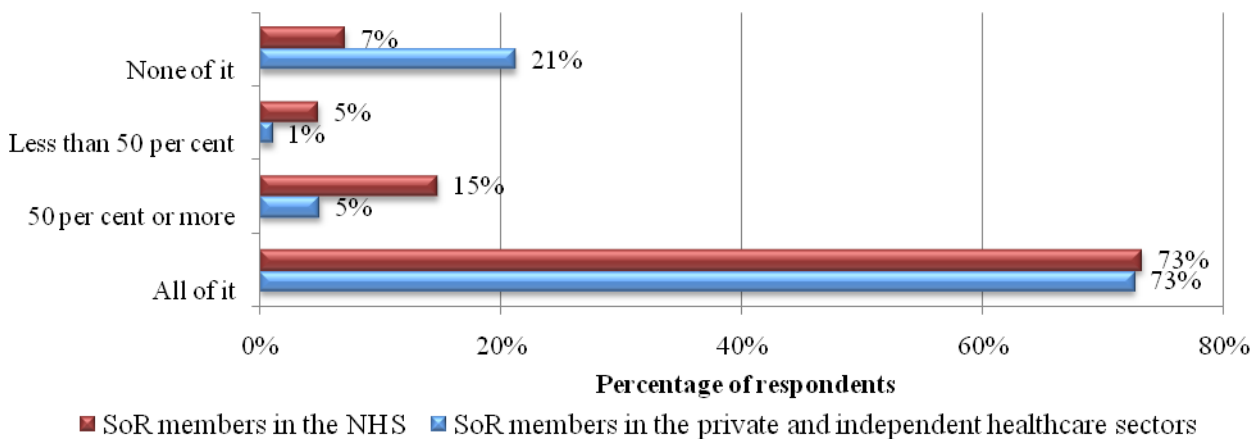
Respondents were asked how much training, other than mandatory training, they have received, paid for or provided by their employer over the past year in order to improve their skills. For comparison purposes, also shown are the responses to a similar question by SoR members participating in the Incomes Data Services survey of NHS professionals in June 2010.¹ Although some variation can be seen between the results from the private and independent healthcare sectors and the NHS, these differences are not statistically significant².

Respondents were then asked how much of this training was paid for by their employer. Here there is a statistically significant difference with more private and independent healthcare than NHS members reporting that their employer had paid for **none** of their training.

How much training, other than mandatory training, have you had provided by your employer over the past year?



What proportion of your training was paid for by your employer?



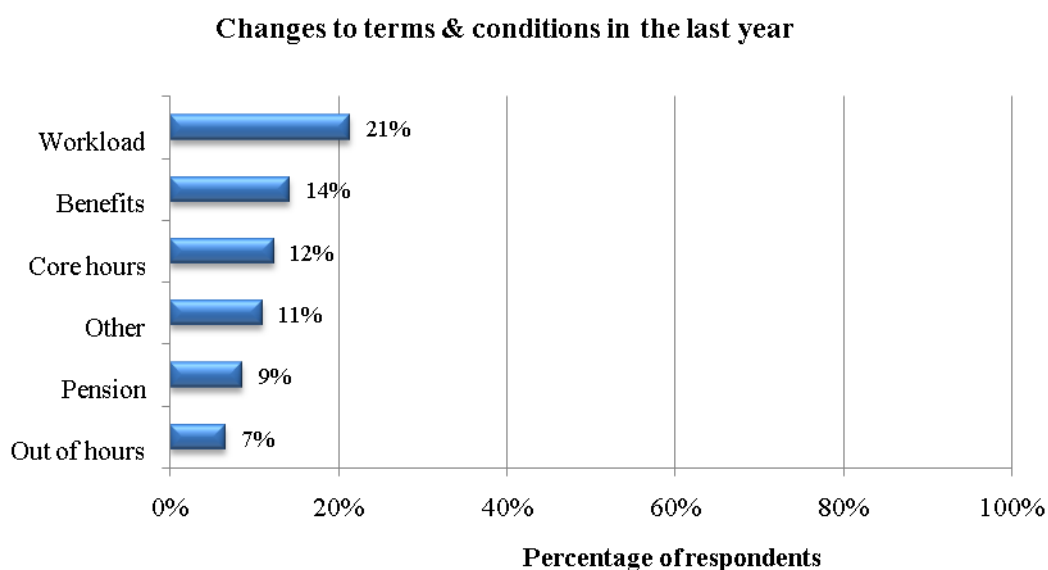
¹ Incomes Data Services (2010) *NHS staff survey – A research report for the NHS trade unions*

² Chi-squared test - 95% confidence level

4. Changes to employment terms & conditions

38% of respondents report that their employment terms and conditions have changed in the last year. Those respondents who reported changes were given a list of common aspects of terms and conditions and asked to select which had changed over the last year. The most frequently selected criterion is workload.

Respondents selecting 'Other' gave a free-text response describing the changes to their terms and conditions in the last year. Aspects of terms & conditions given by two or more respondents were changes to pay, unpaid work, expenses, promotion, job title/description, travel allowance, retirement, 'bank' status and Saturday working.



70% of respondents who have experienced changes to terms and conditions in the last year said that they do not feel their SoR membership was of value during these changes. Respondents were asked if they wished to comment further and the table below gives the main themes raised by 2 or more respondents.

Theme	Number of respondents	Example comment
Membership of little or no help	5	<i>"A number of colleagues and myself asked for assistance regarding the new contracts being offered, but very little help was provided in the form of advice or comment."</i>
Membership was helpful	4	<i>"My regional officer has offered invaluable help and support."</i>
Limited or no recognition of SoR by employer	4	<i>"Advice was given, but as the SoR is not recognised by my employer the SoR could not directly represent me."</i>
Employers do not want trade union involvement	2	<i>"We asked for the SoR to be involved. The company does not want the SoR to be our approved trade union as they say we don't need one"</i>

5. Contact with the SoR

30% of respondents have had contact with the SoR in the last year. The nature of this contact ranged across the entire range of SoR member services. The following types of contact were mentioned by two or more respondents. (The number of respondents is given in brackets.)

- Changes to terms & conditions (10)
- Training and courses (6)
- Membership enquiry (5)
- Change of personal details (4)
- General advice (3)
- Advice for disciplinary (3)
- Copy of diploma / certificate (3)
- Professional Indemnity Insurance (3)
- Password (2)
- Maternity leave (2)
- Issues with managers (2)
- Health & Safety (2)
- CPD (2)

Respondents were then asked if they have any comments on this contact and were generally very positive about the SoR response to their contact. The word cloud below gives a pictorial representation of the most common words used in the free-text responses. The table below gives an analysis of the themes mentioned by two or more respondents.



Word cloud credit: Wordle.net

Theme	Number of respondents	Example comment
Helpful	21	<i>“Very helpful telephone call followed up by email.”</i>
Not helpful	4	<i>“ Re: colleague’s disciplinary, outcome not favourable. Advice appeared to be inappropriate and inadequate.”</i>
Member unable to successfully act on advice	3	<i>“It was prompt useful advice - unfortunately my employee took no notice of it.”</i>
Easy to contact	3	<i>“My regional officer was readily available for advice and support as necessary.”</i>
Rep helped	2	<i>“Society rep a great help in this case.”</i>
Efficient	2	<i>“Very friendly, professional and efficient.”</i>
Regional officer helped	2	<i>“Excellent help and advice from Marie Bullough”</i>
Prompt	2	<i>“Very helpful and quick to respond, thank you”</i>
Slow response	2	<i>“She was eventually very helpful but it did take several telephone calls”</i>

Theme	Number of respondents	Example comment
Employer pays for significant amount of training	3	<i>“When I do go on a course my employer pays for everything, as is a private company the need for external courses/training has to be justified.”</i>
Pay the same membership fee as NHS members	3	<i>“Radiographers working in the private sector are not treated on equal terms to those working in the NHS in spite of paying the same fee”</i>
E-learning only available to NHS members	3	<i>“Feel that SoR sometimes forgets that not all radiographers work in the NHS - there is a training programme accessible to those in the NHS, is there a similar programme in the pipeline for those in the private sector?”</i>
Question value of SoR membership	3	<i>“Having worked outside the NHS for the last 10 years, I have absolutely no idea who I should contact if I have any issues. I have no Society Rep I can approach, I am therefore questioning why I am a Member of the Society at all.”</i>

Appendix A – Survey questionnaire (pdf version only)

Independent and private healthcare sector member survey

1. Introduction

This online questionnaire by the Society of Radiographers should be completed by members working in independent and healthcare sectors.

It should only take five minutes to complete and your answers will be anonymous.

2. Employer

* 1. Approximate size of employer

- Self-employed
- Less than 10 employees
- 10-50 employees
- More than 50 employees
- Not applicable

* 2. Has your employer changed in the last year due to merger or acquisition?

- Yes
- No

* 3. Do you intend to move in the next 12 months

- To a private/independent healthcare provider
- To the NHS
- Overseas
- Out of the profession
- I do not intend to move

3. Employment

* 4. Has there been any change in your terms & conditions in the last year?

- Yes
- No

Independent and private healthcare sector member survey

5. If yes, what has changed (select all that apply)?

- Core hours
- Out of hours
- Pension
- Benefits
- Workload

Other (please specify)

6. Do you feel that your SoR membership was of value during the above changes?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

7. Do you wish to comment further on this?

4. Training

* 8. How much training, other than mandatory training, have you received, paid for or had provided by your employer over the past year in order to improve your skills?

- None
- 1-2 days
- 3-6 days
- 1-2 weeks
- 3-4 weeks
- 1-2 months
- More than 2 months

9. What proportion of your training was paid for by your employer?

- All of it
- 50 per cent or more
- Less than 50 per cent
- None of it

5. Contact

Independent and private healthcare sector member survey

* 10. Have you had contact with the Society of Radiographers in the last year?

Yes

No

11. What was the nature of that contact?

12. Do you have any comments on this contact?

6. General

* 13. Geographic area of work

Outside the United Kingdom

Northern Ireland

Scotland

Wales

England (Eastern)

England (London)

England (Midlands)

England (North East)

England (North West)

England (South East)

England (South West)

England (Yorkshire & Trent)

Not known

* 14. How would you describe the sector in which you work?

Charitable healthcare

Independent healthcare

Private healthcare

Other (please specify)

7. And finally ...

Independent and private healthcare sector member survey

Thank you for completing this survey.

15. Do you have any further comments related to this survey or about the Society of Radiographers?