

# Press release



THE CHARTERED BODY FOR THE PROJECT PROFESSION

07 May 2021 – Buckinghamshire, UK

## **Nearly nine in 10 project professionals' say work on their main project has harmed their mental wellbeing**

The overwhelming majority (87 per cent) of people managing projects say their mental wellbeing has been negatively impacted by their main project, with a third (33 per cent) strongly agreeing with this statement.

The findings of a survey\* by Association for Project Management (APM), the chartered body for the project profession, with research company Censuswide, are released ahead of Mental Health Awareness Week 2021 (10-16 May).

The main reasons project professionals cited for why their project has negatively impacted them are:

- There is insufficient opportunity for me to voice concerns to my superiors – cited by 37 per cent of respondents
- My manager's/superior's attitude and/or approach to work is negatively impacting my ability to work well – cited by 37 per cent
- My work-life balance is suffering due to this project – cited by 36 per cent
- This project is impacting my home life and personal relationships – cited by 34 per cent

APM survey data also highlights the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, revealing that 70 per cent of project practitioners have been negatively affected in their ability to do their job. Respondents who agreed that the pandemic had negatively impacted them cited the need to balance work with other responsibilities (31 per cent), difficulty adapting to remote working (30 per cent), important meetings or phone calls being cancelled or postponed (30 per cent) and reduced confidence among investors or stakeholders (28 per cent) as the main reasons.

Some positives to mental health and wellbeing have also been uncovered by APM's findings, however. The majority of project practitioners (79 per cent) say that their employer has introduced new initiatives during the pandemic to support staff wellbeing.

These initiatives include schemes such as mental health first aiders, dedicated wellness days, allocating work time for social online gatherings and increased flexible working. A third (33 per cent) of project professionals say mental health support training for managers has been the most positive organisational change during the coronavirus pandemic.

Debbie Dore, chief executive of APM (pictured), said: "These continue to be challenging times, and many people in the project profession have been impacted for reasons beyond their control. It's essential that project



professionals continue to be properly supported so they can deliver positive change for the people, businesses and communities they serve.

“It’s encouraging to see that employers are taking the mental health of their employees seriously.

“As the chartered body for the project profession, APM has implemented and established new ways of working that are showing benefits to both our staff and the stakeholder groups we interact with. “We’ve been working closely with our corporate partners to encourage them to do the same and share best practice. Working with the mental health charity Mind, we’ve also published a free-to-access mental health toolkit for project managers and their employers.”

The project manager mental health toolkit can be downloaded by visiting-  
[mentalhealthatwork.org.uk/toolkit/remote-project-managers](https://mentalhealthatwork.org.uk/toolkit/remote-project-managers)

APM has also carried out studies into the wellbeing of project professionals, as well as publishing blogs containing mental health advice and wellbeing tips for project manager. For further details visit [apm.org.uk/resources/mental-health-toolkit](https://apm.org.uk/resources/mental-health-toolkit). APM’s branches across the UK also host virtual social events to help people working in project management stay connected.

\*1000 project professionals across industry sectors were surveyed by Censuswide.

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## **About Association for Project Management (APM)**

APM is the Association for Project Management, a professional membership organisation that sets the standards for the project profession and the only chartered organisation representing the project profession in the world. As a registered charity, APM provides education, qualifications, networking opportunities, research, resources, events and best practice guidance for the project community, helping the profession deliver better.

APM currently has over 30,000 members and more than 500 corporate partners based in over 128 countries across the world. Please see [apm.org.uk](https://apm.org.uk) for further details.