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# One in five police officers in UK suffer from PTSD, study finds

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Expert says lack of national policing mental health strategy is a 'public sector crisis'



**Louise Haigh**

Member of Parliament for Sheffield Heeley

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## PTSD in the Police

10th May, 2019



Officers suffering from PTSD need to be supported properly.

[The survey revealed by the BBC](#) is one of the most shocking I have read in my time in Parliament.

If the findings of a sample of 17,000 officers are replicated across the workforce, it would mean as many as 116,000 thousand police officers have experienced a traumatic event, a staggering 24,000 officers in the last four weeks alone have experienced symptoms consistent with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, 16 thousands of those undiagnosed.

In a service where one the many sad but inevitable duties is to respond to traumatic events, to have those levels of undiagnosed traumatic mental health conditions, is nothing short of a crisis.

For those, like me, who have never experienced Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, it is as well to look carefully at the symptoms and listen to the testimonies from those who have. Then consider how on earth we can ask our officers to fight this battle alone, without the

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# Police officers suffering PTSD on 'alarming' scale, study finds

Experts warn of 'clinical and public sector crisis' as almost one in five suffering from medical condition

Chiara Giordano | 1 day ago | |



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A police officer lays flowers at a police cordon on London Bridge following the terror attack on 3 June 2017. (Daniel Leal-Olivas/AFP/Getty)

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among police officers is reaching "crisis" levels with almost one in five suffering from the medical condition, a landmark



ITV REPORT 9 May 2019 at 8:07am

## Cambridge University study reveals PTSD in the police



The study found that 90% of police workers had been exposed to trauma. Credit: ITV News Anglia

Nearly one in five police officers and staff suffer with a form of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), a landmark study carried out by Cambridge University suggests.

Experts have warned of a "clinical and public sector crisis" after a survey of nearly 17,000 serving officers and operational staff indicated rates of PTSD were nearly five times higher than the wider population.

Carried out by a team at the University of Cambridge, the research's early findings also suggest that two thirds of those suffering from the disorder were unaware they had the condition.

Campaigners have warned that the lack of a unified approach by forces has created a "postcode lottery" in support and called for a national policing mental health strategy to be established.

**“**For the first time in the UK we can see behind the cultural trope of the burnt-out copper who has seen too much. This is a clinical and public sector crisis...Dealing with disturbing experiences is a defining part of policing, but employees have a right to expect resources to protect them from the impact of daily trauma exposure. Without such resources in place, the cost to policing and public safety will just mount in.**”**

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# Landmark study reveals one in five police suffers from PTSD

Rates of PTSD in police officers and staff are nearly five times higher than in the wider population

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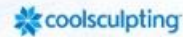
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Ninety per cent of police workers had been exposed to trauma, the survey of 17,000 staff revealed ( *Getty Images* )

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## Police inspector haunted by 18 years of trauma when he didn't know he had PTSD



EXCLUSIVE

Zoe Drewett Thursday 9 May 2019 1:45 pm



823  
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Adam Cornish suffered with PTSD for 18 years while working as a police inspector before he was diagnosed (Picture: Metro.co.uk/supplied/Getty)

Nearly one in five police officers and staff suffer with a form of post-traumatic stress disorder, a study has today revealed.

Experts say the alarming scale of the problem is a 'public sector crisis' and far more common than was ever previously thought.

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# 'Alarming' scale of police officers suffering from PTSD revealed

Experts warned of a 'clinical and public sector crisis'.



Nearly one in five police officers and staff suffer with PTSD, a study found (Victoria Jones/PA)

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# One In Five Police Officers Are Suffering PTSD With Most Unaware They Have The Condition



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# PTSD With Most Unaware They Have The Condition



By Meka Beresford  
Freelance News Editor  
9th May 2019

**One in five police officers are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), but most are unaware that they have the condition, a landmark study has found.**

A survey of 17,000 serving officers and operational staff found 95 percent of officers and 67 percent of operational police staff had been exposed to traumatic events.

Rates of PTSD were nearly five times higher than the wider population.

Two-thirds of those exhibiting signs of the condition did not know that they were suffering.

PTSD symptoms vary for each person, but can include increased anxiety, flashbacks to a traumatic event, self-isolation from friends, family and work, exhaustion and suicidal thoughts.

ve Police Officers Are Suffering PTSD With Most Unaware They Have The Condition

## Police PTSD A 'Clinical Crisis'

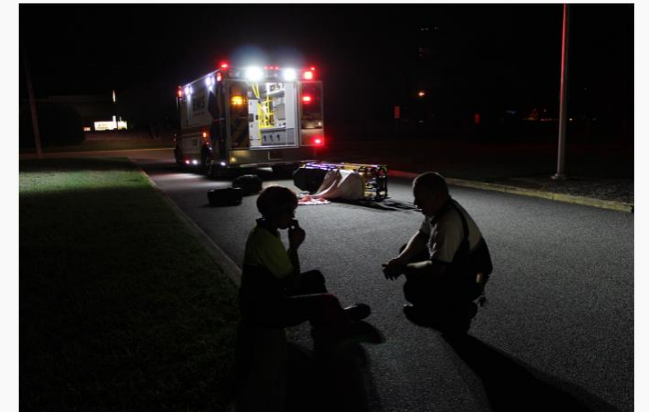


Image credit: Pixabay

Dr Jess Miller, a sociologist who led the research for Cambridge University, said that the high levels of PTSD was "a clinical and public sector crisis", and resources to help police cope were urgently needed to make sure that they are treated in a way which allows them to carry on with their careers.