



**AGILITY:**  
The Covid  
pandemic  
tested the  
resilience of  
most bodies'  
crisis plans.

# Staff are key in a crisis

DR STUART SCOTT, MEDICAL DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL SOS

**C**risis management is a crucial aspect in operational resilience.

Crisis management ensures an organisation is well-prepared for disruption.

A new study by the Business Continuity Institute (BCI), sponsored by International SOS, underlines the value of the "people factor" in both responding to and preparing for crises. The report focuses on the emerging crisis management trends borne out by the pandemic.

A collaborative approach to a crisis – with a greater focus on staff

health and wellbeing than before Covid is now widely seen as essential to successful response.

Of respondents, 87% acknowledged mental health as a key consideration in crisis management plans, with 40% of these organisations having their operations affected by their staff's mental health in 2020.

With many staff working at home, wellbeing support was considered a key factor in protecting a team.

As part of delivering support to colleagues in the office, at home and "in the field", centralisation of key strategic processes is

key in a successful crisis management structure.

Of respondents, 80% have entirely centralised their crisis management processes, or adopted a hybrid approach where regions are allowed a degree of autonomy.

The value of a centralised or hybrid approach is clearly demonstrated in the results, as 81% using this model reported "good" or "excellent" crisis management capabilities compared to 68% of those using a regionally-led or business unit-led response.

The aftermath of the pandemic has led to 60%

of respondents reporting that their organisation will be more collaborative in its approach to crisis management in future, with 53% stating that greater involvement between crisis management and business continuity teams will enable them to work better together.

Furthermore, 88% of respondents now see staff health and wellbeing as a key consideration.

The study teases out some other key findings from 636 respondents, active in 18 sectors in 76 countries. It's clear that crisis planning is becoming more agile as a

direct result of the often confusing responses of global organisations during the pandemic.

While 49% of respondents said their organisation's plans were very effective, the majority found they were not fit for purpose. Three-quarters of those with an ineffective plan reported that they were able to rapidly adapt existing plans against Covid-19.

Worryingly, 10% had no crisis plan.

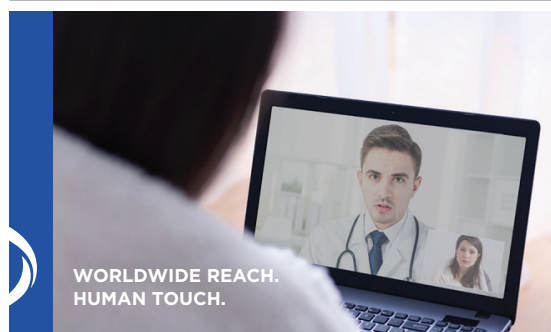
Perhaps unsurprisingly, respondents expressed a clear preference towards strong leadership during a crisis – with senior management leading

crisis management responses in four out of five organisations.

The Crisis Management Report 2021 also demonstrates that business continuity is starting to take a more strategic role in crises.

To find out more about how International SOS can support your crisis management contact Claire Westbrook-Keir, International SOS Director of Key Account Management: [claire.westbrook@internationalsos.com](mailto:claire.westbrook@internationalsos.com)

■ To download the Crisis Management Report 2021 visit [internationalsos.com/](https://internationalsos.com/)



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