

**PUBLIC PROTECTION
LICENSING COMMITTEE: 5 July 2011**

Report of the Head of Regulatory and Supporting Services

Managing violence and aggression in the workplace: A review of local businesses in Cardiff

1. Background

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has reported that one shop worker is attacked or threatened every minute of the shopping day and as many as 60% of businesses experience crime. Businesses who experience violence at work also report suffering from higher staff turnover, lost staff time from injury and stress and potential compensation claims from staff. Employers have a statutory duty under health and safety legislation to assess the risks that violence in the workplace presents to employees and to implement measures to control or reduce the risks. In 2010 a 2 year national project was developed by the 22 local authorities in Wales and the HSE to tackle work-related violence and aggression.

In Cardiff, the first stage of the national project involved the Health and Safety Enforcement Team visiting 54 businesses to review and advise employers on the provisions they had in place to manage violence and aggression risks. This information is currently being collated for all Welsh local authorities. To add to this body of knowledge and to provide a more informed insight into the issues within Cardiff the Health Improvement Team worked with a range of local retail businesses to better understand the issues of violence and aggression that commonly affect the business community. The aim of this supporting project was to identify businesses at risk that would then form the population base for the second stage of the national project which is due to commence in the Autumn of this year. This Committee report outlines the results of the supporting project.

2. Details. (A full copy of the report can be found in Appendix A)

The project involved interviewing the business owner, manager or employee to a standard protocol. Workplaces were selected from 12 wards in Cardiff and reflected the type of premises that had previously reported experiencing violence. Ninety one out of 121 selected businesses took part in the study, a response rate of 83%. Seventy (77%) businesses reported being victims of workplace violence and aggression, the most common businesses included betting shops (6, 100%), newsagents, off licences, pubs/clubs (5, 100%) and convenience stores (18, 90%) compared to cafes and dry cleaners who reported the least amount of workplace violence. Businesses were more likely to experience workplace violence if they were open in the evening and night. Convenience stores and newsagents commonly reported opening between 10:00 and 22:00 and these businesses also reported the highest frequency of violence. The most common type of violence reported was verbal abuse (66, 94%) and theft (41, 70%) and the least common physical assault (15/21%).

Forty (51%) businesses felt that the main cause of workplace violence was alcohol or drug induced. Fifty three (85%) reported incidents to the police and 44 (71%) to their managers. The impact of workplace violence varied, 41 (45%) reported that it did not have an impact on their business however interviewees did comment that it had affected their customers and others reported that they had made changes to their business including additional security measures. The most common means of prevention included advice/training (58, 64%), not working alone (48, 53%) the use of CCTV (44, 48%).

The key findings of this study will be used to target businesses to be inspected by Cardiff Health and Safety Enforcement team as part of the second stage of the national study. The information will also be used to prioritise the application of specific public health interventions within this business community.

3. Consultation

N/A

4. Achievability

This report contains no equality personnel or property implications.

5. Legal Implications

N/A

6. Financial Implications.

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Committee approve the findings of this report.

Mr Dave Holland
HEAD OF REGULATORY AND SUPPORTING SERVICES

9 June 2011

This report has been prepared in accordance with procedures approved by Corporate Managers.

Background Papers: None

Appendix A – Managing violence and aggression in the workplace: A review of local businesses in Cardiff

Managing violence and aggression in the workplace

Background

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) reports that approximately 60% of businesses experience crime and as a result suffer higher staff turnover, loss of staff time from injury and stress and potential staff claims for compensation. Employers have a statutory duty under health and safety legislation to assess the risks that violence in the workplace presents to employees and to implement measures to control or reduce the risks. As part of this requirement and to provide support and guidance to local businesses Cardiff Council Health and Safety Team along with all local authorities in Wales are working in partnership to tackle work-related violence and aggression in the area. At the end of the first year of this 2 year national project officers from Cardiff visited 54 businesses in the City to provide advice and guidance.

As accurate data relating to occupational exposure is not available and to support the next stage of this project Cardiff Council Health Improvement Team (HIT) undertook an additional study to identify types of businesses and areas of the City which may be more vulnerable or experience frequent violence and aggression in the workplace.

Specifically this additional work aimed to:

- gain a better understanding of the issues of violence and aggression that is taking place in Cardiff business community and
- support businesses by providing appropriate and practical information on ways of managing and preventing these issues.

The study involved interviewing the business owner, manager or employee to a standard protocol. Workplaces were selected from 12 wards in Cardiff and reflected the type of premises that had previously reported experiencing violence. Ninety one out of 121 selected businesses took part in the study, a response rate of 83%.

The results of this study will be used to target health and safety interventions to support local businesses and will provide an evidence base to prioritise the next round of inspections that will form part of the next stage of the national project.

Results

Description of businesses

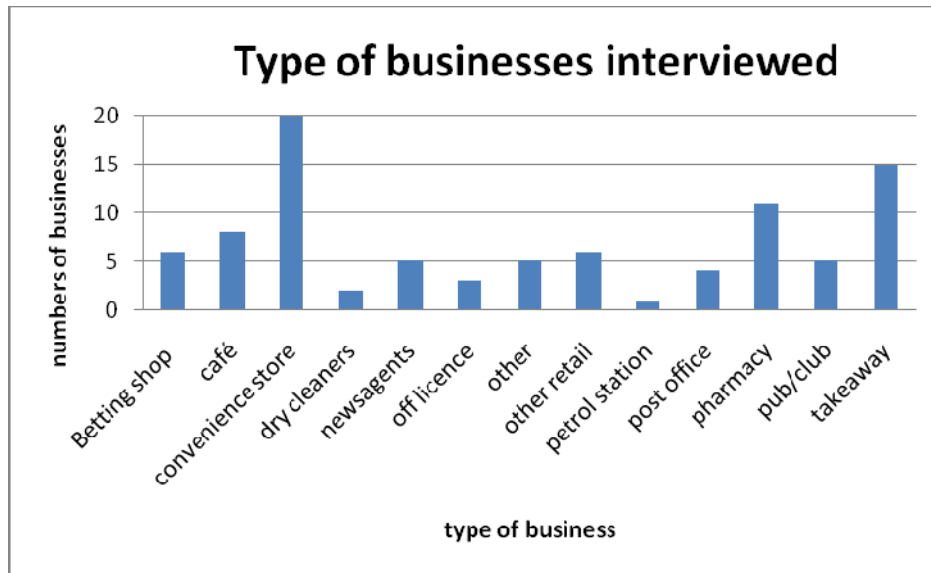
Ninety one out of 121 (83%) businesses participated in this study. Of the 30 businesses that did not take part:

- 12 businesses (40%) had changed owners or were not fully open or had closed down,
- 10 (33%) refused to participate in the study (the reasons included being too busy, didn't feel they had any problems or did not want to)
- 8 (27%) businesses were prepared to undertake the survey however due to time constraints were unable to complete the interview.

Of 91 businesses that took part 63 (69%) were interviewed face to face at the business address and 28 (31%) were interviewed over the telephone. The average length of time for an interview was 10 minutes and ranged between 4 minutes and 30 minutes (median: 10 minutes mode: 10 minutes).

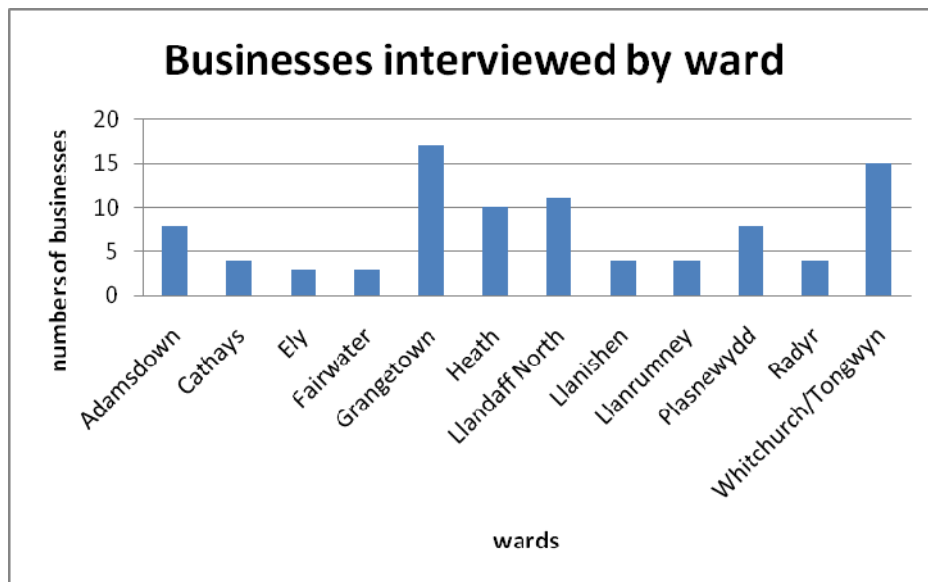
Graph 1 illustrates the type of businesses that participated in the study. The most common businesses to be interviewed were convenience stores (n=20), followed by takeaways (n=15) and pharmacies (n=11) and the least common were petrol stations (n=1)

Graph 1: Type of businesses interviewed



Seventeen (19%) businesses in Grangetown were interviewed, 15 (16%) in Whitchurch/Tongwynlais and only 3 (3%) businesses in Fairwater and Ely (Graph 2). The range in numbers reflects the concentration of retail businesses found in these wards.

Graph 2: Businesses interviewed by ward



Description of persons interviewed

Most interviews were undertaken with the business manager (51, 56%), 27 (30%) with the business owner and where neither of these people were available a member of staff (13, 14%)

was interviewed. Of the 91 businesses interviewed 56 (62%) reported that the majority of their staff were white British, the remaining 35 (38%) comprised a range of ethnic minorities including Asian, Chinese and Eastern European (Table 1). Forty six (82%) of the white British businesses reported experiencing violence in the workplace compared with 24 (69%) ethnic minority businesses. This difference cannot be explained by the current data but may be due to the fact that white British businesses are more likely to report incidents of violence in the workplace or incidents of violence at work occur more frequently in white British businesses.

Table 1: Ethnic origin of the majority of staff

Ethnic Origin of the majority of staff	Total No. (n=91)	Of those reporting violence (n=70)	Of those <u>not</u> reporting violence (n=21)
White British	56 (62%)	46 (66%)	10 (47%)
Ethnic minorities groups	35 (38%)	24 (34%)	11 (53%)

Of the 91 people interviewed 59 (65%) had experienced or witnessed violence, abuse, threats or physical assaults in the workplace. Of these 42 (71%) reported that this had not had an impact on them, 17 (29%) commented that the incident had an impact on them. Table 2 presents more detail on the type of impact reported.

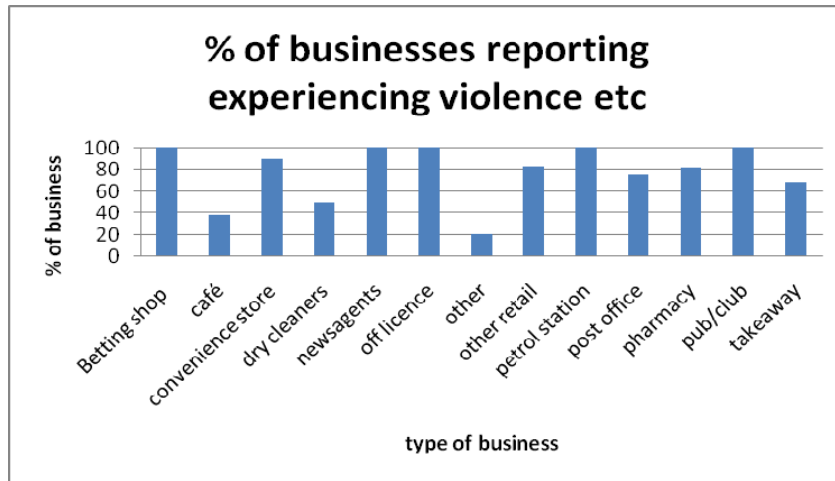
Table 2: Impact of violence at work on person interviewed

Individual interviewed response to incident	No. (%)
No impact	42 (71%)
Frightened	10 (17%)
Angry	3 (5%)
Learn how to handle	3 (5%)
Cautious	1 (2%)
Total	59 (100%)

Review of violence at work incidents

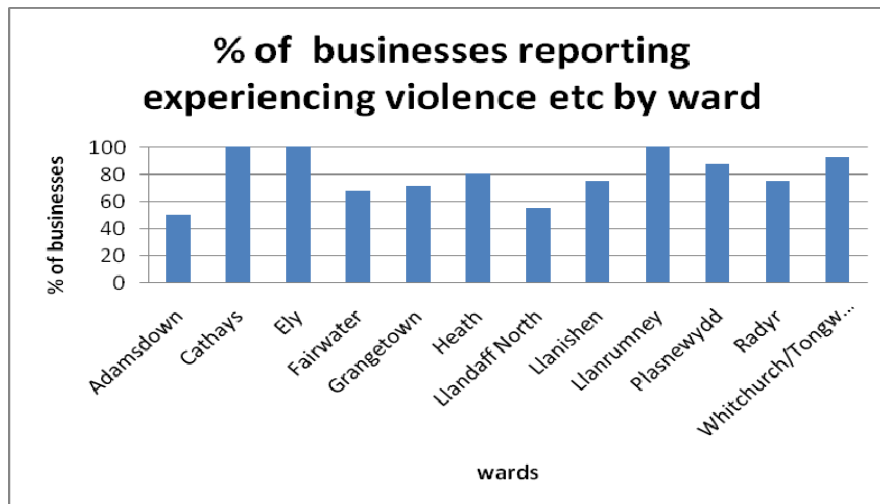
During the interview 70 (77%) businesses reported being a victim of violence, threat or physical assault. Graph 3 shows the types of businesses reporting violence at work. All of the betting shops, newsagents, off licences and pub/clubs interviewed reported violence in the work place whereas cafes and dry cleaners reported experiencing the least amount of violence.

Graph 3: Types of businesses reporting violence at work



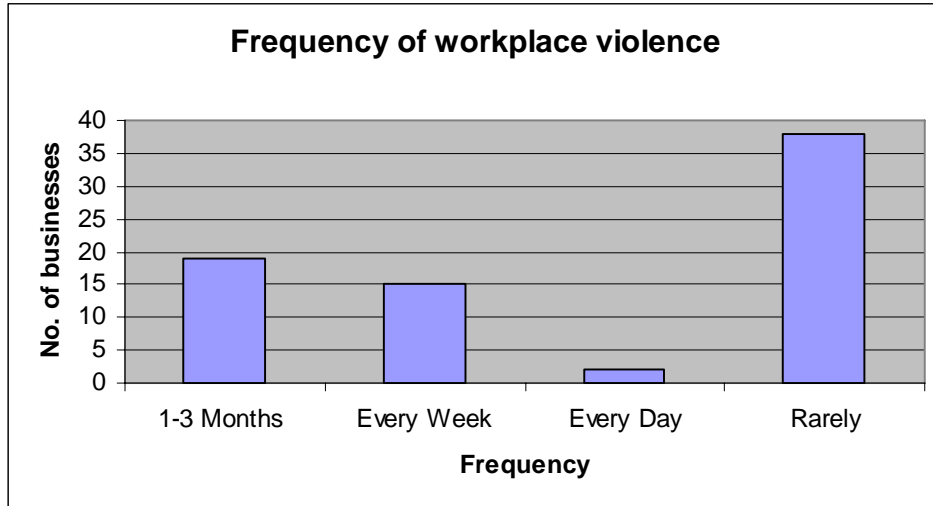
Of the businesses interviewed all (100%) businesses in Cathays (n = 4), Ely (n = 3) and Llanrumney (n = 4) reported experiencing violence, abuse, threats or physical assaults in the workplace, the least amount of violence was reported by businesses in Adamsdown (4, 50%) and Llandaff North (6, 55%), (Graph 4).

Graph 4: Locality of businesses reporting violence at work



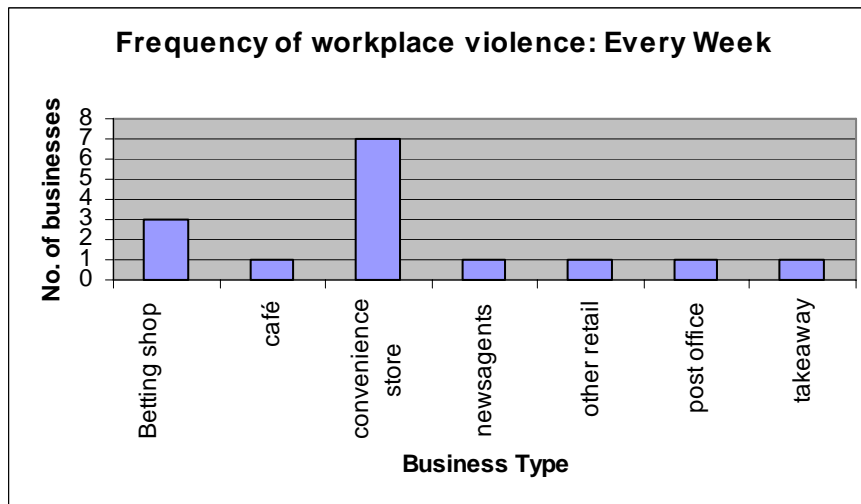
When asked if the interviewee knew the person who had carried out any of the incidents 29 (41%) businesses said that they did know the person compared with 23 (33%) businesses reporting that they sometimes knew the person carrying out the incidents. Of the 70 businesses that reported violence 38 (54%) commented that it was a rare occurrence, 19 (27%) that violence occurred every 1 – 3 months and 15 (21%) experienced violence every week (Graph 5).

Graph 5: Frequency of violence in the workplace



Convenience stores were the most common business to report workplace violence on both a weekly basis and every 1 – 3 months (Graph 6 and 7) and reported the greatest frequency of violence in the workplace (Graph 6) followed by newsagents (Graph 7). Pharmacies and takeaways reported that violence in the workplace only occurred rarely and dry cleaners experienced the least amount of violence in the workplace.

Graph 6: Businesses reporting workplace violence on a weekly basis



Graph 7: Businesses reporting the occurrence of workplace violence between 1 – 3 months

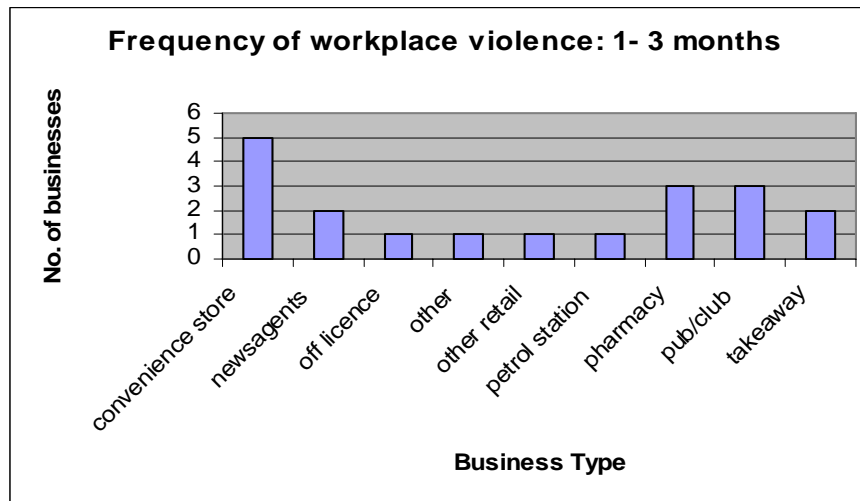


Table 3 shows the times of day that the businesses were more likely to experience incidents. Higher numbers were seen in the evening and night times which correspond to the opening times of convenience stores and newsagents. Thirteen (72%) convenience stores reported opening until 10 or 11 at night.

Table 3: Times that incidents most commonly occur in the businesses that reported violence in the workplace.

Times incidents occurred	No. (%)
Evening	24 (34%)
Anytime when open	22 (31%)
Night	11 (16%)
Afternoon	7 (10%)
Morning	6 (9%)

The majority of businesses that reported violence in the workplace reported a combination of physical assault, physical threat, verbal abuse and theft. The most common violence reported was verbal abuse (66/70, 94%), followed by theft (41/70, 59%) and the least common physical assault (15/70, 21%).

Table 4: Types of violence reported by business type

	Physical Assault	Physical Threat	Verbal Abuse	Theft
Betting shop	3 (50%)	4 (67%)	6 (100%)	2 (33%)
Café	1 (13%)	1 (13%)	4 (50%)	0
Convenience store	4 (20%)	5 (25%)	18 (90%)	15 (75%)
Dry cleaners	0	0	0	1 (50%)
Newsagents	2 (40%)	3 (60%)	5 (100%)	4 (80%)
Off licence	0	0	2 (67%)	2 (67%)
Other	1 (20%)	0	1 (20%)	1 (20%)
Other retail	0	0	3 (50%)	4 (67%)

Petrol station	0	0	1 (100%)	1 (100%)
Post office	0	0	3 (75%)	2 (50%)
Pharmacy	1 (9%)	2 (18%)	9 (82%)	7 (64%)
Pub/club	2 (40%)	2 (40%)	4 (80%)	0
Takeaway	1 (7%)	0	10 (67%)	2 (13%)
TOTAL	15 (100%)	17 (100%)	66 (100%)	41 (100%)

Table 5 illustrates what was, in the opinion of the businesses that experienced violence, abuse, threats or physical assaults was the cause of the incidents. Alcohol was thought to be the cause of the violence in 29 (38%) businesses whereas only 2 (3%) businesses blamed the locality for the violence.

Table 5: Business's opinion of cause of violence at work

Proposed cause	No. (n=76)
Alcohol	29
Drugs	11
Theft	9
Opportunistic	9
Challenging identification	8
Bad losers	6
Racially motivated	4
School children	4
Problem area	2

Sixty two businesses reported incidents of violence, abuse, threats or physical assaults including theft: 53 (85%) reported the incident to the police and 44 (71%) to management. Fifteen businesses did not report the incident commenting that they either believed the incident too trivial to report or that they dealt with the incident themselves.

The impact that violence, abuse, threats or physical assaults has had on the businesses varied: 11/91 (12%) said that the business had made changes including putting in security measures such as employing doormen, changing opening times to avoid people coming in after the pubs close, increasing the numbers of staff to cover potential problem times and having a policy of zero tolerance towards offenders. Nine (10%) expressed that their customers had been affected by not coming in and 7 (8%) reported that it had had an impact on their staff resulting in staff being upset, stressed, leaving and needing counselling. Forty one out of 91 (45%) businesses said that violence in the workplace had made no impact.

Preventive measures taken by businesses to protect their staff

When asked about the measures that were implemented to protect either the individual or the business 89 (98%) businesses said that action had been taken to protect the business/staff.

Table 6 outlines the most common preventive measures that were applied within businesses, these included advice/training (58/91, 64%), a 'not working alone' policy (48/91, 53%) and the use of CCTV (44/91, 48%) (most businesses implemented more than one preventive measure). The effectiveness of these measures could not be evaluated as it wasn't known whether the measures were introduced before or after an incident of violence.

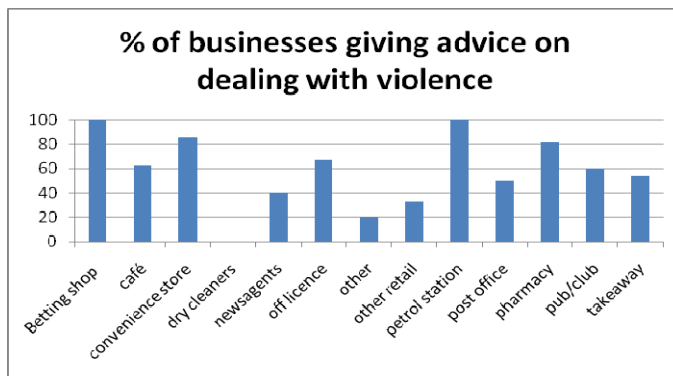
Table 6: Types of action taken to protect the business/staff

Type of Action	Total No's.	No's reporting being victim of violence etc	No's reporting Not being a victim of violence etc
Advice/training on how to deal with verbal abuse/violence	58/91	50/70	8/21
Advice/training on how to deal with bullying	3/91	2/70	1/21
Signs about verbal abuse/violence	6/91	6/70	0/21
Personal security equipment	4/91	4/70	0/21
Mobile phones	32/91	23/70	9/21
Panic button	38/91	34/70	4/21
Not working alone*	48/91	37/70	11/21
CCTV	44/91	40/70	4/21

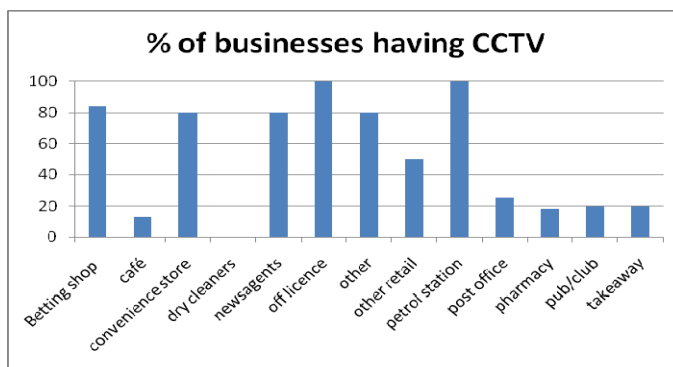
*Not always possible in smaller business.

Graphs 8 and 9 show two measures taken to protect staff against violence in the workplace, giving advice to staff and using CCTV. Between 80 – 100% of betting shops and convenience stores give advice on violence and use CCTV compared to pharmacies where 80% give advice to staff but only 25% use CCTV. Newsagents show a converse trend, 80% use CCTV and only 40% give advice to staff.

Graph 8: Businesses giving advice on dealing with violence



Graph 9: Businesses having CCTV



Fifty nine (65%) businesses that participated in this study were interested in receiving more information and training on managing violence in the workplace.

Conclusion

The HSE report that approximately 60% of businesses experience crime. In the first study of its type, Cardiff Health Improvement Team has worked with a range of local retail businesses to better understand the issues of violence and aggression that commonly affect our business community. This adds to the body of knowledge already provided by the HSE national project which focuses on reducing the risks to employees from workplace violence and aggression by reviewing the provisions businesses have in place for managing these risks.

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40 (51%) businesses felt that the main cause of workplace violence was alcohol or drug induced. Fifty three (85%) reported incidents to the police and 44 (71%) to their managers. The impact of workplace violence varied, 41 (45%) reported that it did not have an impact on their business however interviewees did comment that it had affected their customers and others reported that they had made changes to their business including additional security measures. The most common means of prevention included advice/training (58, 64%), not working alone (48, 53%) the use of CCTV (44, 48%).

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