COVID-19 recovery

12th November 2021

**Title:** Can air cleaners reduce COVID-19 in schools?

University of Leeds| 5th November 2021

A study has been launched into the feasibility of using air cleaners to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in 30 primary schools in Bradford. It is a major investigation into how environmental technology could be harnessed to provide safer, healthier spaces.

The study is investigating two different approaches to cleaning the air with the use of portable or wall-mounted devices. One is based on filtering the air by passing it through what is known as a HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air) filter, which captures most airborne viruses. The second approach involves cycling the air through an enclosed unit where it is exposed to an ultraviolet germicidal light, which inactivates microorganisms including viruses.

Based on the outcome of modelling and experimental analysis, the scientists involved in the study are confident that the technologies will reduce the risk of COVID-19 being spread by microscopic respiratory particles carried in the air, also known as aerosol transmission.

Full detail: [Can air cleaners reduce COVID-19 in schools?](https://www.leeds.ac.uk/news-health/news/article/4953/can-air-cleaners-reduce-covid-19-in-schools)

**Title:** Caring for older patients with complex needs

The Health Foundation | 10th November 2021

An innovative international study has used electronic medical records to compare the cost and quality of care between health care systems in 11 OECD countries. Findings from the International Collaborative on Costs, Outcomes and Needs in Care (ICCONIC) provide further evidence that, while the NHS remains a relatively low-cost health care system that performs well in some areas, mortality rates for some patients are higher than in comparable countries.

 By enabling comparisons of patient data across health care settings, the study provides vital information about how current care strategies are influencing the quality of care in the NHS, while also highlighting opportunities to significantly improve productivity.

The study also highlights the lack of high-quality data that is available across the wider system of health and care, which limits the ability of clinical teams and NHS policymakers to act to improve care.

As the NHS prepares to introduce new integrated care systems, there is a clear opportunity to make better use of patient data to understand what is happening to across care settings.

This full analysis examines the results for England and considers the implications for clinicians and policymakers in the context of the pandemic recovery.

Full detail: [Caring for older patients with complex needs: How does England compare with 11 OECD countries?](https://www.health.org.uk/publications/long-reads/caring-for-older-patients-with-complex-needs?utm_campaign=12790964_ICCONIC%20%2011%20November%202021%20%20WARM&utm_medium=email&utm_source=The%20Health%20Foundation&dm_i=4Y2,7M5KK,6ZKZT4,V0F6H,1)

**Title:** Covid-19 and the UK's health care performance: how does it compare on the international stage?

The King’s Fund | 10th November 2021

This article explains that as health systems globally strive to cope not just with the pandemic but also the backlog of unmet care and needs that have accrued, the United Kingdom is further on the back foot than most. The United Kingdom it suggests needs not just to make up lost ground created by years of under-investment, but to go the extra mile if it is to have world-class outcomes and be adequately prepared for future exigencies.

Full detail: [Covid-19 and the UK's health care performance: how does it compare on the international stage?](https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/blog/2021/11/covid-19-uk-health-care-performance)

See also: [The UK entered the pandemic in a vulnerable position with both systemic weaknesses in the NHS and poor underlying health](https://www.health.org.uk/news-and-comment/news/the-uk-entered-the-pandemic-in-a-vulnerable-position-with-both-systemic-weaknesses-in-the-nhs-and-poor-underlying-health) | The Health Foundation

**Title:** Covid-resistant people inspire new vaccine tactic

BBC News | Nature | 10th November 2021

Understanding how some people naturally resist Covid infection, despite clearly being exposed to the virus, could lead to better vaccines, say researchers. A team at University College London said some people had a degree of Covid-immunity before the pandemic started.

This likely came from the body learning how to fight viruses that are related to the one which has swept the world. Upgrading vaccines to copy this protection, could make the jabs even more effective, the team said.

Full news story: [Covid-resistant people inspire new vaccine tactic](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-59207466) | BBC News

Link to the research: [Pre-existing polymerase-specific T cells expand in abortive seronegative SARS-CoV-2](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-021-04186-8) | Nature

**Title:** Measles outbreaks likely as covid pandemic leaves millions of word’s children unvaccinated, WHO warns

BMJ | 2021; 375: n2755 | 11th November 2021

The risk of outbreaks of measles across the world is mounting because the covid-19 pandemic caused millions of children to miss out on essential vaccinations and has severely affected disease surveillance systems, says a report from the World Health Organization and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In 2020 around 22.3 million children missed their first dose of the measles vaccine, three million more than in 2019 and representing the largest increase in the number of unvaccinated children since 2000, at the height of unfounded safety concerns over the measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine, says the report.

Full detail: [Measles outbreaks likely as covid pandemic leaves millions of word’s children unvaccinated, WHO warns](https://www.bmj.com/content/375/bmj.n2755)

Related: [Global progress against measles threatened amidst COVID-19 pandemic](https://www.who.int/news/item/10-11-2021-global-progress-against-measles-threatened-amidst-covid-19-pandemic) | WHO

**Title:** Evaluation of the BNT162b2 Covid-19 Vaccine in Children 5 to 11 Years of Age

New England Journal of Medicine | 9th November 2021

Children aged 5-11 who are given a low dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech mRNA vaccine produced good antibody responses with no reported serious adverse effects, researchers have shown.

After a dose for further testing was determined in a phase 1 study, a phase 2–3 trial was initiated in which two 10-μg doses of BNT162b2 were given 21 days apart to children 5 to 11 years of age. No serious adverse events were observed. High levels of neutralizing antibodies were induced, and vaccine efficacy 7 days or more after the second dose was 90.7%.

Full paper: [Evaluation of the BNT162b2 Covid-19 vaccine in children 5 to 11 years of age](https://www.nejm.org/doi/pdf/10.1056/NEJMoa2116298?articleTools=true)

See also: [Pfizer vaccine provides 90% protection against infection in children aged 5-11, study finds](https://www.bmj.com/content/375/bmj.n2746) | BMJ

**Title:** Covid-19 and ethnicity: we must seek to understand the drivers of higher transmission

BMJ | 2021; 375: n2709 | 5th November 2021

Over the 22 months of the pandemic, we have learnt that ethnic minority groups in Western countries are disproportionately affected by covid-19 primarily because of higher transmission. This BMJ Opinion piece argues that we must seek to understand the drivers of higher transmission in these vulnerable groups and make concerted efforts to include them in interventions, to minimize ethnic minority groups being yet again disproportionately affected by covid-19 in the waves ahead.

Full detail: [Covid-19 and ethnicity: we must seek to understand the drivers of higher transmission](https://www.bmj.com/content/375/bmj.n2709)

**Title:** Global surveillance, research, and collaboration needed to improve understanding and management of long COVID

The Lancet | 10th November 2021

The scale of chronic ill health and disability after COVID-19 has been described as the next big global health challenge. Prevalence estimates of a post-COVID-19 condition, long COVID, or post-acute sequelae of SARS-CoV-2 vary according to definition, methodology, and population. A recent systematic review reported persistent symptoms at 3–6 months in a median of 57% of hospitalised patients and 26% of non-hospitalised patients.

With more than 245 million SARS-CoV-2 infections reported globally, millions of people are likely to already be experiencing long-term illness. While COVID-19 vaccines have reduced the risk of severe COVID-19 and death, continued high rates of SARS-CoV-2 infection will lead to further disability, having a huge impact on individuals, their families, health services, and society.

Full detail: [Global surveillance, research, and collaboration needed to improve understanding and management of long COVID](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(21)02444-2/fulltext)

**Title:** Recognition, diagnosis, and management of long COVID

Guidelines | British Journal of General Practice

This *Guidelines* summary of *Recommendations for the recognition, diagnosis, and management of long COVID: a Delphi study*covers key recommendations to provide a rapid expert guide for GPs and clinical services in the recognition, diagnosis, and management of post-COVID-19 syndrome, also known as long COVID.

The Delphi method was used to derive 35 clear and practical recommendations by UK clinicians with an interest in and lived experience of long COVID.

Further information and full guideline: [Recognition, diagnosis, and management of long COVID](https://www.guidelines.co.uk/infection/guidance-for-gps-on-long-covid/456430.article?utm_source=MGP%20Ltd&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=12788828_20211109%20GLNs%20highlights%20-%20version%201&dm_i=HEZ,7M3X8,W84HTI,V07ZT,1)

Related: [Recommendations for the recognition, diagnosis, and management of long COVID: a Delphi study](https://bjgp.org/content/71/712/e815) | British Journal of General Practice

**Title:** Long covid: new wine in need of new bottles

BMJ | 2021; 375: n2736 | 9th November 2021

The vast majority of policy documents, political discussions, research, and public health interventions over the past two years have tackled the acute impact of SARS-CoV-2, with limited consideration of its long term sequelae.

However, as this article explains, research around Long Covid is now being funded at scale. The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) has so far funded two rounds of research focused on long covid, awarding £18.6 million for four studies in February 2021, and £19.6 million for 15 studies in July 2021.

This article suggests that finding solutions to Long covid will require new ways of thinking across clinical services and research.

Full article: [Long covid: new wine in need of new bottles](https://www.bmj.com/content/375/bmj.n2736)

**Title:** COVID-19 rapid guideline: managing the long-term effects of COVID-19 [NG188]

National Institute for Health & Care Excellence | updated 11th November 2021

This guideline covers identifying, assessing and managing the long-term effects of COVID-19, often described as ‘long COVID’. It makes recommendations about care in all healthcare settings for adults, children and young people who have new or ongoing symptoms 4 weeks or more after the start of acute COVID-19. It also includes advice on organising services for long COVID.

On 11 November, new recommendations were made and existing recommendations updated on identification; planning care; multidisciplinary rehabilitation; follow up, monitoring and discharge; and service organisation. Also updated were the list of common symptoms, emphasising that these may be different for children.

Full detail: [COVID-19 rapid guideline: managing the long-term effects of COVID-19 [NG188]](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng188)

**Title:** Protective immunity after recovery from SARS-CoV-2 infection

The Lancet Infectious Diseases | 8th November 2021

The SARS-CoV-2 pandemic is now better controlled in settings with access to fast and reliable testing and highly effective vaccination rollouts. Several studies have found that people who recovered from COVID-19 and tested seropositive for anti-SARS-CoV-2 antibodies have low rates of SARS-CoV-2 reinfection.

However, as this Comment piece explains, there are still looming questions surrounding the strength and duration of such protection compared with that from vaccination.

Full detail: [Protective immunity after recovery from SARS-CoV-2 infection](https://www.thelancet.com/action/showPdf?pii=S1473-3099%2821%2900676-9)

**Title:** Trends and clinical characteristics of 57.9 million COVID-19 vaccine recipients: a federated analysis of patients’ primary care records in situ using OpenSAFELY

British Journal of General Practice | 8th November 2021

On 8th December 2020 NHS England administered the first COVID-19 vaccination. The aim of this paper is to describe trends and variation in vaccine coverage in different clinical and demographic groups in the first 100 days of the vaccine rollout.

With the approval of NHS England, a cohort study was conducted of 57.9 million patient records in general practice in England, in situ and within the infrastructure of the electronic health record software vendors EMIS and TPP using OpenSAFELY.

A total of 20 852 692 patients received a vaccine between 8 December 2020 and 17 March 2021. Of patients aged ≥80 years not in a care home (JCVI group 2) 94.7% received a vaccine, but with substantial variation by ethnicity (White 96.2%, Black 68.3%) and deprivation (least deprived 96.6%, most deprived 90.7%).

Patients with pre-existing medical conditions were more likely to be vaccinated with two exceptions: severe mental illness (89.5%) and learning disability (91.4%).

The NHS rapidly delivered mass vaccination. Targeted activity may be needed to address lower vaccination coverage observed among certain key groups.

Full paper: [Trends and clinical characteristics of 57.9 million COVID-19 vaccine recipients: a federated analysis of patients’ primary care records in situ using OpenSAFELY](https://bjgp.org/content/bjgp/early/2021/11/08/BJGP.2021.0376.full.pdf)

**Title:** Six years of memory decline seen in anxious, depressed older people during pandemic

King’s College London | 9th November 2021

Older people who were more anxious and depressed during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic were found to have an average decline in their short-term memory equivalent to six years of natural ageing.

The research was conducted by the PROTECT study. The team found that participants aged 50 and over who reported an increase in validated measures of anxiety and depression also scored lower on cognitive tasks designed to measure short term memory and attention. For memory, the decrease was the equivalent to the decline normally seen over six years of natural ageing. For attention, the difference was the equivalent of five years of ageing.

Full detail: [Six years of memory decline seen in anxious, depressed older people during pandemic](https://www.kcl.ac.uk/news/six-years-of-memory-decline-seen-in-anxious-depressed-older-people-during-pandemic)

We

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