COVID-19: impact on mental health

8th January 2021

**TITLE:** UK STUDY AIMS TO UNDERSTAND EFFECTS ON ETHNIC MINORITY HEALTHCARE WORKERS

BMJ | 2021; 372: n23 | 5th January 2021

A new study has launched in the UK to understand the impact of covid-19 on healthcare workers of different ethnic groups.

The UK-Reach study brings together researchers and clinicians with the General Medical Council, Nursing and Midwifery Council, royal colleges, and ethnic minority healthcare worker associations to investigate if, how, and why ethnicity affects clinical outcomes of covid-19 in healthcare workers. It will also look at the effects of the pandemic on the physical and mental health outcomes of staff.

The research team said they expected some initial findings early this year.

Full detail: [UK study aims to understand effects on ethnic minority healthcare workers](https://www.bmj.com/content/372/bmj.n23.short?rss=1&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+bmj%2Frecent+%28Latest+from+BMJ%29)

**TITLE:** YEAR OF UNPARALLELED PRESSURE LEAVES STAFF EXHAUSTED AND ON THE BRINK

British Medical Association | 1st January 2021

Thousands of doctors have revealed the impact that working during the pandemic has had on their mental health and wellbeing, in a major BMA survey that exposes how a year of unparalleled pressure has pushed an understaffed and exhausted workforce to the brink.

New figures from the latest BMA tracker survey of doctors in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, show that almost 60 per cent (58%) of doctors are now suffering from some form of anxiety or depression, with 46 per cent saying their condition had worsened since the start of pandemic.

67 per cent of doctors say that current levels of fatigue and exhaustion are higher than normal as they tackle a mounting second wave and a growing backlog of care, on top of the usual seasonal demand.

Full detail: [Year of unparalleled pressure leaves staff exhausted and on the brink, BMA survey shows](https://www.bma.org.uk/bma-media-centre/year-of-unparalleled-pressure-leaves-staff-exhausted-and-on-the-brink-bma-survey-shows)

**Title:** Loneliness, social isolation and COVID-19

Local Government Association | 21st December 2020

The Local Government Association (LGA) and Association of Directors of Public Health (ADPH) have jointly produced this practical advice for Directors of Public Health and others leading the local response to the loneliness and social isolation issues arising from the COVID-19 outbreak. It follows on from guidance about the public mental health impacts across the life course.

Full detail: [Loneliness, social isolation and COVID-19](https://www.local.gov.uk/loneliness-social-isolation-and-covid-19)

See also: [Public mental health and wellbeing and COVID-19](https://www.local.gov.uk/public-mental-health-and-wellbeing-and-covid-19)

**TITLE:** ANTIDEPRESSANT USE IN ENGLAND SOARS AS PANDEMIC CUTS COUNSELLING ACCESS

The Guardian | 1st January 2021

Calls to mental health helplines and prescriptions for antidepressants have reached an all-time high, while access to potentially life-saving talking therapies has plunged during the coronavirus pandemic, a Guardian investigation has found.

More than 6 million people in England received antidepressants in the three months to September, part of a wider trend and the highest figure on record.

The fall in referrals to NHS psychological therapies services (IAPT) is thought to have been down to counselling services going online, which some doctors have deemed inappropriate for certain patients, while some patients were reluctant to seek face-to-face help or add extra pressure to health services.

Concerns have been raised that vital early intervention treatment will not have been given, with experts saying the longer people wait for appropriate help the “more severe and complex their difficulties and their lives can become”.

Full detail: [Antidepressant use in England soars as pandemic cuts counselling access](https://www.theguardian.com/society/2021/jan/01/covid-antidepressant-use-at-all-time-high-as-access-to-counselling-in-england-plunges)

**TITLE:** WHEN PATIENTS REFUSE COVID-19 TESTING, QUARANTINE, AND SOCIAL DISTANCING IN INPATIENT PSYCHIATRY: CLINICAL AND ETHICAL CHALLENGES

Journal of Medical Ethics | 2020; 46: 579-580

The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced new ethical challenges in the care of patients with serious psychiatric illness who require inpatient treatment and who may have beeen exposed to COVID-19 or have mild to moderate COVID-19 but refuse testing and adherence to infection prevention protocols. Such situations increase the risk of infection to other patients and staff on psychiatric inpatient units. This article discusses medical and ethical considerations for navigating this dilemma and offer a set of policy recommendations.

Full paper: [When patients refuse COVID-19 testing, quarantine, and social distancing in inpatient psychiatry: clinical and ethical challenges](https://jme.bmj.com/content/medethics/46/9/579.full.pdf)

**Title:** Impact of Covid-19 on Mental Health: An Overview

Review of Recent Clinical Trials | January 5th 2021

Background: The COVID-19 (2019-nCoV) pandemic is a major threat to public health affecting the world; it has been identified as originating in Wuhan, Hubei province, China. It is spreading widely and rapidly spread across the globe, causing an outbreak of acute infectious pneumonia. Such global outburst is associated with adverse effects on mental health. Fear, stress, anxiety seem more definitely an outcome of mass quarantine.

Methods: Keeping this pandemic situation in mind, existing literature on the COVID-19 crisis relevant to mental health was redeemed via a literature search from PubMed database. Collected published articles were classified according to their overall themes and summarized.

Results: Preliminary evidence suggests that symptoms of self-reported stress, anxiety and depression are common psychological impact to the pandemic, and may be associated with disrupted sleep. Regional, state, National-international borders have almost been shut down, economies crashed, and billions of people quarantined or isolated at their own homes and quarantine centers. In this situational frame of covid-19, patients, front-line healthcare professionals, geriatric population with existing psychiatric conditions may be encountering further suffering.

Conclusion: COVID-19 will continue to affect mental health and wellbeing intensely; also, mental health serves an important role in battling the epidemic. With the scare of COVID-19 pandemic on the rise, it is time that psychiatrists should try to integrate the health-care services keeping mental health at prime.

Full document: [Impact of Covid-19 on Mental Health: An Overview](https://www.eurekaselect.com/189933/article)

**Title:** Mental health consequences of COVID-19 media coverage: the need for effective crisis communication practices

Globalization and Health | Volume 17, Article number: 4 (2021) | 5th January 2021

During global pandemics, such as coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), crisis communication is indispensable in dispelling fears, uncertainty, and unifying individuals worldwide in a collective fight against health threats. Inadequate crisis communication can bring dire personal and economic consequences.

Mounting research shows that seemingly endless newsfeeds related to COVID-19 infection and death rates could considerably increase the risk of mental health problems. Unfortunately, media reports that include infodemics regarding the influence of COVID-19 on mental health may be a source of the adverse psychological effects on individuals.

This paper discusses possible crisis communication solutions that media and news organizations can adopt to mitigate the negative influences of COVID-19 related news on mental health. Emphasizing the need for global media entities to forge a fact-based, person-centered, and collaborative response to COVID-19 reporting, this paper encourages media resources to focus on the core issue of how to slow or stop COVID-19 transmission effectively.

Full article: [Mental health consequences of COVID-19 media coverage: the need for effective crisis communication practices](https://globalizationandhealth.biomedcentral.com/track/pdf/10.1186/s12992-020-00654-4.pdf)

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We also produce a range of subject-specific news feeds to ensure our clinical and professional teams stay up to date with developments in their work areas. Please visit our [website](http://www.trftlibraryknowledge.com/) for more information

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