COVID-19: impact on mental health

July 10th 2020

**Title:** How are changes to employment and finances impacting mental health during lockdown?

The Health Foundation | 25th June 2020

* This analysis explores how changes in people’s economic circumstances relate to their mental health during the early lockdown period. It uses data collected in a YouGov survey of 6,005 respondents between 6 and 11 May.
* In the early lockdown period survey results show that, overall, people of working age (18–65) were more concerned about their own or their family’s mental health (62%) and physical health (65%) than they were before the outbreak began. And people were more concerned about these than their household finances (48%).
* People experiencing a worsening in their family’s finances during lockdown were more likely to be highly or very highly concerned with their family’s mental and physical health than when finances had stayed the same or improved.
* 46% of respondents were found to have poor mental health. This was more common among young people (aged 18–24), women, single people and renters. While these patterns pre-date the current crisis, other research suggests greater deterioration in mental health for young people and women relative to other groups since lockdown.
* Regardless of income, the likelihood of poor mental health was higher if families had experienced a deterioration of their finances during lockdown or expected one in the next 3 months. However, in the poorest 20% of families almost three-quarters (72%) reporting a worse financial position had poor mental health, compared to around half (48%) in the richest 20%.
* People who were still working or had been furloughed were less likely to report poor mental health than those who had lost their jobs since lockdown. Retaining a job through being furloughed may have helped prevent a rise in unemployment-related mental health problems. Given the negative health consequences of unemployment, the government should be ready to extend the furlough scheme as necessary to prevent a sharp rise in unemployment. This could better protect household incomes and ultimately our nation’s health.

Full detail: [How are changes to employment and finances impacting mental health during lockdown?](https://www.health.org.uk/news-and-comment/charts-and-infographics/how-are-changes-to-employment-and-finances-impacting-mental-health-during-lockdown)

**TITLE**: THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE MENTAL HEALTH OF HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

QJM: An International Journal of Medicine | 1st July 2020

The aim of this review was to analyse the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health of Health Professionals (HPs).

Most studies found by the authors reported a high prevalence of anxiety and depressive symptoms among HPs that can be associated with: (i) COVID-19 exposure; (ii) epidemiological issues; (iii) material resources; (iv) human resources; and (v) personal factors.

The role of certain variables, before, during and after the pandemic, remains unexplored. Longitudinal studies will help elucidate which factors are associated with a higher risk of developing long-lasting negative effects. Qualitative studies may contribute to understanding the influence of individual and social narratives in HPs’ distress.

Full paper: [The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health of healthcare professionals](https://academic.oup.com/qjmed/article/doi/10.1093/qjmed/hcaa207/5860843)

**Title:** The psychological impact of COVID-19 on the mental health in the general population

QJM: An International Journal of Medicine | 30th June 2020

As a result of the emergence of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) infection in the Chinese city of Wuhan, a situation of socio-economic crisis and profound psychological distress rapidly occurred worldwide.

Various psychological problems and important consequences in terms of mental health including stress, anxiety, depression, frustration, uncertainty during COVID-19 outbreak emerged progressively.

This work aimed to comprehensively review the current literature about the impact of COVID-19 infection on the mental health in the general population. The psychological impact of quarantine related to COVID-19 infection has been additionally documented together with the most relevant psychological reactions in the general population related to COVID-19 outbreak. The role of risk and protective factors against the potential to develop psychiatric disorders in vulnerable individuals has been addressed as well.

Full detail: [The psychological impact of COVID-19 on the mental health in the general population](https://academic.oup.com/qjmed/article/doi/10.1093/qjmed/hcaa201/5860841)

**TITLE:**  MENTAL HEALTH CARE IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

The Kings Fund | 3rd July 2020

Since the beginning of the Covid-19 outbreak, mental health has received a lot of attention but the focus has been largely on the mental health of NHS staff and care workers, and the impact of lockdown on the population’s mental health and wellbeing rather than on people with existing mental health problems.

On 27 April Matt Hancock announced that the NHS was once again ‘open’ starting with restoration of priority services such as cancer and mental health. But for those working in mental health services, the idea that they had ever stopped providing care was another example of a lack of understanding of the needs of people with mental health problems and the care being provided to support them.

Full detail: [Mental health care in the time of Covid-19](https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/blog/2020/07/mental-health-care-time-covid-19)

**Title**: Major study into long-term health effects of COVID-19 launched in the UK

National Institute for Health Research | 5th July 2020

The Health and Social Care Secretary has announced the launch of a major £8.4 million research study into the long-term health effects of COVID-19 on hospitalised patients, which has been funded by the NIHR and UK Research and Innovation. The researchers hope their findings will support the search for treatments for COVID-19 and the development of care pathways that will help patients recover as fully as possible after having experienced the disease.

The [Post-Hospitalisation COVID-19 Study (PHOSP-COVID)](http://www.phosp.org/), led by the NIHR Leicester Biomedical Research Centre, will draw on expertise from a consortium of leading researchers and doctors from across the UK to assess the impact of COVID-19 on patient health and recovery.

This includes looking at possible ways to help improve the mental health of patients hospitalised with coronavirus, and how individual characteristics influence recovery, such as gender or ethnicity.

Full detail: [Major study into long-term health effects of COVID-19 launched in the UK](https://www.nihr.ac.uk/news/major-study-into-long-term-health-effects-of-covid-19-launched-in-the-uk/25200)

**Title:** Coronavirus: The divergence of mental health experiences during the pandemic

Mental Health Foundation | 9th July 2020

This briefing reports findings from the Coronavirus: Mental Health in the Pandemic study as of the fifth wave of data collection carried out between 18th and 22nd June. The study is led by the Mental Health Foundation, in collaboration with the University of Cambridge, Swansea University, the University of Strathclyde and Queen’s University Belfast.

While most people will exit the pandemic with good mental health, the findings of the study clearly suggest that the benefits of exiting the lockdown measures will not be enjoyed equally by all.

Divergence of experience presents a big policy challenge as there are many different groups, areas, impacts and experiences to consider. This huge variety of individual and group identities is difficult to capture in research and it is challenging to produce nuanced policy recommendations that recognise all these different experiences and their effects.  A recovery response needs to take a holistic approach that addresses social, systemic and structural inequalities rather than placing the onus on the individual.

Full detail: [Coronavirus: The divergence of mental health experiences during the pandemic](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus/divergence-mental-health-experiences-during-pandemic)

**Title**: WHAT IS THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON PATIENTS RECOVERING FROM THE DISEASE WHO NEED REHABILITATION?

National Health Library and Knowledge Service | Evidence Team | 5th June 2020

There is limited data on the psychological impact of COVID-19 on patients recovering from the disease 2. Available studies so far list reduced sleep quality, depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as the main symptoms.

Evidence from previous SARS and MERS epidemics support this pattern, as do studies looking at survivors of critical illness. Follow-up data in these patient groups reported symptoms of anxiety, depression, and PTSD ranging from 15% to 44%. One recent multi-centre Chinese study found self-reported PTSD symptoms in 96% of recovered COVID-19 patients. Data from the SARS outbreak show that stress and other psychiatric symptoms persisted long term.

In COVID-19, a small number of randomised controlled trials have been undertaken on: an internet-based intervention for depression and anxiety; progressive muscle relaxation for anxiety and sleep quality; and effects of respiratory rehabilitation on psychological function in elderly patients. These studies showed positive results but patient numbers were small and benefits were mild.

Surveillance for psychopathology will be important in the recovery and rehabilitation phases. Recommendations are to anticipate a high prevalence of depression, anxiety, and PTSD symptoms, and to provide comprehensive and timely management. Particular consideration is required for those with pre-morbid psychiatric illness, healthcare workers, and those who have been treated in Intensive Care.

Full document: [What is the psychological impact of COVID-19 on patients recovering from the disease who need rehabilitation?](https://hselibrary.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Evidence-Summary-COVID-19-Psychological-Impact-Rehabilitation.pdf)

**Title**: PREVALENCE AND PREDICTORS OF GENERAL PSYCHIATRIC DISORDERS AND LONELINESS DURING COVID-19 IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Psychiatry Research | Volume 291, September 2020

Despite ample research on the prevalence of specific psychiatric disorders during COVID-19, we know little about the broader psychological impact of the pandemic on a wider population. The study investigates the prevalence and predictors of general psychiatric disorders measured by the 12-item General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12) and frequency of loneliness during COVID-19 in the United Kingdom, a country heavily hit by the pandemic.

The study found:

* Over one-fourth of British have general psychiatric disorders during COVID-19.
* Over one-third of British sometimes or often feel lonely during COVID-19.
* People with COVID-19 symptoms have more psychiatric disorders and are lonelier.
* Women and young people are risky for psychiatric disorders and loneliness.
* Employment and living with a partner reduce psychiatric disorders and loneliness.

Full paper: [Prevalence and predictors of general psychiatric disorders and loneliness during COVID-19 in the United Kingdom](https://reader.elsevier.com/reader/sd/pii/S0165178120317479?token=24D19C251908C586C5C1111C5539468F430127EF2C27C63DC497C62FE2CD21ED01345A471C8B1D0FE07C2B564BD80A1F)

**Title:** Social isolation, mental health and use of digital interventions in youth during the COVID-19 pandemic: a nationally representative survey

PsyArXiv Preprints | 29th June 2020

Public health measures to curb SARS-CoV-2 transmission rates may have negative psychosocial consequences in youth. Digital interventions may help to mitigate these effects.

The authors aimed to investigate the associations between social isolation, COVID-19-related worries/anxieties, objective social risk indicators, psychological distress and use of digital mobile health (mHealth) interventions in youth during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The study found that Digital interventions may help mitigate the negative psychosocial impact without risk for viral infection given there is an objective need and subjective demand.

Full detail: [Social isolation, mental health and use of digital interventions in youth during the COVID-19 pandemic: a nationally representative survey](https://psyarxiv.com/v64hf/)

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[TRFT Library & Knowledge Service](https://www.trftlibraryknowledge.com/) aim to bring together the latest guidelines, research and news on Covid-19 through our [Covid-19 portal](https://www.trftlibraryknowledge.com/coronavirus.html). For daily updates on Covid-19 visit our '[Latest Health](https://trfthealthweeklydigest.wordpress.com/)' newsfeed, or use the hashtag [#covid19rftlks](https://twitter.com/hashtag/covid19rftlks?src=hashtag_click) to see our latest tweets on Covid-19 research, guidelines and news.

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