COVID-19 recovery

23rd July 2021

**Title:** £19.6 million awarded to new research studies to help diagnose and treat long COVID

National Institute for Health Research | 18th July 2021

People experiencing long COVID will benefit from a comprehensive package of new NIHR-funded research to help improve understanding of the condition, from diagnosis and treatment through to rehabilitation and recovery.

An extensive range of 15 projects from across the UK have been awarded a total of £19.6 million to examine causes of long COVID, trial drugs to tackle it, and investigate symptoms such as breathlessness and ‘brain fog’ that have become synonymous with the condition. Studies will also evaluate health services, such as long COVID clinics, and explore ways patients can monitor the condition to optimise their recovery and return to work.

Recent research shows that as many as a third of people who report being infected with the coronavirus also report long COVID.

Full detail: [£19.6 million awarded to new research studies to help diagnose and treat long COVID](https://www.nihr.ac.uk/news/196-million-awarded-to-new-research-studies-to-help-diagnose-and-treat-long-covid/28205)

**Title:** Creating a gold standard of care for long COVID

University of Leeds | 18th July 2021

A major £3.4 million research project has launched to identify the best way to treat and support the one million people in the UK now living with long COVID.

Led by the University of Leeds and Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust, and funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), the study aims to create a “gold standard” approach for the treatment of long COVID.

The research, titled LOCOMOTION, will identify best practice in providing services, ensuring people are supported quickly and receive the right treatments from the right healthcare professionals – in their own home, through their GP or at specialist long COVID clinics.

It will investigate how many people are unable to work due to long COVID and look at developing a vocational rehabilitation programme to support them back into employment.

Full detail: [Creating a gold standard of care for long COVID](https://www.leeds.ac.uk/news/article/4871/creating-a-gold-standard-of-care-for-long-covid)

**Title:** Long Covid in children: A report summarising the views of young people, parents and doctors

University of Bristol | 21st July 2021

The clinical definition of long COVID in children is at present very limited and poorly understood by doctors, according to this new report. The report also found that symptoms typically associated with long COVID were having a significant physical and psychological impact on children’s day-to-day lives. Long COVID is commonly used to describe signs and symptoms that continue or develop after acute COVID‑19.

The report, led by the University of Bristol, is the first step in a COVID-19 testing in schools study to obtain opinions and experiences of long COVID from different groups of people.

Full report: [Long Covid in children: A report summarising the views of young people, parents and doctors](https://commins.org.uk/documents/Long-COVID-in-children-report-21_07_21.pdf)

Press release: [Long COVID in children poorly understood by doctors](https://www.bristol.ac.uk/news/2021/july/long-covid-children.html)

**Title:** What geographic inequalities in COVID-19 mortality rates and health can tell us about levelling up

The Health Foundation | 17th July 2021

It is well known that existing inequalities have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. What is less well known is that some of these inequalities are even starker among the younger (working age) population. This was covered in the Health Foundation’s [COVID-19 impact inquiry](https://www.health.org.uk/what-we-do/a-healthier-uk-population/mobilising-action-for-healthy-lives/covid-19-impact-inquiry), and this article explore the topic in more detail.

Full detail: [What geographic inequalities in COVID-19 mortality rates and health can tell us about levelling up](https://www.health.org.uk/news-and-comment/charts-and-infographics/what-geographic-inequalities-in-covid-19-mortality-rates-can-tell-us-about-levelling-up)

**Title:** attitudes towards and experiences of the NHS during Covid-19: views from patients, professionals and the public

The Richmond Group of Charities| 21st July 2021

This report is the third and final report from a collaboration with Britain Thinks to understand how the experiences and perceptions of patients, professionals and the public have shifted during the pandemic and what this might mean for the future of the NHS in England.

It looks at the NHS across three areas: primary care; secondary care; and community care. It also examines four patient types: mental health; long term health conditions; cancer patients; and surgery patients. Additionally, it looks into what patients and the public understand about the term 'health inequalities'.

Full detail: [Attitudes towards and experiences of the NHS during Covid-19: views from patients, professionals and the public](https://richmondgroupofcharities.org.uk/news/new-research-highlights-challenges-nhs-england-unlocks)

Press release: [New research highlights challenges for the NHS as England unlocks](https://richmondgroupofcharities.org.uk/news/new-research-highlights-challenges-nhs-england-unlocks)

**Title:** Fully vaccinated critical workers to be able to leave self-isolation in exceptional circumstances

Department of Health and Social Care | 19th July 2021

From 19th July, in exceptional circumstances - where there would otherwise be a major detrimental impact on essential services - a limited number of critical workers may be informed by their employer, following advice from the relevant government department, that they may be able to leave self-isolation to attend work.

This is a small and targeted intervention to ensure that services critical to the safety and functioning of our society can continue, and will only apply to workers who are fully vaccinated (defined as someone who is 14 days post-final dose) and will be solely so that they can attend work.

Full detail: [Fully vaccinated critical workers to be able to leave self-isolation in exceptional circumstances](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/fully-vaccinated-critical-workers-to-be-able-to-leave-self-isolation-in-exceptional-circumstances)

See also:

* [Fully vaccinated NHS staff may not need to self-isolate](https://www.bmj.com/content/374/bmj.n1830) | BMJ
* [Food industry Covid testing rolled out to support sector](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/food-industry-covid-testing-rolled-out-to-support-sector) | Department of Health & Social Care

**Title:** JCVI statement on COVID-19 vaccination of children and young people aged 12 to 17 years

Department of Health & Social Care | 19th July 2021

In view of the progress in offering COVID-19 vaccination to all adults, the Department of Health Social Care (DHSC) asked JCVI for advice on a possible extension of the programme to children and young people. JCVI has also received representations from professional bodies and members of the public on vaccination of children, both for and against such an extension.

* JCVI advises that children and young people aged 12 years and over with specific underlying health conditions that put them at risk of serious COVID-19, should be offered COVID-19 vaccination.
* JCVI advises that children and young people aged 12 years and over who are household contacts of persons (adults or children) who are immunosuppressed should be offered COVID-19 vaccination on the understanding that the main benefits from vaccination are related to the potential for indirect protection of their household contact who is immunosuppressed.

Full detail: [JCVI statement on COVID-19 vaccination of children and young people aged 12 to 17 years](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-of-children-and-young-people-aged-12-to-17-years-jcvi-statement/jvci-statement-on-covid-19-vaccination-of-children-and-young-people-aged-12-to-17-years-15-july-2021#advice)

See also: [Vulnerable children aged 12-15 will be offered Pfizer vaccine, UK announces](https://www.bmj.com/content/374/bmj.n1841) | BMJ

**Title:** The UK’s political gamble that bodes ill for health and the health service

BMJ | 2021; 374: n1848 | 22nd July 2021

This article asks are we willing to tolerate the risk of severe illness and long term sequelae of covid-19 in UK children now that only those with severe neurodisabilities, at risk of immunosuppression, or living with an immunosuppressed person are being offered vaccination.  This decision by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation, the article claims, places it and the government under increasing scrutiny, and suggests the UK is now an outlier in international vaccination policies.

Full detail: [The UK’s political gamble that bodes ill for health and the health service](https://www.bmj.com/content/374/bmj.n1848)

See also: [Should the UK vaccinate children and adolescents against covid-19?](https://www.bmj.com/content/374/bmj.n1866) | BMJ [editorial]

**Title:** Eating disorders during the covid-19 pandemic

BMJ | 2021; 374: n1787 | 19th July 2021

A spike in people seeking treatment for eating disorders during the covid-19 pandemic has revealed their global nature and severity. This article reports from the International Conference on Eating Disorders at which new research was presented showing why previously healthy adolescents succumbed during the pandemic.

Full detail: [Eating disorders during the covid-19 pandemic](https://www.bmj.com/content/374/bmj.n1787)

Related research: [Risk and resilience factors for specific and general psychopathology worsening in people with Eating Disorders during COVID-19 pandemic](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40519-020-01097-x)

**Title:** Implementation of a pooled surveillance testing program for asymptomatic SARS-CoV-2 infections in K-12 schools and universities

EClinicalMedicine | 17th July 2021

The negative impact of continued school closures during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic warrants the establishment of cost-effective strategies for surveillance and screening to safely reopen and monitor for potential in-school transmission. This paper presents a novel approach to increase the availability of repetitive and routine COVID-19 testing that may ultimately reduce the overall viral burden in the community.

By establishing low-cost, weekly testing of students and faculty, pooled saliva analysis for the presence of SARS-CoV-2 enabled schools to determine whether transmission had occurred, make data-driven decisions, and adjust safety protocols. We provide strong evidence that pooled testing may be a fundamental component to the reopening of schools by minimizing the risk of in-school transmission among students and faculty.

Full paper: [Implementation of a pooled surveillance testing program for asymptomatic SARS-CoV-2 infections in K-12 schools and universities](https://www.thelancet.com/action/showPdf?pii=S2589-5370%2821%2900308-4)

**Title:** Are hospitals returning to pre-Covid activity levels?

Nuffield Trust | 22nd July 2021

The latest guidance states that hospitals should aim to deliver at least 95% of the services they delivered before the pandemic, measured against the value of services delivered in the same month in 2019/20. But with rising numbers of Covid patients in hospital, this article looks at how realistic this target is.

Full detail: [Are hospitals returning to pre-Covid activity levels?](https://www.nuffieldtrust.org.uk/resource/chart-of-the-week-are-hospitals-returning-to-pre-covid-activity-levels)

**Title:** Health chiefs encourage more pregnant women to get their COVID-19 vaccine

Public Health England | 22nd July 2021

Health chiefs are encouraging more pregnant women to get their COVID-19 vaccine, as new data shows that 51,724 pregnant women in England have received at least one dose.

The data, from Public Health England (PHE), shows these were all women aged under 50 years of age, who reported that they were pregnant or could be pregnant at the time of receiving the vaccine. Of these, 20,648 women have received their second dose.

It is preferable for pregnant women in the UK to be offered the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccines where available, as there is more safety data available on these vaccines in pregnancy.

Full detail: [Health chiefs encourage more pregnant women to get their COVID-19 vaccine](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/health-chiefs-encourage-more-pregnant-women-to-get-their-covid-19-vaccine)

**Title:** Public urged to continue protecting family and friends

Department of Health and Social Care | 22nd July 2021

New government campaign launches across England to remind public of importance of continuing healthy behaviours to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

* Short film featuring Dr Amir Khan highlights importance of remaining cautious as those vaccinated can still pass on the virus
* New research shows that nearly 9 in 10 (86%) hope that people will proceed with caution and common sense, three quarters (77%) will continue to wear face masks, 81% will practice social distancing where possible and 83% say they will continue to wash hands thoroughly and often

Everyone across England is being urged to continue letting fresh air into enclosed spaces, take up the offer of twice-weekly free testing, wash their hands and book both doses of their vaccine.

Full detail: [Public urged to continue protecting family and friends](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/public-urged-to-continue-protecting-family-and-friends)

**Title:** COVID-19 partial school closures and mental health problems: A cross-sectional survey of 11,000 adolescents to determine those most at risk

JCPP Advances | 20th July 2021

Understanding adolescents' mental health during lockdown and identifying those most at risk is an urgent public health challenge. This study surveyed school pupils across Southern England during the first COVID-19 school lockdown to investigate situational factors associated with mental health difficulties and how they relate to pupils' access to in-school educational provision.

Females, pupils who had experienced food poverty and those who had previously accessed mental health support were at greatest risk of depression, anxiety and a deterioration in wellbeing. Pupils whose parents were going out to work and those preparing for national examinations in the subsequent school year were also at increased risk. Pupils accessing in-school provision had poorer mental health, but this was accounted for by the background risk and contextual factors assessed, in line with the allocation of in-school places to more vulnerable pupils.

Although the strongest associations with poor mental health during school closures were established risk factors, further contextual factors of particular relevance during lockdown had negative impacts on wellbeing. Identifying those pupils at greatest risk for poor outcomes is critical for ensuring that appropriate educational and social support can be given to pupils either at home or in-school during subsequent lockdowns.

Full paper: [COVID-19 partial school closures and mental health problems: A cross-sectional survey of 11,000 adolescents to determine those most at risk](https://acamh.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/jcv2.12021)

**Title:** Tackling childhood overweight and obesity after the COVID-19 pandemic

The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health | 22nd July 2021

Although essential, there are indications that interventions to curb the COVID-19 pandemic are worsening the childhood overweight and obesity crisis globally.

Restricted use of public spaces and play areas mean children have fewer opportunities to engage in physical activities than they had before the pandemic. The closure of schools has compounded the situation; studies have shown that children are more likely to gain excess weight during holiday periods when they are out of school than during term time. This gain in weight could be due to the loss of the positive influence schools tend to have on key risk factors, such as defined mealtimes, physical activity, and sleep schedule.

This comment piece suggests that tackling childhood overweight and obesity after the pandemic will not be easy and might require decades to fully reverse current trends. Genuinely committed and sustained collaborative actions are urgently required to address childhood overweight and obesity and the complex underlying issues.

Full detail: [Tackling childhood overweight and obesity after the COVID-19 pandemic](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanchi/article/PIIS2352-4642(21)00204-2/fulltext)

**Title:** Coronavirus (COVID-19) latest insights

Office for National Statistics | 23rd July 2021

A roundup of the latest data and trends about the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic from the ONS and other sources.

Latest headlines:

* [Infections have increased in England, Wales and Northern Ireland](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/articles/coronaviruscovid19/latestinsights#infections)
* [England's COVID-19 mortality rate in June was similar to May](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/articles/coronaviruscovid19/latestinsights#mortality)
* [Doubt about return to normality within a year](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/articles/coronaviruscovid19/latestinsights#normality)

Full detail: [Coronavirus (COVID-19) latest insights](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/articles/coronaviruscovid19/latestinsights)

**Title:** Does COVID-19 vaccination improve mental health? A difference-in-difference analysis of the Understanding Coronavirus in America study

medRxiv | 22nd July 2021

Mental health problems increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. Knowledge that one is less at risk after being vaccinated may alleviate distress but this hypothesis remains unexplored. Here we test whether psychological distress declined in those vaccinated against COVID-19 in the US and whether changes in perceived risk mediated any association.

The study concludes that receiving a COVID-19 vaccination was associated with declines in distress and perceived risks of infection, hospitalization, and death. Vaccination campaigns could promote this additional benefit of being vaccinated.

Full paper: [Does COVID-19 vaccination improve mental health? A difference-in-difference analysis of the Understanding Coronavirus in America study](https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.07.19.21260782v1.full.pdf)

*Note: This article is a preprint and has not been certified by peer review. It reports new medical research that has yet to be evaluated and so should not be used to guide clinical practice.*

We

[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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