COVID-19 recovery

23rd October 2020

**Title**: Will covid-19 vaccines save lives? Current trials aren’t designed to tell us

BMJ | 2020; 371: m4037 | 20th October 2020

The world has bet the farm on vaccines as the solution to the pandemic, but the trials are not focused on answering the questions many might assume they are as this BMJ Feature piece reports.

Full detail: [Will covid-19 vaccines save lives? Current trials aren’t designed to tell us](https://www.bmj.com/content/371/bmj.m4037)

**Title:** Mental health and wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic: longitudinal analyses of adults in the UK COVID-19 Mental Health & Wellbeing study

The British Journal of Psychiatry | 21st October 2020

Rates of suicidal thoughts have increased during lockdown, especially among young adults, a longitudinal study has found.

Research published in the *British Journal of Psychiatry* found that women, young adults, socially disadvantaged people, and people with pre-existing mental health problems reported the worst mental health outcomes in the initial six week period of national lockdown.

The study—funded by the Samaritans, the Scottish Association for Mental Health, and the Mindstep Foundation—claims to be the most detailed examination to date of the mental health of UK adults in the weeks after they were instructed to stay at home, on 23 March 2020. Researchers surveyed a national sample of 3077 adults three times from 31 March to 11 May. Participants have been followed up throughout the pandemic, and further results will be published in the coming months.

The study found that the proportion of respondents reporting that on at least one day in the previous week they had wanted to end their life increased from 8.2% to 9.2% and then to 9.8%, over the three waves of the study. These rates were highest in young adults (aged 18-29), rising from 12.5% to 14.4% throughout the three waves. The authors note that direct comparisons cannot be made but that this past week rate is higher than an 11% past year suicidal ideation rate reported by young adults in another pre-covid-19 study.

Full document: [Mental health and wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic: longitudinal analyses of adults in the UK COVID-19 Mental Health & Wellbeing study](https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/F7321CBF45C749C788256CFE6964B00C/S0007125020002123a.pdf/mental_health_and_wellbeing_during_the_covid19_pandemic_longitudinal_analyses_of_adults_in_the_uk_covid19_mental_health_wellbeing_study.pdf)

See also: [Suicidal thoughts increased in young adults during lockdown, UK study finds](https://www.bmj.com/content/371/bmj.m4095) | BMJ

**TITLE:** INCREASE MEDICAL WORKFORCE TO TACKLE COVID-19 BACKLOG, DOCTORS’ LEADERS URGE

The NHS will not be able to meet the demands of the covid-19 pandemic and a potential second wave without more staff, doctors’ leaders have warned.

In a reportpublished on 19 October, the BMA, with support from medical royal colleges, said that medical workforce numbers—including consultants—must increase to overcome the backlog of work from the pandemic, reduce NHS waiting lists and waiting times, and restore activity to previous levels. To do this, medical school, foundation training programme, and specialty trainee numbers must be increased, the report said.

The report set out a range of short and medium term solutions to tackle consultant shortages and meet the demands of the pandemic. Among the suggested short term measures were making the most effective use of retired doctors who would like to return to work. “During the first peak of the pandemic, 28 000 doctors made themselves available to return to work,” the report said, “but only a small proportion of them were eventually deployed.”

The wellbeing of consultants and tackling the long term impacts of covid-19 on staff mental health, should also be priorities, the report said.

Full detail: [Increase medical workforce to tackle covid-19 backlog, doctors’ leaders urge](https://www.bmj.com/content/371/bmj.m4056)

Related report: [Consultant workforce shortages and solutions: Now and in the future](https://www.bma.org.uk/media/3429/bma-consultant-workforce-shortages-and-solutions-oct-2020.pdf) | BMA

**Title**: Video consultations in primary and specialist care during the covid-19 pandemic and beyond

BMJ | 2020; 371: m3945 | 20th October 2020

Even before the covid-19 pandemic, virtual consultations (also called telemedicine consultations) were on the rise, with many healthcare systems advocating a digital-first approach.At the start of the pandemic, many GPs and specialists turned to video consultations to reduce patient flow through healthcare facilities and limit infectious exposures.

Video and telephone consultations also enable clinicians who are well but have to self-isolate, or who fall into high risk groups and require shielding, to continue providing medical care. The scope for video consultations for long term conditions is wide and includes management of diabetes, hypertension, asthma, stroke, psychiatric illnesses, cancers, and chronic pain.

Video consultations can also be used for triage and management of a wide range of acute conditions, including, for example, emergency eye care triage.

 This practice pointer summarises the evidence on the use of video consultations in healthcare and offers practical recommendations for video consulting in primary care and outpatient settings.

Full detail: [Video consultations in primary and specialist care during the covid-19 pandemic and beyond](https://www.bmj.com/content/bmj/371/bmj.m3945.full.pdf)

**Title**: Evolution and effects of COVID-19 outbreaks in care homes: a population analysis in 189 care homes in one geographical region of the UK

The Lancet Healthy Longevity | October 2020

COVID-19 has affected care home residents internationally, but detailed information on outbreaks is scarce. We aimed to describe the evolution of outbreaks of COVID-19 in all care homes in one large health region in Scotland.

The effect of COVID-19 on care homes has been substantial but concentrated in care homes with known outbreaks. A key implication from these findings is that, if community incidence of COVID-19 increases again, many care home residents will be susceptible. Shielding care home residents from potential sources of SARS-CoV-2 infection, and ensuring rapid action to minimise outbreak size if infection is introduced, will be important for any second wave.

Full document: [Evolution and effects of COVID-19 outbreaks in care homes: a population analysis in 189 care homes in one geographical region of the UK](https://www.thelancet.com/action/showPdf?pii=S2666-7568%2820%2930012-X)

**Title:** The Challenges of Expanding Rapid Tests to Curb COVID-19

JAMA | published online 21st October 2020

This Medical News feature examines the debate about the value of frequent testing for severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2).

Full detail: [The Challenges of Expanding Rapid Tests to Curb COVID-19](https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2772299)

**Title:** Herd Immunity and Implications for SARS-CoV-2 Control

JAMA | published online 19th October 2020

This JAMA Insights Clinical Update discusses herd immunity in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and explains the herd immunity threshold as a function of transmissibility (R0), the role of an effective vaccine and vaccination program in sustaining herd immunity, and the risks of an infection-based herd immunity approach.

Full detail: [Herd Immunity and Implications for SARS-CoV-2 Control](https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2772167)

See also: [Audio Clinical Review:](https://jamanetwork.com/learning/audio-player/18552659) Can We Count on Herd Immunity to Control COVID-19?

**Title:** What Is Herd Immunity?

JAMA | published online 19th October 2020

This JAMA Patient Page describes what herd immunity is, how it limits disease spread, and how it is achieved in a population either by vaccination or by infection and recovery from a disease.

Full detail: [What is Herd Immunity?](https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2772168)

**Title:** The Impact Of Covid-19 To Date On Older People’s Mental And Physical Health

Age UK | 9th October 2020

This research finds that some older people are coping with the pandemic, but a sizeable minority are finding life incredibly tough. Those who are not very well and have long term health conditions were particularly likely to report that this is an extremely challenging time for them.

The research was made up of a survey of older people, their friends, families, and loved ones (promoted across the Age UK social media channels for two weeks in August 2020 and completed by 569 people) and representative online polling of 1,364 people over the age of 60, conducted by Kantar Polling in September 2020.

Full report: [The Impact of Covid-19 to date on Older People’s Mental and Physical Health](https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/health--wellbeing/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-older-people_age-uk.pdf)

**Title:** Out of sight, out of mind. The continuing impact of COVID-19 on people living with kidney disease

Kidney Care UK | 20th October 2020

This report (compiled using 860 responses from an online survey open from 28 August to 21 September 2020) finds that the majority of kidney patients have been expected to return to work once shielding ended and the furlough scheme ends. Nearly two thirds of respondents (63 per cent) said they were concerned for their safety but had to return regardless. Almost one in five (19 per cent) said that their employer has been ‘very unhelpful’ or ‘unhelpful’ in their return. The report states that the government needs to take immediate and long-term action to protect the wellbeing of around 70,000 vulnerable kidney patients.

Full report: [Out of sight, out of mind. The continuing impact of COVID-19 on people living with kidney disease](https://www.kidneycareuk.org/documents/442/Kidney_Care_UK_patient_survey_report_20.10.20_FINAL.pdf)

**TITLE:** CARING BEHIND CLOSED DOORS: SIX MONTHS ON. THE CONTINUED IMPACT OF THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) PANDEMIC ON UNPAID CARERS

Carers UK | 20th October 2020

Carers UK carried out an online survey between 11 - 28 September 2020. A total of 5,904 carers and former carers responded to the survey. It finds that carers are desperately worried about how they will continue to care safely through the coming winter, and that they are already exhausted and close to burn out. Without urgent action from the government, many carers simply do not think they will be able to cope in the coming months.

* Four in five unpaid carers providing more care for relatives
* 78% reported that the needs of the person they care for have increased during the pandemic
* Two thirds (67%) worried about how they will cope through further lockdowns or local restrictions
* Carers UK calls on Government to help reinstate crucial support services as soon as possible, and implement a New Deal for Carers

Full detail: [Caring behind closed doors: Six months on. The continued impact of the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic on unpaid carers](http://www.carersuk.org/images/News_and_campaigns/Behind_Closed_Doors_2020/Caring_behind_closed_doors_Oct20.pdf)

See also: [Reduced services see unpaid carers pushed to the limit - and desperately worried about winter](https://www.carersuk.org/news-and-campaigns/press-releases/reduced-services-see-unpaid-carers-pushed-to-the-limit-and-desperately-worried-about-winter)

**Title:** How coronavirus has affected equality and human rights

Equality and Human Rights Commission | 20th October 2020

This report summarises evidence that helps to understand the effects of the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic on different groups in society. It highlights potential long-term risks to equality and human rights covering key issues in the areas of: work; poverty; education; social care; and justice and personal security.

It makes targeted recommendations for the UK, Scottish and Welsh Governments to ensure equality and human rights considerations are integrated into the policy response to the pandemic.

Full report: [How coronavirus has affected equality and human rights](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/equality_and_human_rights_commission_how_coronavirus_has_affected_equality_and_human_rights_2020.pdf)

See also: [Hard-won equality and human rights at risk of going backwards in wake of pandemic](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/news/hard-won-equality-and-human-rights-risk-going-backwards-wake-pandemic)

**Title:** Patients’ views on GP premises during COVID-19

The Patients Association | 15th October 2020

With the emergency response to the Covid-19 pandemic disrupting many patients’ access to GP services, this survey investigated what patients felt about their GP’s premises, and whether they would be confident to return to them.

It found ongoing high levels of confidence about visiting GP premises, and a strong expectation among patients that they would feel welcome, confident and safe on future visits.

The survey responses also shed further light on patients’ access to GP services during the pandemic, with many being offered phone consultations, and relatively few getting online video calls. For a substantial minority of patients, online contact was not sufficient to resolve their issue, and they needed to make an in-person visit.

Full survey: [GP premises survey post Covid-19](https://www.patients-association.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=8d055884-82ca-4d07-945a-45a188312df6)

See also: [Patients’ views on GP premises during COVID-19](https://www.patients-association.org.uk/Blogs/reports/patients-views-on-gp-premises-during-covid-19)

**TITLE:** HUMAN CHALLENGE STUDIES WILL SEE PEOPLE PURPOSEFULLY INFECTED WITH VIRUS

BMJ | 2020; 371: m4101 | 22nd October 2020

Human challenge studies of covid-19, which involve volunteers being deliberately infected with the virus under controlled conditions, could start in January, UK researchers have said.

The project, which would be a world first, is a collaboration between Imperial College London, hVIVO (part of the drug company Open Orphan), and the Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust. It has been supported by the government through a £33.6m investment.

In the first stage the researchers will work to determine the smallest amount of virus needed to cause infection and elicit an immune response. To do this they will slowly increase the viral dose to which small groups of volunteers are exposed.

In the second stage vaccine candidates that have been shown to be safe in initial trials will be given to a small number of healthy volunteers, who will then be exposed to the virus. The team will then monitor the participants to see how the vaccine works and to identify any side effects.

Full detail: [Human challenge studies will see people purposefully infected with virus](https://www.bmj.com/content/371/bmj.m4101)

**Title:** Increased risk among ethnic minorities is largely due to poverty and social disparities, review finds

BMJ | 2020; 371: m4099 | 22nd October 2020

Most of the increased risk of infection and death from covid-19 among people from ethnic minorities is explained by factors such as occupation, where people live, their household composition, and pre-existing health conditions, a government review has concluded.

But the first quarterly report from the government’s Race Disparity Unit (RDU), based in the Cabinet Office, notes that a part of the excess risk “remains unexplained” in some groups such as black men, and it said that further work was needed to understand which factors may be causing the disparities.

The report summarises progress towards tackling covid-19 health inequalities since Public Health England published a review on 2 June setting out the disparities in risks and outcomes.Since then the RDU has been working with the equalities minister, Kemi Badenoch, across government, with the Office for National Statistics, and with academics to examine what is driving these disparities and how to tackle them.

Full detail: [Increased risk among ethnic minorities is largely due to poverty and social disparities, review finds](https://www.bmj.com/content/371/bmj.m4099)

See also: [Quarterly report on progress to address COVID-19 health inequalities](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/928646/First_Covid_Disparities_report_to_PM___Health_Secretary_Final_22-10-20.pdf)

**Title**: Coronavirus (COVID-19): evidence relevant to clinical rehabilitation

Cochrane Library Special Collections | 21st October 2020

Rehabilitation has been identified by the World Health Organization (WHO) as an essential health strategy, alongside promotion, prevention, treatment, and palliative care. The rehabilitation of individuals who have experienced COVID-19 must consider not only the consequences of the disease but also the effects of treatments applied during the acute phase.

This collaborative work identified the following conditions as relevant to the WHO rehabilitation programme:

* Acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) and pulmonary restrictive syndrome
* Post-intensive care syndrome (PICS)
* Post-extubation swallowing disorders
* Multiple organ failure and shock
* PTSD, in the context of rehabilitation

This Special Collection focuses on rehabilitation interventions for each of these conditions, but it should be noted that the rehabilitation process of COVID-19 patients in practice will be performed by multi-professional teams with a strict interdisciplinary collaboration, in accordance with the individual’s needs.

Full detail: [Coronavirus (COVID-19): evidence relevant to clinical rehabilitation](https://www.cochranelibrary.com/collections/doi/SC000047/full)

**Title:** Workforce flexibility in the NHS: Utilising COVID-19 innovations

NHS Providers | 22nd October 2020

The outbreak of COVID-19 has presented one of the biggest challenges which the NHS has ever faced, against a backdrop of sustained underfunding and growing workforce pressures. Responding to the pandemic has placed new and drastically increased demands on services, equipment, and staff. To meet these demands, innovations and change were brought about in the NHS at a rapid pace during the initial peak of the pandemic.

This briefing focuses specifically on NHS workforce flexibilities and innovations. It has been directly informed by trust leaders, drawn from the conclusions of a roundtable discussion held in July, which focused on changes to workforce management during the first peak of COVID-19 in England. The briefing explores and makes recommendations on six key areas of change:

* staff wellbeing
* flexibility in staff deployment and roles
* cross-organisational working and regulation
* technology
* making use of new roles
* funding.

Full briefing: [Workforce flexibility in the NHS: Utilising COVID-19 innovations](https://nhsproviders.org/media/690388/workforce-flexibility-during-covid19.pdf)

**Title:** Plan for Jobs: Chancellor increases financial support for businesses and workers

HM Treasury | 22nd October 2020

The government has announced it will significantly increase the reach of its winter support schemes to ensure livelihoods and jobs across the UK continue to be protected in the difficult months to come, supporting jobs and helping to contain the virus.

* open businesses which are experiencing considerable difficulty will be given extra help to keep staff on as government significantly increases contribution to wage costs under the Job Support Scheme, and business contributions drop to 5%
* business grants are expanded to cover businesses in particularly affected sectors in high-alert level areas, helping them stay afloat and protecting jobs
* grants for the self-employed doubled to 40% of previous earnings

Full detail: [Plan for Jobs: Chancellor increases financial support for businesses and workers](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/plan-for-jobs-chancellor-increases-financial-support-for-businesses-and-workers?utm_source=923e5ab2-e10c-490d-ac93-4287f524ee0e&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)

See also: [Chancellor statement to the House – Plan For Jobs](https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/chancellor-statement-to-the-house-plan-for-jobs?utm_source=9b60353d-9f7f-4ef7-9643-68b0bdf684ef&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)

**Title**: Implementing employment support schemes in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

National Audit Office | 23rd October 2020

On 20 March 2020 government announced the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS), followed on 26 March by the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) as part of its economic response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Initially government’s overriding ambition for both schemes was to provide financial support to businesses and individuals as quickly as possible in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic to protect jobs.

This report considers how well HM Treasury and HMRC have managed risks thus far in implementing these schemes. This report considers whether the Departments have:

* managed design and delivery risks effectively in implementing the schemes (Part One)
* understood whether the schemes are reaching the people intended (Part Two); and
* managed fraud and error risks effectively (Part Three)

Full detail: [Implementing employment support schemes in response to the COVID-19 pandemic](https://www.nao.org.uk/report/implementing-employment-support-schemes-in-response-to-the-covid-19-pandemic/?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=)

**Title:** NHS strengthens mental health support for staff

NHS England | 20th October 2020

NHS staff will get rapid access to expanded mental health services that are being rolled out across the country as part of efforts to deal with the second wave of coronavirus.

NHS England and NHS Improvement will invest an extra £15 million to strengthen mental health support for nurses, paramedics, therapists, pharmacists, and support staff.

Staff referred by themselves or colleagues will be rapidly assessed and treated by local expert mental health specialists. Those with the most severe needs will be referred to a specialist centre of excellence.

The investment will fund outreach work among those deemed most as risk such as critical care staff.

Full detail: [NHS strengthens mental health support for staff](https://www.england.nhs.uk/2020/10/strengthening-mental-health-support-for-staff/)

**Title**: Health Secretary warns of long-term effects of COVID-19

Department of Health & Social Care | 21st October 2020

The Health Secretary is urging the public – and especially young people – to follow the rules and protect themselves and others from COVID-19, as new data and a new film released today reveal the potentially devastating long-term impact of the virus. The data suggests long COVID affects around 10% of 18 to 49 year olds who become unwell with COVID-19.

The symptoms of ‘long COVID’, including fatigue, protracted loss of taste or smell, respiratory and cardiovascular symptoms and mental health problems, are described in a new film being released today as part of the wider national Hands, Face, Space campaign. The film calls on the public to continue to wash their hands, cover their face and make space to control the spread of the virus.

Full detail: [Health Secretary warns of long-term effects of COVID-19](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/health-secretary-warns-of-long-term-effects-of-covid-19-as-new-film-released?utm_source=c0dc82e9-886c-43df-8da5-a615494030e0&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)

**Title:** The temporal association of introducing and lifting non-pharmaceutical interventions with the time-varying reproduction number (R) of SARS-CoV-2: a modelling study across 131 countries

The Lancet Infectious Diseases | 22nd October 2020

Non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) were implemented by many countries to reduce the transmission of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), the causal agent of COVID-19. A resurgence in COVID-19 cases has been reported in some countries that lifted some of these NPIs.

The authors of this study aimed to understand the association of introducing and lifting NPIs with the level of transmission of SARS-CoV-2, as measured by the time-varying reproduction number (*R*), from a broad perspective across 131 countries.

Individual NPIs, including school closure, workplace closure, public events ban, ban on gatherings of more than ten people, requirements to stay at home, and internal movement limits, are associated with reduced transmission of SARS-CoV-2, but the effect of introducing and lifting these NPIs is delayed by 1–3 weeks, with this delay being longer when lifting NPIs.

These findings provide additional evidence that can inform policy-maker decisions on the timing of introducing and lifting different NPIs, although *R* should be interpreted in the context of its known limitations.

Full paper: [The temporal association of introducing and lifting non-pharmaceutical interventions with the time-varying reproduction number (R) of SARS-CoV-2: a modelling study across 131 countries](https://www.thelancet.com/action/showPdf?pii=S1473-3099%2820%2930785-4)

**Title**: Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain: 23 October 2020

Office for National Statistics | 23rd October 2020

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey covering the period 14 to 18 October 2020 to understand the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people, households and communities in Great Britain.

Full detail: [Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain: 23 October 2020](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandwellbeing/bulletins/coronavirusandthesocialimpactsongreatbritain/23october2020)

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.

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

<https://www.trftlibraryknowledge.com/health-newsfeeds.html>