COVID-19: impact on mental health

 25th June 2021

**Title:** Funding boost for young people’s mental health services

NHS England | 22nd June 2021

Children and young people will benefit from a cash injection to mental health services which includes addressing the increasing demand for the treatment of eating disorders. An extra £40 million has been allocated to address the COVID impact on children and young people’s mental health and enhance services across the country.

Full detail: [Funding boost for young people’s mental health services](https://www.england.nhs.uk/2021/06/funding-boost-for-young-peoples-mental-health-services/)

**Title:** The mental health of NHS staff during the COVID-19 pandemic: a two-wave cohort study

medRxiv | 23rd June 2021

Health and social care workers(HSCWs) are at risk of experiencing adverse mental health (MH) outcomes (e.g., higher levels of anxiety and depression) as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This can have a detrimental impact on quality of care, the national response to the pandemic and its aftermath.

This longitudinal study design provided follow-up evidence on the MH (changes in the prevalence of disease over time) of NHS staff working in a remote health board in Scotland during the COVID-19 pandemic and investigated the determinants of MH outcomes over time.

HSCWs working in a remote area with low COVID-19 prevalence reported similar levels of substantial anxiety and depression as those working in areas of the UK with high rates of COVID-19 infections.

Efforts to support HSCW MH must remain a priority and should minimize the adverse effects of working with, and the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Note: This article is a preprint and has not been certified by peer review.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.*

Full paper: [The mental health of NHS staff during the COVID-19 pandemic: a two-wave cohort study](https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.06.17.21259076v1.full.pdf)

**Title:** Did social factors buffer against the effect of adversities on self-harm during the COVID-19 pandemic? A longitudinal analysis of 49,227 UK adults

medRxiv | 22nd June 2021

There is concern that the COVID-19 pandemic as well as its economic aftermath will have a negative impact on suicides, although this is not inevitable. This is hypothesised to occur via reductions in protective factors such as social connectedness and increases in risk factors such as domestic abuse and unemployment.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic is having a detrimental impact on a number of known risk factors for suicide, little is known about how social factors such as social support, social contact, and loneliness may interact with these risk factors to exacerbate or buffer their impact on self-harm thoughts and behaviours. The aim of this study is therefore to establish which social factors are associated with changes over time in self-harm thoughts and behaviours in a large sample of UK adults across the first 59 weeks of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The findings of this study suggest the importance of the quality of social support, rather than the mere presence of contact, is important for reducing the likelihood of self-harm behaviours in the context of COVID-19 pandemic-related adversity and worry.

*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.*

Full article: [Did social factors buffer against the effect of adversities on self-harm during the COVID-19 pandemic? A longitudinal analysis of 49,227 UK adults](https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.06.19.21259173v1.full.pdf)

**Title:** Young people's mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic

The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health | 24th June 2021

There has understandably been widespread concern about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions on the mental health of children and young people, with evidence of recent increases in the prevalence of mental health problems.

Yet there has been relatively little evaluation of how mental health has changed over the pandemic and varied for children and young people living in a range of circumstances. This Comment piece discusses the UK based Co-SPACE study, which through the collection of monthly data from a population with diverse social and demographic backgrounds provides a unique opportunity to examine how things have changed over time throughout the pandemic, and, crucially, for whom.

Full detail: [Young people's mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanchi/article/PIIS2352-4642%2821%2900177-2/fulltext)

Related: [Children’s mental health: One year in the pandemic](https://cospaceoxford.org/findings/report-10-changes-in-childrens-mental-health-throughout-one-year-of-the-covid-19-pandemic/) | Co-SPACE study

**Title:** Mental health in the covid-19 pandemic: we need careful presentation and interpretation of facts

BMJ Opinion | 18th June 2021

This opinion piece argues that what we really need is reasoned analysis, careful presentation of the facts, and long term planning and resourcing, so that we can support mental health services to look after those whose mental health has been most affected by the pandemic.

Full detail: [Mental health in the covid-19 pandemic: we need careful presentation and interpretation of facts](https://blogs.bmj.com/bmj/2021/06/18/mental-health-problems-in-the-covid-19-pandemic-we-need-careful-presentation-and-interpretation-of-facts/)

**Title:** A perfect storm: the impact of COVID-19 on the mental health of young people

The Pharmaceutical Journal | 23rd June 2021

Mental health services for children and young people were struggling before the COVID-19 pandemic, but data suggest they are now reaching crisis point. Data obtained exclusively by The Pharmaceutical Journal suggest increasing numbers of young people were prescribed antidepressants during the pandemic, while facing ever longer waits for psychological support.

NHS figures, analysed by the Royal College of Psychiatrists and published in April 2021, show that 80,226 more children and young people were referred to mental health services between April 2020 and December 2020, up by 28% on 2019​​.

In addition, the analysis revealed that the number of children and young people needing urgent or emergency crisis care — including assessments to see if someone needs to be sectioned because they or others are at risk of harm — had increased by 18% compared with 2019. The authors suggest however, that this is ‘the tip of the iceberg’, in terms of need.

Full detail: [A perfect storm: the impact of COVID-19 on the mental health of young people](https://pharmaceutical-journal.com/article/feature/a-perfect-storm-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-the-mental-health-of-young-people)

**Title:** More than half fear lockdown ending as pandemic's impact on mental health laid bare

Mind | 18th June 2021

The majority of people are worried about seeing and being near others once lockdown restrictions are fully relaxed, research carried out by the mental health charity Mind has found.

The study, which nearly 10,000 people in England took part in, revealed 55 per cent of adults and young people had this concern, with 46 per cent of those who have already been vaccinated saying they are still worried they will catch coronavirus.

A total of 1 in 4 adults and more than 1 in 6 young people experienced mental distress for the first time during the pandemic, according to Mind’s research. The latest NHS figures also show the number of people in contact with mental health services is the highest since the first lockdown (1.27million) and the number of urgent referrals to crisis care.

Full detail: [More than half fear lockdown ending as pandemic's impact on mental health laid bare](https://www.mind.org.uk/news-campaigns/news/more-than-half-fear-lockdown-ending-as-pandemics-impact-on-mental-health-laid-bare/)

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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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