COVID-19: impact on mental health

October 2021

**Title:** Coronavirus and depression in adults in Great Britain

Office for National Statistics | 1st October 2021

This dataset provides estimates of adults with depressive symptoms with breakdowns by characteristic. It includes comparisons with earlier periods throughout and before the pandemic. Analysis is based on the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey.

The data shows rates of depression in Britain are starting to fall after rising during the Covid pandemic. The Office for National Statistics estimated that 10 per cent of adults in the UK were depressed before the virus first struck. This more than doubled to a record 21 per cent last winter after two waves of the epidemic and three lockdowns, with women and young people worst affected.

Full detail: [Coronavirus and depression in adults in Great Britain](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/datasets/coronavirusanddepressioninadultsingreatbritain)

**Title:** New Every Mind Matters campaign to improve people's mental health

Department of Health and Social Care | 5th October 2021

The general public is urged to find “what works for me” to support their mental wellbeing as the first campaign is launched by the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID).

The Every Mind Matters campaign empowers people to look after their mental health by directing them to free, practical tips and advice. By answering five simple questions through the Every Mind Matters platform, people can get a tailored ‘Mind Plan’, giving them personalised tips to help deal with stress and anxiety, boost their mood, sleep better and feel more in control.

New research commissioned by OHID reveals nearly half (49%) of adults in England said the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact on their mental wellbeing, and more than a third of all adults in England (34% or 15.1 million) said they did not know what to do to help improve their mental wellbeing.

Younger adults reported struggling the most, with 57% of 18 to 34 year olds saying their mental wellbeing was negatively impacted by the pandemic, and just under half (44%) reporting that they did not know what to do to help.

Full detail: [New Every Mind Matters campaign to improve people's mental health](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-every-mind-matters-campaign-to-improve-peoples-mental-health)

**Title:** Youth Mental Health and Covid-19

ESRC Centre for Society and Mental Health | Emerging Minds | The Policy Institute | 8th October 2021

This policy briefing has been jointly produced by the ESRC Centre for Society and Mental Health, Emerging Minds, and The Policy Institute, following the delivery of a policy lab in early 2021. During the policy lab, a range of challenges affecting UK children and young people in the short- and long-term were identified and reflected upon. Three key themes emerged:

1. The pandemic has had multiple impacts on education and daily life – particularly the impacts of social isolation, academic pressures, and transitions to online learning. Readapting to the school environment may also bring further challenges.
2. There has been severe disruption to support services – while children and young people experience these mental health challenges, there has been limited access to effective and diverse types of support.
3. There are wider impacts of loss, trauma and financial security – children and young people have been affected by the challenges and losses that their families, communities, and wider society has experienced throughout the pandemic.

Potential solutions to the above challenges were discussed, producing recommended actions focused on three different settings: schools, mental health services, and the wider policy and practice environment.

Recommendations range from review of and investment in digital education tools, equipping school staff to normalise conversations about mental health, increased flexibility in modes of learning, and open access to mental health resources for young people. There is also a call for reforms to the benefit system and universal credit, and an exploration the feasibility of implementing a guaranteed income scheme.

Full briefing: [Youth Mental Health and Covid-19: 2021 Policy Lab Briefing Note](https://www.kcl.ac.uk/csmh/assets/youth-mental-health-and-covid-19-2021-policy-lab-briefing-note.pdf)

Press release: [New policy briefing calls for action to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic on the mental health of young people](https://www.kcl.ac.uk/news/briefing-calls-for-action-on-youth-mental-health-and-covid-19)

**Title:** Pre-pandemic mental health and disruptions to healthcare, economic and housing outcomes during the COVID-19 pandemic

The British Journal of Psychiatry | 30th September 2021

People who had higher pre-pandemic levels of depression or anxiety have been more severely affected by disruption to jobs and healthcare during the pandemic, according to a new study.

The study looked at data from 59,482 people who are surveyed regularly as part of 12 ongoing longitudinal studies in England. It found that people whose survey responses before the pandemic suggested higher levels of anxiety and depression symptoms were 24% more likely to have had delays to medical procedures, 12% more likely to lose their job, and 33% more likely to have had disruption to prescriptions or medication during the first eight to 10 months of the pandemic than those with average levels of anxiety and depression symptoms.

Those with more severe symptoms of depression or anxiety experienced a much greater likelihood of disruptions to jobs, income and healthcare, the study found.

Further detail: [Pre-pandemic mental health and disruptions to healthcare, economic and housing outcomes during the COVID-19 pandemic: evidence from 12 UK longitudinal studies](https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/the-british-journal-of-psychiatry/article/abs/prepandemic-mental-health-and-disruptions-to-healthcare-economic-and-housing-outcomes-during-the-covid19-pandemic-evidence-from-12-uk-longitudinal-studies/E1F1E6980CE4974368C31D7B510ECE6B)

See also: [People with prior mental ill health hit harder by pandemic disruption](https://www.kcl.ac.uk/news/people-with-prior-mental-ill-health-hit-harder-by-pandemic-disruption) | Kings College London

**Title:** Does having COVID-19 affect mental health?

Zoe Covid Study | 29th September 2021

In this study, researchers analysed data from 421,977 ZOE COVID Study app contributors, of whom around 27,000 tested positive for COVID-19 between February 23rd and April 12th 2021.

They discovered that 30% of people who tested positive for COVID-19 reported feeling anxious or depressed compared with 26% of people who tested negative - a relatively small increase.

The study also found that people who were infected recently were more likely to report mental health problems compared with those who had been infected more than four months ago. This suggests that the impact of having COVID-19 on mental health fades over time.

Full detail: [Does having COVID-19 affect mental health?](https://covid.joinzoe.com/post/does-having-covid-19-affect-mental-health)

**Title:** One in three doctors say their organisation is not prepared for winter

Royal College of Physicians | 13th October 2021

The twelfth survey of RCP members and fellows during the COVID-19 pandemic was conducted as more of the population returns to normality and winter is on the horizon.

With just four weeks until the end of British Summer Time, over a third of respondents to our survey (36%) say their organisation is not at all prepared for winter. 27% feel personally unprepared, and almost two thirds feeling tired or exhausted.

This follows a year of immense pressure on healthcare staff as they dealt with the COVID-19 pandemic, and now face an enormous backlog of care. As well as the majority feeling tired or exhausted, 36.5% are demoralised and 32.5% pessimistic.

The RCP wants more to be done immediately to improve the conditions under which doctors and other clinicians are working.

They say the key to improving morale is giving back doctors some control over their working life. This means open and honest conversations about job planning and more group job planning to better manage the time available.

It also means accepting that remote working is here to stay and making sure that it is available to everyone.  Remote working is also a training and development opportunity in a world that increasingly does things digitally.

Full detail: [One in three doctors say their organisation is not prepared for winter](https://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/news/one-three-doctors-say-their-organisation-not-prepared-winter)

See also: [Doctors want to work more flexibly – and we need to make it a reality](https://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/news/doctors-want-work-more-flexibly-and-we-need-make-it-reality)

**Title:** Global prevalence and burden of depressive and anxiety disorders in 204 countries and territories in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic

The Lancet | 5th October 2021

Before 2020, mental disorders were leading causes of the global health-related burden, with depressive and anxiety disorders being leading contributors to this burden. The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has created an environment where many determinants of poor mental health are exacerbated. The need for up-to-date information on the mental health impacts of COVID-19 in a way that informs health system responses is imperative. This study aims to quantify the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the prevalence and burden of major depressive disorder and anxiety disorders globally in 2020.

This pandemic has created an increased urgency to strengthen mental health systems in most countries. Mitigation strategies could incorporate ways to promote mental wellbeing and target determinants of poor mental health and interventions to treat those with a mental disorder. Taking no action to address the burden of major depressive disorder and anxiety disorders should not be an option.

Full paper: [Global prevalence and burden of depressive and anxiety disorders in 204 countries and territories in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic](https://www.thelancet.com/action/showPdf?pii=S0140-6736%2821%2902143-7)

**Title:** Mental Health and COVID-19

Oxford Academic Journals

What is the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health? Effects observed include anger, anxiety and insomnia, depression, loneliness and post-traumatic stress. Our collection explores the psychological impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions in the general population; as well as specific groups such as older adults, parents, students, healthcare workers, and patients with pre-existing conditions.

By assessing the impact of the COVID-19 on mental health, these featured resources from a range of Oxford University Press books and journals aim to support pandemic response and recovery.

The collection also includes general resources on global mental health challenges and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) with a view to informing mental health policies beyond the current emergency.

Full detail: [Mental Health and COVID-19](https://academic.oup.com/journals/pages/mental-health-and-covid-19?utm_content=mainstory%2Bimage&utm_source=adestra&utm_medium=email&utm_term=Journals&utm_campaign=oupac-campaign%3A%201391733973218981547)

**Title:** Pre-pandemic mental health and disruptions to healthcare, economic and housing outcomes during the COVID-19 pandemic

British Journal of Psychiatry | 30th September 2021

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted lives and livelihoods, and people already experiencing mental ill health may have been especially vulnerable. The study aimed to quantify mental health inequalities in disruptions to healthcare, economic activity and housing. The study concluded people experiencing psychological distress pre-pandemic were more likely to experience healthcare and economic disruptions, and clusters of disruptions across multiple domains during the pandemic. Failing to address these disruptions risks further widening mental health inequalities.

Full paper: [Pre-pandemic mental health and disruptions to healthcare, economic and housing outcomes during the COVID-19 pandemic: evidence from 12 UK longitudinal studies, British Journal of Psychiatry](https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/E1F1E6980CE4974368C31D7B510ECE6B/S000712502100132Xa.pdf/pre-pandemic-mental-health-and-disruptions-to-healthcare-economic-and-housing-outcomes-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-evidence-from-12-uk-longitudinal-studies.pdf)

**Title:** Short-term and Long-term Rates of Postacute Sequelae of SARS-CoV-2 Infection

JAMA Network | 13th October 2021

This review looked at the question: What are the short-term and long-term postacute sequelae of COVID-19 (PASC) infection?

In this systematic review of 57 studies comprising more than 250 000 survivors of COVID-19, more than half of COVID-19 survivors experienced PASC 6 months after recovery. The most common PASC involved functional mobility impairments, pulmonary abnormalities, and mental health disorders. These long-term PASC effects occur on a scale that could overwhelm existing health care capacity, particularly in low- and middle-income countries.

Full detail: [Short-term and long-term rates of postacute sequelae of SARS-CoV-2 infection: A Systematic Review](https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2784918)

**Title:** Physical, cognitive, and mental health impacts of COVID-19 after hospitalisation (PHOSP-COVID): a UK multicentre, prospective cohort study

The Lancet Respiratory Medicine | 7th October 2021

The impact of COVID-19 on physical and mental health and employment after hospitalisation with acute disease is not well understood. The aim of this study was to determine the effects of COVID-19-related hospitalisation on health and employment, to identify factors associated with recovery, and to describe recovery phenotypes.

The authors identified factors related to not recovering after hospital admission with COVID-19 at 6 months after discharge (eg, female sex, middle age, two or more comorbidities, and more acute severe illness), and four different recovery phenotypes. The severity of physical and mental health impairments were closely related, whereas cognitive health impairments were independent.

In clinical care, a proactive approach is needed across the acute severity spectrum, with interdisciplinary working, wide access to COVID-19 holistic clinical services, and the potential to stratify care.

Full paper: [Physical, cognitive, and mental health impacts of COVID-19 after hospitalisation (PHOSP-COVID): a UK multicentre, prospective cohort study](https://www.thelancet.com/action/showPdf?pii=S2213-2600%2821%2900383-0)

**Title:** Well-being worsened in the year ending March 2021

Office for National Statistics | 15th October 2021

Average ratings across all indicators of well-being deteriorated in the year ending March 2021.

Life satisfaction declined in all countries and regions of the UK compared with the previous period, with the largest decreases being in Northern Ireland and Yorkshire and the Humber.

Self-reported anxiety increased in all countries and regions of the UK apart from Northern Ireland and the North East, with the largest increases being in the West Midlands and the North West.

Average ratings of happiness declined everywhere except the North East and the East Midlands, while the feeling that the things done in life are worthwhile declined everywhere except from the North East.

The recent decline in well-being is the greatest seen since such measurements began in the year ending March 2012.

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

**Title:** 'Fix the issues at the coalface and mental wellbeing will be improved': a framework analysis of frontline NHS staff experiences and use of health and wellbeing resources in a Scottish health board area during the COVID-19 pandemic.

BMC Health Services Research | 13th October 2021

Frontline healthcare staff working in pandemics have been reported to experience mental health issues during the early and post-peak stages. To alleviate these problems, healthcare organisations have been providing support for their staff, including organisational, cognitive behavioural and physical and mental relaxation interventions. This paper reports the findings of a study commissioned by a Scottish NHS health board area during the initial outbreak of COVID-19. The study aimed to understand the experience of NHS staff relating to the provision of wellbeing interventions between March and August 2020.

Our findings show that despite the provision of relaxational and cognitive behavioural interventions to support staff wellbeing during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, there were barriers to access, including heavy workload, understaffing, inconvenient locations and the stigma of being judged. Organisational factors were the most frequently reported support need amongst frontline staff across sites.

While relaxational and cognitive behavioural interventions were well received by staff, barriers to accessing them still existed. Staff support in the context of organisational factors, such as engagement with managers was deemed as the most important for staff wellbeing. Managers play a key role in everyday organisational processes and therefore are in the right position to meet increasing frontline staff demands due to the pandemic and removing barriers to accessing wellbeing support. Healthcare managers should be aware of organisational factors that might increase job demands and protect organisational resources that can promote wellbeing for frontline staff.

Full paper: ['Fix the issues at the coalface and mental wellbeing will be improved': a framework analysis of frontline NHS staff experiences and use of health and wellbeing resources in a Scottish health board area during the COVID-19 pandemic.](https://bmchealthservres.biomedcentral.com/track/pdf/10.1186/s12913-021-07103-x.pdf)

**Title:** Psychosis cases soar in England as pandemic hits mental health

The Guardian | 18th October 2021

Cases of psychosis have soared over the past two years in England as an increasing number of people experience hallucinations and delusional thinking amid the stresses of the Covid-19 pandemic.

There was a 75% increase in the number of people referred to mental health services for their first suspected episode of psychosis between April 2019 and April 2021, NHS data shows.

The rise continued throughout the summer, with 12,655 referred in July 2021, up 53% from 8,252 in July 2019. Much of the increase has been seen over the last year, after the first national lockdown, according to data analysed by the charity Rethink Mental Illness. More than 13,000 referrals were made in May 2021, a 70% rise on the May before when there were 7,813 referrals.

Full detail: [Psychosis cases soar in England as pandemic hits mental health](https://www.theguardian.com/society/2021/oct/18/psychosis-cases-soar-in-england-as-pandemic-hits-mental-health)

**Title:** Staff psychological support response to COVID-19

NHS Employers | 26th October 2021

This case study describes how Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust has implemented a psychological support service for its staff.

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Lancashire Teaching Hospitals Trust (LTHTR) recognised that more staff would need to access psychology services. Almost 1000 staff have been able to access psychological support since adopting new pathways as part of their overall health and wellbeing offer.

A number of key steps were taken, including:

* development and delivery of a staff support helpline
* provision of individual therapy for identified staff
* provision of tailored group support to specific staff groups
* delivery of mindfulness based cognitive therapy to support mental wellbeing and resilience.

Full detail: [Staff psychological support response to COVID-19](https://www.nhsemployers.org/case-studies/staff-psychological-support-response-covid-19)

**Title:** The State of the World’s Children 2021; On My Mind: promoting, protecting and caring for children’s mental health

UNICEF | October 2021

As COVID-19 heads into its third year, the impact on children and young people’s mental health and well-being continues to weigh heavily. According to the latest available data from UNICEF, globally, at least 1 in 7 children has been directly affected by lockdowns, while more than 1.6 billion children have suffered some loss of education. The disruption to routines, education, recreation, as well as concern for family income and health, is leaving many young people feeling afraid, angry, and concerned for their future.

This report suggests that children and young people could feel the impact of Covid-19 on their mental health and well-being for many years to come. The report examines child, adolescent and caregiver mental health. It focuses on risks and protective factors at critical moments in the life course and delves into the social determinants that shape mental health and well-being.

Full report: [The State of the World’s Children 2021; On My Mind: promoting, protecting and caring for children’s mental health](https://www.unicef.org/media/108161/file/SOWC-2021-full-report-English.pdf)

Press release: [Impact of COVID-19 on poor mental health in children and young people ‘tip of the iceberg’](https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/impact-covid-19-poor-mental-health-children-and-young-people-tip-iceberg)

**Title:** A lifeline for London: How mental health services in the voluntary sector worked during the pandemic

Centre for Mental Health | 28th October 2021

The Covid-19 pandemic has put unprecedented pressure on people’s mental health. *A lifeline for London*, commissioned by the Mayor of London, explores how voluntary and community organisations in the capital supported people’s mental health during the first year of the pandemic, how they adapted to the crisis, and what they’ve learned from the experience.

Full detail: [A lifeline for London: How mental health services in the voluntary sector worked during the pandemic](https://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/publication/download/CentreforMH_LifelineForLondon.pdf)

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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