

**w/c 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021**

**Produced by Health Evidence Matters**

## **Public Health England**

### **Help us, help you lung cancer campaign launched**

The latest phase of our Help us, help you campaign urges people worried about possible symptoms of lung cancer to seek advice.

It focuses on the key symptom – a cough that lasts for three weeks or more – and aims to reassure people that cancer remains a priority for the NHS.

[Details](#)

### **National Child Measurement Programme: childhood obesity**

Research by University College London (UCL) shares learning from local authorities that have a downward trend in childhood obesity and this update includes practice examples: North of England, Midlands, South of England, East of England and London.

[Details](#)

### **COVID-19 and worklessness: support for London local authorities**

This report provides information on worklessness and support available to local authorities to mitigate worklessness locally

[Details](#)

### **COVID-19: the green book, chapter 14a - update**

Updated to include information on the Moderna vaccine, further changes to the advice on managing allergic history and allergies after the first dose and updated information and clarification of advice on pregnancy.

[Details](#)

### **PHE launches new Psychological First Aid training**

The online training, developed by PHE, is now available for those supporting children and young people affected by coronavirus (COVID-19).

[Details](#)

### **Weekly national Influenza and COVID-19 surveillance report Week 7 report (up to week 6 data) 18 February 2021**

This week's COVID-19 surveillance report shows that case rates have decreased in all age groups and continue to be highest in those aged 30-39 years old.

[Details](#)

## **Department of Health and Social Care**

### **February interim findings from COVID-19 REACT-1 study published**

Main findings from 9th REACT study show national prevalence fell by two thirds from 1.57% to 0.51%, or 51 per 10,000 infected, compared to last REACT report from 6 to 22 January. R number is 0.72, based on prevalence observed at end of the last report and today's interim findings

[Details](#)

### **New technology to help identify those at high risk from COVID-19**

The QCovid® risk-prediction model, which analyses a combination of risk factors based on medical records, will help clinicians identify a new group of people who may be at high risk from Covid-19, who will be prioritised for vaccination as part of the current vaccination cohorts.

The research to develop and validate the model, which has been independently validated by the Office for National Statistics, was published in the British Medical Journal in 2020. Additional code underpinning the model will be made available within a month.

Patients identified by the risk assessment will be added to the Shielded Patient List by NHS Digital, on a precautionary basis, and will be invited to receive a Covid-19 vaccine as soon as possible if they have not already had it. They will additionally be given advice on precautionary measures, including shielding where this is the current advice.

A letter to NHS Trusts introduces and explains the new model; a similar letter has been sent to GPs.

[Details](#)

[COVID-19 population risk assessment](#)

### **Coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination statistics, plans and documentation**

This page brings together COVID-19 vaccination programme-related documents published by DHSC, and vaccination statistics published by other bodies within the UK.

[Details](#)

### **Covid-19 Human Challenge study**

The world's first COVID-19 human challenge study will begin in the UK within a month.

Up to 90 volunteers aged 18 to 30 will be exposed to COVID-19 to increase understanding of how the virus affects people, the factors that influence transmission, what amount of virus is needed to cause infection and how the immune system reacts

[Details](#)

### **£18.5 million to tackle long COVID through research**

The funding will be given to 4 research projects to better understand the causes, symptoms and treatment of long Covid, which is reported to affect around 1 in 10 people infected. The projects were selected by an independent panel of experts and patients with long Covid.

[Details](#)

### **New campaign to support vaccine roll-out backed by social media companies and British institutions**

A new campaign launched by government and the NHS will see the launch of a range of new Facebook frames and Instagram GIFs, for people to use to show their support for the vaccine roll-out on social media.

[Details](#)

### **Care home residents to be allowed one visitor as part of cautious easing of lockdown**

Every resident will be allowed one regular indoor visitor from 8 March.

[Details](#)

### **COVID-19 home testing kits now easier to order**

The government has introduced a number of new accessibility improvements to the home testing programme to make it even easier to get tested.

[Details](#)

### **Coronavirus England briefing, 18 February 2021**

Epidemiological data and hospitalisation metrics used by the government to brief MPs on local restriction tiers.

[Details](#)

### **Government Office for Science**

#### **Latest R number and growth rate**

Last updated on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

Latest R number range for the UK

0.6 to 0.9

Latest growth rate range for the UK

-6% to -3% per day

[Details](#)

#### **Post-COVID complications following hospitalisation**

SAGE papers: One in 10 Covid patients die within 5 months of leaving hospital, while almost a third of those who survived the virus had to be readmitted. Half of patients in hospital with COVID suffered complications

[Details](#)

### **Independent SAGE**

#### **Independent SAGE briefing note on use of punishments in the Covid response**

Blatant and visible violations of Covid-safe rules and guidance are relatively rare and probably less important in spreading infection than contacts that are within the current regulations (e.g. at workplaces). Punishment for blatant and visible violations may have a role in maintaining a sense of justice for the majority who are adhering, but evidence suggests that prioritizing punitive approaches can be ineffective or even counter-productive. Punitive approaches applied to the one area where adherence is low — self-isolation — also distract from the real causes of failure of adherence and the real solutions. Increasing public understanding about what self-isolation means and when it is required, plus providing adequate financial, material, practical and social support will be more effective in infection control than punishments.

[Details](#)

#### **A 'Sustainable Suppression' Strategy for Keeping Society Open**

The aim of this document is to outline an overall strategy for handling the COVID pandemic which protects the public with the minimum of disruption to the everyday life of our communities. This

involves driving levels of infection down and keeping them down at a level where outbreaks can be handled through highly targeted measures (notably test, trace and supported isolation).

[Details](#)

### **NHS England and NHS Improvement**

#### **NHS offers COVID jab to clinically vulnerable and people 65 to 69**

In the next phase, GPs will offer vaccines to clinically vulnerable patients, while people aged 65 and over will be invited to book a vaccination at one of the vaccination centres. Figures also demonstrate that the NHS has vaccinated 15 million of the most vulnerable people.

[Details](#)

#### **TB service guidance updated**

COVID-19 guidance on tuberculosis service provision has been updated and includes restoration of the local latent TB infection programme.

[Details](#)

#### **NHS England letter details vaccination of JCVI cohorts 5-6 and additional funding for vaccination in residential settings**

This letter provides more detail on the next phase of the COVID-19 vaccination programme, including additional funding for vaccination in residential settings, and clarifies the position on vaccinating children and young people on the clinically extremely vulnerable list.

[Details](#)

### **Research and analysis from academic journals – non-coronavirus-related**

#### **British Journal of General Practice: NHS Health Checks: Equity and outcomes 2009-17: An observational study**

Between 2013-17, NHS Health Check uptake remained low. Attendees more likely to be prescribed statins, 26/1000 vs non-attendees 8/1000 & antihypertensives, 25/1000 vs 13/1000 non-attendees. Statins were prescribed in only 9,785 /117,963 (8.3%) eligible people with  $\geq 10\%$  CVD risk.

[Abstract](#)

#### **Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews: Blood pressure targets in adults with hypertension**

This updated review (11 RCTs [7 new]; n=38,688) found the benefits of trying to achieve a lower BP target rather than a standard target ( $\leq 140/90$  mm Hg) do not outweigh harms in the overall population; further research is needed to see if any particular groups would benefit.

[Full text](#)

#### **Heart: Preventing cardiovascular disease among sexual and gender minority persons**

Review notes the unique health risks and disparate outcomes among sexual and gender minority populations. It stresses the importance of assessing and addressing cardiovascular disease risk behaviours leading to adverse outcomes.

A recent scientific statement from the American Heart Association notes that there is mounting evidence that LGBTQ adults experience disparities across several cardiovascular risk factors compared with their cisgender heterosexual peers. These disparities are posited to be driven primarily by exposure to psychosocial stressors across the life span. The statement aims to present a conceptual model to elucidate potential mechanisms underlying cardiovascular health disparities in LGBTQ adults, to identify

Caveat: Content of these briefings has not been critically appraised! Apply your appraisal skills to articles referenced!  
Health Evidence Matters provides clinical and public health evidence reviews and training in evidence-based practice skills.

[www.healthevidencematters.co.uk](http://www.healthevidencematters.co.uk)

[enquiries@healthevidencematters.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthevidencematters.co.uk)

[@HealthEvMatters](https://twitter.com/HealthEvMatters)

research gaps, and to provide suggestions for improving cardiovascular research and care of LGBTQ people.

[Abstract](#)

[AHA Statement: Assessing and Addressing Cardiovascular Health in LGBTQ Adults](#)

**BMJ Open: Association between sensory impairment and suicidal ideation and attempt: a cross-sectional analysis of nationally representative English household data**

People with visual or hearing sensory impairments had twice the odds of past-year suicidal ideation and over three times the odds of reporting past-year suicide attempt compared with people without these impairments.

[Full text](#)

**BMJ: Food anaphylaxis in the United Kingdom: analysis of national data, 1998-2018**

Despite increase in hospital admissions (HAs) for food induced anaphylaxis (FIA) 1998 to 2018, case fatality rate has decreased. Cow's milk is responsible for >25% deaths caused by FIA & prescriptions for adrenaline autoinjectors have increased at almost double the rate of (HAs).

In a linked opinion piece, the authors that all efforts must continue to alleviate the burden of living with food allergy—by developing more reliable diagnostics, providing safer food choices and through more effective approaches to prevention and treatment—but add that food allergy or anaphylaxis does not usefully contribute to this effort and places an inappropriate burden on those who are mislabelled

[Full text](#)

**Thorax: An assessment of short-acting  $\beta_2$ -agonist (SABA) use and subsequent greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in five European countries and the consequence of their potential overuse for asthma in the UK**

Study found SABA represents majority of inhaler use and of GHG emissions in U.K. and its neighbours, however, U.K. SABA use and GHG emissions per capita are ~treble those of other countries, and 284,683 out of 574,913 asthma patients in UK study were potentially overusing SABA.

[Abstract](#)

**Research and analysis from academic journals and preprints – coronavirus-related**

**LSHTM (preprint): Estimating the impact of reopening schools on the reproduction number 1 of SARS-CoV-2 in England, using weekly contact survey data**

Data show that in almost all scenarios, opening schools at this point in England without additional mitigation results in R rising above 1, and exponential rises in cases resuming. Modelling reveals that reopening all schools could increase R from an assumed baseline of 0.8 to between 1.0 and 1.5, or to between 0.9 and 1.2 reopening primary or secondary schools alone

[Full text](#)

**The Lancet: Single-dose administration and the influence of the timing of the booster dose on immunogenicity and efficacy of ChAdOx1 nCoV-19 (AZD1222) vaccine: a pooled analysis of four randomised trials**

The results of this primary analysis of two doses of ChAdOx1 nCoV-19 were consistent with those seen in the interim analysis of the trials and confirm that the vaccine is efficacious, with results varying by dose interval in exploratory analyses. Efficacy against symptomatic infection (2 standard doses) is 63%. Post-hoc analyses show that for the participants who received 2 standard doses, after the second dose, efficacy was higher in those with a longer prime-boost interval (vaccine efficacy 81.3% [95% CI 60.3–

Caveat: Content of these briefings has not been critically appraised! Apply your appraisal skills to articles referenced!  
Health Evidence Matters provides clinical and public health evidence reviews and training in evidence-based practice skills.

[www.healthevidencematters.co.uk](http://www.healthevidencematters.co.uk)

[enquiries@healthevidencematters.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthevidencematters.co.uk)

[@HealthEvMatters](https://twitter.com/HealthEvMatters)

91·2] at  $\geq 12$  weeks) than in those with a short interval (vaccine efficacy 55·1% [33·0–69·9] at  $< 6$  weeks). These observations are supported by immunogenicity data that showed binding antibody responses more than two-fold higher after an interval of 12 or more weeks compared with an interval of less than 6 weeks in those who were aged 18–55 years (GMR 2·32 [2·01–2·68]).

[Full text](#)

### **The Lancet: Early rate reductions of SARS-CoV-2 infection and COVID-19 in BNT162b2 vaccine recipients**

Letter describes retrospective analysis of 9109 healthcare workers (HCW) in Israel, which found substantial early reductions in symptomatic COVID-19 rates following first vaccine dose (e.g. 1.2 per 10 000 person-days on days 15–28 vs 5.0 per 10 000 in unvaccinated HCWs).

There are a number of limitations to this research inherent to its observational design; in addition, there was no active laboratory surveillance so there may have been an underestimation of asymptomatic cases. The study was of healthcare workers only and the early rate reduction observed may differ from vaccine efficacy reported in the general population due to their higher exposure risk or due to exposure to more virulent or infectious strains.

[Full text](#)

### **MedRxiv (preprint): Association of demographic and occupational factors with SARS-CoV-2 vaccine uptake in a multi-ethnic UK healthcare workforce: a rapid real world analysis.**

Analysis of data from 19 044 staff at the University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust who had all been offered a vaccination since 12 December. As of 3 February, 65% (12 278) had received at least one dose of vaccine. But this masked substantial variation, with 71% (8147 of 11 485) of white staff taking up the vaccine, compared with 59% (2843 of 4863) of South Asian staff and 37% (499 of 1357) of black staff. Overall, 36% of the trust's staff are from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Across all staff, take up was lowest among doctors (57%, 1721 of 3001), and highest among administrative and executive staff (73%, 2537 of 3465) and healthcare scientists (73%, 634 of 871).

[Full text](#)

### **JAMA: Effect of a Single High Dose of Vitamin D3 on Hospital Length of Stay in Patients With Moderate to Severe COVID-19A Randomized Clinical Trial**

RCT involving 240 hospitalized patients with moderate to severe COVID-19, found a single dose of 200 000 IU of vitamin D3, compared with placebo, did not significantly reduce hospital length of stay (median of 7.0 vs 7.0 days; unadjusted hazard ratio for hospital discharge, 1.07).

[Full text](#)

### **The Lancet Public Health: Immune evasion means we need a new COVID-19 social contract**

The emergence of immune evasion is a virological game changer that is as important as the arrival of SARS-CoV-2 variants. Dealing with immune evasion will require a re-evaluation of public health strategies, and the creation of a new, evidence-based social contract.

[Full text](#)

### **The Lancet Digital Health: Indirect acute effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on physical and mental health in the UK: a population-based study**

There were substantial reductions in primary care contacts for acute physical and mental conditions following the introduction of restrictions, with limited recovery by July, 2020. Further research is

needed to ascertain whether these reductions reflect changes in disease frequency or missed opportunities for care.

[Full text](#)

**The Lancet: Safety and immunogenicity of S-Trimer (SCB-2019), a protein subunit vaccine candidate for COVID-19 in healthy adults: a phase 1, randomised, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial**

The SCB-2019 vaccine, comprising S-Trimer protein formulated with either AS03 or CpG/Alum adjuvants, elicited robust humoral and cellular immune responses against SARS-CoV-2, with high viral neutralising activity. Both adjuvanted vaccine formulations were well tolerated and are suitable for further clinical development.

[Full text](#)

**The Lancet: Priorities for the COVID-19 pandemic at the start of 2021: statement of the Lancet COVID-19 Commission**

Statements calls for all regions with high rates of new COVID-19 cases to intensify measures to minimise transmission alongside deployment of COVID-19 vaccines, governments to fully fund WHO and Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator, and G20 countries to increase emergency finance

[Full text](#)

**NEJM: Safety and Efficacy of the BNT162b2 mRNA Covid-19 Vaccine**

Secondary analysis of data on the BioNTech/Pfizer vaccine shows that 1 dose is 92.6% effective after 2 weeks, comparable with 2 doses (94.8%).

[Full text](#)

**Environmental. Science & Technology: Quantitative Protection Factors for Common Masks and Face Coverings**

Most cloth masks have poor efficacy for aerosol <1 micron. Protection factors and mask emissions for exhalation and inhalation were evaluated for masks of seven types currently in use around the world and for a hypothetical mask with 99% efficiency on all particles. Cotton masks work well for exhalation (protecting others), not so well for inhalation (protecting the wearer). Masks with synthetic, nonwoven material like in KN95 and medical masks worked best, but fit is key.

[Full text](#)

**BMJ Open: Association between cardiometabolic disease and severe COVID-19: a nationwide case-control study of patients requiring invasive mechanical ventilation**

Swedish study (n=1.086 cases;10.860 controls) found type 2 diabetes (OR 2.3;95% CI 1.9-2.7), hypertension (1.7; 1.5-2.0), obesity (3.1;2.4-4.0) and CKD (2.5;1.7-3.7) were all linked to severe COVID-19. In younger subgroup (<57 years), ORs were higher for all cardiometabolic risks

[Full text](#)

**BMJ Open: Cross-sectional observational study of epidemiology of COVID-19 and clinical outcomes of hospitalised patients in North West London during March and April 2020**

During the study, 1901 laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases were admitted to hospital, with older ages, men and the BAME group being predominantly affected. In a multivariate analysis, only increasing age was independently associated with increased risk of death.

[Full text](#)

### **NEJM: Vaccinating Children against Covid-19 — The Lessons of Measles**

Article argues that “Protecting children against SARS-CoV-2 infection is both an ethical obligation and a practical necessity.”

[Full text](#)

### **BMJ Feature: Covid-19: How the UK vaccine rollout delivered success, so far**

BMJ Feature explains elements that have made UK’s vaccination programme a front runner globally, covering its head start, rollout, and vaccine production, and describes the hurdles that lie ahead. It notes government is already planning for 3rd round of booster shots in autumn.

[Full text](#)

### **BMJ Feature Interview: Jeremy Farrar: Make vaccine available to other countries as soon as our most vulnerable people have received it**

The SAGE adviser and Wellcome Trust director Jeremy Farrar discusses how the UK government acted too slowly against the pandemic, about the perils of vaccine nationalism, and why he is bullish about controlling Covid variants

[Full text](#)

### **BMJ Head to Head: Should spreading anti-vaccine misinformation be criminalised**

Pits the view of criminalising people who deliberately spread false information against the argument that the definitions of misinformation are too murky and criminalisation may do more harm than good.

[Full text](#)

### **BMJ analysis: Covid-19: Are cloth masks still effective? And other questions answered**

In light of new, more transmissible variants of SARS-CoV-2, this article examines what kinds of mask the public should be wearing, and where they should be worn.

[Full text](#)

### **BMJ analysis: Covid-19: Is vaccination roll out reducing cases and deaths in the UK?**

Death rates among people over 80 appear to be falling faster than other age groups, so are we starting to see the effect of the vaccination programme?

[Full text](#)

### **BMJ news: Covid-19 will become endemic but with decreased potency over time, scientists believe**

The SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus will not be eradicated but will become endemic, continuing to circulate in pockets of the global population for years to come, scientists working in the field believe.

[Full text](#)

### **BMJ news: Covid-19: Hancock’s failure to publish contracts was unlawful**

High Court judge Mr Justice Chamberlain has ruled that the UK government acted unlawfully in failing to publish details of dozens of contracts awarded without competition for goods and services such as personal protective equipment (PPE) needed during the covid-19 pandemic

[Full text](#)

### **BMJ news: Covid-19: Infections in England fall by two thirds since January**

BMJ analysis of latest REACT study findings

[Full text](#)

Caveat: Content of these briefings has not been critically appraised! Apply your appraisal skills to articles referenced!  
Health Evidence Matters provides clinical and public health evidence reviews and training in evidence-based practice skills.

[www.healthevidencematters.co.uk](http://www.healthevidencematters.co.uk)

[enquiries@healthevidencematters.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthevidencematters.co.uk)

[@HealthEvMatters](https://twitter.com/HealthEvMatters)

### **BMJ Opinion: How can we hold political leaders accountable for failures in pandemics?**

Martin McKee discusses the impact politicians have had on the global pandemic

[Full text](#)

### **BMJ Opinion: A new bill to reform the NHS in England: the wrong proposals at the wrong time**

Peter Roderick, principal research associate, and Allyson M. Pollock, professor of public health, Newcastle University discuss the proposed NHS reforms

[Full text](#)

### **BMJ Opinion: Credible proposals for social care reform are needed if health and social care integration is to work**

Chris Ham argues for social care reform for effective health and social care integration

[Full text](#)

### **BMJ Opinion: What makes new variants of SARS-CoV-2 concerning is not where they come from, but the mutations they contain**

New Covid variant with potentially worrying mutations has been found in the UK, with 32 cases of B1525 in Britain, and other cases in countries including Denmark, US and Australia.

[Full text](#)

### **Vitamin D and Covid**

Much press publicity about this trial: [Calcifediol Treatment and COVID-19-Related Outcomes](#) which purported to show a 60% decrease in mortality for people with COVID-19 who were given calcifediol (a metabolite of vitamin D) compared to a control group who were given treatment as usual.

However, there are some serious issues with the trial.

#### **UPDATE: Lancet has now withdrawn this preprint**

Excellent commentary about the issues here: [Vitamin D And COVID-19: An Update Why vitamin D probably still can't cure COVID-19](#)

### **NIHR Dissemination Centre**

#### **NIHR Alert: Men who have sex with men are less likely to use drugs to prevent HIV if they are young, unemployed or have a low disposable income**

Expert commentary is provided on a study highlighting certain groups, such as younger men from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, might be at increased risk of HIV but less likely to be aware of PrEP.

Tailored public health messages and services might be needed to reach these men.

[Details](#)

### **Reuters Health**

#### **Pfizer and BioNTech launch study of Covid-19 vaccine in healthy pregnant women**

The study will evaluate the safety and efficacy of the vaccine given to pregnant women during weeks 24-34 of gestation, with the two doses given 21 days apart. The trial will also assess whether vaccinated women transfer protective antibodies to their babies.

[Details](#)

## Office for National Statistics

### The percentage of people testing positive in every UK nation has decreased

19 February 2021

An estimated 1 in 115 people tested positive for the coronavirus (COVID-19) within the community population in England during the week ending 12 February 2021, equating to 481,300 people, or 0.88% of the population.

This is lower than the week ending 6 February 2021, when 695,400 people were estimated to have COVID-19 in England.

The estimated percentage of people in the community – those in private homes and excluding hospitals, care homes or other institutional settings – testing positive decreased in every nation. In Wales an estimated 24,600 people (0.81% of the community population or 1 in 125 people) were estimated to have COVID-19 in the week ending 12 February 2021, down from 35,300 people in the week ending 6 February 2021.

In Northern Ireland, an estimated 17,800 people (0.97% of the community population or around 105 people) had COVID-19 in the week ending 12 February 2021, down from 24,400 people in the week ending 6 February 2021.

In Scotland, we estimate that 29,200 people (0.55% of the community population or 1 in 180 people) had COVID-19 in the week ending 12 February 2021, down from 35,400 people in the week ending 6 February 2021.

The percentage testing positive compatible with the new UK variant decreased or levelled off in all four nations

[Details](#)

### Deaths involving COVID-19 fall for the first time in six weeks

16 February 2021

There were 7,320 deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) in England and Wales in the week ending 5 February 2021 – a decrease of 1,113 deaths compared with the previous week.

The number of COVID-19 deaths fell in all English regions and in Wales.

Despite the decline, deaths involving COVID-19 still accounted for 42.6% of all deaths in England and Wales in the most recent week (the third highest proportion of the pandemic).

The total number of deaths (17,192) remained far above the average between 2015 and 2019, with hospitals, care homes and private homes all continuing to record excess mortality.

[Details](#)

### Around one in five people in England have antibodies to COVID-19

16 February 2021

An estimated 18.5% of the population in England – an average of 8.3 million people aged 16 years and over – would have tested positive for antibodies to SARS-Cov-2, the virus that causes the coronavirus (COVID-19), in the 28 days up to 1 February 2021.

The presence of antibodies suggests past infection and/or vaccination, and the latest estimates suggest antibody positivity has increased in England in the most recent 28-day period.

The percentage of the people in England aged 80 years and over testing positive for antibodies was 40.9%. This age group was prioritised for vaccination. However, the figures only include those who live in private households, not care homes.

In Wales, we estimate 365,000 people, around 14.4% of the population aged 16 years and over, would have tested positive for antibodies in the 28 days to 1 February 2021. Over the same period in Northern Ireland, the estimate is 201,000 people (13.6%) aged 16 years and over. In Scotland, an estimated

Caveat: Content of these briefings has not been critically appraised! Apply your appraisal skills to articles referenced!  
Health Evidence Matters provides clinical and public health evidence reviews and training in evidence-based practice skills.

[www.healthevidencematters.co.uk](http://www.healthevidencematters.co.uk)

[enquiries@healthevidencematters.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthevidencematters.co.uk)

[@HealthEvMatters](https://twitter.com/HealthEvMatters)

521,000 people (11.7%) aged 16 years and over would have tested positive for antibodies in the 28 days to 1 February 2021. In the data used to produce estimates for Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland, the number of people sampled who tested positive for antibodies to SARS-CoV-2 is low compared with England. This means there is a higher degree of uncertainty in estimates for these nations, as indicated by larger confidence intervals.

[Details](#)

### **Home-schooling is having a more negative impact on well-being this lockdown than last spring**

*19 February 2021*

Half of parents home-schooling during the early 2021 lockdown feel it is having a negative impact on their well-being, responses to the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey indicate.

Of home-schooling parents, almost two-thirds (63%) said it was having a negative effect on their children's well-being, compared with 43% during April 2020.

Strain on relationships as a result of home-schooling was an issue reported by over half of parents (53%), up from 36% in April 2020.

[Details](#)

### **BBC Health news**

#### **Covid vaccine impact revealed in over-80s blood tests**

A report from the ONS revealed that, in England, 41% of over-80s tested positive for antibodies, which is likely due to the high vaccination rate in this group, as two weeks ago that figure was 26%.

Overall, the statistics from this fortnightly report found that, in England, an estimated 1 in 5 people would have tested positive for antibodies against SARS-CoV-2 on a blood test in the 28 days up to 1 February 2021, suggesting they had the infection in the past or have been vaccinated. The next most likely to have antibodies against Covid in England were people aged 16-24 years - 26% of this age group had them, due to infection rather than vaccination.

In the other three UK nations, which have vaccinated a smaller proportion of their older people, antibody detection remained highest in younger groups.

[Details](#)

#### **Covid vaccines - 'spectacular' impact on serious illness**

Research led by Public Health Scotland found by the fourth week after the first dose, hospitalisations were reduced by 85% and 94% for the Pfizer and AstraZeneca jabs respectively.

Among the over 80s, there was an overall 81% reduction in the numbers admitted to hospital.

Impact on transmission was not investigated - or whether immunity waned over time.

The preliminary data from the EAVE II project covers 1.14 million vaccinations given in Scotland between 8 December and 15 February.

Figures for England are expected to be released later.

[Details](#)

### **The House of Commons Library**

#### **Establishing the National Institute for Health Protection**

This report gives an overview of the function of the new National Institute for Health Protection. It finds that most functions confirmed to be moving to the NIHP relate to either managing the current Covid-19 outbreak or preparations for future epidemics and emergencies, as the NIHP will bring together the

health protection and resilience functions of Public Health England, the Joint Biosecurity Centre (which provides data and advice on Covid-19 infection outbreaks), and NHS Test and Trace.

[Details](#)

### **Royal Society for Public Health**

#### **Mind The Gap: Legacy of 2012 Act to blame for low flu vaccine rates in London**

Report finds that the centralisation of vaccine coordination that stemmed from Andrew Lansley's reforms disproportionately affected London. The reforms led to just one person being accountable for flu vaccination across the whole of London, covering 2.2 million eligible patients and 2186 general practices. After the 2012 act the ratio of patients to each individual immunisation lead increased by 36 times in London, compared with seven times in the South West and North West regions.

[Details](#)

### **Public Accounts Committee**

#### **Covid-19: planning for a vaccine – Part 1**

This first inquiry report on the development and rollout of a Covid-19 vaccine covers the period from April to 8 December 2020 and examines the government's approach and progress in securing potential vaccines and determining how they would be deployed to the public.

[Details](#)

### **World Health Organization**

#### **Through a gender lens: women and tobacco in the WHO European Region (2021)**

This report provides a brief summary of some of the challenges, old and new, that women and girls face in the context of the tobacco epidemic in the WHO European Region, outlining the gendered nature of tobacco use and exposure, and how the tobacco industry continues to target them through gendered messaging. It also provides recommendations for approaches and policy interventions that take a gender lens to tobacco control. It reveals that although tobacco use among women is decreasing overall, the rate is going down at a much slower pace than in men, and in some countries it is increasing.

[Details](#)

### **Audit Scotland**

#### **NHS in Scotland 2020**

A report on the performance of NHS Scotland in 2020 praises the early action taken in the first wave of the pandemic to prevent hospitals from being overwhelmed, but it is critical of the failure to implement measures identified in pre-pandemic planning exercises, which led to patient facing staff being unprotected and has resulted in 39% of all covid-19 deaths in Scotland taking place in care homes.

[Details](#)

### **Patient Coalition for AI, Data and Digital Tech in Health**

#### **Digital health during the Covid-19 pandemic: Learning lessons to maintain momentum**

This report draws on research and case studies of good practice in digital health during the pandemic and offers recommendations on how the UK could capitalise on digital health to benefit patients, the NHS and wider society.

Caveat: Content of these briefings has not been critically appraised! Apply your appraisal skills to articles referenced!  
Health Evidence Matters provides clinical and public health evidence reviews and training in evidence-based practice skills.

[www.healthevidencematters.co.uk](http://www.healthevidencematters.co.uk)

[enquiries@healthevidencematters.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthevidencematters.co.uk)

[@HealthEvMatters](https://twitter.com/HealthEvMatters)

It highlights that uptake of digital health technologies has been limited, while patient experience of technologies, including video conferencing and mobile apps, has been mixed.

[Details](#)

### **The King's Fund**

#### **The health of people from ethnic minority groups in England**

This explainer examines the differences in health outcomes for ethnic minority groups, highlighting the variation across groups and conditions, and what's needed to reduce health inequalities.

[Details](#)

#### **Five tips for working across services to support people who are homeless**

This blog shares some practical tips gathered from staff working across services to support people who are homeless.

[Details](#)

#### **Peering through the gloom: the near and medium-term future for public health funding**

What's next for public health funding? After a turbulent year, this blog outlines how economic and political changes are impacting on public health funding.

[Details](#)

### **Local Government Association**

#### **Vaccine webinar: Equalities**

FREE webinar on vaccine equalities at 10.30am on 25 February. This session will provide an update on the vaccination roll out and the implications for councils in engaging with their communities, with a focus on equalities.

[Details](#)

### **Indoamerican Refugee and Migrant Organisation (IRMO)**

#### **The impact of Covid-19 on the lives of Latin American migrants**

This report reveals the intersecting crises of rising unemployment, abusive employment practices, inadequate housing and increasing food poverty facing the Latin American community. This is compounded by digital exclusion and the language barrier, meaning that many find it difficult to access mainstream support. The lack of access to basic health care raises concerns about the rollout of the vaccine among the community.

[Details](#)

### **Reform**

#### **What's next for the NHS? Building the resilience of the health and care system**

A year into the pandemic and with the benefit of some hindsight, this report argues that too little consideration was given to the implications of a complete reallocation of resources away from 'business as usual'. This report, produced jointly with Edge Health, explores the scale of the challenges the NHS faces following the pandemic.

[Details](#)

## Office of Health Economics

### Resource allocation in public sector programmes: does the value of a life differ between governmental departments?

This report examines whether there are differences in the value of life estimates recommended for use across government departments in Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, the Netherlands and the UK. The departments of interest were those known to use some form of valuation of human life: health, social care, transport and environment. For each country, a literature review was conducted to identify evidence from technical reports, guidelines and tools published directly by government departments indicating methods for conducting impact assessments or appraisals.

[Details](#)

## NHS Confederation

### Supporting the LGBTQ+ population through Covid-19 and beyond

Leaders from across the health care system agree that for the LGBTQ+ population to recover and thrive after the pandemic, the way services are designed and delivered, and the workforce environments they are delivered in, must change. This report sets out a series of recommendations to help health care leaders, service designers and commissioners ensure their services and workplaces meet the needs of the LGBTQ+ population

[Details](#)

## Nuffield Trust

### Coronavirus and care homes, nearly 12 months on

Covid-19 has had a particularly hard impact on care homes, and a new explainer looks at the numbers of deaths among care home residents across the pandemic. An accompanying blog analyses why care homes were hit so badly last spring, whether they have fared any better this winter, and the importance of what happens next.

[Details](#)

[Blog](#)

### The second wave's impact on waiting times

The latest chart of the week looks at how waiting times for planned treatment have been affected in recent months. The NHS made enormous strides to reduce waiting times when Covid cases fell in the summer and autumn, but the pace of recovery has levelled off in all regions after a second wave of the virus.

[Details](#)

### QualityWatch indicator update: integrated care

The latest QualityWatch update looks at trends in the quality of integrated care, which uses the latest available data and mostly covers a period before the pandemic. Some measures, like the employment rate among adults with a long-term condition, have improved over time, but others such as support for people with multiple long-term conditions have not.

[Details](#)

### **Social Care Institute for Excellence**

#### **New discussion paper: Future options for housing and care**

Initial paper from the Commission on the Role of Housing in the Future of Care and Support, discussing housing that facilitates care and support for older people.

It aims to provide a short overview of the key issues facing the sector, an initial vision for the future and some preliminary ideas which the Commission believes merit further exploration.

[Details](#)

### **EuroHealthNet**

#### **Health inequalities portal**

has launched a new online portal for information and resources on health inequalities in Europe. It is a platform for international exchange including information, policies, research and initiatives on health inequalities, for anyone who has a role in the Covid-19 recovery and building a more sustainable and fair future.

[Details](#)

### **Asthma UK**

#### **The invisible threat: how we can protect people from air pollution and create a fairer, healthier society**

This invisible threat is a health emergency. It is harmful for everyone, but some groups are being hit hardest – pregnant women, children, older people, those living with lung conditions and those on the lowest incomes. This report sets out new analysis from Asthma UK that shows that people who are the most susceptible are being exposed in the places they should feel most safe. It calls for politicians to commit to air pollution health protection plans and stronger clean air laws.

[Details](#)