

# The impact of the first wave of the covid-19 pandemic on health workers in Old Age Psychiatry (Walton Hospital)

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## INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 is caused by severe Acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2. In December 2019, the first COVID-19 outbreak emerged in Wuhan, the Hubei province of China.

The pandemic has spread to 198 countries. As per the 9 February 2021, WHO recorded 106,125,682 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 2,320,497 deaths.

Health workers have not only had increased workloads as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, but they are faced with increased physical and psychosocial issues linked to their roles in patient care. This also include an increased risk of infection and death due repeated exposure to patients.



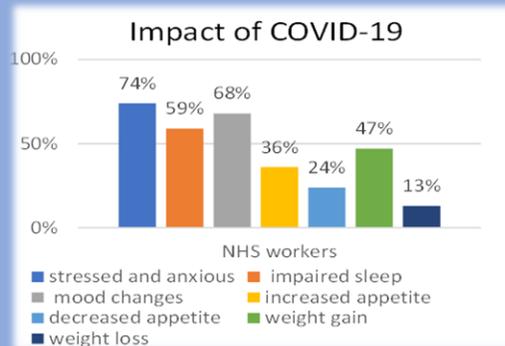
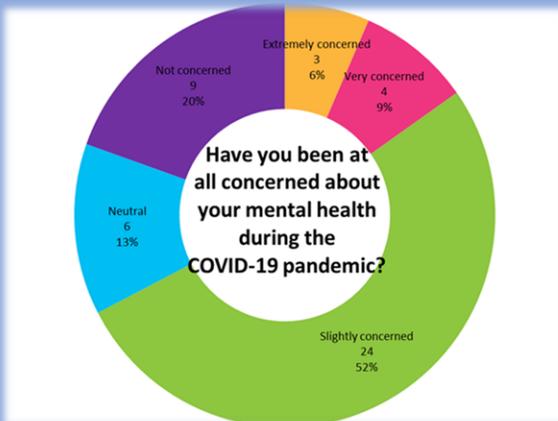
## METHOD

A 27-question paper survey was anonymously completed Walton Hospital staff over a 5-month period. Also, reviews of online literature related to the effect of the COVID19 pandemic on healthcare staff was done.



## RESULTS

- n = 46 NHS health workers - 44(95.7%) females and 2 (4.3%) males.
- 8 health care workers have pre-existing mental health conditions.
- 67% were concerned about their mental health



## RESULTS continued.

- 48% did not know of any local support systems at work
- 85% reported taking measures to protect family members
- 40% felt the hospital administration is taking adequate measures to safeguard the staff
- 39% percent felt isolated from their usual team
- 89% felt supported by their co-workers
- Treatment by public: 13 (65%) reported positive treatment, 2 (10%) reported negative treatment and 5 (25%) reported a mixture of both.

## DISCUSSION- recommendations made:

- Reflective practice groups and psychological first aid .
- Increase the availability of clinical supervision if required.
- Regular staff breaks during work hours.
- Increase the awareness of support systems at work and externally.
- Provide Nursing and HCA staff with training in physical health care.
- Highlight the role of the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian.
- Repeat the survey with staff, once support mechanisms are implemented, to determine the effectiveness and staff response.

## CONCLUSION



This study demonstrated that health workers were faced with physical and psychological distress and increased workloads in the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Although support from the Trust was available, almost half of the staff were not aware of this. This shows an urgent need to provide adequate support for the wellbeing of NHS health workers.