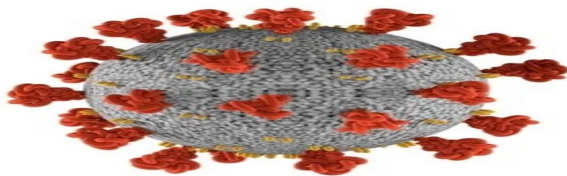


## Introduction:

Patients with intellectual disability (ID) are a vulnerable group. The covid-19 pandemic has had a drastic impact on them. They are at a higher risk of having physical health implications more likely to be admitted to hospital with covid-19 and more likely to die from covid-19 than the general population. The physical health risks have been investigated and reported however there is a need for more research on the mental health effects of the covid-19 pandemic in vulnerable groups. The mental health of patients with ID has been affected due to factors such as reduction in staffing levels due to illness, day services and respite care being closed, restrictions to visits. All these things can be even more distressing and anxiety provoking for patients with ID than the general population. We looked at 5 patients with ID to determine whether there has been an escalation in challenging behaviours or increasing levels of anxiety after they contracted covid-19.

## Methods:

*This is a case series involving retrospective data collection from patients' electronic records (Lorenzo patient record system) and their psychiatric case files. Lorenzo patient record systems are a type of Electronic health record, originally as part of the United Kingdom government's National programme for IT in the NHS. Data was collected for 5 patients meeting the inclusion criteria which included: patients with a clear diagnosis of ID and over 18yrs of age and those managed by local adult ID service. Patients were identified over a period of 1 year from March 2020 and February 2020 by convenience sampling approach having being either seen in outpatient clinic or admitted during this time.*



## Results

- 1: 49-year-old female, a few months after contracting covid-19, she presented with an escalation in her aggressive behaviours and new symptoms such as akathisia, tremor, and rigidity which resolved with medication.
- 2: 64-year-old male, contracted covid-19 and few months later had a new presentation of physical aggression and attempted arson.
- 3: 23-year-old male, after contracting covid-19 had increasing levels of anxiety, agitation, and aggression.
- 4: 44-year-old male, had an escalation in his aggressive and physically violent behaviours weeks after contracting covid-19.
- 5: 38-year-old male, had new symptoms of anxiety and low mood observed weeks after contracting covid-19.

## Discussion:

The increased psychological distress caused by covid-19 is more pronounced in vulnerable groups such as patients with ID. There could be many causes of this for example due to the interruption to access to psychiatric care such as cancellation of face-to-face clinic appointments. It is important to offer best protection in future pandemics to people with ID. This includes offering vaccinations effectively to this group of vulnerable people and planning effectively for future pandemics.

## Conclusion:

This case series sheds some light into the impact on the psychopathology of ID patients affected by covid-19. We need more research exploring ways in which the mental health consequences of the pandemic on ID patients can be mitigated and how it can be best managed. This case series looked at the acute and sub-acute effects of contracting covid-19 however we need to consider the long-term consequences in future research.