

## **Mental Health and Wellbeing of individuals during Covid-19 Outbreak Survey 2020**

### **Summary of Findings**

Healthwatch Slough conducted an online survey to investigate how our local population coped with their mental health and wellbeing during lockdown, where people were going for help and support and if there were any obvious gaps in service provision.



**Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete our survey.**  
**Below is a summary of the feedback we received from you.**

### **We received 132 responses.**

- 6 27% of respondents were living alone.
- 6 58% of respondents were from BAME communities
- 6 25% were informal Carers.
- 6 37% reported a pre-existing mental health condition
- 6 30% reported that this had worsened during this time.
- 6 35% were experiencing increased stress about finances and
- 6 6% of people experienced online bullying during this period.

**In general, people reported feeling the negative impact of isolation, loneliness, infection fears, frustration, boredom, inadequate information and financial loss on anxiety levels leading to increased anxiety and depressed emotions.**

**75% had contacted someone for help and support for their mental health during the Covid-19 crisis**

**People reported they had made contact with ie: Social Workers, Talking Therapies, their GP, family members, Private Health Care Practitioner, Psychology Service (IAPT), counselling service through their employee assistant programme, CMHT and MIND.**

**“Talking Therapies and counselling was offered and this helped tremendously.”**

**“I received support from my homeopath whom I have been using for more than 25 years.”**

# 74% reported that since Covid-19 started that their mental health/wellbeing had been affected.

“ I have CPTSD, OCD, anxiety, depression and now agoraphobia because of Covid-19. ”

“ I have a new disability and was just coping with this as well as losing my job. My doctor said not to go out when the lockdown happened, but I still had to go out for food, which was very stressful. I'm lucky that my disability means I'm in a wheelchair, so I didn't have to wait in the queue. My anxiety was bad before and this just made it much worse. ”

## How staying at home and being isolated made you feel.

“ Being restricted to the house, cut off from family and friends and recently bereaved I feel lost and unsure what to do. ”

“ Being a Carer and having to manage my sick husband alone and being housebound was hard. It was really stressful as I couldn't go to the shops for everyday essentials. ”

“ I've been getting anxiety attacks. ”

“ The isolation of lockdown pushed me into depression. ”

“ The isolation and lack of human contact has affected me. ”

“ Did find it hard not meeting up with family, but technology did help a little (WhatsApp, Zoom, Facetime etc) ”

“ I have been home-schooling 5 children since March as well as working from home. I have had very little/no 'me' time which I have found extremely hard. ”

## How staying at home and being isolated made you feel.

“ At the beginning I was fine. It kicked in during June when in general I had less energy due to physical weakness and then on top of working from home I was dealing with constant feeding the family. ”

“ It was due to my living situation, but once I moved out of the home I was in and cut contact with toxic relationships my mental health became increasingly better. ”

“ Dad was ill in hospital with coronavirus at the start of lockdown. Mum has Alzheimer’s so I had to keep a check on her constantly. I live alone and had to get used to working from home full time. ”

“ Living alone I went days without seeing a person in real life. I spoke to people on the phone and had zoom meetings but I rarely left the house. I felt very low and really sorry for myself. ”

“ I have never done well on my own and being essentially forced to do so has really affected me and my kids. The eldest has become withdrawn and angry. ”

## Examples of what people were experiencing during lockdown.

Worry

Loneliness

Sleeping pattern disrupted

Anxiety

Depressed

Family problems

Trapped

## Below are some examples of what people were experiencing during lockdown.

Watching the news was upsetting. The constant talks about it on TV causes me anxiety, so cannot listen to it. Also, friends texting fake news by WhatsApp and via Facebook was also very distressing.

I get very anxious now and have had panic attacks which I never had before.

It's the isolation more than anything that has affected me. I live alone, with no garden so I have no route to directly speak to anyone

Worried about my job

I'm constantly crying and feel like why even bother.

Feel trapped

Worried about schooling for my children

## Some positive feedback

Just before the lockdown we had looked after a child placed with us, that we intend on adopting. The lockdown gave us the opportunity to focus on the child and build a bond.

I have found other things to do like gardening, DIY jobs, chatting to friends and family on phone. Joined Zoom meetings which was positive. Especially spiritual meetings and meditations.

Lockdown allowed the Earth to breathe and people / local street communities became more pleasant.

Loved it as more time with our son.

## Some positive feedback

“ Mostly I felt I had coped quite well, keeping myself busy with hobbies: cooking, arts and crafts, and doing my daily walks. ”

“ I’m happy at home having a large garden made it more easy for me. I was able to relax and exercise. ”

“ I’m used to being on my own & my flat is perfect for me & my little dog as we have a garden & live on the ground floor with very nice neighbours. Even though my family live far away they call me every day. I am 82 and mobility disabled. I think I am really lucky. Thank you for caring. ”

## There were some reports of online bullying

“ I have witnessed bullying on social media so have chosen to stay away from discussing controversial topics such as pros and cons of wearing a face mask. ”

## Recommendations

- Interim measures need to be put into place while people are on a waiting list
  - More wellbeing calls. Once a week not always enough.
- Meaningful occupation opportunities to stay engaged with people and the community through volunteering.
- Socially distanced activities in public areas especially when weather permits.

## Useful Information:

For a list of services and information that can support your health and wellbeing please use the following link:

<https://bit.ly/3l8SS1X>