

Newsletter

Our monthly update for local Healthwatch

June 2020

[An update on our work on closed cultures](#)

A closed culture is a poor culture which has an increased risk of harm – including abuse and human rights breaches. They're more likely to develop in services where people are removed from their communities, where people stay for months or years at a time, where there is weak leadership and where staff often lack the right skills, training or experience to support people.

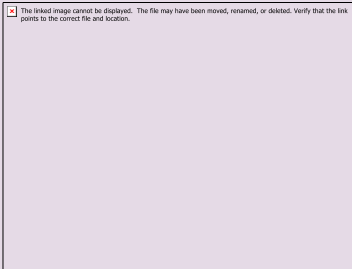
We've been concerned about the quality and safety of mental health and learning disability wards for a long time and we've highlighted examples of the concerns we have in our reports, including our State of Care in Mental Health Services 2014–2017. The BBC Panorama programme in 2019 on Whorlton Hall highlighted shocking abuse of people with a learning disability and autistic people in hospitals, reinforcing the need for rapid improvements in care.

Since then we've [written to providers](#) and asked them to consider what steps they can take to better protect the human rights of people in their service. This month we've released guidance on closed cultures, to further strengthen our approach.

Read more about [what we've done so far](#) and [our future plans for this work](#).

How you can get involved — we need your help

We're committed to working with people who use services, families, providers, frontline staff and other stakeholders to improve the way we inspect closed cultures. One of the ways we'll be involving people in this work is through an Expert Advisory Group. We're looking for people who are able to join the group from the very start in order to influence the work and provide constructive challenge throughout. We'll be giving more details about this group in the next month, but we want to let you know it is coming. Take a look at the [blog post](#) from our Chief Inspector of Adult Social Care, Kate Terroni, for details on how to get involved with the Expert Advisory Group.

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The impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) on different ethnic groups in care

The information that care homes submit to us about the deaths of people in their care is published on a weekly basis as part of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) reporting on deaths, but data is not routinely broken down by ethnicity. Supported by ONS we have completed a targeted piece of work to analyse the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) on different ethnic groups in care settings. This data indicates a disproportionate number of deaths among people from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups. The data we hold has a number of limitations, and the lack of data on ethnicity across adult social care as a whole makes it more important that any information in this area is shared.

Our data on deaths of people with a learning disability

The information that care homes submit to us about the deaths of people in their care is published on a weekly basis as part of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) reporting on deaths. The ONS data is not broken down by whether the person who died had a disability. Supported by ONS we've completed a targeted piece of analysis to better understand the impact of coronavirus on people with a learning disability, some of whom may also be autistic, and how the number of deaths during this period compares to the number of deaths last year.

Raising concerns about care is more important than ever

While routine inspections have been paused, we've continued to inspect in response to risk and concerns raised, and services have remained subject to close monitoring using a range of intelligence sources. This includes an additional monitoring tool – the Emergency Support Framework (ESF), which helps us better understand the impact of coronavirus on staff and people using services and identify where we may need to inspect, or escalate concerns to partner organisations. It's in everyone's interests that staff, people using services and their loved ones are able to speak up freely and are not prevented from raising their concerns about quality and safety.



CitizenLab: what's live this week?

- **Covid-19 pressures survey**: Read Issue 2 of [CQC's insight document](#) about coronavirus pressures and complete a short survey to share your feedback.
- **Future Strategy – Smarter Regulation**: We want you to be involved in how we shape our future and deliver smarter regulation for safer care. Take part in our survey

- [Emergency Support Framework](#): Find out more about CQC's Emergency Support Framework and share your feedback with us.

[Sign up or login](#) to CitizenLab to take part.

Support our new campaign to encourage more people to speak up about their care!

Because We All Care is a new year-long campaign led by the [Care Quality Commission](#) and [Healthwatch England](#). It aims to help services identify and address quality issues and support patients in response to COVID-19 by encouraging people to share feedback on their experiences of health and social care services in England.

The campaign will launch on the **8th July**, targeting all health and social care users in England, and front-line staff working in health and social care, both nationally and regionally. Throughout the year we'll be focusing on different population groups including people with a learning disability and/ or autism, carers, people with a long-term condition and older adults. We'll also be continuously working to reach out to Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) and people from communities that we don't usually hear from on regular basis. We'd greatly appreciate your support, here are some ways you can get involved:

- Share the campaign messaging and images on social media
- Use the #BecauseWeAllCare to spread the word
- Retweet or share content from CQC, Healthwatch and other partners social channels
- Contribute case study stories
- Supporting the campaign on your website's news page, homepage or blog
- Highlight the campaign in your newsletters and bulletins
- Reference or support the campaign through your press activity

We'll be finalising the toolkit this week and it'll be available in a Google Drive folder for you to download. We'll be in touch soon!

[Health and care staff demonstrate resilience in the face of unprecedented pressures](#)

The response of the people involved in the delivery of health and social care has been impressive and we now need to reflect and learn from the early stages of the coronavirus pandemic, our Chief Executive, Ian Trenholm has said. [Our second coronavirus insight report](#) highlights the importance of collaboration between services as integral to meeting people's needs, and stresses that positive transformational changes are not lost, and that efforts to improve system working become widespread.

[Covid-19: understanding inequalities in mental health during the pandemic](#)

The Centre for Mental Health have produced a report on inequalities in mental health during the coronavirus pandemic. The briefing outlines areas where serious concerns have emerged for

individuals and communities with particular characteristics which put their mental health at risk during and after the coronavirus pandemic.

The impact of Covid-19 on those living with severe mental illness

Rethink Mental Illness have released a new report looking the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the physical health of people living with severe mental illness (SMI). This follows their recent briefing focused on access to NHS mental health services for people living with severe mental illness. Rethink Mental Illness is a mental health charity in England offering expert advice, information, and around 200 services for those affected by mental illness.

Innovating and inspiring - providers respond to COVID-19



Health and care providers from all sectors have shared examples with us showing how they have innovated and adapted working practices to respond to the challenges of dealing with coronavirus .

We're sharing these so providers can quickly learn from each other about what they can do now and consider whether innovations brought about by a crisis could help shape services in the future.

Calls for Mental Health Renewal Plan

The devastating impact of the coronavirus pandemic demands an urgent renewal plan for the nation's mental health to avoid crisis, according to an unprecedented coalition of over 50 voluntary and social sector organisations. Samaritans, Mental Health UK, Mind, Rethink Mental Illness and Young Minds are among the charities who warn that the system will fail to cope with an increase in demand without a thorough and fundamentally new approach to mental health. The charities are asking the Prime Minister to create a group to work with the sector to develop policy and unlock crucial funding across England.

People recovering from mild-moderate COVID-19 are struggling

Asthma UK and the British Lung Foundation are carrying out a survey, through their post-Covid Hub, which they set up, alongside a helpline and WhatsApp service, to support anyone left with breathing difficulties after COVID. The two charities are urging more people to complete the survey to help grow the understanding of post-COVID and its impact across the full range of communities particularly exploring how gender, ethnicity, age and socio-economic factors affect health outcomes. They're also calling on the government and NHS to advise what they're doing to identify and support people with post-COVID respiratory complications who were not admitted to hospital for COVID-19.

Implement reforms that smooth the patient journey

The think tank ResPublica have launched a report discussing the ways to refigure our public health system in the light of the coronavirus epidemic. It sets out recommendations for the devolution, integration and reform of health and social care in the UK. They say the present crisis has reaffirmed the value of the NHS, the integral role it plays in meeting the health needs of the population, and the unique position it occupies in the public's consciousness. They say it's also highlighted the long under-valued skills and selfless dedication of the UK's frontline health and social care workers.

Accessibility resources to help you communicate about COVID-19

- **NEW:** Imperial College London, in partnership with the BME Health Forum and the North West London Clinical Commissioning Groups have produced a series of videos aimed at encouraging people to continue to use health services if they are unwell. They are available in [English](#), [Arabic](#), [Farsi](#), [Kurdish](#) and [Sylheti](#).
- ***NEW* Guidelines for organisations booking communication professionals in healthcare settings during COVID-19:** From the Association of Sign Language Interpreters, ASLI's Deaf Interpreter Network (DIN), the Royal Association of Deaf people (RAD), SignHealth and the British Society for Mental Health and Deafness (BSMHD):
- ***NEW* Coping with Coronavirus:** Free picture stories and illustrated guides to support people with learning disabilities and autism through the coronavirus pandemic.
- [Resources from Learning Disability England](#)
- [Signhealth has made their InterpreterNow remote BSL interpretation service available for free across all healthcare services](#)
- [Signhealth is providing a videos of summaries of key coronavirus guidance in BSL](#)
- [Public Health England stay at home guidance](#), translated and in easy read
- [Public Health England guidance on social distancing](#), translated
- [NHS guidelines translated into up to 50 languages by Doctors of the World](#) and find video advice [here](#)
- [Easy read information on COVID-19](#) from Mencap
- [Public Health England resources](#) in accessible formats
- [COVID-19 guidance for providers of services for people experiencing rough sleepin](#)
- The [handwashing rap](#), produced to help people who have a learning disability

[Resources from Learning Disability England](#)

Feeding back during the coronavirus pandemic



Although we paused our routine inspections, our regulatory role and core purpose of keeping people safe has not changed – safety is still our priority. During the coronavirus outbreak, it's more important than ever that we hear feedback.

Use our [Give feedback on care service](#) to let us know about experiences of care. You can also make sure our local teams are up to date with enter and view reports, surveys, comments from the public and any other feedback you've gathered recently.

Remember, all Care Quality Commission offices are now closed. This means that we have stopped communicating by post, and ask that you do not send post to us. Please use other methods to contact us, [details of which are available on our website](#).