

Local Developments

BBC News - Covid-19: Prince William opens Birmingham's Nightingale Hospital - 16 April 2020

The Duke of Cambridge has officially opened Birmingham's NHS Nightingale Hospital. Set up inside the National Exhibition Centre (NEC), the site is intended to take coronavirus patients from 23 Midlands hospitals.

Prince William said it was a "wonderful example" of the "pulling together" going on up and down the UK during the coronavirus pandemic. He spoke via video link to healthcare, military and civilian personnel.

The site became operational as planned on 10 April with a 500-bed capacity, which can be increased to 1,500, but is yet to take in any patients.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-52309494>

BBC News - Coronavirus: 'Less than half' of Birmingham Council's PPE order delivered- 15 April 20

Social care workers "have been left wide open" to coronavirus after orders of personal protective equipment (PPE) failed to arrive, a council has said.

Birmingham City Councillor Paulette Hamilton told the Local Democracy Reporting Service 40% of the authority's PPE order was delivered.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-52296394>

HSJ - Coronavirus deaths mapped: First trust records 500 fatalities - 16 April 2020

University Hospitals Birmingham Foundation Trust has become the first provider to record 500 fatalities. Over the last 14 days, the trust has seen an average of 25 covid deaths every day. It is the trust with the largest amount of deaths to date, by a margin of 155. It is the major specialist acute centre in Birmingham and the Black Country – which alongside London are the worst-hit parts of England by some margin.

<https://www.hsj.co.uk/news/coronavirus-deaths-mapped-first-trust-records-500-fatalities/7027212.article>

Birmingham City Council - Online mental health support for young people during pandemic - 14 April 2020

Birmingham City Council has commissioned a free online mental health and wellbeing service for young people. Kooth gives children and young people the opportunity to access online counselling from qualified counsellors who are available from mid-day to 10pm every weekend day and from 6pm to 10pm at weekends. Young people can drop in for one-to-one instant text-based chats or book a session in advance.

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/news/article/586/online_mental_health_support_for_young_people_during_pandemic

Birmingham City Council - £5m support package for care providers - 15 April 2020

A five million pound package of financial support for care providers across the city has been approved by Birmingham City Council.

The focus of the funding is to support hospital discharge and to recognise the additional costs providers are incurring due to the pandemic.

The city council will reimburse reasonable additional costs that could not have been anticipated, particularly in relation to PPE, staff sickness and agency costs.

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/news/article/587/5m_support_package_for_care_providers

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner - No Excuse for Abuse - April 2020

A resource page for those experiencing domestic violence or abuse whether physical or mental, living in the West Midlands

<https://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/no-excuse-for-abuse/>

HSJ - Major drop off in referrals to children's mental health services - 10 April 2020

Children's mental health services across England have seen a huge drop off in referrals amid the coronavirus crisis, HSJ has learned.

Birmingham Women's and Children's Foundation Trust which runs child and adolescent mental health services for Birmingham, has seen a 50 per cent reduction in referrals since the covid-19 crisis first struck in March, sources have confirmed.

<https://www.hsj.co.uk/coronavirus/major-drop-off-in-referrals-to-childrens-mental-health-services/7027373.article>

Birmingham Women's and Children's NHS Foundation Trust - Urgent and critical care services remain open during Covid-19 pandemic - 15 April 2020

If you have concerns about coming in to hospital during the ongoing Covid-19 (coronavirus) pandemic it's important that you are aware that our urgent and critical care services are still available to support you when you need them.

<https://bwc.nhs.uk/news/urgent-and-critical-care-services-remain-open-during-covid19-pandemic-2776>

Sandwell & West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust - Midland Met plays part to lead coronavirus testing - 15 April 2020

The Midland Metropolitan University Hospital has become a key testing site for coronavirus in the West Midlands.

The testing centre is based in the car park for the site offices at the under-construction hospital which is due to open in 2022. It opened to key workers within primary and social care as well as other public sector employees from across the West Midlands this week and is appointment-only.

<https://www.swbh.nhs.uk/media/midland-met-plays-part-to-lead-coronavirus-testing/>

[Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust - Need urgent dental care? - April 2020](#)

Birmingham Dental Hospital is currently providing services to adults and children in need of emergency or life-threatening dental conditions.

This priority service ensures that patients most in need can still access care and also helps protect staff and patients.

<https://www.bhamcommunity.nhs.uk/about-us/news/latest-news/dental-emergencies/>

[Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust - Letters to loved ones - April 2020](#)

BCHC is offering a letters to loved ones email address for people with relatives staying in their care who may not have access to their own mobile device.

<https://www.bhamcommunity.nhs.uk/about-us/news/latest-news/letters-to-loved-ones/>

[GOV.UK - NHS debt write-off: regional breakdown - 9 April 2020](#)

Details of the £13.4 billion debt that will be written off to support the NHS in its response to coronavirus (COVID-19) and ensure long-term financial sustainability.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-debt-write-off-regional-breakdown>

National Developments

GOV.UK - National action plan to further support adult social care sector - 15 April 2020

- New action plan to reduce outbreaks in care homes, support care staff and providers and maintain independence of those receiving care
- Plans to boost access to PPE, ramp up testing for care sector and recruit more staff
- Unifying new 'care' brand for care workers with NHS-style identity, to ensure recognition and access to benefits during crisis and in response to ask from sector

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-action-plan-to-further-support-adult-social-care-sector>

HSJ - 'Prejudiced' hospital admissions guidance for the elderly dropped by NHSE - 15 April 2020

National guidance which said some care home and community hospital residents “should not ordinarily be conveyed to hospital” has been dropped by NHS England.

NHSE published a reference guide during the Easter weekend on patient management during the coronavirus pandemic.

NHSE drops guidance which stated dementia patients with head injuries should only go to A&E in most serious cases

<https://www.hsj.co.uk/patient-safety/prejudiced-hospital-admissions-guidance-for-the-elderly-dropped-by-nhse/7027414.article>

BBC News - Coronavirus: Body-bag stocks 'in danger of running out' - 13 April 2020

Mortuary suppliers have told BBC News they have no stocks of standard body bags left for sale, blaming the shortage on stockpiling due to the coronavirus pandemic. New stocks from overseas cannot be sourced for many weeks, they say.

The NHS says it currently has adequate stocks but health workers report having to wrap bodies in sheets.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-52205655>

HSJ - Community nursing will 'blow' as discharge threshold is reduced - 12 April 2020

Families, social care workers and volunteers may be forced to step in to help provide nursing care, as community nursing capacity threatens to “blow” due to coronavirus.

Both the Royal College of Nursing and the Queen’s Nursing Institute – the charity for community nursing – told HSJ that district nurses were now having to prioritise patients more than normal, as staffing numbers have become “extremely stretched”.

The demands on nursing care in people’s homes has worsened due to instructions from NHS England and the government to discharge people from hospital more quickly, and when their health is “medically optimised” but not yet “back to baseline”, freeing up tens of thousands of beds for acute covid-19 admissions.

<https://www.hsj.co.uk/community-nursing-will-blow-as-discharge-threshold-is-reduced/7027384.article>

ONS - ONS publishes new data on COVID-19 deaths and the social and economic impacts of pandemic - 16 April 2020

The coronavirus pandemic is affecting the lives of each and every one of us. Today the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has published a range of updated information on its impact including a new analysis of underlying causes of death. The consequences for people’s personal well-being and for businesses and jobs are also explored

<https://blog.ons.gov.uk/2020/04/16/ons-publishes-new-data-on-covid-19-deaths-and-the-social-and-economic-impacts-of-virus-pandemic/>

Centre for Cities - Coronavirus - 8 April 2020

Nowhere is feeling the economic and social impact of Covid-19 more than UK’s cities and largest towns. From a public health perspective, Coronavirus has touched every part of the UK, but its economic impact will be bigger in some places than others.

Includes analysis of cases per population by city & large town.

<https://www.centreforcities.org/coronavirus/>

The Guardian - UK coronavirus rules relaxed for people with autism and learning disabilities - 14 April 2020

People with learning disabilities or autism can leave the house for exercise more than once a day and can travel outside of their local area under current lockdown measures, the government has said.

The guidance, which had previously stated that non-essential workers should only leave their homes once a day for exercise or to shop for basic necessities, was amended on Wednesday.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/14/uk-coronavirus-rules-autism-learning-disabilities-lockdown#maincontent>

ACEVO - Covid-19 and whistleblowing - 17 April 2020

Covid-19 has drastically changed the way in which we work. For charities employing key workers, there is now a heightened need for services to be delivered safely. We know from our Advice Line, which supports people with whistleblowing, that this time of public emergency is giving rise to new concerns about keeping patients, customers and colleagues safe. Now more than ever, third sector senior leaders and managers need to go the extra mile to show staff they are supported, valued, and looked after.

<https://www.acevo.org.uk/2020/04/covid-19-and-whistleblowing/>

Relevant Reports, Findings and Official Figures

Kings College London - Life under lockdown: coronavirus in the UK - 9 April 2020

A major new survey of the UK public by King's College London in partnership with Ipsos MORI shows there is strong understanding of the realities of Covid-19 and support for the government's measures - but there also remain widespread misperceptions, and many are struggling with life under "lockdown".

<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/news/life-under-lockdown-coronavirus-in-the-uk>

International Long-Term care policy network - Mortality associated with COVID-19 outbreaks in care homes: early international evidence - 12 April 2020

Key findings:

- Official data on the numbers of people affected by COVID-19 is not available in many countries
- Due to differences in testing availabilities and policies, and to different approaches to recording deaths, international comparisons are difficult
- Data from 3 epidemiological studies in the United States show that as many as half of people with COVID-19 infections in care homes were asymptomatic (or pre-symptomatic) at the time of testing
- Data from 5 European countries suggest that care home residents have so far accounted for between 42% and 57% of all deaths related to COVID-19.

<https://ltccovid.org/2020/04/12/mortality-associated-with-covid-19-outbreaks-in-care-homes-early-international-evidence/>

Institute for Public Policy Research - Revealed: Three quarters of healthcare workers say the government is putting their health at risk - 16 April 2020

A new IPPR/YouGov poll of UK healthcare professionals responding to the Covid-19 crisis reveals how deeply concerned they are about their safety. When asked if government had done enough during the Covid-19 outbreak to prevent and test health and care workers for illness - for example, through Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) provision and priority diagnostic testing - 72 per cent said they have not.

<https://www.ippr.org/news-and-media/press-releases/revealed-three-quarters-of-healthcare-workers-say-the-government-is-putting-their-health-at-risk>

Royal Pharmaceutical Society - Guidance on ethical, professional decision-making in the COVID-19 pandemic - 9 April 2020

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society has today published Guidance on ethical, professional decision-making in the COVID-19 pandemic to support pharmacists and registered pharmacy technicians faced with making difficult decisions linked to the exceptional impact of COVID-19.

<https://www.rpharms.com/about-us/news/details/guidance-on-ethical-professional-decision-making-in-the-covid-19-pandemic>

The Health Foundation - Today's data show COVID-19 is having a dramatic impact on how people seek care - 9 April 2020

The NHS and social care system is making heroic efforts to respond to the unprecedented challenge of coronavirus (COVID-19), and that is having a dramatic impact on how people seek care and the care that is being delivered. Having risen year-on-year since records began, today's data show a substantial drop in A&E visits last month, with over 600,000 fewer people (a 29% drop) attending A&E compared to the same time last year and 120,000 fewer people being admitted. Meanwhile calls to NHS 111 have surged - there were more than twice as many last month compared to the same time last year.

<https://www.health.org.uk/news-and-comment/news/covid-19-is-having-a-dramatic-impact-on-how-people-seek-care>

The British Psychological Society - Information on supporting older people and those with dementia during Covid-19 - 9 April 2020

Older people and those with dementia are likely to be some of the hardest hit by the current crisis, being most at risk of severe disease if they contract the virus and in many cases advised to stringently self-isolate for the foreseeable future.

<https://www.bps.org.uk/news-and-policy/information-supporting-older-people-and-those-dementia-during-covid-19>

Royal College of Physicians - COVID-19 and mitigating impact on health inequalities - 3 April 2020

To produce this webpage highlighting examples of how NHS providers have mitigated the impact of COVID-19 on health inequalities, RCP has worked with NHS Providers and Provider Public Health Network, a community of practice supported by Public Health England.

<https://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/news/covid-19-and-mitigating-impact-health-inequalities>

The British Psychological Society - Responding to Coronavirus: Resources and Support - April 2020

A collection of resources for the public and professionals dealing with the effects of the coronavirus pandemic.

<https://www.bps.org.uk/responding-coronavirus>

Gov.UK - COVID-19: guidance for commissioners and providers of services for people who use drugs or alcohol - 15 April 2020

This guidance outlines COVID-19 advice for commissioners and service providers involved in assisting people who are dependent on drugs or alcohol or both.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-commissioners-and-providers-of-services-for-people-who-use-drugs-or-alcohol>

Institute for Employment Studies - IES Working at Home Wellbeing Survey - April 2020

Headline statistics include:

- There has been a significant increase in musculoskeletal complaints.
- Diet and exercise are on the wane.
- Poor sleep and increased risk of exhaustion are also cause for concern.
- The mental health of survey respondents depicts a workforce with a lot on its mind.

The interim findings have been drawn from the initial 500 respondents to the survey.

<https://www.employment-studies.co.uk/resource/ies-working-home-wellbeing-survey>

The Kings Fund - Critical care services in the English NHS - 7 April 2020

The national focus on critical care services in England is increasing because of Covid-19 (coronavirus). Emerging international and domestic data suggests a significant proportion of hospitalised patients with coronavirus require help with breathing, including mechanical ventilation, and other services critical care staff and units provide.

<https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/critical-care-services-nhs>

GOV.UK - Coronavirus (COVID-19): looking after people who lack mental capacity - 9 April 2020

Guidance for health and social care staff who are caring for, or treating, a person who lacks the relevant mental capacity.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-looking-after-people-who-lack-mental-capacity>

GOV.UK - COVID-19: guidance for stepdown of infection control precautions within hospitals and discharging COVID-19 patients from hospital to home settings - 9 April 2020

Advice on appropriate infection prevention and control (IPC) precautions for stepdown in hospital or discharge to home or residential settings.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-stepdown-of-infection-control-precautions-within-hospitals-and-discharging-covid-19-patients-from-hospital-to-home-settings>

SMF - Intergenerational fairness in the coronavirus economy - 14 April 2020

This briefing paper, written by Research Director, Scott Corfe, discusses the need for the economic costs of responding to coronavirus pandemic to be shared fairly across the generations

<http://www.smf.co.uk/publications/intergenerational-fairness-coronavirus/>

Insights, Opinion pieces & Views

Please note the articles placed below are to inform about the dialogue around issues people are facing at this time and are not an endorsement of Healthwatch Birmingham's views

Update Brum - Hoping for the Best and Planning for the Worst - 8th April 2020

COVID-19 (coronavirus) - advice for people, families and communities planning for the end of life care and bereavement support

This can be an especially difficult time for people who are receiving end of life care and their loved ones. It is important now that we all know what is important to us, to know what matters and we share it. Hold on to the little things that matter and let us care for each other.

<https://updatebrum.co.uk/c19supportbrum/hoping-for-the-best-and-planning-for-the-worst/>

Centre for Cities - How easy is it for people to stay at home during the coronavirus pandemic? - 7 April 2020

While many people have now shifted to working from home, those living in cities have less space per person on average than people in non-urban areas to do so. New research by Analyst Anthony Breach on how living space and access to green space differ across the country, what drives this, and what this means in the wake of the Coronavirus crisis.

<https://www.centreforcities.org/blog/how-easy-is-it-for-people-to-stay-at-home-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>

The Municipal Journal - Without a place-focused economic response, pre-coronavirus inequalities will become even more entrenched - 27 March 2020

Over the past month the Government has implemented some of the most interventionist economic policies since the Second World War as it battles to keep the economy afloat amid the coronavirus pandemic.

<https://www.themj.co.uk/Without-a-place-focused-economic-response-pre-coronavirus-inequalities-will-become-even-more-entrenched/217158#>

The Kings Fund - Responding to the Covid-19 (coronavirus) outbreak: the dark side and the brighter - 31 March 2020

It is a plain and simple fact that we have not been anywhere like this before within living memory. Even those who have their centenary (unless they are 107 or so) will not have even childhood memories of that pandemic which, depending on the estimate that you go for, killed somewhere between 20 and 100 million people worldwide.

<https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/blog/2020/03/responding-covid-19-coronavirus-outbreak>

ACEVO - What I've learned from coronavirus - 14 April 2020

Ryan Campbell, CEO at Demelza Hospice Care for Children, shares 10 things he has learnt throughout the current coronavirus crisis.

<https://www.acevo.org.uk/2020/04/what-ive-learned-from-coronavirus/>

The Kings Fund - Integrating health and social care in the Covid-19 (coronavirus) response - 03 April 2020

'It was the best of times, it was the worst of times' was how Charles Dickens described, in the opening lines of A tale of two cities, the contrasting state of London and Paris in the years before the French Revolution. Although the full impact of the Covid-19 (coronavirus) outbreak has yet to be felt, his words have a contemporary resonance, considering how the daily rhythms and routines of our lives have been turned upside down in a matter of days.

<https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/blog/2020/04/health-social-care-covid-19-coronavirus>

New Economics Foundation - Covid-19 Shines A Light On The Fragility Of Our Childcare System - 14 April 2020

In the past month families across the country have faced unprecedented changes. For some, paid work has stopped and incomes have nosedived. For others, still working at a time when nurseries are closed to most children, there is a daily juggle of balancing caring for their children and continuing to do their jobs. Yet last week many parents received bills for childcare they are not getting. This is not a story about greedy nurseries trying to make money. The coronavirus crisis is shining a light on the fragility and fragmentation of the childcare sector, while leaving parents confused, worried and in some cases under considerable financial pressure.

<https://neweconomics.org/2020/04/covid-19-shines-a-light-on-the-fragility-of-our-childcare-system>

Positive News

BBC News - Coronavirus: 'Oldest' patient discharged from Birmingham hospital - 15 April 20

A 106-year-old great-grandmother, thought to be Britain's oldest patient to recover from coronavirus, has been discharged from hospital.

Connie Titchen was applauded by staff as she left Birmingham's City Hospital on Tuesday, after three weeks.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-52296196>

BBC News - Coronavirus: Capt Tom Moore's NHS fundraiser hits £17m - 17 April 2020

A 99-year-old war veteran has walked 100 laps of his garden to raise £17m and counting for the NHS. Captain Tom Moore originally aimed to raise just £1,000 for NHS Charities Together by completing laps of his garden before his 100th birthday.

NHS Charities Together, which support health service charities and will benefit from the funds, said it was "truly inspired and humbled" by his efforts.

Its chairman Ian Lush said about 150 charities would benefit from the money.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-52303859>

The Guardian - Coronavirus UK lockdown causes big drop in air pollution - 27 March 2020

The nationwide shutdown caused by the coronavirus outbreak has led to big drops in air pollution across the UK's major cities, new data analysis shows. Levels of toxic pollutants were likely to fall even further, scientists said, as traffic remained off the roads but prevailing westerly winds from the Atlantic returned.

The data shows drops in tiny particle pollution of a third to a half in Birmingham. For nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) pollution, the data also shows declines of a third to a half in Birmingham.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/mar/27/coronavirus-uk-lockdown-big-drop-air-pollution>

The Guardian - The Guardian view on nature's return: humans making way - 15 April 2020

Few are lucky enough to go wild these days. Under lockdown our horizons have shrunk. Beloved nature reserves and glorious national parks must wait until the quarantine is lifted. Yet the wild is coming to us. In Essex, deer roam a housing estate. In Llandudno, goats charge down the streets. In San Francisco, coyotes prowl the Golden Gate Bridge. Inner-city residents may see a bird of prey overhead for the first time, or notice flashes of colour from butterflies which usually shun their gardens.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/apr/15/the-guardian-view-on-natures-return-humans-making-way>

BBC News - Coronavirus: 'You clap for me' film celebrates ethnic minority workers - 15 April 2020

A film which celebrates black, Asian and ethnic minority key workers helping to tackle the coronavirus pandemic has gone viral with millions of views.

The video features doctors, delivery drivers, teachers. Its director Darren Smith says coronavirus has brought about a sense of solidarity within society.

He hopes the film will encourage people to "continue to be open, inclusive and tolerant" once the pandemic is over.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-52294950>

The Guardian - Refugees among hundreds of overseas medics to respond to NHS call - 17 April 2020

Hundreds of foreign-born doctors, including refugees, have signed up to become medical support workers as part of a new scheme aimed at helping the NHS tackle the coronavirus pandemic.

NHS England launched the initiative for international medical graduates and doctors after calls to fast track the accreditation of overseas medics. The NHS plans to deploy the workers, who have passed an English language exam, in small numbers initially

The UN's refugee chief this week called for more countries to allow refugee medical professionals to tackle the health crisis.

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2020/apr/17/refugees-among-hundreds-of-overseas-medics-to-respond-to-nhs-call>