

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

21st Apr 2021

Overnight NewsRoundUp

There is a real danger that COVID-19 will become entrenched as a disease of poverty

- While we have all experienced this pandemic together, we have not all had the same experience. Deprived and [minority ethnic communities have borne the brunt of the pandemic so far](#) and there is now a very real danger that COVID-19 will become entrenched as a disease of poverty.
- People in the more deprived community areas are more likely to catch COVID-19 for several reasons. **Firstly, they are much more likely to have to work outside the home and in frontline roles, such as health and care workers, security guards, public transport workers, cab drivers and retail. These jobs are all associated with higher exposure to catching COVID-19.**
- Secondly, those in more deprived communities are **more likely to live in multioccupancy housing**: those living in households with more than six people have twice the risk of infection compared with households with one or two people. Those in deprived communities have **worse access to high quality green spaces** which, as we move out of lockdown, is likely to lead to more crowded meetings outdoors or more meetings in higher risk spaces.
- Thirdly, many are **financially unable to isolate**. A recent paper in The BMJ reported that only about 20% of people with symptoms request a Covid test and only about half of those with symptoms isolate. It identified that being unable to isolate was a key factor in determining both testing and tracing behaviour. Dido Harding, head of test and trace, acknowledged that lack of support for isolation was lowering the effectiveness of contact tracing.
- Poor housing further exacerbates the problem as even those who do isolate risk infecting others in their household because of cramped accommodation. Researchers have argued persuasively that enhancing comprehensive support for isolation is crucial as we exit the most recent wave of infection.

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Since reaching a height of around 70 000 confirmed covid-19 cases a day in England at the start of the year, the third lockdown has brought cases down to around 2500 a day (at the time of writing). Hospital admissions are back to levels last seen in September 2020, and over half of the adult population has received at least one dose of covid-19 vaccine. We've experienced almost six months of national lockdown in the past year and are just emerging from what has been promised to be the last one. But while we have all experienced this pandemic together, we have not all had the same experience. Deprived and minority ethnic communities have borne the brunt of the pandemic so far and there is now a very real danger that covid-19 will become entrenched as a disease of poverty.

<https://www.bmj.com/content/373/bmj.n986>

Modi warns of coronavirus 'storm' overwhelming India

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Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said the country faces a coronavirus "storm" overwhelming its health system, as authorities in New Delhi said the Indian capital's hospitals would start running out of medical oxygen by Wednesday. Modi said the federal government was working with local authorities nationwide to ensure adequate supplies of hospital beds, oxygen and anti-viral drugs to combat a huge second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/4/20/indias-pm-modi-says-coronavirus-lockdown-should-be-last-resort>

Vaccine-busting Covid variant a matter of 'when, not if', WHO expert warns

Vaccine-busting Covid variant a matter of 'when, not if', WHO expert warns

A deadly Covid variant that can beat the current vaccines is a matter of "when, not if", a leading scientist from the World Health Organisation warned today. With India and Brazil and other countries gripped by surges caused by new mutations, Dr David Nabarro said the disease was proving to be "ferocious" and Britain must not relax social distancing measures. "I want to be clear with you that I personally expect that variants will appear in different parts of the world that are capable of beating the protection offered by the vaccines," he said on Sky News. "It's not the case of if, but when. So I'm saying to everybody that I work with, we do have to maintain our respect for this virus. We can beat it, but it means maintaining the physical distance and wearing masks, and also being really good about isolating.

https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/covid-variant-vaccines-world-health-organisation-b930606.html?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Twitter#Echobox=1618903992

India waives import duty on COVID-19 drug Remdesivir

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India has waived import duty on COVID-19 drug Remdesivir until Oct. 31, the finance ministry said in a statement on Tuesday, as infections surge to record highs and lead to a shortage of the anti-viral medicine. The government has also waived import duties on Beta Cyclodextrin (SBEB CD) used in the manufacture of Remdesivir as well as Remdesivir injections. India on Tuesday reported its worst daily death toll of the pandemic and has large parts of the country under lockdown in an effort to counter an accelerating second wave of infections.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/india-waives-import-duty-covid-19-drug-remdesivir-2021-04-20/>

Covid-19: India red list add 'may be too late', Prof Mark Walport says

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India's addition to the UK's "red list" of banned countries due to rising Covid cases and concerns over a new variant may have come too late, the UK's former chief scientific adviser has said. Prof Mark Walport told the BBC he believed the new variant was "more transmissible" and there were "good reasons" for keeping it out of the UK. Health officials say it is too early to know whether it is more transmissible. India has been reporting more than 200,000 cases daily since 15 April. Its capital Delhi announced a week-long lockdown after a record spike in cases overwhelmed the city's healthcare system.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-56813025>

India suffers worst day for COVID-19 deaths, hospitals overwhelmed

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Authorities said hospitals in the Indian capital of Delhi would start running out of medical oxygen by Wednesday as Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the country faced a coronavirus "storm" overwhelming its health system. Major government hospitals in the city of 20 million people had between eight and 24 hours' worth of oxygen while some private ones had enough for just four to

five hours, said Delhi's deputy chief minister, Manish Sisodia. "If we don't get enough supplies by tomorrow morning, it will be a disaster," he said, calling for urgent help from the federal government.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/india/india-reports-daily-rise-covid-19-cases-259170-2021-04-20/>

49 passengers on India-Hong Kong flight test positive for COVID

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At least 49 passengers on a flight from New Delhi to Hong Kong have tested positive for COVID-19, authorities said on Tuesday, as a two-week ban on all flights from India, as well as Pakistan and the Philippines took effect. All of the passengers who tested positive flew into Hong Kong on a flight run by Indian operator Vistara on April 4. Problems that have delayed AstraZeneca (AZN.L) supplies to the COVAX vaccine-sharing facility have been resolved, UNICEF told Reuters on Tuesday, saying it should receive 65 million doses by end-May from manufacturers outside India.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/4/20/49-passengers-on-india-hong-kong-flight-test-positive-for-covid>

'No place for you': Indian hospitals buckle amid virus surge

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Seema Gandotra, sick with the coronavirus, gasped for breath in an ambulance for 10 hours as it tried unsuccessfully to find an open bed at six hospitals in India's sprawling capital. By the time she was admitted, it was too late, and the 51-year-old died hours later. Rajiv Tiwari, whose oxygen levels began falling after he tested positive for the virus, has the opposite problem: He identified an open bed, but the resident of Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh can't get to it. "There is no ambulance to take me to the hospital," he said. Such tragedies are familiar from surges in other parts of the world — but were largely unknown in India, which was able to prevent a collapse in its health system last year through a harsh lockdown. But now they are everyday occurrences in the vast country, which is seeing its largest surge of the pandemic so far and watching its chronically underfunded health system crumble.

<https://apnews.com/article/india-hospitals-coronavirus-surge-75e49719fdb19e080b5c93d6a5ad270c>

India's Maharashtra to impose stringent lockdown this week- state minister

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India's western state of Maharashtra, home to the financial capital Mumbai, plans to impose a stringent lockdown this week to try to halt the rising cases of coronavirus, two senior ministers from the state cabinet told reporters. Maharashtra, one of India's largest states, is the worst-hit state in a new surge of cases in India. Infections have been rising even after restrictions were imposed this month, and that made a stringent lockdown necessary, Maharashtra health minister Rajesh Tope told reporters.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/india/indias-maharashtra-impose-stringent-lockdown-this-week-state-minister-2021-04-20/>

Positive News

UNICEF says AstraZeneca supply problems outside India resolved

Problems that have delayed AstraZeneca (AZN.L) supplies to the COVAX vaccine-sharing facility have been resolved, UNICEF told Reuters on Tuesday, saying it should receive 65 million doses by end-May from manufacturers outside India. The rollout of COVID vaccines has been disrupted by supply shortfalls in many countries, aggravated by a temporary hold on exports of the inoculation made by the Serum Institute of India (SII) as the country battles to contain a surge in infections. "The initial challenges related to release of vaccines due to ramping up a new supply chain and production across different continents have now been resolved," the U.N. agency responsible for distributing vaccines through the programme told Reuters in an email.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/india/exclusive-unicef-says-astrazeneca-supply-issues-outside-india-resolved-2021-04-20/>

Greta Thunberg joins fight for coronavirus vaccine equity

Teenage climate activist Greta Thunberg has urged governments, vaccine developers and the world to “step up their game” to fight vaccine inequity after the richest countries snatched up most COVID-19 vaccine doses and those in poorer nations have gone lacking. Her comments on Monday came as the World Health Organization announced 5.2 million new confirmed virus cases during the latest week, the largest weekly count yet, according to the UN health agency. The Swedish teen who inspired the “Fridays for Future” climate change movement chipped in 100,000 euros (\$120,000) from her charitable foundation to the WHO Foundation to help buy COVID-19 vaccines for countries where they are needed

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/4/19/greta-thunberg-joins-fight-against-vaccine-inequity>

Israel to buy Moderna's booster shot against COVID-19 variants

Moderna Inc (MRNA.O) said on Tuesday it had secured a new COVID-19 vaccine supply agreement with Israel for 2022, under which the country has the option to buy doses of one of the company's variant-specific vaccine candidates. The announcement follows two earlier agreements between Israel and Moderna to supply a total of 10 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine. Moderna's COVID-19 booster vaccine is in early-stage trials. The company in April said it should be able to provide a booster shot for protection against variants of the novel coronavirus by the end of this year.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/israel-buy-covid-19-variant-specific-vaccine-moderna-2021-04-20/>

Thailand gov't negotiating to buy Pfizer coronavirus vaccine

Thai Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, under intense criticism for failing to secure adequate supplies of coronavirus vaccines, said Tuesday his government is negotiating to buy 5 million to 10 million doses from U.S. pharmaceutical company Pfizer. Thailand is experiencing a new wave of the coronavirus, with the number of daily new cases surpassing 1,000 this month for the first time. Health officials on Tuesday announced 1,443 new cases and four new fatalities, bring the totals to 45,185 cases and 108 deaths. The surge of cases has strained the ability of hospitals to supply rooms for COVID-19 patients, but the government says new field hospitals should provide enough capacity. Thailand has a policy of hospitalizing all people who test positive for the virus.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/thailand-govt-negotiating-to-buy-pfizer-coronavirus-vaccine-thailand-pfizer-ban-gkok-britain-astrazeneca-b1834493.html>

French health minister says would favour regional easing of lockdowns

French health minister Olivier Veran would favour a region-by-region easing of lockdown measures set up to tackle the COVID-19 virus, he told regional paper Le Telegramme in an interview published on Tuesday. Veran added that while there were signs that the latest surge in COVID-19 in France was starting to ease off a little, the virus was still circulating at a high level. The health ministry said on Monday that 5,970 people were in intensive care units with COVID-19, up from 5,893 a day earlier, in a sign that hospitals remain under pressure.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/french-health-minister-says-would-favour-regional-easing-lockdowns-2021-04-20/>

J&J to resume rollout of COVID-19 vaccine in Europe with safety warning

Johnson & Johnson (JNJ.N) said on Tuesday it will resume rolling out its COVID-19 vaccine in Europe after the region's medical regulator said the benefits of the shot outweigh the risk of very rare, potentially lethal blood clots. Europe's health regulator, the European Medicines Agency (EMA), on Tuesday recommended adding a warning about rare blood clots with low blood platelet count to the

vaccine's product label and said the benefits of the one-dose shot outweigh its risks.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/johnson-johnson-reports-100-million-quarterly-covid-19-vaccine-sales-2021-04-20/>

Covid: No new blood clots in Johnson & Johnson vaccine patients have been confirmed, CDC says

CDC director Dr Rochelle Walensky said the agency is watching closely for additional cases of rare blood clots after vaccination with J&J's shot. No additional cases have been confirmed since last Friday, CDC officials told AOL. She did not elaborate on how many people suffered side effects or what side effects people may have experienced. On Tuesday, the CDC and FDA recommended a pause in the rollout of J&J's vaccine, after seven people developed blood clots after receiving it. The CDC's advisory committee is meeting on Friday to vote on whether or not to recommend lifting the pause. Dr Anthony Fauci said he doesn't believe the J&J vaccine will be canceled but that there will be new restrictions or warnings. About 39.5% of the U.S population has received at least one dose and more than three million people are being vaccinated every day.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-9488213/CDC-watching-cases-blood-clots-people-got-J-J-Covid-vaccine.html>

Bharat Biotech, government cash and partners in hand, aims for 700M COVID-19 shots per year

With COVID-19 cases mounting, India has equipped local drugmaker Bharat Biotech with government cash to rapidly scale up its vaccine output this year. Bharat plans to upgrade at two plants to boost production of its COVID-19 vaccine Covaxin to nearly 700 million doses a year, Mint reports. The lift comes after the Indian government awarded the drugmaker nearly \$200 million to upgrade capacity amid a sharp rise in local coronavirus infections. Bharat has more help on the way, too, thanks to a trio of government-funded manufacturing partners that will come online later this year. The country has tasked Bharat with doubling its vaccine output by June and producing around 100 million doses per month by September.

<https://www.fiercepharma.com/manufacturing/bharat-biotech-government-cash-hand-aims-for-700-million-covid-19-vaccines-per-year>

Johnson & Johnson sees 'very viable path forward' for its COVID-19 vaccine despite safety, manufacturing setbacks

It's going to be a big week for Johnson & Johnson's COVID-19 vaccine, which has hit pitfall after pitfall since its launch. European officials offered renewed backing for the shot Tuesday—with a warning about its risks—and a key Centers for Disease Control and Prevention committee is set to meet Friday to review the latest data. By Saturday, depending on that committee's vote, the vaccine could have a clear road ahead in the U.S. Meanwhile, the company is trying to recover from a manufacturing snafu at its U.S. partner Emergent BioSolutions. But whatever happens right now, J&J execs say they are confident the company can get its launch back up to speed.

<https://www.fiercepharma.com/pharma/johnson-johnson-sees-very-viable-path-forward-for-its-covid-19-vaccine-despite-safety>

'Elusive' herd immunity likely won't stop COVID-19 in the US but vaccines can control it, experts say

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For almost a year, Americans have been looking forward to herd immunity, when enough people are protected through vaccination or past infection to stop the spread of COVID-19. Once there, public officials have said, masks won't be necessary and hugging and handshakes – not to mention gyms, bars and indoor dining – can return. But even as more than half of adult Americans have received at least one dose of vaccine and many others are protected by recent infections, health experts are moving away from the idea of reaching some magic number. Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's top

infectious disease doctor, doesn't want to talk about herd immunity anymore

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/elusive-herd-immunity-likely-wont-100209265.html>

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https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/covid-variant-vaccines-world-health-organisation-b930606.html?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Twitter#Echobox=1618903992

Johnson & Johnson Decisions

J&J to resume rollout of COVID-19 vaccine in Europe with safety warning

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<https://www.reuters.com/business/johnson-johnson-reports-100-million-quarterly-covid-19-vaccine-sales-2021-04-20/>

EU agency links J&J shot to rare clots, says odds favor use

The European Union's drug regulatory agency said Tuesday that it found a "possible link" between Johnson & Johnson's COVID-19 vaccine and extremely rare blood clots and recommended a warning be added to the label. But experts at the agency reiterated that the vaccine's benefits outweigh the risks. The European Medicines Agency made its determination after examining a small number of clot cases in people vaccinated in the U.S. It said these problems should be considered "very rare side effects of the vaccine." J&J immediately announced it will revise its label as requested and resume vaccine shipments to the EU, Norway and Iceland. In a statement, it said: "The safety and well-being of the people who use our products is our number one priority." Following the EMA's decision, EU Health and Food Safety Commissioner Stella Kyriakides tweeted that vaccinations save lives and added: "I urge Member States to follow the opinion of our experts."

<https://apnews.com/874bf0fb5374695d924d647e57c67192>

EU regulator prepares to issue advice on use of J&J vaccine

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<https://apnews.com/article/europe-europe-coronavirus-pandemic-coronavirus-vaccine-874bf0fb5374695d924d647e5>

[7c67192](#)

Fauci Expects Decision on Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 Vaccine on Friday

White House chief medical advisor Dr. Anthony Fauci said that he expects US regulators to make a decision on lifting the pause on Johnson & Johnson's (NYSE: JNJ) COVID-19 vaccine this coming Friday when an expert advisory panel of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) meets. Fauci said on CNN's "State of the Union" program on Sunday that he expects the experts to recommend "some sort of either warning or restriction" on the use of J&J's vaccine after their analysis of the data is completed. Fauci's remarks came after the CDC and US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) decided to pause distribution of the J&J vaccine last week to investigate six cases of a rare brain blood clot linked with low platelet counts.

<https://www.marketwatch.com/press-release/fauci-expects-decision-on-johnson-johnson-covid-19-vaccine-on-friday-2021-04-20>

EU regulator finds link between J&J shot and blood clots

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<https://apnews.com/article/johnson-johnson-european-union-regulator-874bf0fb5374695d924d647e57c67192>

J&J to cooperate in study of rare clots linked to COVID-19 vaccine, German scientist says

A German scientist studying extremely rare blood clots linked to AstraZeneca's (AZN.L) COVID-19 vaccine said on Tuesday Johnson & Johnson (JNJ.N) has agreed to work with him on the research after similar serious side effects emerged in recipients of its shot. Andreas Greinacher, a transfusion medicine expert at Greifswald University, announced the collaboration after the European Medicines Agency said it would add a label to J&J's vaccine warning of unusual blood clots with low platelet counts. AstraZeneca's shot has a similar warning.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/jj-cooperate-study-rare-clots-linked-covid-19-vaccine-german-scientist-says-2021-04-20/>

Covid-19: Suicide rate 'did not rise during first lockdown'

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The number of suicides in England did not rise following the first national lockdown in 2020, research has found. Charities had reported more people seeking mental health support, leading to fears the number of suicides would also increase. But University of Manchester scientists found a broadly similar rate from April to October 2020 to that seen between January and March. The findings are in line with research from other high income countries. Using real-time surveillance data, which records suicides as they occur but before an inquest is held, academics studied suicides in areas of England covering some 13 million people - around a quarter of the population.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-56818876>

First Covid-19 vaccination protects blood cancer patients, study suggests

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A single dose of a coronavirus vaccine triggers an immune response in around 70% of patients with

the blood and bone marrow cancer, myeloma, according to a new study. Researchers say the findings suggest the jab could provide protection against the virus. Experts tested for Covid-19 coronavirus antibodies in 93 people with myeloma. A recent report with a smaller number of patients with the cancer suggested that blood cancer patients might receive limited protection after vaccination. Myeloma is a cancer of the immune cells produced in the bone marrow, and puts patients at greater risk of severe Covid-19 infection.

<https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/uk-news/first-covid-19-vaccination-protects-20420849>

Covid-19: U.S. Efforts to Retrieve Americans Overseas in Early Outbreak Threatened Their Safety, Report Says

Covid-19: U.S. Efforts to Retrieve Americans Overseas in Early Outbreak Threatened Their Safety, Report Says

The government's confused effort to retrieve Americans overseas during the early weeks of the coronavirus outbreak compromised the safety of the evacuees, federal employees and communities near where Americans returned to, according to a new report published on Monday by Congress's nonpartisan watchdog. The effort was so dysfunctional that federal health agencies could not even agree on the purpose and terms of the mission, contradicting one another about whether it was classified as an evacuation or repatriation. The more-than-yearlong investigation by the Government Accountability Office concluded that the evacuation of Americans from China bogged down badly as different divisions within the Department of Health and Human Services argued over which was responsible.

<https://cbnc.com/a-confused-federal-effort-to-retrieve-americans-overseas-in-the-initial-outbreak-led-to-safety-risks-a-new-report-says/>

European Medicines Agency: More than 300 cases of rare blood clot events worldwide

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The European Union's drug regulator said on Tuesday there had been more than 300 cases worldwide of rare blood clotting incidents combined with low platelet counts after use of COVID-19 vaccines. There were 287 occurrences with the AstraZeneca vaccine, eight with Johnson & Johnson's shot, 25 for Pfizer and five for Moderna, said Peter Arlett, Head of Data Analytics at the European Medicines Agency (EMA).

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/european-medicines-agency-more-than-300-cases-rare-blood-clot-events-worldwide-2021-04-20/>