

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

20th Jul 2021

Overnight News RoundUp

Many ICU staff have experienced mental health disorders in COVID-19 pandemic

- A high proportion of staff working in intensive care units during the COVID-19 pandemic have experienced mental health disorders, according to a new study.
- In a study of 515 healthcare staff working in intensive care units (ICUs) in seven countries, the researchers found that 48% of participants had mental health problems - depression, insomnia and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The team found a 40% increase in these conditions for those who spent more than six hours a day in personal protective equipment (PPE), compared to those who did not.
- The study, led by researchers at Imperial College London, is published in the British Journal of Nursing and is the first to evaluate ICU workers' mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. In line with the UK government's report on burnout in NHS staff, published in June 2021, the researchers suggest that the high level of mental health disorders found among ICU staff surveyed should inform local and national wellbeing policies.

Mental health resources

- Dr Ahmed Ezzat, lead author of the study and Honorary Clinical Fellow at Imperial College London, said 'This is a timely study which acts as a stark reminder of the personal challenges healthcare staff are facing as a result of COVID-19. As within wider society, mental illness of healthcare staff still remains a taboo subject for some. Recent public campaigns have started the conversation, but we have a long way to go. COVID-19 has acutely exacerbated the issue, and our concern is how staff resilience has been exhausted and what national medium or long term resources are set in place by policy makers to safeguard this workforce from severe mental illness. We have an opportunity to hold a national dialogue of healthcare leaders, stakeholders and governments around the world to address mental health within healthcare.'
- Dr Matthew Komorowski, senior author of the study and Clinical Senior Lecturer in the Department of Surgery and Cancer at Imperial College London said:
- 'The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted the physical and mental health of healthcare workers around the world. The large number of patients admitted to hospital at the height of the pandemic has put considerable demand and pressure on ICUs and staff. Although there has been much reporting on the mental health of frontline workers there has been little done to assess the impact of the pandemic on those who were treating the sickest patients in ICUs.'

Imperial College London - 22 July, 2021 - Maxine Myers author

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compared to those who didn't. The study, led by researchers at Imperial College London, is published in the British Journal of Nursing and is the first to evaluate ICU workers' mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. In line with the UK Government's report on burnout in NHS staff published in June 2021, the researchers suggest that the high level of mental health disorders found among the ICU staff surveyed should inform local and national wellbeing policies.

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/news/226513/many-icu-staff-have-experienced-mental/>

Migration and Covid deaths depriving poorest nations of health workers

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The loss of frontline health workers dying of Covid around the globe, is being compounded in the hospitals of developing nations by trained medical staff leaving to help in the pandemic effort abroad, according to experts. With new Covid waves in Africa, and with Latin America and Asia facing unrelenting health emergencies, the number of health worker deaths from Covid-19 in May was at least 115,000, according to the World Health Organization. Its director-general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, acknowledged data is "scant" and the true figure is likely to be far higher.

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/jul/19/migration-and-covid-deaths-depriving-poorest-nations-of-health-workers>

England's 'freedom day' marred by soaring cases and isolation chaos

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Prime Minister Boris Johnson's 'freedom day' ending over a year of COVID-19 lockdown restrictions in England was marred on Monday by surging infections, warnings of supermarket shortages and his own forced self-isolation. Johnson's bet that he can get one of Europe's largest economies firing again because so many people are now vaccinated marks a new chapter in the global response to the coronavirus. If the vaccines prove effective in reducing severe illness and deaths even while infections reach record levels, Johnson's decision could offer a path out of the worst public health crisis in decades. If not, more lockdowns could loom.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/pm-johnson-pleads-caution-freedom-day-arrives-england-2021-07-18/>

UK PM Johnson dismissed COVID-19 lockdown as only elderly would die, ex-aide says

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British Prime Minister Boris Johnson was not prepared to impose lockdown restrictions to stop the spread of COVID-19 to save the elderly and denied the National Health Service would be overwhelmed, his former top adviser said in an interview aired on Monday. In his first TV interview since leaving his job last year, excerpts of which were released on Monday, Dominic Cummings said Johnson did not want to impose a second lockdown in the autumn last year because "the people who are dying are essentially all over 80".

<https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-pm-johnson-dismissed-covid-19-lockdown-only-elderly-would-die-ex-aide-says-2021-07-19/>

COVID-19: 'It's not freedom day for everyone' - vulnerable people's fears over ending of coronavirus restrictions in England

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People who are at high risk of catching the coronavirus have called the ending of restrictions in England "really frightening" and urged the government to give "more thought" to the vulnerable community. Restrictions such as limits on gatherings and social distancing, as well as face coverings, will no longer be legal requirements, although masks in certain spaces - including supermarkets and on public transport - is still being encouraged. There are around 3.8 million clinically vulnerable people in England with many saying they will do what they can to keep

themselves and others safe - while charities have criticised the government for the blanket easing of coronavirus restrictions.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-its-not-freedom-day-for-everyone-vulnerable-peoples-fears-over-ending-of-coronavirus-restrictions-in-england-12359035>

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<https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-pm-johnson-dismissed-covid-19-lockdown-only-elderly-would-die-ex-aide-says-2021-07-19/>

Bangladesh lifts lockdown to celebrate, exasperating experts

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Waiting among hundreds of fellow travelers to catch a ferry out of Bangladesh's capital, unemployed construction worker Mohammed Nijam knew he was risking catching the coronavirus, but he felt it was even riskier to stay in Dhaka with another lockdown looming. "I have to pay rent every month even though I have no work," he said, adding that his landlord had been bothering him for money even as he was struggling just to feed himself. "I'd rather go to my village home and lead life as God lets me." Nijam is among the tens of millions of Bangladeshis shopping and traveling this week during a controversial eight-day pause in the country's strict coronavirus lockdown that the government is allowing for the Islamic festival Eid-al Adha. The suspension has been panned by health experts who warn it could exacerbate an ongoing surge fueled by the highly contagious delta variant

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/bangladesh-lifts-lockdown-to-celebrate-exasperating-experts-bangladesh-dhaka-islamic-god-india-b1886332.html>

Vulnerable UK children to be offered Covid jabs first, minister says

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Children in the UK will get a Covid vaccine only if they are over 12 and extremely vulnerable, or live with someone at risk, as scientists raised concerns about inflammation around the heart linked to the Pfizer jab. Sajid Javid, the health secretary, said he accepted the advice of scientific advisers that only children over 12 with severe neuro-disabilities, Down's syndrome, immunosuppression and multiple or severe learning disabilities should be allowed to get the Pfizer vaccine. Children over 12 who live in the same house as people who are immunosuppressed will also be eligible for jabs. The opinion of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) expands the eligibility for children, after a previous decision that vulnerable 16- and 17-year-olds could get vaccinated.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jul/19/vulnerable-uk-children-offered-covid-jabs-first-minister-says>

France broadens use of COVID-19 health pass, slashes fines

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The French government adjusted its new plan to fight COVID-19 on Monday, slashing planned fines and postponing them to an unspecified date, spokesman Gabriel Attal said. The measures, which include requiring a health pass in a wide array of venues from the start of August and making vaccination mandatory for health workers, will still account for some of the toughest in Europe.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/france-broadens-use-covid-19-health-pass-slashes-fines-2021-07-19/>

Africa's vaccine crisis: It's not all about corruption

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The third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic is taking its toll across the world, with many countries reporting higher than ever numbers of infections and hospitalisations. The good news is that in countries where vaccines are available there are overall lower mortality numbers, affirming that at a community level, vaccines are working. The bad news is that with a conspiracy of international politics, profiteering and domestic complacency, the vast majority of the world's population remains unvaccinated. As of July 2021, only 25.3 percent of the world's population has received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, and of the 3.4 billion doses that have been administered worldwide, only one percent has been administered in low-income countries.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2021/7/19/africas-vaccine-crisis-its-not-all-about-corruption>

Cabinet ignored expert advice in reopening nightclubs: report

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The Dutch government ignored advice from experts in the Outbreak Management Team and Fieldlab when it authorized the reopening of nightclubs on June 26, NRC reported based on parliamentary documents and conversations with people involved. The number of coronavirus cases in the Netherlands spiked in the two weeks after clubs reopened and events were made possible. This resulted in the cabinet tightening some restrictions again, and apologizing for relaxing measures too soon.

<https://nltimes.nl/2021/07/19/cabinet-ignored-expert-advice-reopening-nightclubs-report>

Fox Rails Against Vaccine Passports, Uses Vaccine Passports

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Tucker Carlson and other Fox hosts have railed, on-air, against the idea of so-called "vaccine passports" but never told their audience that Fox uses one of its own

<https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-news/fox-news-vaccine-passport-clear-pass-1199204/>

In France and Germany, those who reject vaccines find doors increasingly shut

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<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/france-broadens-use-covid-19-health-pass-slashes-fines-2021-07-19/>

Vaccine skeptics wrongly focus on Israel

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Just because a variant emerges that renders the vaccines less effective doesn't mean those vaccines weren't effective in the first place; it means this is a fast-changing pandemic that will require nimble scientists. Israel is as good an example of vaccine efficacy as just about anywhere in the world.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2021/07/19/vaccine-skeptics-zero-israel-again-some-reason/>

Covid vaccination centres vandalised in France

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Two vaccination centres have been ransacked in France, as people protested against the introduction of tougher coronavirus rules. One site in south-east France was vandalised and flooded using fire hoses on Friday night, authorities said. A day later, another clinic in the south-west was partially destroyed by an arson attack, local media reported. The incidents came on a weekend of

demonstrations. More than 100,000 came out to protest on Saturday. Critics have accused President Emmanuel Macron's government of violating freedoms by introducing new rules.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-57883397>

Why the UK's new Covid-19 strategy is uniquely dangerous

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I know of no episode in history where a government has willingly aided and abetted the spread of a dangerous infectious disease among its own population. History is being made. The government of the United Kingdom seems to actually want people to catch Covid-19 in the summer, rather than in the autumn and winter. Ministers reason that the understaffed and underfunded NHS will be in major trouble over the winter. To “go now” with the removal of all legal restrictions, thus producing an even higher level of infections, appears to be regarded as the right thing to do as it will reduce the inevitable problems later this year. This extraordinary policy has been revealed to the population in small dollops via Downing Street press conferences where the Prime Minister is flanked by civil servants. There is no obvious strategy and there is no published plan. In the view of much of the rest of the world, and most of the medical organisations in the UK, there is no possibility that this will be anything other than yet another failure that will cost lives and livelihoods.

<https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2021/07/why-uk-s-new-covid-19-strategy-uniquely-dangerous>

Italian health minister tells politicians to back vaccines

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Italian politicians should throw their weight behind the COVID-19 vaccination campaign, Health Minister Roberto Speranza said on Monday, wading into a row over mainly rightist leaders who have yet to get inoculated. A recent rise in infections, fuelled by the more contagious Delta variant, has given a renewed sense of urgency to the vaccination programme, with the government concerned that almost 40% of the adult population has still not received a shot.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/italian-health-minister-tells-politicians-back-vaccines-2021-07-19/>

Australia prolongs COVID-19 lockdown in Victoria amid Delta outbreak

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Australian authorities said Victoria state would extend a COVID-19 lockdown beyond Tuesday to slow the spread of the highly infectious Delta variant, despite a slight drop in new infections in the state and nationwide.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/local-covid-19-cases-australias-victoria-fall-third-straight-day-2021-07-18/>

Covid vaccine may be less effective on older people, say Israeli experts

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The Covid vaccine may be losing its efficacy in older people, researchers in Israel have warned, as the Delta variant drives a growing fourth wave in the country. The monitoring team at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem reported that about 90 per cent of new confirmed cases in the over-fifties group were people who had been fully vaccinated. “It seems there’s a reduced efficiency of the vaccine, at least for part of the population,” the team said.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/covid-vaccine-may-be-less-effective-on-older-people-say-israeli-experts-g2td6qc60>

American Academy of Pediatrics says ALL children above age 2 should wear masks in school even if they've been vaccinated

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American Academy of Pediatrics released new guidance that students above age 2 and staff in schools should wear masks regardless of vaccination status. The organization says it because most kids are not yet eligible for vaccines and masking reduces transmission of the virus. Dr Anthony

Fauci said the new guidelines are 'a reasonable thing to do' due to vaccines not being approved for children under age 12. In the recommendations, the AAP said masks should be coupled with regular testing, promoting hand hygiene and contact tracing. Children make up 14% of all COVID-19 cases in the U.S. but just 0.1% of all deaths.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-9803311/American-Academy-Pediatrics-says-children-age-2-wear-masks-schools.html>

Scott Gottlieb warns most unvaccinated people WILL get Delta

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Former FDA head Dr Scott Gottlieb says most unvaccinated Americans will contract the Indian 'Delta' coronavirus variant and are at risk of being hospitalized because of it. Gottlieb said 25% of the U.S. population is at risk because 50% of people have been fully vaccinated and another 25% have had COVID-19. He warns that current case numbers are likely being undercounted because those with mild or no symptoms are likely to skip testing. The U.S. recorded 12,048 new cases on Sunday with a seven-day rolling average of 31,919, a 210% increase from the 10,293 average recorded three weeks ago. Missouri saw average cases rise by 111% from 1,053 per day to 2,227 per day in the last two weeks. In Louisiana, COVID-19 cases have increased by 25% from 619 per to 776 per day over the last 14 days. Even areas with higher vaccination rates are seeing cases spike such as Los Angeles County, which is recording more than 10,000 cases a week for the first time since March.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9801663/Scott-Gottlieb-warns-unvaccinated-people-Delta.html>

Taiwan approves Medigen's COVID-19 vaccine candidate

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Taiwan's government on Monday approved the emergency use and production of Medigen Vaccine Biologics Corp's COVID-19 vaccine candidate, a major step in the island's plans to develop its own vaccines to protect against the coronavirus.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/taiwan-approves-production-medigens-covid-19-vaccine-candidate-2021-07-19/>

People unvaccinated against Covid-19 risk the most serious virus of their lives, expert says

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The surge in Covid-19 cases fueled by the Delta variant and vaccine hesitancy has now led to increasing rates of hospitalizations and deaths. Data from Johns Hopkins University shows: - The average number of new Covid-19 cases each day the past week was 32,278. That's a 66% jump from the average daily rate the previous week, and 145% higher than the rate from two weeks ago.

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/07/19/health/us-coronavirus-monday/index.html>

More than 80% of the crew aboard a South Korean destroyer have tested positive for Covid-19

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South Korea's military has recorded its biggest cluster of Covid-19 infections to date, with more than 80% of personnel aboard a navy destroyer on anti-piracy patrol in the Gulf of Aden testing positive. While the 247 cases are not directly linked to new domestic infections, with the destroyer Munmu the Great having left South Korea to start its mission in February, the surge comes as the country battles its worst-ever outbreak of Covid-19 cases at home, with another 1,252 new infections reported for Sunday.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2021/07/19/asia/south-korea-navy-destroyer-covid-intl-hnk/index.html>

Singapore sees COVID-19 cases double overnight as testing ramps up

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Singapore on Monday saw new local coronavirus cases almost double from the previous day to 163, the highest daily tally in 11 months, driven by clusters of infections linked to a fishery port and karaoke bars. The rising cases has prompted the city-state to tighten some restrictions on social gatherings from Monday, just a week after easing them.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/singapore-reports-11-month-high-163-local-covid-19-cases-2021-07-19/>

Jacksonville hospital breaks Covid record in latest Florida surge

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With the state's Covid-19 cases roughly doubling each week, Florida has become one of the country's biggest hot spots for the latest surge fueled by the highly contagious delta variant, as well as vaccine skepticism. UF Health in Jacksonville said it broke its record for most hospitalized Covid patients Monday. At the start of Sunday, the hospital had 86. At one point Monday, the number reached 126, an increase of more than 40 percent in just one day.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/nightly-news/jacksonville-hospital-breaks-covid-record-amid-latest-florida-surge-n1274402>

Cuba, gripped by unrest, battles highest COVID caseload in the Americas

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Cuba, which kept coronavirus infections low last year, now has the highest rate of contagion per capita in Latin America. That has strained its healthcare sector and helped stoke rare protests that have roiled the Communist-run island. The Caribbean nation of 11 million people reported nearly 4,000 confirmed cases per million residents over the last week, nine times more than the world average and more than any other country in the Americas for its size.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/cuba-gripped-by-unrest-battles-highest-covid-caseload-americas-2021-07-19/>

U.S. coronavirus cases rise, fueling fears of resurgence

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Biden: 'Please, please get vaccinated.' Stocks fall as investors fear new lockdowns Canada to reopen border with United States

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/us-coronavirus-cases-rise-fueling-fears-resurgence-2021-07-19/>

Face Mask Requirements Returning As Covid-19 Coronavirus Cases Rise

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Well, this is what happens when the genie has left the bottle, and it's not wearing a face mask. In the words of Christina Aguilera, oh, woah, woah. Covid-19 cases have been on the rise throughout the U.S. This is just two months after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) changed their face mask guidelines in May so that fully vaccinated people would no longer have to wear face masks indoors, as I described then for Forbes. Since it's difficult to tell whether people are fully vaccinated because they may do a thing called lying, many state and local authorities soon abandoned face mask requirements all together.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/brucelee/2021/07/19/face-masks-requirements-returning-as-covid-19-coronavirus-cases-rise/>

Southeast Asian Countries Struggle To Contain A Devastating Third Wave Of COVID-19

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A devastating third wave of the coronavirus pandemic is hitting several countries in Southeast Asia as the delta variant takes hold in the region, leading to record levels of infections and death.

Southeast Asian countries such as Vietnam, Laos, and Thailand had avoided such large-scale outbreaks previously. Now, they're struggling to contain fresh outbreaks, even as Indonesia and Myanmar are battling low vaccination rates, limited oxygen supplies and overcrowded hospitals. Health care experts say health care systems in both countries are on the brink of collapse. Indonesian Epidemiologist Dicky Budiman of Griffith University in Australia spoke with NPR about why so many countries in the region are facing high levels of infection now.

<https://www.npr.org/2021/07/19/1017753256/southeast-asian-countries-struggle-to-contain-a-devastating-third-wave-of-covid->

Thailand warns daily COVID-19 cases could hit 30000 in worst case

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Thailand reported fourth straight day of record infections. Tighter lockdown measures announced in Bangkok and 12 provinces. Government plans to buy 120 mln more vaccine doses in 2022

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/thailand-warns-daily-covid-19-cases-could-hit-30000-worst-case-2021-07-19/>

Singapore advises unvaccinated people to stay home as cases rise

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Singapore's health ministry on Sunday "strongly" advised unvaccinated individuals, especially the elderly, to stay home as much as possible over the next few weeks, citing heightened concerns about the risk of community spread of COVID-19. The country reported 88 new locally-transmitted coronavirus cases on Sunday, the highest daily toll since August last year, driven by growing clusters of infections linked to karaoke bars and a fishery port.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/singapore-advises-unvaccinated-people-stay-home-cases-rise-2021-07-19/>

Hanoi tightens restrictions as COVID clusters spread in Vietnam

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Vietnam's capital Hanoi urged its citizens to stay at home from Monday and ordered a halt to all non-essential services due to new clusters of COVID-19 infections in recent days, the authorities said on Sunday. The city, which had already halted indoor restaurant service and closed salons as well as gyms, also stopped rail and bus passenger services to and from provinces in the south which have seen the biggest increases.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/hanoi-tightens-restrictions-covid-clusters-spread-vietnam-2021-07-18/>