What will it take to ensure a healthy recovery from COVID-19?

Day 1: 2 December 2021, 10:00–16:30 GMT
Part 1: Two years into COVID-19. What have we learnt?
Health & Ageing Conference 2021
Session 3: Health and health systems – What did COVID-19 hurt the most?

Helen Colhoun
Professor
University of Edinburgh

Joan Costa-Font
Associate Professor of Health Economics, LSE

Shekhar Saxena
Professor of the Practice of Global Mental Health, Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health

Annabel Bentley
Chief Medical Officer
AXA Health
Moderator
Session 3: Health and health systems – What did COVID-19 hurt the most?

Shekhar Saxena
Professor of Global Mental Health
Harvard University
Health and mental health

• Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

World Health Organization

• Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.

World Health Organization
Mental health as a dimension (and not as a binary)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, most individuals have moved from left to right on this spectrum.
COVID-19 and mental health

Socio-economic determinants are more impactful than the disease itself

- Job and financial insecurity
- Stress of working from home
- Medical treatment disruptions
- School and college closures
- Social exclusion and bereavement
- Lack of access to food
- Domestic violence
- Fear of infection and contamination
Indicators of Anxiety or Depression Based on Reported Frequency of Symptoms During Last 7 Days

Select Indicator: Symptoms of Anxiety Disorder or Depressive Disorder
Select Group: By Age

Symptoms of Anxiety Disorder or Depressive Disorder

Subgroup: 18 – 29 years, 30 – 39 years, 40 – 49 years, 50 – 59 years, 60 – 69 years, 70 – 79 years, 80 years and above

NOTE: All estimates shown meet the NCHS standards of reliability. See Technical Notes below for more information about the content and design of the survey.
SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey, 2020-2021
Mental health and COVID-19

Prevalence rate (%) of symptoms of depression

Sweden
Mexico
United States
France
United Kingdom
Italy
Japan

Source: National data sources. Note: Sweden, Mexico, Italy and Japan refer to 2020.
COVID-19 and mental health

What did COVID-19 hurt the most?
• Mental health is a pandemic within the COVID-19 pandemic.
• Those without social and economic security have been hurt the most.
• Young adults have suffered the most in terms of mental health.

What can be done to promote mental health?
• Include mental health within the pandemic response.
• Develop policies to protect and promote mental health.
• Provide mental health care in schools and colleges.
• Implement workplace mental health programmes.
Session 3: Health and health systems – What did COVID-19 hurt the most?

Joan Costa-Font
Associate Professor of Health Economics
London School of Economics
Old-age deaths
Nursing-home deaths (evidence from Spain)
Mental health effects differ by risk exposure
Pandemic and trust

The graphs show the trust in the healthcare system for different age groups (18-30 years, 31-45 years, 46-64 years, and 65 and older) over the years, with the relative mortality in year $t$ with respect to the average 2016-2019. The data is split into two years: $t=2013$ and $t=2020$. The trust levels are indicated by the lines, with error bars showing the variability in the data.