



IMMUNISATION
COALITION

Covid -19: Mind and Body

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Aims

- Outline the psychological challenges of Covid-19 on the general population
- Review the literature and clinical experience on persistent symptoms after infection with Covid-19.

World Assumptions Theory



The world is benevolent

- the world as an entity
- the people in that world

The world is meaningful

- The world makes sense.
- The world is predictable
- What happens to us is not random.

The self is worthy

- Good things happen to good people
- An individual has the ability to control positive or negative outcomes.

The Covid Experience

- Existential/ bodily threat
- Uncertainty
- Imposition of restrictions
 - Decreased social connectedness
 - Increased awareness of control
- Information overload
 - New
 - Changing
 - Complex
 - Conflicting

De-civilisation

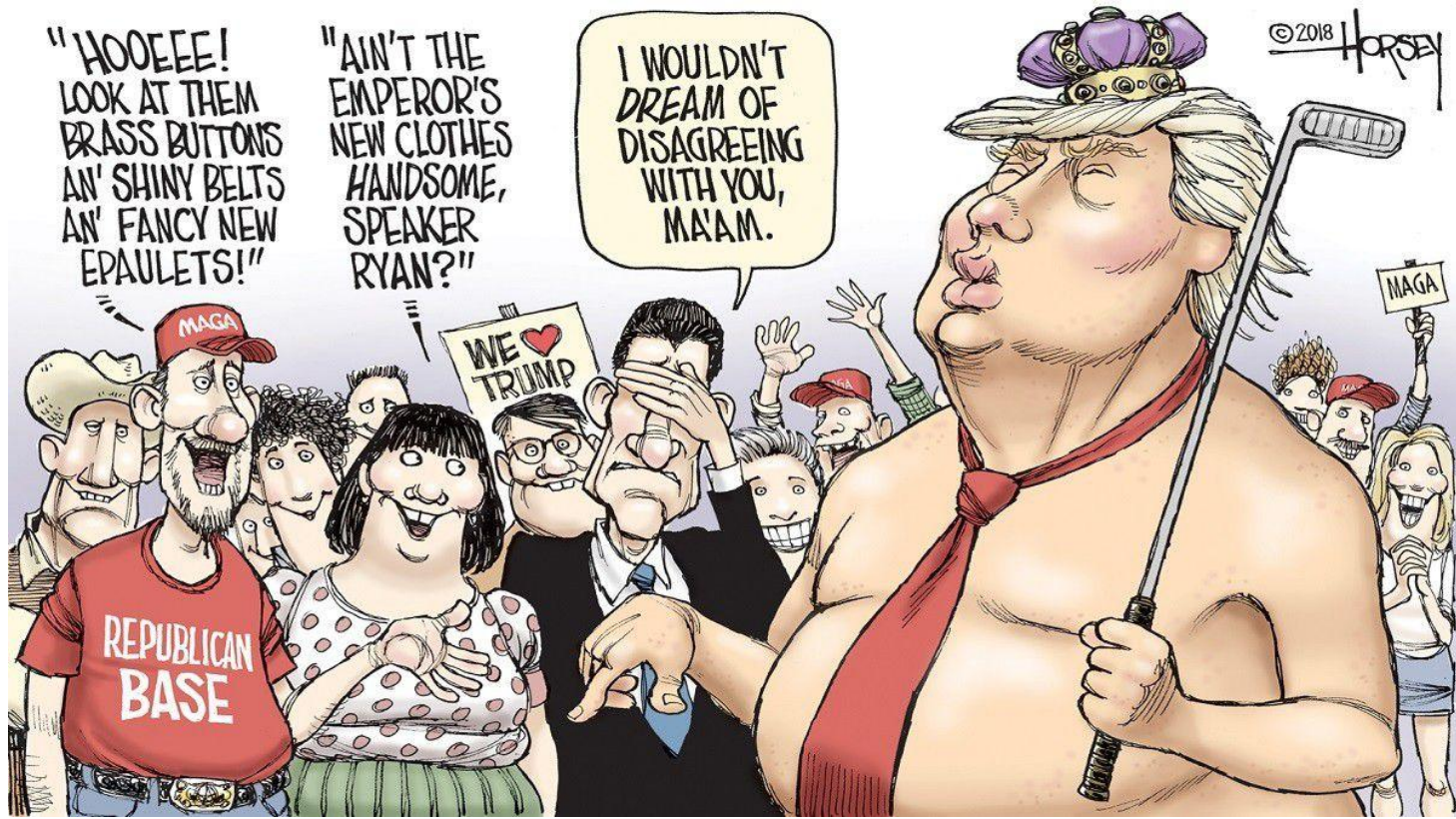
Challenge to 'world assumptions'

Epistemological crisis

- This cannot be real?
- What is real?
- What is true?
- Do I really have to change the way I live in the world?

Safety in new ideology

- Dichotomous positions
- Tribal narratives.
- Personification
 - Heroes/villains



"HOOEEE!
LOOK AT THEM
BRASS BUTTONS
AN' SHINY BELTS
AN' FANCY NEW
EPAULETS!"

"AIN'T THE
EMPEROR'S
NEW CLOTHES
HANDSOME,
SPEAKER
RYAN?"

I WOULDN'T
DREAM OF
DISAGREEING
WITH YOU,
MA'AM.

©2018 HORSEY

REPUBLICAN
BASE

WE ♥
TRUMP

MAGA

Psychological defences

Omnipotence

- “I can do it myself with the power of my will”

Fear of injury

- “I cannot tolerate being damaged or maimed”

Paranoia/inability to trust

- “I do not want to be experimented on”


Control

- “I like to be the one making the decisions”

Devaluation



- “They are incompetent”

Predictions of Mental health Crisis




Sounding the alarm: a post-COVID-19 curve for suicide

Preliminary results from systems modelling:
North Coast Primary Health Network

Post-COVID: Scenario 1 - Unemployment rate 11.1% (total population) and 24% youth unemployment

Post-COVID: Scenario 2 - Unemployment rate 15.9% (total population) and 34.8% youth unemployment



Interventions

- Community-based acute care services:
- Technology-enabled crisis response:
- Post-attempt care:
- Technology-enabled coordinated care:
- Post-discharge peer support:
- Social connectedness:

Services capacity growth

Service	Value
GP mental health services	126
Psychiatrists and allied services	216
Community mental health	0
Psychiatric hospital care	5
Alcohol and drug services	76

Social determinants - scenario testing

Determinant	Value
Childhood adversity	1
Youth employment	1
Unemployment (total)	30
Domestic violence	1
Homelessness rate	1

Model outputs

Health Outcomes (graphical) | Health Outcomes (numerical) | Economic Outcomes (numerical) | Economic Outcomes (graphical)

Suicides per year (pg 1)

Time: 2011 Jan to 2041 Jun

Legend: Run 1 (solid blue), Run 2 (dashed red), Run 3 (dotted purple)

Approximate data points for Suicides per year:

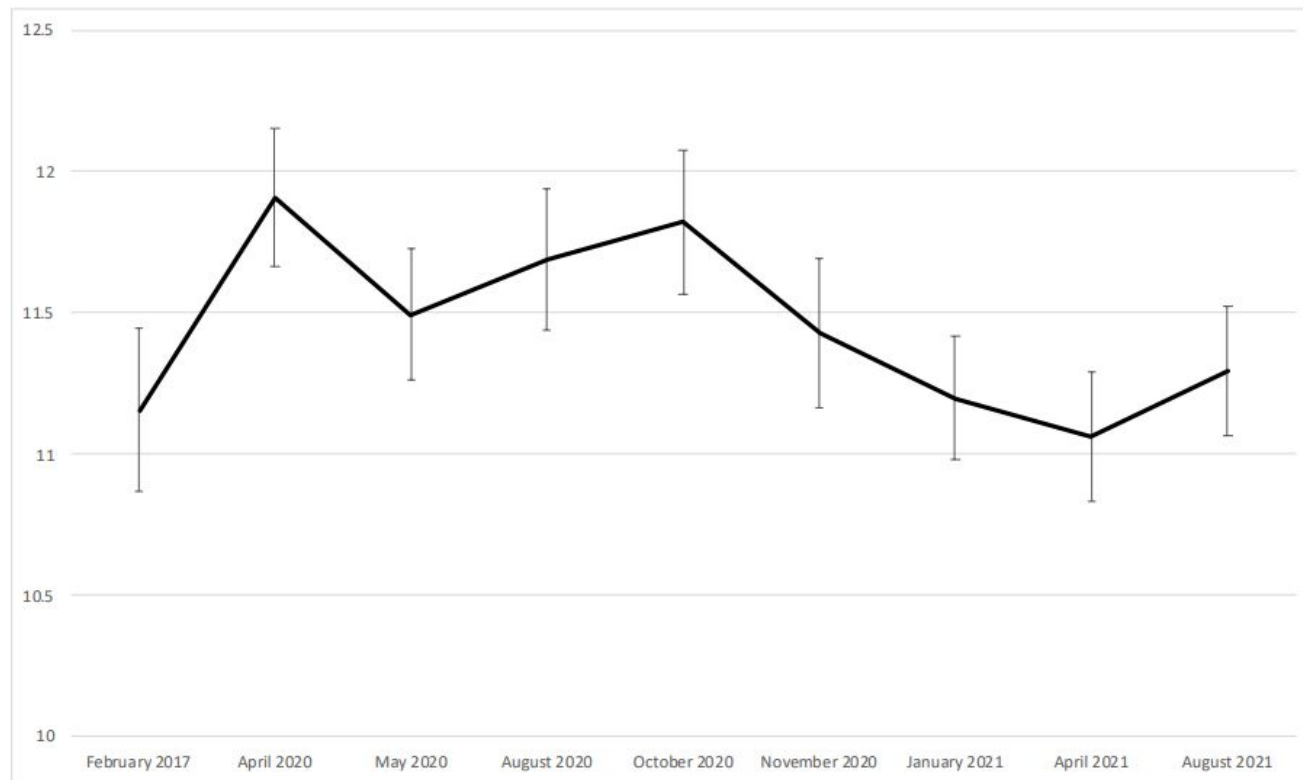
Year	Run 1	Run 2	Run 3
2011 Jan	87.5	87.5	87.5
2015 Nov	~100	~100	~100
2020 Sep	~105	~105	~105
2025 Aug	~105	~125	~155
2030 Jun	~100	~115	~140

Tracking wellbeing outcomes during the COVID-19 pandemic (August 2021): Lockdown blues

ANU Centre for Social Research and

Methods

Figure 4 Psychological distress in Australia, February 2017 to August 2021



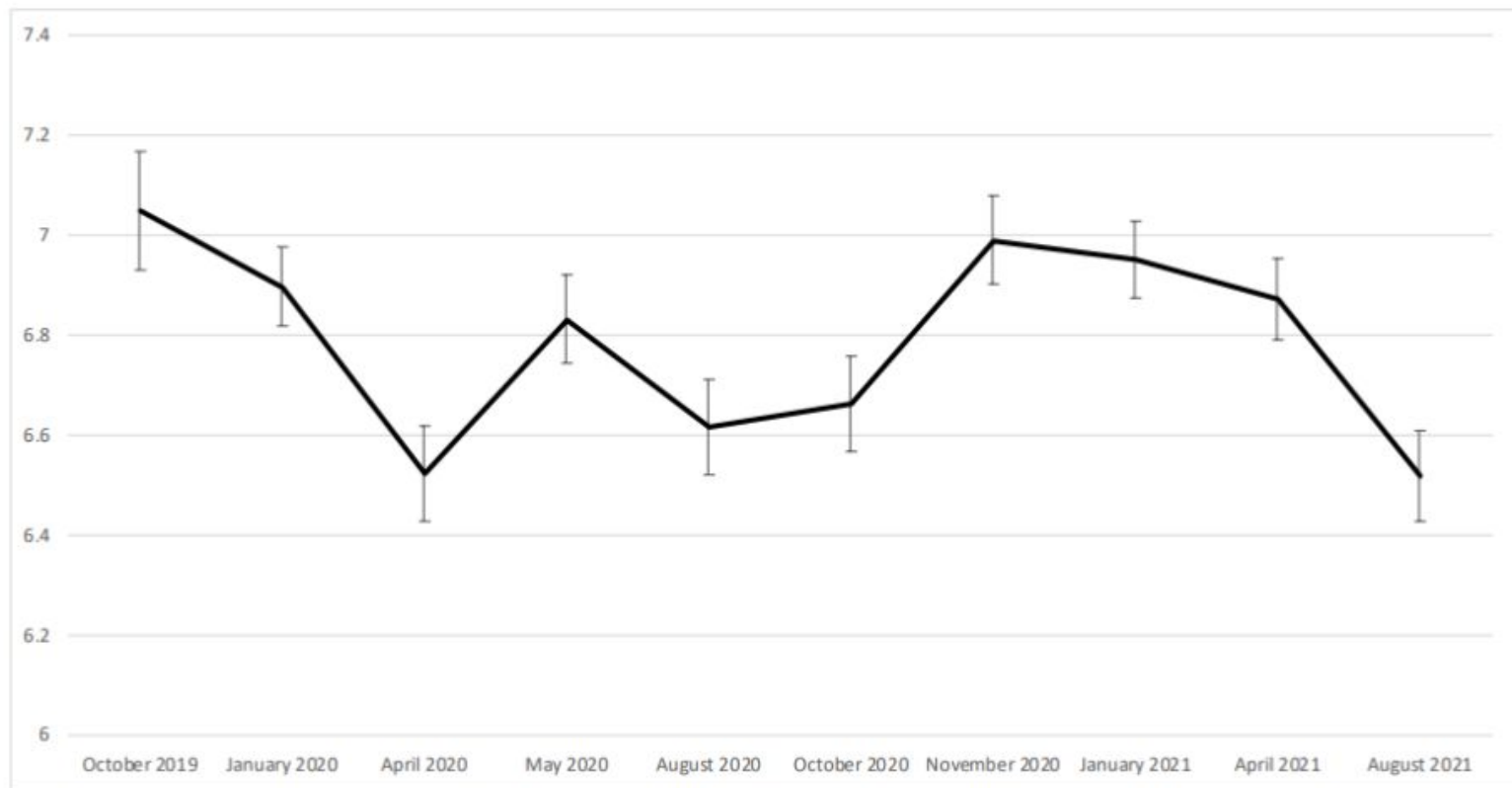
Note: The “whiskers” on the bars indicate the 95 per cent confidence intervals for the estimate.

Source: Life in Australia, February 2017. ANUpoll: April, May, August, October, and November 2020; and January, April, and August 2021

Empirical Measurement of Mental Health

		Not at all	Several days	More than half the days	Nearly every day
1.	Little interest or pleasure in doing things	0	1	2	3
2.	Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless	0	1	2	3
3.	Trouble falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much	0	1	2	3
4.	Feeling tired or having little energy	0	1	2	3
5.	Poor appetite or overeating	0	1	2	3
6.	Feeling bad about yourself — or that you are a failure or have let yourself or your family down	0	1	2	3
7.	Trouble concentrating on things, such as reading the newspaper or watching television	0	1	2	3
8.	Moving or speaking so slowly that other people could have noticed? Or the opposite — being so fidgety or restless that you have been moving around a lot more than usual	0	1	2	3
9.	Thoughts that you would be better off dead or of hurting yourself in some way	0	1	2	3

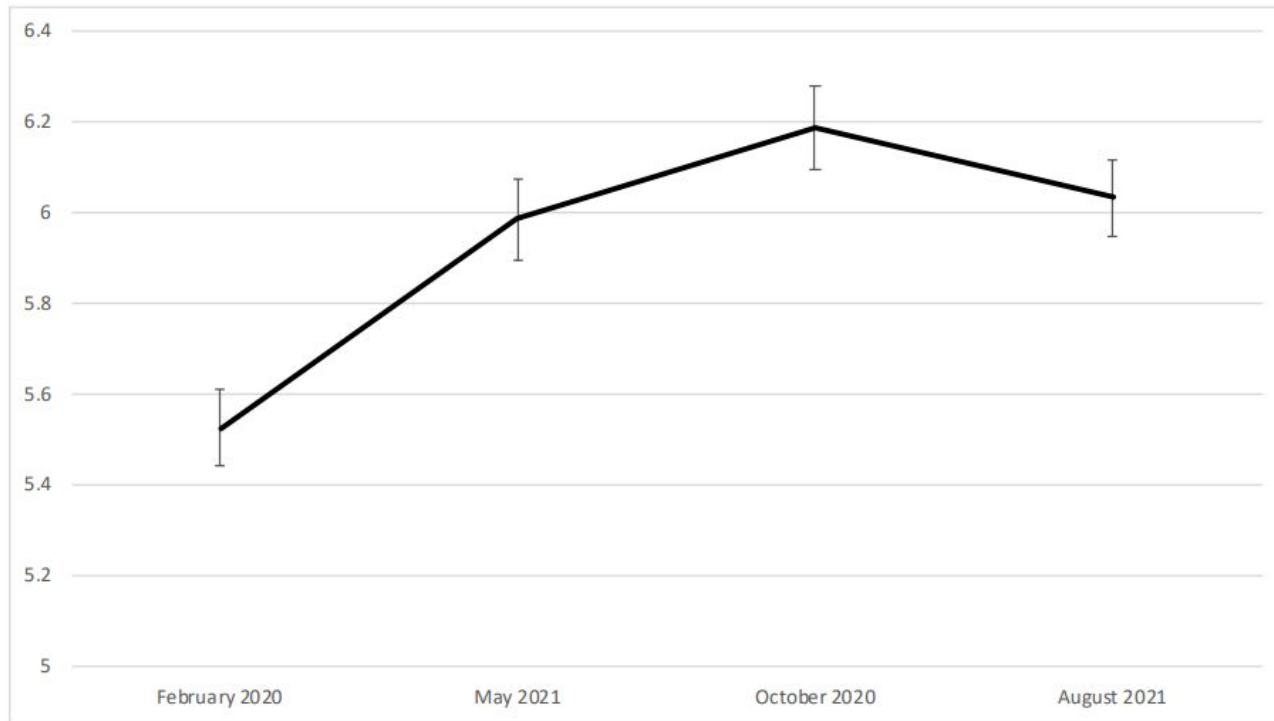
Figure 4 Life satisfaction in Australia, October 2019 to August 2021



Note: The “whiskers” on the bars indicate the 95 per cent confidence intervals for the estimate.

Source: ANUpoll: October 2019; January, April, May, August, October, and November 2020; and January, April, and August 2021.

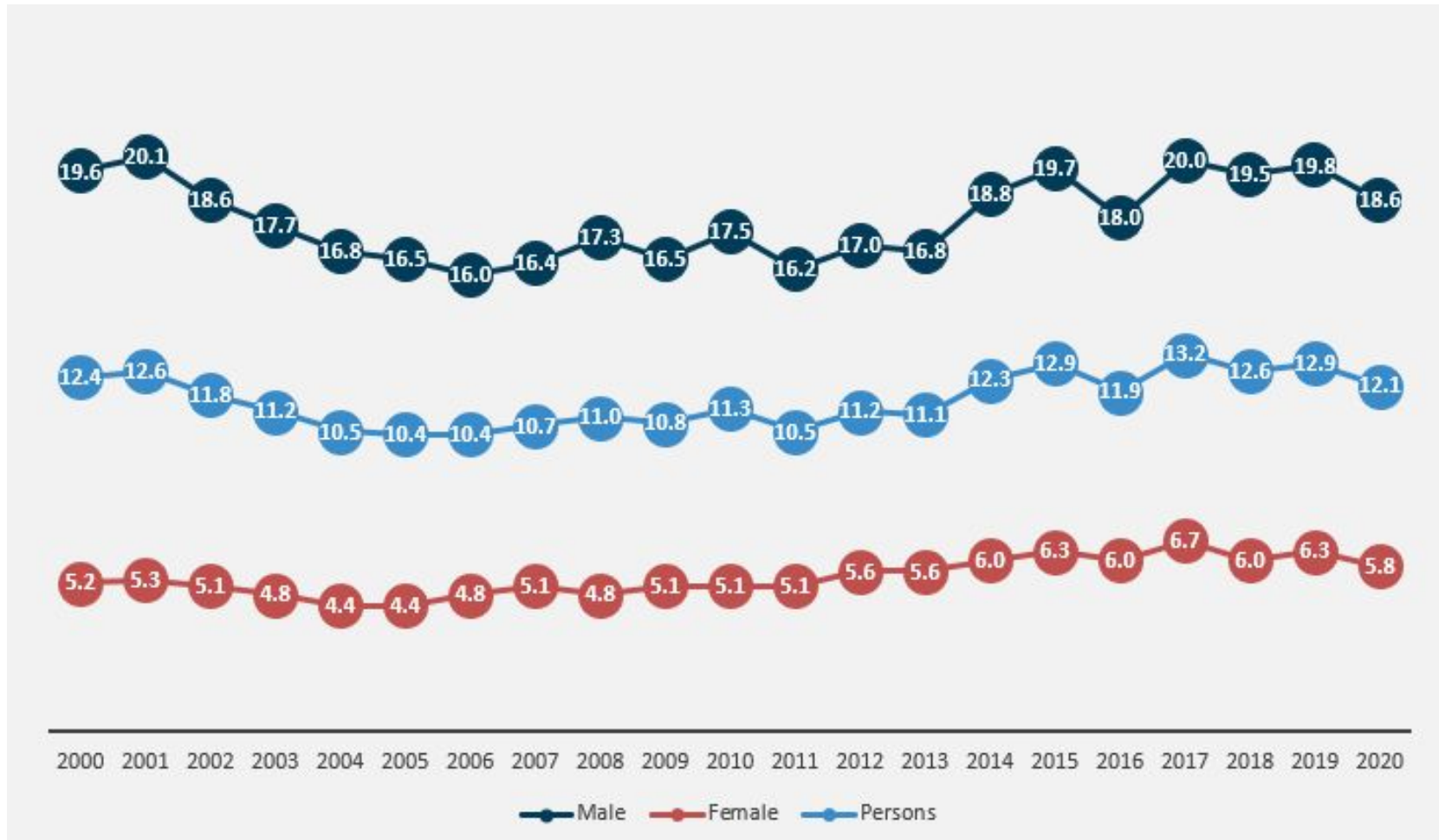
Figure 5 Perceived social cohesion in Australia, February 2020 to August 2021



Note: The “whiskers” on the bars indicate the 95 per cent confidence intervals for the estimate.

Source: Life in Australia, February 2020. ANUpoll: May, and October, 2020; and August 2021.

Australia - Age standardised suicide rate per 100,000



Differential Impact

- Youth
- Pre-existing mental health issues
- Marginalised and disadvantaged
- Sub-cultures
- Employment security
- Profession
 - Health care workers
- Health
 - Primary
 - Access to hospitalised friends/family

Mental Health Services

- Increases in demand have been witnessed across support organisations such as Lifeline, Kids Helpline and Beyond Blue.
- No change in Mental health-related Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme prescriptions.
- March 2020 and 25 April 2021, over 15.0 million Medicare-subsidised mental health-related services were processed nationally, with nearly 30% (almost 4.5 million) delivered via telehealth.

Post Viral Syndromes

SARS/MERS

- fatigue
- impaired concentration
- impaired memory
- sleep disorder
- frequent recall of traumatic memories,
- emotional lability

Norwegian cohort – 12 months post Covid -19

BMJ pre-print Oct 2020

Norwegian Mother,
Father and Child
Cohort Study.

70,000 participants.

	RR (95% CI), adjusted
Altered smell or taste	51.4 (36, 73.5)
Reduced lung function	24.9 (14.6, 42.7)
Shortness of breath	8.7 (5.7, 13.3)
Chest pain	6.7 (3.6, 12.7)
Poor memory	5.3 (3.8, 7.3)
Fatigue	4.8 (3.5, 6.7)
Heart palpitations	3.9 (2.3, 6.6)
Brain fog	3.2 (2.1, 4.8)
Anxiety	2.8 (1.3, 6)
Skin rash	2.4 (1.1, 5.2)
Cough	2.2 (1.1, 4.4)
Dizziness	2.1 (1.1, 3.7)
Headache	1.8 (1.2, 2.6)

Two relatively distinct forms

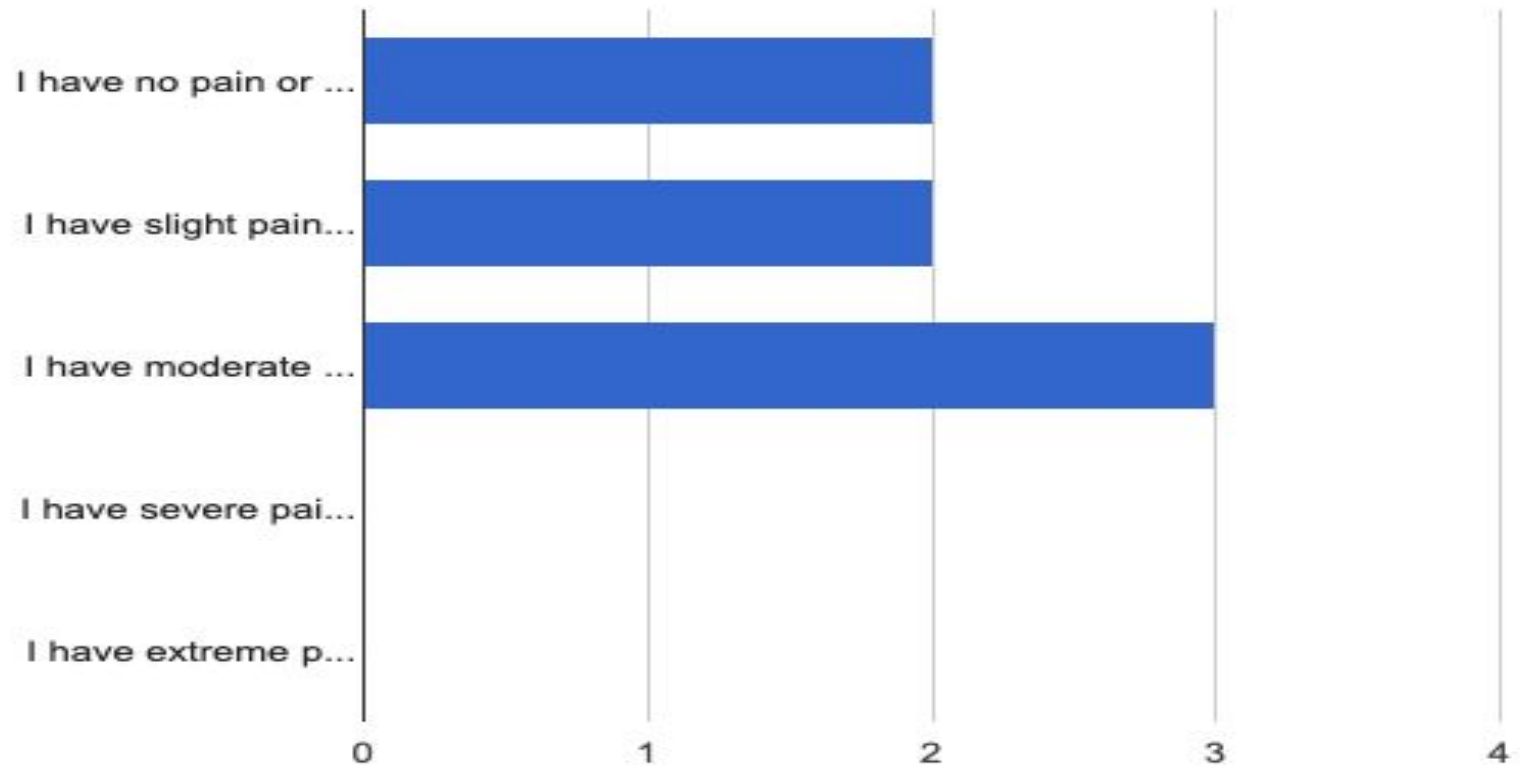
1. Persisting symptoms in those who were seriously ill and new symptoms in those, often younger people, who had only mild or even no symptoms with their acute infection.
2. Patients' symptoms after mild COVID-19 include anosmia, fatigue, palpitations, insomnia, hyperhidrosis, brain fog, and dyspnoea.

RMH Covid Clinic – Symptoms at 12 months

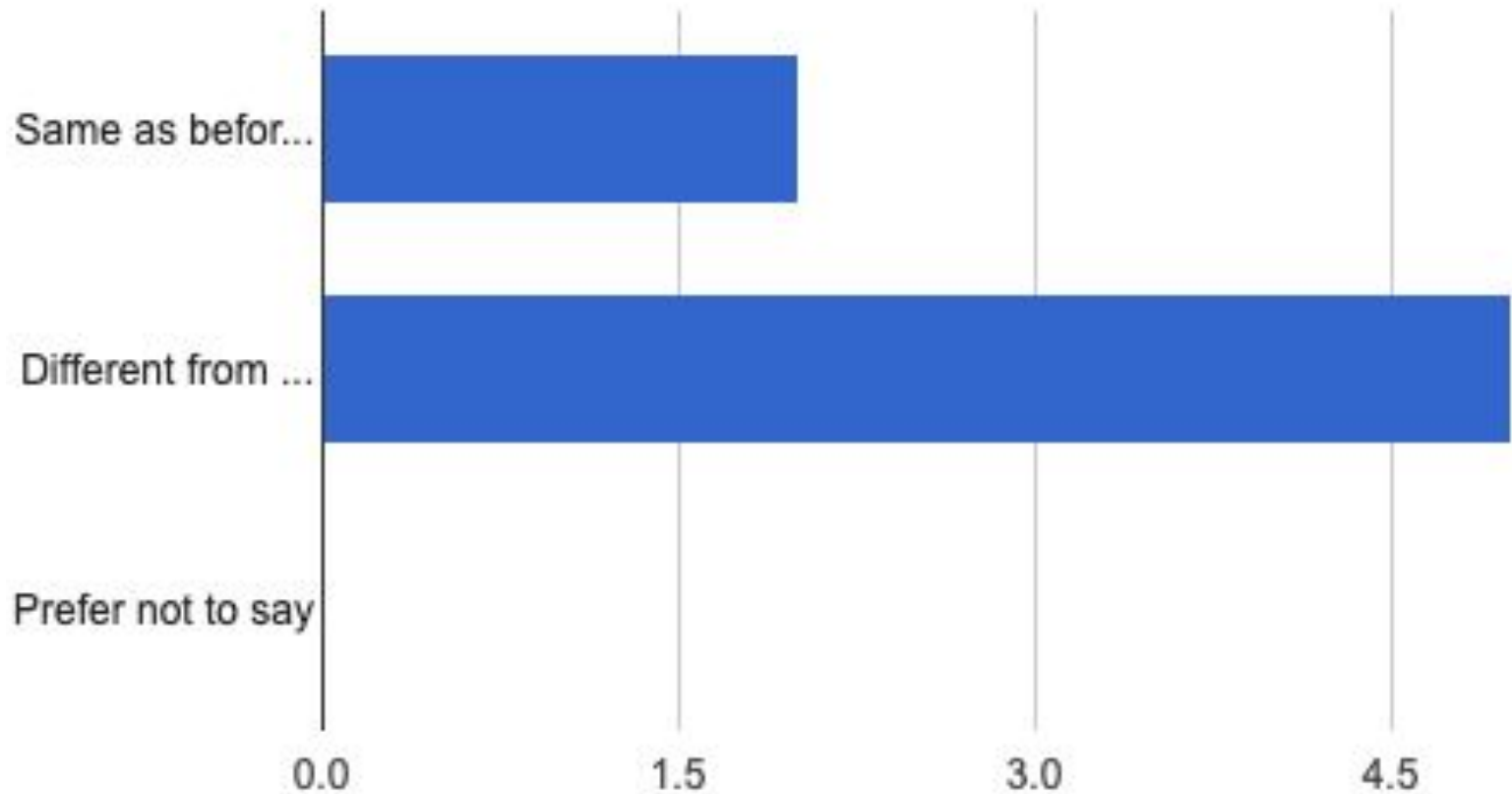
Age		32.6	
Gender			
	Male		
	Female	75.0	
Employment			
	Healthcare	66.7	
		Nursing	83.3

headache	100.0
shortness of breath/difficulty breathing	100.0
problems thinking or concentrating	91.7
persistent muscle pain	87.5
feeling sick or vomiting	85.7
Fatigue	83.3
difficulty sleeping	75.0
stomach pain	71.4
chest pain	50.0
a loss of sense of smell	42.9
diarrhoea	42.9
loss of appetite	42.9
sense of taste	42.9
palpations (heart racing)	33.3
weight loss	33.3
pain on breathing	28.6
persistent cough	28.6
constipation	14.3

Pain



Impact on occupation



One week after Vaccination

Worse	0.0
No change	70.0
Better	30.0

Phenomenology

- Focus on physical symptoms.
- Frustration at not being able to do things previously able to do.
- Fear of not getting better.

- Restriction in usual “wellness activities”
- Fear of shame and stigma
 - weak
 - ‘psychological’,
 - “not real”. “Not being believed”
 - “having a breakdown”

What can we do?

- Validate persistent symptoms
- Acknowledged the uncertainty
- Share experience

- Investigate wisely
- Treat mental disorders when clear and apparent

- Avoid mind/body thinking and debate
- Address self stigmatization

- Pace recovery
- Help negotiate return to work

Conclusion

- Covid -19 has challenged our world assumptions.
- The effects of infection are novel.
- The nature of persistent symptoms are unclear.
- This represents a challenge is to resist premature retraction to safe biological or psychological ideologies.