

Senedd Cymru
Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg

Welsh Parliament
Children, Young People and Education Committee

Ymchwiliad i effaith argyfwng Covid-19 ar
blant a phobl ifanc yng Nghymru

Inquiry into the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak
on children and young people in Wales

COV 88
Ymateb gan: Coleg Brenhinol y Meddygon
Cymru

COV 88
Response from: Royal College of Physicians Wales

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Children, Young People and Education Committee's invitation for written evidence on *the Scrutiny of Covid-19 and its impact on children and young people*.

This response is the result of consultation with the Royal College of Physicians, young adults and adolescents steering group (YAASG) and members of our patient carer network in Wales. We would be happy to organise further written or oral evidence if that would be beneficial to your inquiry.

The RCP has concerns about the impact the lockdown is having on the physical and mental health of young people. Reduced or altered access to specialist services can result in long term health issues for young people with complex and chronic conditions. This may be especially true in rural areas where access to services is already an issue.

Another area of concern is the ability of young people to access sexual health services during the lockdown due to a reduction in services. For example, the absence of an online STI testing service means that individuals who want to gain access to screening and testing have been denied the opportunity to do so. This in turn could lead to long term harm.

For patients requiring acute services there may be a reluctance to access services due to a fear of contacting the virus in a health care setting¹. With evidence showing the rate of nosocomial infections of COVID-19 higher than in the wider community. This is already evident with a reduction in the use of non COVID-19 services within care settings.

It is also important to understand that the longer-term monitoring of physical health will change as a result of the pandemic. This will be key in understanding the impact on health areas such as obesity and mental health. It is therefore

¹ The Guardian: More people dying at home during Covid-19 pandemic – UK analysis: Pamela Duncan and Denis Campbell-8May 2020

important to develop the delivery of timely and appropriate interventions to mitigate any negative health related consequences.² Finally, RCP Cymru Wales and the YAASG remains committed to multispecialty working to ensure that the needs of Young adults and adolescents are considered and delivered during the current pandemic and beyond.

Further evidence

As part of our evidence, we are also submitting the following RCP Cymru Wales reports and recommendations for consideration. All of them can be accessed below or on our website.

- [Survey of fellows and members about the impact of COVID-19](#) (2020)
- [Time for research: Delivering innovative patient care in Wales](#) (2019)
- [Feeling the pressure: Patient care in an overstretched NHS in Wales](#) (2017)

About us

Our 37,000 members worldwide, including 1,300 in Wales, work across 30 different clinical specialties,

In Wales, we work directly with health boards and other NHS Wales organisations, including Health Education and Improvement Wales; we carry out regular local conversation hospital visits to meet patients and staff; and we collaborate with other organisations to raise awareness of public health challenges.

We organise high-quality conferences, teaching and workshop events that attract hundreds of doctors every year. Our work with the Society of Physicians in Wales aims to showcase best practice through poster competitions and trainee awards. We also host the highly successful biennial RCP membership and fellowship ceremony for Wales.

To help shape the future of medical care in Wales, visit our website:

www.rcplondon.ac.uk/wales

To tell us what you think – or to request more information – email us at:

wales@rcplondon.ac.uk

Tweet your support:

[@RCPWales](https://twitter.com/RCPWales)

² YoungMinds: Coronavirus: Impact on young people with mental health needs 20 March 2020