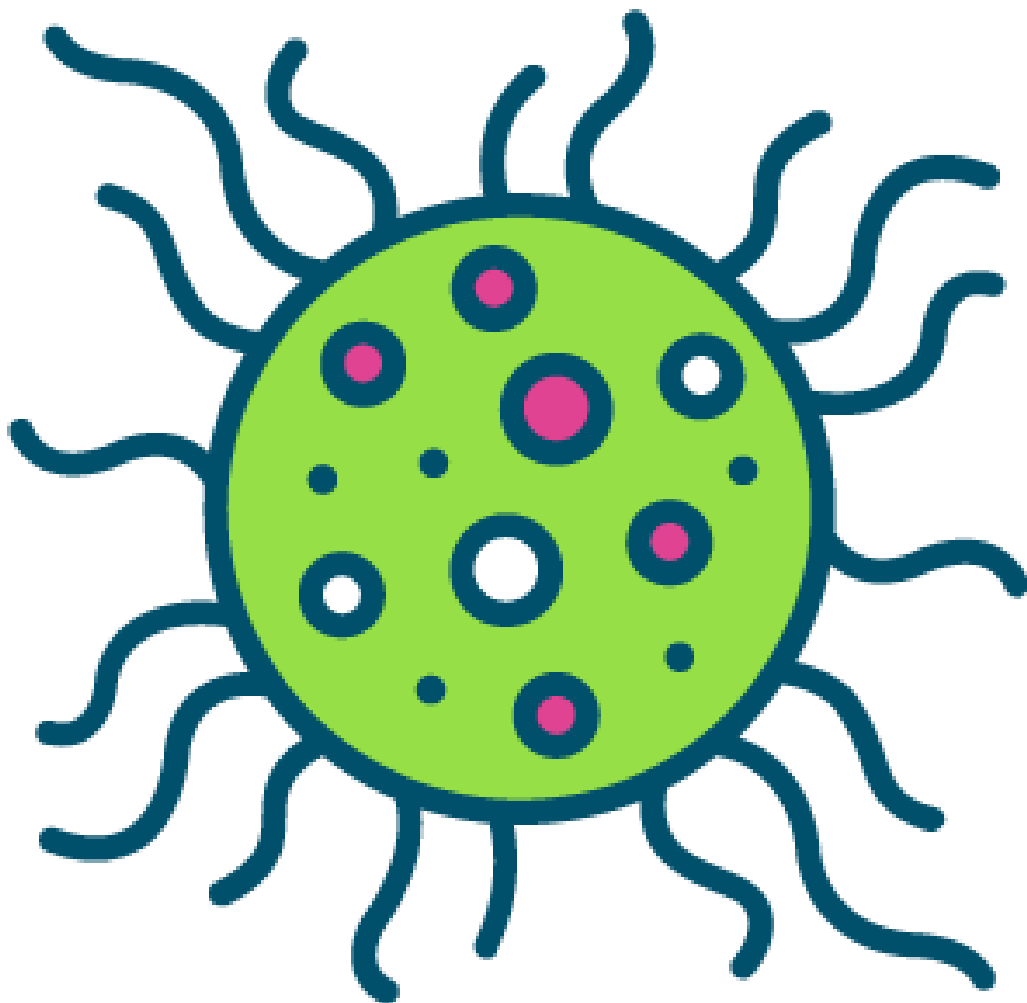


Living with Covid-19

Summary of Public Feedback on Information, Health and  
Wellbeing

08.05.2020 to 10.06.2020



# COVID-19 Public Feedback Survey & Social Media Results

## Background

*In these difficult times during the Covid-19 pandemic, Healthwatch Bolton wanted to gather some feedback from the public about how the crisis is affecting their everyday lives. Working in partnership with Bolton Public Health, and students from Bolton University, it was agreed to seek the views of the public on particular areas of interest regarding information and health and wellbeing. In addition to this, Healthwatch Bolton are harvesting data collected via social media groups to provide information as to what people are talking about that is affecting their everyday lives. The survey and social media feedback will continue throughout the duration of the pandemic which will assist both Bolton Public Health, Bolton Council and Bolton CCG to tailor their public messages and information. Healthwatch Bolton will also make recommendations based on the intelligence collected.*

## Summary

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### Information

- ✚ People are finding Tweets from Bolton CCG and Bolton Council very useful.
- ✚ There are still concerns that people who do not/cannot access the internet or social media are missing out on key information and messages.
- ✚ Social media continues to be a platform for people to find solutions to local/non-urgent problems, but the types of conversations are changing. As lockdown restrictions begin to ease more people are either promoting their business or putting a call out for services: gardening, plumbers, cleaners.
- ✚ People would like to see consistent messages from the government particularly around self-isolation and social distancing.
- ✚ People would like more information, advice and support around furlough, restarting their business and/or job recruitments.

### Health and wellbeing

- ✚ Some people have expressed how their mental health has deteriorated during lockdown: anxiety, panic attacks, feeling overwhelmed, isolated and loneliness.
- ✚ Some carers are finding that they are not able to get any respite from their caring commitments - they “must keep going” despite feeling very tired themselves.
- ✚ People reported that their sleep pattern has changed during lockdown.
- ✚ On the one hand, some people tried to maintain a routine, while other people felt less pressure because they had no routine.
- ✚ People continue to take advantage of going out for exercise at least once a day: walking, running, gardening.
- ✚ People continue to use online platforms/digital technology (WhatsApp Groups, Zoom, FaceTime and Skype) to stay connected with family and friends.
- ✚ People are keeping busy with hobbies and leisure activities as much as they can: painting, sewing, online gym classes.
- ✚ People are concerned about the number of cars being driven very fast in residential areas. They are finding this practice (which has emerged more during lockdown) not only dangerous but also very distressing.

## Recommendations

- ✚ *We recommend Bolton Council consider producing reliable and up to date information in formats that are non-digital and accessible for people with sensory disabilities.*
- ✚ *As lockdown restrictions begin to ease, we recommend that Bolton Council highlight what support is available for people who are struggling to make ends meet. This information could include furlough and local business support.*
- ✚ *CCG and Public Health to consider re-enforcing the messages about the importance of carers looking after their own wellbeing and highlight what support is available.*
- ✚ *We recommend Bolton Council & Bolton CCG share information about mental health support, healthy eating and drinking be shared more widely and via social media groups (including BAME and disability groups).*
- ✚ *We recommend Public Health clarify which dental practices are set to reopen in Bolton.*
- ✚ *We recommend that Bolton Council and GMP produce a collaborative message that encourages people to report drivers that are driving their cars very fast, without due care and attention.*
- ✚ *We recommend that Public Health consider a producing a message about the dangers of shisha smoking - especially during this period.*

Survey Monkey Results - Sample Size: 35 respondents

## Information

**Q1. Are you happy with the information you have seen locally on what you should do in the COVID 19 crisis? If no, please tell us what you think is missing? (i.e. paper/digital, formats such as BSL, different languages etc.**

### Positive

Overall people are reasonably happy with the information they have seen locally on Covid-19. Two people commented that they found Tweets from [Bolton CCG](#) and [Bolton Council](#) very informative. Several people have found the internet to be a very good source of information but raised concerns about the accuracy of information. One respondent wondered whether information in paper formats is available, specifically for older people, who do not use social media. People have also helped family members with mobility and language get the information they need.

People made the following comments regarding information:

### Negative

- ✚ *“On discharge from hospital the information on self-isolating was sketchy at best and also contradictory.”*
- ✚ *“I haven't seen anything posted or delivered by local government.”*
- ✚ *“Where can I find information locally? There is a lot of wrong information out there online too. I only go on official websites to be on the safe side.”*
- ✚ *“None of it makes sense!”*

- ✚ *“GP surgeries could have been more helpful with providing support for patients with long term health conditions as people are reluctant to contact them due to the current crisis.”*
- ✚ *“... more should be about furlough...”*
- ✚ *“If you don't buy or subscribe to the Bolton News then you have no access to local information.”*
- ✚ *“Not seen much official information displayed.”*
- ✚ *“Half and half. To be honest I think it is too little too late and do not listen anymore.”*

## Health and Wellbeing

### Q2. How are you looking after your physical and mental health? What helps to keep you well and what are you struggling with?

#### Keeping Well

Some respondents have been protecting their mental health by rationing the amount of news (specifically Coronavirus news). A lot of people took the advantage of being able go out for exercise. People are also using online platforms to stay connected with family and friends. One respondent had a face to face GP consultation and said this was “*very efficient*”.

In addition, respondents found the following beneficial:

- ✚ Walking and spending time in nature, listening to the birds
- ✚ Exercise: running
- ✚ Eating well and online classes
- ✚ DIY and cleaning the house
- ✚ Not feeling any pressure from colleagues or family to maintain a routine.
- ✚ Art, crafts and hobbies: sewing, gardening, reading
- ✚ Catching up with university work.
- ✚ Online quizzes
- ✚ Not watching too much TV (in general)

#### Struggles

Respondents gave a range of examples of what they are having difficulty managing or struggling with:

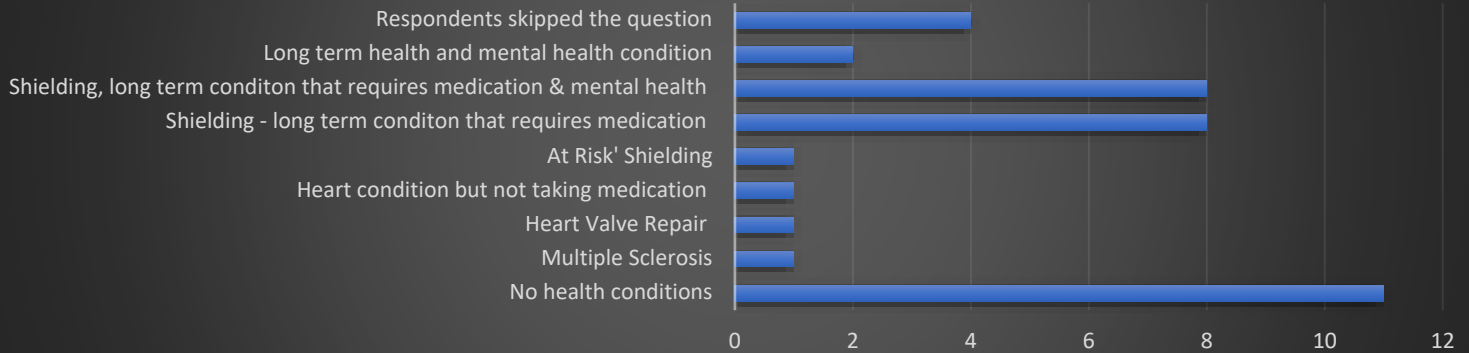
- ✚ *“Sleep pattern is chaotic. It's now the nineth week and I'm starting to go stir crazy.”*
- ✚ *“Mental health getting worse. [I] Want to sleep a lot and feel very isolated. I must keep going because I care for my husband. I miss seeing the family. We have been in self isolation for one week before the official lockdown.”*
- ✚ *“A phased relaxation of restrictions needs to come soon. I get a sense from my daily walk that more people are not adhering to the rules, especially young men driving round in cars. Evidenced from daily walk along Moss Bank Way.”*
- ✚ *“I live with my husband who is in the vulnerable category and with no escape to attend work I am finding this very challenging.  
I feel like his various medical conditions are constantly in my face and I struggle with his management of them daily. At work and going out of the house at the*

- weekends I can escape so that we are not at loggerheads over his choice of lifestyle. [I am lonely] although living in a small house with another person.”*
- ✚ “My anxiety and stress have increased since the government have changed their policy regarding Covid-19. I worry that my friends and family will get it and become ill. I miss them but do accept I cannot see them but do not agreed with people being allowed to exercise for as long as they like or travel wherever they like. I think it is a massive mistake and very dangerous. I believe the government have now returned to herd immunity policy!”*
  - ✚ “The lockdown went far too quickly. A great percentage of the population will experience mild to no symptoms and we have been sacrificed for the few that will.”*
  - ✚ “I was brought up long time ago where we suffered hardship, the trouble is these days people can’t think for themselves, due to the nanny state.”*
  - ✚ “Everyone is now scared to death to do anything.”*
  - ✚ Problems with neighbours policing what they deem to be right and making assumptions is causing me a lot of distress.*
  - ✚ I am so angry that we must stay isolated until June 30<sup>th</sup>, while other people ignore the lockdown rules especially those who think they are above the law. The law is for everyone and not the special few.”*
  - ✚ “I am trying to undertake my usual exercise classes indoors, as well as gardening. Both help but the mental health aspect is the hardest. I keep in touch with my children to keep me sane but there have been times when I have felt like screaming and my emotional state has been on the edge.”*
  - ✚ “I’m struggling with knowing what to do with myself. I have cleaned the house from top to bottom because there is nothing else to do. I can’t get a job cos of this predicament, yet I could be helpful to businesses like I used to as I’m a cleaner.”*
  - ✚ “My family have all been ill with Covid-19 and there has been times over the past month that I thought I would lose my father, daughter or husband. I have suffered from panic attacks and nightmares because of the fear of someone close to me dying or being ill with the virus. I was struggling to breathe. I have been fatigued and struggled to be able to care for my family and home. I am now spending time gardening and taking my dogs out for a walk to reduce my anxiety and improve my fitness. We were so ill that my father had to go to intermediate care after spending time in hospital as we were too ill to care for him.”*
  - ✚ “Carrying on with my Uni work and keeping in touch with my lecturers helps to keep things normal for me... I am struggling with home schooling, I am finding it incredibly difficult to fit in with my studying, my home duties: cooking, cleaning shopping etc. I can’t find time for myself to even exercise. My health condition has worsened during lockdown - stress etc. I am cooking more new recipes from Instagram and following food vloggers. I am overeating which is not good for my BMI. I am looking forward to Ramadan and Eid.”*

# Survey Monkey Demographics

- 9 respondents lived alone
- 21 respondents lived with school age children and/or another adult

## Pre-existing Health Conditions in Households

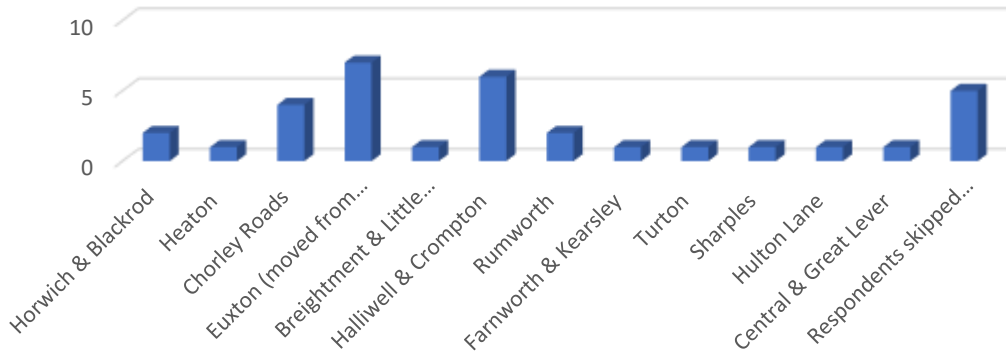


## Age of Respondents



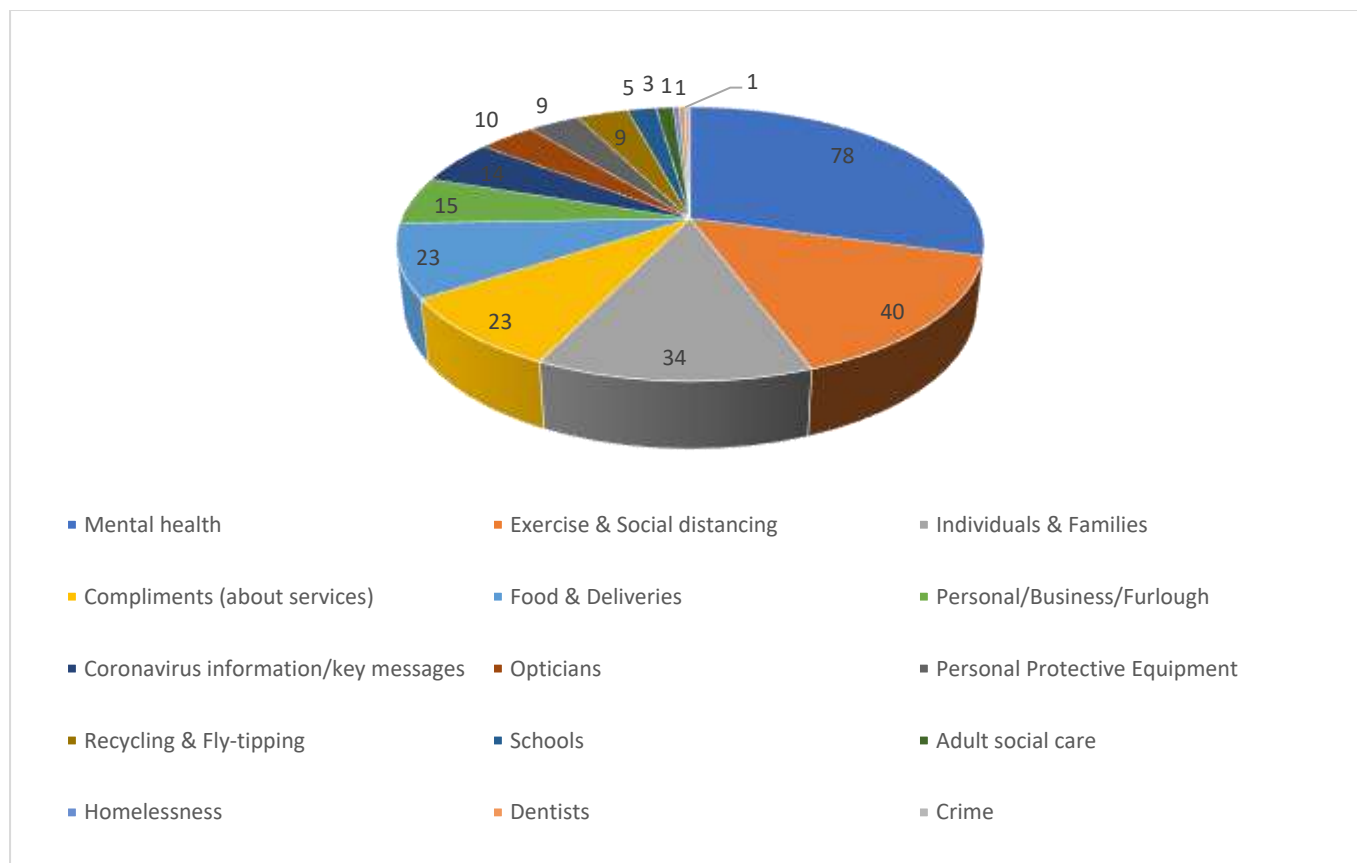
- 20-29 years
- 30-39 years
- 40-49 years
- 50-59 years
- 60-69 years
- 70+
- Respondents skipped the question

## Neighbourhood/Area



## Covid-19 Social Media/Digital Feedback - 8.05.2020 to 10.06.2020

In total 195 social media postings were captured over this period. The themes are listed below with **mental health, exercise and individuals and families** being the most common themes, followed by **food and deliveries, personal and business finance, coronavirus information/key government messages** then **opticians, personal protective equipment (PPE), recycling and fly-tipping, schools, adult social care, mobility aids and faith communities**. Comments were drawn from Healthwatch Bolton (HWB) volunteers, family and friends and the following social media and digital groups: Bolton News, Twitter, Next Door, Bolton Covid-19 Support Facebook Group, Brightmet - What's Happening Facebook Group, Harwood is our Home Town Facebook Group, Edgeworth Village Notice Board Facebook Page and Horwich & Blackrod Notice Board Facebook Group



**As well as collecting the themes of what people are saying, we are also collecting information about how some of the problems are being solved which we would like to share with you.**

- ✚ Some comments on social media are mostly inspired by people reaching out to offer others practical and emotional support during the Coronavirus pandemic. However, a HWB volunteer viewed some comments about individuals being abusive towards children and parents in supermarkets. The children appeared to have a learning disability/autism. HWB’s volunteer expressed sadness at some people’s lack of patience and understanding. Solution offered: HWB to write a piece/raise awareness of the Sunflower Lanyard via their website and social media.
- ✚ Drive through Shisha pipe smoking business (in Manchester) is promoting themselves as lockdown restrictions begin to ease. There is a concern around (a) smoking shisha and (b) sharing shisha pipes during this pandemic. It is important to educate people on the potential dangers of socially smoking shisha with the

increased risk of cross contamination and spreading of infections. Potential solution: educating the public and shisha business owners of the risks.

- ✚ Concerns about care workers disposing of personal protective equipment (PPE) in client's waste bin. Solution offered: raise this issue with the care company.
- ✚ Query about NHS dental care and treatment - solution offered was to contact NHS 111 and the if the dental issue is an emergency to contact the emergency dental service.
- ✚ Structural inequalities - impact on health for BAME communities, families who are economically challenged, vulnerable groups (i.e. people experiencing homelessness). Suggested solution: more resources needed, initiate community health programmes.
- ✚ Ongoing support from Homeless Aid UK and Urban outreach. Solution offered: to provide food and clothing for vulnerable individuals and families.
- ✚ Bolton Deaf Society shared a post regarding the use of communication cards for people struggling due to people wearing face masks/face covering and the lack of deaf awareness. Solution offered: Bolton Deaf Society are posting Communication Cards to people who need them.
- ✚ Several people put a call out for exercise equipment and bikes for sale. People who had such items were happy to give them away for free for sell them for much less than the original price.
- ✚ New lockdown measures need clarification - lots of confusion and uncertainty around: meetings friends and family, using public transport, going to work or school. Solution offered - check central and local government websites for guidelines. Each individual situation varies, and people should use common sense.
- ✚ Concerns about returning back to work. Solution offered: speak to a trade union if you are a member.
- ✚ A local woman expressed struggling with loneliness during lockdown. Solution offered: 54 people has responded and offered to have a chat.
- ✚ Concerns about children going back to school. The solution/general consensus is: *"Not going to listen to the government advice on sending children back to school."*
- ✚ A Poll (on Bolton Covid-19 Support Group Facebook Page) asked members 'Do you feel it's safe to send children back to school?' Solution offered/general consensus: most respondents felt it was not safe to send their children back to school and will not be sending their children back to school in June.
- ✚ Warning to Facebook members selling food at home. They must be registered. There are lots of unregistered food sellers and there is a possibility of putting the public at risk. The message is also to the public to *"ensure that food sellers have the correct certificates and insurance."*
- ✚ Worries about a second wave of Covid-19 cases in the next few weeks as lockdown restriction ease. Solution offered: wear face masks (PPE) especially when shopping and adhere to the two-metre social distance rule.
- ✚ Funding to provide free community meals for elderly/vulnerable coming to an end (4778 free meals already delivered to those in need). Solution offer: contact Age UK or Blackburn with Darwen Council. [Intelligence taken from Edgeworth Village Notice Board Facebook Page].
- ✚ Misinformation (conspiracy theories/myths) on flyers about the Coronavirus pinned to trees. Solution offered: people warned about misinformation and advise to dispose of the flyers. [Intelligence taken from Edgeworth Village Notice Board Facebook Page].
- ✚ Tag a small business to support during and after lockdown restrictions have been lifted.



✚ Reopening of McDonalds, cars blocking roads - causing long queues. Worries about ambulances getting through the traffic. Solution offered: McDonald staff managing traffic to ease congested areas. A debate focussed emerged about whether it was responsible to let children go back to eating “*junk food*”, others argue that McDonalds is a treat for children after lockdown.

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