



Welcome to the NHS England & NHS Improvement (London Regional) Monthly Covid-19 Safeguarding Bulletin for **December 2020**.

The NHS England & NHS Improvement want to ensure that you are kept up to date with emerging safeguarding risks and issues relating to the Covid-19 epidemic, and its potential, experienced or evidenced impact on vulnerable adults and children during the current national lockdown.

It is more important than ever that we are all connected and keeping up to date with guidance, policy, research and peer review/support. We also want to ensure that you are aware of the current work being undertaken from NHS England & NHS Improvement perspective to mitigate against some of the extraordinary pressures that Covid-19 has created for us all.

The newsletter contains helpful advice and guidance and signposts you to further information via weblinks and attachments which you will hopefully find useful in your daily practice.

We will continue to publish these bulletins on a monthly basis to keep you informed about current pertinent risks and issues during this challenging time for the NHS.

The NHS England & NHS Improvement safeguarding team are also keen that this newsletter captures the needs of all of our stakeholders, and we would therefore welcome any feedback or suggestions on what should be included in future editions.

Please feel free to circulate this newsletter to all relevant staff within your organisation.

PLEASE NOTE: - We have created [hyperlinks](#) for this newsletter which allow the reader to click to the news items listed in **Table of Contents**

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## Children:

### 1. **Something's Not Right 'campaign launch**

The Home Office launched a new campaign, **'Something's Not Right'**, on Tuesday 17th November to help secondary school children in England who suffered a range of harms, such as sexual and physical abuse, during lockdown.

With schools re-opened and safeguarding channels restored, the campaign aims to build awareness of the support services available to victims and encourage disclosure of abuse to a trusted adult.

The campaign has been developed in close collaboration with the NS PCC, Barnardo's, The Children's Society, Internet Watch Foundation and Marie Collins Foundation.

Anything you could do to promote the campaign, such as sharing campaign assets on your social media accounts, adding campaign banners to your websites, or forwarding on details to front-line colleagues, would be hugely appreciated and help us reach the children that need support

More information on the insight and research used to develop the campaign brand and messaging can be found in the supporters' pack are attached [here](#)

### 2. **Online safety- Freedom of Information: Online sexual offences:**

The NSPCC has released findings from Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) responses from 38 police forces in England and Wales which shows that 1,220 offences of sexual communication with a child were recorded in the first 3 months of lockdown.

Figures show that, where the platform was recorded, Instagram was used in 37% of cases while Facebook-owned apps (*Instagram, Facebook* and

*WhatsApp*) were used in 51% of cases and Snapchat was used in 20% of cases.

**Read the news story:** [here](#)  
**See also on NSPCC Learning**  
[Online safety training](#)

### 3. **Coronavirus: impact on children and young people-UNICEF review:**

UNICEF has published a review of literature on the societal impacts of the coronavirus pandemic to understand the potential and actual societal effects on children and young people and identifying viable evidence-based solutions are critical pathways to inform timely policy and programmatic responses. The report also examines evidence from prior epidemics to find insights to inform the current COVID-19 crisis.

**Read the press release:** [here](#)  
**Read the report:** [here](#)

### 4. **'Baby Steps' programme: podcasts**

The NSPCC has released two podcasts on the 'Baby Steps' perinatal educational programme, designed to help prepare people for becoming parents. Baby Steps has been adapted and delivered virtually since March 2020 and the podcasts discuss: how the NSPCC and external partners have delivered services during the pandemic; and the research and evaluation carried out to gather insight about how the programme has

been run since lockdown began.

Listen to the podcasts: click [here](#)

### See also on NSPCC Learning

[Safeguarding children and child protection](#)

## 5. What Works for Children's Social Care podcast?

The What Works for Children's Social Care podcast brings you the latest on evidence-based practice to improve outcomes for children, young people and families.

As part of their evidence-based practice approach to improve outcomes for children, young people and families. they have released a podcast discussing the future of children's services under the coronavirus pandemic.

Listen to the podcast "*The future of children's services under Covid*" [here](#)

## 6. Ofsted's Chief Inspector flags concerns regarding under 1s:

Ofsted's Chief Inspector Amanda Spielman gave a speech at the online National Children and Adult Services (NCAS) Conference flagging concerns for children under 1

Every week, Ofsted are seeing notifications from local authorities about babies that have died or been seriously harmed through abuse or neglect.

The figures are stark. Between April and October, Ofsted saw over 300 serious incident notifications. A significant proportion of these – almost 40% – were about babies, over a fifth more than in the same period as last year. And tragically, over half of these cases – that's 64 children – suffered non-accidental injuries. And sadly, 8 died as a result.

Amanda's full speech published on 6.11.2020 can be found [here](#)

## 7. OFSTED report Developmental delay with children:

Ofsted has today published its second report in a series looking at the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic across the sectors it inspects and regulates, from early years and children's social care, through to post 16 education. into the impact of the pandemic on children who were hardest hit by school closures

The report finds that some children of all ages and backgrounds, have lost some basic skills and learning as a result of school closures and restrictions on movement highlighting concerns of developmental delay with children during the pandemic Concerns include:

- Younger children have lapsed back into nappies
- Increases in eating disorders
- Abuse going undetected
- Children of all ages losing of basic skills.
- Older children have lost stamina in their reading and writing, some have lost physical fitness, others show signs of mental distress

Here is the [link](#): to the report.

## 8. Health Visiting and School Nursing during and beyond COVID19:

In partnership with the **Local Government Association**, the **School and Public Health Nurses Association** [www.saphna.co](http://www.saphna.co) and the Institute of Health Visiting [www.iHV.org](http://www.iHV.org), have produced case studies to demonstrate excellence in practice of Health Visiting and School Nursing during and beyond Covid-19, protecting, preventing, promoting and supporting our children, young people and families. Please see [link](#)

Contact [sharon@saphna.co](mailto:sharon@saphna.co)

## Adults

### 9. RCGP Impact of Covid on safeguarding webinar:

Covid-19 has brought many new challenges including how GPs manage safeguarding. Many adult victims of abuse have been more 'hidden' during lockdown and the pandemic has amplified many different types of abuse and exploitation. This webinar focuses on:

- How COVID-19 has amplified adult safeguarding issues and brought new safeguarding challenges
- How to identify and manage adult safeguarding issues when working remotely
- Issues around domestic abuse which has been increasing during lockdown.

The RCGP has brought together a number of practicing GPs and academics to discuss these challenges.

The full webinar can be viewed [here](#)

### 10. Domestic Abuse under Covid-19 with Anthony Melnikoff

Anthony Melnikoff is a retired Presiding Magistrate, in Criminal and Family courts, with a special interest in domestic abuse and is co-editor of 'Family Matters', the Family Court magazine. Anthony became involved with an NHS England project aimed at publicising domestic violence during Covid19

One of his briefs was to give talks on DA under Covid-19 to faith and related groups. This talk is one he gave one such talk to a local Jewish Barnet community. This is now available on YouTube.

The YouTube film can be found [here](#)

### 11. New Govt Guidance: MCA and DoLS:

The government made some further updates to published guidance on the MCA and DoLS during the pandemic.

These changes address two important issues—self-isolation rules and the impact of the local Covid alert level system on face-to-face visiting – both in England.

The main guidance document - '*The Mental Capacity Act (2005) (MCA) and the deprivation of liberty safeguards (DoLS) during the coronavirus pandemic*' has been updated.

The supplementary guidance document - '*The Mental Capacity Act (2005) (MCA) and the deprivation of liberty safeguards (DoLS) during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic: additional guidance*' has been updated. The 'Emergency public health powers' section has been changed to '**Emergency Coronavirus health powers**' to include updated information about what affect the new regulations and guidance in England for self-isolation, (brought into force on Monday 28 Sept 2020), have if a person does not have mental capacity to make decisions in relation to these rules.

The section '*Continuing to carry out a role as a DoLS independent mental capacity advocate (IMCA) or relevant person's representative (RPR)*' has also been updated to include local advice on visiting care homes in relation to the latest local COVID alert level guidance

The section '**Supervisory bodies** (local authorities in England, and local health boards and local authorities in Wales)' has been updated to include advice on visiting care homes in relation to the latest local Covid alert level guidance.

Please see [here](#) for further information.



## 12. SCIE Mental Capacity Act Resources Directory

The SCIE (Social Care Institute for Excellence) have recently updated their very comprehensive Mental Capacity Act Resources Directory.

The MCA Directory helps to raise awareness about the Mental Capacity Act (MCA), including the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS).

You will find useful information and tools to help understand or implement it. There is material here for people who may be subject to the Act's provisions, and for professionals from a range of backgrounds

Those most at risk from Covid-19 are likely to be over-represented in the group of people whose rights are protected by the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005. This new resource covers the implications of the pandemic on the MCA. [See link here.](#)

### All Safeguarding

## 13. Build Back Fairer: The COVID-19 Marmot Review published

The UCL Institute of Health Equity Professor Sir Michael Marmot. Collaborates on works to address the Social Determinants of Health and improve health equity.

The aim is to develop and support approaches to health equity and build on work that has assessed, measured and implemented approaches to tackle inequalities in health.

UCL has published a report based on a review led by Sir Michael to examine inequalities in Covid-019 mortality with three-fold aims: -

- To examine inequalities in Covid-19 mortality. Focus is on inequalities in

mortality among members of BAME groups and among certain occupations, alongside continued attention to the socioeconomic gradient in health – the more deprived the area, the worse Covid-19 mortality tends to be.

- To show the effects that the pandemic, and the societal response to contain the pandemic, have had on social and economic inequalities, their effects on mental and physical health, and their likely effects on health inequalities in the future
- To make recommendations on what needs to be done

The **Executive Summary** and **full report** can be found [here](#)

## 14. Cyber Safety at Work

Since Covid-19, there has been a major increase in the number of online platforms being used as people isolate and work from home. Approximately half the UK working population were by definition lone workers at home after 23rd Mar 2020.

Concerningly, a pilot study conducted by Suzy Lamplugh Trust has found that this has prompted an escalation of online abuse.

Key findings highlighted that a startling one third of participants are currently experiencing online abuse at work. Of these victims, 83% state that the abuse has escalated over the period of the pandemic. Furthermore, the study finds major gaps in employers 'provision of personal safety support for lone workers while online.

The findings set out in this report demonstrate the clear escalation of online harms and the increasingly blurred line between work and home life as a result of the pandemic.

The report highlights guidance for employers and employees to improve their safety online,

as well outlining what actions platforms can take to better protect users. [See link](#)

### 15. NCISH Suicide in England since the COVID-19 pandemic

Since 2018 the national confidential inquiry (NCISH) has supported a suicide prevention programme in England built around NHS geographical subdivisions (STPs - Sustainability & Transformation Partnerships). Their key role has been to advise on data and evidence and several STPs have established "real-time surveillance" (RTS) of suspected suicides to give an early indication of local patterns of risk.

New research by NCISH has found there was *no evidence* of a rise in suicide post-lockdown. The researchers examined the suicide figures established by "real-time surveillance" (RTS) systems in several parts of England, total population 9 million, comparing the months pre-lockdown (Jan-March 2020) to post lockdown (April-August 2020). The average number of suicides per month varied but there was no evidence of a rise post-lockdown. The post-lockdown figures were higher than in the equivalent period in 2019 but this should be understood in the context of rising suicide rates and improving RTS systems.

Several important caveats apply, and these findings do not rule out higher figures in some areas or as a result of a future economic downturn.

Please see [link](#)

### 16. Govt Advice on training Covid-19 vaccinators

With authorised vaccines against Covid becoming available over the next few months and a considerable number of people requiring vaccination as rapidly as possible, a substantial workforce who can be mobilised quickly to give the vaccine safely will be needed.

The number of vaccinators required could exceed the number of trained and experienced vaccinators currently giving vaccines, particularly since many of those who currently give vaccines are likely to be required to maintain the national routine immunisation schedule. It may therefore be necessary to rapidly train people who have not vaccinated for some time or who have not previously given a vaccine in order to maximise vaccine uptake in a short time period.

New Govt guidance sets out the recommendations for training a workforce who are knowledgeable and able to confidently, competently and safely deliver the Covid19 vaccine programme at pace. These recommendations are intended to complement the recommendations made for training the Covid-19 vaccinator workforce by NHS England and Improvement. [See link](#)

### 17. Rapid Response Guidance Note Vaccination and Mental Capacity:

The Court of Protection team at **Essex Chambers** has been asked to advise on the legal position in relation to vaccination for Covid-9 in relation to those aged 18 and above in England; specific advice should be sought in respect of Wales and for those under 18. Reference should also be made to the **DSHC's guidance**, which is to be updated shortly to address vaccination.

The Rapid Response guidance note on testing, is available [here](#).

### 18. 'Corona Bee' Game

'Vaccine hesitancy' is a barrier to Covid-19 vaccine uptake. The **Corona Bee Game** is an evidence-based 'serious' game that challenges Covi-19 vaccine myths and misconceptions to overcome vaccine hesitancy.

The game improves uptake by engaging, informing, and encouraging individuals on their mobile phones. It works through a web

browser and takes a few minutes to play. Independent studies prove that games can persuade people with vaccine hesitancy to get vaccinated.

You can play the game [here](#)

## 19. [#CovidSafeguarding-Christmas comms and resources](#)

As we venture into the festive period the CovidSafeguarding partnership have been exploring how we can support safeguarding system leaders and citizens with useful key messages and resources.

We know that typically safeguarding moments increase throughout the festive period and we have heard of domestic abuse, online exploitation, scams, poverty and mental health issues increasing during the pandemic and with families extending their Christmas bubbles this may increase the 'pressure cooker' home environment further.

Please find below a collection of resources that you may find useful: -

### Newborns & Children

**ICON-** Babies cry you can cope, Dads Talk earlier [YouTube video for](#)

### [Fathers.](#)

Other ICON resources [HERE](#)

**Lullaby Trust-**[Safe Sleeping](#)

**Child Accident Prevention Trust-**  
[Pandemic home safety](#) advice including  
button batteries safety

**RCPCH-** [Advice for parents/carers of babies less than three months old during coronavirus](#)

**RCPCH webpage-** Covid-19 Resources for Parents and Carers NSPCC helpline [here](#)

**NSPCC** - helping adults protect children - [here](#)

Keeping children safe | NSPCC - [here](#)

**Barnardo's-** [See, Hear, Respond](#) Its aim is to provide early intervention before children reach the threshold for statutory intervention. Created specifically to help children and young people in England who are experiencing harm and increased adversity during coronavirus.

### Online safety

The **UK Government** has advice and support for parents and carers on how to keep children safe online [here](#) .

**Think U Know** is a resource for children of all ages to learn more about how they can be protected online [here](#).

The Children's Commissioner has produced a digital safety and wellbeing kit for parents [here](#)

**Internet Matters** offers tips and advice for parents on how to keep their children safe online [here](#)

### Other useful websites

**Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists** [Coronavirus infection and pregnancy](#)

**ADHD - A paediatrician's tips for managing ADHD in lockdown - YouTube**

**YoungMinds** [Coronavirus and mental health](#)  
Mental health and self-care tips for young people  
Self-care tips for young people | One You (www.nhs.uk)

### Domestic Abuse

**Refuge & National Domestic Abuse Helpline** [here](#)

**SafeLives** [here](#)

**Domestic Abuse guidance for virtual health settings** [here](#)

Supporting our staff:



The new NHS online support portal is for Our NHS People to help staff manage their own health and wellbeing **#ThankYouNHS**

**#OurNHSPeople**

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within your organisation.***

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