



What was health care and adult social care like in England in 2020 and 2021?

October 2021



Easy read version of 'The state of health care and adult social care in England 2020/21'



We are the Care Quality Commission (CQC). We check how good health and social care services are in places like hospitals, GP surgeries, care homes and home-care services.



This booklet tells you what we found in these services in England over the last year.



What have people's experiences of care been like over the last year?



Over the last year, lots of people got sick with an illness called Covid-19. Sadly, a lot of people also died of the illness.



This changed things for everyone, and a lot for people who use or work in health and social care.



Many people have had to wait longer for the care they need, like hospital treatment.



Covid-19 has affected some groups of people more than others.



Generally, more people died in poor areas of England than rich areas.



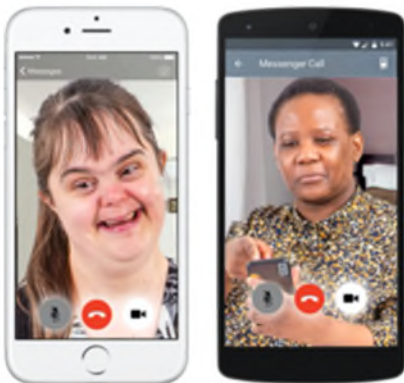
And people from Black and Asian backgrounds were also more likely to die from Covid-19.



Covid-19 made life more difficult for some people with a learning disability:



- There were problems in some areas with planning for people's care when they move from children's services to services for adults, which can mean they are not supported in the right way.



- Also, changes in the way that family, doctors and others talked to people using video calls and mobile phones was difficult for some, but others preferred it.



We are improving the way we check services for people with a learning disability, because their needs are not always met by staff who respect them.



More and more people need support for their mental health.



But some people said they could not get this support, which means their illness can get worse.



Some children and young people were badly affected with mental health issues, like eating disorders.



This is partly because schools were closed to stop lots of people catching Covid-19, but this meant teachers missed the signs that pupils may be unwell.



There are over 4 million unpaid carers (like family or friends) since people started getting ill with Covid-19.



A lot of them have felt lonely and not supported.



Health and social care staff have been working very hard and are very tired.



There is a worry that there are not enough staff to support people well.



Even with all these problems, when people were able to get the care they needed, they said it was good.



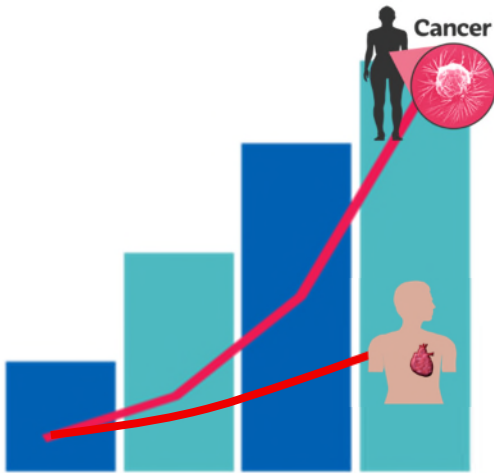
How have health and care services changed to deal with Covid-19?



The NHS was able to increase the number of hospital beds for people who were very ill with Covid-19 when they were needed most.



But this had an effect on other hospital services. For example, fewer people were treated for cancer and heart disease when Covid-19 started.



Things got back to normal in cancer services more quickly than for heart disease services, but there are still a lot of people waiting to be treated.



We are worried that people are left in ambulances outside hospitals for too long, waiting to get in for treatment.



Social care services, like care homes and home-care services, have been very important over the last year.



This is because they have had to keep people safe from catching Covid-19, while trying to support them to live full lives.



But there are not enough staff to support people who use social care services, and it is getting harder to find people to do those jobs.



Since December 2020, the NHS has done very well to help so many people in England get a vaccine injection, which helps stop them getting very ill with Covid-19.



GP surgeries have been very important in this success.



Some people have found it difficult to get an appointment with their GP surgery though to meet their other health needs.



Last year, there were a lot fewer people getting treatment from their dentist to keep their teeth healthy.



What areas of health and care are we still worried about?



Through our checks of mental health services, we are worried that people in a small number of services are more likely to receive bad care, have their freedom taken away, or even be abused.



Where we find this happening, we take action to make things better for people. We are improving our checks to make sure we find any problems quickly.



Too many services for women having a baby are not good enough, and improvements are taking too long.



We have found problems with staff not having the right skills, not working well together, and not learning from when things go wrong.



Services were not good enough at involving and talking with women who are having a baby – especially women from Black, Asian and other backgrounds.



How have local health and care services been working together?



We have looked at how local services work together to make sure that the health and care needs of the people in a town or area are met.



Some areas worked well together, but generally adult social care services were not involved enough in talks about local health and care support.



Local services should work together to make sure everyone can get the same level of support. But different areas do this differently.



In some areas, support for people with a learning disability is viewed as less important than in other areas.



Talks about local health and care support are better when they include people who understand and can speak up for people with a learning disability.



Health and care services have learned from the problems brought up by Covid-19, and there is more learning to do.



Being able to make quick improvements to the way health and care are run and paid for should help make sure people experience better services in the future.



Find out more

Look at our website here:

www.cqc.org.uk/stateofcare



If you want to give feedback on your care – it can be good or bad, fill out our form here:

www.cqc.org.uk/share-your-experience



Or you can call us on:

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