

Connecting Communities for COVID19 News

12th Aug 2020

Isolation Tips

Coronavirus: Severe mental health problems rise amid pandemic

Doctors are seeing a rise in people reporting severe mental health difficulties, a group of NHS leaders says. It follows a more than 30% drop in referrals to mental health services during the peak of the pandemic. But there are predictions that the recent rise will mean demand actually outstrips pre-coronavirus levels - perhaps by as much as 20%. The NHS Confederation said those who needed help should come forward. But the group, which represents health and care leaders, said in a report that mental services required "intensive support and investment" in order to continue to be able to help those who needed it. The NHS Confederation's mental health lead, Sean Duggan, said that when coronavirus cases were at their highest, people stayed away from services, as they did from other parts of the NHS.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-53742121>

Coronavirus Turmoil Raises Depression Risks in Young Adults

Social isolation and vanished opportunities caused by Covid-19 bring a mental-health toll for those on the cusp of careers and adulthood

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/coronavirus-turmoil-raises-depression-risks-in-young-adults-11597066200>

'Like a prison sentence': the couples separated by Covid-19

Unmarried couples from different countries have been quiet victims of the sealing off of global borders in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Around 9,000 Europeans are estimated to be cut off from partners outside the EU, along with thousands of others similarly stranded apart elsewhere. Their ranks includes Felix Urbasik, a German programmer whose Australian partner, April, is stuck in Sydney, unable to join him because of a government ban on citizens travelling. In July, Urbasik found a Facebook group for people in similar situations, and set up a website and forum to organise activism and share stories. "It got 50,000 visits in the first week," he recalled.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/aug/12/like-a-prison-sentence-the-couples-separated-by-covid-19>

Hygiene Helpers

Coronavirus: Local Covid-19 tracing 'needs more resources'

Joint working between local and national teams on coronavirus testing and contact tracing should be properly funded, says a public health official. Deputy director of public health for Luton Lucy Hubber said more resources should be allocated to councils to cover the costs of finding people. It comes after the government said it will provide councils with "ring-fenced teams" of the contact tracers. Initial trials of joint working has improved the success of the system.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-53698193>

Did London's lockdown work? Capital has the same level of coronavirus antibodies as Stockholm

Official data shows around one in six people in both cities have caught the virus Two British experts who compiled research said UK's measures came too late UK shut down economy on March 24 while Sweden stayed open throughout

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8616519/Did-Londons-lockdown-work-Capital-level-coronavirus-antibodies-Stockholm.html>

WHO advises dentists to delay carrying out 'routine, non-essential dental work' over Covid-19 fears

The World Health Organisation has said routine, non-essential dental work should be delayed until Covid-19 transmission rates drop sufficiently, cautioning against procedures that produce aerosol spray from patients' mouths. The WHO said check-ups, dental cleanings and preventive care could be postponed, as it released guidance for dentists on how to minimise the risk of transmission during the coronavirus pandemic.

<https://www.thejournal.ie/dentists-should-delay-routine-non-essential-dental-work-5173540-Aug2020/>

Coronavirus infections stabilise in Australia's virus epicentre

Australia's second-most populous state reported only a small rise in new COVID-19 infections on Tuesday, boosting hopes that case numbers are stabilising after a second wave forced authorities to put the city of Melbourne back into lockdown. Victoria state, which currently accounts for nearly all of Australia's new cases, detected 331 COVID-19 infections and 19 deaths in the past 24 hours, up from 322 infections and the same number of fatalities a day earlier, health officials said. Daily infections in Victoria peaked at 725 on Aug. 5 and have been trending lower in recent days, following the imposition of a hard lockdown in Melbourne on July 19. While the lockdown has caused significant economic harm, authorities said the restrictions that will run until September are bearing fruit. "We continue to see numbers coming down. Exactly how long that takes and to what the lowest number is we can get to, only time will tell," Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews told reporters in Melbourne.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-australia-state/coronavirus-infections-stabilise-in-australias-virus-epicentre-idUKKCN2562S7>

Why a second wave of coronavirus cases in Greece has prompted new restrictions

Greece has formally entered a second wave, following a sharp rise in coronavirus cases. The country had become a top destination for British holidaymakers following the changes to quarantine guidelines for people visiting Spain, who now have to isolate for two weeks on their return to the UK. But the Greek government has now imposed new restrictions and curfews on bars and restaurants coming into effect on Tuesday across major tourist areas, including the islands, while holidaymakers from certain countries will now need proof of a negative Covid-19 test before entering.

<https://inews.co.uk/news/world/greece-lockdown-coronavirus-cases-second-wave-restrictions-uk-travel-advice-explained-576253>

Community Activities

Chronic stress and endless hours: Were we ready to work from home?

According to data from NordVPN, a personal virtual private network service provider, people have been working up to two hours extra a day in Europe and three hours in the United States. One in every four employees has had to use their free time to meet their obligations, according to a Eurostat survey, and we have done so from the sofa or from the kitchen, sharing improvised spaces with our partners and/or children. And people's work has cost them hours of sleep.

https://english.elpais.com/economy_and_business/2020-08-11/chronic-stress-and-endless-hours-were-we-ready-to-work-from-home.html

'Tsunami' of parents interested in homeschooling amid COVID-19 pandemic

Homeschooling has never been on entrepreneur Sarah Renner's radar, yet she's taking it on this fall in order to educate her daughters free from distractions. "We were going somewhere the other day and by the time we got there three masks had been broken, so I was like, 'How exactly is this going to work for my six year old?'" Renner said. "I don't know if that's really what I want for them — to be playing around with masks and spending a ton of time talking about how we need to be in a classroom now with these new measures."

<https://globalnews.ca/news/7266080/homeschooling-amid-covid-19-pandemic-alberta/>

How vaccine alliance Gavi uses the power of radio to combat isolation during the pandemic | Transform

The show's seven-member crew works for Gavi, a Geneva-based organization focused on providing vaccines for children in the world's poorest countries. As the organization's approximately 280 employees turned to working remotely when the coronavirus pandemic struck, Mends, Gavi's director of operations, worried some might become isolated. He pulled together other members of Gavi's social club, which he runs, to think about ways to help their colleagues connect. "One of the things that really resonated with me when we were having that conversation was the power of music and the familiarity of hearing people talking," Mends says. "So I came up with the zany idea that we do a radio station."

<https://news.microsoft.com/transform/how-vaccine-alliance-gavi-uses-the-power-of-radio-to-combat-isolation-during-the-pandemic/>

Coronavirus UK: Anti-lockdown activists storm Morrisons

A group of anti-mask activists has staged a protest inside a Morrisons, urging food shoppers to 'resist the new world order agenda'. StandUp X members told the public to 'ask questions' and refuse to consent to coronavirus lockdowns, as they demonstrated inside the supermarket in Peckham, south London two weeks ago. The footage emerges after masks were made mandatory in more indoor settings - including museums, cinemas and places of worship - in England and Scotland on Friday. Demonstrators shouted 'your masks are so bad for you', while others claimed the British people were being 'conditioned', as customers looked on in Morrisons.

<https://metro.co.uk/2020/08/11/anti-lockdown-activists-storm-morrisons-telling-shoppers-not-wear-masks-13111997/>

North Korea's Red Cross deploys thousands of volunteers to help cope with coronavirus, floods

North Korea's Red Cross has deployed 43,000 volunteers to help communities prevent outbreaks of the coronavirus and provide flood assistance, an official with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) said on Monday. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un declared an emergency last month and imposed a lockdown on Kaesong, near the inter-Korean border, after a man who defected to the South in 2017 returned to the city showing coronavirus symptoms. Heavy rain and flooding in recent days have also sparked concern about crop damage and food supplies in the isolated country.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-northkorea/north-koreas-red-cross-deploys-thousands-of-volunteers-to-help-cope-with-coronavirus-floods-idUKKCN25607R>

Working Remotely

How COVID-19 is redefining "working remotely" for Canada's high-skilled foreign workers

For those who had a job offer and seemingly a bright future in Canada, travel has been halted until further notice. What can they do now?

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/pandemic-border/how-covid-19-is-redefining-working-remotely-for-canadas-high-skilled-foreign-workers/>

Remote working in a post-Covid-19 climate

Led by the necessity to ensure business continuity during the pandemic, many organisations have had to make quick, tactical decisions to enable over 90% of their workforce to work remotely at the same time. Remote working is not a new concept, what is new is that through the unprecedented times we've all been navigating, even the biggest skeptics of the agile working culture have had to adopt and trust in this practice. While solutions that enable an entire firm to work remotely, and have existed for some time now, the pace at which organisations had to adopt these over the past

few months has brought a new set of challenges for all.

<https://www.techradar.com/sg/news/remote-working-in-a-post-covid-19-climate>

Virtual Classrooms

Coronavirus spurs enrollment explosion for Pa. cyberschools

To say interest in K-12 cyber education for this fall is exploding is clearly an understatement. PA Cyber, a cyber charter school based in Beaver County, is receiving 1,000 inquiries about its programs each week. The school already has reached its 11,677-student limit – 2,000 more students than it usually has enrolled at the start of school – and has thousands of names on a waiting list. Over on the other side of the state, PA Virtual Charter School in Montgomery County has implemented a lottery system for the first time in its 20-year history. The number of enrollments it had at the end of July is three times the number it had at the same time last year.

<https://papost.org/2020/08/10/coronavirus-spurs-enrollment-explosion-for-pa-cyberschools/>

Coronavirus: Online learning is here to stay, says global education survey

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<https://www.thenational.ae/uae/education/coronavirus-online-learning-is-here-to-stay-says-global-education-survey-1.1062221>

Teachers, students head back to virtual classrooms

In a back-to-school day unlike any other before it, the first group of Santa Clarita Valley K-12 students and teachers returned to the classroom via a distance learning format Tuesday. The William S. Hart Union High School District and the Castaic Union School District booted up their computers and online programs for the first day of the school year. The Saugus Union School District is set to start classes Wednesday; the Newhall and Sulphur Springs Union school districts are set to resume Thursday. For the first to return, starting in an online teaching environment was a new experience for teachers who weren't involved in the previous year but, naturally, it's being treated as a learning opportunity.

<https://signalscv.com/2020/08/teachers-students-head-back-to-virtual-classrooms/>

Public Policies

Coronavirus: Brazil becomes second country to pass 100,000 deaths after US

Brazil's coronavirus death toll has surpassed 100,000, with the country's affliction showing no signs of abating as most cities reopen shops and restaurants. The nation became the second in the world to reach the grim milestone by official counts

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/coronavirus-brazil-death-toll-cases-100000-bolsonaro-covid-a9663781.html>

Coronavirus: Spanish Health Minister 'Not Ruling Out' New Lockdowns where Necessary to Control Outbreaks

THE director of the Centre for the Coordination of Health Alerts and Emergencies (CCAES), Fernando Simón, warned last night that, among the measures to deal with the coronavirus, the possibility of imposing new confinements where necessary to control transmission still remain. At the press conference to assess the evolution of the pandemic, Simón pointed out that confinement is one of the responses that can be given to the increase in infections in a given place, apart from carrying

out PCR tests and quarantining the contacts of people who have been infected.

<https://www.euroweeklynews.com/2020/08/11/coronavirus-spanish-health-minister-not-ruling-out-new-lockdowns-where-neccesary-to-control-outbreaks/>

Russia to start mass use of its Covid-19 vaccine in coming weeks

Russia has become the first country to grant regulatory approval to a vaccine against Covid-19, with mass production and immunisation of key workers to begin in the next few weeks. The move, the first time a Covid-19 vaccine has been approved for civilian use, comes after just two months of human trials and underscores Moscow's desire to rush the vaccine through testing and trial procedures at breakneck speed in an attempt to beat western pharmaceutical companies. "This morning, for the first time in the world, a vaccine against the coronavirus infection has been registered," announced President Vladimir Putin at a televised meeting with government officials on Tuesday.

<https://www.ft.com/content/219b973f-c50a-4071-994f-cc4592d43e1b>

Bhutan orders first coronavirus lockdown as cases hit 113

Bhutan ordered its first nationwide lockdown on Tuesday after a returning resident tested positive for coronavirus after being discharged from quarantine and coming into close contact with people in the capital Thimphu. The case took the total in the tiny Himalayan kingdom to 113, still the lowest in South Asia, and it has yet to record a fatality. Bhutan, which is heavily reliant on high-end tourists, banned tourism in March after an American visitor tested positive for the virus, and ordered a three week mandatory quarantine for everyone returning from abroad. The lockdown was ordered after a 27-year-old Bhutanese woman, who returned from Kuwait and was discharged from quarantine after testing negative, tested positive at a clinic on Monday.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-bhutan/bhutan-orders-first-coronavirus-lockdown-as-cases-hit-113-idUKKCN2570U0>

French PM: Coronavirus spread may get harder to control

The renewed spread of coronavirus in France could become harder to control without a collective effort to stop a rise in the infection rate, its prime minister said on Tuesday.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-france-idUSKCN2571ZH>

England's contact-tracing saga is at the heart of the government's failures

The saga of the attempts to set up an English test-and-trace system is perhaps the central story of the government's Covid-19 failure. At the heart of the tale is a prime minister who promised NHS test and trace would be a "world beating" operation. Next to him sits Matt Hancock, the health secretary whose record is now indelibly associated with the smartphone app that was meant to be integral to controlling the virus, but has yet to materialise. Other key actors include Serco, the multinational outsourcing company that has previously been contracted to run everything from prisons to air traffic control - and, at a cost of £108m, was recently put in charge of recruiting and training thousands of call centre workers to establish contact with infected people and ensure that anyone they had been close to went into self-isolation.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/aug/11/englands-test-and-trace-saga-is-at-the-heart-of-the-governments-coronavirus-failures>

Philippines' Duterte has 'huge trust' in Russia vaccine, volunteers for trial

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has lauded Russia's efforts to develop a coronavirus vaccine and is willing to personally participate in trials, as he welcomed a supply offer from Moscow that he expects will be free of charge. Russia on Tuesday became the first country in the world to grant regulatory approval for a COVID-19 vaccine, paving the way for mass domestic inoculation even as the final stage of clinical trials continue. Russia has offered to supply or co-manufacture the vaccine in the Philippines, which said it was ready to work with Moscow on trials, supply and production. The

Philippines has among Asia's highest case numbers, which rose by 2,987 to 139,538 on Tuesday. "I will tell President (Vladimir) Putin that I have huge trust in your studies in combating COVID and I believe that the vaccine that you have produced is really good for humanity," Duterte said late on Monday.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-philippines-russia/philippines-duterte-has-huge-trust-in-russia-vaccine-volunteers-for-trial-idUKKCN2570HS>

Coronavirus updates: Russia becomes 1st country to approve COVID-19 vaccine

Over 20 million people across the globe have been diagnosed with COVID-19, the disease caused by the new respiratory virus, according to data compiled by the Center for Systems Science and Engineering at Johns Hopkins University. The actual numbers are believed to be much higher due to testing shortages, many unreported cases and suspicions that some national governments are hiding or downplaying the scope of their outbreaks.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/health/medical/coronavirus-updates-us-records-under-50-000-new-cases-for-2nd-straight-day/ar-BB17P2se?li=BBnba90>

Coronavirus: Philippine president Duterte offers to be 'injected in public' with Russian vaccine to dispel safety concerns

Philippine president Rodrigo Duterte has offered to be "injected in public" with a Russian coronavirus vaccine, as Vladimir Putin announced the jabs had been approved for launch by his health ministry despite international scepticism. Mr Duterte declared he had "huge trust" that the vaccine would be "really good for humanity" despite safety concerns raised by virologists and the World Health Organisation (WHO). The Russian ambassador to Manila said last week Vladimir Putin's government would be willing to supply the vaccine to the Philippines as Covid-19 infections surge in the Southeast Asian nation.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/coronavirus-vaccine-russia-duterte-philippines-safety-concerns-covid-19-a9664246.html>

New Zealand moves fast to lock down Auckland after return of COVID after 102 days

New Zealand's biggest city Auckland will be shut down from midday on Wednesday after Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern warned four new cases of coronavirus had emerged. The country had achieved a record 102 days of no new transmissions and has been widely held up internationally as the model on how to beat the virus with the strictest regulations in the world. Citizens in Auckland will be expected to work from home unless they are essential workers, and schools will close, as will bars, cafes and restaurants until the end of the week. Ardern said in a televised press conference, "We're asking people in Auckland to stay home to stop the spread

<https://www.marketwatch.com/story/new-zealand-moves-fast-to-lock-down-auckland-after-surprise-covid-outbreak-following-weeks-of-no-cases-2020-08-11>

Coronavirus: Australia's Northern Territory extends border restrictions for virus hotspots

Australia's remote Northern Territory (NT) will keep its borders closed to coronavirus-affected states for at least another 18 months, officials say. Australia is battling a second wave in its south-east, with about 8,000 active cases in Melbourne and smaller clusters in Sydney. But elsewhere around the country, the virus has effectively been eliminated. Prime Minister Scott Morrison has said interstate travel restrictions will likely persist until Christmas. Last week, Queensland re-closed its borders to New South Wales - which includes Sydney - and the Australian Capital Territory.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-australia-53732350>

Coronavirus England: Infection rates are rising in under-65s

Coronavirus infection rates among all age groups under 65 have been on the rise since lockdown was eased, official data shows. Among people aged 15 to 44 in England, the rate has increased by 35 per cent since July 5 - a day after 'Super Saturday' when bars, restaurants and cinemas reopened

and a large chunk of the workforce returned to work. A total of 11.9 people per 100,000 population in the age group caught the virus in the week ending August 2, compared to 8.8 per 100,000 five weeks ago. A combination of people having more social interactions and a ramping up of widespread testing is likely behind the rise, experts say. The latest Public Health England data shows weekly infections have jumped by 40 per cent in infants during the same time period. But cases in this age group are still relatively rare, with just 3.8 youngsters per 100,000 being diagnosed per week compared to 2.7 at the start of July. Professor Paul Hunter, an epidemiologist at the University of East Anglia, told MailOnline the reopening of nurseries and pre-schools could be to blame.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8615423/Coronavirus-infection-rates-rising-age-groups-65-Public-Health-England-data-shows.html>

Spain defends pandemic response as case numbers overtake Britain

Spain's government defended its response to the coronavirus pandemic on Monday after official data showed the country had overtaken Britain to register the highest total number of cases in Western Europe. "Appropriate measures are being taken to control the pandemic in coordination" with the regions, the government said in a statement, after experts questioned its policies. "The data shows that we are being very active in tracking and detecting the virus." Health ministry data showed 1,486 new cases were diagnosed in the past day, bringing the cumulative total to 322,980, compared with 311,641 in Britain. The disease claimed 65 lives in Spain over the past seven days. More than 28,000 people have died from the disease in Spain, while more than 46,000 have died in Britain. The government also said it had tested nearly 7.5 million people since the start of the pandemic, with over 400,000 tested in the past week alone.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-spain/spain-defends-pandemic-response-as-case-numbers-overtake-britain-idUKKCN2562CY>

Maintaining Services

Egypt's isolation hospitals reopen in preparation for second coronavirus wave

Egypt's isolation hospitals will reopen this week ahead of a predicted second wave of coronavirus. Mohamed Taleb, manager of Al-Nagila Hospital, Egypt's first ever quarantine hospital, has said that the second wave could be even stronger than the first. In an interview with DMC TV Taleb said that Health Minister Hala Zayed has held several meetings with hospital managers and asked that they be prepared. Al-Nagila reopened as a covid isolation centre three days ago after initially closing when the country saw a decline in cases. His advice goes against what head of the scientific committee to combat coronavirus at the Egyptian Health and Population Ministry, Hossam Hosny, said earlier this week, that Egypt was not in the midst of a second wave of the virus. Hosny told ONE that the increase in infection numbers was due to Egyptians being careless, and did not indicate there would be a second wave.

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20200811-egypts-isolation-hospitals-reopen-in-preparation-for-second-coronavirus-wave/>

As offices reopen, employers face a surge in mental health issues

The UK workforce is in the grip of a mental health epidemic. At the beginning of this year, global consultancy Deloitte estimated that a sixth of UK workers were experiencing a mental health issue at any one time, costing UK businesses between £42-45 billion a year through lost days and reduced productivity. Thanks to the coronavirus-imposed lockdown, that figure - already 16 per cent higher than the one identified in the landmark Stevenson-Farmer review into mental health in the workplace conducted in 2017 - is expected to continue to grow.

<https://www.wired.co.uk/article/return-to-work-mental-health>

Dr. Fauci fears the 'convergence' of COVID-19 and the flu this fall could be a 'very difficult time'

Dr. Anthony Fauci warned Americans of the possibility that the COVID-19 pandemic could converge with flu season this year. Fauci said such a situation could prove to be a 'difficult time' for citizens. He added that there should be a 'universal wearing of masks' as schools are reopened across the country. Fauci said photos of packed school hallways with very few people wearing face masks was 'disturbing' Fauci urged Americans to follow public health guidelines to curb the virus' spread

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8614293/Dr-Fauci-fears-convergence-COVID-19-flu-fall-difficult-time.html>

Coronavirus: UK to nosedive into recession after COVID-19 triggers record slump

Britain is to be officially declared in recession for the first time since the financial crash with figures set to show the COVID-19 crisis triggered a record economic slump. The dramatic 21% downturn between April and June - the worst in western Europe - is expected to be confirmed by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on Wednesday after a 2.2% fall in the first three months of 2020. A recession is defined as two successive quarters of decline in gross domestic product (GDP), which has not been seen in the UK since the financial crisis back in 2008.

<https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-uk-to-nosedive-into-recession-after-covid-19-triggers-record-slump-12047281>

A third of NHS staff in two hospital units were infected with coronavirus without showing symptoms, study finds

A new study has highlighted the number of NHS staff who can be infected with coronavirus but be completely unaware they are a risk to their colleagues and patients. The research by doctors at University College London Hospitals (UCLH) found a third of staff working in two maternity departments at UCLH and St George's Hospital tested positive for the virus but had no symptoms. Overall, one in six staff who had not previously been diagnosed with the virus were tested for Covid-19 antibodies and were found to be positive for infection.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/coronavirus-nhs-staff-symptoms-antibodies-covid-maternity-test-a9664841.html>

Some U.S. colleges stick to in-person reopening in pandemic despite doubts, pushback

Many U.S. universities are revamping campuses to resume in-person classes despite COVID-19, requiring students to be tested, wear masks and socially distance, but some college town residents and critics say schools are putting profits before public safety. Tulane University, a private college in New Orleans, plans to reopen on Aug. 19 to as many as 13,000 students. Before students move in to dormitories, they must report to an "Arrival Center" at a city hotel "where they will be guided through two days consisting of COVID-19 testing and orientation sessions" according to Tulane's published guidance. Maintenance workers at Tulane and other colleges are fitting auditoriums and classrooms with signage for social distancing. Students are being asked to wear masks, and at Tulane, those who host parties or gatherings with more than 15 people could face expulsion, the college said.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-universities/some-us-colleges-stick-to-in-person-reopening-in-pandemic-despite-doubts-pushback-idUKL1N2F71GW>

Healthcare Innovations

New app allows remote monitoring of patients with motor neurone disease during Covid-19

A new online system, developed by the University of Sheffield, which enables healthcare professionals to remotely monitor and support patients who have motor neurone disease (MND) during the Covid-19 pandemic, has been fast-tracked for use by Sheffield Teaching Hospitals. The Telehealth in Motor Neurone Disease (TiM) system) has been rolled out to patients with MND in Sheffield and Edinburgh months ahead of schedule; thanks to a partnership between the University of Sheffield's Institute for Translational Research (SiTraN), Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and technology firm Advanced Digital Innovation (UK) Limited (ADI) a leader in the

field of technology-enabled health and care services, which has been working with Sheffield Teaching Hospitals for the past four years, across its musculoskeletal services.

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20200812/New-online-system-allows-remote-monitoring-of-patients-with-motor-neurone-disease-during-Covid-19.aspx>

Management of post-acute covid-19 in primary care

Management of covid-19 after the first three weeks is currently based on limited evidence. Approximately 10% of people experience prolonged illness after covid-19. Many such patients recover spontaneously (if slowly) with holistic support, rest, symptomatic treatment, and gradual increase in activity. Home pulse oximetry can be helpful in monitoring breathlessness. Indications for specialist assessment include clinical concern along with respiratory, cardiac, or neurological symptoms that are new, persistent, or progressive.

<https://www.bmj.com/content/370/bmj.m3026>

Asthma patients not at higher risk of Covid-19 complications, research suggests

Patients with asthma do not seem to be at risk from complications associated with being hospitalised with Covid-19 disease, in sharp contrast to other viral infections say French researchers. In a group of 768 patients hospitalised from March to April, 37 patients (4.8%) had asthma – a broadly similar proportion to the general population of the same age in France. The patients were generally younger than non-asthmatic patients hospitalised for Covid-19 and far more likely to be female, the researchers reported in the European Respiratory Journal. None of the patients with asthma experienced a severe asthma attack warranting specific treatment on admission to hospital and their asthma therapy was unchanged, supporting previous research that Covid-19 is less likely to exacerbate asthma than other respiratory viral infections, the researchers concluded.

<http://www.pulsetoday.co.uk/clinical/clinical-specialties/respiratory-/asthma-patients-not-at-higher-risk-of-covid-19-complications-research-suggests/20041284.article>

Antibody drugs could be key tools against Covid-19. But will they matter?

From the moment Covid-19 emerged as a threat, one approach to making drugs to treat or prevent the disease seemed to hold the most promise: They're known as monoclonal antibodies. Now, scientists are on the brink of getting important data that may indicate whether these desperately needed therapies could be safe and effective. Clinical trials involving a pair of antibodies developed by Regeneron Pharmaceuticals will read out early results in September. A separate effort from Eli Lilly could yield data later in the fall. Despite experts' eagerness to see the data, however, there remains a debate over just how significant a role any antibody treatment might play in changing the course of the pandemic.

<https://www.statnews.com/2020/08/11/antibody-drugs-could-be-one-of-the-best-weapons-against-covid-19-but-will-they-matter/>

J&J eyes one billion doses of potential COVID-19 shot in 2021, weighs challenge trials

Johnson & Johnson could produce 1 billion doses of its potential COVID-19 vaccine next year if it proves successful and would consider injecting healthy volunteers with the novel coronavirus if there are not enough patients for final trials,

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-vaccine-johnson-jj-eyes-one-billion-doses-of-potential-covid-19-shot-in-2021-weighs-challenge-trials-idUKKCN25720U>

NHS appeal for those who have had Covid-19 to donate their blood plasma

The NHS is calling for people who have had Covid-19 to donate their blood plasma as a possible treatment for those suffering from the virus. The process, which is similar to giving blood, only takes 45 minutes and can be used to help treat patients who aren't producing enough of their antibodies to fight Covid-19. Appearing on Good Morning Britain, Consultant Haematologist Professor Mike Murphy told Adil Ray and Kate Garraway: "We still need to confirm the effectiveness of the

treatment in randomised clinical trials. They are the gold standard where some patients receive plasma, some patients don't and we compare the results in the two, so we are urgently appealing for anyone who has suffered from coronavirus and recovered to come forward and donate plasma so that we have enough for the clinical trials and we can scale up production so there is enough to treat the patient and many more patients if the trials demonstrate that plasma is really effective."

<https://www.itv.com/goodmorningbritain/articles/nhs-appeal-for-those-who-have-had-covid-19-to-donate-their-blood-plasma>