Health inequalities & the unequal impacts of the pandemic

Louise Marshall, Senior Public Health Fellow

15 September 2020
About us

The Health Foundation is an independent charity committed to bringing about better health and health care for people in the UK.

We connect what works on the ground with effective policymaking and vice versa.
What makes us healthy?

Good health matters, to individuals and to society. But we don’t all have the same opportunities to live healthy lives.

To understand why, we need to look at the bigger picture:

- Good work
- Our surroundings
- Money and resources
- Housing
- The food we eat
- Education and skills
- Transport
- Family, friends and communities

The healthy life expectancy gap between the most and least deprived areas in England is over 18 YEARS.

Find out more: health.org.uk/what-makes-us-healthy
Health inequalities before the pandemic
Life expectancy at birth (England, 2003-05 to 2015-17)

http://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/resources-reports/marmot-review-10-years-on
Inequality in healthy years of life

Healthy life expectancy, England: 2011/13-16/18
Women (years at birth)

Men (years at birth)

Least deprived 10%

Most deprived 10%

Source: ONS, Health State Life Expectancies by deprivation decile
Unequal impacts of the pandemic
Health Impacts
- Exposure to COVID-19
- Risk of serious COVID outcome
- Mental health harm
- Delayed treatment of other conditions

Social and economic impacts
- Economic hardship
- Disrupted education and careers
- Community cohesion

Future health and health inequalities

COVID-19

Existing health and health inequalities

Personal, social and economic circumstances

Government & societal response
Health impacts of the pandemic: mortality

Weekly excess deaths for selected European countries
Change from baseline weekly deaths, by week, 2020

Health impacts of the pandemic: deprivation

Age-standardised mortality rates, all deaths and deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19). Index of Multiple Deprivation, England, deaths occurring between 1 March and 31 July 2020

Source: Office for National Statistics – Deaths involving COVID-19 by local area and socioeconomic deprivation
Health impacts of the pandemic: ethnicity

The risk of COVID-19 related death is more than four times as high for people of black ethnicity than for those of white ethnicity after adjusting for age.

Risk of COVID-19-related death by ethnic group and sex, England and Wales, 2 March to 10 April 2020.

Men

Source: ONS Coronavirus (COVID-19) related deaths by ethnic group, England and Wales, 2 March 2020 to 10 April 2020 • The logistic regression model is adjusted for age only.
Health impacts of the pandemic: income

Poor mental health by income and change in financial situation

Share of population with poor mental health by 18–65-year-old family income quintile before COVID-19 (exc. retired and students): UK, 6–11 May 2020

- All adults
- Adults with worsened family financial situation

Source: Health Foundation analysis of YouGov, Adults aged 18–65 and the coronavirus (COVID-19) • Notes: Base = all adults aged 18–65 with valid income data. Family income distribution based on equivalised, disposable benefit unit incomes among 18–65-year-old adults, excluding families containing retired adults or nonworking adults following a method developed by Resolution Foundation (see Resolution Foundation, Return to Spender for details)
COVID-19 Impact Inquiry
More on the inquiry

• **Advisory panel chair**: Clare Moriarty
• **Launch**: October 2020
• **Report**: Summer 2021
• **Aim**: A comprehensive synthesis of the evidence to date considering:
  • how people’s experience of the pandemic was influenced by their health and existing inequalities
  • the likely impact of actions taken in response to the pandemic on people’s health and health inequalities – now and in the future.
Thank you

Louise.Marshall@health.org.uk