

COVID-19 Daily Briefing: June 22nd

DISCLAIMER: Scientists for Labour are a voluntary organisation, and collating this research takes a significant amount of time. We cannot claim that this document is comprehensive, necessarily accurate in all regards, or that it covers all developments. Expert fact checking has been performed by the Boyd Orr Centre for Population and Ecosystem Health at the University of Glasgow.

1. Summary

PREVENTION & CONTROL

- **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** This literature review on disease outbreaks, including Ebola, highlights the importance of engaging with communities to ensure contextual and acceptable interventions; and individual and community compliance. Social and community responses are critical in reducing transmission in the current COVID-19 pandemic. Community engagement would be particularly important in reaching marginalised populations and ensure equitable responses.
- **SMARTPHONE APPS:** This pre-print article investigates COVID-related Android apps. The development of such apps has been very rapid, with some released as early as February 2020. These apps are typically established to inform people, monitor their health, and trace users with the goal of preventing virus spread. They are most often released by developers with experience of the market, such as governments and public health providers.

PUBLIC HEALTH

- **MENTAL HEALTH:** There has been an increase in mental illness amongst medical workers who are on the frontline of the COVID-19 pandemic, associated with an increase in emotion suppression strategies but not cognitive re-evaluation. It is imperative to develop measures and programs aimed at improving the mental health of healthcare workers, but many physicians lack the time or the support to help with their mental health during this pandemic.
- **EXCESS DEATHS:** For every 100 excess deaths in England and Wales attributed to COVID-19, a further 19 occurred which have not been recorded as resulting from the pandemic. This number could be a combination of deaths incorrectly not being attributed to COVID-19, individuals being unable or unwilling to access treatment for other conditions, or delays in either reporting or in effects on patients whose interventions were delayed.

3. Quick Summaries

[Global governance for COVID-19 vaccines](#)

- **VACCINES:** *Editorial.* Governments in wealthy countries must ensure that the vaccine for COVID-19 is available worldwide. Nationalist and competitive policies regarding vaccine pricing and distribution could lead to further avoidable deaths in developing countries.

[Ethical decision making in a pandemic: where are the voices of vulnerable people?](#)

- **CARE HOME CRISIS:** *Essay.* The government did not consult vulnerable people when it outlined its ethical framework for adult social care in the crisis in March, violating the inclusion tenet of the framework. It is likely that residents of care homes and their carers would have highlighted the need for protection during the pandemic. The government lacks accountability as there is no transparency over the decisions which led to the crisis in care homes.

[Reordering gender systems: can COVID-19 lead to improved gender equality and health?](#)

- **GENDER:** *Comment article.* The long-term effects of COVID-19 on gender divides are uncertain, but the crisis could redistribute traditional gender roles by encouraging men to do more household work which has been historically. However, it could also exacerbate gender discrepancies, as there is evidence of women being more likely to lose their jobs due to the unfolding economic crisis

disproportionately affecting sectors fulfilled by women, such as healthcare and those on part-time contracts. Policies that encourage positive changes to gender systems could ultimately benefit the health and wellbeing of all.

4. Longer Reading

[Convergent antibody responses to SARS-CoV-2 in convalescent individuals](#)

- **IMMUNITY:** *Peer-reviewed journal article.* Blood plasma collected from 149 individuals previously infected with SARS-CoV-2 identified only low concentrations of antibodies that could neutralise the virus. However, several closely related antibodies with potent neutralising activity were found in all tested individuals, suggesting that a vaccine designed to elicit them could be broadly effective.

[Half of children entitled to free school meals do not have access to the scheme during the COVID-19 lockdown in the UK](#)

- **FREE SCHOOL MEALS:** *Preprint journal article.* A survey of 635 children identified that 49% of eligible children did not receive any form of free school meal (FSM) in the month following lockdown. As it is unclear when all pupils will return to school, it is concerning that children from low-income families who cannot attend schools may not have access to nutritious meals. As the FSM scheme may now continue over the summer and will be needed in the case of a second wave, the government's free school meal scheme will need major improvements.

[Higher risk of COVID-19 hospitalization for unemployed: an analysis of 1,298,416 health insured individuals in Germany](#)

- **PUBLIC HEALTH:** *Preprint article.* Hospitalisation rates in Germany were lowest for the employed and highest for the long-term unemployed. A long-term unemployed person was nearly twice as likely to be hospitalised with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 as somebody with employment. Differences may be explained by inequalities in exposure (e.g. living conditions), in vulnerability (e.g. higher rates of comorbidity), or in available care.

[Assessing the impact of coordinated COVID-19 exit strategies across Europe](#)

- **INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION:** *Preprint journal article.* As rates of new COVID-19 cases decline across Europe, countries need guidance on how to ease restrictions without risking a second wave. Well-connected countries with stringent lockdown measures may experience a this s many as 5 weeks earlier if they ease restrictions too early. An internationally coordinated easing of lockdowns could greatly improve the likelihood of delaying resurgence and eliminating community transmission throughout Europe. Synchronised intermittent lockdown across Europe could result in half as many lockdown periods to end community transmission across the continent.