




**THE IMPACT OF  
CORONAVIRUS ON  
THE PEOPLE WE  
SUPPORT**

AUGUST 2020

Over the summer, we surveyed 76 of our clients to find out the effect of the pandemic and lockdown. Our respondents include young people (12 years+), vulnerable families and disadvantaged adults.

Only 9% of our beneficiaries believe that they, or a family member, have had Coronavirus, yet almost all (97%) have been affected negatively in one of the ways set out in this report. This demonstrates that, certainly among disadvantaged families in Surrey, the social and emotional impact of this crisis is much more significant than any physiological impact.

As the furlough schemes end and the country enters recession, we know that many of the people we support will be pushed to the brink. Our vital services will be needed as never before.



John Downing  
Chief Executive, the Surrey Care Trust

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On some occasions, different respondents answered different questions. Sample sizes for each question therefore vary from 76 to 30, with an average of 57 respondents per question.

# The impact on young people

83% of our young respondents report that they are feeling more anxious.

Many of those who do not feel more anxious were either already highly anxious or struggle with social anxiety and therefore were more comfortable staying at home.

64% feel more anxious about their future with 100% of those aged 14-16 anxious about the future.

84% feel more socially isolated.

41% have become less confident.

48% are experiencing more family conflicts.

83% miss going to school

They mainly miss the social element, although some are concerned about their futures and some feel the loss of structure and support that the school day provided.

# The impact on vulnerable adults

91% feel more anxious in general.

86% feel more anxious about the future.

82% feel more socially isolated.

79% have become less confident.

55% are struggling more financially.

65% have used a new support service.

58% are experiencing more family conflicts.

# Feeling more anxious

**85% of our beneficiaries report that they are feeling more anxious.**

This is particularly the case for people who had pre-existing physical or mental health struggles (for instance those who suffer from panic attacks), those accustomed to regular social interaction (for instance those in schools or part of sports teams), and for parents concerned for their children's schooling.

*"I am spending all my time in my room, worrying about my exam results. I don't go out because I can't see myself getting on public transport and wearing a mask. And I don't like seeing people in masks. I've missed trips with school and seeing my friends and when I see them what's going to happen? Not seeing friends causes me anxiety about how things will be with them. It's been really difficult to come to terms with everything."*

**77% of these beneficiaries are specifically more anxious about the future.**

Of those who explained their anxiety further, 48% are concerned about the impact on their children and their education, 24% about their employment or finances, and others worried about physical health, returning to school or accommodation.

*"I'm worried about going back to school and being in a new year group. I did some of the school work but not everything that was set. Some of it was too hard and I didn't understand it. I don't like being on zoom so I didn't join the daily class sessions with the teacher."*

## Feeling socially isolated

80% of our beneficiaries are feeling more socially isolated.

Of those who gave reasons for this, 76% are struggling to keep in contact with friends or family, and 24% are finding their pre-existing social isolation is exacerbated.

Of those who do not feel more socially isolated, some have made effective use of the support available, some are enjoying more family time, and some do not usually enjoy much social interaction anyway.

*"I missed my friends during lockdown but even when I was able to see them, with social distancing it wasn't the same. We didn't have much to talk about anymore. So sometimes I don't even answer their text messages now."*

## Feeling less confident

47% of our beneficiaries are observably less confident

Of those who are not feeling less confident, many already face a noticeable lack of confidence, which remains but has not worsened.

*"Before lockdown I was just at a stage in my recovery from a medical issue where I was able to go out a bit and be more independent. With help from my mentor and therapists I was learning to adjust to my new disabilities and was becoming more confident. I am waiting for plastic surgery before I start college in September which might now be cancelled because of Covid. I feel like my confidence has taken a real knock, spending so much time in my room alone and dwelling on my surgical situation. I'm not sure I can face going to college now."*

# Finances and employment

40% of our beneficiaries are struggling financially and/or have seen a change in their employment status.

They may have been furloughed or lost their job. Of those beneficiaries who have seen a change to their employment or financial status, 94% are feeling more anxious 83% more socially isolated and 54% are noticeably less confident.

*"I was very anxious in the beginning about my job. I didn't get any money for the first few weeks, I was worried I was going to lose my job and I have no qualifications to get another job. Now I owe money to a family member. I became unwell during lockdown and I'm not sure if it was COVID or stress related."*

*"I'm not sure how we are going to manage if I lose my job. We have had to discuss pooling our money to pay for the essentials, like rent and utilities and, as head of the household, I find it embarrassing to discuss this with my family."*

*"I am trying to keep myself busy, so I don't have to think about what might happen. I've stopped watching the news, as so much of it mentions redundancies and it worries me about what will happen after furlough finishes. I am drinking more, which I know is wrong, but sometimes I need to try to relax."*

# Family conflict

50% of our beneficiaries are experiencing more conflict in their home lives.

In general, respondents told us that they have seen an increase in arguments between family members. In some cases it has resulted in family members no longer speaking to each other or in one case, violence.

*"I struggled with living with my family. They have a different view on hygiene and cleanliness. I stayed in my room and ate in my room as much as possible. I had to clean the kitchen before I wanted to use it. My family didn't care. I wanted to get out of the house all the time."*

*"The house is always full because people don't go out much now, so I spend a lot of my time in my room playing computer games late into the night. Sometimes my dad gets annoyed because he has to get up for work early."*

44% of our beneficiaries accessed a new support service

Of those accessing a new support service because of the pandemic, 50% accessed a foodbank, 32% used a volunteer service (for food shopping and collecting prescriptions for example), while others tapped into mental health, childcare or employment support.





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