



Public Health
England





Non-radiological health effects of sheltering, evacuation and temporary relocation: literature findings on psychological effects

SJ Watson, J Sherwood, AF Nisbet





Areas considered

Groups	
	General population
	Residents of hospitals and nursing homes
	Adults living at home, but with medical or care needs (elderly, those with existing illness)
	Children

Protective actions

Sheltering-in-place

Evacuation

Temporary relocation

Health effects

Physical effects

Psychological effects







Psychological effects

- 1^o stressors (radiation) lead to worry about health, home, family, future.
- 2^o stressors (protective actions) disrupt normal life and breakdown networks.
- Seen following TMI, Chernobyl and Fukushima.
- Many studies demonstrated MH problems after Fukushima.
- Also after English floods 2013/14.
- For people whose homes were not flooded, MH problems among those evacuated seen at twice the rate of those who were not. This shows link between displacement and MH even without primary stressor.









Psychological effects - sheltering-in-place

Groups			Effects
 General population			Potential for mental stress linked to fear, confusion, or isolation Likely to increase in unfamiliar location or with longer time periods Emotional aspects of separation Challenges of social interactions Perception that not enough is done
 Hospitals/ nursing homes	 Adults with needs	 Children	None reported



Psychological effects – evacuation & relocation

Groups	Evacuation	Temp. Relocation
General population 	Some risk of psychological issues, especially if evacuation is unplanned.	Risk of developing (or amplifying pre-existing) mental health disorders. Stigma, self-stigma and disaster related suicide may occur.
Hospitals/nursing homes 	None reported.	
Adults with needs 	If evacuation centres/accommodation not suitable for physical needs this can lead to psychological burdens.	
Children 	Stress and risk of PTSD. Increased risks if evacuation takes place during the school day.	Risk of developing mental health disorders. Link with sleep duration. Risk of stigma.



Findings / Recommendations



- Evacuation, relocation and sheltering-in-place are all viable protective actions.
- All can result in non-radiological health impacts, including psychosocial, which may exceed radiation risks.
- Risks minimised if actions are well planned and not hurried.
- Emergency planning and preparedness is crucial and should include mental health issues.
- Review capabilities for provision of mental health diagnosis, treatment and support, with recruitment and training of staff.
- Some findings not conclusive – more work needed



Lessons from Covid: headlines and comments from the media



A mother has told of the heartbreak of seeing her four-year-old son waving to his father who is unable to get off his ship when it is moored outside their house during the coronavirus lockdown.

FAMILY TORN APART Hero coronavirus nurse reveals heartbreaking decision to leave family for up to three months to work on NHS frontline

Tens of thousands of Britons are stranded abroad after borders around the world were closed to prevent the spread of **coronavirus**.

With **coronavirus** lockdown measures in place around the world, cruise ships have been stuck off coastlines unable to sail - their staff still on board.

One cruise ship worker, Cassandra Snowden has told ITV News she is worried for the mental health of employees living through the pandemic on board cruise ships.

International students in Bedford “starving” in coronavirus lockdown

How to look after your mental health during the coronavirus outbreak

Thursday, 07 May 2020

Mental health charity Mind finds that nearly a quarter of people have not been able to access mental health services in the last two weeks

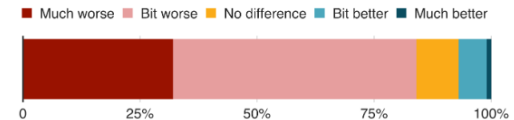
Coronavirus has created an epidemic of weird dreams

Coronavirus Worries Keeping You Up?

Crazy dreams, tossing and turning, waking up in the middle of the night? Coronavirus-induced insomnia is a real thing. Here's what can help.

How has coronavirus affected the mental health of young people?

Survey of 2,111 young people with mental health needs



Source: YoungMinds survey carried out between 20-25 March

BBC

Community spirit makes comeback amid anxieties of coronavirus lockdown Britain, survey shows