

Covid-19 patients' mental health and wellbeing low enough to require depression assessment, says new data

SilverCloud Health offers free digital therapy, "Space from Covid", backed by senior NHS leaders to help UK patients recover from mental challenges of pandemic. Tackling sleep issues, stress, grief and loss, money worries and mindfulness

The mental wellbeing of patients recovering from Covid-19 is low enough on average to require assessment for depression, according to new feedback from users of the Covid Virtual Ward created by digital therapeutics providers, [my mhealth](#).

Measured against the WHO-5 wellbeing scale created by the World Health Organisation (WHO), patients with Covid-19 using the my mhealth Covid Virtual Ward, reported on average significantly lower feelings of wellbeing.

The average score was in the WHO's "poor" wellbeing category – low enough to suggest that Covid has had a significant impact on wellbeing and that the respondents may benefit from further support and assessment.

With the research being the latest indication of the deep and long-lasting impact from the pandemic on physical and mental health, a significant new and free initiative to support wellbeing is being launched across the UK.

Designed by psychologists and wellbeing practitioners, the "Space from Covid" digital therapy initiative – under the "Nurture your Normal" campaign - is being offered free, by [SilverCloud Health](#), a leading digital mental health provider which works with 80% of NHS mental health trusts in England. The aim is to offer a key aid to the UK's recovery that acknowledges the "new normal" which now exists for everyone due to the global pandemic.

The "Space from Covid" programme offers online modules, based on cognitive behavioural therapy, to address the most common mental health challenges experienced in lockdown.

It provides coping strategies to address issues including trouble sleeping, coping with stress, financial worries and the experience of grief and loss. To access the programme go to: <https://spacefromcovid.com/>

Usually, SilverCloud Health's online therapy is accessible after a GP or other NHS referral, but with the huge demand for mental health support across the UK during the pandemic and overwhelmed NHS services, the "Space from Covid" wellbeing support is being made freely available to anyone aged over 18.

Dr Lloyd Humphreys, a clinical psychologist and head of Europe at SilverCloud Health, said: "We have seen an extreme rise in the last 12 months in demand for mental health support across the UK, and in relation to a range of common mental challenges that many people are encountering and never before experienced. We need to reach people quicker and earlier to help stop the descent from poor wellbeing into mental health.

“This new data provided by my mhealth shows that Covid-19 may cause a legacy of depression – a further indication of how far-reaching the impact is on mental, and physical health. We are in a new era of acknowledging that society’s recovery will take time to nurture and ‘Space from Covid’ has been designed to provide people with simple, accessible help based on cognitive behavioural therapy as they adjust to their ‘new normal’.”

New data on impact on mental health and wellbeing from Covid-19

The data relating to feelings of wellbeing by individuals who had been diagnosed with Covid-19 was collected in a detailed questionnaire sent to patient users of the my mhealth Covid Virtual Ward and was collated as part of a partnership with SilverCloud Health.

These patients, whose key health indicators had been monitored remotely at home on a “virtual ward” or in a care home for Covid-19 were asked to evaluate their feelings of wellbeing on the globally-recognised WHO-5 scale.

The average score amongst the 65 respondents was 50.45, just below the 52 level which shows that Covid has had a significant effect on their wellbeing and that they may benefit from further assessment and support. The baseline for good wellbeing in the WHO-5 score is 70.

Further results showed that 60% of patients would welcome free access to digital tools to supporting wellbeing, this 60% also represented those with the lower wellbeing scores.

Dr Simon Bourne, CEO at my mhealth, said: “The impact that physical health problems can have on mental health and wellbeing can often go unrecognised. This feedback from users of our Covid Virtual Ward demonstrates the need for programmes like ‘Space from Covid’ to be made widely available and promoted to all individuals who have been affected by this pandemic.”

He added: “This is just the beginning. We are very much looking forward to continuing a wider partnership with SilverCloud to treat patients with long-term conditions.”

Support from senior health leaders

The “Space from Covid” programme has the support of leading health organisations including Practitioner Health, the NHS’ free confidential advice service for NHS staff in England, suffering mental health and addiction difficulties. It is also backed by RCNi, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Royal College of Nursing.

Dame Clare Gerada, a practising GP, former chair of the Royal College of General Practitioners, and medical director of Practitioner Health, strongly welcomed “Space from Covid” being made available to all over-18s.

She said: “We are in the midst of an intense period of demand for help for those encountering difficulties with their mental health as a result of the pandemic, and the challenges and restrictions it has brought. This is being profoundly felt by individuals, as well as many health workers who are themselves suffering stress, anxiety and burn out.”

“Digital mental health therapy offers highly effective support and guidance at scale, and at a pace determined by the individual. Making ‘Space from Covid’ available to everyone will play a substantial role in helping people manage their own personal recovery in the ‘new normal’.”

Perspective of a service user on benefits of “Space from Covid” to their mental health

In initial assessment of use of the “Space from Covid” modules, there was a 95% satisfaction rate from 2,605 people surveyed, saying it helped them achieve their goals.

One of those who has benefited from the programme is Lee Wignall, 38, a graphics motion designer and editor, of Slough, Berkshire, whose long-standing issues with low esteem and anxiety were exacerbated during lockdown. He said: “The impact from Covid has had a huge effect on everyone’s mental health. Some people have had a horrendous time of it.

“At the outset of the lockdown I found my anxiety started to flare up. I had low moods and was irritable and wasn’t dealing with my emotions in the right way, causing me to shout and have outbursts. Someone locally called social services and I was referred to the SilverCloud programme.

“I have found it very helpful in getting me to manage my emotions, particularly the idea of putting your thoughts in a courtroom-type setting where you try to get a perspective on your behaviour and why you have acted the way you have, whether it is justified, what the external influences are and how you can eliminate them.”

Notes to editors

About SilverCloud Health

[SilverCloud Health](#) is the world’s leading digital mental health company, enabling healthcare organisations to deliver clinically validated digital health/therapeutic care that improves outcomes, increases access and scale while reducing costs. The company’s multi-award-winning digital mental health platform is a result of over 18 years of clinical research with leading academic institutions. Today, SilverCloud is being used by over 300 organisations globally to meet their populations’ mental health needs. Global experts have deeply validated the platform through full randomised control trials and real-world data from over 650,000 SilverCloud users.

The platform continues to lead the industry with its effectiveness, engagement, and range of clinical programmes that encompass the spectrum of mental health needs.

Media contact

Jon Salmon, Highland Marketing on behalf of SilverCloud Health
+44 (0)7827 291901
jons@highland-marketing.com

Chloe Bines, Highland Marketing on behalf of SilverCloud Health
+44 (0)7557 265473
Chloeb@highland-marketing.com

About my mhealth

[my mhealth](#) is the UK’s leading digital therapeutics company. They deliver population-scale health care interventions to patients with long term conditions, that meet the needs of individual patients. Their simple on-boarding process assesses the patient through validated, patient-reported outcomes measures, health assessments and data collected from medical devices. They then provide patients with a unique and tailored evidence-based digital intervention that is proven to improve health outcomes and reduce health service dependence. As well as providing software to patients, they empower clinical teams with products that facilitate the remote monitoring and management of patients, enabling clinical services to prioritise and manage patients at both a population and individual level. During wave 1 and 2 of the pandemic, my mhealth

delivered over 250,000 education and rehabilitation sessions to patients with COPD, and 100,000s interventions to patients with other long-term conditions.

For more information please visit: <https://mymhealth.com/>