



Weekly update

Through our research, community outreach and expert commentary, the University of Birmingham is taking an active role in the fightback against COVID-19. You can read our latest statements and follow our research updates at www.birmingham.ac.uk/coronavirus.

Through Birmingham Health Partners, a strategic alliance between the University and two NHS Foundation Trusts, we are working to support frontline healthcare professionals. For the latest updates visit their [website](#).

Research

Innovative ‘pop-up tent’ could be latest line of defence for frontline NHS staff treating patients with COVID-19

A disposable plastic ‘pop-up tent’ which creates a protective barrier between patients and healthcare professionals could be the latest line of defence for frontline NHS workers thanks to a new product developed by a team from the UK.

Designed by experts at the University of Birmingham, the Disposable Resuscitation, Intubation and Nebulisation Kit Shield – or DRs INK Shield - is a compact device designed to cover the patient’s head, neck and shoulder area while treatments for COVID-19 are administered. ([More information](#))



Above: DRs INK equipment in action

COVID-19 clinical research briefing

Researchers across Birmingham Health Partners are collaborating to produce regular COVID-19 briefings based on the latest literature to support clinical

colleagues and disseminate key information. The latest update reviews the paediatrics evidence.

([More information](#))

Global ‘creative marathon’ sees scientists and technologists building solutions to COVID-19 problems

Students from the University of Birmingham are helping to co-ordinate a huge global ‘hackathon’, which aims to develop technology solutions to combat issues created by the coronavirus pandemic.

The initiative, called Hack Quarantine, has brought over 2,500 technologists and scientists across five continents together to develop innovations in four key areas: supporting those quarantined or at risk; creating new technology to improve health; finding ways to improve remote working; and improving awareness and behaviour. ([More information](#))

Community

Free online training rolled out for those returning to clinical roles during COVID-19 pandemic

An online training programme designed to help those returning to clinical roles or being redeployed into less familiar roles during the COVID-19 crisis has been rolled out for free across the NHS.

The SCRIPT e-learning programme is developed by experts at the University of Birmingham to improve therapeutics knowledge for newly qualified doctors and other healthcare professionals. ([More information](#))

Birmingham researchers produce 3D printed visors to shield against coronavirus

Researchers at the University of Birmingham are sharing their expertise in 3D printing to make face visors for use by frontline medical staff in Birmingham Children’s Hospital.

Over the next few days, staff expect to be able to produce an initial batch of around 60 of the visors, which will be delivered directly to the Children’s Hospital. ([More information](#))

Helping older adults fight COVID-19 with exercise

Professor Janet Lord, Director of the Institute of Inflammation and Ageing, has recorded a video showing how older adults can help keep their immune system strong by exercising and try not to sit down for long periods of time. ([More information](#))

Comment

The Maths Behind Lockdown Nation and the Social Distancing Exit Strategy (Professor John Bryson)

How does one forecast the future? The answer is that the future is too often unpredictable, but it might not be unexpected. This article offers a forecast regarding the lockdown exit strategy. ([More information](#))

What is the impact of self-isolation and quarantining on our mental health? (Dr Karen Newbigging)

Dr Karen Newbigging responds to a recent review published in The Lancet addressing the psychological impact of quarantine and how to reduce it. ([More information](#))

Britain's "Police State" and the Dangers of Everyday Authoritarianism (Dr Jonathan Fisher)

The Covid-19 crisis is exposing the shape and character of authoritarianism across the globe, including in some of the world's most longstanding democracies. It is critical for us to rethink how we see, and respond to, "authoritarianism" as practice in light of this. ([More information](#))

3 ways Covid-19 is helping to shine a spotlight on care workers

(Department of Social Work and Social Care)

The Social Care sector has been overstretched for many years, with councils and agencies struggling to meet demand. Low pay, irregular hours and insecure contracts offered to care workers are reflections of the low status allied to social care. But now, as the full effect of Covid-19 takes hold of the nation, it is putting a spotlight on care workers and the vital role they play in the lives of older and disabled people.

([More information](#))

Polling shows British Public value protecting lives over economic prosperity during COVID-19 pandemic

(The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues)

Polling undertaken by Populus for The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, at the University of Birmingham, has found that the UK public value the short-term care for life during the current coronavirus crisis ahead of protecting the longer-term economic prosperity of the country. ([More information](#))

A doctor's view from the frontline - Patient care at the time of COVID and how routine health data can help (Dr Elizabeth Sapey)

In previous pandemics, paper health records thwarted our ability to learn at scale during the crisis, as data was so siloed and inaccessible. The learning had to occur once the dust had settled. That is not the case today. Our electronic health records from hospitals across the UK contain critical insights into the disease, from the first presentation to recovery (at best) or death (at worst).

By bringing together and studying the health data of these people now (without being able to identify any individual patient) there may be things we can learn very quickly, to improve health care now, during this pandemic.

([More information](#))

Ancient Greeks purged city-states of disease as they would a human body – and it was the most vulnerable that suffered (Professor Candida Moss)

With the spread of the coronavirus, the world is becoming pointedly aware of the extent to which human beings are interconnected. The rapid spread of the virus has highlighted how much we are dependent upon one another, not just for basic biological needs, but also for our sense of belonging and even commerce. There's nothing novel about this level of interdependence. ([More information](#))

Coronavirus: Social distancing is cutting asylum seekers off from education and support (Dr Reza Gholami)

The UK's social distancing measures in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic have caused unprecedented changes to individual and social lives.

The necessity of the measures to control the disease is not in question. However, it is becoming clear that the effects of social distancing will hit refugees and asylum seekers harder and in more complex ways than others as the informal networks they rely on disappear.

([More information](#))

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