

Placing Health Equity at the Heart of the COVID-19 Sustainable Response and Recovery: Building Prosperous Lives for All in Wales

The Welsh Health Equity Status Report initiative (WHESRI)

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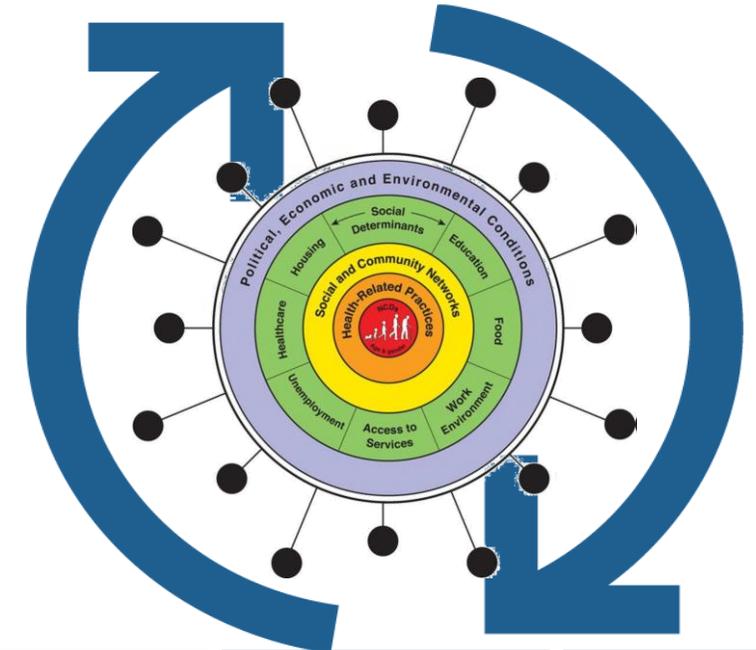
Iechyd Cyhoeddus
Cymru
Public Health
Wales

Synergy on Global, European and National Levels

Addressing the COVID-19 Syndemic

- 1) Inform and accelerate progress towards healthy prosperous lives for all, mitigating harms and enabling opportunities from COVID-19
- 2) Enable sustainable investment for health and well-being, building an Economy of Well-being
- 3) Strengthen Wales' role in Global Health Security, developing and sharing good practice, expertise, innovative solutions and tools

- **WHESRI and Health Equity Solutions Platform, incl. COVID-19**
- **COVID-19 International Horizon Scanning**
- **COVID-19 National Public Engagement Survey**
- **Health Impact Assessments (HIAs), incl. COVID-19**
- **Economic impact of COVID-19 and Value-Based Public Health**
- **Dashboard of broader health and wellbeing indicators**
- **Violence Prevention Unit and Dashboard**
- ...



Wales – an Influencer and a Live Innovation Site for Health Equity in Europe and Globally

MoU between the Welsh Government and the WHO Regional Office for Europe 2020-23



COVID-19 sustainable response and recovery towards an economy of well-being, leaving no one behind



United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

WHO European Programme of Work 'United Action for Better Health in Europe' 2020-2025

WHO Health Equity Status Report initiative (HESRI)

Welsh Health Equity Status Report initiative (WHESRI) and Health Equity Solutions Platform

- Synthesise and share national and international evidence, intelligence and good practice
- Data, Policy, Economics analyses and modelling
- Identify sustainable solutions
- Develop innovative methods & tools
- Enable stakeholder engagement and partnership

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act

Prosperity for All: the national strategy

A Healthier Wales: long term plan for health and social care

A More Equal Wales: the Socio-economic Duty



Building a Healthier Wales



First WHESRi Report

Placing health equity at the heart of the COVID-19 sustainable response and recovery:

Building prosperous lives for all in Wales

Evidence – People – Data – Economic modelling – Policy response



The Welsh Health Equity Status Report initiative (WHESRi)

Methodology

Systematic assessment and analysis of documents, including:

- UK and Welsh Government policies, strategies and interventions
- Published in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, from March to November 2020
- Relevant to health equity and/or the five essential conditions, and mapped across

The policy analysis is complemented with information and evidence from government and non-governmental agencies, think tanks and research.

Global, UK and Wales' evidence and data from the COVID-19 International Horizon Scanning and Learning reports (WHO CC, Public Health Wales) have been summarised, synthesised and mapped across the five essential conditions. It was also used to provide contextual information on health equity and COVID-19.

Findings from two health impact assessments (WHO CC, Public Health Wales) have been integrated, providing additional insight in the health equity impacts:

- A Health Impact Assessment of the 'Staying at Home and Social Distancing Policy' in Wales
- A COVID-19 pandemic world and beyond: The health impact of home and agile working in Wales

the COVID-19 National Public Engagement Survey (WHO CC, Public Health Wales):

- Gathered over the first 16 weeks (3 April-2 July 2020)
- Including Welsh residents 18+ years old
- Exploring views/attitudes/experiences, aligning to the five essential conditions
- Showing differences according to sex, age group and level of deprivation
- Estimates generated from a generalized linear model including age, sex, Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation quintile and survey week

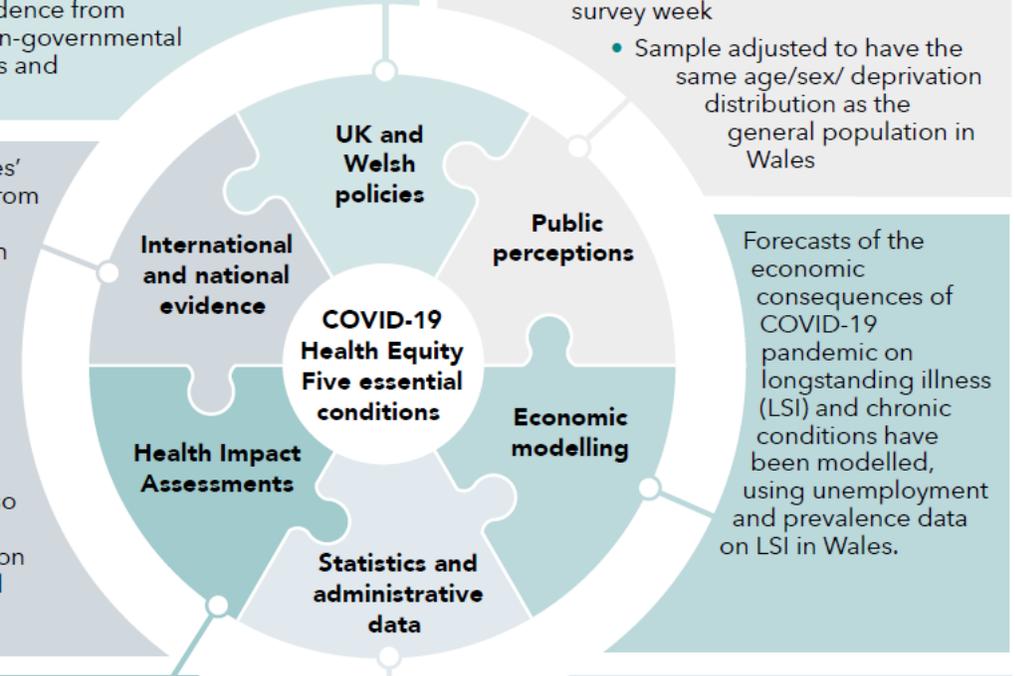
- Sample adjusted to have the same age/sex/ deprivation distribution as the general population in Wales

Forecasts of the economic consequences of COVID-19 pandemic on longstanding illness (LSI) and chronic conditions have been modelled, using unemployment and prevalence data on LSI in Wales.

Statistics and administrative data, related to health equity and the five essential conditions, published February-December 2020, have been analysed.

For example:

- Hospital admissions, extracted from the Public Health Wales Observatory COVID-19 Recovery Profile
- Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, extracted from HM Revenue & Customs, UK Government
- Reported crimes, extracted from DATA.POLICE.UK



Data Examples: Global Context

Pre COVID-19



COVID-19 impact

150 million more people (9.4% of the world's population) to be forced into extreme poverty by the global recession (34)

Working hours equivalent to **495 million jobs** 14% of the world's entire workforce lost in the 2nd quarter of 2020 (46,47)

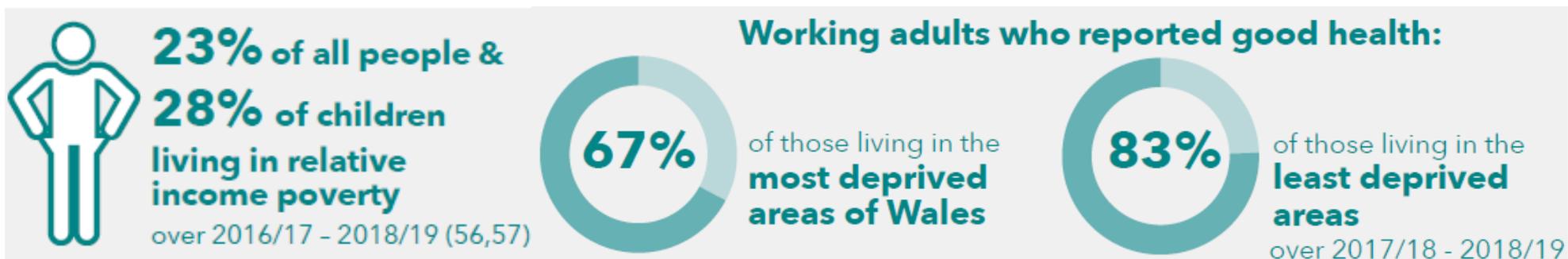


Critical mental health services disrupted in **93%** of countries worldwide (35)

1.38 billion learners impacted by school closures during the first wave of the pandemic (40)

Data Examples: Wales

Pre COVID-19



COVID-19 impact

Major decrease in elective and emergency hospital admissions

in Wales in 2020 by

55% for elective and
30% for emergency
compared to 2019 (66,67)



22% of households in Wales lost at least
20% of their weekly income
between February and April 2020 (73)



A major indirect impact on children and young people, including a 'digital exclusion' of those from more deprived backgrounds (75,78)

COVID-19 may have caused

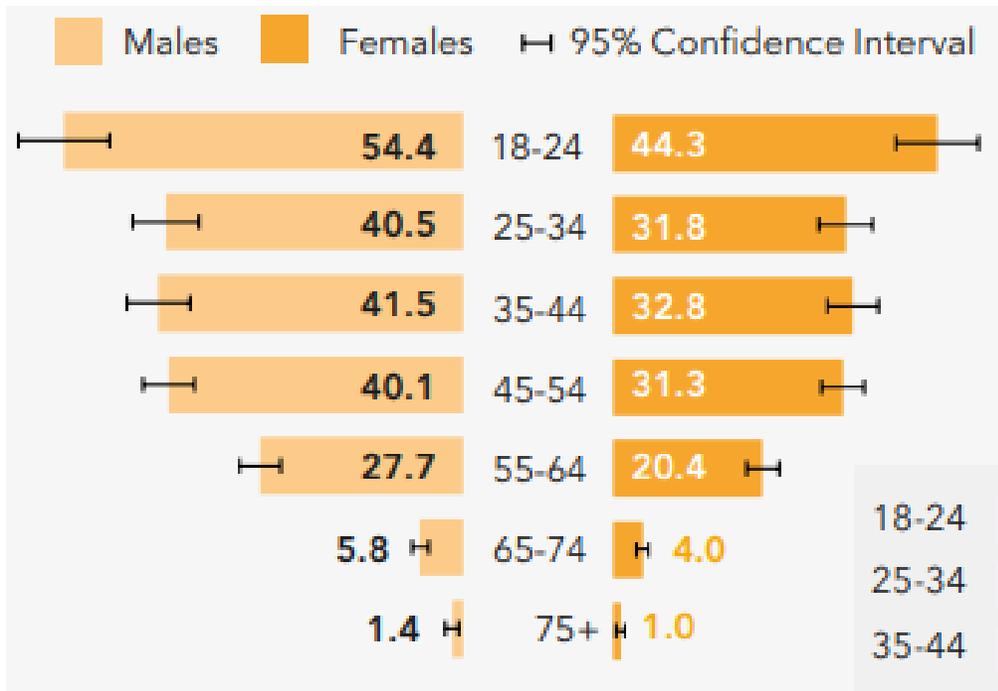
361 - 1231 additional lives lost

due to delayed cancer screening depending on the referrals backlog, months in lockdown and diagnostic capacity (72).

Increased risk for unsafe environment and trauma, such as violence and abuse at home, especially for women and children (79)

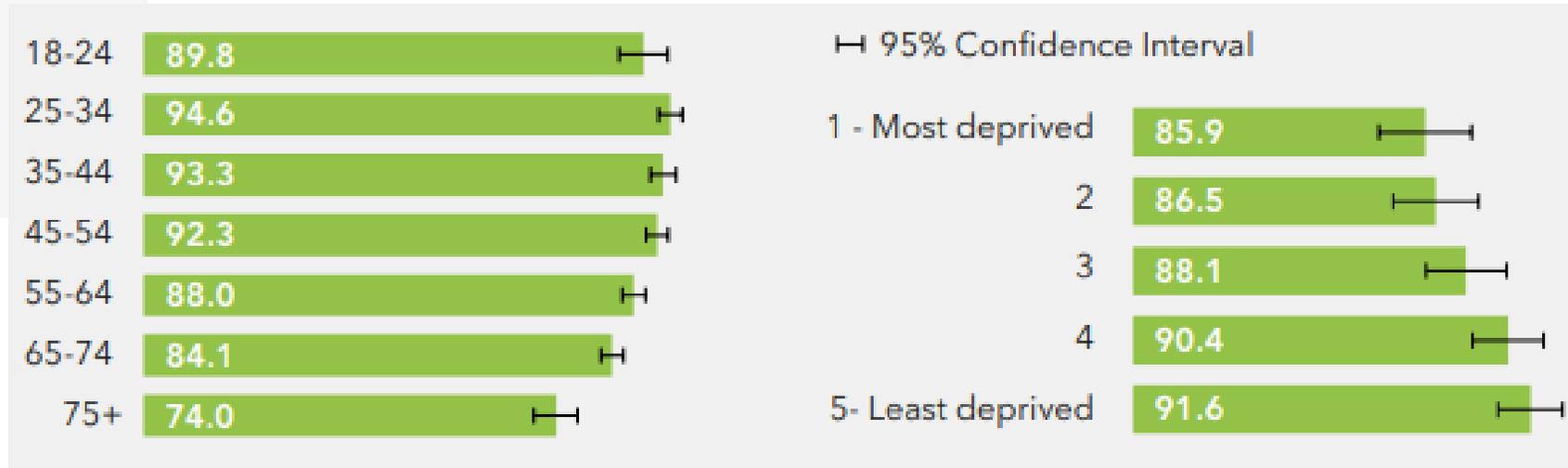


Public Health Wales COVID-19 Public Engagement Survey Analysis



Respondents (18+) who report being worried about losing their job or not being able to find one over the past week, %, survey weeks 1-16 (April-July 2020)

Respondents (18+) who report leaving their home or garden in the past 7 days, %, survey weeks 7-16 (May-July 2020)

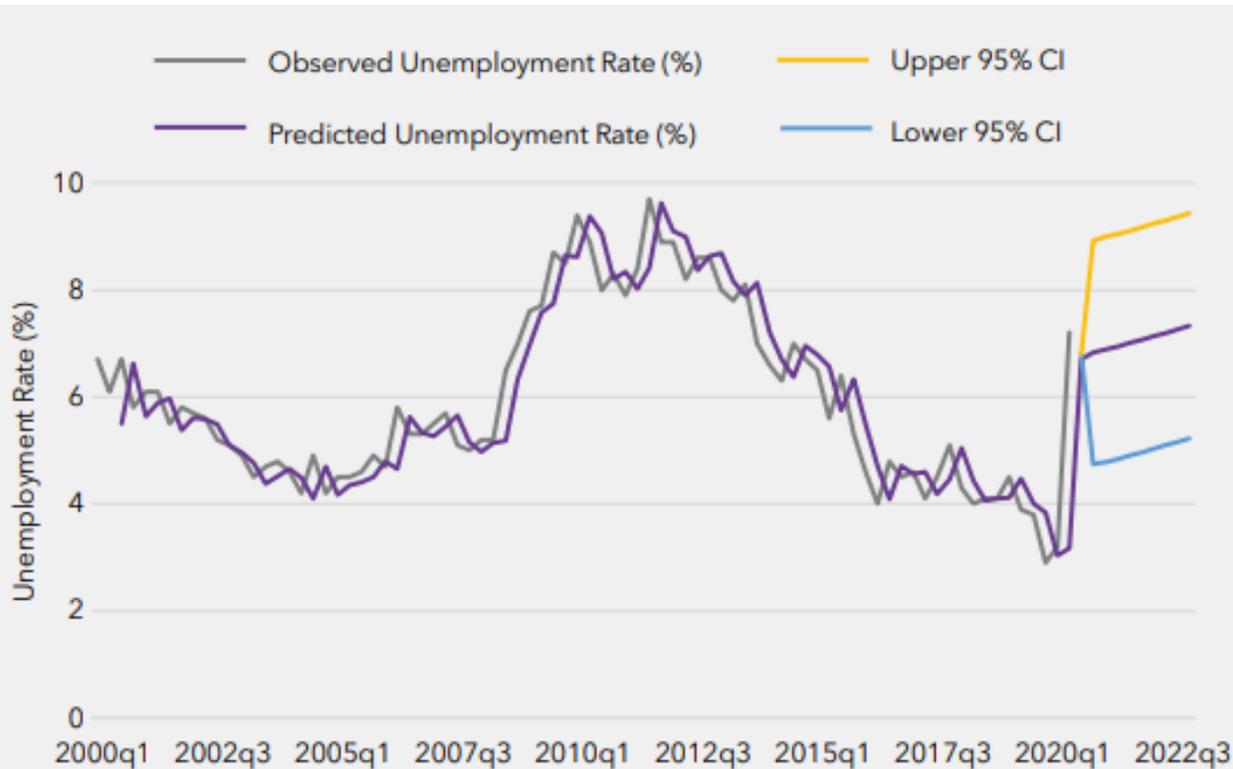


Economic Modelling

Economic consequences of COVID-19 on longstanding illnesses (LSI) and chronic conditions in the medium term (2020-22) with a focus on unemployment

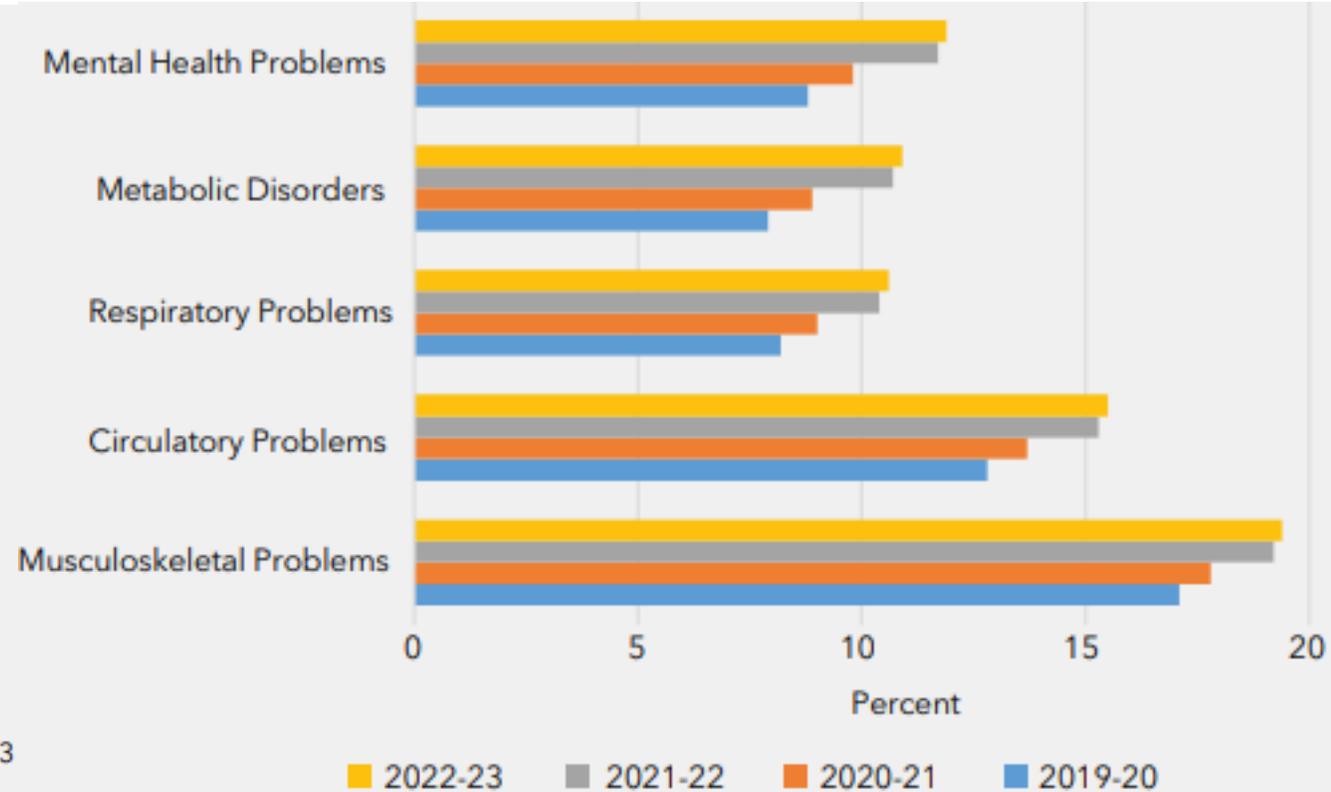
Projected unemployment rates in Wales following COVID-19, 2020-2022

- Without reparative interventions, unemployment rate is expected to increase sharply from 3.8% in 2019 to about 7% in 2020 following COVID-19 and then gradually increase over the projected period



Projected percentage of adults with chronic health conditions

- Percentage of adults with chronic health conditions is projected to increase following the COVID-19 with a higher increment for mental health and endocrine/metabolic problems



The challenge

Key Messages

The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered a **public health and socio-economic crisis, exacerbating underlying inequities, and exposing new vulnerabilities.**

It has revealed the **fragility of systems and capacities**, related to chronic under-resourcing of public health, disease prevention and health promotion.

The **impact on livelihoods**, especially for the most vulnerable, has been catastrophic, highlighting how **interdependent individual health and well-being, social cohesion, and the economy are.**

Key population groups with multiple vulnerabilities, compounded or exposed by COVID-19, include:

- Children and young people
- Minority ethnic groups, especially Black and Asian
- People living in (or at risk of) deprivation and poverty
- People in insecure/low income/informal/low-qualification employment, especially women
- Marginalised and socially excluded, such as homeless persons

The opportunity

Returning to the status quo before the pandemic is not enough.

There is an opportunity for a **transformative, synergetic recovery**, accelerating innovation, bridging the gaps in health, education, housing, income, employment prospects and social safety nets, advancing green solutions, and **ensuring the well-being of current and future generations.**

Preparing better for the next pandemic is not enough.

There is an opportunity to **prevent future epidemics and crises**, building sustainable, inclusive, evidence-informed systems, policies and services, which **enable healthier living environments and behaviours, and strengthen individual and community resilience** to infections and adversities.

The case for targeted investment in people's well-being, health equity and prevention is stronger than ever and requires **urgent coherent action across all sectors** towards closing the health gap.

Wales leading the way towards healthy prosperous lives for all



Health and health services

- ◆ Substantial impact on health services, with limited access to prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation, and significant reduction in hospital admissions, following a socio-economic gradient
- ◆ People trust the NHS in Wales and consider that it has responded well to the pandemic



Health and income security and social protection

- ◆ COVID-19 has widened the socio-economic gap, affecting the most deprived the hardest
- ◆ Young people, women, people from ethnic minority backgrounds, and those who are already marginalised, have been affected the most



Health and living conditions

- ◆ COVID-19 has exposed flaws in the housing system in Wales, with unequal access to green and blue spaces, and posing specific challenges to women and children, the homeless and traveller communities, care homes and prisons
- ◆ Significant increase in recorded crime and anti-social behaviour observed in 2020, including breaching COVID-19 regulations, with higher levels amongst the most deprived



Health and social and human capital

- ◆ Unprecedented educational disruption with immediate and long term harms to child safety and development, health and well-being, educational attainment, future prospects, and family income, reinforcing inequities
- ◆ Digital technology has enabled individuals to remain socially connected, with digital divide across different ages and levels of deprivation, and many people remaining digitally excluded



Health and employment and working conditions

- ◆ Major impact on employment and working conditions, highlighting existing and generating new inequities, particularly for key workers and ethnic minority groups
- ◆ Unemployment rates have increased and are forecasted to continue growing over the next two years



The policy response

- A large number of policies and mitigation measures have been implemented as an immediate response to COVID-19 across different sectors in Wales, many aiming to address inequities
- To prevent perpetuating the socio-economic crisis, inequities and related vulnerability post-COVID-19, equity needs to be placed in the heart of the short and longer term response and recovery, building on the unique assets and commitment towards a healthier, more equal and prosperous Wales

A window of opportunity for sustainable synergetic transformation

- **Unprecedented financial and other support measures** implemented in the UK and Wales: **more than 70 policies identified** across the five essential conditions
- **Need for continuity, consistency and proportionate (progressive) universalism:** most mitigation measures **temporary and not specifically targeted** to address the needs of specific/vulnerable groups
- **Building on some positive impacts** of COVID-19 mitigation measures, such as, promoting **active travel** and reducing commuting; stimulating **community assets and volunteering**; creating opportunities to **support the local economy...**
- **Potential enablers are equalizers:** applying an **intergenerational lens** in the response and recovery; **education innovation and digital technology**; using **holistic socio-ecological indicators** for monitoring success; embedding **sustainable ways of working** and adopting a **circular economy**
- **The case for investing in public health and reducing health inequities is stronger than ever:** vital role of **health promotion, disease prevention and early intervention**, enhancing **healthy environments and behaviours**
- **Wales leading the way:** The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, 2015; a Framework for Recovery from COVID-19, 2020; a Socio-Economic Duty, 2021; WHESRi project and building a Health Equity Solutions Platform

WHESRi Progress Going Forward

Towards achieving healthy prosperous lives for all in Wales and beyond

- Health equity status reports for Wales, including a [decomposition analysis](#)
- Innovative methods, tools and approaches across the life course, sectors and settings, establishing Wales as a [live health equity innovation site](#)
- Making the case for establishing an [Economy of Well-being for Wales](#), demonstrating that the health system and public health are engines for social, economic and environmental stability and well-being
- [Health Equity Solutions Platform for Wales](#), including COVID-19 impacts



World Health Organization HESRI Health Equity Dataset European Health Equity Solutions Platform *Building a Healthier Wales*

HEALTH EQUITY

Healthier Prosperous Lives for All

- ✓ Identify sustainable solutions for policy action and investment
- ✓ Provide a suit of innovative and digital tools
- ✓ Enable predictive modelling of future trends and impacts
- ✓ Enable stakeholder engagement and partnership
- ✓ Share national and international evidence and learning
- ✓ Monitor progress

Resources

Public Health Wales Rapid COVID-19 surveillance dashboard available at: <https://public.tableau.com/profile/public.health.wales.health.protection#!/vizhome/RapidCOVID-19virology-Public/Headlinesummary>

Public Health Wales Observatory COVID-19 Recovery Profile available at:

https://publichealthwales.shinyapps.io/COVID19_Recovery_Profile_PHWO/

WHO Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard available at:

<https://covid19.who.int/>

Welsh population statistics available at:

<https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Population-and-Migration/Population/Estimates/nationallevelpopulationestimates-by-year-age-ukcountry>

Placing health equity at the heart of the COVID-19 sustainable response and recover: Building prosperous lives for all in Wales. 2021. Full report and technical supplement available at:

<https://phwwhocc.co.uk/resources/welsh-health-equity-status-report-whesri/>

International Horizon Scanning reports available at:

<https://phwwhocc.co.uk/covid-19/international-horizon-scanning/>

Health Impact Assessment reports available at:

<https://phwwhocc.co.uk/covid-19/hia/>

Economic modelling report available at:

<https://phwwhocc.co.uk/resources/economic-consequences-of-covid-19-pandemic-outbreak-on-health-indicators-and-health-service-use-in-wales/>

Canolfan Gydweithredol Sefydliad
Iechyd y Byd ar Fuddsoddi
ar gyfer Iechyd a Llesiant



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