



**WOMEN
FRIENDLY
LEEDS**

**BETTER FOR WOMEN,
BETTER FOR EVERYONE**

**WOMEN'S
LIVESLEEDS**

COVID-19 Women's Survey Report

COVID-19 Survey 01/06/20 – 14/06/2020



June 2020

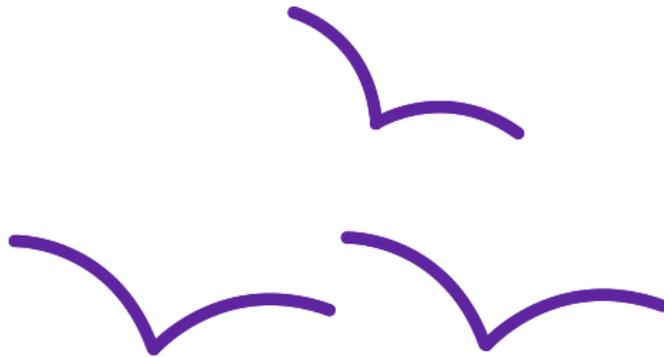
Completed by:

Emily Turner

WLL VOICES Co-ordinator

Contents

Foreword	3
Introduction.....	3
Executive Summary.....	4
Q1: Are Women Disproportionately Affected by COVID-19? .	10
Q2: Are There Other Ways That Women are Disproportionally Affected by COVID-19?.....	13
Q3: Personal Experiences.....	20
Q4: As a Woman, What are your Concerns About the Pandemic Now?.....	24
Q5: As a Woman, What is your Main Concern About the Pandemic for the Future?.....	33
Q6: Have You Easily Been Able to Access Local Advice, Guidance and Support Regarding COVID-19 in Leeds?	39
Conclusion.....	40
Recommendations	41



Foreword

As we continue to respond to the unprecedented and tragic circumstances thrown at us by COVID-19, as a Council we remain steadfast in our commitment to be the Best Council and for Leeds to be the Best City.

I am therefore pleased to support Women's Lives Leeds' ambition to make Leeds the UK's first Women Friendly City, and to become an Ambassador for them.

We recognise how important it is to draw on all the experiences and views of the people of Leeds to help guide us through this crisis.

Women Lives Leeds has reached out to women across our city to ask for their views about how COVID-19 has or is currently affecting them.

There has been an overwhelming response with so many women taking part and contributing, making sure their voices are heard.

We endorse the contents of this report, which will help shape our thinking around the support needed for all our communities and which will help us achieve our ambition to make Leeds the Best City.

Cllr Judith Blake – Leader of Leeds City Council



Introduction

In light of the COVID-19 Pandemic that has swept across the nation, Women's Lives Leeds were keen to make sure that the effects of this pandemic on women were known, so created an online survey that would provide a quick snapshot of this, with a view that the findings would contribute to the reshaping of services across Leeds.

The Women Friendly Leeds COVID-19 survey was launched on Monday 1st of June and closed on Sunday 14th June. A total of 979 responses to the survey were received, telling us that Leeds women wanted their say about their views and experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic, within a local context. The purpose of the survey was to gather data to capture the experiences and views of women to gain a wide, diverse perspective, represent the views of as many women as possible and feed this into key decision conversations across the city. This included the "Communities of Interest" work, which is Leeds's partnership approach to COVID-19. The data will also be shared with other strategic partners, such as Public Health, Safer Leeds, Healthwatch Leeds and the Equalities Assembly.

The questions were focused to provide an understanding of women's concerns in the current pandemic and its future effects. Questions focused on women's opinions and their experiences. The survey was launched 10 weeks after lockdown begun, with the aim that women would be able to reflect and respond thoughtfully on their experiences so far.

The survey was advertised through established partnerships, contacts and networks within the local authority, social media and in newsletters to the Women Friendly Leeds and Women's Hub memberships.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this section is to highlight the diverse range of issues and key emerging themes that have been captured in the detail of the report.

Question one

5 statements were presented and women were asked to reflect on whether they agreed or disagreed:

- 85% (829 respondents) agreed that women bear the brunt of childcare and other caring responsibilities more than men.
- 57% (558 respondents) agreed that there are more women than men in frontline jobs, therefore having a greater risk of exposure to the virus.
- 90% (877 respondents) agreed that women's experience of domestic violence is likely to increase during lockdown.
- 72% (702 respondents) agreed that women from different BAME communities women are disproportionately affected by COVID-19 compared with white British women.
- Only 43% (424 respondents) agreed that women are more likely to be affected by mental health issues as a direct result of COVID-19, with 39% (382 respondents) neither agreeing or disagreeing, demonstrating that most women did not think this was a gendered issue. However, this is still a significant theme, as it was evident in later responses from the survey.

Three key themes emerged from this question are as follows:

1. Women's opinions and concerns around bearing the brunt of childcare
2. Other caring responsibilities
3. Domestic abuse.

Question two

Women were asked if they thought there were other ways that women were disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

The top five themes are:

- Employment – mentioned by 60 respondents, was particularly about job security and stability and was hindered by other responsibilities such as childcare and home-schooling.
- Childcare or home-schooling – mentioned by 58 respondents, women spoke about bearing the brunt of these responsibilities, or doing all of it, whilst often working from home at the same time.

- Carrying the emotional burden and juggling a variety of roles – mentioned by 58 respondents, this was about ‘holding it all together’ and looking out for the practical and emotional needs of others.
- Household chores – mentioned by 41 respondents, these tasks had increased due to more people being at home and for longer periods of time.
- Other caring responsibilities – mentioned by 39 respondents, this included current caring roles that had become more complex and time consuming, or new caring roles due to the virus, again fitting alongside other responsibilities.

Other themes that were raised were ‘financial concerns’, ‘access to women’s health and maternity services’, ‘mental health’, ‘the lack of representation of women at government level’ and ‘intimidation by men.’

Question three

Women were asked to reflect on their own experiences, by asking them to agree or disagree with seven statements, prompting them to leave out any that weren’t relevant to them:

- 19% agreed that they have experienced difficulty accessing women’s health services during lockdown.
- 27% agreed that COVID-19 had negatively affected their financial situation.
- 25% were concerned about their children going back to school or nursery too soon.
- 56% agreed that they had experienced mental health issues more than normal directly due to the pandemic.
- 29% agreed that they were concerned about going back to work sooner than they felt comfortable with.
- 18 % experienced difficulties due to inadequate technology, however it was important to note that this was an online survey, so likely that respondents had a reasonable level of access to the internet, and a device.
- 31% of respondents agreed that they had been affected by shielding for themselves or others.

56% who expressed that they had experienced mental health issues more than normal as a direct result of COVID-19, clearly demonstrating that is the most significant issue that women are experiencing.

Questions four and five

These questions focused on what was their main concern regarding the pandemic now and in the future respectively.

The themes that came up in these questions were very similar but prevalence was different depending

on whether women were thinking about their view now, or going forward.

The top five themes about current concerns were:

- Childcare, home-schooling and other household chores – mentioned by 93 respondents.
- Health – mentioned by 89 respondents
- Lockdown being lifted too soon – mentioned by 68 respondents
- Mental health – mentioned by 64 respondents
- Safety – mentioned by 60 respondents

Other themes were; 'people not sticking to lockdown rules', 'government failures', 'isolation', 'work', 'access to services', 'a second spike', and 'gender inequality.'

The top five themes about future concerns were:

- Work, unemployment and jobs – mentioned by 109 respondents
- Returning to normal – mentioned by 87 respondents
- A second spike – mentioned by 79 respondents
- Education – mentioned by 70 respondents
- A recession and the economy – mentioned by 68 respondents

Other themes were; 'mental health', 'COVID-19 illness and recovery', 'gender inequality', 'government failures', 'relationships and families', and 'the future for younger generations.'

It is apparent that concerns for the future move to employment and education, and are linked to returning to normal, an expected second spike, and an unstable economy.

Question six

This question asked; 'Have you easily been able to access local advice, guidance and support regarding COVID-19?'

This was mostly positive, with many women reporting that they had been able to with:

- 64% being able to access it within their locality
- 7% commenting that this was through work specifically
- 16% hadn't tried or needed to access information or services
- 8% had not been able to access any at all

The same key themes emerged throughout the whole survey, and they linked with each other. Women strongly expressed that they are struggling to manage working from home, childcare, home-schooling, having increased household chores, and holding the emotional burden. This has had an impact on their mental and physical health, and they predict that the ongoing situation, which could lead to a second spike and further lockdown, would continue to have a disproportionate effect on them as women.

They are concerned that the pandemic will inadvertently create a backwards movement in terms of gender inequality. There is the view that the government are not considering their experiences, in part due to a lack of representation in those conversations.

They felt that the disproportionate effects of economic instability, which also link to employability and getting 'back to normal' was more complex and difficult for women.

Conclusion

The Women Friendly Leeds team was delighted to have received such a positive and vast response from women in Leeds to the COVID-19 women's survey. We want to thank every respondent who took the time to contribute their opinions and experiences which has given us an extensive local view of how the pandemic has affected women. We took the time to read, understand and categorise every single comment that was made and we valued every response given.

These responses have enabled us to gain a rich and useful range of local data highlighting the views, opinions and experiences of 979 women in Leeds in regards to COVID-19. It is apparent that there are key themes that have emerged from the survey, some are already known across the city, so the findings reaffirm those as priorities and concerns that should be addressed.

These themes include: women's employability; juggling numerous tasks expected of them, such as taking the majority of the burden of childcare, other caring responsibilities, carrying the emotional burden; and greater general household tasks. Some respondents told us that these negatively affected their financial stability, and their mental health and well-being.

There was a sense that gender inequality had been negatively affected by these issues and, women talked about their concerns for family of all ages, and friends, often as a concern over themselves. Whilst completing this survey there have been some lessons learned by the team from women who responded in terms of the following which will be considered in the future:

1. Developing online surveys
2. How to capture some of the many positives stories to have come out of the pandemic that haven't been captured within this survey
3. How capturing the demographics of the respondents may have given more insight into who was responding and if those respondents were fully reflecting the diversity of Leeds
4. How questions could be posed without being deemed as being biased

Women's Lives Leeds are delighted that the Women Friendly Leeds team could do this first survey and capture so many responses which can be seen in the direct quotes throughout the report. These will be used to help shape and contribute to conversations in Leeds.

The intention is that these findings will be used to inform the city's COVID-19 recovery response, and be taken into consideration in the future, so that women's voices will be present in every decision, plan and change that our city makes.

We make no apology for the ambitious nature of our recommendations and strive to ensure that gender is at the heart of the future city-wide approach in line with our intention for Leeds to become the first UK Women Friendly City.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been drawn from this report and will be shared across all strategic partnerships:

1. The report will be disseminated and inform future planning in the city, where city leaders will take a proactive approach to gender and have an inclusive leadership stance in the COVID-19 recovery stage.
2. Women's Lives Leeds will adopt a strategy to share the report as widely as possible to all regional and national partners.
3. City leaders continue to recognise gender equality and that the voices, experiences and views of a diverse range of women are included and represented in conversations going forward in the future.
4. City leaders are to consider and include employability and equality in conversations at every stage in the COVID-19 recovery process, as these were identified as particular concerns, both currently and in the future.
5. All Partners including Leeds City Council, Public Health and Clinical Commissioning Groups who have a responsibility for designing, reviewing and commissioning services consider the specifics that are relevant to them to help shape more targeted approaches; to help make changes to services and to adapt to meet identified need that has arisen directly due to the pandemic, in particular maternity and mental health.
6. The Women's and Girl's Hubs consider this alongside the City Listening Project's outcomes; form task and finish groups to agree and take forward collective priorities based on the broader scope of both projects.



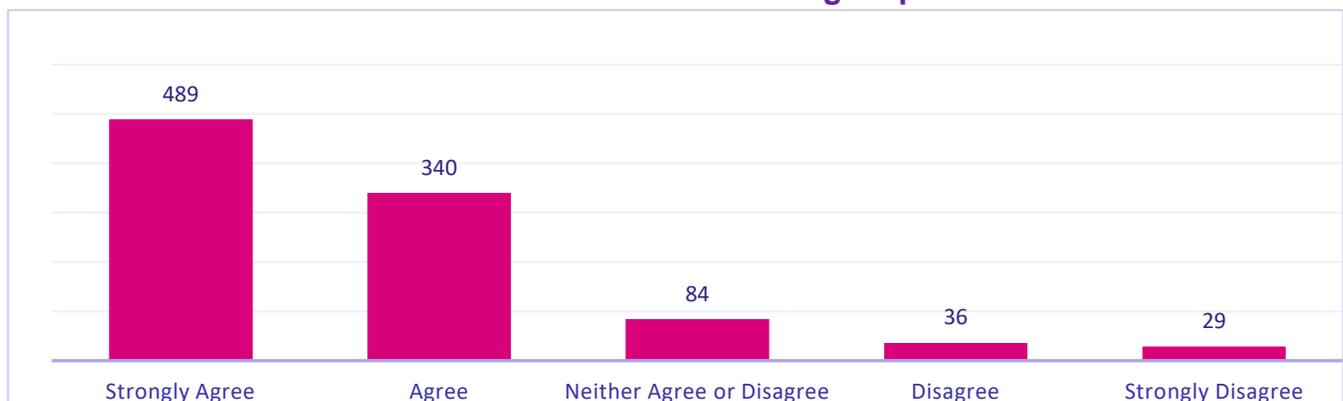
The detail

The following section provides the detail and personal quotes captured from those who responded to the survey.

Q1: Are Women Disproportionately Affected by COVID-19?

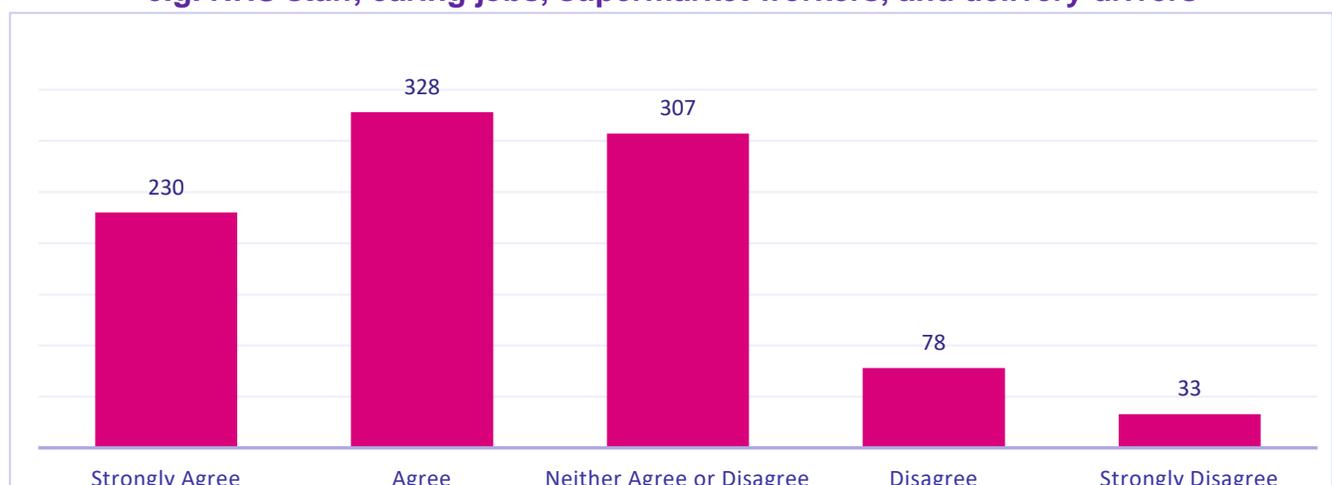
Q1 asked respondents whether they thought women were disproportionately affected by COVID-19 in a variety of ways. The survey stated that they should leave out any of the statements that they didn't have an opinion on for whatever reason, including if it wasn't relevant for their personal experience.

Women bear the burden of childcare and other caring responsibilities more than men



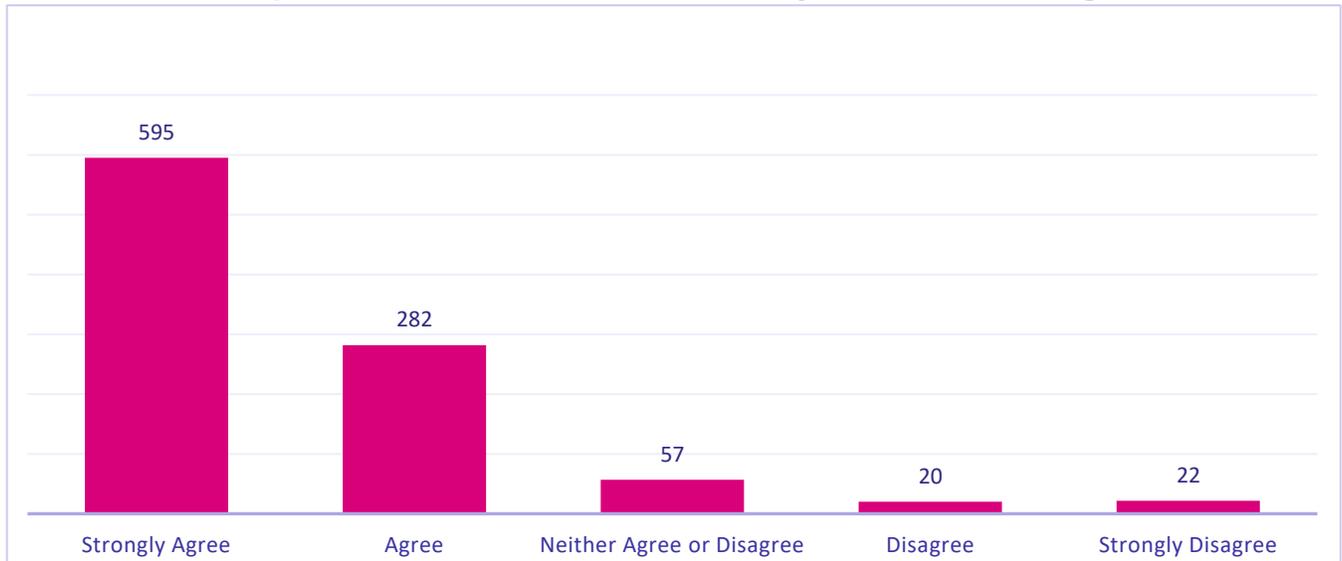
This shows us that the majority of respondents agreed with this statement, indicating that it is widely experienced by women either personally, or by others they know. Only one respondent did not answer this question. 85% either agreed or strongly agreed, 8% neither agreed or disagreed, and 7% either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

There are more women than men in frontline jobs, therefore having more risk of exposure, e.g. NHS staff, caring jobs, supermarket workers, and delivery drivers



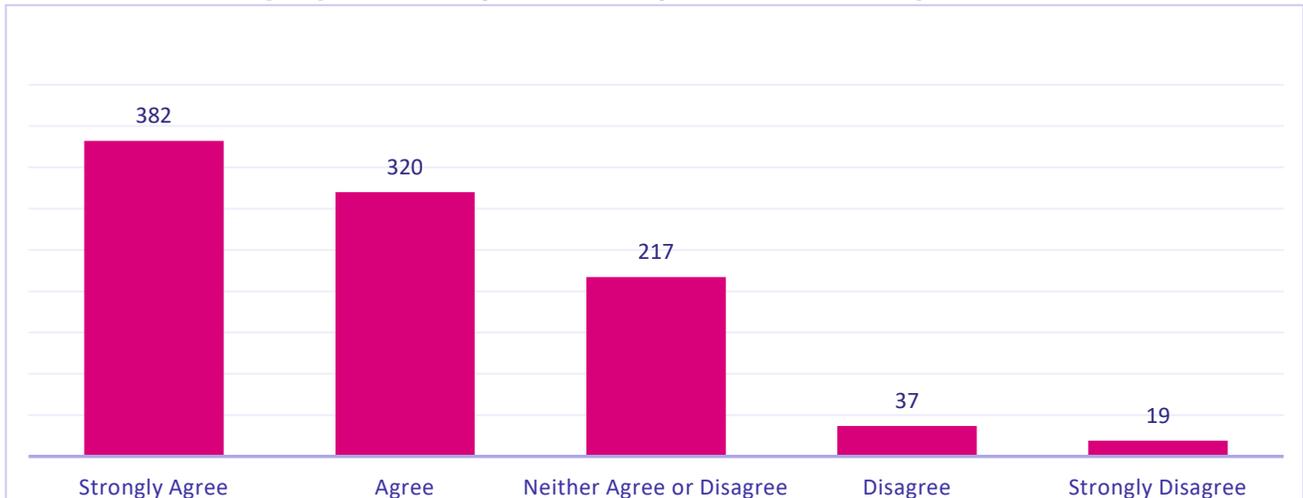
Only 3 respondents did not answer this question. Again, the majority agreed with this statement, although a much larger percentage neither agreed or disagreed. 57% agreed or strongly agreed. 31% neither agreed or disagreed and 12% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Women’s experience of domestic abuse is likely to increase during lockdown.



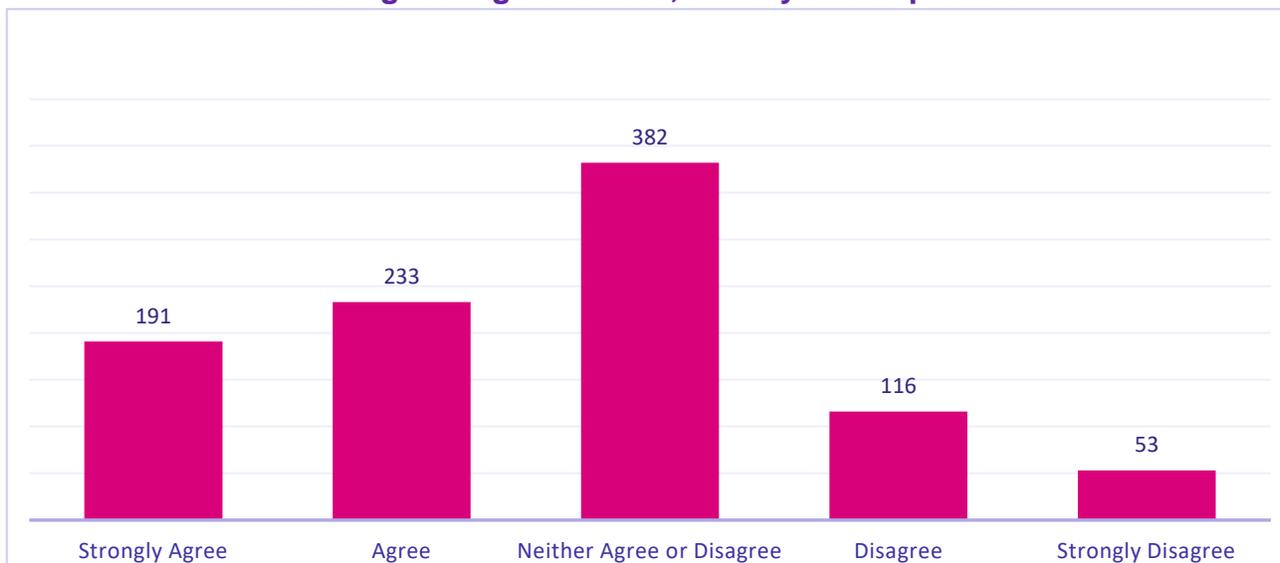
These results were very convincing. Only 3 respondents did not answer this question. 90% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. 6% neither agreed or disagreed and 4% disagreed or strongly disagreed. It’s clear that women feel very strongly that women were likely to experience increased incidents of domestic abuse.

BAME women are disproportionately affected by COVID-19, compared to white British women.



Again, respondents convincingly agreed that women from different ethnic BAME communities were disproportionately affected by COVID-19 when compared to White British women. 4 respondents did not answer this question, with 975 answers submitted. 72% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, 22% neither agreed nor disagreed and only 6% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

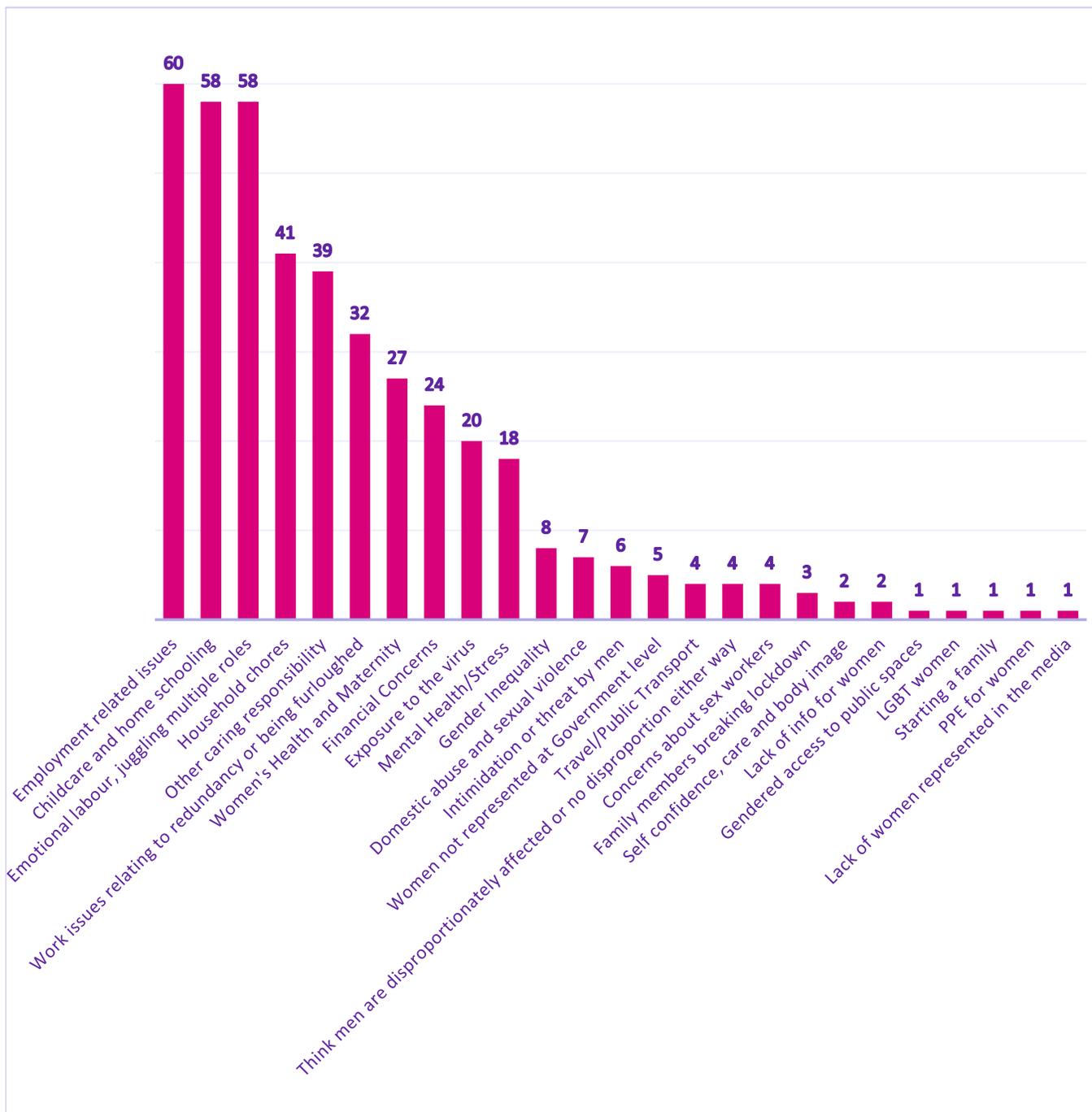
Women are more likely to be affected by mental health issues as a direct result of COVID-19, including feelings of stress, anxiety and depression



There was a more even distribution of answers with this question. There were 975 respondents. 43% agreed or strongly agreed, 39% neither agreed nor disagreed and 18% disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Q2: Are There Other Ways That Women are Disproportionally Affected by COVID-19?



Summary

It is evident in the responses to this question that often the themes were combined in clusters, and that some of the themes were linked to others or they affected each other.

Employment (60 responses)

The main themes represented were around job security and stability, and employment protection being poor. Women spoke about childcare and caring roles either hindering their ability to work, or to be

productive, or managers not being supportive of women trying to work and care at the same time. This particularly affected single mothers. Some women had even given up their jobs to look after others in lockdown, however the effects weren't necessarily so dramatic, and included moving meetings, or turning down some responsibilities, or taking on the easier tasks.

Women were concerned about career progression being hindered. Some mentioned that career prospects could suffer for the entirety of a woman's life. There were concerns that contracts would not be renewed, and future redundancies would be made, affecting women more than men. Some women spoke of other's assumptions that their work commitments were not as important as men's.

Maternity leave was a specific concern, due to the self-employed grant not considering maternity, or women being put on statutory sick pay rather than being furloughed, or women being forced to extend their maternity absence. All these issues have a knock-on effect on women's mental health, stress levels, sense of worth and financial stability.

I also think that women are suffering professionally. Those with children and working from home cannot be as productive as childless colleagues and some women are having to work longer, later hours to compensate. Is COVID going to be a time that managers think of when promotions or pay rises are available in the future? What is the lingering impact going to be?"

"My job has been extremely difficult to perform with my children at home as a single parent. My contract has not been renewed because of insecurity over the current economic climate"

I am trying to decide whether to apply for a new job, however with the responsibility of home-schooling I might not go ahead with my application even though the vacancy is a good match to my skills"

Childcare and Home-schooling (58 responses)

Women spoke about the stress of managing the needs of children at different ages and many said they had taken on the bulk of the burden of childcare and home-schooling, if not all of it. Some single mothers reported that the fathers of their children had not even seen them during lockdown, and were not receiving child maintenance. The theme of juggling home-schooling, childcare and working from home was prevalent, with many reporting that it was unmanageable and highly stressful.

Home-schooling was particularly difficult, especially managing multiple homework streams, having a lack of resources and lack of confidence. It caused physical and mental effects, particularly feelings of guilt. Even key working mothers reported that school and childcare was not adequate due to shortened hours or lack of after school and holiday provision. A range of women identified this as a major challenge, whether they worked outside the home full or part time, or did no paid work

"I think childcare is a big one. My friends with children do much more than the men and are feeling the stress of combining work and childcare more. A male colleague on the other hand was talking about soundproofing his office when his child was heard in the background which I think it's representative of many men's unflinching ability to say no to children when they have to work, whereas women just have to get both done somehow"

"Further to childcare being an issue for women, I think it needs to be stated that in split families the women also predominantly have main custody of children, and there is a lot of pressure on mothers at the moment to be able to work, keep the house clean, home school children and find time to do projects, bake, go on 50 million walks, exercise, learn a language etc. I feel like this is not something that men/fathers have to contend with and it's something I struggle with. I'm in a position where I feel guilty for not doing all of the nice things that I see on FB or insta because I work from home and have children."

Emotional Pressure or Juggling Multiple Roles (58 responses)

There were lots of comments demonstrating that women are feeling the burden of providing emotional support, and emotional responsibilities to family, friends and colleagues have increased. Some felt they had less opportunity to have time and space for themselves, and they were in situations where they were juggling multiple roles, causing increased stress and tiredness. Comments like 'keeping it together' 'balancing responsibility' and 'I'm expected to cope' were common. Supporting connections was an added pressure, such as remembering birthdays and checking in with others. This theme was not just prevalent at home and with friends, but also in the workplace.

"An expectation to 'keep it together' and provide emotional support to friends and family."

"Emotional work, supporting vulnerable members of society, e.g. students who turn disproportionately to female members of staff for support."

"In my house I am the one that holds everything together so if I'm not functioning well, then everybody in the house suffers."

"When a member of the family gets ill - with COVID-19 - it is the woman that will do most of the caring - they are the ones that will have to juggle everything. It's just an expectation that this is what women do. The men will just go along as if nothing has happened or changed!"

"Expectation that women 'care'"

Household Chores (41 responses)

Due to lockdown, there has been a greater use of the home by all family members, which means increased shopping, washing, cleaning, cooking and tidying, which women reported as being tasks that have fallen disproportionately to them. Many have expressed the pressure of these tasks laying alongside other roles such as working from home, childcare, other caring responsibilities and checking in on family and friends. Women talked about the practical nature of these tasks alongside the 'admin' of planning and organising. There were some women that reported gender equality in the home had been pushed back due to lockdown measures.

"Women are often responsible for a lot of household tasks which became harder to perform (grocery shopping, meal planning, cleaning etc.). Figuring out food delivery options etc. adds to the mental workload."

"Women are more likely to be the ones completing more of the household tasks such as cooking cleaning and shopping so are more likely to be feeling stressed juggling all the other roles they have to complete alongside these. Getting shopping is more stressful and time consuming."

"I feel that gender equality in the home has been pushed back many years by the stresses of COVID-19."

Other Caring Responsibilities (39 responses)

Women were experiencing caring for others aside from children. This included family members such as elderly or vulnerable parents and grandparents, aunts and uncles. They also spoke about taking on caring roles for the elderly, or shielding neighbours or friends. Sometimes these caring roles would be for a partner who has become ill with COVID-19, adding additional stress and fear.

Some caring responsibilities were existing ones, that had become more difficult or complicated, but the majority were new caring responsibilities that had to fit in alongside full and part time jobs, childcare, home-schooling and other responsibilities. Women often said they felt this work was not always recognised, and the impact on physical, emotional and mental well-being was evident. Informal caring roles may include cooking, cleaning, picking up shopping and medication, or running other errands.

"Women are more likely to be supporting elderly relatives shielding and assisting with childcare for grandchildren whose parents are frontline workers."

"Some women are carers in addition to supporting their children and these are often single mums. Impact is huge on physical, emotional and mental well-being."

Work Issues relating to redundancy or being furloughed (32 responses)

Respondents talked about women being more likely to be in roles in the retail, food and beauty industries, putting their jobs under threat. Some had experienced being furloughed but some had been laid off. They talked about women being more likely to have part time, or lower paid jobs, putting them at greater risk of those jobs being cut by employers.

"Women are more likely to be in part time work/hourly paid/low paid work or be self-employed to fit work around other commitments. These are the types of employments badly affected."

"More likely to lose out financially as they are often in lower paid /part time jobs that will not be furloughed and could more easily be made redundant due to the service/ hospitality sector. Women also often have more than one job making it more likely their income will be reduced."

Women's Health and Maternity (27 responses)

Some women mentioned difficulty in accessing services, or appointments being postponed. The types of women's health services mentioned were varied, but included sexual health, breast and smear screenings and contraception. Period poverty is likely to have increased, and menopause was mentioned. Factors around menopause included symptoms being heightened, added anxiety, and it being more difficult to get medical intervention at this time.

Pregnancy, birth and post-natal care was of particular concern for women and issues included having to go for post and pre-birth appointments, check-ups, screenings and procedures without a partner to support, only one person being allowed at the birth, and labouring in hospital up to that point alone. There was also the added general anxiety, stress and worry about COVID-19 whilst pregnant.

"Women who are pregnant who are having to labour alone during rules about birth partners only being there for birth, and then no visitors and no one allowed into the home. This will impact on women's recovery after birth, and they will have less help, and reduces the critical support network needed after having a baby. Support for breastfeeding is difficult to access as no face to face groups, and there is a known link between women who wanted to breastfeed and stopped and postnatal depression."

"Medical screening appointments such as breast and smear have been postponed"

Financial Concerns (24 responses)

Respondents were concerned about financial issues for the short and the long term. Low income, furloughed wage reductions and job losses was the main reason for financial worries, with some women talking about having to leave their jobs so they can look after children. Key workers reported that childcare costs have gone up because of having to find alternatives due to limited hours. Women also talked about having to spend more on their weekly supermarket shop, and their budgets do not stretch to these added costs. Even things like having to buy home-schooling materials and there being less reduced food in the supermarket was having an impact.

"Women's financial security is affected. Women are either paying more for child care, or taking reduced hours to cover child care. Fees have also increased by a day. As a result, women's annual incomes are affected. Longer term their pension contributions will be affected. It is costing me 928pcm for child care for 4 days a week for 1 child. I am a nurse. Restrictions on pick-ups and drop offs and closed days means currently I am paying an extra 500 a year for child care I am not using. Australia has made child care free during Covid to help support their community. We should consider adopting this approach."

"Many women might be forced to leave their jobs, or reduce their working hours due to care responsibilities. This might lead to a significant reduction in income, reducing financial independence and putting financial hardship in their households."

Exposure to the virus (20 responses)

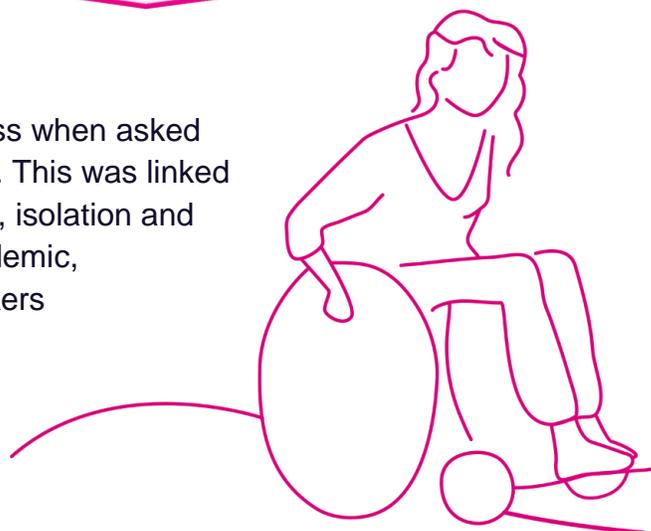
Women explained that they were more likely to do certain jobs that would give them greater exposure to the virus, such as teaching and frontline care or NHS jobs. They also expressed their concern for women being more likely to do supermarket shopping, exposing them to the virus in this context.

"Women are often responsible for grocery shops and therefore risking exposure."

"Women tend to work more in 'front line' care jobs."

Mental Health and Stress (18 responses)

Some respondents mentioned mental health and stress when asked about other ways women were affected by COVID-19. This was linked to a variety of reasons, such as juggling multiple roles, isolation and not seeing friends, ageist attitudes to do with the pandemic, stress for women with new-born babies, frontline workers missing social interactions, and generally women worrying more about current and future circumstances than men.



"I feel that women generally will try to do all they can to keep everyone happy both at home and at work to the detriment of their own health and wellbeing."

"Women may feel under more pressure to be good parent/great cook/demonstrate their ability to do their job from home just as well as in a calm quiet office. In my experience women will try to do it all and have high expectations of themselves which could lead to more pressure and mental health issues."

Other responses

Gender inequality (8), domestic abuse and sexual violence (7), intimidation or threat by men (6), women not represented at government level (5), travel or public transport (4), men are disproportionately affected or no disproportion either way (4), concerns about sex workers (4), family members breaking lockdown (3), self-confidence, care and body image (2), lack of information for women (2), gendered access to public space (1), LGBTQ+ women (1), starting a family (1), PPE for women (1), and a lack of women represented in the media (1).

As we can see there was a wide range of responses that women gave about the ways they have been disproportionate affected by COVID-19 and many of the issues were linked and mentioned in different themes.

"I am concerned about the lack of women's voices at a decision-making level."

"I've felt more scared walking down the streets when they are emptier. I had a man follow me down the street and tell me I had to be a "good girl" and "not let men near me."

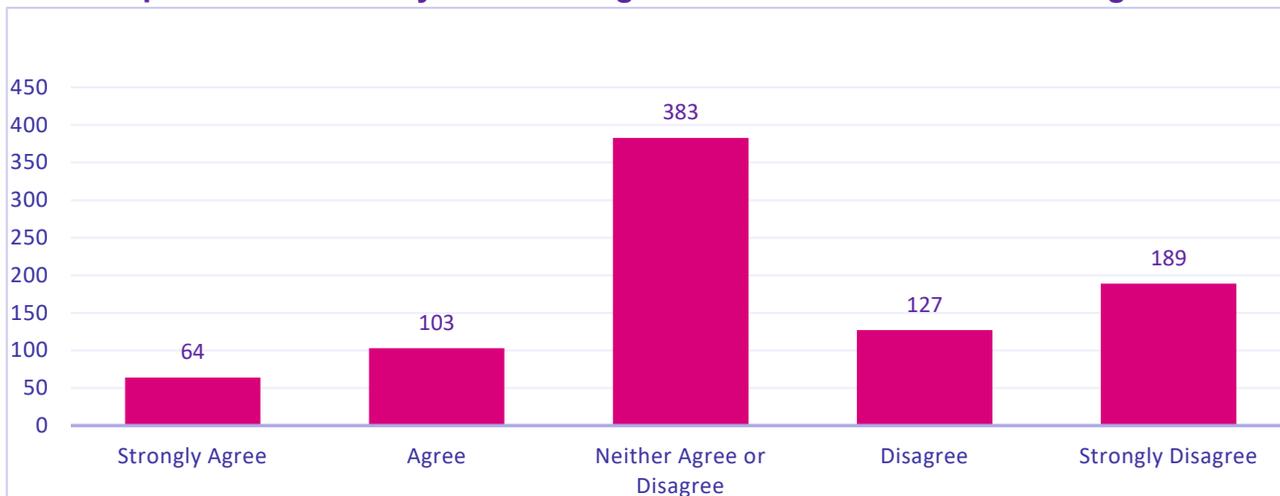
"In addition, in families with more 'traditional' values where women might already be encouraged to stay home/not work/ take more responsibility for housework it may be challenging to win back freedoms."

"I know a number of women who are really battling with balancing diet and exercise as a result of lockdown which is having a detrimental effect on their self-confidence and body image."

Q3: Personal Experiences

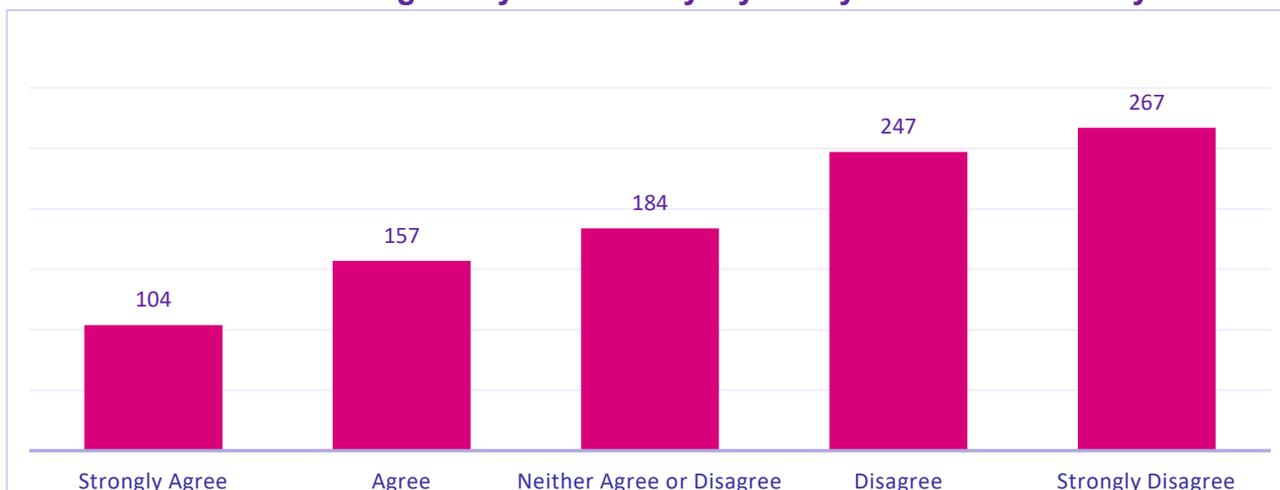
Q3 asked the respondents to consider various statements from their personal experience rather than their more general opinion, as in Q1. Again, they were told they could leave out any of the statements that they couldn't answer due to not having any experience or for any other reason.

I have experienced difficulty in accessing women's health services during lockdown.



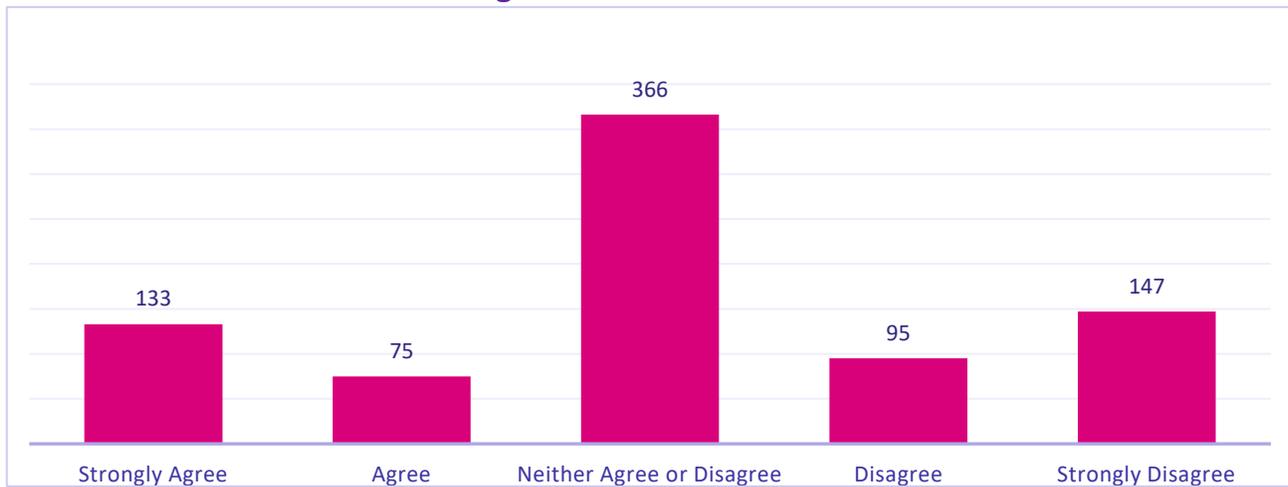
866 respondents answered this question. 19% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement meaning they had had difficulties accessing women's service. 44% said they neither agreed or disagreed. 37% said they disagreed. Women having difficulty accessing women's health services was the minority but still equated to 167 individuals, nearly 1 in 5 respondents.

COVID-19 has negatively affected my/my family's financial stability.



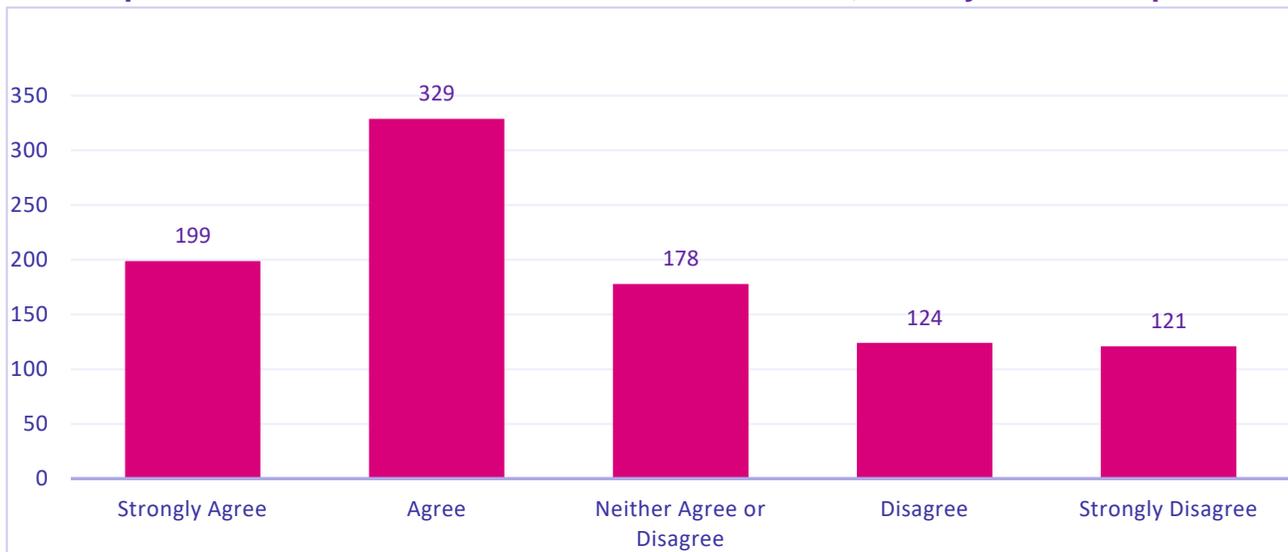
959 respondents answered this question. Most women reported that COVID-19 had not affected their financial stability, 54% said they disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. 19% said that neither agreed or disagreed and a minority of 27% said that COVID-19 had affected their finances.

I am so concerned about my children going back to school or nursery, that I will not be sending them on the allotted date.



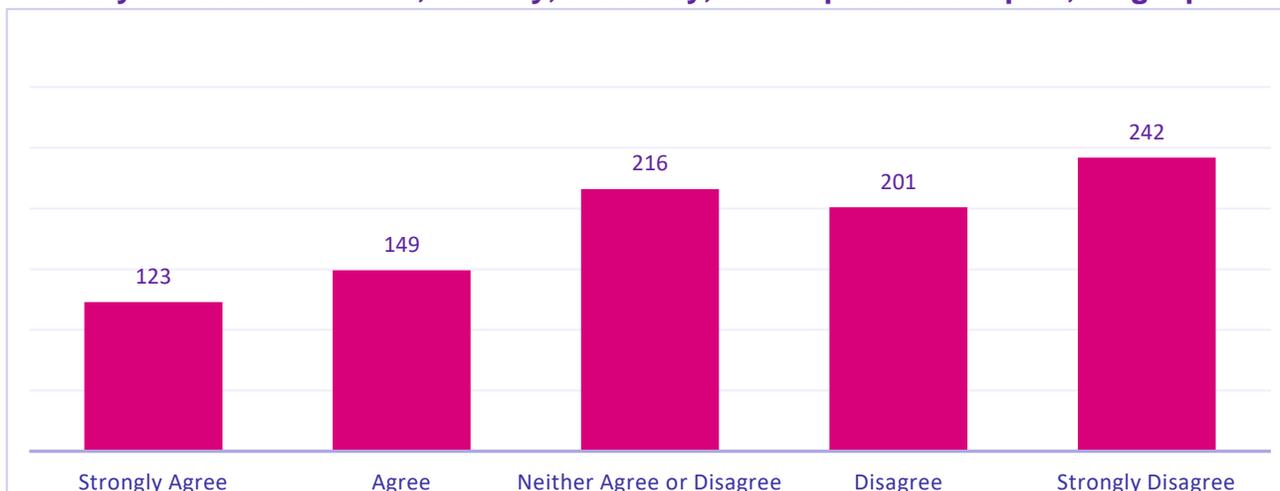
816 respondents answered this question. We can assume that those who did not respond do not have children, although it's likely that a proportion of people that responded 'neither disagree or agree' also did not have children. This was how 45% of respondents answered. 30% responded to say they disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement and 25% said they agreed or strongly agreed. This indicates that the majority are happy to send their children back to school or nursery on the date given, but it must also be noted that this will be vastly different for people depending on the child's age, job of the parent, or other factors, and some may not even know at this point.

I have experienced mental health issues more than usual, directly due to the pandemic.



951 respondents answered this question. It's clear that the majority reported that the pandemic has caused them to experience mental health issues more than normal. 56% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. 19% stated they neither agreed or disagreed and 25% said they disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. Again, it could be that respondents who have answered that they 'neither agree or disagree' with this statement, have never experienced mental health issues, or that the pandemic has not changed their experiences.

I am concerned that I will be going back to work sooner than I feel comfortable. This could be for a variety of reasons: BAME, identity, disability, use of public transport, single parent etc.



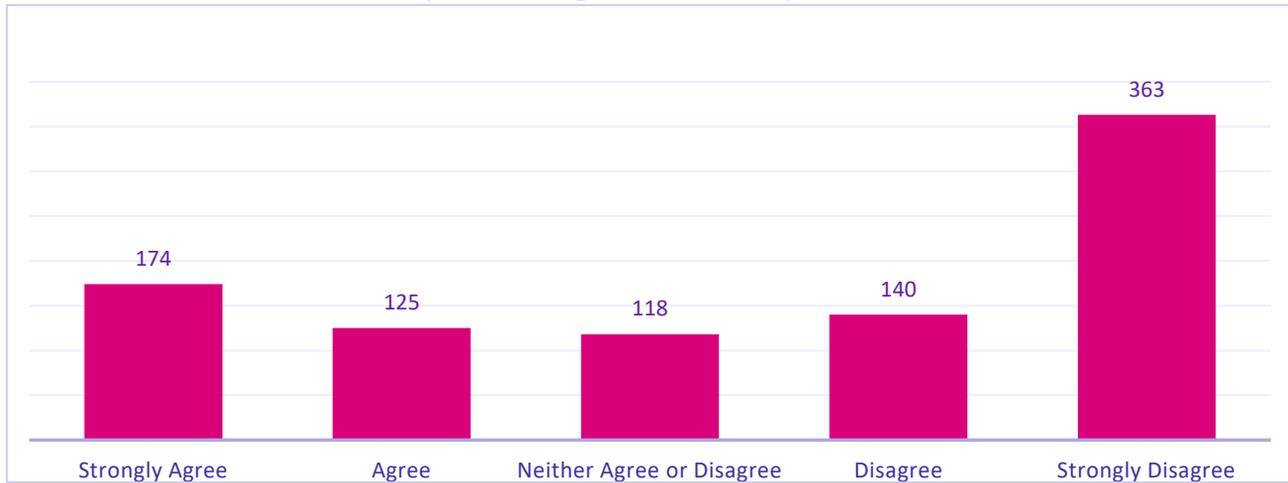
931 respondents answered this question. The majority of respondents disagreed with this statement, although there was quite an even spread across the answers. This indicated that most people are happy to return to work, although we do not have an indication as to when this may be for the respondents, and is likely to differ greatly. Respondents may not even know themselves. 48% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, 23% neither agreed or disagreed and 29% agreed or strongly agreed.

I have experienced difficulties accessing information, staying connected, home-schooling or anything else due to inadequate technology, e.g. access to a device such as a smart phone or a lap top, or inadequate data or internet connection.

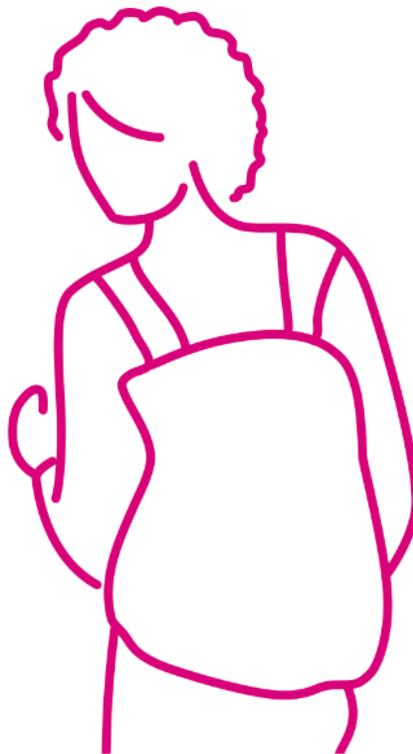


949 respondents answered this question. The majority (68%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, meaning they had little or no issues with technology, however this is perhaps not surprising given it was an online survey. There were still 18%, just less than 1 in 5 who had experienced difficulties and 14% who said they 'neither agreed or disagreed.'

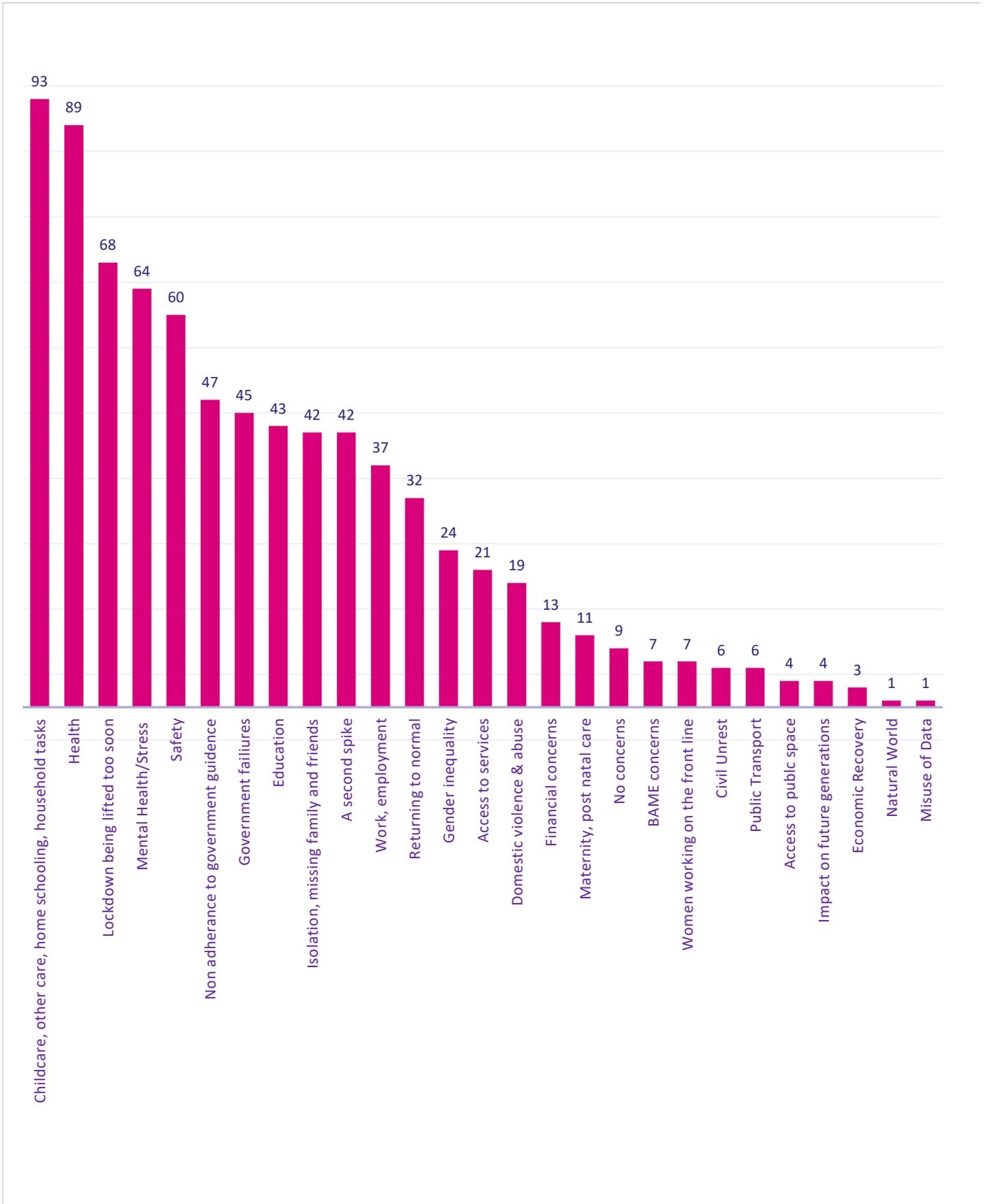
I have been affected by shielding, either for myself, or someone I care for.



920 respondents answered this question, meaning that 59 did not. Although the majority of those who answered had not been affected by shielding, (55%) and those that answered 'neither agree or disagree' were 13% a very high 31% reported that that had been affected by shielding. This is surprising as only around 2-3% of the population were formally advised by the NHS to shield, so either our survey reached so many women who were linked to this percentage of people in Leeds, or a higher number of people in Leeds self-selected to shield, in addition to those who were formally advised to. This would be interesting to investigate wider within the Leeds community.



Q4: As a Woman, what are your Concerns About the Pandemic Now?



Childcare, Home-schooling, Other caring, Household chores (93 responses)

Childcare, home-schooling, other caring responsibilities and household chores was the area of biggest concern around the pandemic right now, with 93 women commenting on this theme. In fact, juggling some or all of these roles was a key issue. Also, this category had a direct impact on job security, employment development, gender inequality and mental health & well-being according to many of the respondents. There was a sense of it never ending and when and how to transition back, and what unknown effects there would be. There was a pressure and an expectation on women to do these roles without acknowledgement, so it was deemed by some to be a hidden problem, however widespread. This is reflected by the number of respondents commenting on it.

"It is hard trying to keep up with everything at the moment: work, homeschooling, preparing extra meals for my family, doing additional housework as everyone is home all the time, queuing for food - everything takes so much of my time. I usually start my day at 07.00 and finish at 21.30, it's very tiring."

"Disproportionate burden of childcare and home-schooling even when both parents are working from home."

"Juggling work, childcare, household chores and other caring responsibilities"

Health concerns (89 responses)

Health concerns was the second highest theme when women were asked about their current concerns. 89 women mentioned health. Mostly women were worried about the health of their children, elderly relatives or others they cared about, but they also talked about their own health. They talked about avoiding catching the virus and passing it on, but they also questioned how they would carry out caring duties and other tasks if they were to get ill. They were worried about shielding relatives catching the virus and the lack of vaccine. Some mentioned being concerned about the health risks of particularly vulnerable women, for example, homeless people, asylum seekers, and women in prison.

"My main concerns are not catching the virus and falling ill as I have a lot of family members who rely heavily on me, from parents, children and grandchildren."

"The health impact on my elderly relatives and on the country as a whole."

"Getting the virus and leaving my children without a mother."

Lockdown lifted too soon (68 responses)

Lockdown and restrictions being eased either too soon, or too quickly was the third highest area of concern with 68 women citing it as their main concern currently. They were worried that the easing of lockdown and restrictions would cause another wave of infections (many predicting this in the Autumn), affecting healthcare systems, and risking their own health or the health of those they care about. Schools and nurseries reopening were a major concern, along with a lack of evidence to say easing of restrictions was safe.

"Lockdown is being eased at a time when death rates are still high in the UK."

"Lockdown is being lifted too quickly because the government care more about the economy rather than public health and there will be a second spike."

"Lock down is being lifted too quickly and risk of second spike. No decent track and trace system."

Mental Health (64 responses)

64 women mentioned mental health as their main concern during the pandemic. Many of those concerns were around mental health of others and in particular their children of all ages. General wellbeing and mood were also a concern. Isolation, anxiety around catching the virus, plans being put on hold and juggling numerous roles were the most common causes mentioned for mental health issues. The concerns around mental health for children were around the fear of COVID-19, and being away from school, or the huge changes to schools, such as social distancing measures.

"The wellbeing of my children not being at school and nursery. Lack of routine and socialisation"

"The mental health of young adults in family."

"The effect on my own mental health that I am constantly with my baby and also on their development by not seeing others and their separation anxiety."

Safety (60 responses)

60 women spoke about safety; safety in terms of catching the virus, and in relation to their children, families and relatives, especially when they had underlying health conditions. They asked how safe schools were, and questioned how to keep their families safe, especially as changes were being made, and easing of lockdown meant their families were at greater risk of exposure. Safety and protection of vulnerable people in society was also mentioned, as was safety at work.

"Safety of the public and myself and my family because of the pandemic."

"Safety of return to school. We decided not to send my reception age son back. It was a stressful decision, and we didn't have adequate information."

"The safety of myself and my child. There is no one else to safely take care of my child if I become ill."

Others not adhering to Lockdown Rules & Social Distancing (47 responses)

47 women commented on their concerns that others were not adhering to social distancing and were breaking other lockdown rules and the subsequent risk this was putting on themselves, their families and wider communities. They were particularly concerned that these behaviours would drive them back into a second lockdown period and there would be a second wave of the pandemic, leading to more unnecessary illnesses and deaths. Of particular concern was parties, beaches, beauty spots

and barbeques and a few women mentioned the example of Dominic Cummings and their view that he set a bad example and broke the government rules, leading to others following suit.

"The general public's demonstrated lack of compliance; I have no trust in others to maintain cleanliness or practice safe distancing."

"Lockdown measures being flouted and lifted too rapidly suggesting we'll be back where we started quite rapidly and all we've done in the last 12 weeks will have been wasted."

"the recklessness of the general public, especially after the Cummings debacle."

Government Failures (45 responses)

Views regarding the government and perceived failings were cited as the main concern of 45 women. This was in relation to decisions, lack of information, mismanagement, inadequate testing facilities, and ignoring scientific evidence. Women spoke about the government being unstable, and these women had a lack of trust in the government, feeling they had to make their own decisions, which were potentially not supported. They also said that the leadership was poor and in comparison, gave examples of Germany and New Zealand, where female leaders were strong and competent. Underfunding and neglect of the NHS was a concern, as was a lack of female representation in the government. Many women felt that the government was being driven by the economy more than people's safety and health, which they did not agree with.

"That government is repeatedly disregarding scientific advice such as relaxing the lockdown now is too early. That the government clearly doesn't care about us, it only seems to care about protecting itself and party donor's profits."

"The safety of my family and the faulty decisions of the government which I feel puts their safety at risk."

"The lack of attention to or clarity on safety, community, support and family, and how to properly manage these during the pandemic. The advice from government is very vague, putting the pressure on individuals to decide what is safe or not and removing collective responsibility, which should be the focus right now."

Education (43 responses)

Women were very concerned about the education of their children of different ages, from nursery age, primary, secondary, GCSE's and A Levels, through to university education, and there was a wide variety of concerns. There were worries about the lack of input from teachers, about how and when children would get back to education. Other issues were: the methods of work being sent, not being suitable to individual's needs, not wanting children to return to school for safety reasons, and the lack of intellectual stimulus. Sometimes, children not being in school was having a detrimental effect on women's ability to work efficiently, or at all. There were feeling of guilt expressed, due to sending

children back to school too soon, or about what the experience of sending children felt like, or due to not doing a good job of home-schooling. Some women were concerned about the job prospects and futures of their older children doing GCSE or A-Level exams or at University.

"My child's education and how the hell I am going to manage that and working 30 hours a week until September?"

"Is my decision to send the kids back to school the right decision?"

"My children's ability to take their exams (GCSEs and A Levels) and being disadvantaged by the level of input they've had from school / private tutors compared to other children their age."

"I am concerned that my (Yr 7) child will not be going back to school until September - there seems to be little discussion of the 'in-between' years (i.e. not the years which are starting back now, or scheduled to start back over the next few weeks)."

A second wave of the pandemic (42 responses)

Many women were worried about a 2nd spike or wave of infections and that this would mean that the pandemic would last a long time, the country would return to lockdown, and more people would become ill and die. They mentioned various reasons why they were expecting a second spike, such as 'mass gatherings', or 'lockdown easing too soon', and 'a rush back to normal.'

"I am concerned there is going to be a second peak which might cause more difficulties."

"2nd peak, people thinking it's over when 100s of people are still dying."

"The risk of a second peak and therefore moving back into lockdown again."

Isolation and not seeing family and friends (42 responses)

Social isolation, loneliness and not being able to see family and friends was the biggest cause of concern for 42 women. Some women talked about missing family in other countries, or living far away. Isolation for those shielding was mentioned, and also not being able to see family who are ill or struggling. Grandparents, parents, children, siblings and close friends were most often mentioned as people respondents wanted to see. Social interactions were important for romantic relationships growing and forming. In a work context, some women spoke about not feeling supported at work by managers and colleagues, and becoming lonely. For some women, interactions at work were their main source of human contact, which was taken away quickly at the start of lockdown due to working from home.

"When will I be able to see my extended family who live down South and give them a hug?"

"I'm unable to visit my elderly mother who lives too far away to visit in a day."

"Lack of opportunities for social interaction which may enable me to meet a romantic partner & the negative impact on my daughter's need to interact with her peers."

Work and Employment (37 responses)

Issues around work and employment were mentioned by 37 women. Again, there was a wide range of concerns. Many women were worried about job stability. Some women had been made redundant, and were struggling to find appropriate jobs advertised in their sector. Some had contracts ending, and were worried about getting a new job. Some women were worried about their performance at work because of working from home and other responsibilities, and they wanted to get back to work, whilst others had opposite concerns such as being forced to go back to work too soon. Other issues were promotions being put on hold, and not being able to secure fragile contracts. Women business owners talked about their concerns too. Seasonal business had been affected, which would have a knock-on effect for the rest of the year and beyond. There was also concerns about the difference in situations and opportunities for men and women in the workplace and working from home, with women being more adversely affected in this area.

"My business is seasonal and all my bookings have cancelled for 2020. I am not entitled to any government funding nor benefits. I have had my business for 10 years and it is dead."

"That my contribution at work is invisible and being overlooked / not supported for work opportunities in favour of male counterparts."

"I was made redundant at the start of the pandemic and there have been few jobs advertised in my sector."

Returning to 'normal.' (32 responses)

Many women talked about returning to normal, or a 'new normal'. There was anxiety about how this would happen, what to expect, how to manage the easing of lockdown, and the fear of the unknown. Areas of concern were work, education, shopping and seeing family and friends.

"Just how things are going to return to "normal" or what "normal" will in fact look like and the long-term effect this situation could have on my children's mental health and their education going forwards."

"What is the new normal?"

"Normality? Think it will be a whole new experience shopping etc the ability to nip into a shop? Instead of planning and queuing?"

Gender Inequality (24 responses)

Gender Inequality was a concern for 24 women. Women talked about inequalities being made more visible, or surfacing due to the pandemic, and were worried that they would be ignored, especially by the government, who were showing a lack of responsibility towards women. Women spoke about the pandemic reinforcing the gender divide, where men generally could continue working as normal, and women were carrying the burden of childcare, home-schooling and housework. Stereotypical views of women were also a concern, where women were just 'expected to keep it all together.' The disproportionate effects of the pandemic on women were a common theme.

"The pandemic has just shone a light on existing inequalities in society, which will continue beyond the pandemic if we don't take more action to redress the imbalances."

"We are already fighting for equal rights and this has just made that fight harder and the gap larger - women are doing it all... housework, childcare, home-schooling, and expected to continue working from home. It is not possible - these are 2 or 3 full time jobs."

"I feel that stereotypes that women are emotional are more prevalent in society again. I fear that my concerns won't be heard as they will be seen to come from an emotional place. I also think the pandemic has highlighted inequality but that it is not being addressed."

Access to service (21 responses)

Access to services was a concern for 21 respondents. This was mainly about women's health services, and routine medical appointments but also about support services, autism assessments, and services for vulnerable women. Women's health services included cervical screening, contraception, fertility services, breast screening, and ovarian cancer appointments. Some women said these services were not available and others said they were reluctant to access them due to COVID-19.

"I need medical appointments but they have to wait."

"Probably sounds daft but I'm now a month late for my depo injection which I had to stop my extremely painful periods. Worried they are going to come back."

"That wider medical service will commence reopening and women will be encouraged to return to breast screening, booking smears etc."

Domestic Violence and Abuse (19 responses)

Domestic Violence and abuse were the main concern for 19 respondents. Women were concerned that incidents would increase in frequency and seriousness, and that there would be a rise in new cases. Women spoke about the home being the most unsafe place for some women, and situations had been made worse due to not being able to leave their homes because of lockdown. There were

concerns about there being insufficient refuges and services due to rising numbers of cases. Honour based violence was also mentioned as a concern.

"Women experiencing domestic violence who don't have the resources/access to leave during the lockdown."

"I'm particularly concerned about women and children in abusive relationships who are unable to leave because there are insufficient shelters and services for them."

Financial concerns (13 responses)

Financial concerns were the primary issue for 13 women. This was sometimes due to losing their job, or their partners losing their jobs, or the potential instability of those jobs. The economic effects of the virus were also mentioned. There were also issues with pensions.

"I am concerned that my partner might lose his job and the effect that would have on our finances."

"Future financial stability. I am 60 years old. Would have been about to receive state pension but now have to rely on a private pension I took out later in life to compensate for the fact my state pension age has now been delayed until I am almost 67. The private pension has been decimated by this crisis and I am now thousands of pounds down."

Maternity and Post Natal (11 responses)

11 women surveyed were concerned about pregnancy, maternity care and post-natal care. Women expressed how being on their own for appointments and parts of their birthing experience worried them, and missing out on support networks due to social distancing. Some also spoke of general health concerns around being pregnant and COVID-19, for themselves and their babies.

"Getting pregnant and having to attend appointments and scans without my partner for support. I know this has been the case for a number of my friends who have literally gone through the process alone."

Women working on the front line (7 responses)

7 participants talked about women being in front line or key worker jobs, therefore putting their health and that of their families in danger. They spoke of feeling anxious going out into the community in case they infected others unknowingly. Another issue was the lack of PPE they had access to.

"That I put myself at risk every week as a key worker and do not always feel supported or understood in my anxieties about having to go out in to the community."

"When will I be withdrawn from the front line?"

Public Transport (6 responses)

6 women were concerned by public transport, and feeling it was unsafe, but they had no option but to use it to be able to go back to work.

"Having to travel by public transport with other people's inability to social distance."

Civil unrest, and Racism (6 responses)

6 women talked about concerns of future civil unrest and having experienced aggression, verbal abuse and racism. This was in queues, supermarkets, walking down the street, and whilst out doing exercise. One of the reasons they believe people behave in these ways is due to frustration.

"Racism - as a British born Chinese woman I have experienced much more racist behaviour - casual verbal abuse, spitting - than is 'usual'. This affects stress/anxiety and makes me control the number of times I go outside for exercise (my flat has no outside space)."

Impact on future generations (4 responses)

4 women mentioned the impact on future generations in terms of their jobs, finances, opportunities, and relationships, and they were worried about their children's future.

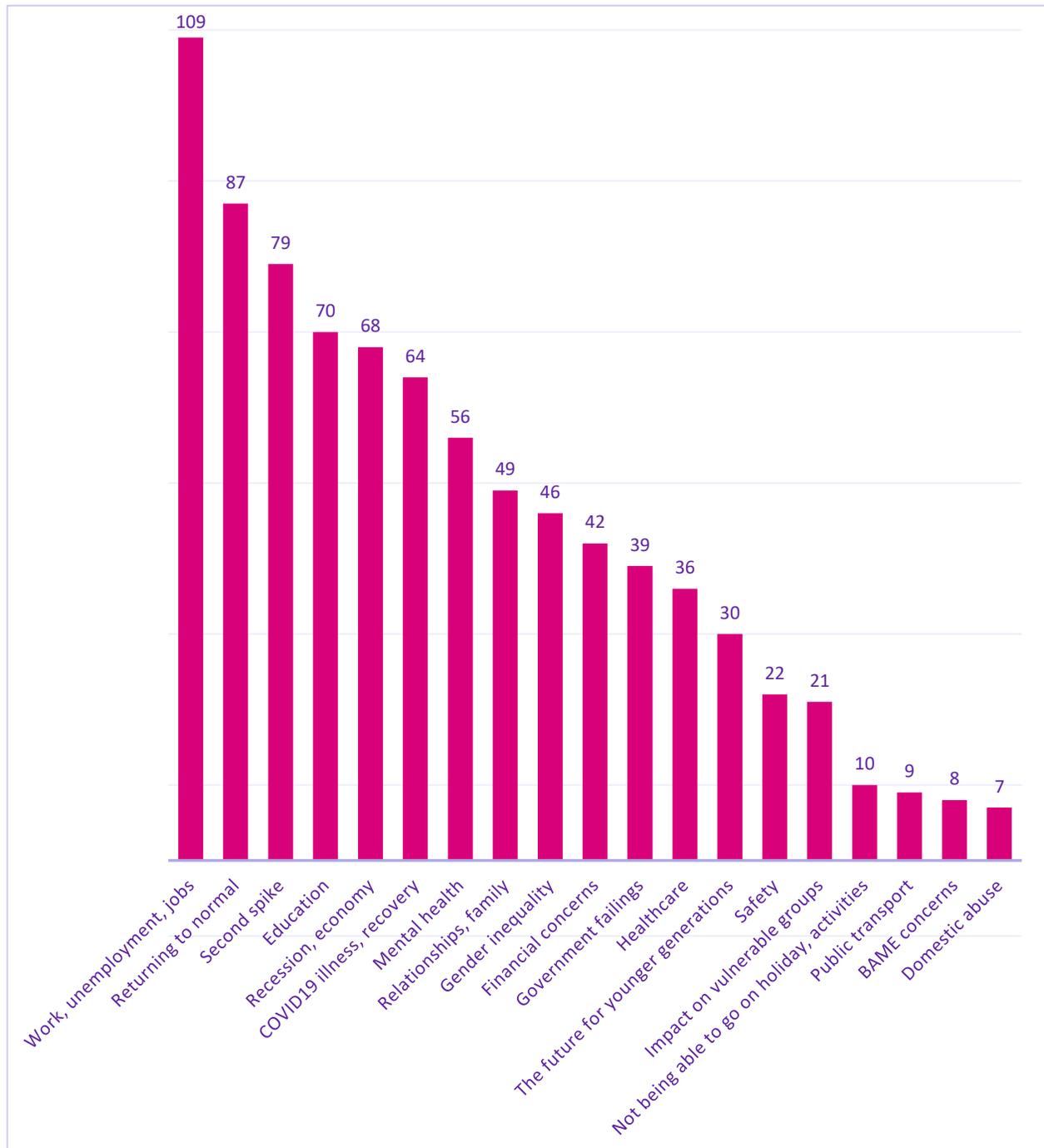
"The effect on my adult children's family future, financial, job security & relationships."

Access to public spaces (4 responses)

Comments included having a lack of social space for distancing whilst out in public places, and limited safe access to public places including public toilets, important due to women's health such as menstruating.



Q5: As a Woman, what is your Main Concern About the Pandemic for the Future?



Work, unemployment and jobs (109 responses)

There were many different concerns within this theme but they included job security for the future, career development, unemployment, how to manage a safe commute, and a work life balance. Many women asked how safe work would be to return to, and how their work and job security had been or would be affected by childcare and other caring responsibilities. They questioned future job prospects, potentially affecting their whole lives, and employability after being furloughed. They were concerned about the impact of returning to work and how to work around childcare.

Some women were also enjoying working from home and were concerned that they would have no option but to return to the workplace. There were also comments that women who were in caring, NHS and frontline jobs had not been rewarded for their roles. The concerns around jobs were for all ages, young women leaving university and starting their careers and also older women finding new jobs and the impact on pensions.

"Many things, but one of them is the fear of future redundancy. As a woman in my fifties how easy will it be to find new employment? Will the benefit system support me? What will be the effect of an extended period of unemployment on my pension and my mental health?"

"Long-term effects on my career. I am on a 3-year contract and worry that I will find it difficult to find employment when this contract ends if businesses/universities are hiring less."

"I think it will hamper careers if women have taken a step back into a more domestic role during the crisis. If we keep having second, third, fourth waves it may be hard for women to keep their jobs if they have a male partner who is unprepared to compromise."

Returning to normal (87 responses)

There were many concerns around returning to normal and it was mentioned in other themes too. Mostly, respondents were worried how and when we would return to normal but some respondents wanted to keep some of the changes they had experienced and were reluctant to return to all forms of 'normal.' One example of this was less movement of people had had a positive impact on natural surroundings.

Some of the themes around 'returning to normal' were around childcare and working from home, transport, seeing family and friends, the criminal justice system, schools, holidays and feelings of worry and anxiety. Some commented how all our lives have changed forever.

"The potential for changing the world - not for the better and myself and my children not being able to experience life to the full."

"The world will never be the same."

"I'm concerned about going back into society as I have stayed away from shops etc."

Second spike, second lockdown (79 responses)

There were many reasons why respondents were concerned about this. Many spoke about other people not following the rules about social distancing and meeting up in groups. They also said that lockdown was being eased too soon. They were worried about bars and shops being opened too soon, and football matches and other sports and entertainment events not being safe. Some were worried about workplaces not being safe, and also schools and other education establishments. Some spoke

about comparing the UK other countries and not trusting the governments decisions about easing restrictions.

"Lockdown could be a regular occurrence if it is not brought under control."

"This is going to come back with a vengeance!"

Education (70 responses)

Concerns included when and how children were going to be able to return to school and how normal that would be for them and the effects on their mental health and wellbeing. There was also worries about how different schools would be operating, therefore not a consistent experience and thoughts about after school activities not being available so this would still affect women going to work. Another issue was the concern for children from more disadvantaged backgrounds having had less home-schooling and peer interaction, therefore widening the gap.

"Children from poorer families will be disadvantaged through having had less home-schooling."

"Will my children go back to school at all this year?"

"When will my children will be able safely return to the school/nursery environment they are used to? (i.e. not just an isolating bubble), and play properly with friends."

Recession and the Economy (86 responses)

Respondents were particularly worried about a recession and the economy being negatively affected by the pandemic when thinking about the future. It was also a concern when women were thinking about their present situation, but was more prevalent when thinking about the future. Women also said they were worried that the government were more concerned about the economy rather than people's safety and health. There were concerns about funding cuts to vital services and these concerns were about both the immediate and long-term future.

"I'm very concerned about the economy and how this will affect our lives for decades."

"For women more broadly, the impact of a collapsed economy and how this will exacerbate the damage caused by austerity."

"I am worried about the long term social and economic consequences more than anything."

Illness and recovery from COVID-19 (64 responses)

There were a range of concerns around illness and recovery from the virus, the most prominent being about a vaccine. Some thought a vaccine would be unlikely or that it would not be available to everyone, or the amount of time it would take to reach a safe vaccine. Some even spoke about a vaccine being imposed.

Other concerns were about the lack of knowledge about the virus, such as the assurance of immunity after having COVID-19 and around recovery, in particular those that had suffered from long term recovery issues such as ongoing chronic fatigue, and felt that they had not received adequate support. Women also mentioned safety issues due to not knowing who had the virus, and about testing, especially for those that had the virus early on when testing was not available.

"Will there ever be a vaccine, when will I be able to have a test that shows the body is now immune to the virus and indeed my family. What can we learn from the pandemic."

"Chronic fatigue cases increasing."

"Not having a vaccine or drugs to help with the disease. Not knowing who is a carrier or spreader of the disease."

Mental Health (56 responses)

There were lots of concerns about mental health in the future, new cases and existing cases getting worse and therefore a strain on services that support people. There were concerns for women's own mental health but also for their family, especially children, and the sense of a collective trauma within society. The separation from normality was a theme, and issues included anxiety, depression, and PTSD.

"Longer term impact on mental health of society as we have experienced (and continue to experience) a collective trauma."

"Mental health of children having been separated from normality, and then separating from parents again - I don't want to let go of my children yet - feeling of not being safe outside the house of an invisible illness, PTSD. Mental health issues may arise further down the line, not immediately."

Family and relationships (49 responses)

Social isolation was a concern for many women, and the long-term nature of restrictions preventing women from seeing their family and friends. There were many examples of how women had been affected by the lack of face to face contact with others: women on maternity leave wanting to connect with other mothers, women wanting to find and develop romantic relationships, women whose families live abroad, women whose children or parents live far away, and women who are having to work longer hours because of working from home meaning they had less time for social interactions. This ties into the theme of things returning to normal and women expressed how they could not see how and when vital face to face relationships and interactions would resume.

"I miss my children who live in different parts of the UK, Scotland, Wales and England, I miss hugging my mum who's 81, I miss hugging in general, I'm a hugger. Hugging makes me feel good."

"The length of time we will be unable to fully interact with family and friends."

Gender inequality (46 responses)

This theme rose in prevalence in the answers of women when thinking about their main concern for the future. They were worried that the fight for gender equality would be pushed back years, that the role of women in society would be pushed further towards the home and childcare, that economic disadvantage would affect women more than men, and that the gender pay gap would increase. Respondents worried that women's issues were at risk of being forgotten within the pandemic and that nothing would change.

"Further oppression of women due women's issues getting swept under carpet as recovery from pandemic and recession takes priority."

"In my view, women are being seriously affected by the pandemic. I think after the pandemic there will be a significant increase in poverty levels all over the world, also an increase in families of single mothers having to look after their children, many women having to leave their jobs to look after those affected by the disease with long-term consequences. Also, young girls having to stop their studies to help with house-chores or to help look after siblings. I think in many instances the pandemic has shifted back the perception that women are the main caregivers, and it will be very difficult to shift back to a world where women are not defined solely on that basis."

Financial concerns (42 responses)

Some respondents were worried about financial concerns for the future. This was in relation to pensions, inflation and tax rises at the same time as pay freezes, the potential of losing jobs, the effects on small businesses and women in certain sectors that have been more heavily hit by the pandemic.

"Long term impact on my pension scheme, I am playing catch-up due to career breaks earlier in life and my husband has retired."

"Financial implications - inflation, possible pay freeze, tax increases."

Government failings (39 responses)

Respondents were concerned about the government prioritising the economy over people's safety. They were also concerned that they were passing bills without public scrutiny and there may be a breakdown of democracy. Another aspect of concern was women not being adequately represented in government, so women's issues would not feature in the planning and recovery of the pandemic. There was also the mention of government spending being out of control and leaders not being held to account.

"Women are still not being adequately represented in positions of power and therefore the management of the pandemic is inevitably skewed to the white male perspective. This makes me worried that gender and race divides will only be further entrenched by the pandemic. Government incompetence over Brexit being masked by effects of pandemic."

Healthcare (36 responses)

The concerns highlighted within this theme were in relation to the lack of, or postponement of screenings such as cancer and cervical screenings, menopause treatment, and difficult access to the GP. Sometimes this was because of the healthcare provider, and sometimes because of the individual's reluctance to access healthcare during the pandemic for safety reasons. Another area of concern was for the funding and sustainability of the NHS, women's disproportionate role within it and the lack of adequate PPE protection.

"I'm also aware that I have delayed having a smear test until social distancing etc. has eased - at what point does all this non-urgent healthcare that is delayed become urgent?"

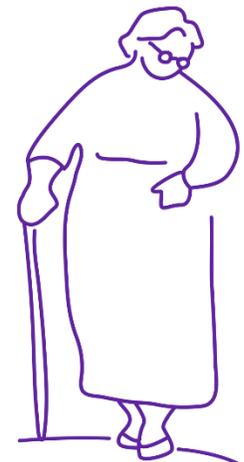
"Getting hold of the right medicine for issues with the menopause - I recently asked for a referral but was told they are on hold at this time."

Other responses:

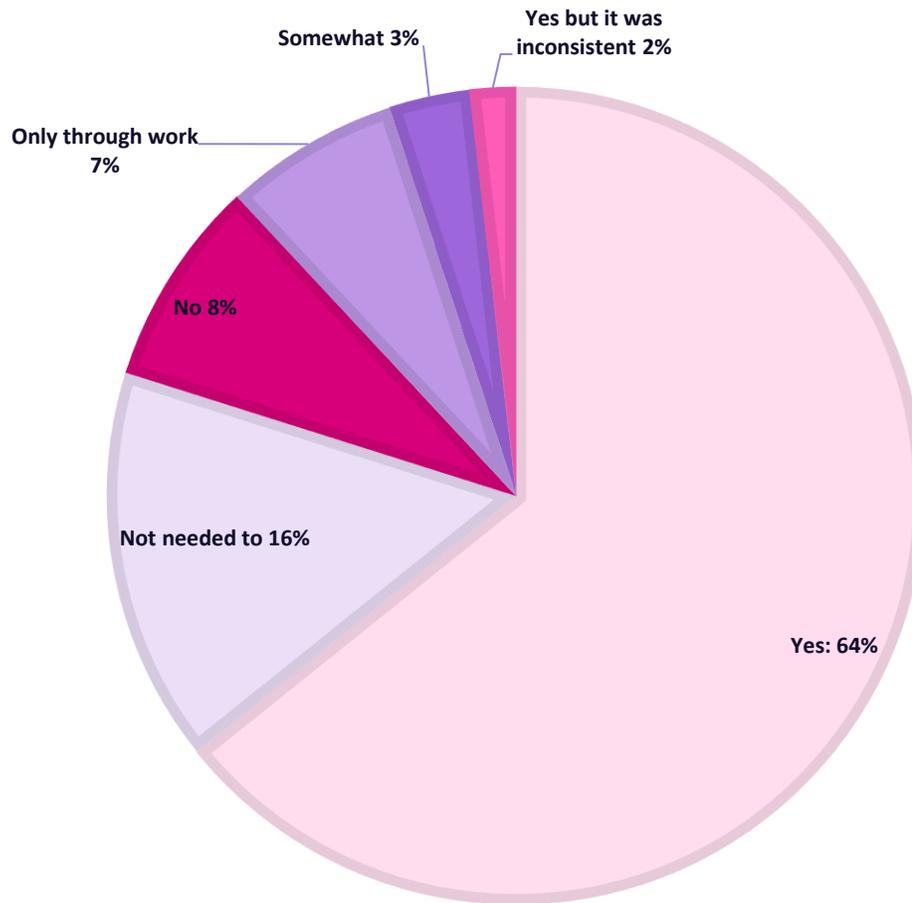
These included the future for younger generations (30), safety (22), the impact on vulnerable people (21), not being able to go on holiday or other activities (10), public transport (9) women from different BAME communities concerns (8), and domestic abuse (7)

Again, there was a wide range of responses that linked with each other. If we compare the range of answers in question 4 and 5, we can see that the themes emerging were similar, however, the prevalence of them changed depending on whether women were thinking about their concerns regarding COVID-19 now or in the future.

The top three concerns for this current time were 'childcare, home-schooling, other caring and household chores', 'health concerns' and 'lockdown being lifted too soon.' The top three concerns for the future were 'work, unemployment and jobs', 'returning to normal' and 'a second spike/lockdown.' Themes were apparent across the areas identified such as mental health, women juggling lots of different roles, women carrying the emotional burden, and the effect of the pandemic on gender equality. Concerns were that issues such as this were going to be ignored whilst the government focused on the economy.



Q6: “Have you easily been able to access local advice, guidance and support regarding COVID-19 in Leeds?”



When asked the question, “Have you easily been able to access local advice, guidance and support regarding COVID-19 in Leeds?” 780 responses were given. 64% of respondents answered ‘Yes.’ 16% reported that they hadn’t tried to access any information or support, or they hadn’t needed to. 8% answered ‘No.’ 7% had accessed information and support, but only through their workplace or because of the type of work they do. 3% said they had received information or guidance to an extent, and 2% said they had received information and guidance but it had been confusing or provided inconsistent messages. Below are some of the responses given.

“I feel Leeds City Council has provided clear guidance and support by providing updates and writing to all residents in how to access support. They teamed up with V&L very quickly to coordinate a local response prior to the NHS responder scheme was launched nationally.”

Conclusion

Women Friendly Leeds team was delighted to have received such a positive and vast response from women in Leeds to the COVID-19 women's survey. We want to thank every respondent who took the time to contribute their opinions and experiences which has given us an extensive local view of how the pandemic has affected women. We took the time to read, understand and categorise every single comment that was made and we valued every response given.

These responses have enabled us to gain a rich and useful range of local data highlighting the views, opinions and experiences of 979 women in Leeds in regards to COVID-19. It is apparent that there are key themes that have emerged from the survey, some are already known across the city, so the findings reaffirm those as priorities and concerns that should be addressed.

These themes include: women's employability; juggling numerous tasks expected of them, such as taking the majority of the burden of childcare, other caring responsibilities, carrying the emotional burden; and greater general household tasks. Some respondents told us that these negatively affected their financial stability, and their mental health and well-being.

There was a sense that gender inequality had been negatively affected by these issues and, women talked about their concerns for family of all ages, and friends, often as a concern over themselves.

Whilst completing this survey there have been some lessons learned by the team from women who responded in terms of the following which will be considered in the future:

1. Developing online surveys
2. How to capture some of the many positives stories to have come out of the pandemic that haven't been captured within this survey
3. How capturing the demographics of the respondents may have given more insight into who was responding and if those respondents were fully reflecting the diversity of Leeds
4. How questions could be posed without being deemed as being biased

Women's Lives Leeds are delighted that the Women Friendly Leeds team could do this first survey and capture so many responses which can be seen in the direct quotes throughout the report. These will be used to help shape and contribute to conversations in Leeds.

The intention is that these findings will be used to inform the city's COVID-19 recovery response, and be taken into consideration in the future, so that women's voices will be present in every decision, plan and change that our city makes.

We make no apology for the ambitious nature of our recommendations and strive to ensure that gender is at the heart of the future city-wide approach in line with our intention for Leeds to become the first UK Women Friendly City.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been drawn from this report and will be shared across all strategic partnerships:

1. The report will be disseminated and inform future planning in the city, where city leaders will take a proactive approach to gender and have an inclusive leadership stance in the COVID-19 recovery stage.
2. Women's Lives Leeds will adopt a strategy to share the report as widely as possible to all regional and national partners.
3. City leaders continue to recognise gender equality and that the voices, experiences and views of a diverse range of women are included and represented in conversations going forward in the future.
4. City leaders are to consider and include employability and equality in conversations at every stage in the COVID-19 recovery process, as these were identified as particular concerns, both currently and in the future.
5. All Partners including Leeds City Council, Public Health and Clinical Commissioning Groups who have a responsibility for designing, reviewing and commissioning services consider the specifics that are relevant to them to help shape more targeted approaches; to help make changes to services and to adapt to meet identified need that has arisen directly due to the pandemic, in particular maternity and mental health.
6. The Women's and Girl's Hubs consider this alongside the City Listening Project's outcomes; form task and finish groups to agree and take forward collective priorities based on the broader scope of both projects.

