



## **Coronavirus and People with Learning Disabilities Study**

### **Wave 2 Results - July 2021**

#### **Briefing: Physical and Mental Health of People with PMLD**

##### **Background**

- This study is designed to systematically and responsively track the experiences of adults with learning disabilities through the COVID-19 pandemic across the four UK nations.
- There will be three 'Waves' of data collection over a 12-month period. Wave 2 data were collected between April and May 2021.
- The data in this briefing are taken from Wave 2 of the study. If you want to find out more detail about the people who took part and the Wave 1 findings, you can download the full report [here](#).
- There are two 'Cohorts' of participants in this study. In Wave 2:
  - In Cohort 1, 598 adults with learning disabilities were interviewed by researchers.
  - In Cohort 2, family carers or paid support staff took part in an online survey about the experiences of 272 adults with learning disabilities who they supported/cared for. These were likely to be adults with more severe to profound learning disabilities.
  - In Cohort 2, 44.7% of the adults were described as having profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD).
- This document presents selected data about the physical and mental health of people with PMLD from the Wave 2 results. These data only relate to people with PMLD in Cohort 2. You can download the Easy Read briefing about the physical and mental health of people with PMLD [here](#).

## Physical health of people with PMLD

- About half (52%) of family carers and paid support staff of people with PMLD in Cohort 2 reported that the health of the person they care for was good that day.
- 33% of people with PMLD were reported to have had a new or worsening health problem (excluding COVID-19) in the last four weeks.
  - Of these people, there was an attempt to get advice from a doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for 86% of people with PMLD.
  - Of those people who did not attempt to get advice from a doctor, nurse, or pharmacist, the most commonly reported reason for this was thinking that it was not serious enough to seek advice.
- 14% of people with PMLD were reported to have become very overweight since the start of the first lockdown in March 2020.
- 6% of people with PMLD were reported to have become very underweight since the start of the first lockdown in March 2020.
- 76% of people with PMLD were reported to have stayed about the same weight since the start of the first lockdown in March 2020.

## Contact with health care professionals

- Figure 1, below, shows the percentage of people with PMLD in Cohort 2 who had had contact with different health care professionals in the four weeks before the survey was completed.

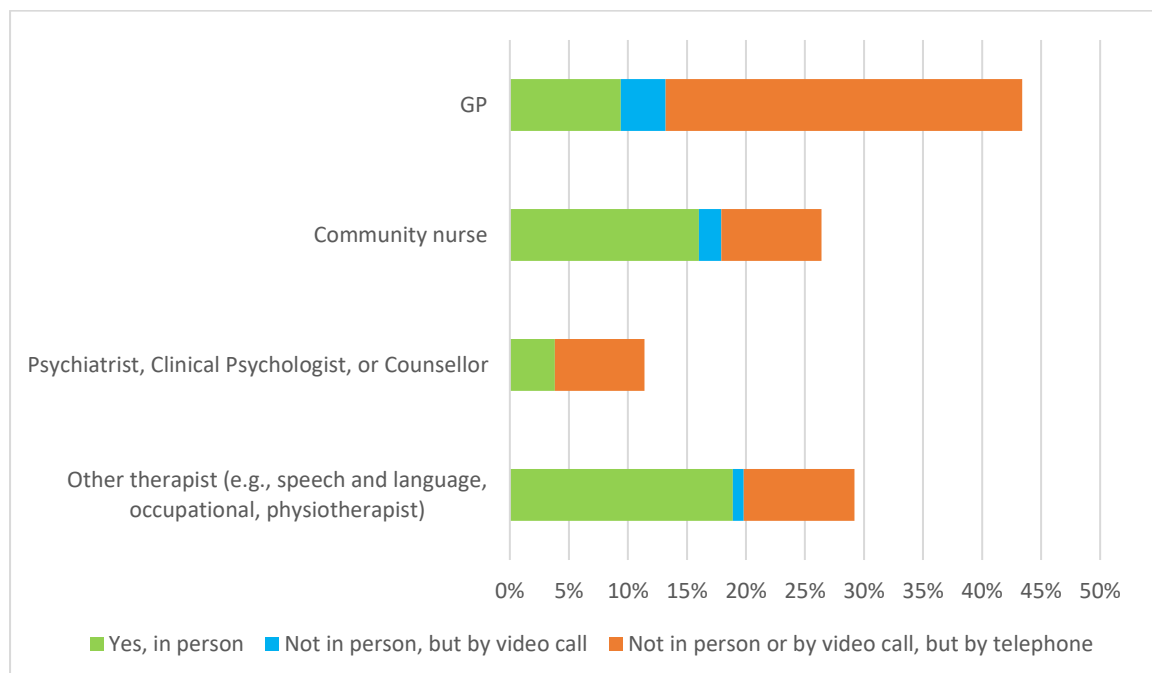


Figure 1. Contact with health care professionals for people with PMLD in Cohort 2 in the last four weeks

- Over half of the people with PMLD in Cohort 2 were reported to have not seen these health care professionals at all in the last four weeks.
- Of the three contact methods we asked about (in person, video call, telephone call), video calls were used least frequently for all four health care professionals.

### **Hospital admissions**

- In the last four weeks, 6% of people with PMLD in Cohort 2 were reported to have been admitted to hospital for a reason unrelated to COVID-19.
- All of the people with PMLD who were reported to have been admitted to hospital were allowed to have a carer stay with them while they were being admitted to hospital and while they were in hospital.

### **Planned medical appointments, tests and operations**

- 5% of people with PMLD in Cohort 2 had had a planned hospital appointment cancelled in the last four weeks.
- 6% of people with PMLD in Cohort 2 had had a planned medical test cancelled in the last four weeks.
- 2% of people with PMLD in Cohort 2 had had a planned medical operation cancelled in the last four weeks.

### **Preventative health measures**

- 19% of people with PMLD have had an annual health check since the start of 2021. Of the 20 people who have had an annual health check, these were either in person (7), by telephone (11) or by video call (2). One further person with PMLD had not yet had theirs, but had an appointment booked.
- 77% of people with PMLD in Cohort 2 were reported to have received their flu vaccine in Winter 2020/21.

### **Mental health of people with PMLD**

- Figure 2, below, details how people with PMLD were reported to have been feeling in the last four weeks.

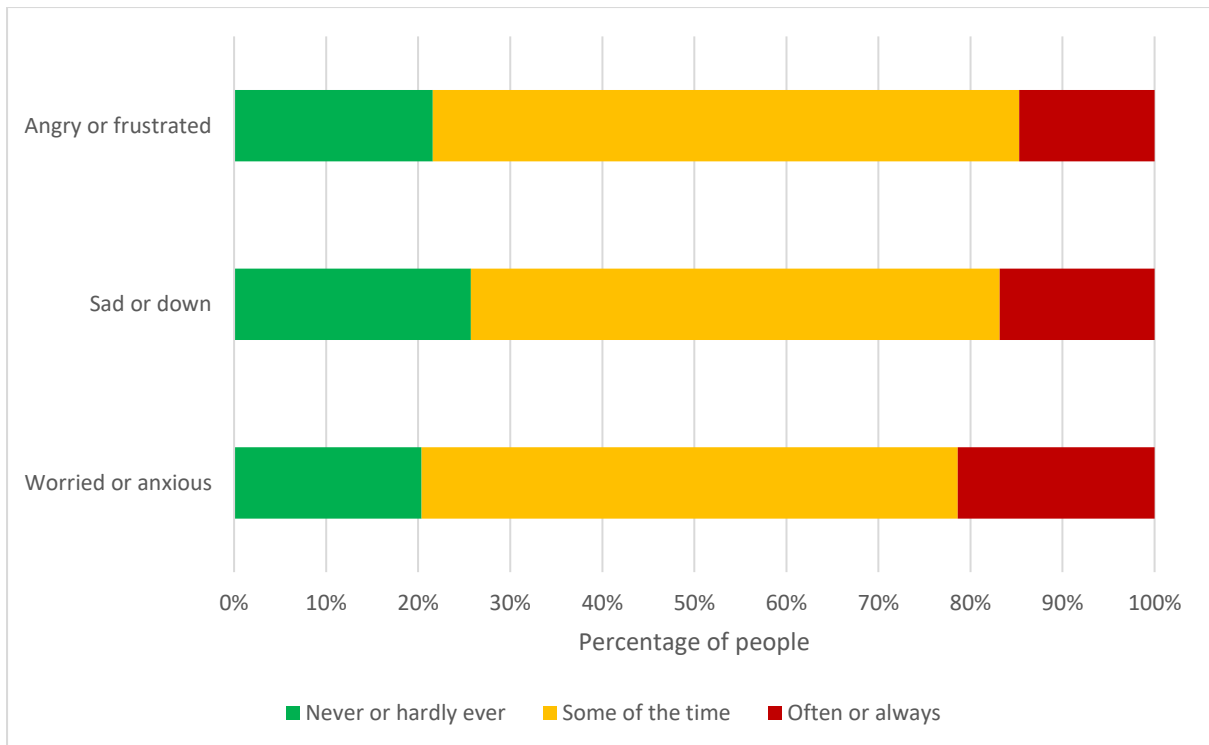


Figure 2. How people with PMLD are reported to have been feeling in the last four weeks

- Most people with PMLD (79%) were reported to have felt angry or frustrated at least some of the time in the last four weeks.
- Most people with PMLD (74%) were reported to have felt sad or down at least some of the time in the last four weeks.
- Most people with PMLD (80%) were reported to have felt worried or anxious at least some of the time in the last four weeks.

### Receiving help for feeling sad, worried, or angry

- When asked what help people with PMLD received when they were feeling sad, worried, or angry, the most common responses were help from their family (58%), someone paid to support them (23%), and from their friends (4%).
- As seen in Figure 1, only 11% of people had had any contact with a psychologist, psychiatrist or counsellor in the last four weeks.

## **What happens next?**

The Wave 3 interviews and surveys will be starting in July 2021 for people who took part in the Wave 1 and/or Wave 2 interviews and surveys.

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