

Escalation of Care research: Survey information/FAQ page

Why is the survey being conducted?

The [UK Covid-19 Inquiry](#) has commissioned [IFF Research](#), an independent research organisation, to conduct a survey of healthcare professionals to understand experiences of escalation of care during the Covid-19 pandemic. The survey findings will be submitted as evidence to the Inquiry's hearings.

The purpose of the Covid-19 Inquiry is to independently investigate the UK's preparedness for and response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and evaluate lessons learned to improve the response to future pandemics. Understanding the impact of the pandemic on patients and healthcare staff is an essential part of fulfilling the Inquiry's aims.

This survey is seeking to fill a gap in evidence identified by independent experts to the Inquiry about whether decisions about referring patients to a higher level of care were influenced by a need to preserve limited resources rather than decisions being made based solely on clinical need. The Inquiry has previously heard conflicting evidence about the extent to which the pandemic may have affected escalation of care decisions.

To better understand this issue, the Inquiry has commissioned a survey of healthcare professionals who were working on the frontline during the Covid-19 pandemic and were either making or witnessing decisions about escalation of care.

Who has commissioned this research?

This research is being conducted solely on behalf of, and funded by, the UK Covid-19 Inquiry for the purposes set out above.

Who are IFF Research?

IFF Research is an independent research agency and a member of the Market Research Society. You can find out more about them on their website www.iffresearch.com. The UK Covid-19 Inquiry has commissioned IFF Research to conduct this survey with healthcare professionals to understand healthcare professionals' experiences of escalation of care during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Why am I being asked to take part? Do I need to take part?

Completing the survey is voluntary. We would really appreciate you taking part because the findings from the survey will be submitted as evidence to the UK Covid 19 Inquiry's hearings. The Inquiry is an independent public inquiry into the UK's response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and seeks to both investigate what happened and evaluate how the response to future pandemics could be improved. It is really important that the experiences and perspectives of healthcare professionals who worked on the frontline are heard to improve the understanding of what happened.

What does the survey involve and what questions are being asked?

Healthcare professionals invited to take part in the survey will receive an email from IFF Research, which tells you about the survey and provides a link you can click to go to the online questionnaire. Some professionals may also hear about the survey or see a survey link via another route e.g. your regulatory body, professional association or employer – you may complete the survey via either channel. You only need to complete the survey once.

The questionnaire only takes approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. You will have the option to pause and come back to the survey in case you need to take a break. The survey will save your progress.

The issues covered in the survey questionnaire include:

- Your job role during the first and second waves of the Covid-19 pandemic;
- Your experience of making or witnessing decisions about escalation of care;
- Whether lack of resources played a role in decisions around escalation of care or on the quality of care;
- Support received to help decision-making.

Will my answers impact my relationship with the UK Covid-19 Inquiry, my employer or anyone else?

No. The research will not be used to identify any individuals to the UK Covid-19 Inquiry. IFF Research will share a report of the survey findings with the UK Covid Inquiry using anonymised data. Nobody will know which answers you personally have provided.

Your participation in this research is confidential, and IFF Research will not contact your employer or professional body about you taking part.

What information has IFF Research received about me?

If you received an email directly from IFF Research, your contact details were securely shared with IFF by Wilmington, who maintains a database of healthcare professionals.

If you received a link via another route (e.g. shared by a colleague, your employer or professional association), IFF Research will not have been given any details about you.

How will IFF Research use the information I provide?

IFF Research will analyse the data and produce a report for the UK Covid-19 Inquiry. This report will be submitted as evidence to the Inquiry's hearings.

Your answers from the survey will only be shared with the UK Covid-19 Inquiry in an anonymised form. After the end of the Inquiry, this data will be transferred to the National Data Archive.

Where can I get help if the topics in this survey cause distress?

We understand that re-living pandemic experiences can be distressing. If you are experiencing distress after taking this survey, we would suggest reaching out to one of the following services:

- NHS Practitioner Health: Practitioner Health is a free, confidential NHS primary care mental health and addiction service with expertise in treating health and care professionals. <https://www.practitionerhealth.nhs.uk/>
- Frontline 19: Frontline19 is a free, independent, confidential and UK-base nationwide service delivering psychological support to people working on the frontline. <https://www.frontline19.com/>
- Samaritans: Samaritans offer listening and support to people and communities in times of need. They're available, day or night, for anyone who's struggling to cope, who needs someone to listen without judgement or pressure. They give people ways to cope and the skills to be there for others. <https://www.samaritans.org/>
- Ambulance Staff Charity: The Ambulance Staff Charity provide a range of services to support the mental health, physical rehabilitation, and financial wellbeing of the UK's ambulance staff, their family members, students, and ambulance service volunteers. <https://www.theasc.org.uk/>

I have another question or query, who do I contact?

If you have been invited to the survey and have any other questions, or if you need to change your contact details, please contact Katie Phillips on 0808 175 6984 or email covid-inquiry@iffresearch.com.

Who should I contact at the UK Covid-19 Inquiry if I want more information about the research?

Please email contact@covid19.public-inquiry.uk for any additional queries.