



UK Health
Security
Agency

Association of Directors of Public Health - Joint Symposium

What psychology can contribute to pandemic response?

Richard Amlôt

Behavioural Science and Insights Unit
Chief Scientific Officer's Group, UK Health Security Agency

richard.amlot@phe.gov.uk

Behavioural Science and Insight Unit (BSIU) in UKHSA



- Previously, Behavioural Science Team based in the PHE Health Protection and Medical Directorate's Emergency Response Department Science & Technology Group. A decade of support to HPA / PHE applying behavioural and social science to health protection and public health emergency preparedness, resilience and response.
- The Behavioural Science and Insights Unit (BSIU) supports the COVID-19 response and the all-hazards health protection work of UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and it's partners through applied expertise in behavioural and social science, behavioural insights, evidence-based risk and crisis communication, and the psychosocial aspects of health protection incidents.
 - Behavioural science/insights support to teams formulating **theory-driven, evidence-informed guidance, messaging and communication strategies**.
 - **Tools and capacity for effective community engagement and rapid evaluation** with regional communications and community engagement teams, supporting or leading the analysis and interpretation of qualitative and quantitative data.
 - Rapid **evidence synthesis** on behavioural science-related topics, access to new and emerging evidence and research data for specific issues.
 - Partnership with **NIHR Health Protection Research Units** and other project groups including: **CORSAIR, Germ Defence, CoVACCs, CIVOS and more**.
 - Identify and support the implementation and evaluation of existing and new **behaviour change interventions** (e.g. www.germdefence.org) in support of new or ongoing Public Health and Social Measures (PHSM).
 - **Briefings and presentations on behavioural science and insights topics** with actionable advice and insights for national/regional/local teams.
 - Providing **expert behavioural science advice to inform policy making** relating to COVID-19 behaviours or interventions.

Behavioural science to inform health protection and public health emergency preparedness and response

Some key outcomes from decades of research into the behavioural and psychological aspects of emergencies and disasters

- Characterisation of the public as panic-prone is a myth.
- Altruism, helping and pro-social behaviours are most common.
- Public disorder narratives in pandemics or other disasters are flawed.
- An under-reaction to a threat may be as common as an over-reaction.
- Disasters do not affect people equally; disadvantaged groups are disproportionately affected.
- Facilitating and maintaining trust (in responders and Government) is crucial to successful response efforts and intervention strategies.
- Successful risk and crisis communication strategies start with treating people with respect, capable of taking decisions for themselves and managing personal risk.
- Relying on myths and assumptions about public responses to emergencies results in missed opportunities to understand real motivations for behaviour, and sub-optimal response strategies.

[Slide first presented in March 2020]



Panic-buying or... sensitive 'just in time' supply chains and isolation guidance?



Rule-breaking or... social distancing by those without private outdoor spaces?

Facilitating Collective Psychosocial Resilience in the Public in Emergencies: Twelve Recommendations Based on the Social Identity Approach
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2019.00141>

Terrorism and dispelling the myth of a panic prone public
<https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.jphp.3200083>

Public perceptions, anxiety, and behaviour change in relation to the swine flu outbreak: cross sectional telephone survey
<http://www.bmj.com/cgi/doi/10.1136/bmj.b2651>

The impact of communications about swine flu (influenza A H1N1v) on public responses to the outbreak: results from 36 national telephone surveys in the UK
<https://doi.org/10.3310/hta14340-03>

How to improve adherence with quarantine: Rapid review of the evidence
[https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/en/publications/how-to-improve-adherence-with-quarantine-rapid-review-of-the-evidence\(acb58e6d-9542-4e4a-8ebe-f01a503c50e1\).html](https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/en/publications/how-to-improve-adherence-with-quarantine-rapid-review-of-the-evidence(acb58e6d-9542-4e4a-8ebe-f01a503c50e1).html)

The psychological impact of quarantine and how to reduce it: rapid review of the evidence
[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)30460-8/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)30460-8/fulltext)

Behavioural and social science to inform health protection and public health emergency preparedness, response & recovery: moving towards 'all-hazards'

- Characterisation of the public as panic-prone is a myth: **the public and professional communities are the most important assets we have in large-scale public health incident response.**
 - **How can we best communicate and intervene to influence and guide adaptive and protective behaviours in affected populations? What more can we do to prepare 'at-risk' communities?**
- Altruism, helping and pro-social behaviours are most common: **we should plan and respond in ways that facilitate the mobilisation of volunteers, communities and use co-production to design interventions that work with and for people.**
 - **What programmes can we support or establish that will allow for the effective engagement and mobilisation of volunteers and community action, given the vital role it will play in any emergency response? How can we test and evaluate these to be assured they work?**
- Public disorder narratives in pandemics or other disasters are flawed: **our public health interventions and communications should be designed to facilitate and support people to adhere to protective behaviours, enforcement-led strategies may only be necessary for a small minority of rule-breakers.**
 - **How can we best use behavioural science and insights to optimise our interventions and messaging, to promote and support the uptake of protective behaviours? How can we bridge any implementation gaps and what are the most effective strategies for knowledge mobilisation?**



Behavioural and social science to inform health protection and public health emergency preparedness and response: moving towards 'all-hazards'

- An under-reaction to a threat may be as common as an over-reaction: **we need to help people to understand their risks, and act accordingly - what we say and do as responding agencies will in large part determine what people will and won't do.**
- Facilitating and maintaining trust (in responders and Government) is crucial to successful response efforts and intervention strategies: **“trust arrives on foot, but leaves on horseback”... we must be consistent with what we say and do, in order to maintain trust. A loss of trust can substantially undermine engagement and adherence.**
 - **how can we upskill policy makers, practitioners and responders with key evidence and insights from the behavioural and social sciences to inform evidence-based decision making? How do we embed behavioural and social scientists in our organisations and response teams in ways that can facilitate close collaboration?**
- Disasters do not affect people equally; disadvantaged groups are disproportionately affected: **we must work with and understand our populations and communities, to reduce inequalities, improve preparedness and resilience, and develop the vital roles that community members and leaders play in major incident response.**
 - **how do we most effectively address health inequalities and build community resilience as we prepare for public health emergencies of all kinds, in ways that result in measurable improvements in response outcomes?**



UKHSA: Behavioural Science and Insights Unit Weekly Literature Report, Week 91 - 11.03.22

- Email: covid19.behaviouralscience@phe.gov.uk to join the mailing list
- Content: Research papers (pre-prints, published), commentaries, statements, position papers, grey literature, blogs, podcasts, webinars, recordings, newspaper articles and other journalism, miscellaneous resources)
- Highlights (11th March 2022):
 1. [Location, location, location: a discrete choice experiment to inform COVID-19 vaccination programme delivery in the UK](#), Robert McPhedran et al., BMC Public Health, 4th March 2022.
 2. [Intergroup helping during the COVID-19 crisis: A moderated mediation with effects of ingroup identification, ingroup blame, and perceived global common fate](#), Hanna Zagefka, Current Research in Ecological and Social Psychology, 2022.
 3. [Mental Health and COVID-19: Early evidence of the pandemic's impact: Scientific brief](#), WHO, 2nd March 2022.

All past editions can be found here: <https://phelibrary.koha-ptfs.co.uk/coronavirusinformation/>, under the 'Keeping up to date' tab.

LitRep Collections - selected articles relevant to a particular theme from the LitRep database.

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**BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCE AND INSIGHTS UNIT (BSIU)
LITERATURE REPORT**

11th March 2022: Week 91

The report aims to highlight a selection of COVID-19 related work in the field of behavioural and social science (mostly) released from the 4th – 11th March 2022. Please note the report is not a perfect product and the inclusion or omission of a publication should not be viewed as an endorsement or rejection by UK Health Security Agency. Additionally, the authors of this report do not accept responsibility for the availability, reliability or content of the items included in this report and do not necessarily endorse the views expressed within them.

Please feel free to forward this email to your colleagues.

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Past editions

You can find our thematically categorised database of all previous literature reports [here](#)

You can find past editions, under the 'Keeping up to date' tab [here](#)

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UKHSA Behavioural Science Weekly Literature Report – Database.

- We have created a database compiling all previous literature reports.
- All articles have been thematically categorised, so you can filter through the different topics for a more precise search. The database will be updated weekly to include our latest reports.
- Accessible via this link:
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1qfR4NgnD5hTAS8KriPaXYhLu1s7fpZJDq8EIXQYOZEes/edit?usp=sharing>

BSIU LitRep Database ☆ 📄 📄 📄

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Public Health England Behavioural Science Reference Cell Literature Report Database

Welcome to Public Health England Behavioural Science Reference Cell's database of past Literature Reports

Here you can access all reports from our archive and can filter according to specific topics to help narrow down your search

Our Literature Reports aim to highlight a selection of COVID-19 related work in the field of behavioural and social science. Please note, the report is not a perfect product and this data should not be used as a substitute for wider literature searches

This database will be updated weekly with the latest edition and topics will evolve in line with the LitRep content

To use the database:

- 1) open the database in the sheet below
- 2) click on "Data" in the toolbar at the top
- 3) click on "Filter views"
- 4) click on the filter you would like to choose

Note: there are three categories to choose from and you can choose one filter at a time: 1) topic; 2) population; 3) location

- 5) if you want to view another filter, repeat steps 2-4
- 6) if you want to view the whole database again, click on the "x" in the top right hand corner

Please note, at this moment in time the filtering option is not available on a tablet or phone

If you are looking for a specific article or author name, press "Ctrl F" on your keyboard and type in your entry

If you have any issues or feedback, or if you are not currently on our mailing list but would like to be, please email the COVID-19 Behavioural Science mailbox at: covid19.behaviouralscience@phe.gov.uk

Topic	Population	Location	Title	Type	First Author	Week Released	Issue No
Continental Behavioural Science			Behavioural science to enable more effective COVID-19 pandemic response	Commentary	Oliver Dyer	5-Mar	41
COVID-19 Testing			Behavioural science will help operating	News story	Oliver Dyer	5-Mar	41
Healthcare: Management of COVID-19			The upside	News story	Paola Cariani	8-Mar	41
Health: Disasters			Evidence: How to address COVID-19 in a pandemic for a sustainable future	News story	Jim McManis	5-Mar	41
Vaccination			COVID-19	News story	Marta Kelly	8-Mar	41
General Behavioural Science			People look for a solution to COVID-19 after lockdown, experts say	News story	Marta Kelly	5-Mar	41
Health: Connection		UK	COVID-19: Connected UK communities and schools will speed recovery, report finds	News story	Martin Scudgell	5-Mar	41
Vaccination		UK	What's next for the UK's COVID-19 vaccination programme?	News story	Holly Griffin	5-Mar	41
Long COVID	Children	UK	COVID-19: Children in care face complex, uncertain future	News story	Nicole Carter	5-Mar	41
Health: Media			Twitter to generate new ideas for COVID-19 management	News story	Alicia B	5-Mar	41
Health: Media			Twitter to generate new ideas for COVID-19 management	News story	Alicia B	5-Mar	41
Health: Campaign			Robert	News story	Samuel Dobson	8-Mar	41
General Behavioural Science	Older adults	England	Covid-19: Old people in England need COVID-19 support	News story	Martin Scudgell	5-Mar	41
Government Behavioural Science		USA	COVID-19: How the US can improve its response to future pandemics	News story	Janet Brown	5-Mar	41
Vaccination			Vaccination: How to speed up the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines	Blog	Helen Doolittle	5-Mar	41
Child: Early Childhood	Children		Research: Understanding behavioural science in the COVID-19 era	Blog	Tomer Meiri	5-Mar	41
Mental Health			Public mental health: COVID-19 and the future of mental health services	Blog	Oliver Dyer	5-Mar	41
Hygiene			Behavioural science: Evidence for hand hygiene at home to reduce virus spread now and in the future – new study	Blog	University of York	8-Mar	41
Transmission and Interventions		UK	Behavioural science: Evidence for hand hygiene at home to reduce virus spread now and in the future – new study	Blog	Jim McManis	5-Mar	41
Transmission and Interventions		UK	COVID-19: How to speed up the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines	Blog	Helen Doolittle	5-Mar	41
Government: Behavioural Science	Older Adults	UK	COVID-19: How the US can improve its response to future pandemics	Commentary	Oliver Dyer	5-Mar	41
Mental Health	Youth people		COVID-19: How the US can improve its response to future pandemics	Commentary	Young Minds	8-Mar	41
General Behavioural Science			Covid-19: How the US can improve its response to future pandemics	Press release	James M. Russell	8-Mar	41
Health: Media			Behavioural science: Evidence for hand hygiene at home to reduce virus spread now and in the future – new study	Press release	Rachel van der Vaart	5-Mar	41
Vaccination			Behavioural science: Evidence for hand hygiene at home to reduce virus spread now and in the future – new study	Press release	Rachel van der Vaart	5-Mar	41
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Thank you for listening

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richard.amlot@phe.gov.uk