



**NORTH LONDON PARTNERS**  
in health and care

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# Post Covid Syndrome

North Central London: Summary, Mar-22



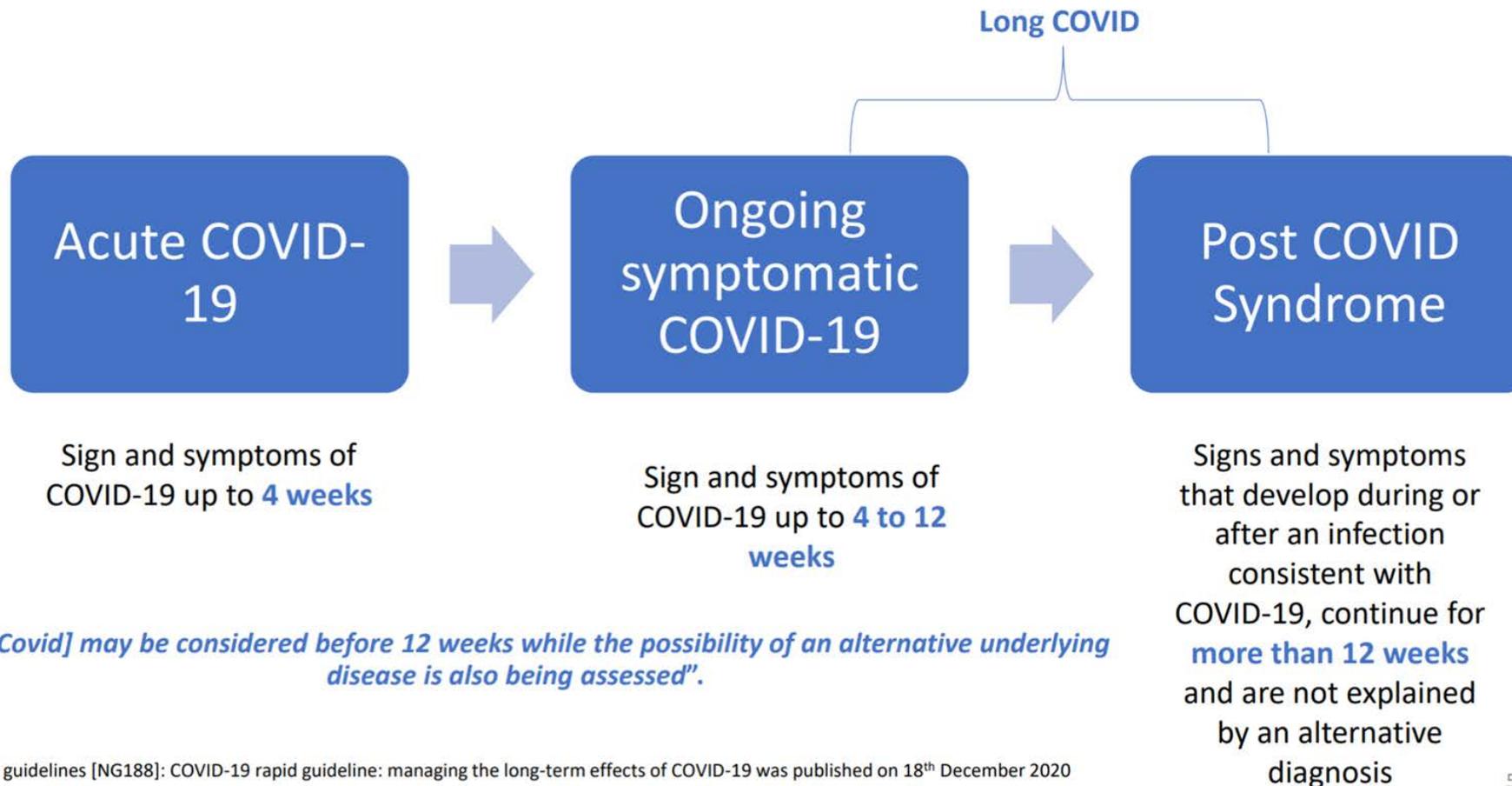
# 1. Background

- Post Covid Syndrome (PCS) is a term used to describe the signs and symptoms caused by Covid-19 infection that persist beyond 12 weeks.
- A very wide range of symptoms and syndromes have been reported with PCS, and the pathology and biological mechanisms underlying these are poorly understood.
- Patients require a wide range of services and support, with a proportion experiencing significant impacts on their health, daily life and functioning.



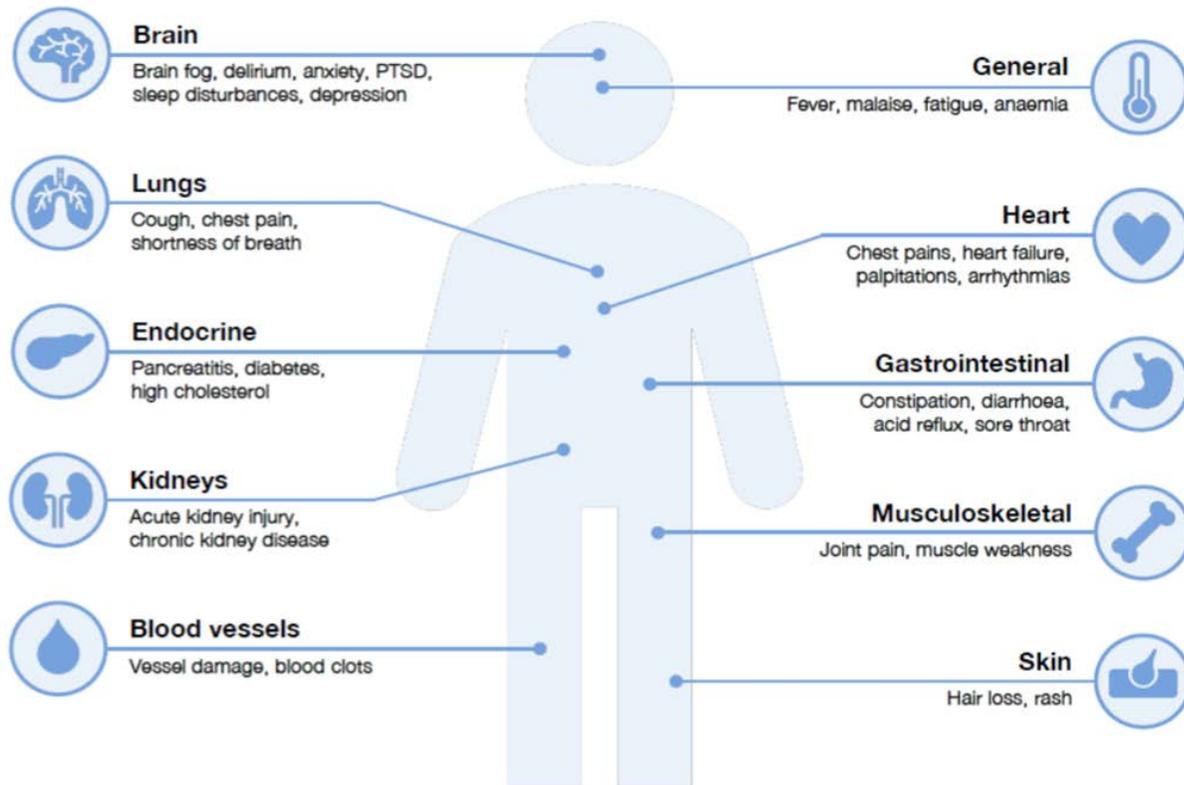
# Diagnostic Classification

NICE Guidance (NG188) describes the following clinical definitions for the initial and ongoing illness from Covid-19.



# Symptoms of PCS

- Patients who experience Long COVID have reported **> 200 symptoms** which come and go over time
- The most common symptoms are fatigue, breathlessness, difficulty concentrating, loss of smell, muscle ache

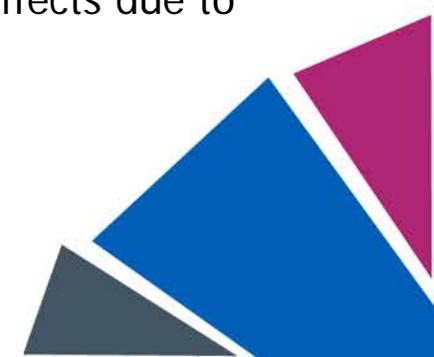


Picture credits: Dr Marilena Korkodilos

Potentially multiple underlying causes ([NIHR](#))

- Continuing Covid-19 symptoms
- Post-intensive-care syndrome
- Lasting organ damage to the lungs and heart
- Post-viral fatigue syndrome

Mechanisms under investigation include autoimmune responses to the viral infection, microvascular injury and clotting, mitochondrial dysfunction, and other end-organ effects due to direct viral damage



# How many people have Long Covid?

## National prevalence

As of October 2021, 1.2 million people (1.9% of the population) self reported Long Covid

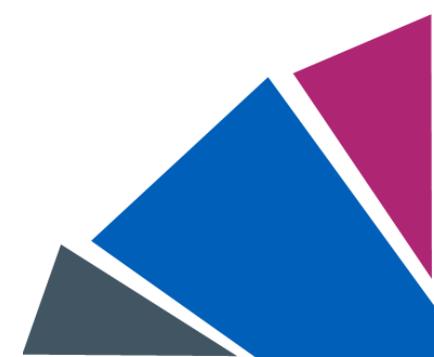
Prevalence rates of self-reported long Covid were greatest in ages 35-69, female patients, those living in the most deprived areas, health and social care workers, and those with a pre-existing, activity limiting health condition.

71% of respondents said that Long Covid was affecting family life, and 80% said it affected their ability to work

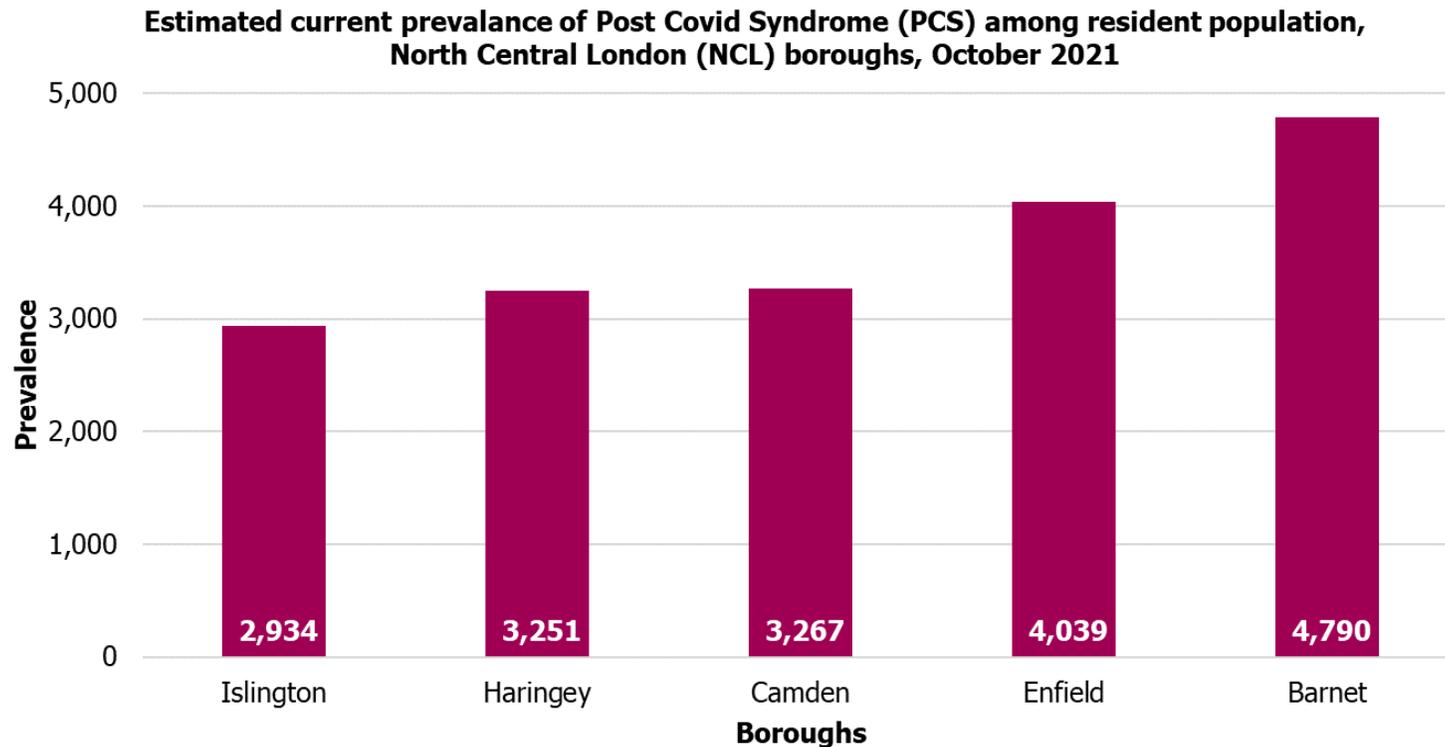
## Prevalence in North Central London

Using the ONS data, we estimate that between 12,000 – and 18,000 people in NCL have long covid. (For Haringey, we expect 2,000 – 3,000 people).

NCL Public Health teams have completed an in-depth needs assessment (Updated Nov-21) which provides detail on a wide range of expected prevalence including demographics, gender, age, deprivation



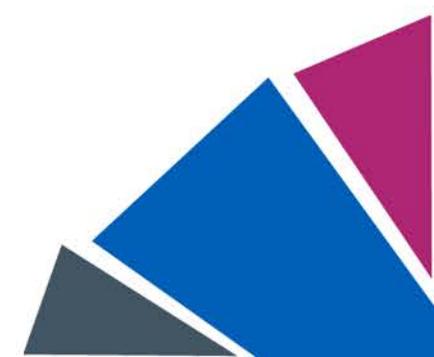
# NCL estimated prevalence, by borough



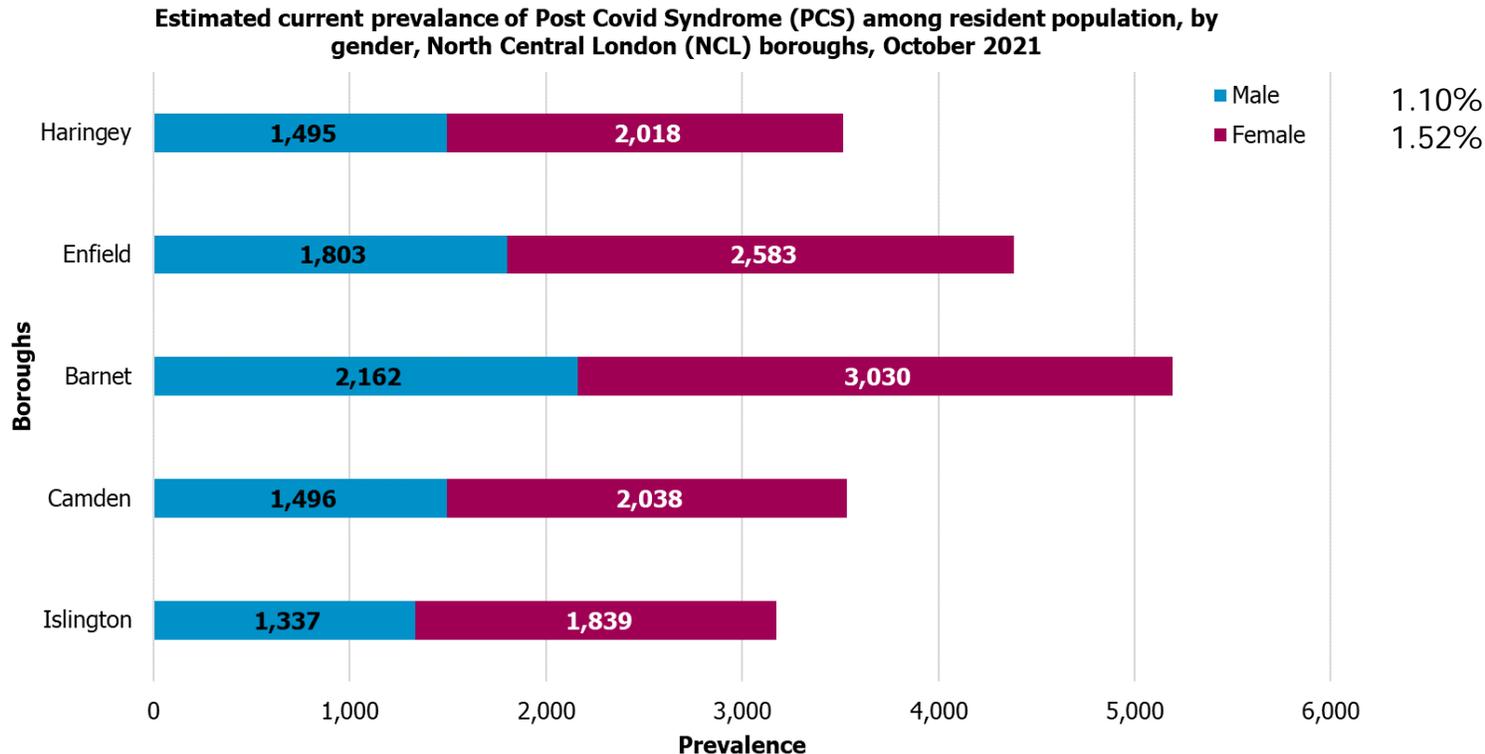
- According to the ONS Infection survey data, the estimated prevalence of PCS among the population is **1.21% in the London Region** as of October 2021.
- **Note:** The regional estimate has been applied to the local population estimates in the NCL boroughs to derive local PCS estimates by borough.

**Note:** Modelling of current prevalence is based on Office for National Statistics (ONS) Infection Survey data

**Source:** ONS population estimates, mid-2019; ONS COVID-19 Infection Survey data, November 2021



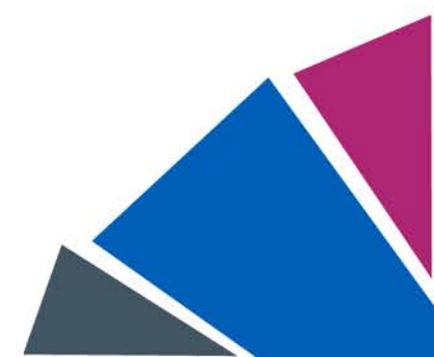
# NCL estimated prevalence, by gender



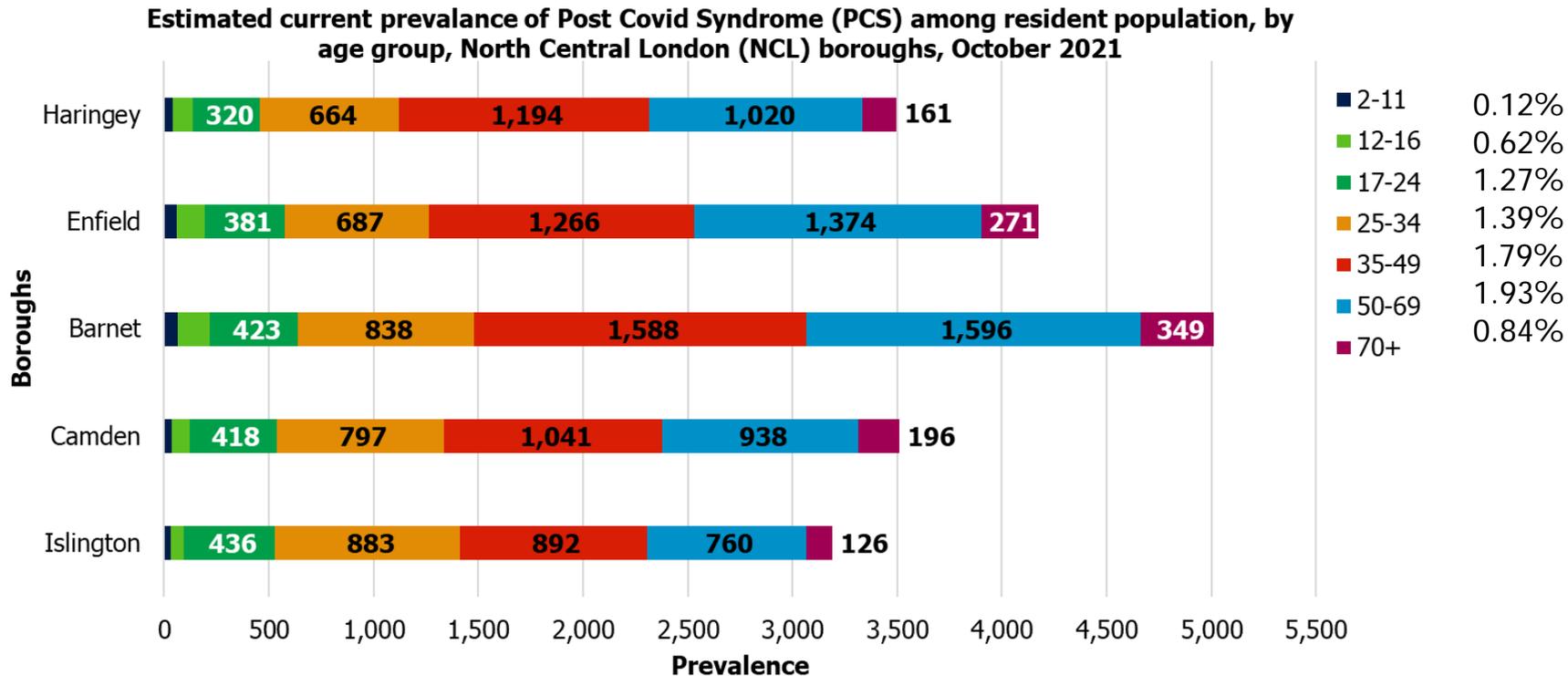
- PCS prevalence is estimated to be **higher in women than men**.
- According to the ONS Infection survey data, the estimated prevalence of PCS is **1.10% among males** and **1.52% in females** (UK, October 2021).
- **Note:** The UK estimates by gender have been applied to the local population estimates in the NCL boroughs to derive local estimates of PCS by gender.

**Note:** Modelling of current prevalence is based on Office for National Statistics (ONS) Infection Survey data

**Source:** ONS population estimates, mid-2019; ONS COVID-19 Infection Survey data, November 2021



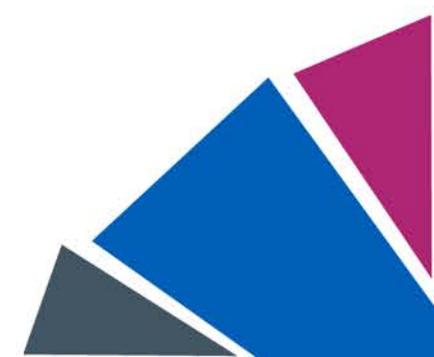
# NCL estimated prevalence, by age



- PCS prevalence is estimated to be **highest in working age adults**.
- According to the ONS Infection survey data, prevalence of PCS rises from 0.12% in children 2-11 to **1.93% in those aged 50-69**, falling to 0.84% in the age 70+ (UK, October 2021).
- Note:** The UK estimates by age group have been applied to the local population estimates in the NCL boroughs to derive local estimates of PCS by age.

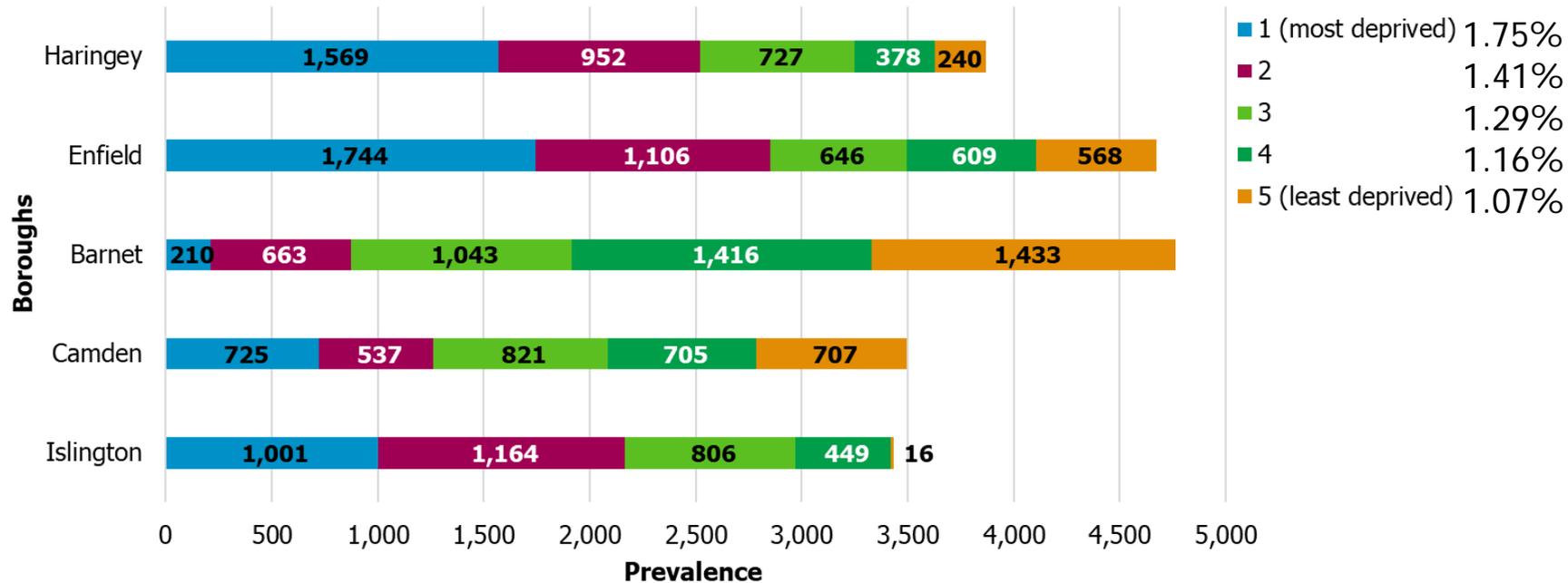
**Note:** Modelling of current prevalence is based on Office for National Statistics (ONS) Infection Survey data; 0-1 age group has been excluded

**Source:** ONS population estimates, mid-2019; ONS COVID-19 Infection Survey data, November 2021



# NCL estimated prevalence, by deprivation

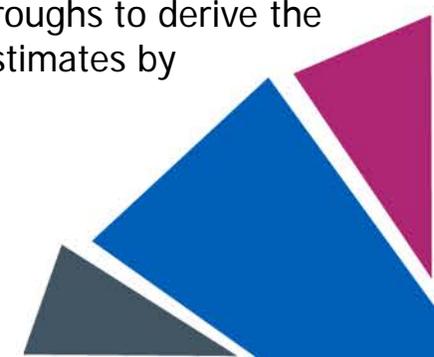
**Estimated current prevalence of Post Covid Syndrome (PCS) among resident population, by deprivation quintile, North Central London (NCL) boroughs, October 2021**



- PCS prevalence is estimated to be **higher in more deprived areas**.
- According to the ONS Infection survey data, prevalence of PCS rises from **1.07% in the least deprived areas to 1.75% in the most deprived areas** (UK, October 2021).
- **Note:** The UK estimates by deprivation have been applied to the local population estimates in the NCL boroughs to derive the local PCS estimates by deprivation.

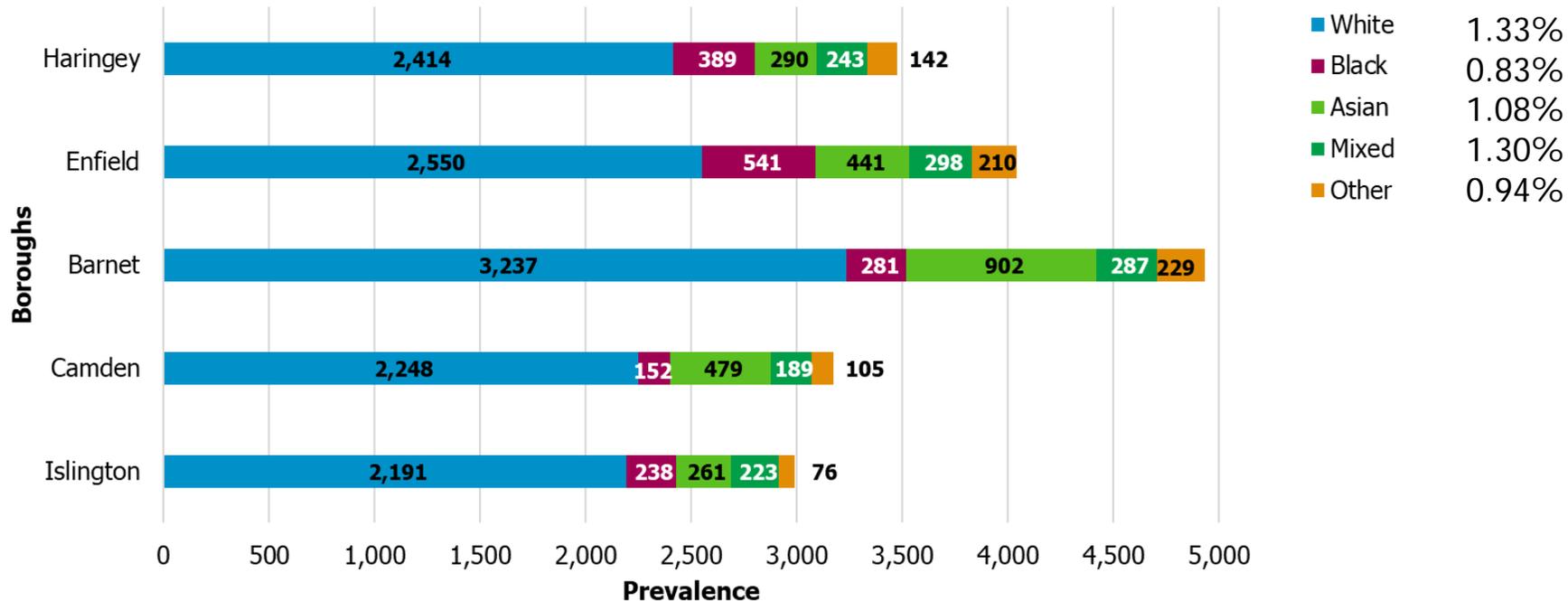
**Note:** Modelling of current prevalence is based on Office for National Statistics (ONS) Infection Survey data; Deprivation groupings based on IMD (2019) deciles, converted to quintiles as follows: Most deprived = 1, Second most deprived = 2, Third more deprived = 3, Second least deprived = 4 and Least deprived = 5.

**Source:** ONS population estimates, mid-2019; ONS COVID-19 Infection Survey data, November 2021; English Indices of Deprivation, 2019



# NCL estimated prevalence, by ethnicity

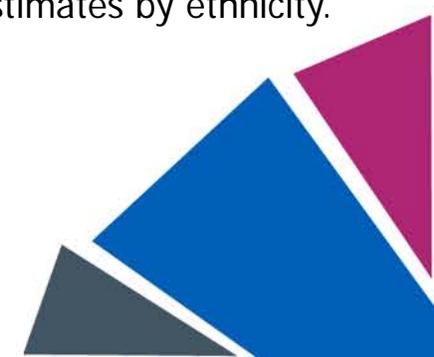
**Estimated current prevalence of Post Covid Syndrome (PCS) among resident population, by ethnicity, North Central London (NCL) boroughs, October 2021**



- According to the ONS Infection survey data, the estimated prevalence of PCS ranges from **0.83% - 1.33%** among various ethnic groups (UK, October 2021), though there is considerable uncertainty in these estimates.
- Note:** The UK estimates by ethnic group have been applied to the local population estimates in the NCL boroughs to derive local PCS estimates by ethnicity.

**Note:** Modelling of current prevalence is based on Office for National Statistics (ONS) Infection Survey data

**Source:** GLA 2016-based ethnic group projections for 2020; ONS COVID-19 Infection Survey data, November 2021



# Building Long Covid Services

To respond to residents needs, NCL has developed a pathway of care to support people with Post-Covid symptoms, working with national guidance, best practice and drawing on regional support.

It is important that this pathway is accessible to people regardless of whether they have had a positive diagnosis of Covid-19.

The NCL Post Covid Syndrome Pathway described here covers the patient journey from first presentation with symptoms to referral to onward support, specialist care and self-management. It describes the care of:

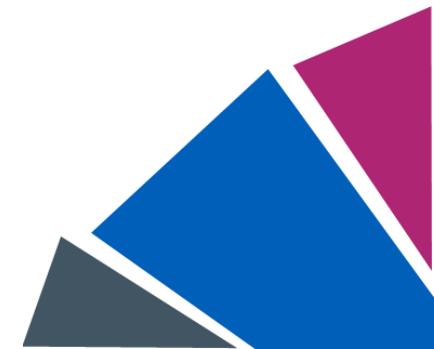
- Patients who present to their GP practice with symptoms consistent with Post-Covid Syndrome
- Patients being supported in the community
- Patients being followed up in an outpatient clinic after a hospital admission

Patient care may be provided by:

- General Practice
- Community services
- Specialist hospital clinics
- Mental health services

These services come together in each borough in a regular Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) who meet regularly to review patients whose care planning would benefit from a group clinical discussion.

The following slides describe how the NCL patient pathway works and how services work together.



# Pathway

Patients identified in the community

Patients identified following a hospital admission and followed up in an outpatient clinic

## Primary Care (General Practice)

Patients will carry out a self assessment of their symptoms and goals before they speak to a health professional for an assessment of their symptoms. Where appropriate, diagnostic tests including blood tests and examinations will be carried out in primary care. Clinicians will also discuss self-management of symptoms. If needed, they will make a referral for specialist or ongoing care and treatment.

## Community Provider Offer

Community providers offer rehabilitation services to patients including fatigue and breathlessness management. This includes input from specialist physiotherapy and occupational therapy services and community nurses, alongside dedicated vocational rehabilitation if appropriate.

## NCL Post-Covid Syndrome Clinic

Our specialist clinic is held at University College London Hospital (UCLH). It brings together experts from a number of hospital teams to assess and care for patients using and has access to more specialist diagnostic tests. This clinic sees the most complex cases and will not be required for all patients.

### NCL Post-Covid Syndrome MDT

Attendees:  
GP, NCL Post-Covid Consultants, Care Navigator, Community therapists, Specialist Community nurses, Psychology

# Where is care provided?

Provider(s)	Offer	What do they provide?	Geography / referral pathway
General Practice	Post-Covid support	Registered cohort. Agreed pathway to self-management tools, community services or direct to specialist clinic. Option to refer to local acute if single specialty input needed	Will identify patients within their own registered practice list
All community providers	Co-ordinated Community rehabilitation	Integrated offer linking rehabilitation and mental health services for both Post-Covid Syndrome cohort and people who have been discharged after a Covid related admission. Additional support through app. NCL wide vocational rehabilitation service provided by Royal Free.	Borough based. Will take referrals from primary care, acute hospitals or specialist clinic
All mental health providers	Mental health support to patients with Post-Covid Syndrome	Increasing Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) services see patients identified out of hospital as needing mental health support.	Borough based. Takes referrals from primary care, community or hospital clinics or self-referrals
All acute hospital sites	Post-discharge Covid clinic (for hospitalised patients)	Post discharge support for all patients following Covid related admission. Some of these patients may require referral to NCL Post-Covid Syndrome Clinic. Can refer on to community or discharge to primary care	Will see patients post-hospital admission in an outpatient clinic
University College London Hospital	Specialist NCL Post-Covid Syndrome Clinic	Complex Post-Covid Syndrome symptoms requiring specialist, multi-disciplinary support for people who have ongoing Covid related needs. In-reach from Community and Primary Care	Covers all of NCL. Takes referrals from primary care, community or hospital clinics

# What happens at an assessment?

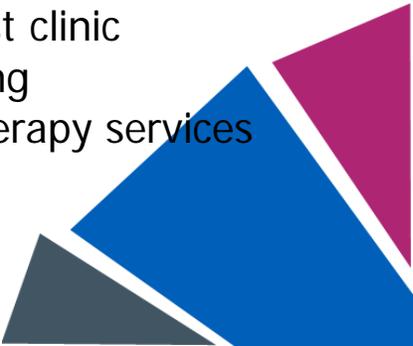
After initial contact with the GP practice, if it is felt that the patient has symptoms consistent with Post-Covid Syndrome, the patient will be sent a self-assessment questionnaire (this asks about severity and impact of symptoms and includes patient reported outcome measures) to complete. In addition any relevant investigations will be initiated.

Once completed, the questionnaire should be returned to the practice. The results of the investigations and the questionnaire are reviewed by the assessing clinician and the questionnaire responses and results entered into the NCL Post-Covid assessment template. The patient will then be invited in to the practice for a physical assessment.

Once the full assessment has been completed, the clinician will:

- Discuss the findings with the patients
- Agree what is important to the patient regarding their health and wellbeing. Complete a personalised care and support plan
- Add the diagnosis of Post-Covid Syndrome to patient record.
- Signpost the patient to the Your Covid recovery website
- Agree the most appropriate management.

This may include:

- Referral to the UCLH Post-Covid specialist clinic
  - Discussion at the Post-Covid MDT meeting
  - Referral to the Post-Covid community therapy services
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# Supporting Self Care

There is a wide range of support available to patients with symptoms to help them manage their own care. Some of this can be freely accessed, others require patients to be referred or supported by a health professional.

Your Covid Recovery is an open-access online portal for self-guided recovery – encouraging General Practice to refer patients to self manage online where appropriate.

<https://www.yourcovidrecovery.nhs.uk/>

The Haringey Long Covid Project commences in Feb-22. This project will support a minimum of 350 people disproportionately impacted by Covid and least likely to use statutory services, including Black, Asian and minority ethnic, older people, and those unemployed due to long Covid.

The delivery partners are Royal Free Charities, The Bridge Renewal Trust and 9 voluntary and community organisations in Haringey. The project will run until 31 August 2023

- LONG COVID Independence and personal goals – undertake community outreach and engagement events, establish referral pathways with GP and other specialist health services and engage individuals in a range of activities including setting personal goals, social prescribing and motivational support activities, employment, education and community activity.
- Improved mental and physical health and wellbeing and reduced isolation and reliance on emergency services – engaging individuals in physical and mental health and wellbeing early intervention and prevention activities such as community, social prescribing and other lifestyle improvement activities.



## Supporting your recovery after COVID-19

As you find yourself recovering from COVID-19 you may still be coming to terms with the impact the virus has had on both your body and mind.

These changes should get better over time, some may take longer than others, but there are things you can do to help.

Your COVID Recovery helps you to understand what has happened and what you might expect as part of your recovery.