

74% of people are worried social distancing will not be followed as lockdown is eased

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Nearly eight in 10 people are worried about COVID-19 infections rising and people not adhering to social distancing as lockdown is eased, according to UCL's COVID-19 study.

The study, launched in the week before the lockdown, is the UK's largest on adult wellbeing and mental health during the coronavirus epidemic and has over 90,000 participants who report their feelings about the lockdown, government advice, along with wellbeing and mental health.

It is funded by the Nuffield Foundation with additional support from Wellcome and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). Findings are broken down by age, gender, income, those living with children, those who are keyworkers and those living in rural areas and whether people live alone or not.

This week's findings, which focus on how people have been feeling between 4-10 May, find that [economic concerns](#) about recession and unemployment levels rising also rank highly. Additionally, around one in three people express

concern about pollution increasing, social cohesion decreasing, and crime levels rising.

Lead author, Dr. Daisy Fancourt (UCL Epidemiology & Health Care) said: "Our findings show that concern about increasing cases of COVID-19 are consistent across all ages, but concern about hospitals becoming overwhelmed is higher in younger adults, while concern about people not adhering to social distancing is higher in older adults.

"Concerns about unemployment and recession are consistent across ages, but concern about crime rising is higher in older adults, while concern about pollution increasing and [social cohesion](#) decreasing is slightly higher in adults under the age of 30."

This week's report also finds that half of people do not feel in control of their future plans with 23% of people and 39% of people feeling the same about their mental health and employment respectively.

Dr. Fancourt (UCL Epidemiology & Health Care) added: "This week we also found 50 % of our participants do not currently feel in control of their future plans, and many feel unable to manage their mental health and are worried about their future employment.

"However, in terms of physical health, eight out of ten people feel in control and the same can be said for their marriage or relationship. When we compare 'sense of control' across age groups, younger adults report feeling less in control across all domains." The study team has also received support from Wellcome to launch an international network of longitudinal studies called the COVID-MINDS Network. Through the network, dozens of scientists and clinicians are coming together internationally to collate results from mental health studies running in countries around the world and compare findings. The initiative will support the launching of new mental health studies in other

countries and show whether actions taken in specific countries are helping to protect [mental health](#).

The UK study is still recruiting and participants can sign-up anonymously at www.COVIDsocialstudy.org/

Provided by University College London

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