

A graphic featuring a large blue arrow pointing to the right. The word 'THE' is in a green box above the arrow, and 'NORTHUMBRIA WAY' is written in white inside the arrow.

THE NORTHUMBRIA WAY

PEOPLE CARING FOR PEOPLE

Post Covid update

Alistair Blair, Executive Medical Director, Northumbria Healthcare

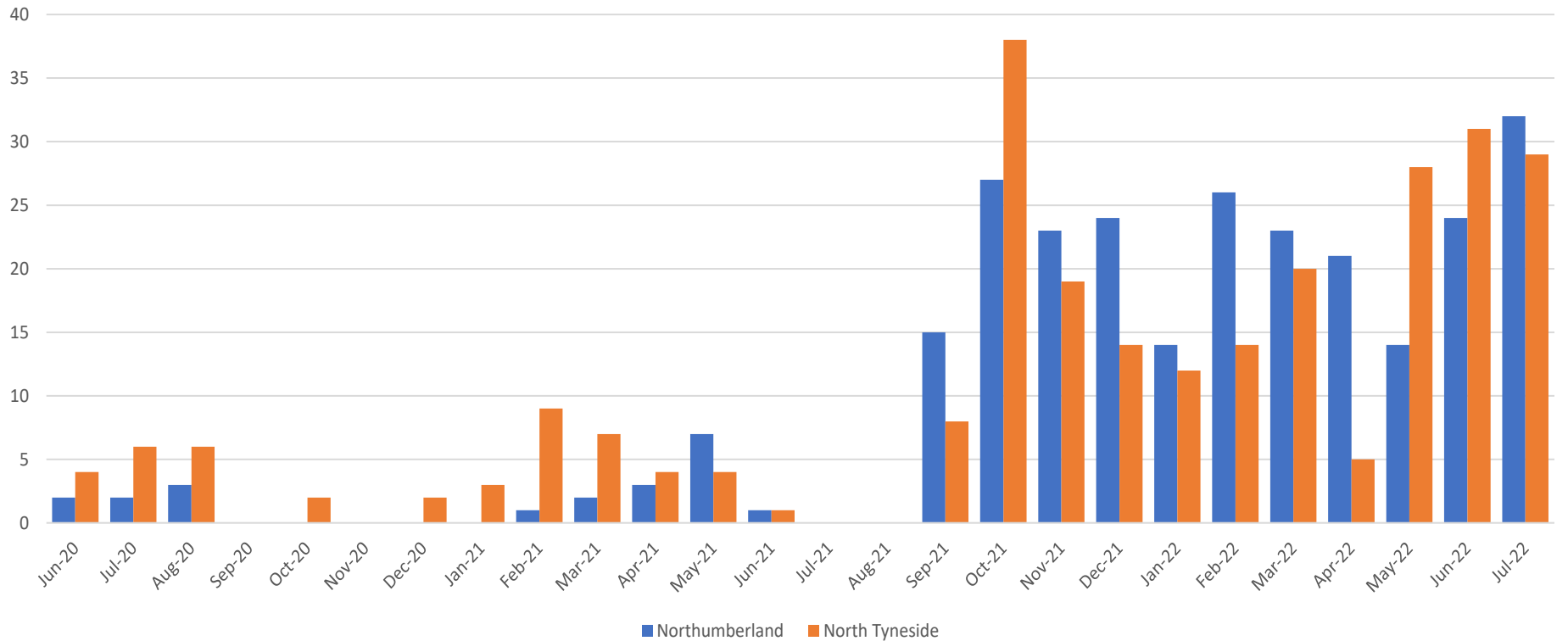
Mark Weatherhead, Consultant (Medicine), Northumbria Healthcare

Alan Bell, Senior Head of Commissioning for Northumberland Place, North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board

Post COVID Clinic Contacts per Month



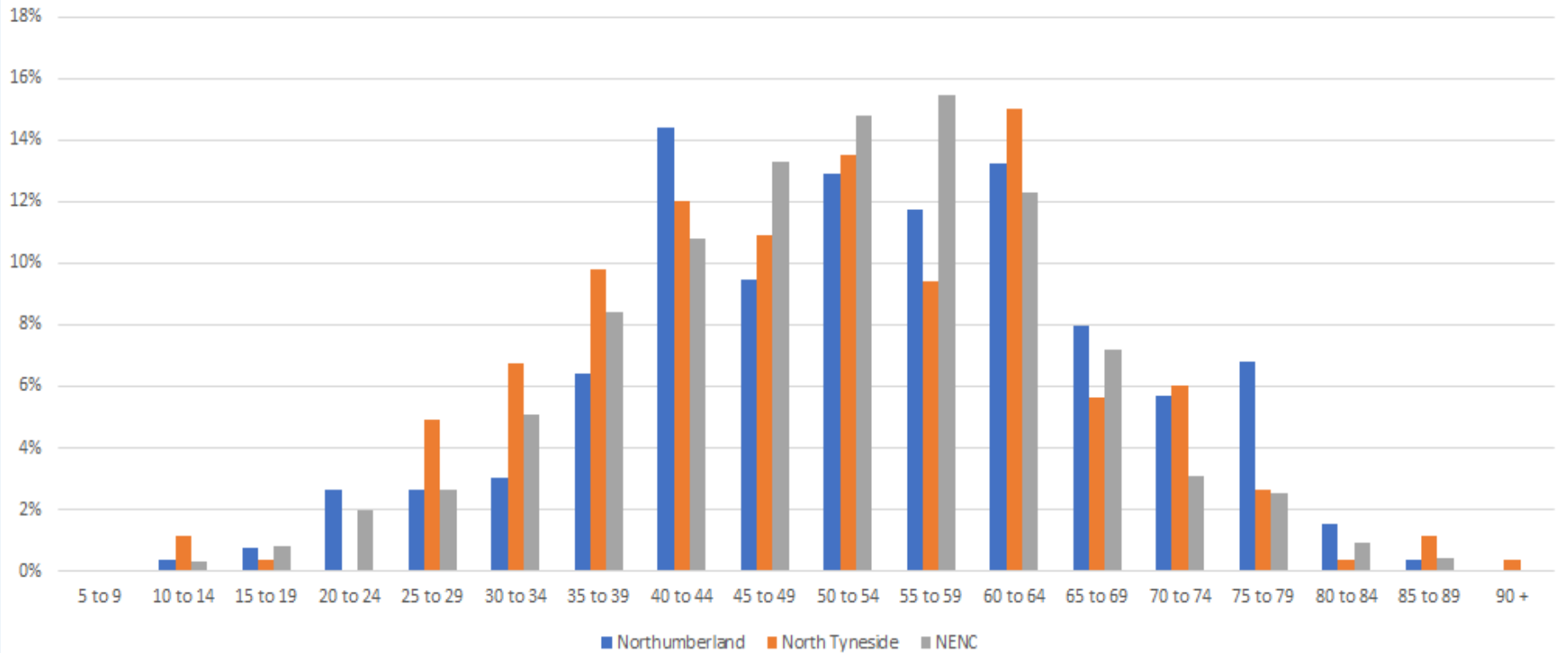
Post COVID Clinic Contacts: June 2020 to July 2022



Age Profile of Referred Patients



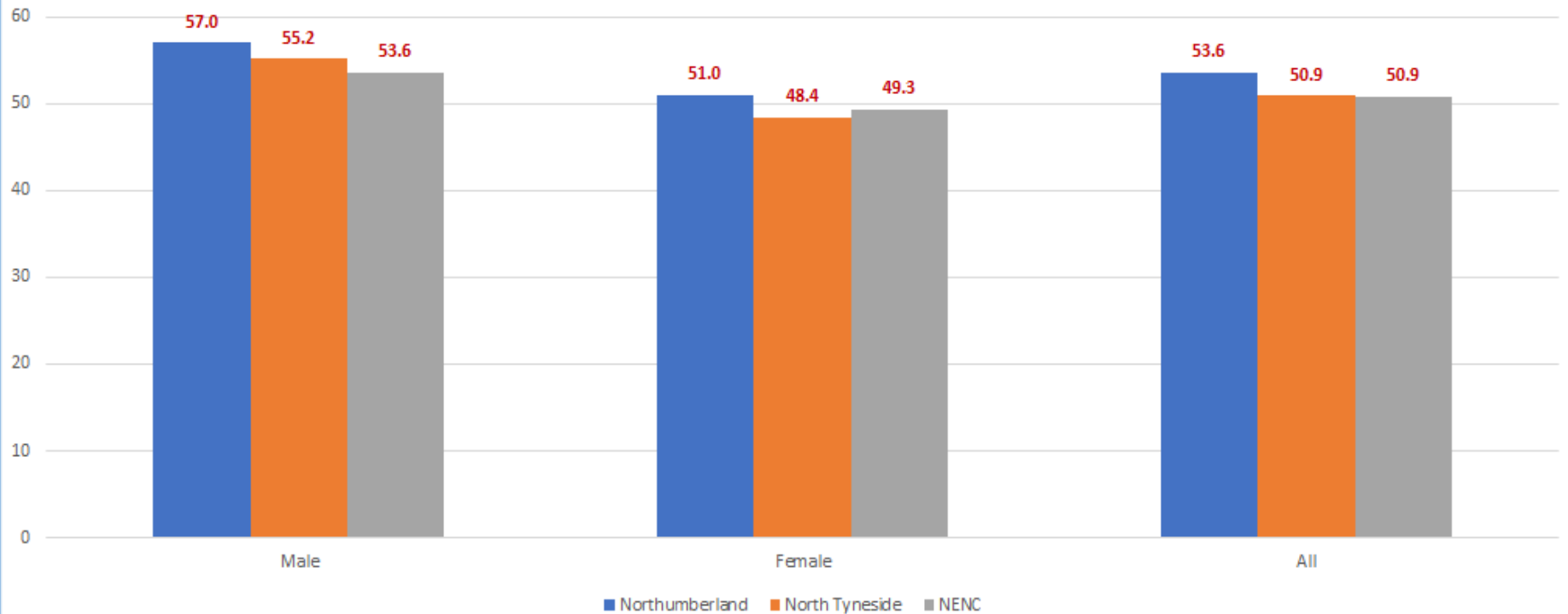
Post COVID Clinic Referrals: 20/06/2020 to 12/08/2022



Average Age by Gender



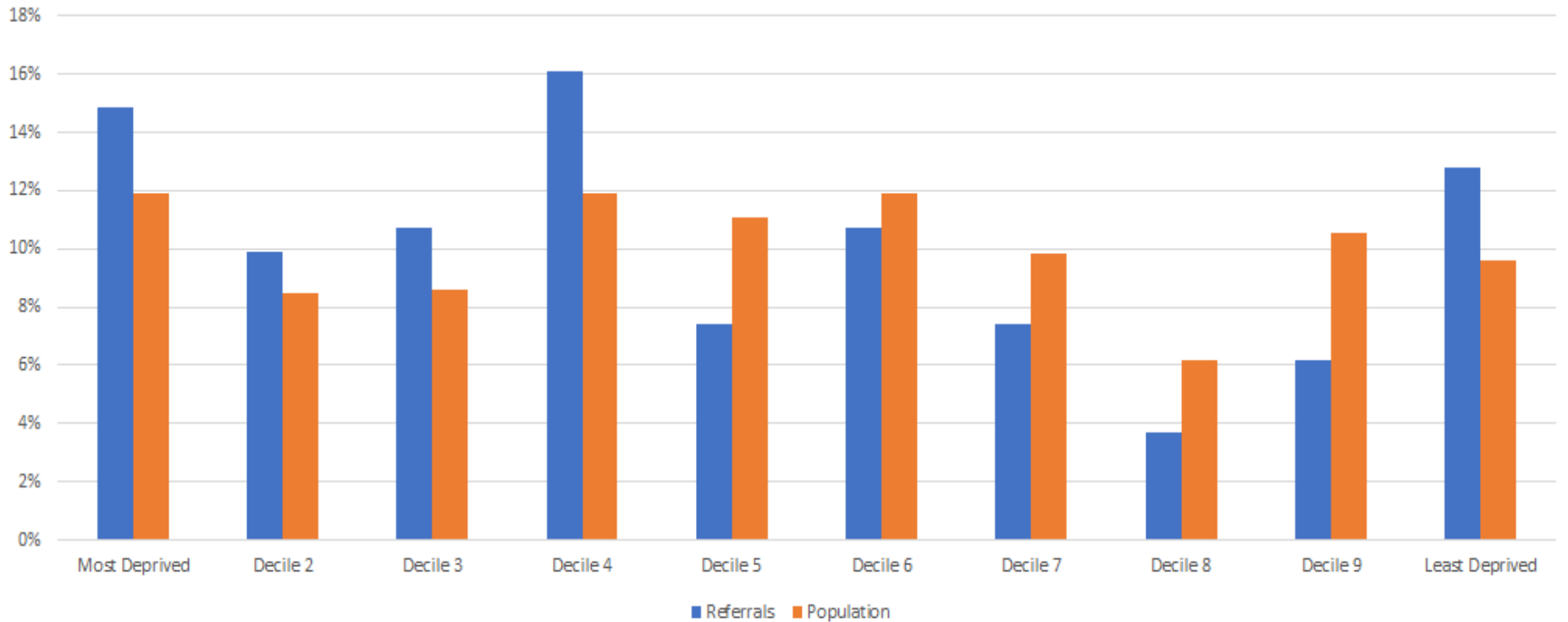
Post COVID Clinic Referrals: Average Age - 20/06/2020 to 12/08/2022



Deprivation Profile of the Referred Cohort – Northumberland



Post COVID Clinic Referrals: 20/06/2020 to 12/08/2022
Northumberland



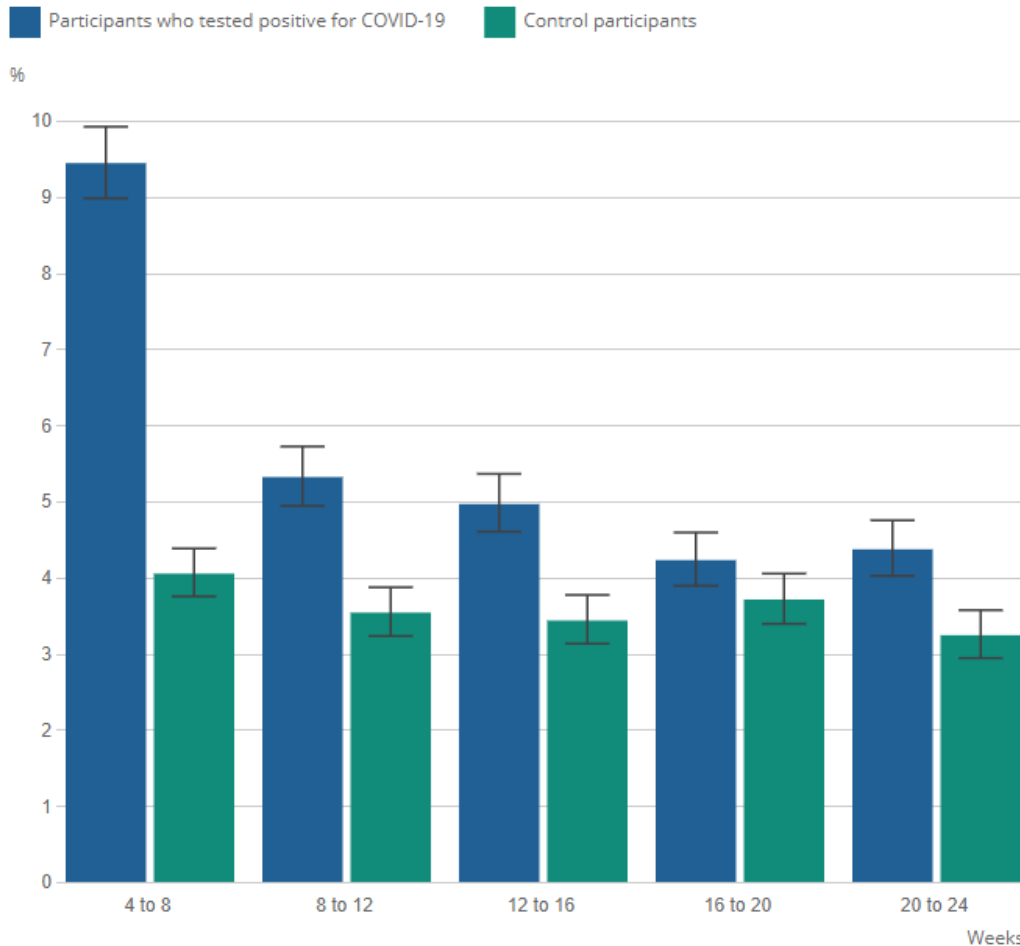
Post Covid Initial Features

- A game of multiple phases
 - Pre Autumn 2020 - outside hospital, confirmatory diagnosis was limited
 - There is no definitive test for past Covid infection
 - Autumn 2020 - Winter 2021 mass testing available
 - Ongoing limited access to testing outside hospital
- 205 symptoms associated with 'long' Covid
- More women - 56%
- Mainly aged 30-50 years
- Not linked to severity of initial infection
- Emphasis on listening, believing and excluding other causes

Time

- Numbers affected over time:
 - 21% of Covid swab positive patients have symptoms at 5 weeks
 - Fatigue 12%, cough 11%, headache 10%, muscle pain 8%
 - 14% of Covid swab positive patients have symptoms at 12 weeks
 - Fatigue 8%, cough 7%, headache 7%, muscle pain 6%
- The largest group of long Covid sufferers reported symptoms such as fatigue, 'brain-fog' and headache
- A second group experienced respiratory symptoms such as chest pain and severe shortness of breath. These symptoms were the most common in the early stages of the pandemic, before widespread vaccination
- A third, smaller group experienced a diverse range of symptoms including heart palpitations, muscle ache and pain, and changes in skin and hair

Percentage of study participants reporting any of 12 symptoms in four-week intervals from infection (participants with COVID-19) or from equivalent date (control participants), UK: 26 April 2020 to 1 August 2021



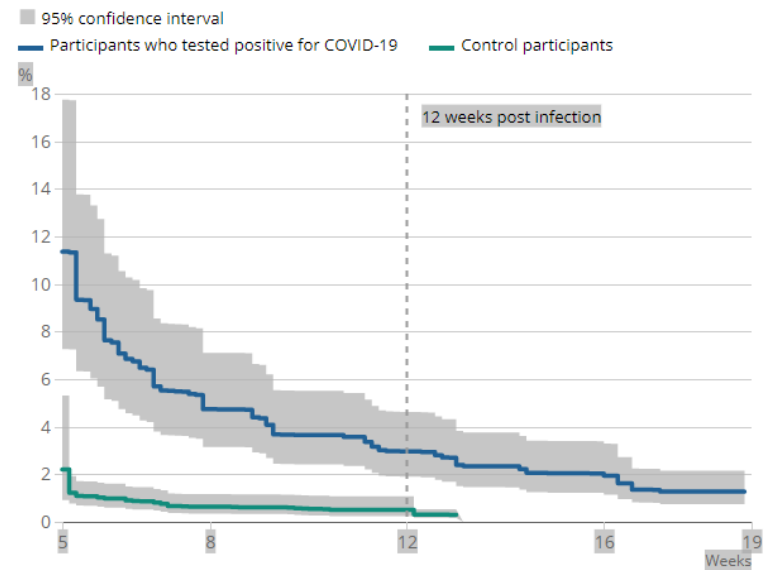
How many people have Post Covid symptoms ?

How many people have Post Covid Symptoms ?

- A clear difference for those with persistent symptoms
- Less than 1/30 have persistent symptoms over 12 weeks
- So maybe more around 3-4% of patients have true Post Covid-19 syndrome

Figure 2: Fewer than 1 in 30 study participants experienced any of 12 common symptoms continuously for at least 12 weeks after COVID-19 infection

Estimated percentage of study participants reporting any of 12 symptoms with time from infection (participants with COVID-19) or time from equivalent date (control participants), UK: 26 April 2020 to 1 August 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics - Coronavirus Infection Survey

How many people have Post Covid symptoms ?

- Initial estimates suggest 2-5% of all positive patients will have long Covid. Later versions of Covid-Omicron etc. appear to have generated fewer case of long Covid
- Nationally there are 70,000 patients whose symptoms have lasted over one year which would equate to around 540 patients across Northumberland and North Tyneside
- There is evidence that being fully vaccinated reduces your risk of developing long Covid. It reduces your risk of catching Covid in the first place but there is also evidence that being vaccinated can reduce the risk of developing long Covid should you catch Covid

Post Covid clinics

- Initially set up in May 2020 to follow-up patients discharged after Covid-19
- Referrals with Post Covid Syndrome seen in the clinic routinely from November 2020 onwards. These are now the majority of the patients seen in the clinic
- Respiratory physicians with some input from ID team
- MDT clinic with respiratory physiotherapist present
- Ability to refer onwards to community and hospital based psychology services and a dedicated psychologist in post

Physiotherapy intervention

Inpatients requiring level 2 and 3 support receive a telephone call six weeks post discharge to assess for any issues requiring immediate intervention prior to the 12 week follow up clinic, telephone advice and education is provided and if necessary a home visit can be carried out

In clinic following assessment interventions include:

- Exercise and strengthening programmes
- Education re SOB including techniques for management and recovery
- Assessment and treatment of breathing pattern disorders
- Education and treatment for fatigue
- Secretion clearance
- Referral to appropriate adjunct therapies/specialist assessments
- Direction to appropriate resources for education and support
- Identification of suitable patients for a rehabilitation group programme
- Reassurance and listen to the individuals concerns and worries

Post Covid syndrome (Long Covid)

- Symptoms lasting more than three months after acute Covid-19 infection
- Multiple symptoms
- Most common - breathlessness, fatigue, lethargy, headache, chest discomfort, rashes
- And a wide variety of other post viral symptoms
- Management is akin to Chronic Fatigue Syndrome
- Exclusion of other conditions- CXR/bloods/Lung function +/- ECG/ECHO etc
- Referral to organ specific specialists for focal symptoms

Role of Post Covid clinic

- Reassurance and advice
- Signposting to self help, physiotherapy, psychology
- Exclusion of other conditions

There are no proven specific medical treatments for Post Covid syndrome at present

Time, Rest and Pacing most important

Post Covid services regionally

- Funding (limited) at present through NHS England to support Post Covid assessment clinics in all acute trusts within the region
- It is not yet clear how long funding for the services will continue and whether more support for long term management of patients will be funded
- There is a group of patients with ongoing fatigue who are best served by community management for chronic fatigue syndrome for whom currently there is not the community based MDT team (physio/OT/psychology) to fully support. This still needs exploring on a regional basis with appropriate funding and expertise



Any questions?





Thank you

