

Current Adherence to Behavioural and Social Interventions in the UK: Comments from SPI-B [22 March 2020]

Key highlights

- Adherence to some aspects of general social distancing appears to have increased over time. Although survey respondents report having stopped or cut down many behaviours, there appears to be room for social distancing to be increased still further.
- We do not know the level of adherence among children or the level of adherence to household isolation.
- We do not know the level of adherence to shielding, but 37% to 54% of people to whom the policy applies have not stopped seeing friends or members of the family who do not live with them.
- The data we have reviewed were not ideal. We recommend that a single group within Government takes ownership of adherence measurement: optimising measures, co-ordinating activity and rapidly sharing all data.

Background

- Following discussions by SPI-M, on 20 March SAGE asked SPI-B to review: 1) the current level of adherence to behavioural and social interventions and 2) possible options for increasing adherence. This report tackles the first of those requests.
- In preparing this report, we have:
 - requested that the SAGE secretariat provide us with reports on whatever pertinent data are available to the Government;
 - looked at two surveys commissioned by the Government to which we have access; and
 - examined the existing register of COVID-19 relevant polling and academic literature maintained by SPI-B and a separate register held by the Behavioural Insights Team.
- In doing this, we have focused on self-reported behaviour or objective indicators of behaviour within the UK. We have excluded measures of behavioural intentions.
- We have specifically looked for data collected after a relevant announcement. For example, although there are several surveys relating to general social distancing (e.g. [Ipsos MORI](#); [RetailX](#); [YouGov](#); [Brandwatch](#)), we have not included any that pre-date 16 March, when official recommendations to engage in social distancing were announced.