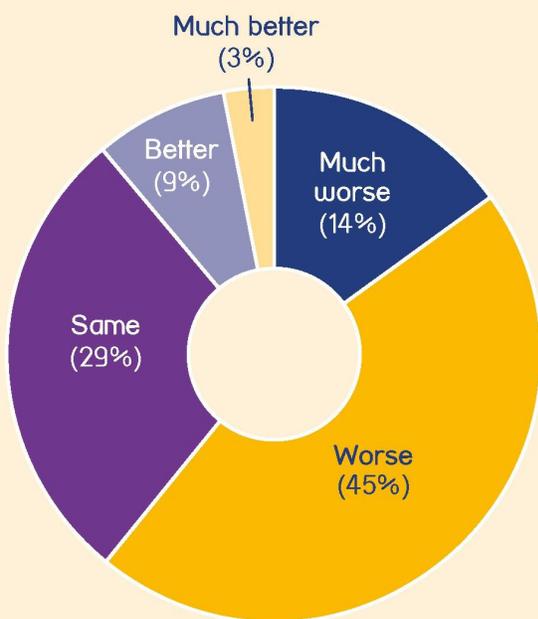## Most people's mental health has got worse during lockdown

- Over a quarter (29%) of adults surveyed said their mental health has stayed the same, while just 12% said that their mental health has improved.

- Just over two thirds (68%) of young people said that their mental health had got worse during lockdown, with this rising to three quarters (74%) of people aged 18–24. A fifth (19%) said it stayed the same, while 12% said their mental health has improved.

- Two thirds (65%) of adults and three quarters (75%) of young people with experience of mental health problems said their mental health has gotten worse during lockdown. Over half of adults (51%) and young people (55%) without experience of mental health problems also said their mental health has got worse during this period.

Young people are most likely to say that the pandemic has worsened their mental health

- Under a third (29%) of adults described their current mental health during lockdown as poor, while 7% described it as very poor. 42% said that it's OK, and a further fifth (22%) of people said that it's good or very good.

- However, young people reported worse mental health, with nearly half (46%) saying that their mental health was poor or very poor during lockdown. Just over a third (35%) said their mental health was OK, while a fifth (19%) said it was good or very good.

- Over three quarters of young people had a lower than average wellbeing score, in comparison to two thirds (66%) of adults.

People with and without experience of mental health problems reported poor mental health and wellbeing during lockdown

- Those with experience of mental health problems were more likely to report poor mental health and wellbeing. Three quarters (75%) of adults and 88% of young people with experience of mental health problems had a lower than population average wellbeing score during lockdown.[3]

- Although they are less affected than those who have experienced mental health problems, more than one in five (22%) young people and adults who have not experienced mental health problems prior to the pandemic said that their mental health was poor or very poor during lockdown. Just over half of young people (57%) and adults (53%) without experience of mental health problems had a lower than average wellbeing score during lockdown.

How has your mental health changed in the past two weeks?

Much better (3%)

Better (9%)

Much worse (14%)

Same (29%)

Worse (45%)

Survey participants, adults

3. SWEMWBS criteria was used to determine wellbeing score. Find out more about this criteria: https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/med/research/platform/wemwbs/using/

Top five concerns for adults that made their mental health worse

1. Being unable to see family, friends or partners that they didn't live with (79%)
2. Feeling anxious about family or friends getting coronavirus (74%)
3. Not being able to go outside except for essential reasons (73%)
4. Feeling bored/restless (69%)
5. Feeling anxious about getting coronavirus (66%)

Top five concerns for young people that made their mental health worse

1. Feeling bored/restless (83%)
2. Not being able to see friends (80%)
3. Not being able to go outside except for essential reasons (76%)
4. Feeling lonely (72%)
5. Feeling anxious about family or friends getting coronavirus (64%)

Case study

Raj

Raj, 42, lives alone in a small flat above a corner shop in a rural part of Northumberland. He experienced anxiety symptoms for the first five months of 2020, which mostly manifested as a constant feeling of heartburn.

One thing that Raj struggled with in lockdown was knowing his mother was all alone in Bradford. He was very worried about her health and they spoke multiple times a day. Raj had been keeping track of the number of days since he last saw his mother as well as keeping track of the daily coronavirus death rate.

Sadly, during the pandemic, one of his close friends passed away. As a result, Raj has stopped checking the death rate and now tries to avoid the news. In an attempt to avoid these stories, Raj had a 'social media free weekend' which he thought might make him feel better but in fact, just made him feel worse as he felt disconnected from others.

Case study

Halima

Before lockdown, Halima, 17, would get up at 7am every weekday. She'd then have school from nine in the morning until five-past-three in the afternoon. After that, she'd do her homework and eat before going out to see friends. She describes herself as extremely sociable, and she likes to be out of the house as much as possible. Needless to say, lockdown saw a dramatic change to her usual routine.

During lockdown Halima found it 'almost impossible' to stick to a consistent routine. She still tried to get up before 9am as she still has lots of work set by her school, but it's hard for her to stay motivated with such a monotonous and stifled daily routine. This meant that during the start of lockdown, her mental health deteriorated considerably. 'If 10 is the worst state of mental health, I was at 7,' she told us. She was struggling with not getting to go out and see her friends, and not seeing her beloved grandparents every day.