

Long Covid clinics in the UK: why are they closing, what's next?

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Everyone with Long
Covid who spent their
precious energy
completing the
survey

Long Covid clinics report (March, 2025)



Read the report on
[LCS website](#) or [LCK website](#)

Read or watch media coverage

[Yahoo](#)

[BBC Local Radio Stations](#)

[BBC Birmingham](#)

Up to date info on longcovidclincs.co.uk



What services are available for NHS Long COVID patients in the UK?

(Click on the relevant flag to see the services available in your country)

As of 19th March 2025, we had received responses from 209 non-ambulance Trusts in England out of a possible 209.

Of the responses received so far, we have determined there are:

68 Adult Long Covid Clinics & 8 Hubs for Children and Young People*



Keep up to date and
keep us informed
on LCS

[Clinics website](https://longcovidclincs.co.uk)

LONG COVID CLINICS IN THE UK

UPDATE - 29th March 2025

Have you been notified that your local Long Covid clinic is changing? We want to hear about it!

Click on the **'Submit'** button and complete our survey. We will update this webpage with any updates we receive.

SUBMIT

[ALISS](#) Scotland

What can you do?



- Tell us what's happening in your area using longcovidclinics.co.uk
- Write to your **MP**
- Write to your local **Health Board** (in England these are called Integrated Care Boards (ICB)) to
 1. express your concern
 2. ask what will happen to people with Long Covid if clinics close
 3. ask if they have conducted a public consultation about the change of service, and if so, can you see the results of the consultation. (If they haven't done a consultation, ask them why not. ICBs have a statutory duty to involve the public in decisions about major changes to services.)
- Write to [NHS England](#) (or equivalent) to tell them that the service is closing due to lack of funding and to ask what the plan is for Long Covid services
- Write to your local [Healthwatch](#) (or equivalent outside England). (The Healthwatch regions are not the same as the ICB regions so you'll have to have to search to find which one covers your address).
- Write to your **GP** to ask how your current and outstanding needs will be met.
- Post on social media tag in Long Covid Support or Long Covid Kids

NHSE Allocation of resources 25/26



<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/allocation-of-resources-2025-26/>

Allocations (ICB core services)

Baseline construction 2025/26

				2024/25 Recurrent baseline - published (£k)	2024/25 Recurrent baseline - updated (£k)	2024/25 Ambulance capacity funding (£k)	2024/25 Ambulance capacity funding - FYE (£k)	2024/25 Virtual and physical UEC capacity (£k)	2024/25 Adult Long COVID transfer from SDF (£k)	2024 Learn disab and au FTA (
R23	Region	ICB23	Integrated Care Board (ICB)							
Y63	North East and Yorkshire	QOQ	NHS Humber and North Yorkshire ICB	3,033,252	3,143,773	4,773	899	38,056	2,485	
Y63	North East and Yorkshire	QHM	NHS North East and North Cumbria ICB	5,965,068	6,187,595	9,705	1,769	31,790	4,604	
Y63	North East and Yorkshire	QF7	NHS South Yorkshire ICB	2,606,014	2,703,389	3,608	749	19,236	2,132	
Y63	North East and Yorkshire	QWO	NHS West Yorkshire ICB	4,381,813	4,544,811	6,196	1,286	31,410	3,821	
Y62	North West	QYG	NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICB	5,242,942	5,439,647	8,201	1,565	62,309	4,492	
Y62	North West	QOP	NHS Greater Manchester ICB	5,612,031	5,823,110	9,040	1,725	69,969	4,900	
Y62	North West	QE1	NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB	3,480,857	3,610,946	5,412	1,033	41,363	2,950	
Y60	Midlands	QHL	NHS Birmingham and Solihull ICB	2,592,669	2,688,025	6,091	805	20,851	2,939	
Y60	Midlands	QUA	NHS Black Country ICB	2,257,910	2,344,698	5,133	678	8,519	2,735	
Y60	Midlands	QWU	NHS Coventry and Warwickshire ICB	1,692,009	1,752,155	3,854	509	21,210	1,240	
Y60	Midlands	QJ2	NHS Derby and Derbyshire ICB	1,952,813	2,025,422	5,111	607	8,433	1,919	
Y60	Midlands	QGH	NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire ICB	1,395,420	1,446,500	3,102	410	9,463	707	
Y60	Midlands	QK1	NHS Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland ICB	1,783,609	1,846,909	4,768	567	36,290	1,626	
Y60	Midlands	QJM	NHS Lincolnshire ICB	1,425,888	1,478,004	3,658	435	12,417	775	
Y60	Midlands	QPM	NHS Northamptonshire ICB	1,306,627	1,354,604	3,479	413	10,386	804	
Y60	Midlands	QT1	NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire ICB	2,101,004	2,177,710	5,616	667	11,736	1,949	

Data Gathering



Online survey & FOIs

1. Patient experience survey

692 respondents

520 adults

182 children & young people

2. Referral patterns/demand

3. ICB Consultation process

Main Findings

Summary of findings 1

Finding 1

Long Covid is driving high levels of disability

Finding 2

Awareness of specialist Long Covid services is low

Finding 3

Specialist LC services are falling short of NHS commissioning guidelines, some are not physician-led and don't offer in-person consultations

Finding 4

Many patients are not followed up or are discharged despite ongoing symptoms

Summary of findings 2

Finding 5

Satisfaction is low but is higher than that for NHS services overall

Finding 6

Provision in the UK is already limited and is set to diminish further

Finding 7

Public consultation about service change is absent or tokenistic

Finding 8

Health authorities are underestimating the true demand for Long Covid care

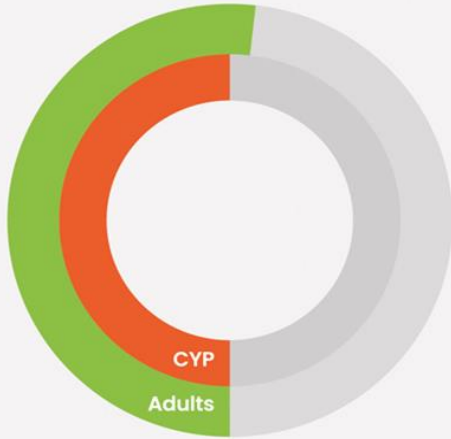
01 - Levels of disability

55%

Adults

50%

CYP*



Long Covid is driving high levels of disability. Over half of adults and CYP considered themselves disabled by the condition.

* CYP = Children and Young People

1 in 7 lost jobs due to LC (LCS/TUC 2023)

1 in 4 employers say LC is a primary cause of long-term sickness absence (CIPD, 2024)

“Eighteen months into Long Covid I have received no support whatsoever with my Long Covid. I have however, lost my job, been refused DLA [Disability Living Allowance] and scrape by on ESA [Employment and Support Allowance]. Basically at 57 I’ve been thrown on the scrap heap.”

Male, 55-59, disabled before Covid, Wales

02 - Insufficient awareness

Awareness of specialist Long Covid services remains insufficient amongst those with Long Covid. Over a quarter of adults and three-fifths of CYP were not aware of any local specialist Long Covid services.

28%

Adults

61%

CYP

“Equitable access to Post Covid services” NHS England, 2023

Responsibility devolved to ICBs

“My GP has been very supportive, however he has not been able to refer me to any Long Covid help or support. We are not aware of any Long Covid services.”

Male, 55-59, disabled since Covid, Scotland

03 - Inadequate care

Specialist Long Covid services are falling short of NHS commissioning guidelines.

Over a quarter of adults and CYP have received neither an in-person appointment nor a remote consultation with a healthcare professional.

28%

Adults

26%

CYP

Face to face appts crucial for baseline assessments (SOM, 2022)

Therapy-only model cannot address medical needs

“Within 10 min of my Zoom appointment the physio said their service was inappropriate for what I needed”

Female, 45-49, disabled since Covid, England

04 - Lack of follow up

51%

Adults

28%

CYP

Half of adults and over a quarter of CYP reported that they had been **discharged despite still having ongoing symptoms.**

Adults

CYP

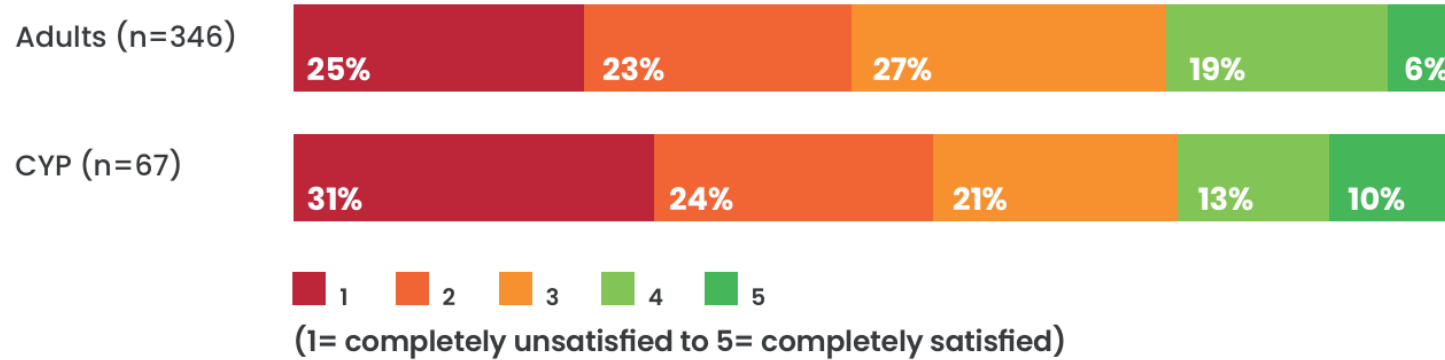
"I was discharged after 2 years because I didn't recover within the timeframe they thought I should have and referred to a CFS service who could only offer an ME diagnosis."

Young female, 18-24, disabled since Covid, England

Pause for breath....

05 - Satisfaction with LC services

Figure 3. Satisfaction with specialist Long Covid services



“My Long Covid clinic are brilliant...They keep up to date with the latest evidence and are always willing to share what others have found helpful. Most importantly, they do not encourage me to push through ... and have never suggested that physical symptoms are psychological. They have provided excellent letters for benefits, retirement etc... They offer virtual appointment which hugely helps manage energy levels but also do in person if I prefer that. They also keep me on their books so I can contact them as and when I need additional advice.”

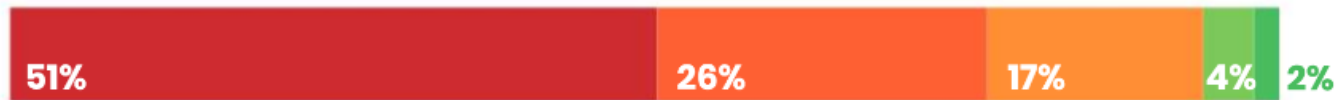
Female, 25-29, disabled before Covid, England

05 – Satisfaction with NHS overall

Figure 4. Satisfaction with NHS services overall

Had not used specialist Long Covid services

Adults (n=148)



CYP (n=107)



Had used specialist Long Covid services

Adults (n=346)



CYP (n=68)



1 2 3 4 5

(1= completely unsatisfied to 5= completely satisfied)

Satisfaction with NHS Overall is higher in adults who have used LC Services, but similar in CYP

What patients want

- Compassionate, knowledgeable professionals
- Physician-led care
- Re-referral pathways for relapses and reinfections
- Research-informed treatments
- Personalised, holistic care
- Choice of in-person or virtual consultations

“My LC clinic has been amazing. They seem to be really cutting edge with their approaches, very patient centred with an excellent range of well informed and highly trained clinicians...I was given a choice of group work or 1:1. I was fast tracked to see an OT as they knew I was returning imminently to work. I saw her for 6 months and she was an integral part of my phased return being successful. I cannot sing their praises more highly and know that recovery would look really different without their support.”

Female, 40-44, not disabled, England

What patients do not like

- limited or no consultation with physician
- HCPs lacking knowledge
- lack of in-person appointments
- discharge while still symptomatic
- lack of diagnostics and treatment
- uncertainty around follow-up care
- inappropriate and potentially unsafe care
- lack of support or validation from healthcare professionals
- open disbelief of patients' testimony
- assertions that symptoms were psychosomatic

"The service has not met my needs. There has been no continuity of care, no follow up, and no meaningful support."

Parent/carer of young female, 17-19, disabled since Covid, England

"The paediatrician said that long covid did not really exist and to give it more time as symptoms were probably due to something else."

Female, 15-16 years, disabled since Covid, England

06 - People are being left without care

Finding 06

Diminishing services



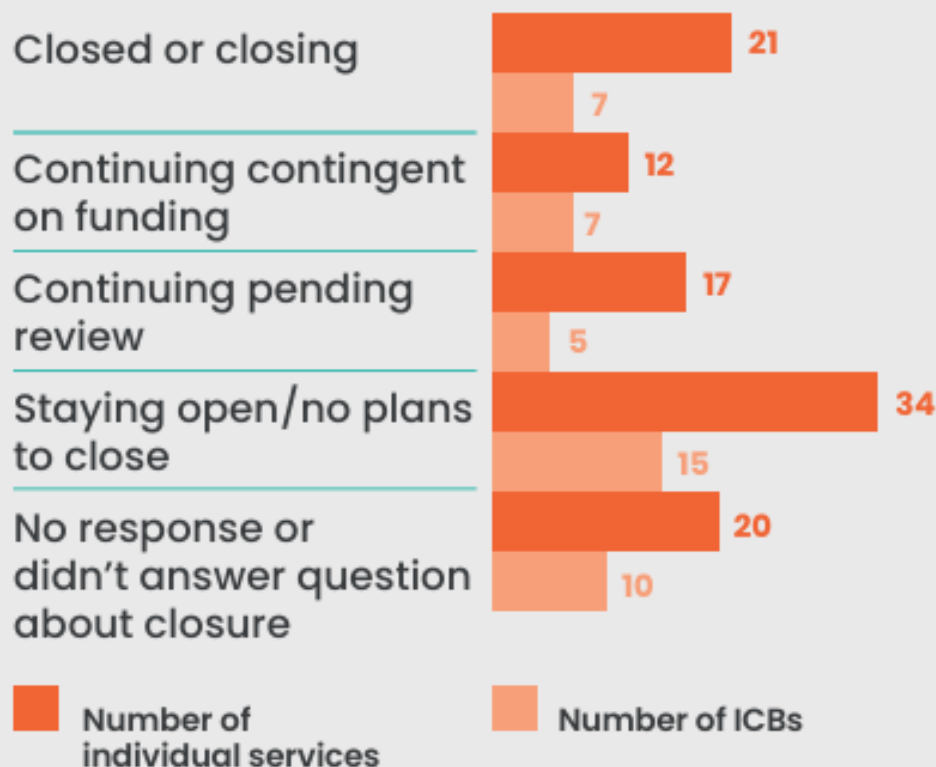
Specialist Long Covid service provision in the UK is already limited and is set to diminish further. Some services have already closed, others may face the risk of closure unless funding is secured beyond March 2025.



06 – LC Specialist Services are closing

a. England

42 ICBs, 104 individual services



Best-case scenario (England)

- 39 ICBs will operate 85 services

Worst-case scenario (England)

- 17 ICBs would run 34 services

Of the responses received so far, we have determined there are:

68 Adult Long Covid Clinics & 8 Hubs for Children and Young People*



Key Considerations for Children and Young People



- Access to NHS & Challenges of Private Healthcare
- Education
- Transitions
- Occupational Balance
- Overlapping Conditions
- Futures

What we are doing:

- Support
- Resource Development/Website Update
- Covid Inquiry Module 8 (Sep 25)
- Overlapping Conditions Alliance
- Research
- Continued Advocacy

Pause for breath....

07 - Limited public consultation

Public consultation about specialist Long Covid service change is absent or tokenistic.

Few adults and CYP reported participating in public consultations and none felt that the outcomes met their expectations.

6%

Adults

1.4%

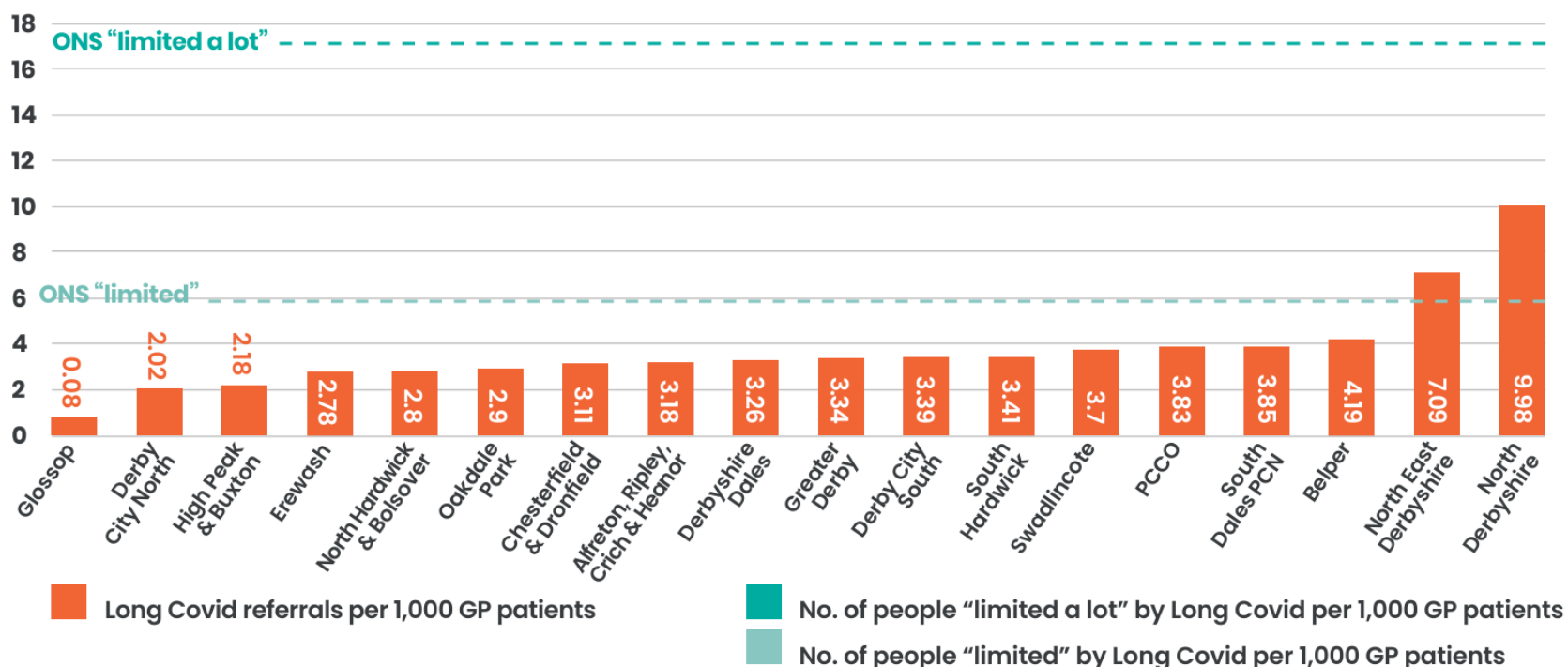
CYP

“...it was a tick box exercise. Patients’ voices are not listened to.”

Female, 55-59, disabled since Covid, England

08 – Inconsistent referrals

Figure 7. Long Covid referrals in NHS Derby and Derbyshire ICB per 1,000 GP patients

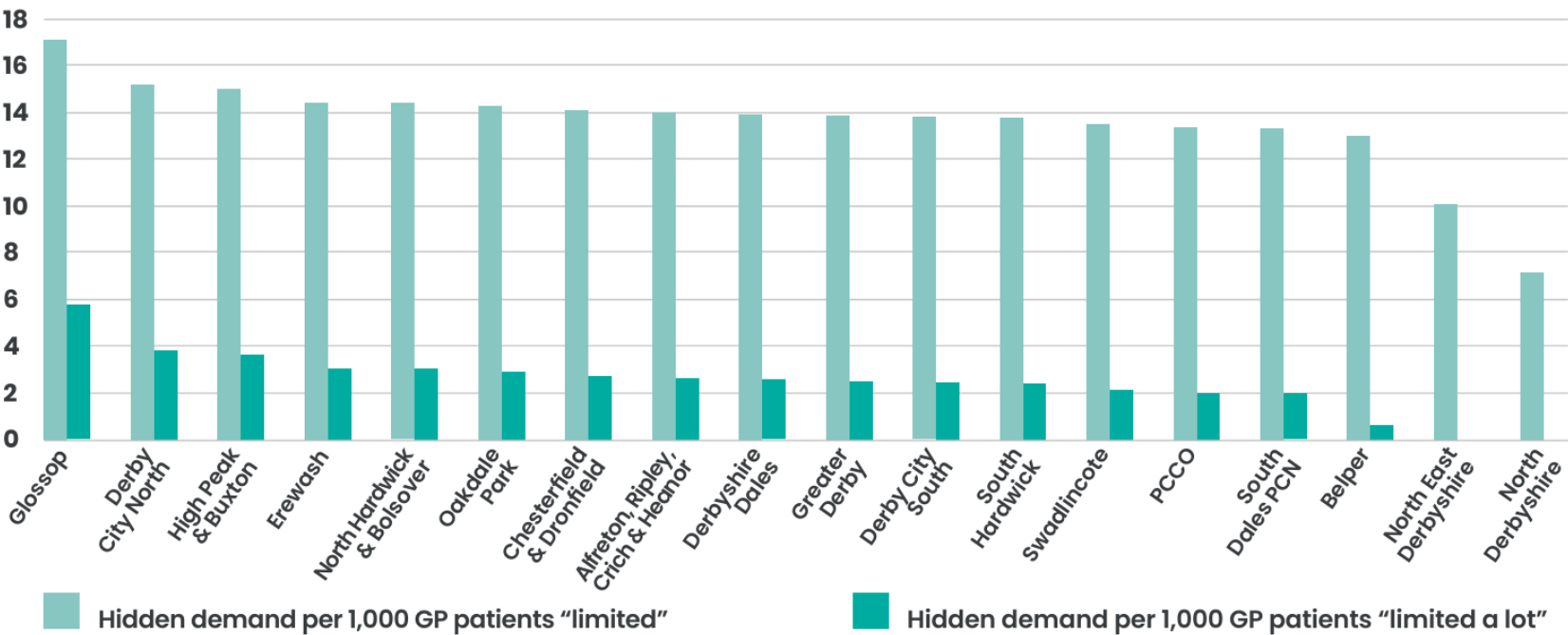


125 times more likely to get referral in N Derbyshire than Glossop

16/18 not even meeting the need of those "limited a lot"

08 – Hidden Demand

Figure 8. The hidden demand for Long Covid Services in Derbyshire Primary Care Network

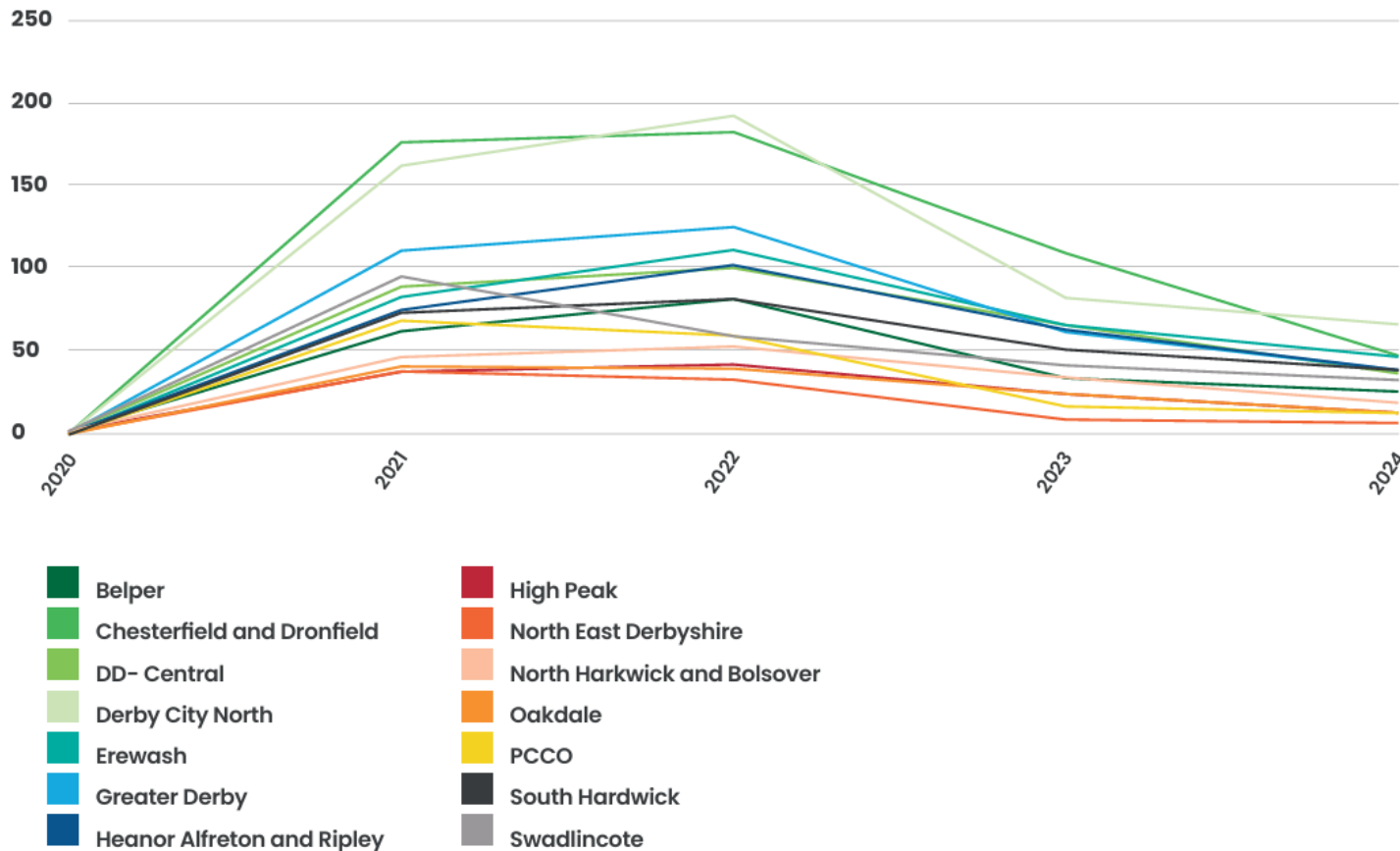


Hidden demand
far outstrips
visible demand

Referrals are NOT
a good metric for
demand

08 – Referrals dropping while prevalence increases

Figure 9. Referrals for Long Covid services in Derbyshire over time



LC is being
invisibilised and
ICBs are complicit

ICBs are content to
use poor quality
data to assess
demand

08 – Why are referrals dropping?

- no public health information – lack of awareness that Long Covid exists, or what it is
- a lack of testing, which prevents individuals from recognizing Covid infection as the trigger for their symptoms
- paucity of clinical coding and diagnoses by GPs
- lack of confidence by GPs in specialist services
- the stigma associated with a Long Covid diagnosis
- difficulty in obtaining a GP appointment
- not being believed or taken seriously
- absence of self-referral options

We are calling for

Based on our findings, we make 8 recommendations:

- 1. Urgently reinstate national Long Covid surveillance.**
- 2. Reverse closures of NHS specialist Long Covid services for adults and children.**
- 3. Allocate sufficient, secure, ongoing funding for specialist Long Covid services.**
- 4. Restore national oversight of specialist Long Covid services to the DHSC.**
- 5. Establish a comprehensive Long Covid national research strategy led by a dedicated co-ordinating body.**
- 6. Evaluate and adopt gold standard Long Covid clinical practice nationwide.**
- 7. Implement a rolling programme of Long Covid healthcare professional education and training.**
- 8. Formally recognise and manage Long Covid as a disabling condition.**

Any Questions?

Find us:



LongCovid.org



Long Covid Support Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/longcovid>

Covid-19 Research Involvement group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2590602557864509>

Long Covid Support <https://www.facebook.com/LongCovidPage/>



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