**The impact of disability on employment and financial security following the outbreak of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic in the UK**

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Journal of Public Health

**Background**

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic may have a greater impact on people with disabilities than non-disabled people. Our aim was to compare the short-term impact of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic and first lockdown on the employment and financial security of working age adults with and without disabilities in the UK.

**Methods**

Secondary analysis of data collected in Wave 9 and the special April, May and June COVID-19 monthly surveys of ‘Understanding Society’, the UK’s main annual household panel study.

**Results**

During the first 3 months of the introduction of the COVID-19 lockdown in the UK, respondents with disability were more likely than their peers to be working reduced hours and experience higher levels of financial stress. These differences were attenuated, but not eliminated, when estimates were adjusted to take account of pre-lockdown financial status.

**Conclusions**

Working age adults with disability were particularly disadvantaged by the financial impact of the COVID-19 lockdown in the UK. The UN Secretary-General António Guterres has stated the need for a disability-inclusive COVID-19 government response. The results of our analysis suggest that these pleas have either not been heeded, or if measures have been implemented, they have so far been ineffectual in the UK.

<https://academic.oup.com/jpubhealth/article/43/3/472/6082833>

**Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on health, financial worries, and perceived organizational support among people living with disabilities in Canada****[☆](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1936657421001278" \l "aep-article-footnote-id1)**

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Disability and Healthy Journal

**Background**

Individuals with physical or mental health disabilities may be particularly vulnerable to the impact of COVID-19 on their health and employment.

**Objectives**

We examined COVID-19-related concerns for health, finances, and organizational support among workers with no disability, a physical, mental health, or both physical and mental health disability, and factors associated with COVID-19 perceptions.

**Methods**

An online, cross-sectional survey was administered to a sample of Canadians in the first wave of the COVID-19 [pandemic](https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/medicine-and-dentistry/pandemic). Questions asked about COVID-19 perceptions, demographics (gender, age, education), work context (e.g., sector, contract work) and employment conditions (e.g., job stress, control, accommodation needs). Descriptive, multivariable, and nested regression analyses examined factors associated with COVID-19 perceptions.

**Results**

A total of 3066 participants completed the survey. Workers with both a physical and mental health disability reported significantly greater health and financial concerns and less organizational support than those with no disability. Workers with a physical disability reported more health concerns and those with a mental health disability reported more financial concerns and less organizational support. Respondents with disabilities also reported significant differences in employment conditions (e.g., more contract work, stress, unmet accommodation needs) than those with no disability. Employment conditions were consistently significant predictors of COVID-19 perceptions and attenuated the significance of disability type in analyses.

**Conclusions**

Concerns about the impact of COVID-19 on one's health, finances, and organizational support reflected existing disability inequities in employment conditions and highlight the importance of creating more inclusive employment opportunities for people living with physical and mental health disabilities.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1936657421001278>

The impact of Covid-19 on older workers’ employment and Social Security spillovers

* [Gopi Shah Goda](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00148-022-00915-z#auth-Gopi_Shah-Goda),
* [Emilie Jackson](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00148-022-00915-z#auth-Emilie-Jackson),
* [Lauren Hersch Nicholas](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00148-022-00915-z#auth-Lauren_Hersch-Nicholas) &
* [Sarah See Stith](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00148-022-00915-z#auth-Sarah_See-Stith)

Journal of Population Economics

Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic represents a major threat to health and economic well-being in the USA, especially for older and disabled workers, and may spill over onto Social Security. We use individual-level from the Current Population Survey, state-level monthly Social Security administrative data on disability benefit applications, and national-level monthly data on Social Security retirement benefit applications to assess the impact of the pandemic on older adults’ employment and benefit claiming. State-level monthly Google Trends data are used as a leading indicator of future claiming in the population. We find that employment for older workers dropped substantially more than would have been predicted prior to the pandemic: employment for 50–61-year-olds was 5.7 pp (8.3 percent) lower, while employment for 62–70-year-olds was 3.9 pp (10.7 percent) lower. We find declines in labor force exit due to disability (4–5 percent), applications for disability insurance (15 percent), the average age of disability program applicants, and Google searches for disability (7 percent). We contrast with prior periods of economic downturn and explore potential mechanisms, finding evidence for both supply- and demand-side explanations.

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00148-022-00915-z>

COVID-19 and Employment Losses for Workers with Disabilities: An Intersectional Approach

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SSRN WP

**Abstract**

This paper studies the disparate effects of COVID-19 on workers with physical and mental disabilities, paying particular attention to an intersectional analysis by disability, race/ethnicity, and gender. Results indicate that White and Black women with disabilities experienced relatively greater employment losses during the pandemic compared to White men without disabilities. Our decomposition procedures reveal that the disability employment gap increased during the pandemic, and a substantial portion of the increased gap is explained by differential effects of the pandemic across occupations. The unexplained component of the disability gap also rose, which could partly reflect growing discrimination against people with disabilities.

<https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3788319>

**Short-run Effects of COVID-19 on U.S. Worker Transitions**

[**Benjamin W. Cowan**](https://www.nber.org/people/ben_cowan)

NBER WP

I use Current Population Survey Data from February and April 2020 to examine how individual workers have transitioned between labor-market states and which workers have been hurt most by the COVID-19 pandemic. I find not only large effects on workers becoming unemployed but also a decline in labor-force participation, an increase in absence from one’s job, and a decrease in hours worked. Generally, more vulnerable populations—racial and ethnic minorities, those born outside the U.S., women with children, the least educated, and workers with a disability—have experienced the largest declines in the likelihood of (full-time) work and work hours.

<https://www.nber.org/papers/w27315>

**The initial impact of COVID-19 and policy responses on household incomes**

[Mike Brewer](javascript:;), [Laura Gardiner](javascript:;)

*Oxford Review of Economic Policy*

As soon as the scale of the coronavirus shock to the economy became clear, the UK government introduced three policies to protect directly household incomes: a Job Retention Scheme, to pay the wages of employees who were temporarily furloughed; a Self-Employment Income Support Scheme, to give grants to established self-employed people whose businesses had been affected; and a package of increases to entitlements to social security benefits, with Universal Credit at the core, that bolstered the UK’s means-tested ‘safety net’. This paper analyses the design and beneficiaries of these policies and, given the distributional pattern of the labour market shock, considers the emerging overall impact on living standards, particularly of low-income households.

<https://academic.oup.com/oxrep/article/36/Supplement_1/S187/5863392>

**Labor Markets During the COVID-19 Crisis: A Preliminary View**

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**NBER WORKING PAPER** 27017

We use a repeated large-scale survey of households in the Nielsen Homescan panel to characterize how labor markets are being affected by the covid-19 pandemic. We document several facts. First, job loss has been significantly larger than implied by new unemployment claims: we estimate 20 million lost jobs by April 6th, far more than jobs lost over the entire Great Recession. Second, many of those losing jobs are not actively looking to find new ones. As a result, we estimate the rise in the unemployment rate over the corresponding period to be surprisingly small, only about 2 percentage points. Third, participation in the labor force has declined by 7 percentage points, an unparalleled fall that dwarfs the three percentage point cumulative decline that occurred from 2008 to 2016.

From the paper: Prior to the crisis, most respondents out of the labor force claimed that it was because they were retired, disabled, homemakers, raising children, students, or did not need to work. Only 1.6% of those out of the labor force were claiming that they could not find a job as one of their reasons for not searching. At the height of the covid-19 crisis with a much larger number of people now out of the labor force, we see corresponding declines in the share of homemakers, those raising children and the disabled

<https://www.nber.org/papers/w27017>

Economic Conditions, the COVID-19 Pandemic Recession, and Implications for Disability Insurance in the United States

[*Wharton Pension Research Council Working Paper No. 2022-14*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4178289)

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Harvard Medical School - Department of Health Care Policy

**Abstract**

Previous economic downturns have led to increases in applications for and, eventually, receipt of Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits. In the pandemic-induced recession of 2020 and its aftermath, however, SSDI applications did not increase. One important factor may have been the prolonged closure of SSA field offices, since previous research finds that field office closures lead to persistent declines in SSDI beneficiaries in the surrounding communities. In this case, there may be pent-up demand for SSDI benefits as normal operations resume in areas where the economy has not fully recovered. Nevertheless, unemployment insurance expansions and other government support programs were materially different than in past recessions, which appears to have enabled people to weather the downturn and avoid applying for SSDI benefits. In this paper, we draw on prior research and recent federal statistics to discuss the unfolding effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the SSDI program and its beneficiaries.

<https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4178289>