

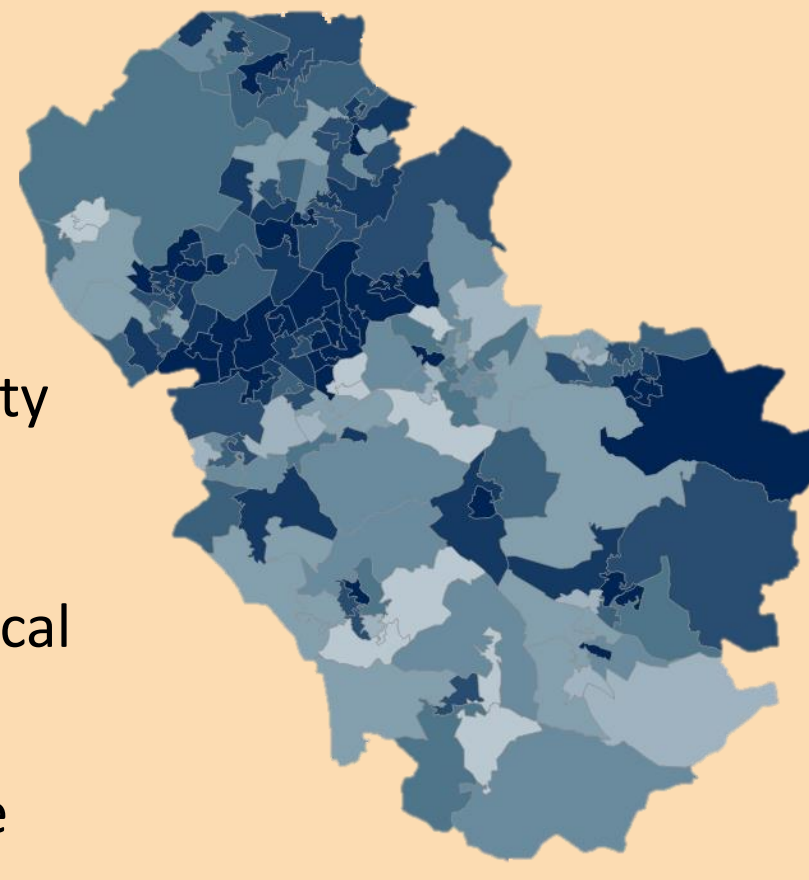
The Impact of the Pandemic in Rotherham

How this impacted people, health behaviours, community and neighbourhoods, the environment, and socio-economic factors.

Lorna Quinn, Public Health Intelligence Principal, Adult Care, Housing and Public Health, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Background

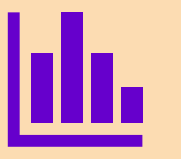
- The pandemic highlighted how Rotherham's deprivation coupled with the unequal distribution of social determinants of health impacted resilience to Covid-19 and the outcomes for our population.
- Preventable inequalities within society reduce an individual's ability to prevent sickness or access healthcare when ill health occurs. These inequalities include exposure to risk factors, education, housing, employment, and lead to associated inequalities in physical and mental health.
- The pandemic exposed these inequalities with people living in the poorest 10% of areas more likely to die from Covid-19, and left sections of society vulnerable to financial insecurity, employment loss, missing education, and unmet mental and physical health needs.



Rotherham LSOA deprivation according to 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation. A darker colour represents a more deprived area.

Method

- Semi-structured interviews across the four Council directorates to understand how the pandemic affected staff and service users, coupled with quantitative data covering service demand, changes and adaptations, and ongoing and emerging issues.
- This information was combined with significant public engagement obtained through thirteen focus group sessions and 70 survey responses including participation from carers and those in receipt of care, parent and toddler group members, people living with neurodiversity, ethnic minority communities, and older people.



Measures

Socio-economic

- Education
- Healthcare
- Adult Social Care
- Children's Services
- Housing
- Income and Inequality
- Work and Employment



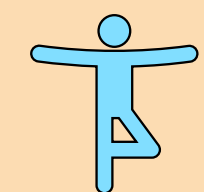
Community and Neighbourhoods

- Crime
- 'Being at home'
- Community Hub



Health Behaviours

- Smoking
- Weight
- Alcohol
- Substance use
- Sexual Health



Environment

- Air Quality
- Transport
- Culture, Leisure and Socialising

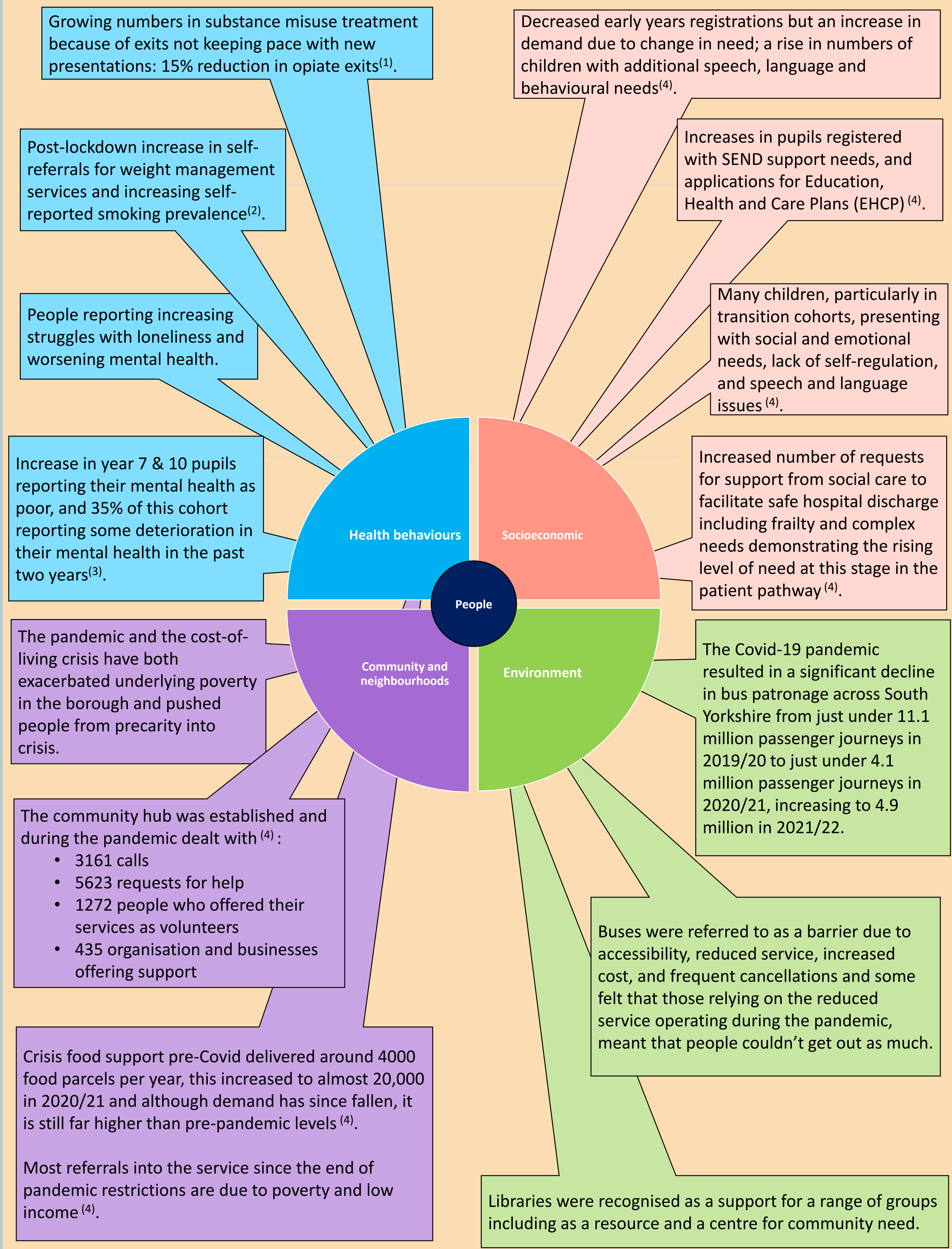


People

- Digital
- Access to Services
- Guidance and Media



Results



Conclusion and recommendations

- Work remains to recover the pre-pandemic position for a number of services and outcomes with consideration of the impact on health inequalities and inequalities in access. Outcomes of concern that will have a long-term effect on individuals and within the borough include Alcohol and Drug treatment completions, Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) prescribing rates, smoking rates, obesity rates, immunisation, and cancer screening rates.
- There remains continued anxiety felt by certain cohorts within the population creating a barrier to community participation and therefore risking detriment to physical and mental health; there is a need to support people to overcome this to regain the confidence to interact and achieve wider integration with society.
- Engagement responses demonstrate the complexity of pandemic guidance and communication challenges throughout. For future major incidents, partners should recognise the importance of good communications nationally, regionally, and locally, and the need for community engagement to support understanding, adherence, and the ability to engage with the changes to pathways and services.
- It should be noted the economic impacts of the pandemic, and the post pandemic rises in the cost of living, ensuring mitigation of poverty locally both through the provision of support services, and in terms of organisational delivery of social value through support for the local economy and to local employment

References

- Alcohol and substance misuse data obtained from NDTMS
 - Data obtained from Public Health Commissioned Services
 - Rotherham Voice of the Child Survey, 2022
 - Data obtained from internal RMBC services.
- Full report available here: [Director of Public Health Annual Reports – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

Acknowledgements

This was supported by Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council staff across all directorates and by Rotherham residents and we would like to thank all members who provided insight and expertise that greatly assisted this research.