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| **Minding the Gap - News Brief: No. 153** |
| **Learning in Lockdown**  For the second time in less than a year, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced schools to close for the most children, with the majority of children learning remotely. During the first lockdown, research found that children’s experiences of remote learning varied substantially across different socio-economic backgrounds and that there was a risk that after years of work to reduce the attainment gap and tackle social mobility could be undone in just a few months.  This report looks at the situation for pupils at the beginning of the second period of school closures and gives an up to date picture of how teaching is being delivered remotely, as well as access children have to resources, and other barriers faced while learning at home. The pandemic continues to have an impact on learning d that impact is being unevenly felt Teachers at the least affluent state schools report a lower than normal standard of work returned by pupils since the shutdown when compared to more affluent state schools and even less at private schools. The report also looks at how the impacts of the pandemic on education and how social mobility can be minimised.  [Report](https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Learning-in-Lockdown.pdf) |
| **COVID-19—Break the Cycle of Inequality**  One of the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic has been to illuminate far-reaching health and socioeconomic inequalities. The impact has fallen disproportionately on the most vulnerable individuals and along racial, ethnic, occupational, and socioeconomic lines. The article suggests that there is a need for financial recommitment to public health, in addition, a substantial commitment to tackling the social determinants of poor health and wellbeing. Investing in young people and support in long-deprived regions and sectors of society is arguably one of the most powerful ways to break the chain of perpetual inequality.  [Article](https://www.thelancet.com/action/showPdf?pii=S2468-2667%2821%2900011-6) |
| **Social Determinants of Health and the Role of Local Government**  Health improvement has always been a fundamental responsibility of local government and this was emphasised further with the transfer of public health responsibilities in 2013. It is almost eight years since that transfer. It is 11 years since the landmark publication of the Marmot report, ‘Fair Society Healthy Lives. The role of local government at that time was set out as the following: as an employer; through the services it commissions and delivers; through its regulatory powers; through community leadership; through its well-being power. Local government still has all these roles in improving health and tackling the social determinants of health, but the world has moved on over a decade and the developments during that time are considerable.  Therefore, it is the right time to look again at what local government can do to improve health especially by tackling social determinants. There are opportunities to see what innovation and new activity has been undertaken across the country and how that can be repeated elsewhere. In the context of COVID-19 it is important to remember that it is often the effects of social determinants of health that have made people more vulnerable to the virus. Conversely the social effects of the virus on employment and the economy will have an additional impact on health.  [Report](https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/22.52%20Social%20Determinants%20of%20Health_05_0.pdf) |
| **Working For Babies: Lockdown Lessons from Local Systems**  The first 1001 days, from pregnancy to age two, are an age of opportunity. This is a critically important period of rapid development that lays the foundations for later health, wellbeing and happiness. It is also a period of unique vulnerability, when babies are particularly reliant on adults and susceptible to their environment. There is a strong moral, social and economic case for ensuring local services and systems work effectively to support babies and their families during this formative life stage.  This report summarises the impacts on babies of Covid-19 and the spring 2020 national lockdown. The report also explores how local systems responded to the challenges presented by Covid-19. It seeks to understand the factors that have shaped the response by services that support babies and their families. Most importantly, the report seeks to ensure that lessons are learnt for the future of service provision for this age group. The report suggests that babies' needs are often not prioritised by decision makers, despite the increased vulnerability of infancy and the enormous importance of early childhood development and that there continues to be a 'baby blind-spot'.  [Report](https://parentinfantfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/210115-F1001D-Working-for-Babies-Report-FINAL-v1.0-compressed.pdf?utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20%28main%20account%29&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=12106480_NEWSL_HMP%202021-01-22&dm_i=21A8,77HF4,FLWQCU,T7M70,1) |
| **Working Mums and Covid-19: Paying the Price**  There are calls for a temporary legal right to access the furlough scheme for parents and those with caring responsibilities who have had these significantly disrupted due to coronavirus restrictions, and people who cannot work because they are required to shield.  The main purpose of the furlough scheme is to support jobs where there is no demand due to Covid-19 restrictions. However, this report suggests that because we don’t have a parental leave system that is fit for purpose, the government made furlough scheme available in April 2020 to parents who cannot work due to Covid-19 restrictions on schools and childcare. This report also calls for a discussion on alternative forms of working should be had with both dads and mums to ensure stereotypical assumptions on who provides care are not inadvertently reinforced. Likewise, furlough should be offered equally on a flexible basis to mums and dads so that they can both share care. Newly self-employed parents should have immediate access to the self-employment income support scheme  [Report](https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/2021-01/WorkingMums.pdf) |
| **UK Poverty 2020/21**  This year’s UK poverty report is published at the end of the most turbulent year in the lives of most of us. Coronavirus has imposed pressure on people’s everyday life, meaning activities and habits we had taken for granted were no longer possible. This report highlights that some of the groups most caught up financially in this, who before coronavirus were in low-paid, insecure work, who were struggling to live on benefit levels that had fallen further behind the cost of living over the last seven years, or who were seeing more of their income eaten up by expensive private rents. The report also shows how the UK and devolved governments have rightly responded by taking a series of steps to support jobs, incomes or housing security, but also that many of us still need a lifeline to keep us afloat.  This report has shown that even before coronavirus, millions of people in our society were living precarious and insecure lives. In many instances, coronavirus has swept them deeper into poverty, as well as dragging others under, many of whom will have not experienced this situation before. The Government has responded with some bold and compassionate actions, but too many of these are temporary. A longer-term strategy is desperately needed to act as a life raft for people in poverty, including through the uncertainty of exiting the Brexit transition period. The report summarise these effects and discuss what needs to happen next.  [Report](http://downloads2.dodsmonitoring.com/downloads/Misc_Files/uk_poverty_2020-21.pdf?utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20%28main%20account%29&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=12093921_NEWSL_HWB_2021_01_25&dm_i=21A8,777Q9,FLWQCU,T69OJ,1) |
| **A New Deal for Prevention**  This series of articles discusses the benefits of a preventive approach to public health and the obstacles that stand in the way of its realisation. It brings together experts from the scientific research community and the health and social care sector to consider the future of prevention in the UK. Averting or delaying the development of preventable conditions allows people to live for longer in better health means that we need to shine a spotlight on health inequalities and tackling the social determinants of ill health driving forward.  [Report](https://reform.uk/sites/default/files/2021-01/Reformer%20Thoughts%2C%20Prevention%20Final%20%282%29.pdf?utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20%28main%20account%29&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=12093921_NEWSL_HWB_2021_01_25&dm_i=21A8,777Q9,FLWQCU,T6DV1,1) |
| **Pandemic Pressures: Why Families on a Low Income are Spending more During Covid-19**This briefing explores why so many low-income families report spending more, not less, since Covid-19 gripped the nation in spring 2020. The report highlights how increased financial worries amplify the negative impact of the pandemic on the mental health of parents and carers on a low income. The report finds that average household spending has fallen during the Covid-19 pandemic, driven by lower expenditure on leisure activities, meals out, holidays and commuting costs, but the fall (and commensurate rise in saving) does not reflect the experience of all households.  More than half of adults in families from the lowest income quintile have borrowed more to cover everyday costs since the pandemic began, while those that entered the crisis with low savings have been the most likely to have run those down during 2020. However, the Covid-19 experience is differentiated not just by income group but also by family type. This briefing also examines, in detail, at how the living standards of families with dependent children on a low income have changed since the pandemic began.  [Briefing](https://www.resolutionfoundation.org/app/uploads/2021/01/Pandemic-pressures.pdf?utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20%28main%20account%29&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=12093921_NEWSL_HWB_2021_01_25&dm_i=21A8,777Q9,FLWQCU,T69XG,1) |
| **Real "Levelling Up" Means Greater Social Justice**  This article suggests that there is a case for a coherent approach to addressing inequality grows. Research shows that mortality rates from Covid-19 were twice as high in the most deprived areas as in the least deprived. One of the reasons for this is the nature of employment – many people cannot work at home and are forced to take more risks in jobs that tend to be of low value and open to Covid-19 exposure. When you add deepening income disparities, heightened employment insecurity and intergenerational poverty, the problems raised by Covid-19 become even more apparent. The article calls for building a more “people” rather than “project”-centred approach to “levelling up” which means developing policy solutions informed by those at the sharp end of inequality alongside the professionals trying to support them.  [Article](https://www.newstatesman.com/spotlight/coronavirus/2021/01/real-levelling-means-greater-social-justice?utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20(main%20account)&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=12093921_NEWSL_HWB_2021_01_25&dm_i=21A8,777Q9,FLWQCU,T6VKU,1) |
| **UK Labour Market Sees Steep Increase in Unemployment**  This article Includes current labour market data covering September to November 2020 showing the impact of the second national lockdown on an already slow recovery. The research finds that unemployment is the highest it has been since 2016, and vacancies remain low and redundancies, although down from their peak in September, remain high. Overall there is little improvement this quarter, and no indication the labour market situation will improve any time soon in the context of the third national lockdown we are currently navigating.  [Article](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/work-foundation/news/blog/uk-labour-market-sees-steep-increase-in-unemployment) |
| **Downturn In Workers’ Mental And Financial Wellbeing During Covid-19: Hardest Hit Are Those That Can Least Afford It**  The COVID-19 crisis has impacted almost all aspects of our lives to an unprecedented extent. With large numbers of workers furloughed, on reduced hours, or having lost their jobs, many are experiencing a fall in income in spring and summer 2020. This briefing explores the extent to which such falls in income are impacting mental wellbeing. The briefing found that the COVID-19 crisis is having a differential financial impact on workers on low incomes, with those who were just getting by prior to the crisis 7 times more likely to struggle financially now, compared with people who were better off. Workers who were ‘finding it very difficult to get by’ before the crisis have experienced a greater negative impact on their mental wellbeing. There was a drop in financial wellbeing for workers in some low-paid sectors that were impacted by lockdown and restrictions, such as hospitality, and ‘other services’, which includes in-person services such as hairdressing and workers who were permanently laid off experienced substantively increased levels of mental distress.  [Briefing](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/media/lancaster-university/content-assets/documents/lums/work-foundation/reports/7090-LUni-WorkFoundation-MentalHealthv4.pdf) |
| **Older And Wiser: A Practical Guide For Developing, Commissioning And Operating Age-Friendly Homes**  This guide is intended to show how housing associations, local councils and private developers who may be looking to develop specialist housing for the first time can deliver greater numbers and a wider range of accommodation to meet the needs of older people. Whilst this report was written before the pandemic, the principles it espouses, in particular the need to build communities, design for well-being, and provide access to outside space, have proved to be more important than ever.  [Guide](https://www.housinglin.org.uk/_assets/Resources/Housing/OtherOrganisation/Report_OlderAndWiserHousingForum.pdf?utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20%28main%20account%29&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=12093921_NEWSL_HWB_2021_01_25&dm_i=21A8,777Q9,FLWQCU,T6VBC,1) |
| **Health on the High Street: Embedding Healthy Living into Urban Regeneration after the Pandemic**  This report argues that town centres where shops and offices fall vacant should be used to establish new 'health hubs' combining GP surgeries, health and social care services and gyms. The report profiles examples where local authorities and health care bodies are already developing such hubs, which it suggests could be a model for other areas in the future.  [Report](https://www.smf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Health-on-the-high-street-January-21.pdf?utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20%28main%20account%29&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=12093921_NEWSL_HWB_2021_01_25&dm_i=21A8,777Q9,FLWQCU,T7G70,1) |
| **The Unequal Pandemic: COVID-19 and Health Inequalities**  By Clare Bambra, Julia Lynch and Katherine E. Smith  It has been claimed that we are ‘all in it together’ and that the COVID-19 virus ‘does not discriminate’.  This accessible, yet authoritative book dispels this myth of COVID-19 as an ‘equal opportunity’ disease, by showing how the pandemic is a syndemic of disease and inequality.  Drawing on international data and accounts, it argues that the pandemic is unequal in three ways: it has killed unequally, been experienced unequally and will impoverish unequally.  These inequalities are a political choice: with governments effectively choosing who lives and who dies, we need to learn from COVID-19 quickly to prevent growing inequality and to reduce health inequalities in the future.  [Order here](https://policy.bristoluniversitypress.co.uk/the-unequal-pandemic) |
| **The Deaton Review of Inequalities: A New Year’s Message**  The Deaton Review was set up to look at the possibility that inequalities may prove a threat to our economic, social and political systems unless they are tackled effectively. The review argues that among other things we collectively lacked a coherent understanding of how key forms of inequality relate to each other: such as inequalities in health, income, wealth, educational opportunity and family life, and gaps between rich and poor, different parts of the country, different ethnic groups and different genders. Since then, the world has changed more than any of us could have imagined. And yet COVID-19 seems to have shone a light on many of the issues we raised pre-pandemic, more vividly than we ever could have.  This report examines the impact of the pandemic on educational, economic, social and health inequalities in the UK. It outlines data and evidence on the groups that have been most heavily impacted by widening inequalities and Covid-19. The report suggests that the COVID crisis has exacerbated inequalities between the high- and low-paid and between graduates and non-graduates and that it has hit the self-employed and others in insecure and non-traditional forms of employment especially hard. Educational inequalities will almost certainly have been exacerbated by the crisis, the crisis has had very different impacts on different ethnic groups and whilst pensioners have on average reported becoming financially better off, the young have borne the brunt of job and income loss, mortality rates from COVID-19 were twice as high in the most deprived areas as in the least deprived.  [Report](https://www.ifs.org.uk/inequality/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/IFS-Deaton-Review-New-Year-Message.pdf?utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20%28main%20account%29&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=12061170_NEWSL_HMP%202021-01-05&dm_i=21A8,76IGI,FLWQCU,T4HCZ,1) |
| **Build Back Fairer: The COVID-19 Marmot Review**  This report has been produced by the UCL Institute of Health Equity and commissioned by the Health Foundation as part of its [COVID-19 impact inquiry](https://www.health.org.uk/what-we-do/a-healthier-uk-population/mobilising-action-for-healthy-lives/covid-19-impact-inquiry/call-for-evidence) to investigate how the pandemic has affected health inequalities in England.  It was the principles of fairness and the need to do things differently that animated the concrete recommendations we set out in our February 10 Years On Review, just before the pandemic hit with such devastating intensity. Inequalities in mortality from COVID-19 and rising health inequalities as a result of social and economic impacts, have made such action even more important.  The aim of this report is three-fold:   * To examine inequalities in COVID-19 mortality. Focus is on inequalities in mortality among members of BAME groups and among certain occupations, alongside continued attention to the socioeconomic gradient in health – the more deprived the area, the worse COVID-19 mortality tends to be * To show the effects that the pandemic, and the societal response to contain the pandemic, have had on social and economic inequalities, their effects on mental and physical health, and their likely effects on health inequalities in the future * To make recommendations on what needs to be done   **The report highlights that:**   * Inequalities in social and economic conditions before the pandemic contributed to the high and unequal death toll from COVID-19 * The nation’s health should be the highest priority for government as we rebuild from the pandemic * The economy and health are strongly linked – managing the pandemic well allows the economy to flourish in the longer term, which is supportive of health * Reducing health inequalities, including those exacerbated by the pandemic requires long-term policies with equity at the heart * To build back fairer from the pandemic, multi-sector action from all levels of government is needed * Investment in public health needs to be increased to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on health and health inequalities, and on the social determinants of health.   [Full Report](https://yhphnetwork.co.uk/media/72540/build-back-fairer-the-covid-19-marmot-review-ihe-2020.pdf)  [Executive Summary](https://yhphnetwork.co.uk/media/72541/build-back-fairer-the-covid-19-marmot-review-executive-summary-ihe-2020.pdf)  [Build Back Fairer Launch Webinar](https://youtu.be/vRyVNyIrBn0?t=133) |
| **Marmot Review 10 Years On**  It has been ten years since the publication of The Marmot Review, for the first time in more than 100 years life expectancy has failed to increase across the country, and for the poorest 10% of women it has actually declined. Over the last decade health inequalities have widened overall, and the amount of time people spend in poor health has increased since 2010.  #Marmot2020 confirms an increase in the north/south health gap, where the largest decreases were seen in the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods in the North East, and the largest increases in the least deprived 10% of neighbourhoods in London.  There are a number of key points made within the report, but the principle point I would like to make is that, the more deprived the area, the shorter the life expectancy. This social gradient has become steeper over the last decade, and women in the most deprived 10% of areas for whom life expectancy fell from 2010-12 and 2016-18. There are marked regional differences in life expectancy, particularly among people living in more deprived areas, a general point is that the North is doing worse than the South.  Mortality rates are increasing for men and women aged 45-49 – perhaps related to so-called ‘deaths of despair’ (suicide, drugs and alcohol abuse) as seen in the USA. Child poverty has increased with children’s and youth centres have closing and the reduction in funding for education. There is a housing crisis and a rise in homelessness, people have insufficient income to lead a healthy life and there are more ignored communities with poor conditions leaving people with little reason for hope, aspiration and tangible possibility to improve their lot!  Marmot Review 2020  [Executive Summary](https://www.health.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-03/Health%20Equity%20in%20England_The%20Marmot%20Review%2010%20Years%20On_executive%20summary_web.pdf)  [Full Report](https://www.health.org.uk/sites/default/files/upload/publications/2020/Health%20Equity%20in%20England_The%20Marmot%20Review%2010%20Years%20On_full%20report.pdf) |
| **Events**  **Public Health Approaches to Policing and Serious Violence**  **Venue: This event will take place online.**  **Date: This a week-long webinar series starting, 8 Feb 2021**  **With some 15 individual webinars over the week, the series will have a strong focus on learning from practice that is currently being tried, tested, and delivered across the four nations.**  **Key areas to be covered include:**  **· An introduction to public health approaches – What is it and how will it benefit my working practice?**  **· Crisis response utilising public health approaches**  **· Whole system public health approaches**  **· Early intervention and prevention**  **· Trauma informed practice**  **For more information** [**click here**](https://web.cvent.com/event/d4a08dfd-9470-4b90-b713-5d96f7ccc893/websitePage:645d57e4-75eb-4769-b2c0-f201a0bfc6ce)  **The Personalisation and Co-Creation of Public Services Represents a Growing Movement in Public Service Reform.**  **Venue: This event will take place online.**  **Date: Wed, 10 February 2021**  **Time: 16:00 – 17:15**  Most simply, personalisation means that public services respond to the needs of people rather than service providers. In its more radical forms, it encompasses ‘co-creation’, an increasingly influential idea in public services often associated with social innovation, where people who use services work with professionals to design, create and deliver them. However, to date, many of the examples of personalisation and co-creation in public services have taken place in services where people’s participation is more or less voluntary.  The speakers have collaborated with Interserve to design a series of pilot interventions for people on probation supervision, culminating in a pilot called ‘MyDirection’. In this free seminar the speakers will discuss the development of MyDirection, its links to desistance theory and some key findings from its evaluation  For further details or to request your free seminar place please [click here](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/personalisation-innovation-and-transforming-rehabilitation-registration-135966985915)  **NIHR SPHR Places & Communities /Equal England Webinar**  **Venue: This event will take place online.**  **Date: 2 February 2021**  **Time: 14:00 – 16:00**  This webinar will present and discuss early findings from the NIHR SPHR Places & communities programme and initiate a discussion of how they apply to the COVID and post-COVID era.  **Presentations** The webinar will include presentations on the latest research from the programme.  Local government funding cuts and their consequences for health equity Food outlet data and its uses for local authorities Food advertising in transport settings  **Discussions** Attendees will have a chance to discuss findings and feedback to presenters Facilitated discussion on place-centred public health in the COVID era: how can researchers, policy-makers and the public hear each other views on priorities, problems and solutions.  For more information and to register [click here](https://sphr.nihr.ac.uk/news-and-events/nihr-sphr-places-and-communities-equal-england-online-webinar/)  **Marmot – Ten Years On! Rescheduled! I will update in due course**  **Venue: Leeds City Hilton Hotel, Neville Street, Leeds LS1 4BX**  **Date: Monday, 21st September 2020**  **Time: 8:30 – 17:00**  As a result of the increasing health concerns and escalating developments that have occurred recently regarding the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, Minding the Gap have made the decision to postpone our next conference (Marmot Ten Years On) until September 2020. We have a duty of care and responsibility to the people who would be attending the event, the delegates, presenters, and staff, many of whom would be older and might have pre-existing chronic conditions that could put them at greater risk. Others will be supporting efforts across the country to stop the spread of this infection and we have a wider responsibility to the general public and the NHS not to do anything that could possibly contribute to the spread.  We regret not having the opportunity to publicly celebrate the recently published work of the Institute of Health Equity, but rest assured that our work continues.  I have booked a new provisional date for the conference, the 21st September 2020 which will take place at the same venue, so please reserve the date in your diary. I will be writing out again in the next week or so to establish your availability, but I emphasise that this date is still provisional.  Once again, our sincere apologies for any inconvenience caused and thank you for your understanding.  Kind regards  Ian Copley  Project Co-ordinator  **Let’s Start at the Very beginning. It’s a Very Good Place to Start. Conference**  The link to the Speaker Presentations and Evaluation Report for this Event is:  <https://www.yhphnetwork.co.uk/links-and-resources/minding-the-gap/events-and-conferences/lets-start-at-the-very-beginning-its-a-very-good-place-to-start/>  Links to the individual videos are:  Rachel Dickinson - <https://youtu.be/f4HLia559So>  David Taylor Robinson - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ftnIrKY7A9w&feature=youtu.be>  Ceri Wyborn - <https://youtu.be/PgtKhW-3K4Q>  Edward Melhuish - <https://youtu.be/yZdp-bY3Sis>  Peter Matejic - <https://youtu.be/6AIskEXvDnM>  Stephanie Waddell - <https://youtu.be/82tR1_SKQw4>  Nick Frost - <https://youtu.be/-RDYJFnU0Cc> |
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