



LONDON COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESPONSE SURVEY: WEEK EIGHTEEN/NINETEEN

FIELDWORK 10th - 19th August 2020

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Community Response Survey

The COVID-19 Community Response Survey asks civil society organisations who work in London a small number of questions to understand the impact of COVID-19 and associated policy measures, such as social distancing, on vulnerable populations in the capital.

The first week of the survey focused on asking baseline questions to capture organisational profiles, and included a small number of questions relating to the immediate impact post-lockdown of COVID-19.

Surveys from week two onwards are shorter, and ask organisations a number of questions about changes they have seen in the last week.

This week's survey collected data over two weeks.

Results from the survey are shared with responding organisations and with decision-makers supporting the pan-London response to COVID-19.

Cohort details

The questions were sent to more than 360 Civil Society organisations who have agreed to take part. The organisations were recruited through existing contacts and mailing lists held by the GLA Community Engagement and Equality & Fairness teams.

In addition, larger organisations and infrastructure providers were asked to cascade the invitation down to their networks.

A total of 106 organisations responded in full or in part to the week seven questions, which were live between Monday 10th and Wednesday 19th August 2020.

Note: due to the relatively small sample size and the targeted way in which recruitment was conducted, it is important not to extrapolate from any findings in the weekly survey to all civil society organisations in London or any particular population of Londoners. Results from the weekly survey should be used alongside other sources of intelligence to understand the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable communities.

CHANGE IN NUMBER OF PEOPLE SEEKING SUPPORT

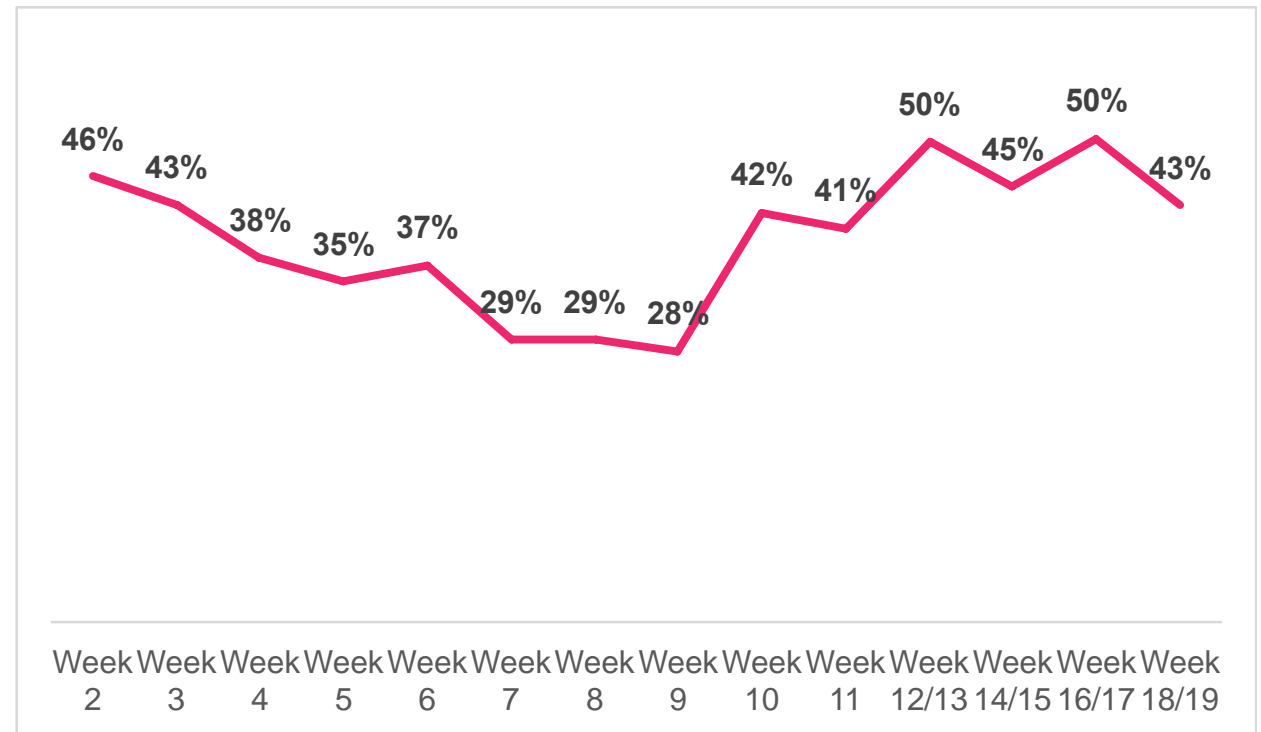
This week 43 per cent of responding organisations (45) saw an increase in the number of people seeking support in the last two weeks.

49 reported little change in numbers and 11 reported a decrease

Organisations working with young people were particularly likely to report an increase in demand (55%). This is a change from previous weeks, where these organisations were more likely to report lower demand. Organisations working with socially excluded groups were also more likely to report an increase in demand (50%).

Organisations that work with the general public (27%) and disabled people (29%) were less likely to report an increase in demand.

Change in numbers seeking support (number of organisations)



CHANGE IN NUMBERS SEEKING SUPPORT FOR SPECIFIC ISSUES

We asked responding organisations to tell us whether the number of people seeking support for a range of specific issues was higher, the same or lower compared to last week. We asked them to only answer if they deal with and have seen each of the issues. This week we have seen a noticeable increase in the proportion of organisations experiencing an increase in demand around education, homelessness, domestic violence and victim support.

Issue	Proportion reporting higher demand	No. of responses	Issue	Proportion reporting higher demand	No. of responses
Education	72%	36	Access to benefits	41%	46
Poverty	66%	44	Isolation and loneliness	40%	57
Employment	60%	45	Capacity Building	39%	36
Homelessness	58%	36	Access to health	38%	39
Debt issues	57%	47	Hate crime	38%	21
Housing	56%	43	Digital connectivity	37%	52
Domestic violence	51%	35	Grief bereavement	36%	25
Discrimination	50%	26	Substance misuse	32%	19
Physical health	48%	40	Access to food	27%	66
Mental health	46%	59	Immigration issues	27%	26
Victim support	44%	18	Access to care	13%	31
Childcare or Parenting	43%	23			

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE YOUR ORGANISATION IS FACING THIS WEEK?

We asked responding organisations to tell us the three biggest challenges they were facing last week. The most common challenges are still longer-term funding and recovery planning

Challenge	Number of organisations
Funding sustainability beyond the crisis	40
Planning for recovery/easing of lockdown	33
Delivering services whilst following social distancing guidelines	20
Funding general	20
Capacity - general	14
Reaching vulnerable groups	13
Staff wellbeing and mental health	13
Capacity - due to increased demand	12
Digital or tech equipment (laptops, mobile phones or other devices)	12
Need to provide new or changed services	11
Funding access to urgent funding for new needs	10

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE YOUR BENEFICIARIES ARE FACING THIS WEEK?

We asked responding organisations to tell us the three biggest challenges their beneficiaries were facing in the last week. This week the top issues identified remain consistent with W16/17, loss of employment, low income, mental health & social isolation are the top four issues. This week there was an increase in the number of organisations identifying No Recourse To Public Funds a key challenge for beneficiaries.

Challenge	Number of organisations
Loss of jobs or lack of employment opportunities	38
Low income	38
Mental health	29
Social Isolation	25
Digital exclusion	20
Access to food and essentials	19
Social distancing rules	14
Inadequate accommodation	11
No recourse to public funds	11

| BENEFICIARY CHALLENGES BY BENEFICIARY GROUP

Do biggest beneficiary challenges vary by the main groups of beneficiaries organisations work with? Percentages shown are of responding organisations, and are relative to the cohort overall.

Organisations working with disabled Londoners were particularly likely to mention mental health (44%), digital exclusion (28%).

Organisations working with young people were much more likely to mention mental health (58%) and more likely to identify social distancing rules (25%).

Organisations working with BAME Londoners were much more likely than other organisations to mention loss of jobs (67%) and more likely to mention digital exclusion (28%).

Organisations working with low income Londoners were more likely to mention access to food (37%) and No Recourse to Public Funds (21%).

ANY OTHER ISSUES

Changes in food aid

Still a need for food parcels but the offer of the from LA's are dwindling

We are in the process of closing our food delivery service and looking at making referrals to alternative organisations.

People are in desperate shape with lots of anxiety and stress and worries about the future. They don't know what will happen. This is coupled with a dramatic loss of volunteers due to them going back to work or on holiday. We will not have the same volunteer groups that we have had for the last 4 months and worked closely with as when they come back from holidays many will start work ... Also our volunteer drivers have got to know the people they deliver to and have become friends with them. So they are leaving them. Its more difficult for those of us left behind to know how to go forward. We are losing our cooked food from next week so we have to buy cooked food in for quite a few desperate households. It means we can offer less but may help with the problem of dependency of which we are very aware. But it comes at a time when people are showing up to collect food and crying because they can't find work. If we offer less does this help them stop having food aid or push them deeper into depression? Impossible to know and maybe different for different people and differing circumstances. We also have households who have found work but cannot live on the money they get from it and have debts from the months of not working so cannot come off food aid for some time. Its all much messier and more difficult now.

ANY OTHER ISSUES

We still have a lot struggle supporting cases of migrant women, while they are homeless or are under process of immigration issue dealing with Home Office. We have many clients need financial help as well.

Experiences of migrants and those with NRPF

NRPF / overstayer migrant mums with new born babies are not getting any check-ins or visits by health visitors - we are their first port of call. GPs not responding - signposting to health visitors.

Growing concern is the increase in unemployment and homelessness. Our beneficiaries especially with children need more support than is out there at the moment or childcare/ child minding

Housing and homelessness

We are seeing a number of people who were initially accommodated due to Covid, but who have subsequently left, or been asked to leave, their temp accommodation, and have returned to rough sleeping. It's proving hard to support them as our day centre is still a few weeks away from reopening.

South American Community in Walworth, many of whom are no recourse to public funds, are still jobless. Can't pay rent, at risk of homelessness, increasingly cramped housing etc. Unable to support family members.



NEXT STEPS

The next survey will cover two weeks, being in the field between 24th August – 2nd September

Results available on Monday 7th September.