

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on people with mild-to-moderate dementia living in the community: findings from the IDEAL cohort

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a challenging time for people living with dementia. Research suggests that lockdown and social restrictions have been bad for people with dementia. This information is limited for two reasons. First, most of it comes from carers. It is important to include the views of people with dementia. Second, researchers have not compared people's answers with information collected before the pandemic.

We planned to talk to both people with dementia and carers about their experiences. We contacted people who had already taken part in the IDEAL study. This meant we could compare their answers to answers they gave us before the pandemic. We could find out what had changed.

We talked to 173 people with dementia and 248 carers over the telephone or online. We did this between September 2020 and April 2021. Because of the pandemic, there were many restrictions on what people could do during this period.

What people told us about their physical health, mood, relationships, social contacts, and neighbourhoods was similar to what they told us before the pandemic. In some ways, things were better than before. Fewer people with dementia felt depressed or anxious, more people felt optimistic, and more people were satisfied with the support they got from family.

In other ways, things were more difficult. There was a strong feeling that the abilities of people with dementia had deteriorated during the pandemic. For example, people found it harder to remember, to say what they wanted to say, or to plan ahead and make decisions. Compared to before the pandemic, people were finding it harder to look after themselves and do their everyday activities. More people with dementia felt lonely. Generally, people felt less positive about their lives.

People with dementia mostly felt they had coped well during the pandemic. However, they may need support to regain lost ground after the pandemic.

This is a summary of a [research article](#) which appeared in the **Journal of Alzheimer's Disease** in November 2021.