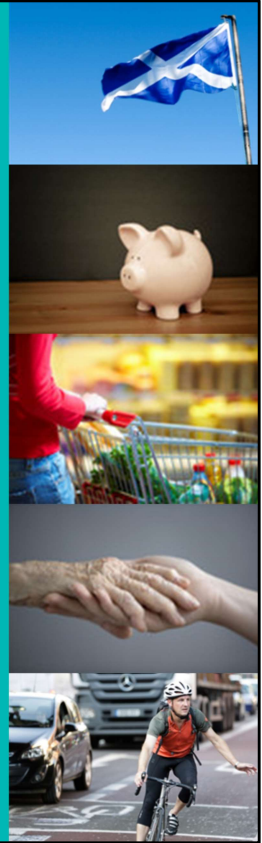


Covid-19 Support Study:

Experiences of and compliance with self-isolation

Interim Report 1
Wave 1 survey findings

April 2021



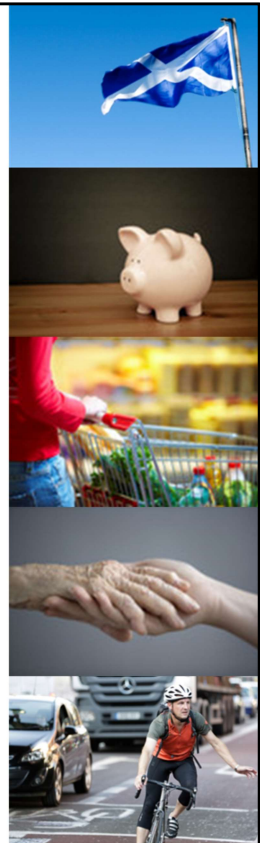
Summary

- ScotCen Social Research were commissioned by the Scottish Government to carry out a mixed mode study of adults asked to self-isolate by Test and Protect either because they tested positive for COVID-19, were in contact with someone that tested positive for COVID-19 or recently arrived into Scotland from outside the UK.
- The findings included here are interim findings only and based on Wave 1 online survey fieldwork carried out between Friday 19th March 2021 and Wednesday 31st March 2021.

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1



Study background & aims

1.



Background

The purpose of the Scottish Government's Test and Protect programme and self-isolation approach is to disrupt community transmission of COVID-19 and **save lives**

Self-isolation can present a range of challenges that may not be easy to overcome

Those asked to do so need to be *able* to self-isolate according to the guidelines



Good quality, robust data is needed to:

- Understand these challenges in more detail and how they may vary by individual circumstances
- Identify the specific types of additional support that are needed to help those asked to self-isolate

3

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- The Scottish Government commissioned this research in recognition of the need for robust data on compliance with the self-isolation requirement and the various challenges and barriers to isolation that exist and a desire to understand the factors that might facilitate adherence.
- It was also designed to identify knowledge and uptake of the support offer available to those asked to self-isolate and to identify what additional support, if any, people might need during this period.

Study purpose

To understand the challenges and support needed by those asked to self-isolate by exploring 3 key themes:

Knowledge



- How familiar are self-isolators with the key isolation requirements?
- Are self-isolators aware of the support offers available to them?

Attitudes



- Factors that may help understand a person's isolation behaviour
- Do they think self-isolation an effective strategy?
- Willingness/motivation to isolate
- Views on the role of the individual in decision-making

Practice



- Compliance levels (rate and extent)
- Isolation behaviours
- Support accessed, if any
- Support needs

4

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The study's research questions broadly sit under the themes of knowledge, attitudes and practice.

1. How much do people know about the self-isolation requirement and the support offer available to them?
2. What do they think about what they're being asked to do? And how motivated are they to do it?

And finally,

3. What are they actually doing – in terms of adherence but also in terms of accessing support during isolation.

Study design



2

Study design

Mixed mode:



Online/telephone quantitative survey

- Wave 1 - 19th - 31st March
- Wave 2 - 12th April – 5th May
- Wave 3 - 17th May – 2nd June



Follow-up in-depth telephone/video qualitative interviews
(mid-April – end of May)

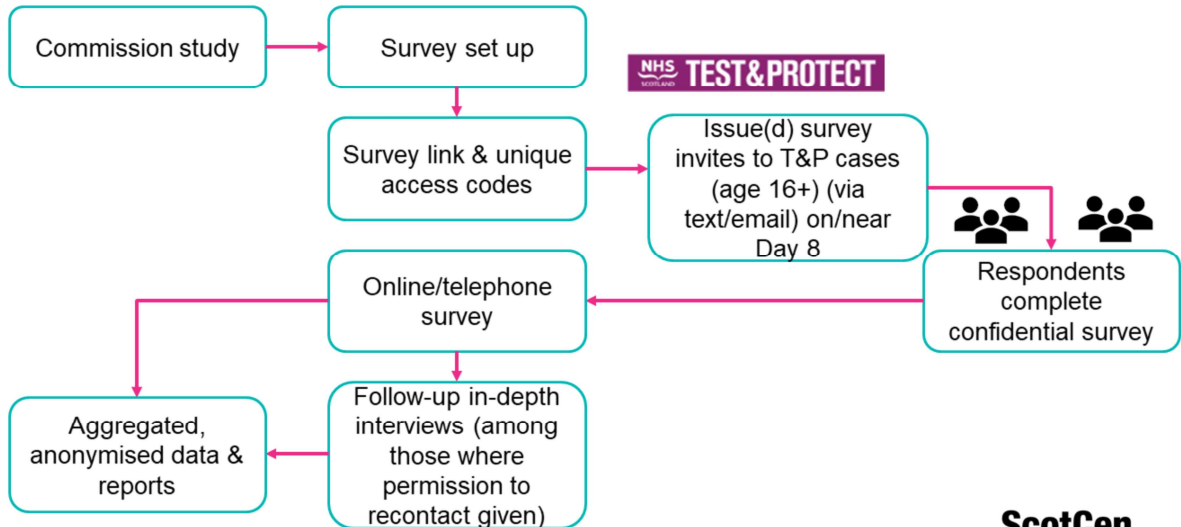
Summary

- The study is mixed mode consisting of 3 waves of survey fieldwork (roughly across March, April and May) along with in depth follow-up interviews with survey participants.

Study administration



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7




Summary

Survey administration is as follows:

- ScotCen pass a survey link and a list of unique access codes to Test and Protect
- Test and Protect issue invitations (either by SMS or email) to everyone eligible to take part (see next slide)
- Participants take part in the 15 minute online (or via phone if they prefer) survey.
- At the end of the survey participants are asked if they would be happy to be re-contacted for the follow-up in depth interviews.

Survey sample

A person was eligible to take part if they were:

- Age (16+)
- In Test and Protect system because they either:
 -  Tested positive for COVID-19
 -  Came into contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19, or
 -  Arrived into Scotland from outside of the UK
- Were on/close to **day 8** of their advised self-isolation period during the window for issuing invitations

8

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Summary

Those eligible to take part in the survey were defined as:

- Adults (16+) invited by Test and Protect to self-isolate because they:
 1. Tested positive for COVID-19, or
 2. Were in contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19, or
 3. Because they recently arrived into Scotland from outside the UK.
- Eligible participants were invited to take part when they were on/close to day 8 of self-isolation.

Key topics covered

Experiences

Current isolation status & reason for self-isolating

Experiences of self-isolation

Experiences of being tested for COVID-19

Support/guidance

Contact & guidance offered

Whether applied for self-isolation support grant

Support offered/ accessed/ needed from Local Authorities

Understanding & opinion

Understanding of self-isolation guidelines

General opinions on self-isolation guidelines & behaviour

**Wave 1
response**



3.

Wave 1 response

	Index cases	Contact case	International Travellers	Total
Invitations issued (n)	3,515	7,332	1,904	12,751
Total questionnaires completed (n)	384	261	263	908
Response rate – total questionnaires completed (%)	11%	4%	14%	7%

11

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Summary

- 12761 eligible adults in the test and protect system were invited to take part in Wave 1.
- 908 participated fully or partially in the survey.
- Response by case type. International travellers were most likely to take part (14%) and contact cases were least likely to participate

Findings

4



Interpreting the findings

The findings presented here should be interpreted with a degree of caution for the following reasons:

- They are based on interim data from one wave of fieldwork only
- Tests of statistical significance will only be carried out once all waves of fieldwork have been completed
- The survey was opt-in, therefore the findings cannot be viewed as representative of all those asked to self-isolate by Test and Protect

Summary

When interpreting the findings included in this report it should be borne in mind that:

- This is an opt-in survey. Therefore findings are representative of survey participants and not all those asked to self-isolate by Test and Protect.
- The results are based on one wave of data collection only so the sample size is relatively small and tests of statistical significance will only be carried out after data collection has been completed.

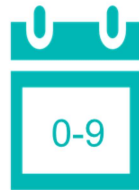
**Knowledge of
guidelines**



5.

Knowledge of required number of days to self-isolate (%)

According to official guidance from the Scottish Government/NHS Scotland, for how many days in total should someone self-isolate if they test positive for COVID-19...?



2%



81%



17%

15 Base: All respondents (818)

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Summary

- When asked how many days someone should self-isolate for if they tested positive for COVID, 8 in 10 people answered 10 days.
- A further 17% reported that self-isolation should be for 11 days or more (with 14 days being the most common answer among this group)
- On the whole, knowledge of this requirement is high with just 2% reporting that the official guidance was to isolate for fewer than 10 days.

**Compliance with
requirement to
self-isolate**



6.

Compliance measured in two different ways

Self-assessed – Ask people how they feel they did

Which of the following best describe how you managed to comply with self-isolation?

Followed the self-isolation guidance:

- All of the time
- Some of the time
- Was not able to follow at all

Behavioural - Measure adherence to different aspects of the guidance

- **How soon were able to isolate after developing symptoms/being asked to**
- Whether undertook any activities outside home/accommodation before or during isolation
- **Whether left home/accommodation during isolation**
- Whether met anyone from outside household
- **Number of days isolated for**

17

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Summary

- Compliance is measured in the survey in two ways:
 - (1) By asking people directly how well they think they followed the guidelines, and
 - (2) By asking people separately, a series of questions designed to measure adherence to specific components of the isolation requirement (these are listed on the right-hand side of the slide).
- Those components in bold, on the right-hand side, were used to create a less subjective summary measure of compliance. So a person's responses to the questions on: how soon they started isolating, whether they left accommodation during the isolation period, and the total number of days they reported isolating for were used to categorise them as fully, partially or non-compliant with the requirement to self-isolate.

Self-assessed compliance with the requirement to self-isolate (%)

Which of the following best describe how you managed to comply with self-isolation?

Followed the self-isolation guidance...

■ All of the time ■ Some of the time ■ Not able to follow at all



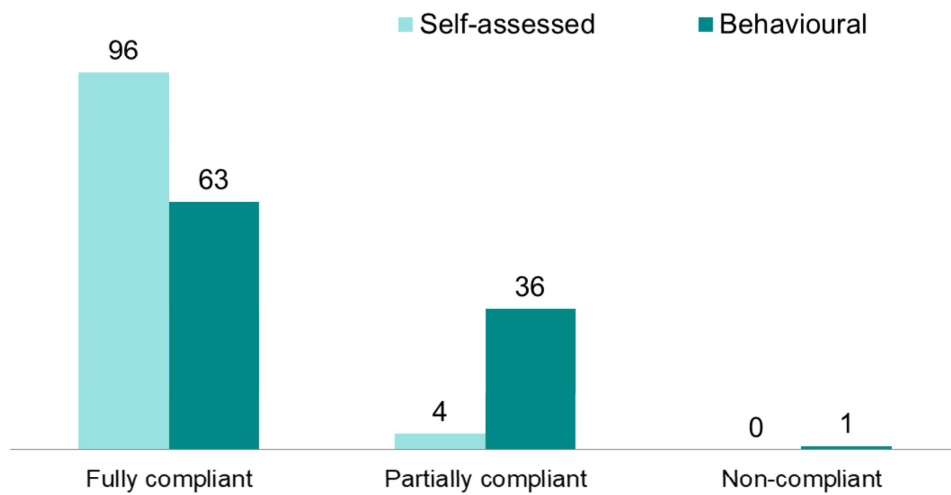
18 Base: All respondents (802)

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Summary

- This slide presents the results for the self-assessed measure of compliance with the requirement to self-isolate.
- It is clear that, when asked directly how well they managed to comply with self-isolation, the vast majority (96%) of people think they complied “all of the time.”
- Just 4% of participants reported managing to comply “some of the time” and no-one reported not being able to comply with the requirement at all.
- This very high level of self-assessed compliance is in line with findings from elsewhere in the UK. For example, data from the ONS COVID-19 Test and Trace Cases Insights Survey indicated that 86% of index cases (February fieldwork) and 90% of contact cases (March fieldwork) stated that they fully adhered to the requirement to self-isolate. In addition, a recent report from Public Health Wales stated that 78% of contact cases in Wales adhered by not leaving their home during their self-isolation period.

Comparison of compliance measures (%)



19 Base: All respondents who gave self-assessed compliance response (802); all included in behavioural calculation (908)

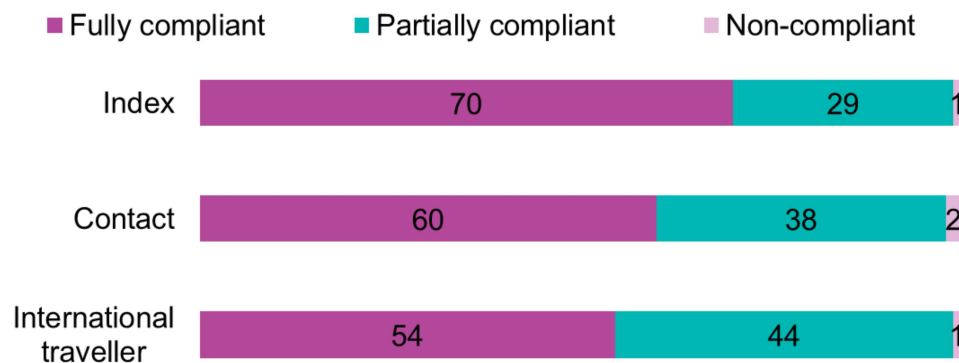
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Summary

- This slide explores self-assessed compliance side by side with the behavioural measure of compliance (derived from responses to questions on when started isolation, total days isolated for and whether left the house during the self-isolation period).
- Compliance (based on composite behavioural survey measure) is lower than people's own assessment of how well they think they complied.
- While 96% felt they fully complied, according to our derived measure of compliance full compliance was around two thirds.
- While just 4% reported following the guidelines most of the time, 36% appear to have only partially complied
- Non-compliance is low for both measures.
- This may partially reflect the sample i.e. opt in and social desirability among those who did respond.

Behavioural compliance by case type (%)

When started, whether left house during & days isolated



20 Base: All respondents who answered this question (908); Index (384); Contact (261); International traveller (263)

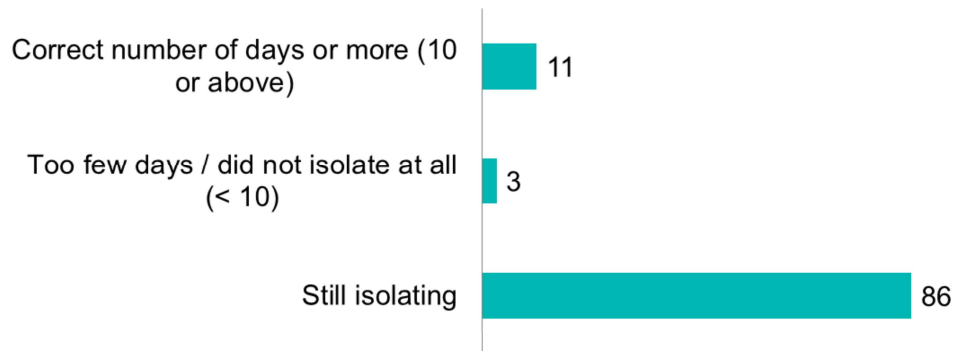
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Social Research

Summary

- The composite measure of compliance was created based on responses to questions on when a participant started isolating, whether they left home/accommodation during isolation and the total number of days they isolated for.
- Index cases (those who tested positive) were most likely (70%) to fully comply with self-isolation.
- Partial compliance was highest among international travellers (44%).
- Non-compliance was 1-2% for all case types.

Isolation length (%)

Days able to isolate for (%)



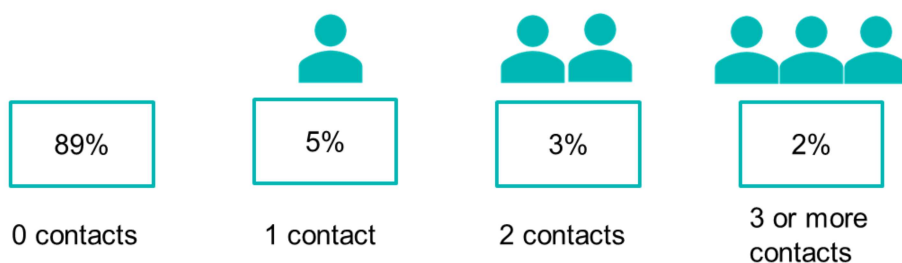
21 Base: All respondents (908)

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Social Research

Summary of findings:

- The majority of respondents were still isolating at the time of completing the survey (86%).
- A very small proportion isolated for less than 10 days or not at all (3%) while 11% had finished isolating but were able to isolate for the full 10 days.

Number of contacts with people outside household during self-isolation (%)



22 Base: All respondents who answered this question (841)

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Summary of findings:

- The vast majority of those asked to self-isolate reported having no contact with anyone from outside their household during their self-isolation period (89%).

International Travellers

7



% frequency of type of booking made prior to arriving in Scotland (International Travellers)

Arrangements made before returning to Scotland



Booked a managed isolation (quarantine) package

21%



Booked COVID-19 test kit for self-isolation at home

77%



Neither
1%

24 Base: All International Travellers (248)

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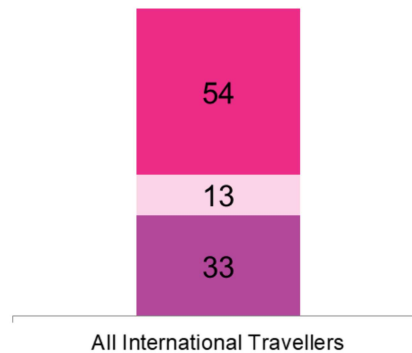
Summary

- Almost all international travellers that took part made arrangements for their self-isolation before arriving into Scotland, with just 1% reporting that hadn't made arrangements in advance.
- Most (77%) booked a test kit to self-isolate at home, while one in five (21%) reported booking a managed isolation (quarantine) package.

Agreement on ease of understanding international travel rules (%)

"It was easy to understand the Scottish Government information on international travel rules during the pandemic"

■ Strongly agree/agree ■ Neither ■ Disagree/strongly disagree



All International Travellers

25 Base: All International Travellers (243)

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Social Research

Summary

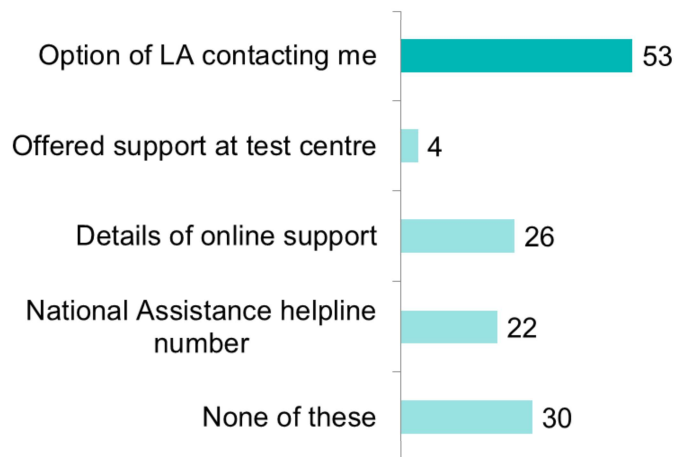
- International travellers were asked how much they agreed or disagreed that the Scottish Government information on international travel rules were easy to understand.
- Just over half agree that the information was easy to understand and a third disagree with the statement.

Local Authority support

8



Types of support offered (%)



27 Base: All index & contact cases (609)

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Summary:

- When asked if they had been offered support in any of the ways listed, just over half of index and contact cases said they were offered the option of having their contact details passed on to their Local Authority (53%).
- 3 in 10 indicated that they were not offered any support in any of the ways listed when they were advised to self-isolate.

Local Authority Support summary



28 Base: All index & contact cases who answered question (609); *all those offered support from LA (322); *** all respondents (839)

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Summary:

- Of those index and contact cases that reported being offered the option of having their contact details passed on to their Local Authority, around 1 in 10 (12%) accepted this offer.
- Eight percent reported that they contacted their Local Authority directly themselves.

Reasons for not accepting offer of LA support (%)

Reasons for not accepting offer	Proportion
Did not need additional support	90%
All the information was accessible online	15%
Wasn't sure what kind of support was available & whether I needed it	6%
Wanted to contact my local authority directly	1%
Did not wish to be identified to my local authority	-
Other	4%

29 Base: All who did not take up offer of LA contacting them for support (275)

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Summary:

- Those who did not accept the offer of local authority support were asked to choose from a list of reasons, why they declined the offer.
- The vast majority (9 in 10) indicated declining because they didn't need any additional support.
- A sizeable proportion (15%) declined because they felt the information was accessible online.
- 6% didn't accept the offer because they weren't sure what kind of support was on offer and whether they needed it.

Testing



12

Location of most recent COVID-19 test (%)



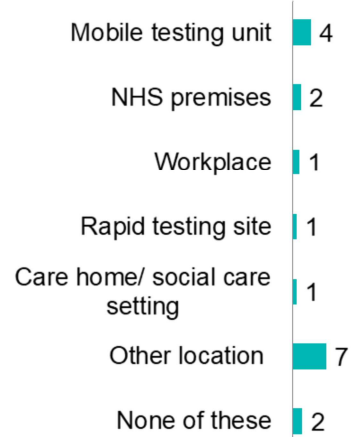
Local drive through/walk in testing site

53%



At home (NHS testing kit)

29%



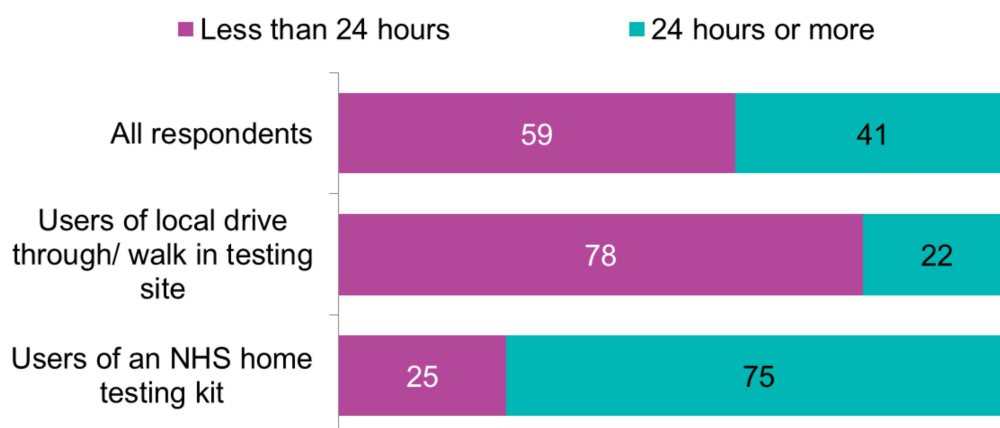
31 Base: All respondents who had ever been tested (802)

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Summary

- Just over half (53%) of those that reported having been tested for COVID-19, said that their most recent test took place at a local drive through or walk-in site (53%).
- And of the remaining participants, the majority had used an NHS testing kit at home.

Time taken for test result (%)



32 Base: All respondents who had ever been tested (800; 428 walk-in/drive thru; 231 at home)

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Summary

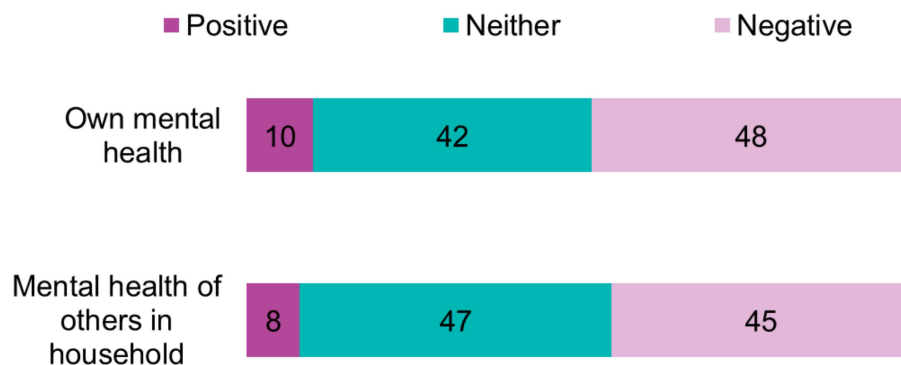
- Participants that reported having had a COVID-19 test were asked how long they waited for their most recent test result.
- 6 in 10 people received their result in under 24 hours. This was higher (closer to 8 in 10) (78%) for those who had their test at a drive through/walk in test site.
- The most common length of time for NHS home-test kit users to wait for their result was between 24 and 48 hours (55%).

**Attitudes &
experiences**

13



Impact of self-isolation on mental health (%)



34 Base: All respondents (812); all who lived with others (703)

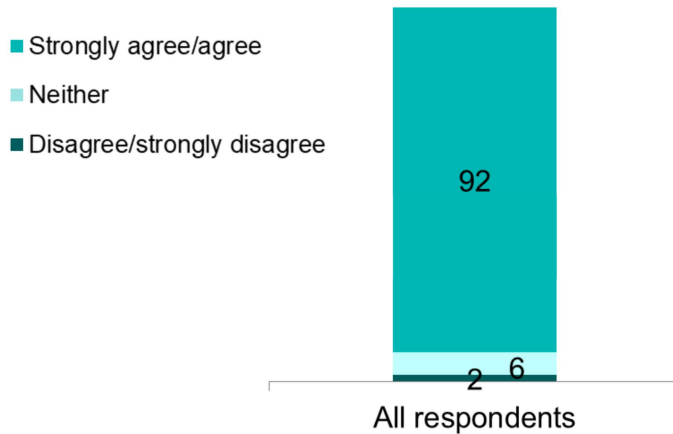
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Summary

- Participants were asked whether they thought self-isolation had a positive or negative impact on their own mental health (or neither a positive nor negative impact).
- Almost half (48%) said it impacted negatively on their mental health. ONS data indicated that 37% of index cases and 32% of contact cases reported a negative impact on their wellbeing and mental health. A sizeable proportion said it didn't have any impact, positive or negative.
- Participants were also asked what impact, if any, their own requirement to self-isolate had on the mental health of others in their household/accommodation. 45% reported that their own requirement to self-isolate had negatively impacted on the mental health of others in the home.

Agreement with statement regarding the effectiveness of self-isolation in preventing the spread of COVID-19 (%)

"Self-isolation is an effective way to help prevent the spread of COVID-19"



35 Base: All respondents (808)

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Summary

- To assess the level of acceptance of self-isolation as a strategy, participants were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with the statement that self-isolation is an effective way to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- As you can see, support is very high with over 90% agreeing that it is an effective way of stopping the spread of the virus.

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