


# NO GOING BACK - HOW THE PANDEMIC MIGHT SHAPE SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE IN THE FUTURE

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**Social Care Day of  
Remembrance and Reflection**

**17 March 2022**

**#**

**RememberSocialCare**





# Those we have lost

- UK - as at 23 March 2022
- 164,603 Covid deaths (possible 36 social workers)
- 20,756,767 cases
- Unknown cases of Long Covid
- Globally: 6m deaths and 479m cases

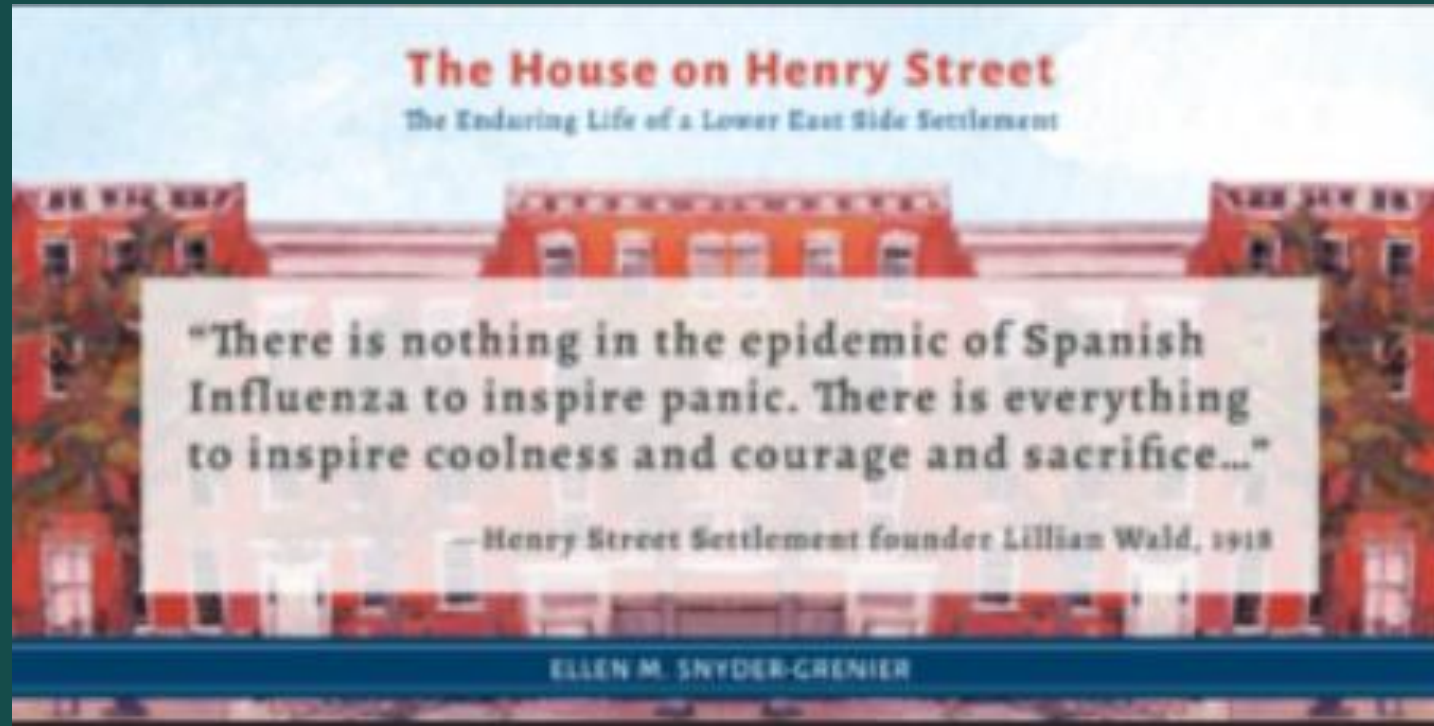
# In the UK this currently means ...

- Likely to have had Covid
- Colleagues likely to have had it
- Service users likely to have had it
- Social anxiety and depression
- Vaccine hesitancy
- Inequalities amplified
- Long Covid emerging
- Suppressed need
- Not back to normal ...



# With few exceptions, pandemics were largely forgotten in social work until now ...

- Singapore's 1918 influenza epidemic had 2 waves, June-July, & October-November, and resulted in >2,870 deaths.
- In Britain killed 250k approximately
- Globally estimated 100 million



<https://www.henrystreet.org/news/latest-news/sleepless-nights-in-1918-lillian-wald-and-henry-streets-first-influenza-epidemic/?msclkid=c9626f48adf411ecb90a7ddb7ce22c99>



# Our (Covid) research on experiences of different communities

Study of Ancillary workers (cooks, cleaners) in care homes

Study of respite experiences for people living with dementia

Participation in Return to Social Work training to enable people to rejoin profession and CPD training

Study of 'Easements' to Care Act 2014

Studies of social workers in children's social care

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32977986/>

UK survey of health and care workforce including social workers - 4 waves - some comparisons with Japan [www.hscworkforcestudy.co.uk](http://www.hscworkforcestudy.co.uk)

The infographic features a pink background with a white line-art icon of a person wearing a face mask. The title is 'Health and social care workers' quality of working life and coping while working during the COVID-19 pandemic November 2020 - January 2021'. A circular inset photo shows a woman. Below the title, three columns of names are listed: Dr Paula McFadden, Dr John Mallett, Professor Jill Manthorpe, Mr Daniel McFadden; Dr Patricia Gillen, Dr Helike Schroder, Dr Denise Currie, Dr Jana Ross; and Dr John Moriarty, Dr Jermaine Ravaller, Ms Patricia Nicholl. A row of icons includes a target, a speech bubble, a group of people, a magnifying glass, a lightbulb, a person with a gear, a group of people, a diamond, and a clock. The main heading is 'Findings from a UK Survey'. Three circular photos show healthcare workers: one in a clinical setting, one in a white coat, and one in blue scrubs. A large graphic of a head profile contains a gear with people icons and a cursor arrow. The bottom right corner contains logos for Ulster University, Queen's University Belfast, and the Public Health Agency.

Health and social care workers' quality of working life and coping while working during the COVID-19 pandemic November 2020 - January 2021

Dr Paula McFadden  
Dr John Mallett  
Professor Jill Manthorpe  
Mr Daniel McFadden

Dr Patricia Gillen  
Dr Helike Schroder  
Dr Denise Currie  
Dr Jana Ross

Dr John Moriarty  
Dr Jermaine Ravaller  
Ms Patricia Nicholl

Findings from a UK Survey

Ulster University, Queen's University Belfast, Public Health Agency

# How communications changed for social work professionals?

Office to home  
(some)

Virtual  
assessments &  
introductions

Virtual meetings  
with  
professionals - &  
families

Multi-agencies'  
communications

Team meetings,  
supervision,  
debriefing

Government  
guidance,  
actions and  
responses +++

# Needs for compassion

- Compassion for colleagues - but also wellbeing support
- Compassion for family carers with help to take up support
- Compassion for key workers on the 'frontline'
- Compassion for bereavement and other ongoing symptoms
- Compassion for forced separations
- Compassion fatigue





# What communities added to this

- More referrals as people noticed things in the local neighbourhood
- More organised neighbourliness eg collecting medications
- More family help and contact with relatives
- More contacts, compassion and kindness with care homes
- National volunteering offers
- Covid craft - such as PPE and images
- Symbolised initially by Clapping for Carers - weekly during first lockdown

# Examples

- Wokingham (a small town) Link (befriending) - 16,000 welfare calls made in first lockdown
- Role of local media - Twitter, Facebook Groups
- Will this be sustained by social workers?
- Links with practice model of Strengths Based social work



**Do what makes you feel good**

*Befriending*  
ACTIVITIES ASSISTANT

GARDENING *Music & singing*

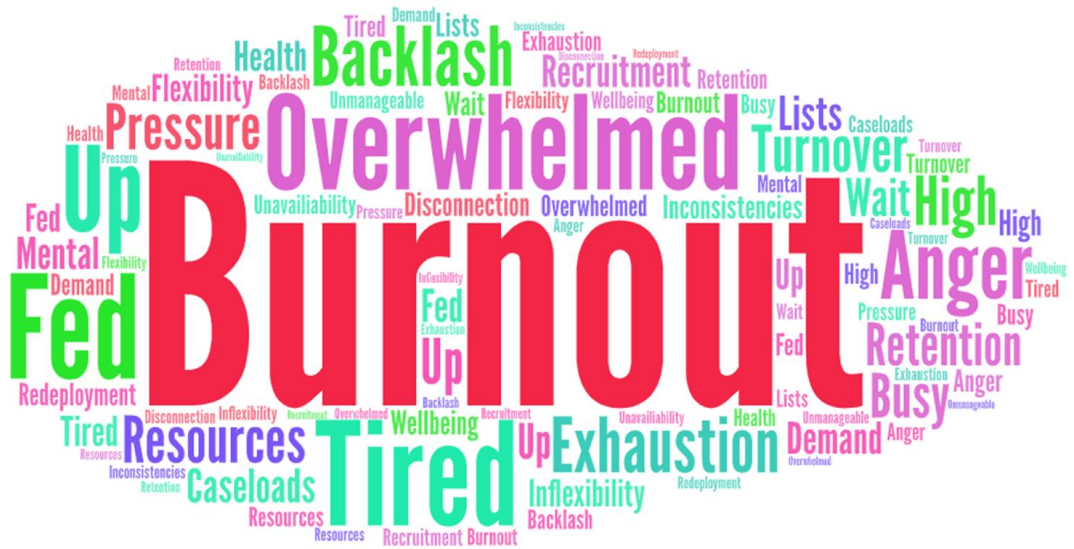
ARTS & CRAFTS

Tea Service MINI BUS DRIVING

**Join us today!**

**VOLUNTEERING**  
The Order of St John  
Care Trust  
*Be the difference*

# But what were/are the challenges?



People 'unseen'

Supervision and support formal and informal

Digital Inequalities

Infection control – difficulties especially early on

And more – Workforce survey end 2021- start 2022  
eg Burnout



# What is emerging? The professional focus



- Seriousness of what was hidden - implications
- Suppressed then increased demand - in adult and children's services
- Compounding retention and recruitment problems
- Hybrid working - home & office
- Reporting
- Need for more support for students as they enter practice
- Buildings - hybrid working but questions of purpose
- No return going back

# Legacy 1



- Significant changes in UK – most people's use of technology
- How to effectively employ this in contacts with individuals and families?
- Implications for self-image of social work and social care
- How to stop compassion turning to anger and blame

# No going back ...

- Realisation of the global community and value of global professions
- Learning from UK inquiry
- Preparedness and precautions for another event
- Managing diverse memories and experiences
- Addressing the hidden and long-term harms
- Enhancing mutual support in teams and services





## Acknowledgements and disclaimer

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