

COVID-19 - resources for paediatric services globally

[Global Operations team](#)

This page aims to support our members and paediatric partners around the world, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. As we understand more about this global pandemic, we will work together to share new knowledge about the potential direct effects of COVID-19 among newborns, children and young people, as well as the indirect impacts of the disease on families and on health systems.

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Introduction

COVID-19 is now a global pandemic affecting the vast majority of countries and territories around the world. It is reported to be relatively highly transmissible with a comparatively high rate of mortality, acutely among older people and those with underlying health conditions.

Impact on RCPCH Global child health programmes

In our partner countries, Ministries of Health, medical and paediatric associations and professional bodies, as well as clinicians and health workers at all levels are getting ready to support national responses to COVID-19. In the UK, we are seeing a growing burden of care demands as a result of COVID-19 which will require 'all hands on deck'.

As a result, RCPCH Global child health has taken the difficult but necessary decision to bring all volunteer clinicians home for the next period of time. We remain absolutely committed to our partners in Myanmar, Sierra Leone and Rwanda, and intend to re-engage operationally with them as soon as the situation with COVID-19 allows. We are also continuing to support

colleagues in these countries remotely, both in the development of their responses to COVID-19, and in continuing to advocate for strengthening high quality neonatal and paediatric care services throughout their health systems.

We are already seeing significant positive strategies being put in place by Government and Ministries of Health in our partner countries. But we know that, where there are underlying structural weakness in the development of the national health system, large-scale epidemic outbreaks like COVID-19 can place intolerable pressure on the provision of care services, including through the unintended effect of diverting resources away from wider clinical care services including for newborns and children.

Continuing global support

Through RCPCH Global and across the College, we are aiming over coming weeks and months to support our members and paediatric partners the world over.

As we learn more about COVID-19 – about the virus, the rate of infectious spread and the most effective strategies for containment and suppression, the scale of symptomatic severity and related demands for care, about our immunologic responses and the implications of that for the longer-term – we intend to continue communicating with our members in the UK and internationally, linking paediatric communities together to support the fast, effective sharing of emerging research and information.

All countries are learning as we go about the pandemic and our best capabilities to confront and overcome it. RCPCH will be in the frontline of that process in the UK, and an active voice internationally in maximising our collective learning and collaborative action. In particular, as we understand more, we will work together to ensure that new knowledge about the potential direct effects of COVID-19 among newborns and children is shared widely, along with real-time dissemination of strategic and advisory materials. We will also monitor indirect impacts of COVID-19 on families caring for infants and children, and on the health system as a whole.