

Unlocking the hidden power of peer support:

identifying the demand and meeting the need for long term
Post COVID support with a co-produced, non-clinical, group offer

Authors and affiliations

Brigid Bose¹, Jeong Su Lee², Esther McDonnell¹, Julie Moore¹,
Alexandra Curtis¹, Laura Duly¹
¹Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, London, United Kingdom
²City St George's, University of London, London, United Kingdom

Contact gstt.longcovidselfpeersupport@nhs.net for more information

5. Conclusions

Demand for peer support in Long COVID patients is strong, even following completion of rehabilitation more than a year previously. To meet this expressed need we co-produced a peer support offer across our six boroughs.
Face to face and online groups have run, offering a variety of options on day and time.
Next step, to investigate whether the peer support group has met participants' expectations.

The role of the Coordinator

- Trained and experienced peer facilitator
 - Non-clinical role
 - Comfortable not knowing the answers
 - Listen, reflect, validate
- ✓ Meeting patients' need for emotional connection
 - ✓ Learning from real life examples
 - ✓ Reciprocity as a key feature of peer support
 - ✓ Avoiding the pitfalls of a clinician led or peer led model
 - ✓ Time and space to share positive and negative experiences

A co-produced
group offer

What does peer support mean to you?



What do you want to gain from attending the group?



Rehab helped
but we're still
struggling with
symptoms

We're isolated
and missing a
sense of
community

Brain fog meant we
couldn't make the
most of rehab group

We're glad to be
back in touch
with Long COVID
services

We'd like a group
we can trust and
where we feel safe

We'd like a
refresh of the
strategies

We don't have the
energy to set up our
own groups

Results: Gap in service

4. Results

- 190 patients who had completed a rehab group or received 1-1 support from the MDT were identified
- 45 (23.7%) responded as interested in face to face or online peer support
- 11 patients attended one of two online focus groups

Results: Logistics

Results: Expectations

3. Methods

- Patients who had completed a Long COVID rehabilitation group were identified
- Patients were emailed a Microsoft Forms survey asking about their interest in peer support and their expectations of a peer support group
- Patients who expressed interest in peer support were invited to take part in an online focus group
- Clinicians in the service considered the key features of the care coordinator role

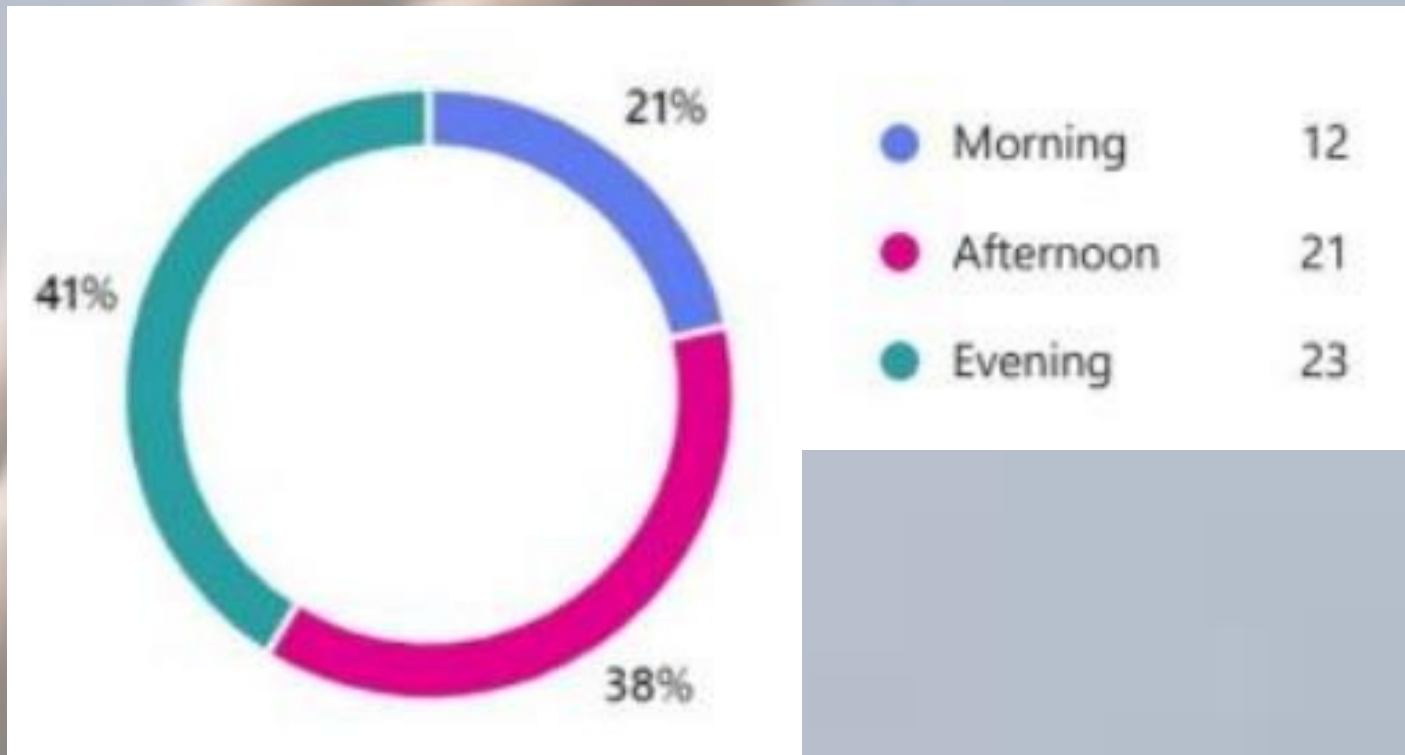
2. Aims

- To co-design a peer support offer using survey data to understand patient preferences
- To gain patients' feedback to understand the perceived gap following completion of the standard Long COVID rehabilitation intervention
- To consider what role the care coordinator plays in the peer support group

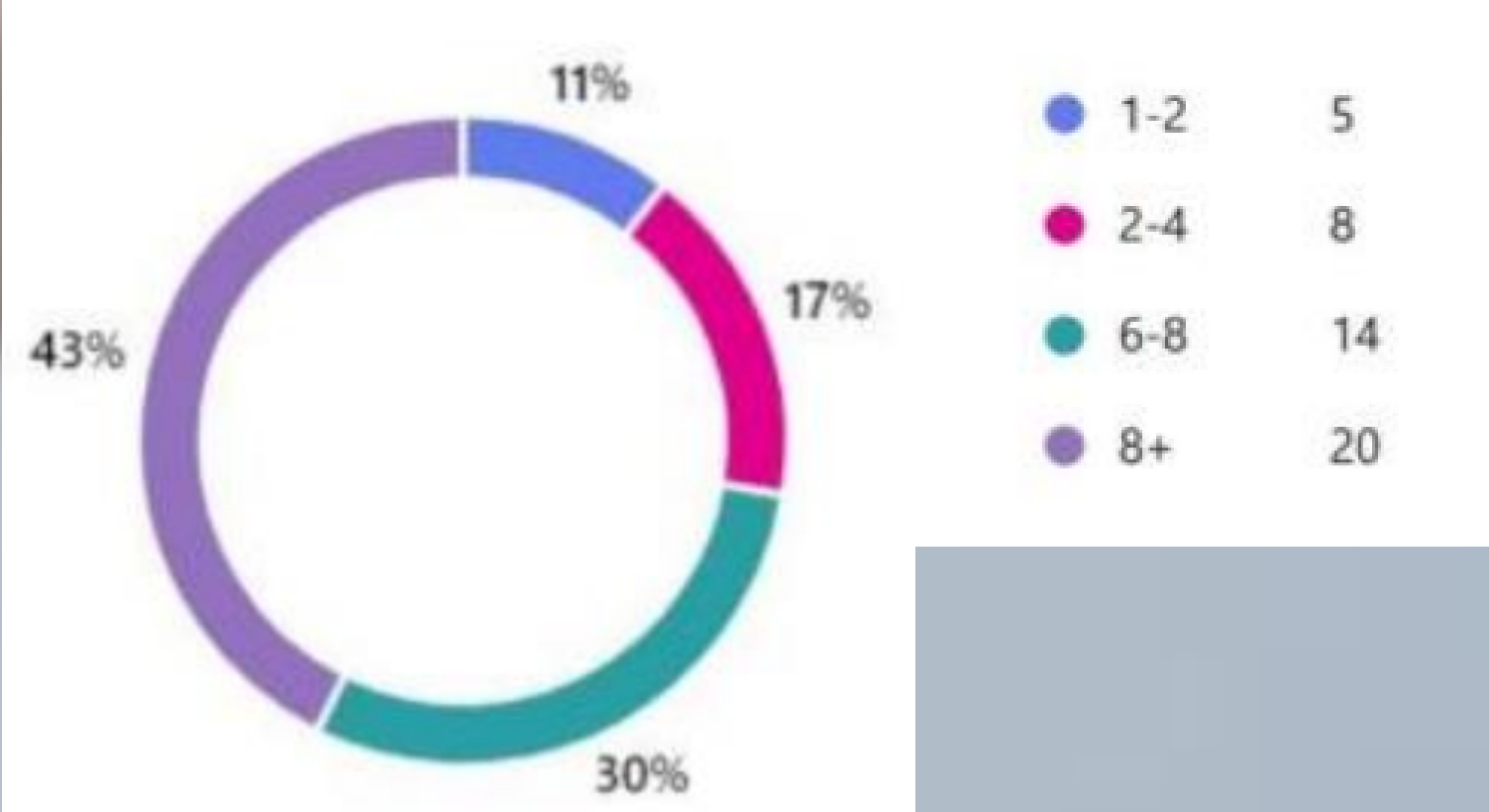
1. Background

- Gap analysis identified peer support for Long COVID patients as a service gap across Southeast London (SEL)
- Work conducted by London South Bank University showed Long COVID patients' strong desire for peer support groups
- Peer support is recommended in the NHS England Commissioning guidance for post-COVID services for adults, children and young people
- Patients lacked resources or conversance to independently instigate set up
- New role of SEL Long COVID Care Coordinator created capacity to meet this need

When should the group meet?



How many sessions would you like?



What type of group would you prefer?



How often should the group meet?

