



THE UNIVERSITY  
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University of  
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Integrative  
Epidemiology  
Unit

# The long term impact of COVID-19 on mental health: comparisons between health record linkage and observed longitudinal data

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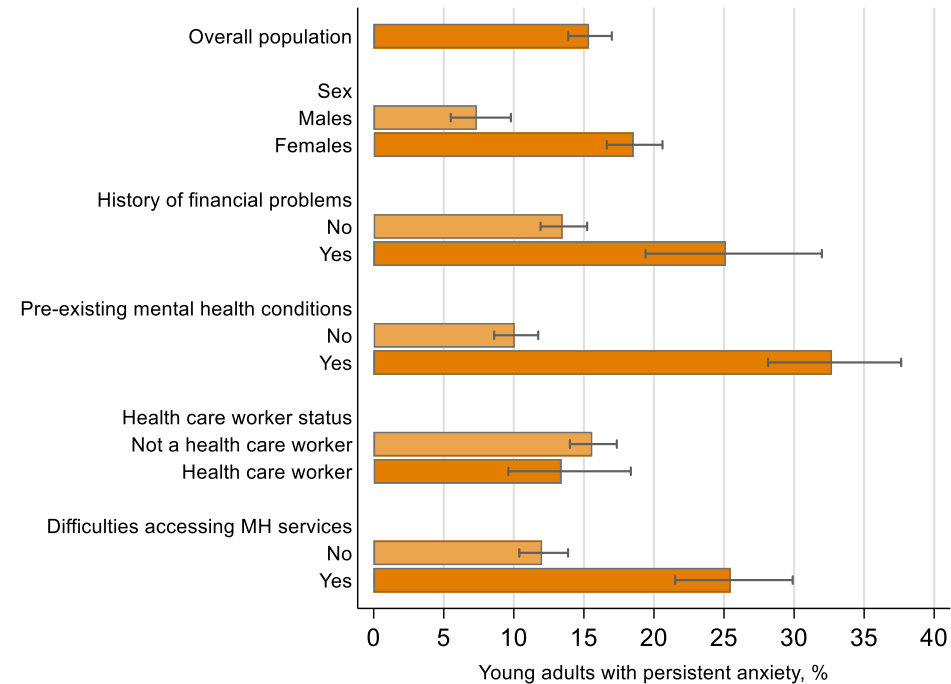
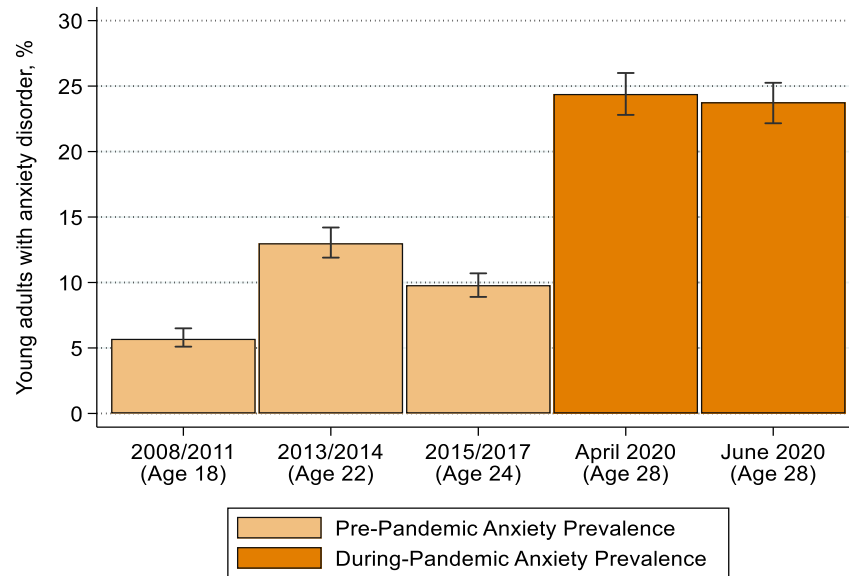
generation  
scotland 



# Background

- We have previously shown poorer mental health during COVID-19 in two longitudinal population cohorts
  - Worse for different groups
    - For example: **young people**, pre-existing mental health or financial concerns
  - Just an initial reaction to an unprecedented event or something more long term?
- Also several reports of a decrease in service use during the pandemic
  - So **higher** rates of poorer mental health but a **decrease** in service use
  - What is happening to those people who are NOT getting help?
    - Why?
    - What are they doing to alleviate symptoms?

# MH longitudinally in young people



**Left:** Anxiety is much higher across COVID-19 compared to previous waves

**Right:** The number of young people with anxiety at both COVID-19 waves (persistent anxiety) by subgroups

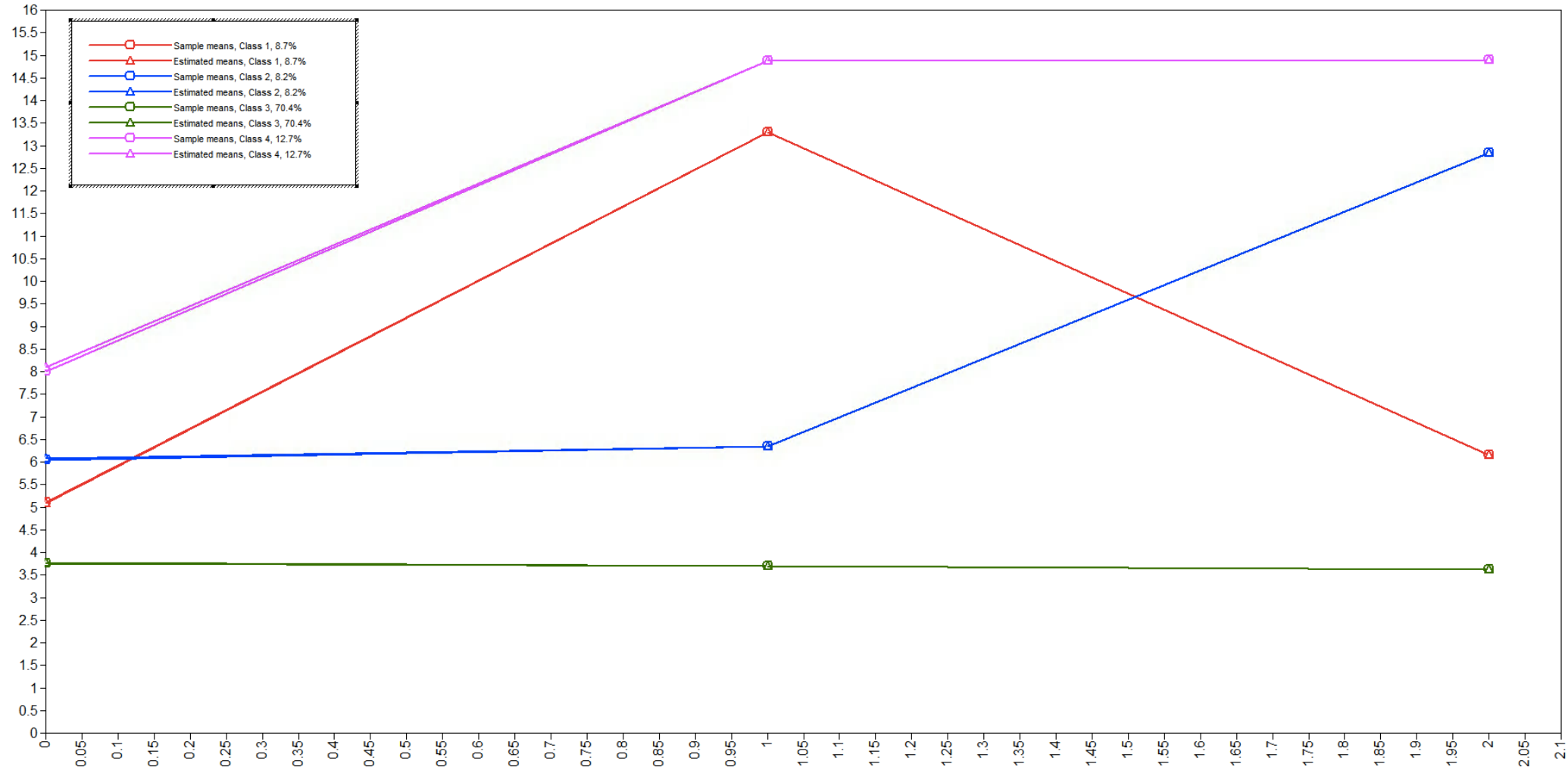
# Data

- **Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC)**
  - 14,500 families recruited in 1991-1992
  - 3 generations: G0 (original parents) / G1 (offspring) / G2 (offspring of G1)
- All include wealth of longitudinal pre-pandemic data
- COVID-19 Qs developed in collaboration with Wellcome Trust
  - Collected April and July (and now in November)
  - Includes mental health (depression, anxiety and wellbeing)
  - + COVID-19 symptoms, impact of mitigation & lifestyle factors
  - Linkage to health records

# RQ1

- **RQ1: How has mental health and wellbeing changed across the pandemic, and for whom?**
  - Establish trajectories of anxiety, depression and mental wellbeing from before the pandemic across three waves of data collection in ALSPAC
  - What factors are associated with worse mental health trajectories during COVID-19?
    - I.e., pre-existing mental health conditions, financial problems, poorer physical health
  - Are these trajectories associated with poorer outcomes at the latest data collection?
    - I.e., social anxiety, poorer relationships, worse physical health

# RQ1



# RQ2

- **RQ2: How has mental health service use changed during the COVID-19 pandemic?**
  - Identify if mental health service patterns have changed during COVID-19 compared to pre-pandemic times
    - I.e., March 2020 – November 2020 **VS** March 2019 – November 2019
  - Is poorer reported mood related to mental health service use?
    - And if not, why?
  - Is poorer reported mood related to other forms of help?
    - I.e., private counselling, online or smartphone apps
  - Replication in Generation Scotland

# Outputs

- **RQ1:**

- Rapid descriptive reports shared with HDRUK, SAGE and PHE
- Trajectories manuscript
- Further mental health information for secondary data analysis

- **RQ2:**

- Rapid descriptive reports shared with HDRUK, SAGE and PHE
- Linkage manuscript
- Further access to linkage for a digital health PhD student to expand on
- Health linkage for additional projects using mental health in ALSPAC





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