Paediatric Long COVID

R Gavin – May 2022

CLoCk study

	COVID	Controls
Onset	35.4%	8.3%
Any symptoms after 3 months	66.5%	53.3%
Three or more symptoms after 3 months	30.3%	16.2%

Terrence Stephenson et al. Lancet Child Adolesc Health 2022; 6: 230-39

Paediatric Statistics (UK)

- UK Office for National Statistics Nov-Dec 2021

- Long COVID in Children:
  - Positive test
  - Continuous symptoms 12 weeks+
  - Everyday life is affected (physical activity, learning, emotional wellbeing)

Source: Office for National Statistics – Coronavirus (COVID-19) Schools Infection Survey

UK Office for National Statistics Nov-Dec 2021

Primary School	Positive Test	No Positive Test
At least one recurring symptom for 12+ weeks	47.5%	46.6%
Three or more recurring symptoms for 12+ weeks	26.0%	20.7%

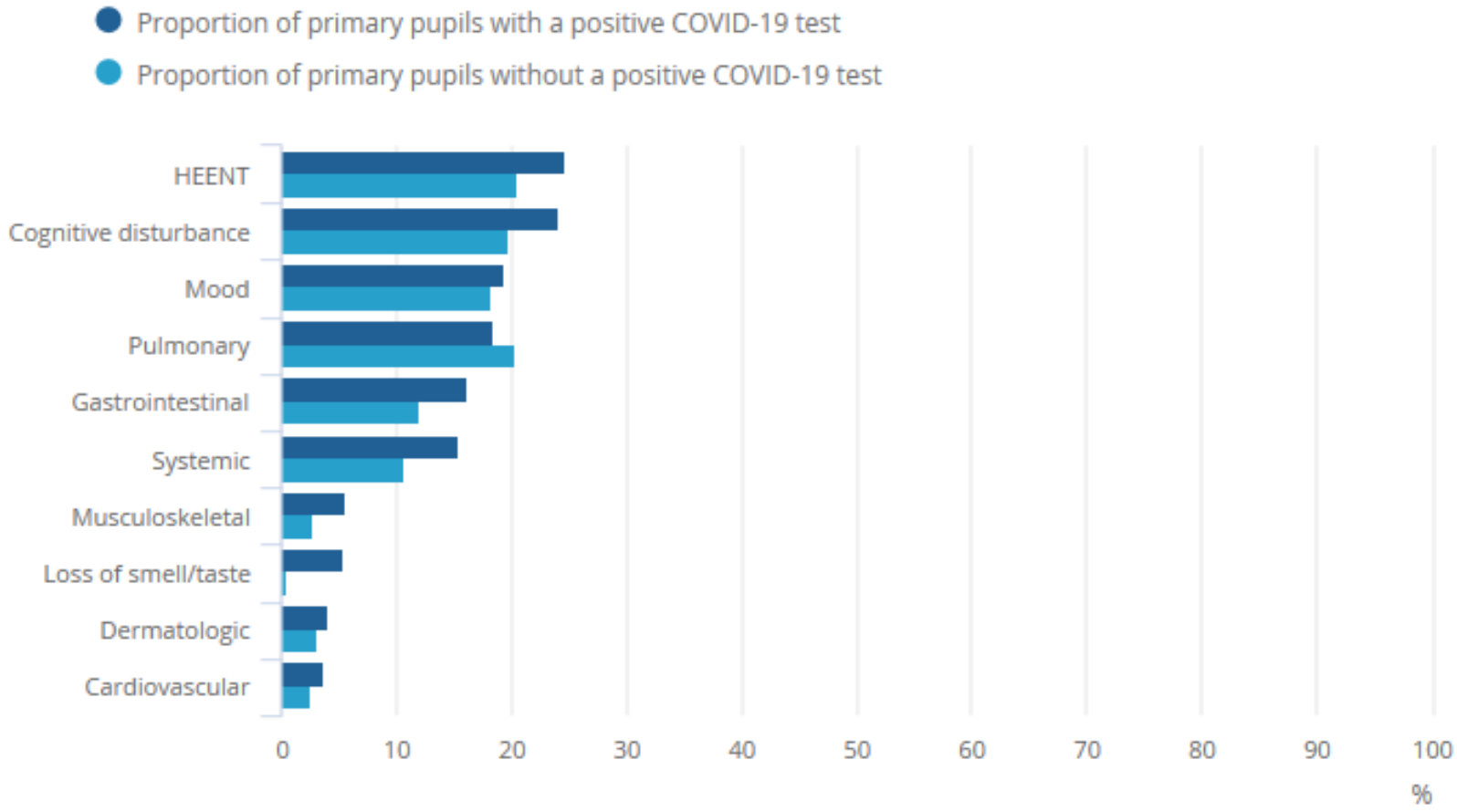
1% of primary school children had on-going symptoms which impacted physical activity, learning, emotional wellbeing

UK Office for National Statistics Nov-Dec 2021

Secondary School	Positive Test	No Positive Test
At least one recurring symptom for 12+ weeks	57.6%	49.5%
Three or more recurring symptoms for 12+ weeks	32.5%	26.9%

2.7% of secondary school children had ongoing symptoms which impacted physical activity, learning, emotional wellbeing

12-week symptom prevalence for primary school pupils with and without a positive COVID-19 test



US Information

RECOVER study

- June 2021 - NIH launched prospective study into Long Covid
- Includes data on vaccination and variant of Covid
- Includes children and young people
- Recruit for one year

Australia

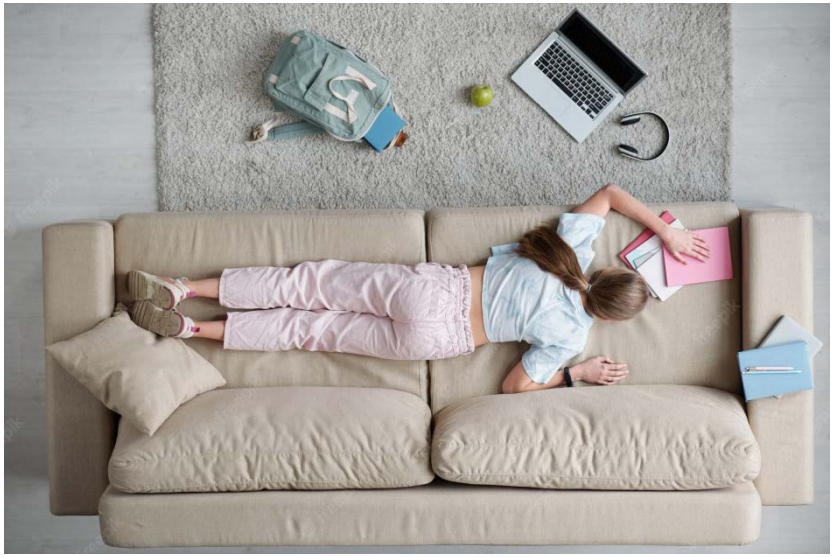
- Relatively low numbers of Long COVID in paediatric clinics in 2020 & 2021 but numbers now increasing
- Most centres are managing patients with Long COVID in pre-existing CFS clinics
- Most CFS clinics significantly underfunded (there are no paediatric CFS clinics in NZ)

Risk Factors

- Female
- Older age group
- Poor baseline physical or mental health
- Asthma

Long COVID vs ME/CFS

- Is it the same disease?
- Increasing evidence that processes are similar with a different viral trigger
- Main differences are altered smell and taste, shortness of breath (more common after Covid)
- Post-exertional fatigue is a hallmark symptom



Management & prevention of further harm

- Believe the patient
- Check for other conditions that may present in similar ways
  - Thyroid disorders
  - Eating disorders
  - ME/CFS
  - Anxiety
- Prevention of further harm (direct or indirect)
  - Deconditioning
  - Social isolation
  - Education
  - Vitamin D deficiency
- Boost knowledge about ME/CFS, POTS, complex pain, eating disorders, anxiety and depression

Issues

- We already see patients with these issues
- We have poor services for patients with ME/CFS
- Current services not equitable
- Post-COVID clinics / support services
  - ? available to those without COVID
  - If we test less will those without documented COVID infection be able to access support?
- Do pre-schoolers get Long COVID?

Summary

“The pandemic has had a profound impact on all adolescents, regardless of infection status”

Funding for services and support for young people with these symptoms should not be limited to those with a positive test and should not be short term