

Loneliness & Society 5.0

Mental Health Awareness Week
12 May 2022

Austen El-Osta | Pamela Qualter | Nina Goldman

Imperial College
London


The University
of Manchester

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of Basel



Austen El-Osta



Imperial College
London

- Director of Self-Care Academic Research Unit (SCARU)
- Primary Care & Public Health Research Manager at Imperial College London School of Public Health (PCPH / WHOCC)
- Mixed methods researcher & NHS Manager (Imperial NHS Trust)
- Societal engagement & close working with local authorities & a wide mix of stakeholders on issues that span health & social care
- NIHR Applied Research Collaboration (ARC) Northwest London (Prof. Azeem Majeed)

Pamela Qualter



MANCHESTER
1824

The University
of Manchester

- Pamela Qualter, Professor of Psychology for Education, Manchester Institute of Education, University of Manchester
- Expert in loneliness, with experience of running large prospective studies, RCT trials, experimental and EEG studies, and qualitative methods
- Ran the BBC Loneliness Experiment in 2018, providing important data on loneliness worldwide
- Close working relationship with DCMS Tackling Loneliness Team

Nina Goldman



- Nina Goldman, PhD on Influenza & vaccination behaviour on a city level, spatial & quantitative analysis
- Postdoc @ Institute for History and Ethics of Medicine (Technical University of Munich) - qualitative work on ethical implications of social media recruitment
- Lecturer @ Department for Environmental Sciences (University of Basel) - teaching courses on Urban Health, empirical social research
- NEW: Working on *Geographies of Loneliness* Project to compare loneliness between and within Basel & Manchester (INTERACT Study)

Presentation outline

1

- Will loneliness increase & be the pain of living in the 21st century & Society 5.0?
- Public health impact of loneliness (pre & post-COVID)
- The UK Government's response

2

- Risk factors
- Loneliness in children & young people
- Intervention to tackle this rising problem of society
- Measuring loneliness

3

- INTERACT Study: developing a 'heat map' of loneliness
- Swiss / UK Collaboration
- Q&A / Discussion

Society

SOCIETY 1.0
the old days...

SOCIETY 2.0
Agrarian / travel
(the wheel)

SOCIETY 3.0
Industrial age
(machines)

SOCIETY 4.0
Digital age
(internet/apps)



4th industrial revolution & Society 4.0 (NOW)

BC.....

AD.....

1800's.....

1900's..

Now... (2022)



Steam engines...

Electricity...

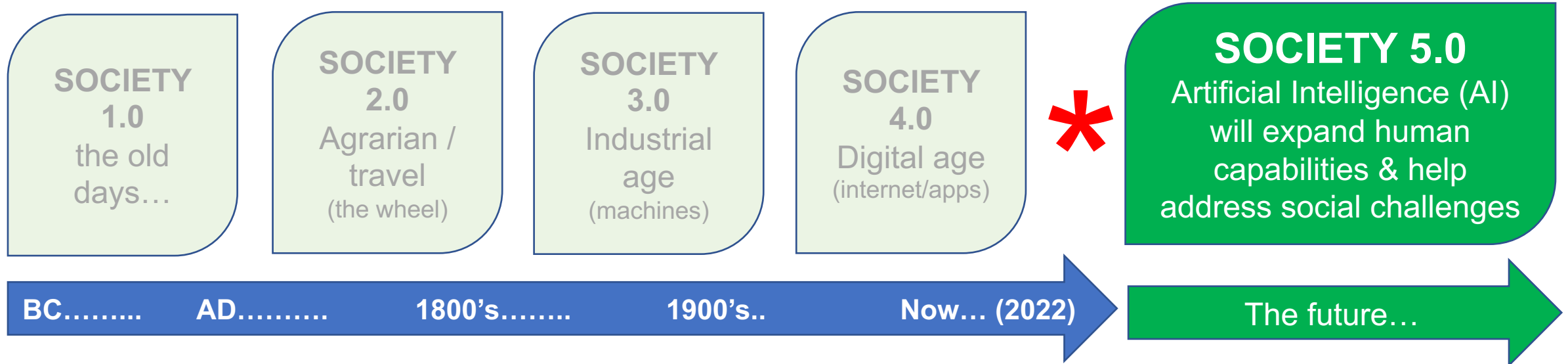
Internet...

IoT...

characterised by industrialisation, digital, connectivity & efficiencies in supply chain 😊

—
but also pollution, stark inequalities & other problems ☹️

Society 5.0



- AI will transform Big Data collected from the Internet of Things (IoT) into a new system (SOCIETY 5.0)
- The vision for Society 5.0 is to leverage AI to help us tackle some of society's big problems (e.g., sustainability & redistribution of wealth (tackle inequalities))
- Defined by the pervasive use of cyber-physical systems, nanotechnology, robots, blockchain, drones & 3D printing as primary drivers...
- Improved standard of living & we'll be freed from manual labour, the stress of driving & we'll have the ability to 'visit' anyone/anytime & have access to low cost healthcare

The Metaverse



A spotlight on loneliness

- Loneliness is a personal experience that includes uncomfortable & **negative emotions**
- Most of us experience loneliness from time to time (10% often/always lonely & 40% sometimes/occasionally lonely)
- National lockdowns & self-isolation during COVID has highlighted the type & quality of social connections we have
- When loneliness becomes prolonged it can inhibit social connections & cause harm – it's one of the factors of the social determinants of health

It's personal

Loneliness is not the same as being alone, it seems that it's about the loss of something. A loss of a partner, mobility, or a loss of a sense, like sight or hearing, loss of a job, independence, a driving license, or a sense of community – it's an erosion of confidence & sense of identity"

Esther Rantzen (BBC presenter who experienced loneliness after she became widowed)

- TV is some people's main form of company
- Nearly half a million people say that they will spend Xmas alone
- There is a psycho-social dimension to loneliness & this can influence personal behaviours & ability to self-care to maintain a good quality of life

Definitions

Loneliness

An emotional perception that can be experienced by individuals regardless of their breadth of their social networks
(PHE)

SUBJECTIVE

“Unwelcome feeling of a gap between the social connections we want & the ones we have”
(Perlman & Peplau, 1981)

Social isolation

The inadequate quality & quantity of social relations with other people at the different levels where human interaction takes place (PHE)

OBJECTIVE

“A measure of the number of contacts or interactions”
(Fischer & Phillips, 1982)

Loneliness is distinct from wellbeing or social isolation

Loneliness akin to suffering in silence

- No agreed definition of loneliness - but it's an unwelcome, painful & unpleasant feeling...
- Less about the number of friends you have & more about how you feel
- It's akin to 'suffering in silence'
- Difficult to measure & identify



Patterns of loneliness

	75% NOT lonely	25% Lonely
NOT Isolated 68%	Female Married Being younger Having children +ve health assessment Active participation in social events Not sad/depressed High self-esteem Close to family 56%	Frequent feelings of sadness / depression Low self-esteem Living more than 50 miles from family 12%
Isolated 32%	19% Advanced age (85+) Low education No children Low group participation Poor health Low self-esteem In rural setting & far from family	13% Male Single/divorced Advanced age (85+) Low education No children Low group participation Poor health Low self-esteem In rural setting & far from family

Public health impact

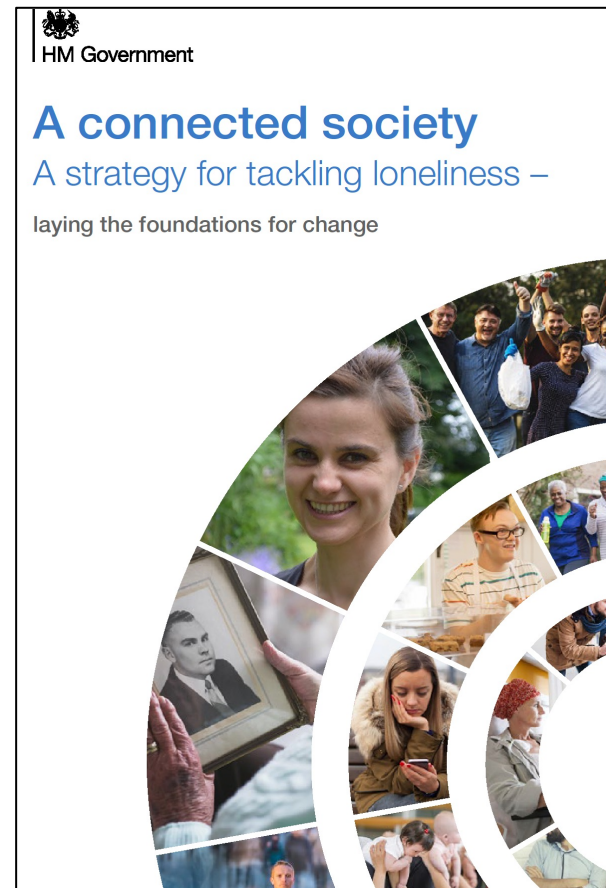
- Loneliness has both an emotional & a health impact
- The level of social disconnection can endanger health - reduces life expectancy by as much as 15 cigarettes/day (more than excessive drinking or obesity)
- It's a public health issue & deserves serious attention
- Loneliness is inversely related to overall quality of life
- Psychological effects: lower self-esteem & limited use of active coping mechanisms
- Lifestyle effects: makes people less likely to pursue health-seeking behaviours
- Social connectedness is a health asset that could be leveraged to tackle the complications of chronic illness

An issue of inter / national importance

- The structure of society is rapidly changing + fast growing population of 85yr+.
- A lot of mobility can make it hard to know neighbours
- Policy makers call refer to loneliness is one of society's "wicked" problems (other examples include homelessness, suicide, inequalities...)
- Health costs & loneliness related ill health & sick days cost c.£2.5bn to UK employers
- It's a social, societal & health problem - Loneliness strategies are being developed in various countries

UK Government response

- Theresa May launched the first cross-Government strategy to tackle it loneliness in 2018.
- “Loneliness is one of the greatest public health challenges of our time”*
- The Prime Minister confirmed that all GPs in England will be able to refer patients experiencing loneliness to community activities & voluntary services by 2023
 - Support via social prescribing (& Link Workers)



The image shows the cover of a policy position paper from ageUK. The title is 'Loneliness (England)' in large blue letters. Below the title is the date 'May 2019'. A quote from the University of Bristol is featured: 'Estranged. You're estranged from what goes on out there. And the more you sit at home, with or without daytime TV, the more you're estranged from what's going on out there'. Below this is a photo of an elderly man. The cover also includes 'Key issues' and 'Key statistics' sections.

Policy Position Paper

Loneliness
(England)

May 2019

Older people should have the support and opportunity to make and maintain meaningful connections so that they can enjoy life as much as possible for as long as possible

Estranged. You're estranged from what goes on out there. And the more you sit at home, with or without daytime TV, the more you're estranged from what's going on out there
Older Men at the Margins, University of Bristol

Key issues
People can become isolated and lonely in later life for a wide range of reasons, including bereavement, ill health, lack of local services, poor public transport and a poor physical environment.

It is possible to be isolated without being lonely and lonely without being isolated. Social isolation relates to the quantity of social contacts a person has. Loneliness is subjective, reflecting a perceived gap between the quality and quantity of relationships that we have and those that we want.

Loneliness has a huge impact on the wellbeing of many older people, making them unhappy and often lowering their self-confidence and ability to cope and reach out to other people. Studies suggest that people with a high degree of

Key statistics

1 in 12
People aged fifty and over are often lonely, equivalent to 1.4 million people

1.6 million
People aged 65+ often feel ignored and invisible

2 million
People aged fifty and over at risk of being often lonely by 2026 on current trends

From 'All the Lonely People' Age UK 2018 and TNS survey for Age UK, 2016

UK Government response

Documents

[Building Connections Fund evaluation final reports](#)

12 August 2021 Research and analysis

[Emerging Together: The Tackling Loneliness Network Action Plan](#)

8 May 2021 Policy paper

[Employers and loneliness](#)

8 May 2021 Guidance

[Government announces £7.5 million funding to tackle loneliness during winter](#)

23 December 2020 Press release

[Loneliness Annual Report: the first year](#)

20 January 2020 Policy paper

[Loneliness Annual Report: the second year](#)

22 January 2021 Policy paper

[Loneliness annual report: the third year](#)

15 February 2022 Policy paper

[‘Let’s Talk Loneliness’ campaign launched to tackle stigma of feeling alone](#)

17 June 2019 Press release

[PM launches Government’s first loneliness strategy](#)

16 October 2018 Press release

[A connected society: a strategy for tackling loneliness](#)

15 October 2018 Policy paper

[Call for evidence on approach to Loneliness Strategy](#)

22 June 2018 Consultation outcome

[£20 million investment to help tackle loneliness](#)

18 June 2018 Press release

[PM commits to government-wide drive to tackle loneliness](#)

17 January 2018 Press release

[Loneliness Monetisation Report](#)

24 August 2020 Research and analysis

[Tackling loneliness evidence review](#)

26 January 2022 Independent report

Home > Society and culture > Loneliness

Collection

Government's work on tackling loneliness

This page brings together government's work and announcements on loneliness.

From: [Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport](#) and [Office for Civil Society](#)
Published 19 June 2018
Last updated 7 April 2022 — [See all updates](#)

Contents

- Objectives
- COVID-19
- A connected society
- Funds
- Documents

Tackling loneliness matters to everyone: individuals, employers, communities, educators and health professionals. Supporting people to have meaningful social relationships is not just crucial to people's physical and mental health. It also affects their engagement in the workplace and wider community cohesion. We all need to take action to tackle loneliness across society, and government can play an important role supporting this.

Independent report

Tackling loneliness evidence review: executive summary

Published 26 January 2022

Contents

What we need to know next about loneliness

1. Life course approach
2. Social stigma and loneliness
3. Societal culture
4. Mental health
5. Place and context
6. Workplace
7. The economic case for tackling loneliness
8. Effectiveness of interventions

Print this page

What we need to know next about loneliness

We have updated what we know about loneliness since the [2018 Loneliness Strategy](#) and related evidence review. We have done this through a voluntary network of experts, not a formal review. We did this to work out what we still need to know and how to start. This is important because the evidence base is growing as we hoped. A review of loneliness statistics by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) in 2021 found that data on loneliness was increasingly important to a range of users including UK government and devolved administrations, local authorities, academics, charities and community groups. The review noted that while there are a range of official statistics on loneliness produced by the government, little local level demographic data exists, meaning some users, including charitable organisations, are producing their own statistics to fill data gaps. [However](#) this growth of evidence makes it hard to find it all, to make sense of it, and know what you can rely on for decision making, especially for those of us who are not specialist loneliness researchers.

As well as continuing to improve measurement, we have identified eight priority areas outlined below:

- 1 Life course
- 2 Social stigma
- 3 Societal culture
- 4 Mental health
- 5 Place and context
- 6 Workplace
- 7 Economic evaluation
- 8 Effectiveness of loneliness interventions

Centre for Ageing Better

How community organisations contribute to healthy ageing

Evidence from the Evaluation of the Leeds Neighbourhood Networks

Chris Dayson, Jan Gibbertson and Jan Chivers (Sheffield Hallam University)
Angela Ellis-Smith (University of Birmingham)
Helen Kara (Vita Research Ltd)
March 2022

SIMETRICA Jacobs

Loneliness monetisation report

Analysis for the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport

June 17, 2020

Sebastian Peytrignet, Simon Garforth-Bles, Kieran Keohane

COVID-19

The government launched a [major effort](#) to tackle loneliness during the coronavirus outbreak and period of social distancing. Led by the previous Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden, the plan aimed to ensure that, for people of all ages and backgrounds, staying at home did not need to lead to loneliness.

It included:

- [Let's Talk Loneliness public campaign](#) to get people talking openly about loneliness, and guidance on supporting [yourself](#) and [others](#) safely
- a guaranteed [£5 million boost for national organisations working to tackle loneliness and build social connections to help them to continue and adapt their critical work](#)
- Loneliness charities including Age UK were supported to work with NHS Volunteer Responders in their communities
- a network of high-profile charities, businesses and public figures joined 'Tackling Loneliness Network' formed by government to help connect groups at risk of isolation
- the Tackling Loneliness Network published [Emerging Together: The Tackling Loneliness Network Action Plan](#) in May 2021, setting out actions for Network members and government to take to tackle loneliness as part of a connected recovery from COVID-19.

Funds

Loneliness Engagement Fund

The [Loneliness Engagement Fund](#) provided small grants of up to £50,000 to nine organisations engaging with target groups at high risk of loneliness.

Building Connections Fund

The £11.5 million [Building Connections Fund](#) was a partnership between government, The National Lottery Community Fund and The Co-op Foundation. This fund supported 126 projects aiming to help bring communities together and improve the evidence base on what works to tackle loneliness. Further information about the fund, including a full list of grantees, can be found [here](#)

Loneliness Covid-19 Grant Fund

Government announced £5 million of funding to support national organisations working to tackle loneliness and build social connections to help them to continue and adapt their critical work. We awarded grants of between £500,000 and £1 million to nine organisations, a full list of which can be found [here](#).

Local Connections Fund

Government announced a further £4 million Local Connections Fund in partnership with The National Lottery Community Fund. It provided funding to a large number of hyperlocal, grassroots organisations helping to build relationships in and across communities to help reduce loneliness.

A connected society

'[A connected society: a strategy for tackling loneliness - laying the foundations for change](#)', published on 15 October 2018, is the world's first government strategy for tackling loneliness. It builds on years of work by many individuals and organisations, and acts as government's first major contribution to the national conversation on loneliness and the importance of social connections. This strategy is an important first step, but government is also committed to long-lasting action to tackle the problem of loneliness.

Government has provided updates on the progress made against commitments in the strategy through the [first Loneliness Annual Report published in 2020](#), [[second Loneliness Annual Report published in 2021](#)](<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/loneliness-annual-report-the-second-year>) and the [third Loneliness Annual Report published in 2022](#).

The main strands of government's current work on loneliness are:

- The [Every Mind Matters Loneliness Campaign](#), which aims to raise awareness of loneliness so people understand the problem and stigma is reduced, encouraging people to talk and act on loneliness. The latest campaign was launched in January 2022, and focussed on encouraging young people aged 18-24 to "Lift Someone Out of Loneliness" by carrying out small acts of kindness to help someone who may be feeling lonely.
- The [Tackling Loneliness Network](#), a group of high-profile charities, businesses and public figures, formed by the government to help connect groups at risk of loneliness. The members of this network have been challenged to develop innovative ideas and commit to action to tackle loneliness and the commitments were published in the [Tackling Loneliness Action Plan](#). These organisations communicate and share insights through the government's [Digital Platform](#), the Tackling Loneliness Hub, which allows them to work seamlessly together, sharing data and research.
- In combination with these two strands, the government will also **drive forward action** by continuing to encourage other government departments and more organisations across society to commit to tackling loneliness in their own work.
- In line with our objective to **build up the evidence base**, government is also committed to improving and sharing evidence on loneliness and what works tackling it so people and organisations know how best to act. The [tackling loneliness evidence review](#), published in 2022, highlights the current evidence gaps.
- In May 2021 we published our [Employers and Loneliness guide](#), produced by The Campaign to End Loneliness, to act as the starting point to a wider conversation about what organisations can do to address loneliness. It follows a consultation with thirty-four businesses and employers who recognise loneliness in the workplace and support employee's social wellbeing.
- In June 2021, the UK and Japanese Ministers for Loneliness met to discuss tackling loneliness. As outlined in a [joint statement](#), they agreed to strengthen bilateral cooperation with: regular meetings between the UK and Japan; sharing knowledge on measures and policy; and working to

UN Decade for Healthy Ageing



World Health Organization

Home / Initiatives / Ageing / UN Decade of Healthy Ageing

UN Decade of Healthy Ageing
2021-2030

Section navigation

1. **Age friendly environments**
2. **Combatting ageism**
3. **Integrated Care**
4. **Long term care**

- WHO has recognised loneliness as a priority health problem
- During the course of the **UN Decade for Healthy Ageing (2021-2030)**, the Demographic Change & Healthy Ageing Unit will be addressing social isolation & loneliness as one of the themes that cuts across the four main action areas of the decade
- WHO is keen that governments work harder to tackle this rising problem in society

Tech: a cure & a cause of loneliness



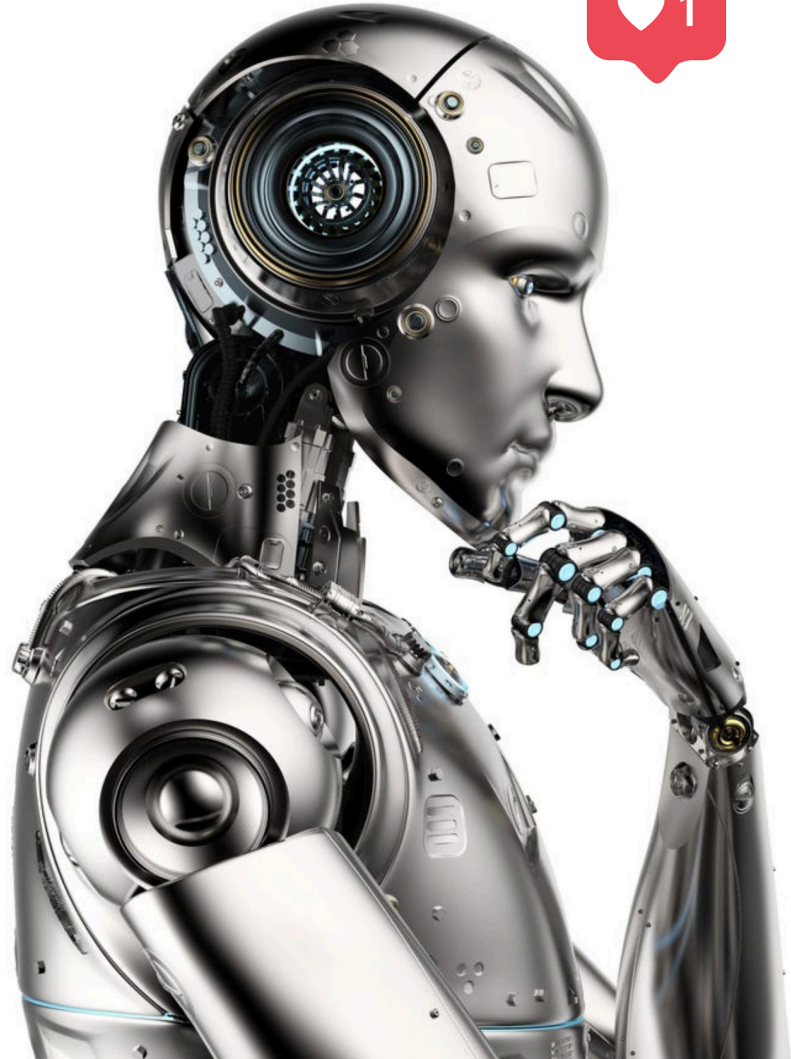
- People who are socially anxious can find online communication appealing because they can remain relatively anonymous
- Virtual, online & use of avatars mean that we can experiment with our identity & retain a sense of being in control
- Pandemic has highlighted how personal networks & interactions with others have changed
- Technology has given us the opportunity to stay 'in touch' but many of us experienced a loss or a reduction of physical presence & human connection

Pervasive technology



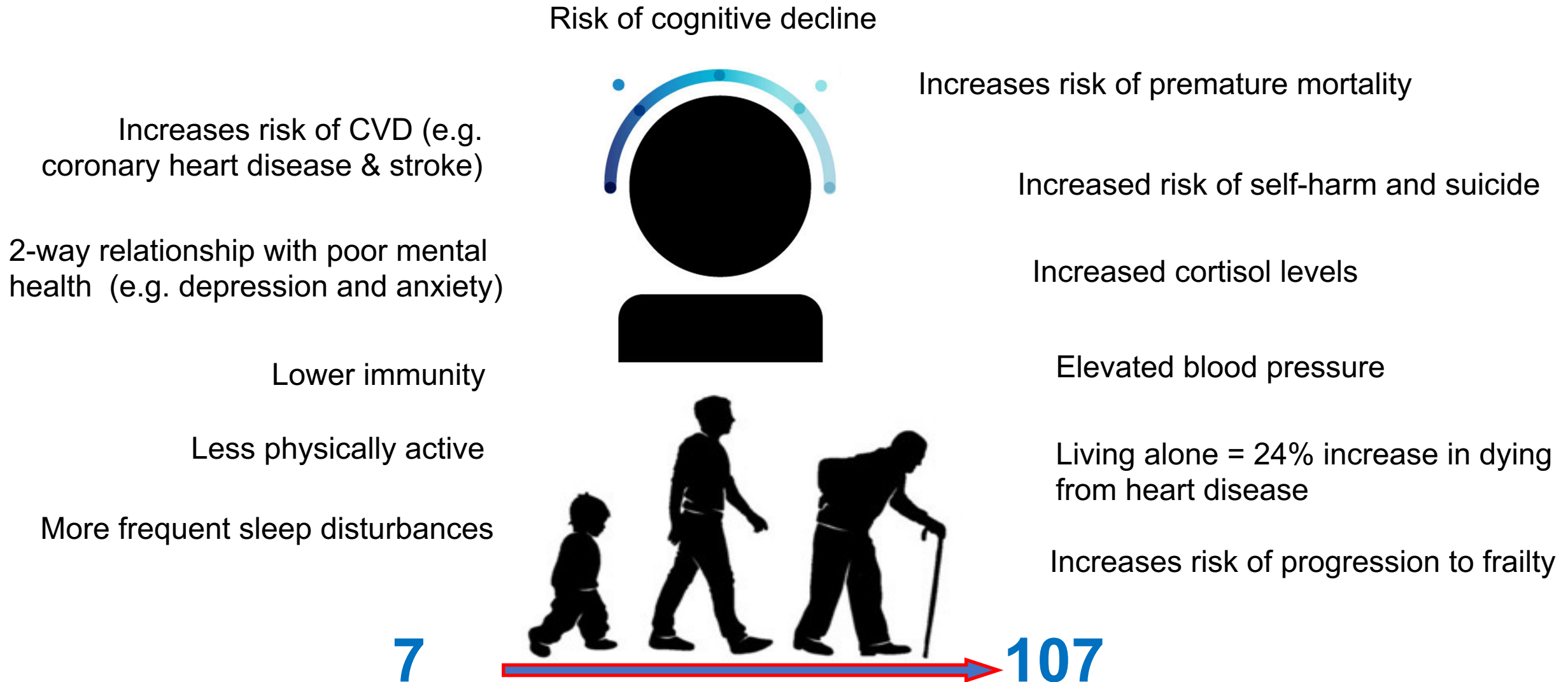
- Society 5.0 will likely be marked by pervasive use of technology, the Internet of Things (IoT) & the rapid adoption of humanoids & AI enabled home companions
- This raises concerns on how machines eventually replace human interaction
- Studies have shown that when robots fail to reciprocate human emotions, feelings of loneliness could be exacerbated instead of alleviated
- How about those individuals who are digitally excluded?

Where will the future take us?



- As we emerge from COVID & enter this new age, we will have the opportunity to explore the uses of technology to help us live full & happy lives
- For some people, the point of playing online games is often not to win, but to connect & feel a sense of being part of a (virtual) community
- Will this type of virtual interaction be a cause or a cure for loneliness in the future?

Emotional & health impacts



Risk factors for SI&L

Socio demographic Factors

Age*

Gender

Living arrangements

Living alone*

Marital status*

Availability of family & friends

Financial Resources*

Housing Tenure

Educational level

Access to a carer

Sexual orientation

Ethnicity

Life Events

Widowhood

Admittance to a care home*

Retirement migration

- Are a young parent
- Moved to university
- Obesity
- Neglect, DVA
- Mental Health problems
- Disability / LTC
- Not in education or employment
- Bereaved / ended a relationship

COVID & self-isolation

Health Factors

Functional status*

Disability*

Being a carer

Perceived health

Depression

Onset of illness

Cognitive impairment*

Social care needs

Structural & societal factors

Transport

Build environment

neighbourhoods, access to green spaces

Digital technology / exclusion

Societal factors

Social Isolation as Function of Location

Urban /rural risk factors

Lack of accessible transport

Lack of local facilities

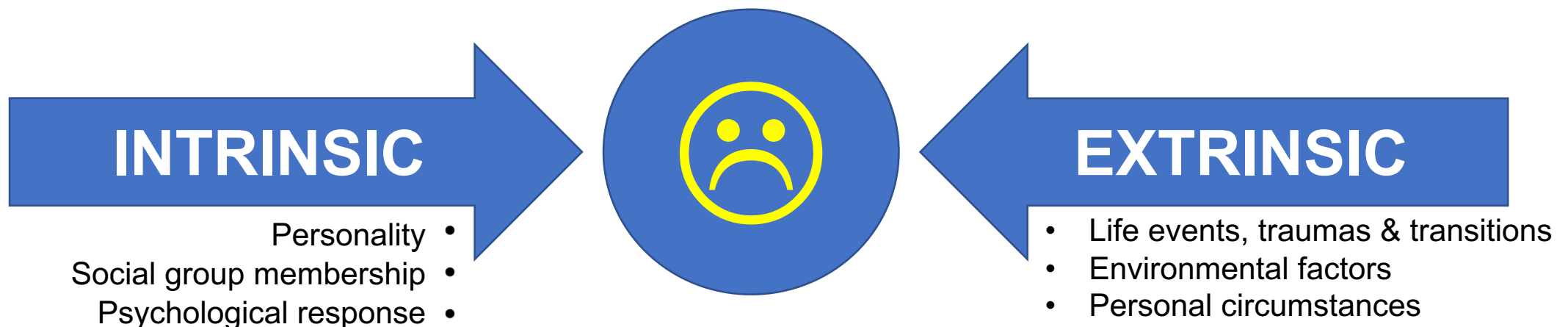
* Red= also a risk factor for social isolation

Loneliness in children & young people

- Loneliness is not becoming more prevalent, but we are recognising the issue, particularly among young people. ChildLine carried out 4,636 counselling sessions for loneliness in 2017/18 – 14 per cent more than in 2016/17
- Across population surveys with adults, loneliness is most prevalent among 16-24 year olds.
- Loneliness increases significantly during the adolescent years, with population data in England showing 15>13>11
- School climate of trust and acceptance appear to be important according to our recent analyses of the PISA data

Pathways to loneliness

- Loneliness is likely to be culmination of one or more factors, or set of circumstances
- Key factors can be intrinsic (i.e. a property of the individual) and/or extrinsic (i.e. external event or circumstance that impacts on the individual)
- Configurations of factors can make preventing or alleviating loneliness very complex (Swift, 2014)



Dealing with the stigma of loneliness

- There's a great amount of stigma associated with loneliness, and this is often a barrier to people seeking help
- Recent work (Manuela et al., 2022) shows that this is often self-stigma rather than external
- Recent DCMS report (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-loneliness-evidence-review>) highlights the need for robust evaluation of interventions

Interventions to tackle loneliness

- One of the best things we can do is to talk about it!
- Important to be self-aware & to help destigmatise it
- Many such community-based interventions are working together to help tackle loneliness & social isolation
- Charities, faith groups, local authorities, schools, healthcare services etc.
 - Encourage opportunities for social connections
 - Asset based community development (ABCD) - utilisation of existing community resources
 - Use of short screening tools
 - Coproduction with the intended target group
 - Interventions that offer social activity &/or support with a group format

Example Interventions

Key resources

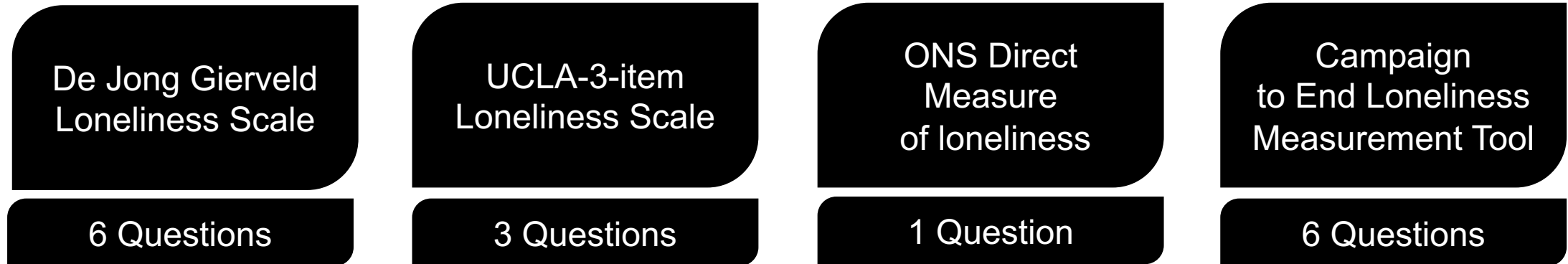
- Silverline (0200 470 8090)
 - Get Connected: confidential hotline for emotional & MH issues linked to loneliness
 - NHS Choices (volunteering, continuing education & support with getting online)
 - Great Get Together: building kinder communities to ensure a sense of belonging
 - Men's Sheds (targets men); Befriending others
-
- Awareness campaigns - Talk about it (in schools, public spaces, social media etc.,)
 - Make every contact count (MECC) - health & social care support/services
 - Social prescribing: Link Workers usually spend c.45 min with the client & can connect people to community, and the Governments' Tackling Loneliness Network

Measuring loneliness

- Measurement is at the heart of science
- Knowing where & how often people feel lonely can help us:
 - Identify ‘pockets’ of loneliness where people may be suffering in silence
 - Determine if measures tally with known *predictors* of loneliness
 - Help develop & target place-based interventions (e.g. ABCD)
 - Can help us consider placed based interventions to tackle inequalities
 - Develop a ‘baseline’ to compare in future initiatives
- Need for relevant & reliable data, especially since the advent of COVID & how society may have changed locally & globally

Tools to measure loneliness

- There are various scales & tools for 'measuring' loneliness



- Heat maps of loneliness have been developed before - but not granular (e.g. 50K across England)
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/articles/mappinglonelinessduringthecoronaviruspandemic/2021-04-07>
- There is the opportunity to revisit with support from Local Authority & NHS Primary Care

Measuring Loneliness in UK (INTERACT) Study

Measuring Loneliness in UK (INTERACT) Study

Aim

Create a heat map of loneliness to inform place based interventions at local level

How?

Work in partnership with local authorities, community groups & NHS primary care to engage with a wide segment of society (16yr+)

Tool

Short anonymous eSurvey

RESEARCH GROUP

- Austen El-Osta (PI) - Imperial College London
- Pamela Qualter (Co-I) - University of Manchester
- Azeem Majeed (Co-I) - Imperial College London
- Nina Goldman (Collaborator) - Switzerland

+ SCARU team

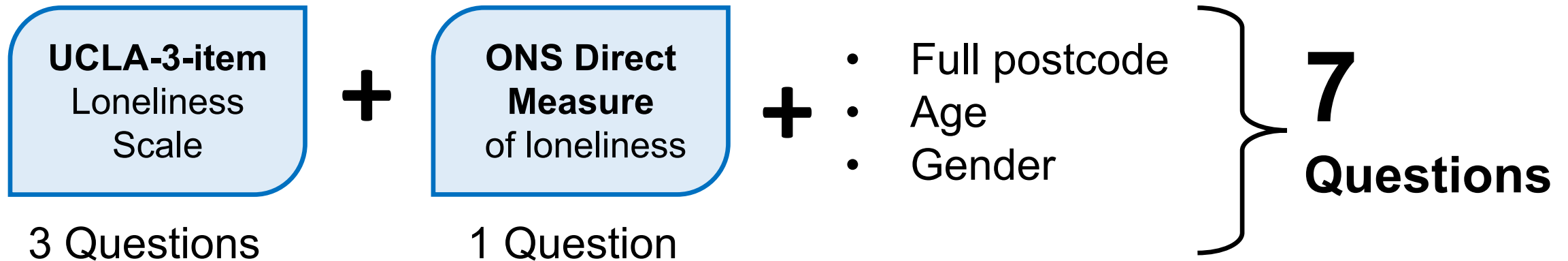
- Aos Alaa Study Coordinator
- Immy Webber Research Support
- Manisha Karki Research Support
- Marie Line El-Asmar Research Support
- Emmanouil Bagkeris Statistician
- Eva Riboli Scasco Qualitative Researcher

In partnership with:

- Hammersmith & Fulham Council
- NHS Primary Care
- NIHR CRN Northwest London
- NIHR Applied Research Collaboration NWL
- Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust

Creating a 'heat map' of loneliness

- Heat maps of loneliness have been developed before- but they were not granular enough (e.g. 50K sample across England)
- There is an opportunity to revisit with support from Local Authority & NHS Primary Care
- To invite completion of very brief anonymous eSurvey (7 questions)



English ▾

Imperial College London is conducting a research study to help identify ways to tackle social isolation & loneliness in the community setting. Please consider participating in this brief online questionnaire which should not take more than 10 minutes to complete. You can choose the preferred language for completing this questionnaire using the drop-down list on the top-right of page. All your responses will be anonymous.

For more information, please refer to the [Participant Information Sheet](#).

Please confirm that you consent to participate in this survey.

Yes

No

What is your full postcode? (We will not be using this information to identify you)

UCLA 3-item

Scan to take
part in Survey



ONS Direct Measure

How often do you feel that you lack companionship?

Hardly ever or never

Some of the time

Often

How often do you feel left out?

Hardly ever or never

Some of the time

Often

How often do you feel isolated from others?

Hardly ever or never

Some of the time

Often

How often do you feel lonely?

Often or
always

Some of
the time

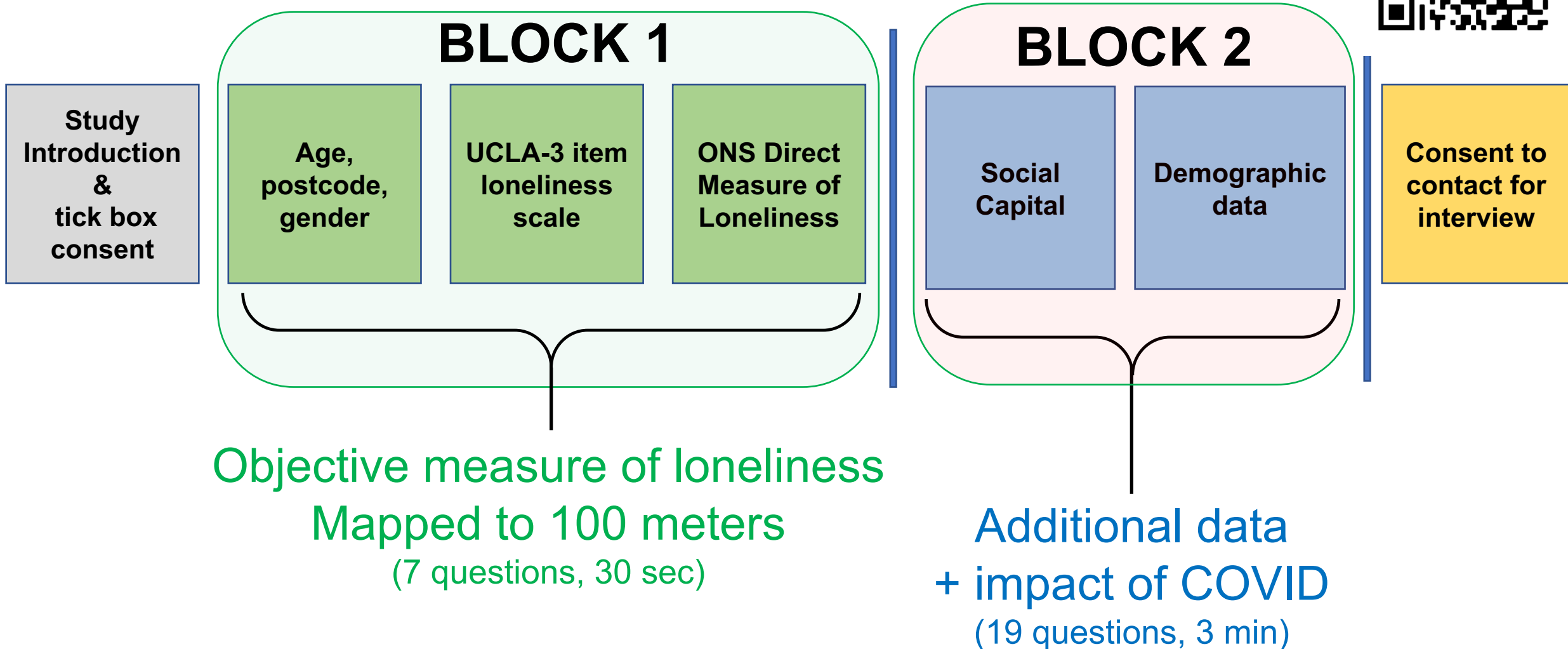
Occasionally

Hardly ever

Never

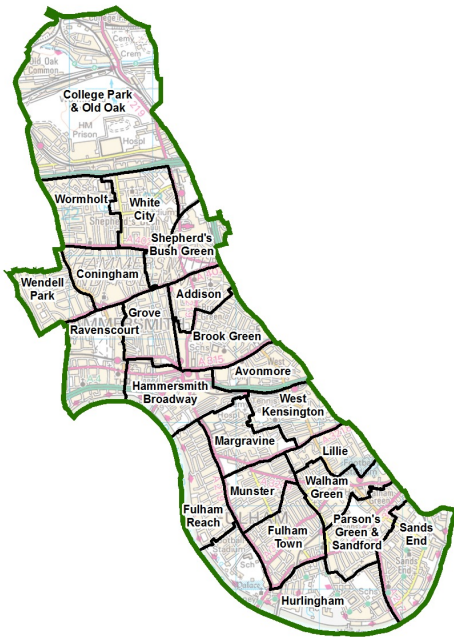
What is your age? (in years)

INTERACT eSurvey



Data led approach

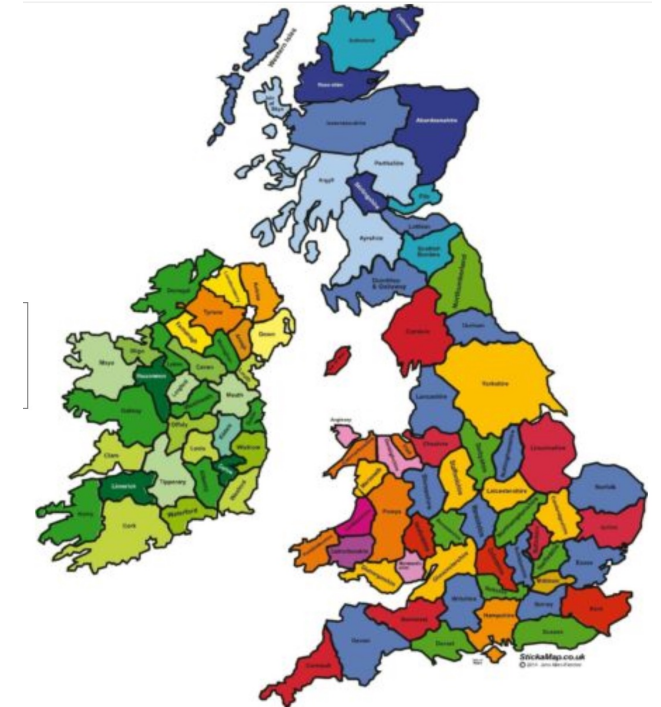
- If members of the community & NHS patients answer a brief (<1min) anonymous eSurvey, we could develop a detailed 'heat map'
- We can use these data to target interventions



Local authority



City



Regional / National

Hammersmith & Fulham (pilot site)



Imperial College London



Imperial College London | NIHR Applied Research Collaboration Northwest London | SCARU Self-Care Academic Research Unit

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- Deutsch
- ✓ English
- Español
- Français
- Italiano
- Polski
- Português
- Somali
- العربية
- فارسی
- हिन्दी

British Sign Language introduction to the loneliness survey

Hammersmith & Fulham Council and Imperial College London

h&f hammersmith & fulham

Home > H&F Council and Imperial College London join forces to tackle loneliness with ground-break ...

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H&F Council and Imperial College London join forces to tackle loneliness with ground-breaking project

17 January 2022
NEWS Health and care

FEEDBACK

Anybody aged 16 yr or over can participate

- Individuals with access to a smartphone tablet or personal computer with internet can participate in very brief survey
- Local Authorities & volunteer organizations have the option to administer the survey & record responses
- Also recruiting from schools, care homes & other settings
- The study has a favourable opinion form Imperial College London Research Ethics Committee & NHS Research Ethics Committee
- Externally peer reviewed & was adopted on NIHR CRN portfolio



Partnership working

← **Measuring Loneliness in UK (INTERACT) Study**
11 Tweets



Measuring Loneliness in UK (INTERACT) Study
@LonelinessStudy

[@ImperialSCARU](#) is collaborating with partners to measure the prevalence of loneliness at borough & city level. tinyurl.com/3n7umt9c

📁 Medical & Health 📍 United Kingdom 🔗 tinyurl.com/2nventze
📅 Joined January 2022

599 Following 100 Followers

Follow

+

Local Authority

Local Directors of Public Health

NHS Primary Care

Schools

Care homes

+

Community groups

Voluntary sector organisations

NIHR CRN

NIHR ARC



@LonelinessStudy

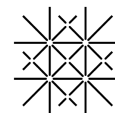
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Geographies of Loneliness - A tale of two cities



Aim of the project

Develop a **better understanding** of how various **neighbourhood features** can help reduce the prevalence of loneliness and social isolation in the community setting.

→ **sequential mixed-methods** research design to address **four specific objectives**



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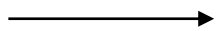
1. Understand the **perceptions of stakeholders engaged in local initiatives** to help reduce the prevalence of loneliness and social isolation.
2. Characterise the **prevalence and spatial patterns** of loneliness and social isolation in two European cities (**Basel & Manchester**).
3. Understand the **perceptions of socially isolated and lonely residents**.
4. Explore **associations between different neighbourhood features** and how this may impact the perceptions of residents who report feeling lonely and/or socially isolated.



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Overview of the sequential mixed-methods research design

1



2



3



4

Focus group discussion

- Use personal and professional contacts in Basel & Manchester to identify min. 4 stakeholders in each city

Online Survey (eSurvey)

- Adapting ICL online survey (INTERACT)
- capture prevalence of SI&L, location of residence, aspects of the neighbourhood, living conditions and demographic data in Basel & Manchester
- 3 recruitment tracks for e-survey

Interviews with residents

- Interviews with 30-40 respondents from Basel and Manchester (15-20 per city)

Exploring associations

- Based on eSurvey and interview data, establish how certain neighbourhood features may help reduce the perceived SI&L of its residents



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Expected outcomes

- Even on the city level, we can see spatial variation in reported loneliness
- Neighbourhoods with less social infrastructure (Café, Bar, Library, Parks,...) and more negative evaluation of its inhabitants show higher levels of reported loneliness.

Dissemination

- Papers on 1) Policy analysis, 2) Findings from eSurvey (incl. Maps), 3) Findings from interviews (residents)
- Lay summary of findings with infographics for all participants posted on social media, media articles, blog posts

Summary

- Loneliness is a social problem that is back in the spotlight & needs attention
- Personal awareness can be empowering & could be the gateway to self-care practices to prevent, delay the appearance of, or to learn how to cope with (& get out of) loneliness
- Measuring loneliness can help guide the development of targeted interventions to support people throughout the life course
- This type of research will only be possible if we have partnership working, and help create a social movement help tackle loneliness (now & in the future)



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