

# Evaluation of the ExtraCare Charitable Trust Response to Covid-19

**November 2021**

**Overview of key messages**

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## Background

As the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic eased throughout the UK, ExtraCare decided to undertake a second comprehensive review of our response to the pandemic. Our main objectives were to:

- Understand the resilience of our model of retirement communities in the face of an unprecedented global health crisis; and
- To build on the results of the original resident Covid-19 survey completed in July 2020 as well as to continue to inform our response to further waves of the pandemic, and support us in our mission of creating better lives for older people.

## Methodology

- A questionnaire based on Covid-19 measures, mental health, physical health and practical aspects was sent to residents via email and post (for those that don't have an email address). The previous survey covering the first national lockdown in 2020 was only available digitally. For this survey, a paper version was sent out as well as a digital version, and the long health-based questionnaires were removed in favour of health questions on the survey to try to improve the response rate. In total we received 1492 responses.

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## Between March 2020 and July 2021

- 381 residents have been confirmed to have had Covid-19 (8.66% of total residents);
- 73 residents died with Covid-19 listed as the cause (1.67% of total residents) and a further 9 died of other causes but had Covid-19 when they died;
- 94% of residents who died had underlying health conditions; and
- Half of residents (49%) contracted Covid-19 in hospital and 34% most likely caught it in the location.

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## Resident overall wellbeing

Residents were asked about their overall view of ExtraCare's handling of the pandemic and their perception of living in an ExtraCare location during the lockdown in Winter / Spring 2021.



93%

agreed that limiting visitors to the locations has been important in containing the spread of Covid-19



88%

felt safe living in an ExtraCare location during the pandemic



67%

agreed that staff had tried to keep residents physically well



84%

Had a personal conversation with someone they don't live with often / every day.



More than 80%

felt supported in getting essentials such as groceries and medication



77%

reported that ExtraCare communicated well with residents during lockdown'

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## Resident mental wellbeing

Residents were asked about the impact the pandemic and the lockdown measures had had on their mental health and wellbeing during the lockdown in Winter / Spring 2021.



**39%**

reported feeling socially isolated during lockdown



**41%**

reported that Covid-19 had negatively affected their mental health



**47%**

used digital video-calling technology to communicate with loved ones



**73%**

reported feeling sad at not being able to see children/grandchildren



**63%**

reported being worried about friends and family members



**5%**

contacted the dementia and mental wellbeing enabler

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## Conclusion

ExtraCare took prompt action from the start of the pandemic, putting in place a Covid governance team, communication materials and plans, and 'locking down' locations even before the first national lockdown began. Our two key objectives, to keep residents safe, and to remain financially viable were achieved.

There was a lower death rate in our residents in the 85+ age group than in England overall. The death rates in our locations were markedly lower than those recorded in care homes in England.

It is clear that there was a broad consensus across both populations (national lockdown and our 'location' lockdown) that lockdown was needed and was introduced at the right time. Residents did feel safe in our locations.

Residents did however report issues with mental and physical wellbeing and social isolation. Both populations brought forward themes of loss of independence, feeling like they were not in control of decisions or involved in decision making processes. Changes made to our processes in the second wave did support better physical health and mental wellbeing.