



Local Area Research + Intelligence Association

LARIA Newsletter January 2021

Mike Walker, LARIA Chair

The year 2020

What a year 2020 was. It has been a very difficult time for us all: in our working lives and our personal lives. The effects have been massive, and will be felt for the months and years to come. Many of the economic and societal inequalities that we have talked about for years have been laid bare. I sincerely hope that you and your families have fared well in the last 12 months.

In my last article for this newsletter, from December 2019, and thinking about the new decade, I said "I'm not going to try to predict the future, but I know there will be new things to learn, new opportunities to take and new relationships to build."

I don't think anyone could have foreseen what happened. Professionally, the one saving grace of the Covid-19 pandemic has been that research and intelligence has been thrust centre stage. As analysts and specialists in our local areas, we have made a vital contribution to tackling the disease and its impact in our local communities.

We have learnt to work differently, mainly at home, and Zoom, Teams and Skype have become staple channels for working and collaborating. We have improved multi-agency working and data-sharing, but we may feel isolated sometimes, even from our own teams. Our working environment may not always be conducive to analytical thinking, as we juggle domestic demands.

There has been a wealth of new data, terminology and systems to understand, analyse and interpret. We have been under immense pressure, as have our colleagues and partners, to make a positive difference in the battle with coronavirus. And we have continually delivered!

It's not been perfect and we have learnt a lot along the way. Much of our usual work has changed, been side-lined or deprioritised. Based on our experiences over the last year, we may continue to do things differently, better or not at all. We will begin to focus on the aftermath of the pandemic and how we can rebuild our local areas. Our profession, and the way we deliver it in the future, will undoubtedly continue to change.

But, I'm not making any predictions, other than to say that LARIA will be here, and as LARIA members we can all continue support each other through contacts, webinars and forums. And there will come a time when we can again meet face-to-face.

There are signs of optimism for 2021 and we trust they continue to grow. Most importantly, I hope that you and your loved ones can keep safe, the work pressures ease, and that all your efforts remain central to informing decision-making.

LARIA Spring Webinar Series

Spring Battling **Webinar Covid-19** **Series: using** **research,** **Call analysis** **for and** **Papers insight**
Beginning 12 April 2021 for 7 weeks

LARIA's webinar series will provide delegates with the ideas, tools and techniques for influencing decision-makers and delivering improved outcomes based on robust data, evidence and research. We are calling for a broad range of papers from the general to the specific on our theme: Battling Covid-19 using research, analysis and insight. For full details and to submit a paper to present please download the [submission form](#) and return to admin@laria.org.uk

Deadline for submissions: Friday 19 February 2021.

If your organisation is interested in sponsoring a webinar, please email admin@laria.org.uk for more information.

CACI's CV-19 Local Government Data Initiative 2021

CACI's data and intelligence has always been used by local government as a way of understanding the local community better, helping to improve decision-making and serving as an evidence base to underpin service delivery strategies. Many authorities made use of their data to support COVID-19 activities throughout both lockdowns and as the country felt the effects of measures associated with the tiered system.



Their blog provides useful insight about what we've learnt about our communities in the wake of coronavirus and how data can be used to support our recovery, to access this simply click [here](#).

Although vaccines are being rolled out, the rapid increase in positive cases mean it's likely that we'll be living with COVID measures for some time yet. If the public sector is to be able to truly continue to deliver services to the wider community and those vulnerable groups, local authorities must be able to access and use the most up-to-date data sources to support their response to the pandemic.

As part of CACI's ongoing commitment to the public sector they have decided to reboot their CV-19 Local Government Data Initiative, providing free access (subject to contract) to a number of relevant datasets to support COVID only related activities until the end of February 2021.

If you would like to take advantage of this offer, click the [link](#) and complete the requested information. CACI will then arrange a call to discuss your requirements and talk through next steps to share the data with your organisation.

Office for National Statistics - Census Day

Census Day – Sunday 21st March 2021 – is less than two months away and all of us at the Office for National Statistics (ONS) are now in our final planning stages. It has been a challenging time due to COVID-19 and the lockdowns but we can confirm that the census will definitely be going ahead.

Census 2021 will highlight areas of deprivation, it will show the ethnic make-up of the country, it will provide information on our living arrangements, health, education and the jobs we do and the data from it will help inform policy at a local and national level for years to come. It will also provide us with important insights into the impact of the pandemic on our society.



We have planned and built a flexible operation which can adapt to the changing circumstances of the pandemic. We have continued to review and adapt our plans to ensure our staff and the public can be kept safe, and everyone can be safely counted.

We are currently ensuring that the right plans and resources are in place to deliver a successful census safely and securely.

We want to acknowledge the excellent support we have received from local authorities during a time that is even more challenging for Local Authorities than ever before. We have liaised with Census Liaison Managers and Assistant Census Liaison Managers in over 98% of Local Authorities and we are delighted to see the Census being advertised on many local authority websites. We are also grateful to all the councils that have helped in advertising census jobs and hope that will continue. Our Census Engagement Managers, who are out in the field, have developed excellent relations with nearly all local authorities and continue to offer and receive assistance and advice.

Just before Christmas we issued a pack to all local authorities which asked if they required posters and leaflets which could be used in council buildings, sheltered housing schemes, libraries and community buildings. In February we will be asking local authorities if they would like to order new leaflets and posters for display in the last weeks before Census Day. We will also be running a workshop covering the local data collection operation including field staff roles and Census Support Centres.

With the support of local authorities, we hope to have a very successful Census 2021.

Health Statistics User Group - ONS Consultation on Health Index

Closes **3rd** **March** **2021**

The Office for National Statistics is looking for feedback to support the development of a composite Health Index. The consultation runs until the 3rd March.

There are a number of ways in which you can become involved

1. You can provide your own comments direct to ONS

2. The HSUG (Health Statistics User Group) and the Faculty of Public Health (FPH) will be putting together a joint response and you can contribute to this. If you wish to respond by this route, then please do so by 22nd February. Further notes on responding are provided below.

3. The RSS official Statistics Section is hosting a webinar on the 11th February to provide an opportunity to discuss the proposal. Further details on this are available on the [RSS Events page](#). It is hoped that the discussions at the webinar will be helpful in preparing individual responses, but HSUG and FPH will also draw on the discussions when preparing our shared response. You can register for the webinar [here](#).

4. The Health Foundation is also holding a webinar on the 19th January. Speakers include the former CMO Dame Sally Davies. Further details are available on the [Health Foundation Events web page](#).

A link to the consultation web page is provided [here](#).

[Consultation: Developing the Health Index for England](#)

Contributing to the joint HSUG/FPH response

If you wish to contribute to the joint response, then please send any contributions to rwillmer@btinternet.com by **22nd February**.

It would be useful if you could identify from which type of organisation you are responding, and, as far as possible, use the structure of the 'Consultation Questions' to provide a response (see below). Not all questions need to be answered.

The main consultation document has three parts:

1. a general text that provides an overview of the process used to produce this version of the Health Index;
2. a "Technical Annex" that provides more detail, and
3. the "Consultation Questions."

A Word version of each of these documents has been provided on the HSUG web page in order to facilitate adding comments, and allow for a more general exchange of views and ideas, that can be included in the joint consultation response, as appropriate. As these Word documents have been manually generated, if the texts do not read true, please refer to the official PDF file.

Online Events, Webinars and Training

Statistical Methods for Covid-19: Test, Trace and Protect Webinar on 28th January 2021 from 12:00 to 13:30

Organised by RSS Official Statistics Section in collaboration with the Health Statistics User Group

1. **Summary**

This is the third in a series of webinars organised jointly by the Health Statistics User Group (HSUG) and the RSS Official Statistics Section. We continue on our theme of COVID-19, following on from sessions in 2020 on mortality statistics and modelling for Covid-19. The focus

will be on the statistical methods being used for Test, Trace and Protect, and will involve sharing experiences and discussing approaches across the four nations of the UK.

Speakers will be sharing their learning and progress, and there will be opportunities to ask questions as well as share thoughts.

2. Introduction

These webinars are being organised by Health Statistics User Group (HSUG) together with RSS Official Statistics Section. The first webinar was held on 20 May 2020 and the second webinar was held on 23 July 2020.

3. Registration

For those wishing to register, you can do so [here](#).

4. Focus of the webinar

The current webinar series is focused on health and care statistics relating to Covid-19. These meetings are planned to give an overview of recent developments in the availability and access to health and care statistics in the UK, in relation to Covid-19. The webinars include presentations on work in England, Scotland and Wales (and N Ireland, if possible), with opportunity for feedback and discussion.

The purpose of the meetings is to improve awareness of what is being produced and also, through the discussions, to improve coherence, accessibility and understanding of the statistics being produced.

The focus is on how the statistics are produced (including by whom, to what timescale, within what constraints etc), and sharing experiences and discussing approaches, rather than on reporting results.

After the meetings the presentations, along with the questions raised and answers provided, are placed on the HSUG website.

5. Audience

The intended audience is people whose work involves producing and/or using data/statistics/information relating to Covid-19.

The webinars are not generally intended for the general public. However, many of the people in the audience will be involved in making information available to the general public and so the webinars will indirectly help the public

6. Purpose of the webinars

The aims for the webinars are to provide an opportunity for:

i) People involved in producing statistics relating to Covid-19 to share their experiences and exchange ideas (note: "involved in" is intended to cover all aspects of production – data collecting, analysis, modelling, interpretation, presentation etc).

ii) People using the statistics to pose questions and make comments. This will help with their understanding and use of these statistics.

iii) Members of the audience to contribute insights to the analysis and interpretation based on work they are doing.

iv) People producing the statistics to gain an understanding of the queries and comments that users have regarding their statistics, which will be helpful in improving the explanations that are provided with the statistics

7. Logistics

For the third webinar on 28th January, RSS will host the workshop, using MS Teams, as well as handling registrations. RSS will send information about how to log in to the webinar to those of who have registered, together with some background information, including how the webinar will

be

organised.

There will be a facility to send queries and comments during the webinar using the chat facility within MS Teams. Queries can also be sent in advance to the webinar e-mail address webinar@hsug.org.uk.

UK Data Service

Coding Demonstration: Social Network Analysis in Python

27 January 2021, 14.00 - 15.00

This free event, organised by the UK Data Service, demonstrates some advanced methods that can be customised to the needs of individual research projects. Led by Dr Diarmuid McDonnell and Dr Julia Kasmire, the demonstration address the following topic:

Techniques and methods of analysis for social network data



We will work through coding examples line-by-line, explaining the logical and programmatic aspects of the methods being demonstrated. During the session you will be able to run the code yourself in real time without any installation on your machine. Each demonstration uses the popular Python programming language and lasts for roughly 30 minutes, followed by up to 30 minutes for Q&A and other interaction.

[More information and booking](#)

Online	workshop:	Data	Pre-processing	Methods	in	Python
28	January	2021,	13.00	-		14.00

Data pre-processing is a data mining technique that involves transforming raw data into an understandable format. With the increasing amount of data available for research and analysis, real-world data is often incomplete or inconsistent and thus not ready to be used directly. Multiple spreadsheets, missing values, typos, numbers shown as text, unnecessary columns. Data without adequate preparation will deliver poor or misleading findings. This is exemplified by the pithy data scientist phrase 'GIGO', which stands for 'Garbage In Garbage Out'.

This free event, organised by the UK Data Service, is the third in a series and will involve a coding demo session, for those who want a first-hand experience of putting the workflow into action via python.

[More information and booking](#)

UK	Data	Service	Computational	Social	Science	Drop-in
9	February		2021,	13.00	-	14.00

Join our free monthly UK Data Service Data Drop-in to get or give some help on Computational Social Science projects. This event will take place on Zoom. There will be a data expert from the UK Data Service present to chair the session. Feel free to join for general advice on getting data, learning to code and much more.

The sessions take place on the second Tuesday of the month. Sign up below and we will see you there.

[More information and booking](#)

Webinar: The Catalogue of Mental Health Measures: Discovering the depths of mental health data in UK longitudinal studies

11	February		2021,			16.00-17.30
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This free webinar is jointly organised by the UK Data Service, The University of Essex, and the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience, Kings College London.

The webinar will introduce the new [Catalogue of Mental Health](#) which provides access to information on mental health and wellbeing measures in British cohort and longitudinal studies. The webinar will be useful for researchers from across different disciplines and career stages. The Catalogue may be particularly useful for early career researchers utilising data that has already collected and researchers less familiar with the mental health field – but it may also hold some surprises for experienced mental health researchers! It is an interactive session, please bring your laptop, iPad or mobile phone so you can try it out!

[More information and booking](#)

[The Collaborating Centre for Values-Based Practice - Dementia Webinar](#)

Values, science, rights: what do they mean for dementia and Covid?

What's the importance of values and science for people affected by dementia and practitioners? Are values relevant in dementia care when we are being "led by the science" for Covid? Are rights important? What is 'values-based practice' and why is it important for dementia? This free interactive webinar will consider these questions and more

Speakers: Prof Julian Hughes, Toby Williamson, Keith Oliver and Jayne Goodrick

Chair: Philly Hare

Hosted by: The Collaborating Centre for Values-Based Practice, St Catherine's College, Oxford

Date/time: 3 February 2021, 12-2pm

Registration details: [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

Day Centre Research Forum

The next Day Centre Research Forum (DCRF) will take place virtually on **Thursday 18th February 2-4pm**. We will be using Zoom and we will be using the 'meeting', rather than the 'webinar', format to make it easier to interact. Please find attached the flyer which we encourage you to share. If you tweet about it, please use #DCRForum @katitao @ARC_S_L

The event's focus will be Covid-19, and we are delighted to have the following speakers present:

* Jayne Townsend (Albany Oasis Day Centre) will be speaking about reopening her day centre, examining how to balance the risks involved with the safety and wellbeing of guests, and sharing experiences of delivering care whilst adhering to shifting government rules and regulations.

* Rebecca Packwood & Agnieszka Daldorph (Age Exchange) will be speaking about how they supported people in a way that kept creativity and reminiscence at the heart of improving wellbeing while face to face services were closed. This presentation covers how their blended virtual service continued to have impact.

This event is free and open to all, however, booking is essential in order to receive the Zoom link during the week before the event. Please book on [Eventbrite](#).

Please see our [webpage](#) for further information about previous DCRF events and our NIHR Applied Research Collaboration South London Social Care work.



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