

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW ON THE EPIDEMIOLOGY OF LONG COVID

HIQA reviewed the international evidence to identify the prevalence, symptoms and risk factors for developing long COVID.



Epidemiology

Long COVID is a complex condition involving a wide range of symptoms that can be debilitating and vary significantly from person to person. The most common symptoms include fatigue, brain fog, memory loss and or confusion, loss of smell and shortness of breath.



Clinical Burden

Long COVID places a large burden on healthcare services. In studies based on self-reported data, estimates for the prevalence of long COVID in the general population ranged from 15% to 53%.



Risk Factors

Long COVID can affect anyone. It is more likely to affect you if you are a woman, older, were admitted to hospital because of COVID-19 or have a respiratory condition such as asthma.



Prevention

Based on our knowledge of COVID-19 and long COVID, it is important to follow public health advice to minimise the risk of infection or reinfection. This includes supporting people to avail of the COVID-19 vaccine and to obtain their scheduled booster doses to reduce the severity of COVID-19 cases and potentially the incidence of long COVID.