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New community health fund launched to tackle COVID health inequalities

Newcastle City Council has launched a new [Community Health Fund](#) to tackle health inequalities in the city.

The fund is looking for projects (£1,000) that will support activities to reduce health inequalities and help people to take care of their own physical and mental wellbeing.? Projects could be looking at activities while we continue to live with the virus, or in the long term relating to the impact of the pandemic on our health.? Deadline for expression of interests is Monday 22 February. For help email communityhealthfund.

World Encephalitis day, 22nd February

This awareness day was established six years ago as encephalitis is a little known neurological disease which has a lasting impact on an individual and their family. Encephalitis is an inflammation of the brain. It is caused either by an infection invading the brain (infectious encephalitis) or through the immune system attacking the brain in error (post-infectious or autoimmune encephalitis).

Anyone at any age can get encephalitis. There are up to 6,000 cases in the UK each year and potentially hundreds of thousands worldwide. Once treated the road to recovery is slow because the brain takes longer to recover than muscles, skin and bone. There may be memory lapses, problems with concentration, mood swings along with physical changes which impact on movement and balance and speech. There are a number of resources on the [Encephalitis Society](#) website including podcasts.

Find out more, get involved and raise money by downloading the [Brainwalk app](#).

How has covid-19 impacted women differently to men?

[A new report](#) by MPs on the House of Commons Women and Equalities Select Committee looks at how the economic impact of coronavirus has impacted men and women differently; for example, because of the over-representation of women in certain types of work ie care or hospitality, and also because of actions the Government has taken.

The impact of Covid on people with a disability

The Disability Benefits Consortium (DBC), a group made up of over 100 charities including the [MS Society](#), [Parkinson's UK](#), and [Action for ME](#) has published a report on how the pandemic has affected the finances of disabled people.

The report, titled [Pandemic Poverty: Stark choices facing people on benefits](#), brought together findings from a survey conducted by the DBC and highlights the need to permanently extend the Universal Credit £20 uplift to legacy benefits (those being replaced by Universal Credit). This is based on findings from the survey that include:

- 82% of respondents said they had had to spend more than they normally would since the Covid-19 crisis began (eg delivery charges or paying volunteers to shop locally)

- two-thirds of people said they had to go without essentials like food, heating or medication as a result of increased costs since the Covid-19 crisis began
- high proportion of [Employment and Support allowance](#) users are using foodbanks
- additional costs to go digital to access help, services or connect with friends
- 44% said they had fallen behind on critical financial commitments like rent, mortgage payments, or household bills.

Read InformationNOW articles on [ME](#), [Parkinson's](#) and [Self care and disability](#)

Free Tablets and Wi-Fi for over 50s

Do you know someone who would like to get online, but doesn't quite know where to begin? [Elders Council](#) has received funding from the Postcode Community Trust to provide tablets and WiFi to people aged 50+ living in Newcastle.

Working with their partners [Mental Health Concern](#) and Your Homes Newcastle, they are able to provide a device, WiFi and a Tech Buddy to help people to get started. To find out more contact Elders council on 0191 208 2701 or leave a message and telephone number, or [email](#)

Diabetes support

During the coronavirus pandemic it's still really important for people to talk to a healthcare professional if they notice any of these signs and symptoms. [Diabetes UK](#) has a new video about the symptoms of type 1 and type 2 diabetes to help ensure that people are diagnosed and receive the right treatment as soon as possible. They are having online events that anyone can attend:

Pre-Diabetes and reducing risks of developing type 2 diabetes in the South Asian community: Thursday 25 Feb 10.30am - 12.00pm [Register](#)

Self Management: Empowering people with type 2 diabetes from the South Asian community: Thursday 4 March 2.00pm - 3.30pm [Register](#)

Diabetes UK has a resource called '[Your diabetes care during coronavirus](#)' that helps people with diabetes to understand what care they should be receiving during the pandemic. They also have advice on preparing for remote appointments.

InformationNOW information on [diabetes](#).

[Diabetes UK Northern Team's](#) are holding a virtual catch up for volunteers. Book through [Eventbrite](#) for an online lunch and a chat.

Online sexual violence awareness training

[Rape Crisis Tyneside and Northumberland](#) are offering new online sexual violence awareness training. The training is aimed at increasing knowledge and confidence about sexual violence and understanding those who have experienced it.

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