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# MEDIA RELEASE

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# Universities launch joint project to track key worker wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic

The first research project to understand and track the wellbeing of frontline key workers during the Covid-19 pandemic has been launched by researchers from the University of Gloucestershire and the University of Limerick.

The researchers are looking for people across the UK and Ireland, that are currently deployed in frontline key worker positions, to take part in the longitudinal survey. They want to hear from anyone who is working on the frontline, from hospitals to supermarkets, to understand how the impact of being a key worker hero affects their wellbeing over time.

The [questionnaire](https://glos.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/cv19heroes) asks about how our frontline heroes feel about the pandemic, and how their wellbeing might be impacted by the increasing strain on their reserves. It asks about how they cope, what their approaches are to helping others, and how they feel about government strategies to deal with the various issues posed by the pandemic.

An important part of the study will be to see if there are any differences between the two countries in terms of how frontline workers are coping with increased demands on their personal resources. With markedly different strategies to deal with the pandemic, data from the two countries will provide an interesting case study into how national policy may impact frontline worker wellbeing during times of crisis.

The research team, headed by Senior Lecturer in Psychology from the University of Gloucestershire, Dr Rachel Sumner, who is an expert in stress and wellbeing, and Dr Elaine Kinsella, a Lecturer in Psychology and expert in the psychology of heroism from the University of Limerick, are trying to learn more about factors might predict wellbeing as the pandemic continues.

Dr Sumner said: “For us, it’s really important to recognise that there are people being plunged into the role of being a frontline worker who previously would not and could not have expected that from their job”.

Dr Kinsella added: “The heroic efforts of our key workers, whatever their role, rely on them being able to cope with the extraordinary pressure that they are all facing in this rapidly changing situation. We hope the study will help us understand more about how they cope, and how they can be helped”.

The researchers want to hear from as many people as possible over the age of 18 that works in a frontline key worker role during the pandemic in the UK or Republic of Ireland, including those who have recently answered the call to re-join organisations like the NHS and the HSE.

The first survey takes about 20 minutes to complete, and respondents are invited to register for follow-up surveys taking no longer than 5 minutes every two weeks as things progress. There is also an option to opt-in to follow-up interviews so the researchers can explore the nature of the heroism of these workers, what they feel they’ve been up against, and what support they’ve had or felt they needed.

The research is currently not funded, but the researchers are very grateful for the voluntary support of University of Gloucestershire students who have generously given their time to support the administration of the project as well as some of the background data gathering.

**ENDS**

**Notes to Editors: for more information, please contact the University press office on 07919 621215 or email** [**pressoffice@glos.ac.uk**](mailto:pressoffice@glos.ac.uk)**.**

**NB: The twitter handle for the study is @CV19Heroes. Please note the image should be credited to Miguel Bruna at Unsplash.**

**University of Gloucestershire:** [**www.glos.ac.uk**](http://www.glos.ac.uk)

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