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Researchers say mental health levels may worsen as infections rise and lockdowns are _____. Restrictions to curb the spread of coronavirus in the UK has _____ stress, anxiety and depression far above normal levels and may do again in coming months if widespread lockdowns are re-imposed, researchers say.

_____ the mental health problems improved as restrictions _____, scientists warn they may worsen again as infections rise and more aggressive nationwide lockdowns are considered over the autumn and winter.

The study conducted with King's College London _____ more than 3,000 UK adults about their mental health as _____ restrictions came in earlier this year. The researchers looked specifically at which groups were most affected by lockdown and what issues they found most difficult. Women, young people and those in _____ categories for Covid-19 were most affected, the researchers found, though different factors probably drove the mental health difficulties in each group. While the fear of catching the virus was likely _____ to those with underlying health conditions, young people and women may have felt more distress through work insecurity, loneliness and more domestic violence.

In a separate study, which has yet to be published, Michael Daly investigated the mental health of 14,000 people in UK households during lockdown. The results _____ that women and young people experienced the greatest increases in mental health difficulties, though they also enjoyed the fastest recovery.

To prepare for the coming months, she said new policies were needed to help people feel less worried about _____ up the virus. Specifically, she said the UK needs to _____ the virus to low levels, have an effective system for tracing the contacts of those who test positive and have enough testing capacity so people can go about their daily lives without fear of becoming infected.

Vedhara advised people to stay as socially connected as possible, to help _____ off loneliness, and ensure they found time to have fun: “Take time in every day to do at least one thing that makes you feel good, and makes you laugh out loud if possible, and reach out to friends, family or seek professional help as soon as you feel things are becoming _____,” she said.