

A snapshot from research at UIC that helps us better understand how to support people with SMI in new and innovative ways:



The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Mental Health & Daily Life of Adults with Behavioral Health Disorders

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Survey results reveal areas of life where the COVID-19 pandemic had the most impact for people with SMI. Here's what people had to say:



1

Media Added to Stress

"I also find it stressful to hear daily news in the media that the federal government is so uncoordinated and uncaring about the impact of this pandemic on all of us, especially those in direct contact with the virus."

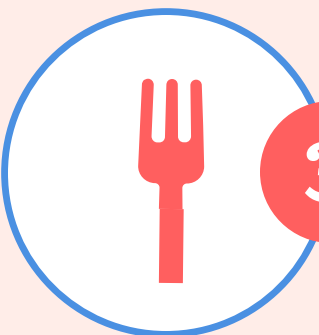


2

Sleeping Habits Changed

"I am home more, I sleep less, I bathe and I shower less."

"I sleep a little longer on workdays and spend much more time in bed on weekends."



3

Eating Habits Changed

"I eat more candy."

"eating a lot more... stress eating."

"I don't have a lot of food on hand. So I am eating what I have."



Routines changed

"Every day is more stressful because my routine and the routine of everyone around me has been disrupted... I enjoy being home, however, there's a difference between choosing to stay home and being forced to stay home."

5

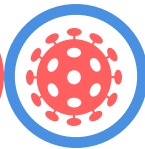


Feeling Socially Isolated

"Biggest effect has been social - I live alone and my immediate family all lives out of state, so I feel more isolated without seeing coworkers and not being able to meet friends out."

"I miss my family, miss going to Church. I miss seeing my recovery family [at work]. I can no longer facilitate groups and I truly miss seeing and speaking with the clients."

6



Exposure to COVID-19

"COVID-19 has had a devastating effect on my life. I have been going through grief and loss as well as fear and anxiety because I have many friends and some family that [tested] positive [for COVID]. I have been worried about my wife because she is a[n] essential worker."

7



Financial Stress & Worries

"Terrible. I am now financially strapped and afraid of losing my housing. I am constantly anxious, overwhelmed, & starting to feel depressed. I feel like hope is fading."

... "money problems, loss of time at work, uncertain future, job may be in jeopardy."

But, many noted that their resiliency also took many forms:

"I continue to pivot to positive as much as I can, looking at all of the areas in my life that I am very grateful for including my job, and [my] ability to work in the area that I have a passion for which has not changed during this COVID 19 Pandemic."

"My daily needs are being met and I would say the only changes are I work from home and I have to stay in the house. Other than that, I am thankful to still have an income, medication, food and all of my needs are being met."

