

University Student:

My best friend keeps saying when politicians and celebrities aren't following the rules, why should I?

ITU doctor:

I don't think people out there understand how hard it is for us. We haven't enough staff, and we have to do things such as turning a patient over several times just to help them breathe (it helps with ventilation when someone's oxygen levels are dropping). Turning patients requires several of our team to help because tubes etc. can be dislodged. Everything is so tiring and we too miss our families.

ITU nurse:

I held the hands of someone who died today. It's heart-breaking. And even more so when you hear people call this pandemic a hoax.

Cleaning staff:

I wake up at 5am every morning just to get to the hospital to make sure everything is sanitised and clean. My 21-year old son doesn't bother with hand sanitiser anymore, he says 'it's time to get things back to normal!'

Post office worker:

People come in every day not wearing their masks. They're indoors and we don't have great ventilation. They glare at me when I ask them to please put their masks on.

Teacher:

I heard a parent say that they don't understand the graphs in the COVID-19 briefings, so they don't watch them. Instead they get all the information they need from friends on their messaging app.

Teacher:

It's hard work keeping young pupils in a bubble. They want to chat with each other. Pre-pandemic we'd often joke about how teachers are the first ones to catch germs from their pupils, so some of us find it odd that no one is listening to our concerns about safety. Not just for us and our pupils, but for all our families too.

Teacher:

There's nothing worse than having to comfort a child who thinks they might have passed on the virus to their family member who has just passed away. I want nothing more than to teach my pupils, but I also want to tell the authorities not to open schools so quickly.

Parent:

My neighbour went on holiday to Italy over the summer. They said they didn't quarantine or they'd lose precious holiday time, and didn't wear their masks in case they got tan lines.

Parent:

Other parents keep trying to pop over to have a chat and coffee with me, and to let our children play together since they'll be at school together anyway. This makes me uncomfortable as they keep saying, 'well, we're not really breaking the rules, it's only us, it won't make a difference.'

Grandparent:

Of course I'm looking forward to seeing my children and grandchildren, but I don't want any of them to get ill. Until we've all had our vaccinations, we're not meeting. I'm willing to wait. Why can't others wait a little while longer too? We're so lucky to have vaccines. I can remember the times of smallpox and polio. Such awful diseases.

Shopkeeper:

I've lost so many members of my family to this disease. I don't wish this on anyone else. But listening to my fellow shop owners worried about their businesses makes me want to tell them there's nothing more important than life and health.

Gym owner:

It's important for us to stay open for the health and well being of all our members, but at the same time we want everyone to be safe. We've had staff members in tears as they can't work any longer, and we don't know what to say to them.

Pub owner:

We know we'd like to be open, but we also know that having customers in close proximity is not safe for them or us. We'll do our best to serve and support the community, but we're always being asked when are we going to open properly?

Restaurant worker:

I know the boss was on at the government to reduce the distance for social distancing so we could open, but if germs can still spread far, I feel scared knowing someone could take their mask off to eat, and even being one metre away they could still cough or shout their germs at me.

Business owner:

All our businesses are suffering, some more than others. But at the same time, if we're so busy trying to save the economy, but people are dying, there aren't going to be any people left to enjoy my business.

What will I do then?

Airport worker:

We know about cross-border spread being on planes means that viruses can spread fast. There's also close human-to-human contact. But I can't even convince my boss let alone anyone higher. Can we really close our borders like other countries? I might be okay, but my colleagues won't likely survive being out of work.

Plumber:

I didn't want to say, it, but I'm going to have to say 'job or no job' to some of my employees. I always assume I'm infected when I haven't even caught the disease. I wish other people would too.

Epidemiologist:

Over-responding is better than delaying action, and we can learn so much from other countries.
Why does no one want to learn from other countries who are doing so well?

Vaccine scientist:

We have vaccines now, but we can't just stop our good behaviours because of that. Hearing how people want to mix with each other and hug grandkids and so on straight away is a little worrying. Vaccines are preventative, not a cure.

Journalist:

I keep on top of all the news stories and even write them. But I don't know what to say when a close friend says they're not getting the vaccine because they're fit and healthy, or that they've already had COVID-19.

Imam:

I am telling people to verify before they amplify. But it's hard. There is a lot of information circulating telling people that the vaccine is not halal.

Vicar:

My congregation are taking heed to government advice and following the rules and regulations. But ultimately they will choose what they deem as right. Religion has been important in coping with stress and anxiety, they need their community, but I'm worried about the lack of social distancing.

Pujari/Iyer:

We are not opening the temple for regular festivities, as we know that religious congregations have been the cause of mass outbreaks. Yet it's so difficult for us to stop people wanting to worship, turning up at the temple doorstep wanting to be let in, and wanting us to carry out ceremonies for births, marriages and funeral rites.

Scientist:

I overheard someone at the supermarket say that we should just treat this like chicken pox and have parties, all mingle until we all get it, and then we'll have herd immunity. The natural way! I didn't know whether to interrupt and tell them that herd immunity is for when we're all vaccinated.

Immunologist:

There are a lot of concerns about allergies, but people who have severe allergies have to be careful about everything anyway. We have experts on standby at vaccine centres for such emergencies, but how do I get this message out there?

Teenager:

I heard someone talking on the phone about looking for all the loopholes in the rules just so they could hang out together. Looking for loopholes doesn't sound like a kind way to behave.

Teenager:

I don't think my friends understand the point of bubbles. They think they can go and visit one group of friends and then go and meet another group of friends, but as long as it's six different groups of friends maximum, that's the rule of six sorted.
Some huge bubble!

Teenager:

I wish people didn't keep telling us all to use our common sense. It's not actually common sense, it's an understanding of science that matters and how diseases are transmitted. Not everyone has that or wants to learn.

Man in his late 20s:

My family doesn't understand lockdown. They think it's infringing on their human rights. I don't know how to convince them that it's to help keep us all alive as if they NHS is overwhelmed they're not going to be able to help everyone. They'll have to choose. I don't want them to choose saving me over my family? It scares me.

Middle-aged woman:

My partner says he's not sure what to believe anymore. He can't deal with the science changing all the time. But science does change. If it didn't we'd all still think the Earth was flat, climate change is made up and sun travels in the sky around us!

30-year old officer worker:

My sister thinks that she doesn't want to have any of the vaccines. It's been developed too fast and not been tested enough and she doesn't trust pharmaceutical companies.

University student:

My uncle is 55 and thinks he's healthy and fit so he won't get seriously ill if he catches COVID-19. He doesn't even want the vaccine for that reason.

Man in his 60s

My niece is in her 30s and thinks she'll become infertile if she has a vaccine. She says she doesn't want to put genes from a virus in her body, as who knows what it'll do.

57-year old woman:

I'm worried that once most of us get the vaccine, everyone will stop social distancing and stop wearing masks and act as if nothing ever happened. But there will still be unvaccinated people and they might still do the same. What if this virus keeps mutating?

Businesswoman:

I'm never sure what to say when someone says, 'But we take risks every day, when we drive our cars, cross the roads etc.' It really doesn't feel the same as that.

35-year old woman:

I live in a lovely place, full of diverse communities and I loved hanging out with my neighbours before the pandemic. Many are elderly and lonely because they are shielding. The Government now wants them to come out of their houses, get public transport to get the vaccine. They're not keen on the vaccine for this reason. It's not that they're against science. What can I do?

Medical student:

Some people don't want to take the vaccine right now. They want to wait and see how other people react to it first and don't want to be guinea pigs. One of my friends is waiting for all the politicians to have it first. How do I explain clinical trials to them?