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# Employment-related COVID-19 exposure risk among disabled people in the UK

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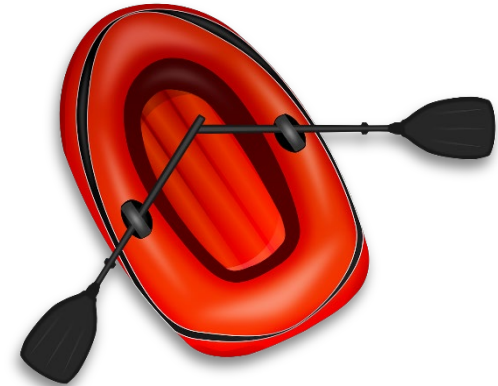
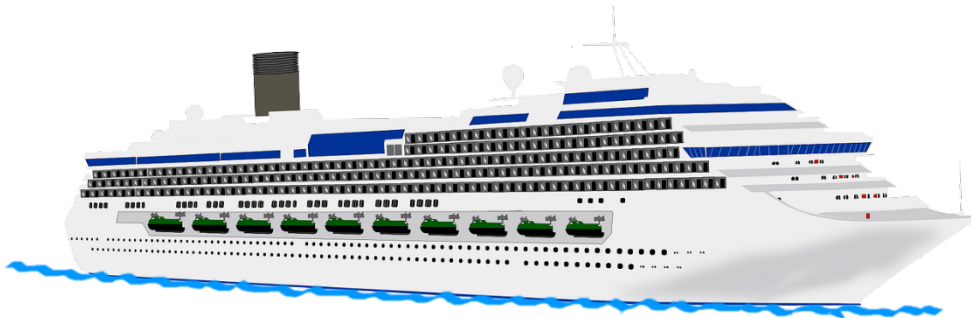
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# Summary

- Workplaces are fertile territory for the transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus which causes COVID-19
- In the UK, disabled people were significantly less likely to work from home and more likely to be working outside the home during the pandemic
- Disabled people were also more highly concentrated in occupations with high risk of exposure to COVID-19
- Adds to evidence that disabled people experienced a particularly raw deal during the pandemic and helps to explain why three in five people who died from COVID-19 were disabled

# Same storm, different boat!



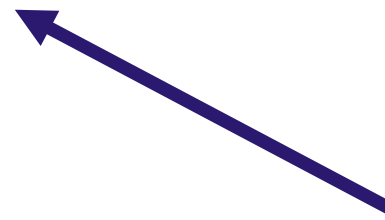
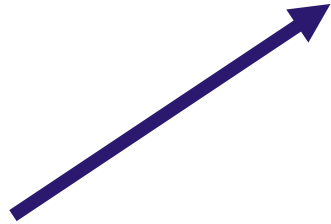
- Disabled people accounted for 60% of COVID-19 deaths in the UK
- Even taking account of age and underlying health conditions (clinical vulnerability), disabled people had higher rates of death so were clearly more exposed to the virus

# Data

- We use the 'covid' waves in Understanding Society: The UK Household Longitudinal Study (UKHLS) – monthly / bi-monthly surveys throughout the pandemic
- Data on whether they were employed, number of hours worked in the week and whether they often or always worked at home
- We match in data from the latest wave of the regular UKHLS survey to identify disabled people (long-standing physical or mental impairment, illness or disability and has substantial difficulties with one or more specified functions)
- For employed people, we also identify their occupation in 2019 – for each occupation we apply a 'risk indication factor' based on job quality measures from O\*NET (see Kikuchi and Khurana, 2020)



# High risk occupations



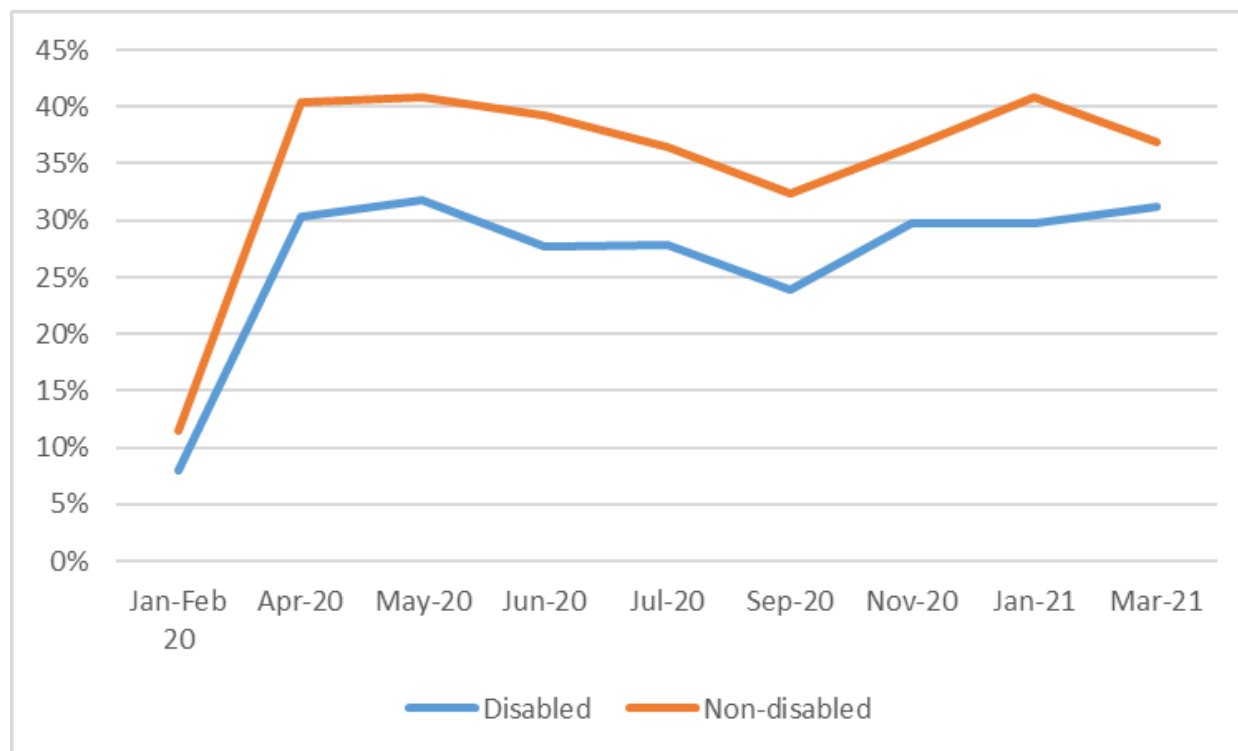
Physical proximity to others

Exposure to disease



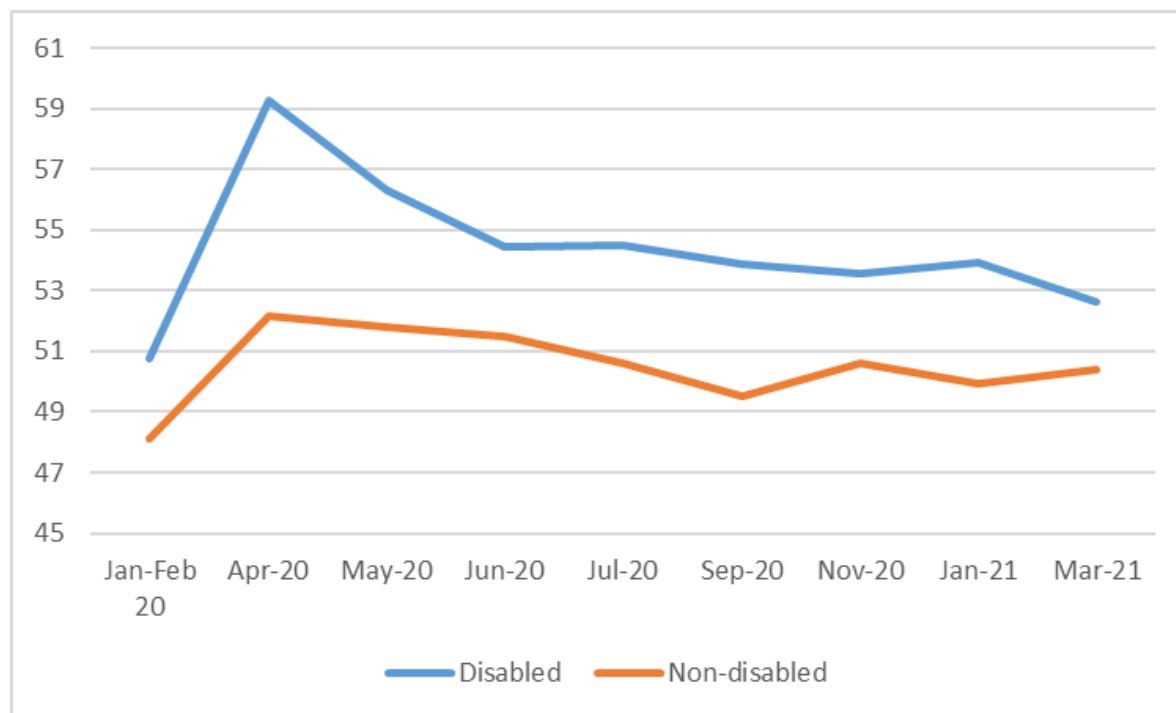
# Disabled people less likely to work from home ...

Percentage of workers always or often working at home



# ... and more likely to work in high risk occupations

Average Risk Indication Factor of people working outside the home



# What have we learnt?

- The UK government wants to get 1 million more disabled people into work by 2027. That's great, but ...
- COVID-19 is still with us and probability of further pandemics is high, so how can we enable disabled people to participate in the labour market safely?
- Recommendations of the Work and Pensions Committee:
  - Statutory right to request remote or flexible working from the start of employment
  - Support and encourage employers to adopt job carving practices when employing disabled people
  - Reform Statutory Sick Pay so it is available to the lowest paid and those in precarious forms of work





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# Thank you

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