
Statistics on post COVID-19 condition in primary care and specialised care

In this fact sheet, the National Board of Health and Welfare presents statistics on patients diagnosed with post COVID-19 condition (also known as long COVID) during the time period October 2020 to October 2021. During the survey period, 16,019 patients were diagnosed with post COVID-19 condition in publicly-provided primary care and 5,710 patients in specialised care.

The number of care contacts in which the diagnosis post COVID-19 condition was registered increased steadily since the diagnosis was introduced in mid-October 2020, reaching a peak in May 2021. During the study period, public primary care registered a total of 24,798 doctor visits for patients diagnosed with post COVID-19 condition. The corresponding figure for specialised care was 9,246 care contacts.

About the statistics

The statistics on post COVID-19 condition in primary care are taken from the National Board of Health and Welfare's (NBHW) special collection of statistics from all regions of the country. Collection was carried out in December 2021. The data on specialised inpatient and outpatient care are taken from the NBHW's patient register. The applicable legislation does not allow the NBHW to process primary care data at the individual level. The Agency also judges that it should not process data at the group level in privately-provided primary care either. Collection was therefore conducted in the form of a questionnaire in which the regions report statistics on the number of patients and doctor visits in publicly-provided primary care.

The statistics from the patient register include episodes of inpatient care and doctor visits in specialised outpatient care provided both privately and publicly. In the fact sheet, the term *care contacts* is used as a collective term for doctor visits and episodes of care. It is likely that there are patients who were diagnosed with post COVID-19 condition in primary care and then referred to specialised care, or vice versa. As the NBHW does not have access to individual data for primary care, it is not possible to determine which primary care patients are also included in the statistics from specialised care. For the same reason, it is not possible to calculate the total number of individuals with post COVID-19 condition by adding the number of patients from the primary care data collection and the number of patients identified through the patient register.

The statistics presented in the fact sheet are based on patients and care contacts for which ICD-10 diagnosis code U09.9, Post COVID-19 condition, unspecified, has been registered. The statistics cover the period October 2020 to October 2021. Read more about the use of diagnosis codes in the National Board

of Health and Welfare's previous fact sheet Statistik om tillstånd efter covid-19 i primärvård och specialiserad vård [Statistics on post COVID-19 condition in primary and specialised care] (published 22 June 2021).

The questionnaire asked the regions to indicate the proportion of the total number of doctor visits in primary care that were carried out by public and private providers, respectively. Based on this data, the NBHW then estimated the total number of patients and number of doctor visits in primary care. The number of doctor visits carried out by public providers was increased by a factor corresponding to private primary care's proportion of all doctor visits in the region. The NBHW estimated the total number of patients in a similar manner. The estimates should be interpreted with caution. They are based on the assumption that the reported statistics also reflect the post COVID-19-related care that has not been reported in terms of gender, patient composition, etc. Five regions (Norrbotten, Uppsala, Västernorrland, Västmanland and Östergötland) indicated that care provided by private digital healthcare services have not been included in the reported statistics. The total number of patients and number of doctor visits are therefore probably slightly higher than what is shown by the estimate.

More women than men with post COVID-19 condition

16,019 patients were diagnosed with post COVID-19 condition, unspecified (U09.9) in publicly-provided primary care up to 31 October 2021 (see Table 1). 5,710 patients were diagnosed with post COVID-19 in specialised care.

Table 1. Number of patients with diagnosis code U09.9, Post COVID-19 condition, unspecified, from primary care (reported and weighted) and specialised care, women and men

	Total		Men		Women	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Public primary care – reported data*						
Total	16,019		6,108		9,911	
aged 0–17	215	1%	110	2%	105	1%
aged 18–69	14,890	93%	5,558	91%	9,332	94%
aged 70+	914	6%	440	7%	474	5%
All primary care – estimated data**						
Total	29,861		11,424		18,437	
Specialised care						
Total	5,710		2,783		2,927	
aged 0–17	270	5%	119	4%	151	5%
aged 18–69	4,358	76%	2,043	73%	2,315	79%
aged 70+	1,082	19%	621	22%	461	16%

* Data reported from the regions, public care Gotland and Västmanland reported both public and private care.

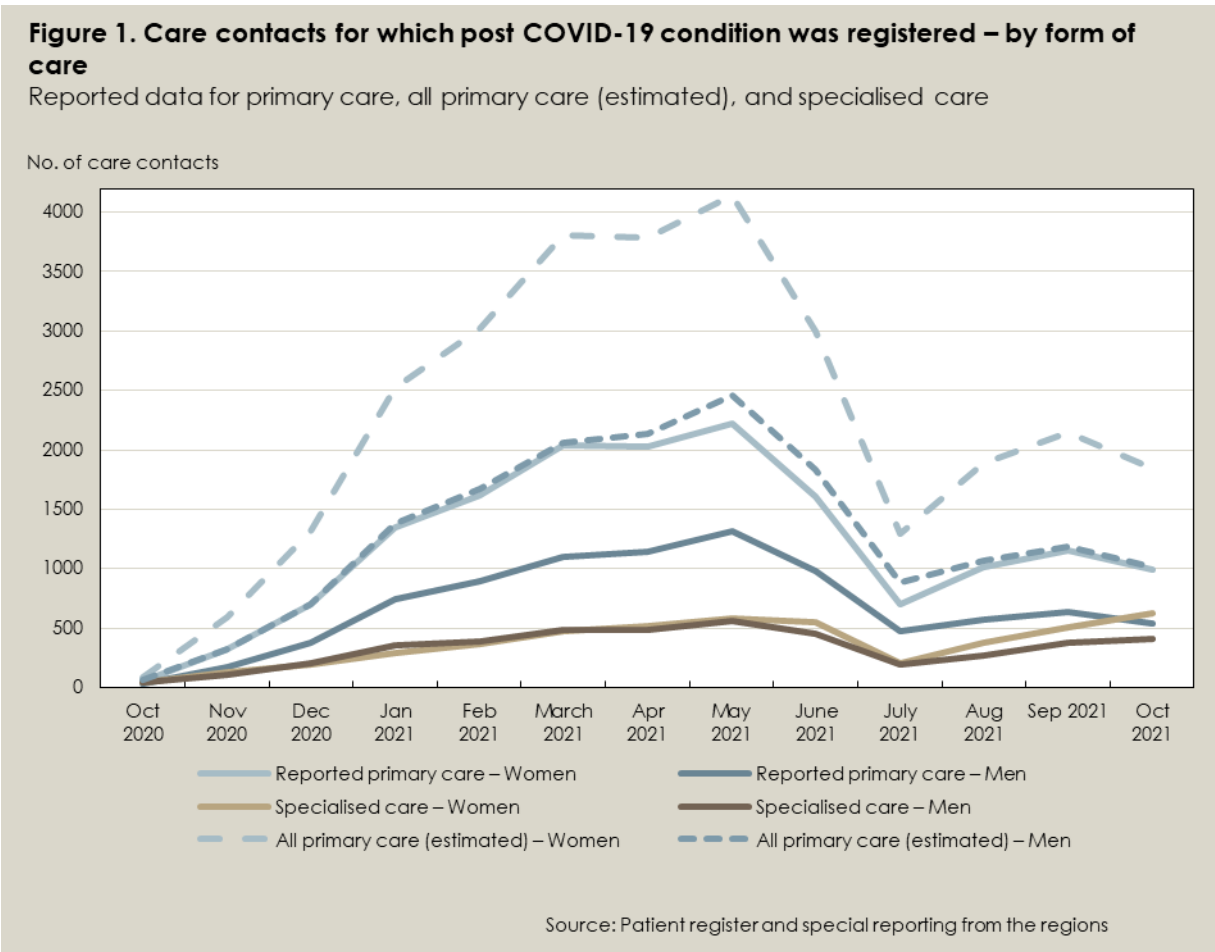
** The estimated data were calculated by increasing the number of unique patients with post COVID-19 condition in public primary care by a factor corresponding to the proportion of all doctor visits in the region provided in private care.

Of the patients with post COVID-19 condition in primary care, 9,911 (62 percent) were women. There was a more even gender distribution in specialised care, with 52 percent (2,927 patients) women. In primary care, one percent of the patients were under 18 years of age, and five percent were aged 70 or older. In specialised care, these age groups accounted for five and 19 percent, respectively. There were more women than men in all age groups, except among patients aged 70 and older. This was true in both primary care and specialised care. Seven percent of men in primary care, compared to five percent of women, were in this age group. The corresponding figures for specialised care were 22 percent men and 16 percent women.

Using the calculations described under the heading About the statistics, the NBHW estimates that 29,861 patients (11,424 men and 18,437 women) were diagnosed with post COVID-19 condition in primary care. However, this number cannot be added to the 5,710 patients diagnosed in specialised care due to the unknown overlap of patients between the forms of care.

Highest number of care contacts in May 2021

The number of care contacts in which the diagnosis post COVID-19 condition was registered increased steadily between the introduction of the diagnosis in mid-October 2020 and May 2021 (Figure 1). In May 2021, when the number of visits per month was at its highest, 3,541 doctor visits were registered in public primary care. Estimating all primary care, including that provided privately, there were approximately 6,600 doctor visits with the diagnosis in question during the same month. The number of care contacts with post COVID-19 patients decreased in June and July 2021, and then increased slightly in August and September. The statistics show a slight decrease in the number of doctor visits in primary care in October, while the number of care contacts in specialised care continued to increase cautiously.

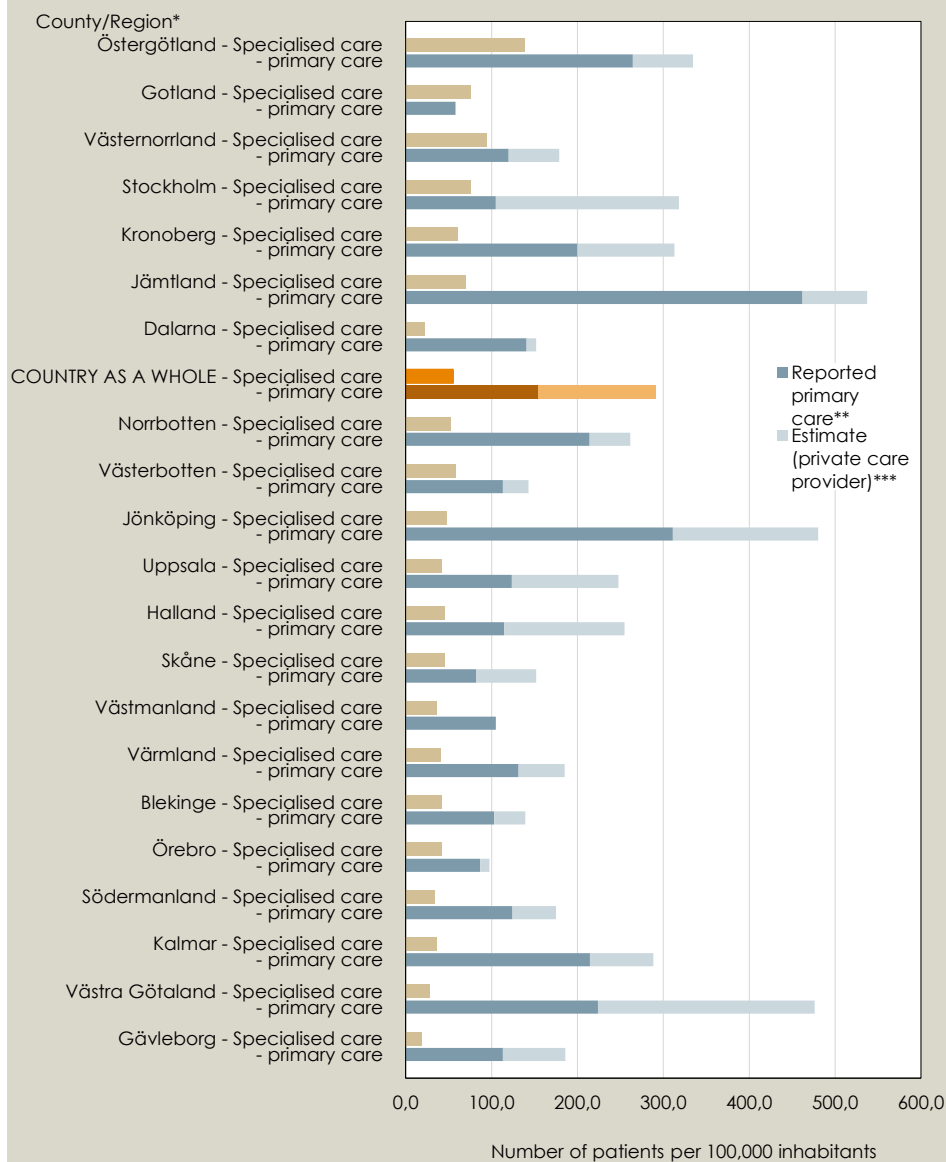


* The estimated values were calculated by increasing the number of doctor visits with post COVID-19 condition in public primary care by a factor corresponding to the proportion of all doctor visits in the region provided in private care.

Post COVID-19 condition by region

Figure 2 shows the number of patients per 100,000 inhabitants diagnosed with post COVID-19 condition in specialised care and primary care, respectively, in the regions of the country. The figure for the country as a whole was approximately 154 patients per 100,000 inhabitants in primary care (estimated 291 patients in total, including private care) and 55 patients per 100,000 inhabitants in specialised care.

Figure 2. Patients with post COVID-19 condition by region and form of care, October 2020–October 2021. Number per 100,000 inhabitants



*) Specialised care by the patient's home county, primary care by region in which the care was provided. Per 100,000 inhabitants in the county, 31 December 2020.

**) Gotland and Västmanland reported both public and private care.

***) The estimate is based on the proportion of primary care in the region carried out by a private care provider

Source: Patient register and special collection of statistics from the regions

Number of care contacts per patient

During the study period, public primary care registered a total of 24,798 doctor visits (Table 2) for patients diagnosed with post COVID-19 condition. The estimated number of doctor visits for all primary care (including private care) was 46,226. This means that each patient had an average of 1.6 doctor visits. There

were 9,246 care contacts in specialised care, corresponding to 1.6 care contacts per patient. For women, there were 1.6 doctor visits per patient in primary care and 1.7 care contacts in specialised care. For men, the corresponding number of visits/contacts was 1.5 and 1.6, respectively.

Table 2. Number of care contacts and number of care contacts per patient for post COVID-19 patients.

	Total		Men		Women	
	No.	No./patient	No.	No./patient	No.	No./patient
Primary care – reported data						
No. of doctor visits	24,798	1.6	8,997	1.5	15,801	1.6
Primary care – estimated data*						
No. of doctor visits	46,226	1.6	17,626	1.5	28,600	1.6
Specialised care						
Number of care contacts	9,246	1.6	4,364	1.6	4882	1.7

* The estimated data were calculated by increasing the number of doctor visits with post COVID-19 condition in public primary care by a factor corresponding to the proportion of all primary care doctor visits in the region provided in private care.

Various symptoms and ailments of post COVID-19 condition

In both primary and specialised care, the most common diagnoses according to the ICD-10 classification system, given together with the additional code U09.9 (Post COVID-19 condition, unspecified) fell within category R, *Symptoms, signs and abnormal clinical and laboratory findings, not elsewhere classified*. Approximately 28 percent of the diagnoses in public primary care and 34 percent of the diagnoses in specialised care fell within category R. This category includes many different symptoms and ailments, but the most common were R00-R09 *Symptoms and signs involving the circulatory and respiratory systems* and R50-R69 *General symptoms and signs*. Other common symptoms and ailments in COVID patients in primary care fell within category F *Mental and behavioural disorders* and category I *Diseases of the circulatory system in primary care*. The corresponding categories for specialised care were category I *Diseases of the circulatory system* and category J *Diseases of the respiratory system*.

More information

- Statistics on post COVID-19 condition (updated on the second Wednesday of each month): <https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/statistik-och-data/statistik/statistik-om-covid-19/>
- Statistics on post COVID-19 condition in primary care and specialised care (fact sheet): <https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/globalassets/sharepoint-dokument/artikelkatalog/statistik/2021-6-7495.pdf>
- Statistics on post COVID-19 condition (fact sheet): <https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/globalassets/sharepoint-dokument/artikelkatalog/ovrigt/2021-4-7353.pdf>
- Information on coding of COVID-19: <https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/utveckla-verksamhet/e-halsa/klassificering-och-koder/icd-10/>
- Statistics on COVID-19: <https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/statistik-och-data/statistik/statistik-om-covid-19/>
- Patient register: <https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/statistik-och-data/register/alla-register/patientregistret/>
- Post COVID-19 condition – support to decision-makers and healthcare professionals –
 - part 1: <https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/globalassets/sharepoint-dokument/artikelkatalog/ovrigt/2021-3-7276.pdf>
 - part 2: <https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/globalassets/sharepoint-dokument/artikelkatalog/ovrigt/2021-4-7351.pdf>
 - part 3: <https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/globalassets/sharepoint-doku->

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