



VCS Emergencies
Partnership

VCS EP Pulse Check

Week of 07 December 2020

Results published 16 December 2020

Summary

- 29% of respondents in the North and 17% in Midlands & East reported significant or major **concerns about unmet needs** in their area in the 7 days prior to data collection
- **Mental health, hardship** and **food** were the most frequently mentioned unmet need in the 7 days prior to data collection
- 19% of respondents reported significant or major concerns about the **capacity** of the voluntary sector to respond to local needs in the 7 days prior to data collection
- **Sustainability** and **demand** were the most frequently mentioned issues affecting voluntary sector capacity in the 7 days prior to data collection

About this survey

This survey was conducted between 07 December – 11 December 2020. Of 198 organisations surveyed, 148 responses were received – a response rate of 75%.

Respondents were asked to provide a high-level assessment of unmet needs and voluntary sector capacity in the past 7 days and an indication of priorities in the following 14 days.

Respondents were asked for a general assessment based on existing knowledge of local conditions; responses should be interpreted as a rough indication of where gaps exist.

With this in mind, survey results should be used to highlight areas for further exploration and engagement rather than as a definitive picture of unmet needs in England.

Responses are grouped by VCS EP multi-agency cell (*see map on p.6*).

Contact: vcsep_im@redcross.org.uk

Concerns about the level of unmet needs in your area in the last 7 days?

	No concerns	Slight concerns	Significant concerns	Major concerns	Not sure
North	11%	57%	26%	3%	3%
Midlands & East	25%	58%	15%	2%	0%
London	0%	65%	30%	0%	5%
South East	16%	72%	8%	0%	4%
South West	5%	75%	10%	0%	10%
England	14%	64%	18%	1%	3%

Areas with major concerns flagged over unmet needs

North
- Lancashire

Midlands & East
- Cambridgeshire

Figures are rounded and may exceed 100% in total

Most frequently mentioned needs concerns in the 7 days prior to data collection:

- 1. MENTAL HEALTH**
- 2. HARDSHIP**
- 3. FOOD**
- 4. HEALTH**
- 5. CAPACITY/SU SAINABILITY**

* Percentage of respondents mentioning each issue in open text answers

Concerns about the capacity of the voluntary sector in your area in the last 7 days?

	No concerns	Slight concerns	Significant concerns	Major concerns	Not sure
North	14%	51%	31%	0%	4%
Midlands & East	27%	52%	19%	2%	0%
London	5%	75%	15%	0%	5%
South East	20%	68%	4%	4%	4%
South West	0%	67%	25%	0%	8%
England	18%	59%	18%	1%	4%

Areas with major concerns flagged over voluntary sector capacity

Midlands & East
- Nottinghamshire

South East
- Kent

Figures are rounded and may exceed 100% in total

Most frequently mentioned capacity concerns in the 7 days prior to data collection:

1. SUSTAINABILITY
2. DEMAND
3. FUNDING
4. VOLUNTEERS
5. FOOD

* Percentage of respondents mentioning each issue in open text answers

Priority concerns in your area in the next 14 days?

**MENTAL
HEALTH**

84%

**HARDSHIP &
FINANCIAL
SUPPORT**

72%

FOOD

47%

DIGITAL DIVIDE

23%

People are already struggling with financial hardship and this will be heightened over the Christmas break when many services may not be open due to shortage of volunteers and the need for paid staff to have a break. Everyone is exhausted.

As the hospital numbers increase, there is growing concern over those being discharged who may not be quite ready and the level of support they have once they are discharged.

People that have never accessed advice services or food banks are now making the majority of new service users. Continued rise in unemployment is now starting to be felt.

Closures of venues is now starting to have damaging impact on incomes of sporting organisations. Groups have reported that the closure of the gym their group uses has meant loss of income for themselves. They are having to continue to pay rent to the gym despite not using the facilities. They are having to dip into their reserves to pay invoices.

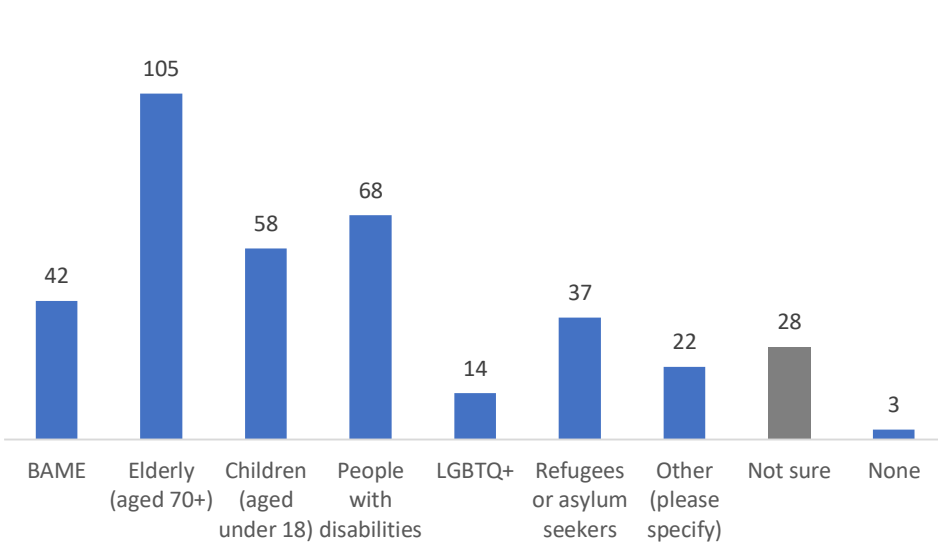
As the weather worsens we are expecting more requests with fuel poverty leading to more hardship.

There are growing concerns for the mental health of frontline third sector workers who have been working 'beyond capacity' for an unsustainable amount of time.

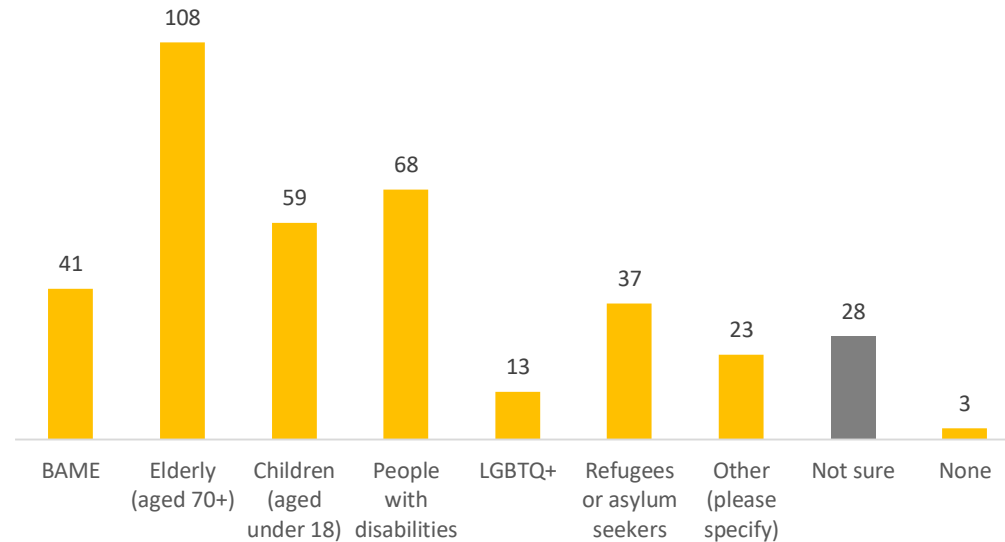
* Percentage of total respondents that answered this as one of the top three sectors of concern in the next 14 days. The list available to select from was: food, housing/temporary accommodation, mental health, healthcare, hardship & financial support, protection & safeguarding, employment advice & support, IT access/digital divide, fuel poverty, other, none, not sure.

Vulnerable populations

In the last 7 days, do you think any of these populations groups were in particular need of support?



In the next 14 days, do you think any of these population groups will be in particular need of support?



Other groups mentioned:

- Homeless
- Isolated and living alone
- Migrant workers
- Carers
- Financial hardship
- Isolated people in rural communities
- Clinically extremely vulnerable
- Single adult families
- Those who are shielding
- Those with no recourse to public funds
- Refugees/asylum seekers

With Christmas approaching people are struggling to provide for their children.

People who are most disadvantaged are experiencing multiple layers of challenges due to COVID.

Requests for support

Status of open requests for support as of 14 December



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VCS EP open requests for support as of 14 December

By category:

Transportation & delivery	2
Personal protective equipment	2
Funding advice	2
Guidance	1
Specialist training	1
Mental health or well-being	1
Volunteers	12
Other	6

By region:

Midlands & East	2
London	5
North	1
South East	6
South West	3

RE:ACT unmet needs requests in 30 days to 14 December*

By category:

Food	0
Mortuary	1
Testing	0
Welfare	0
Strategic planning & analysis	2
Vaccinations	1

By region:

North	0
Midlands & East	0
South East	2
South West	2
London	0

* Requests from England only