

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND ACADEMIC SCIENCE IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH

Background

To assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the research workforce and identify the potential implications for the diversity of the biomedical workforce, the NIH Chief Officer for Scientific Workforce Diversity (COSWD) developed and fielded the **NIH COVID-19 Impact on Extramural Researchers Survey** in October 2020.

Population

This fact sheet focuses on the impact of the pandemic on mental health among members of the scientific workforce.

Response Rate

Overall, **45,348 of 234,254 invited researchers responded** to the survey (19% response rate). Respondents included principal investigators, trainees, sponsors, undergraduate students, graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, scientists, and project personnel.

Results

- **Mental health** was negatively impacted by both societal/political events and physical/social isolation for more than two-thirds of respondents (**69%** and **66%**, respectively; Figures 1 and 2). Respondents also frequently cited disruption of promotion/tenure timeline (**38%**; Figure 3) as a factor negatively impacting their mental health.
- **Nearly half** of respondents reported that pandemic-related changes in their personal mental health and/or physical health had a substantial effect on their productivity since the pandemic began.

Where Do We Go From Here?

- NIH will continue to analyze these data and share findings with the extramural research community.
- NIH intends to use these and other data as they become available to maintain its focus on evidence-based actions that foster inclusive excellence within the scientific workforce, to better support the health of our entire population.

Figure 1. Impact of Societal/Political Events on Mental Health
(n = 41,364)

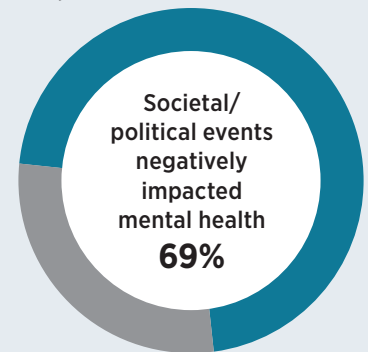


Figure 2. Impact of Physical/Social Isolation on Mental Health
(n = 41,429)

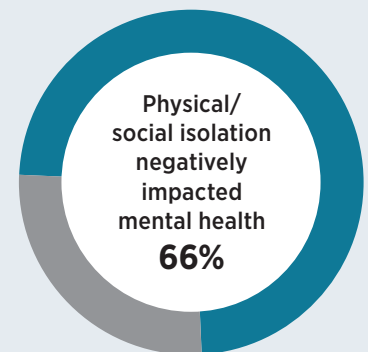


Figure 3. Impact of Disrupted Promotion/Tenure Timeline on Mental Health
(n = 41,447)

