

Over 45,000 heart procedures were missed due to the COVID-19 pandemic

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The COVID-19 lockdown led to more than 45,000 cardiac procedures being missed this year, which could have a long-term impact on mortality rates as healthcare providers work to catch up.

Researchers from Keele University's Cardiovascular Research Group, led by Professor Mamas Mamas, have said that the deficit could have a significant effect on long-term morbidity and [mortality rates](#), with major restructuring of cardiac services being required to deal with the missed cases.

Professor Mamas and his colleagues analyzed the numbers of major cardiac procedures performed in England between January 1st and May 31st for the years 2018 and 2019 (pre-COVID) and compared them with figures for the same period in 2020 (the COVID period).

Their analysis found that there was a deficit of 45,501 procedures during the COVID period compared to the monthly averages for March to May in 2018 and 2019, with cardiac catheterisation

and device implantations being the most affected procedures in terms of reduced numbers.

In addition to the deficit in treatments being carried out, [death rates](#) for the procedures which were performed during the pandemic—cardiac catheterisation and cardiac device implantation—were higher compared to pre-COVID times. Professor Mamas said the reasons for this are unclear, but it may relate to only the more complex, higher risk procedures being undertaken during the pandemic.

However, the researchers argue that to deal with the shortfall in treatments which has arisen due to the pandemic, a major restructure of cardiac healthcare services is required to clear the backlog, a measure which Professor Mamas said would inevitably impact long-term morbidity and mortality statistics.

Professor Mamas said: "This reduction in [cardiac procedures](#) will have significant implications for longer-term patient quality of life, cardiac events, and [mortality](#), as many of these procedures are time-sensitive. Our [policy makers](#) need to think how to restructure healthcare delivery to meet the challenges of the pandemic and minimize the impact on our ability to deliver cardiac care nationally."

More information: Mohamed O Mohamed et al. Impact of COVID-19 on cardiac procedure activity in England and associated 30-day mortality, *European Heart Journal - Quality of Care and Clinical Outcomes* (2020). DOI: [10.1093/ehjccco/qcaa079](https://doi.org/10.1093/ehjccco/qcaa079)

Provided by Keele University

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