



COVID-19 and access to services - people living with dementia

Dementia is an overall term for diseases and conditions characterised by a decline in memory, language, problem-solving and other thinking skills that affect a person's ability to perform everyday activities.

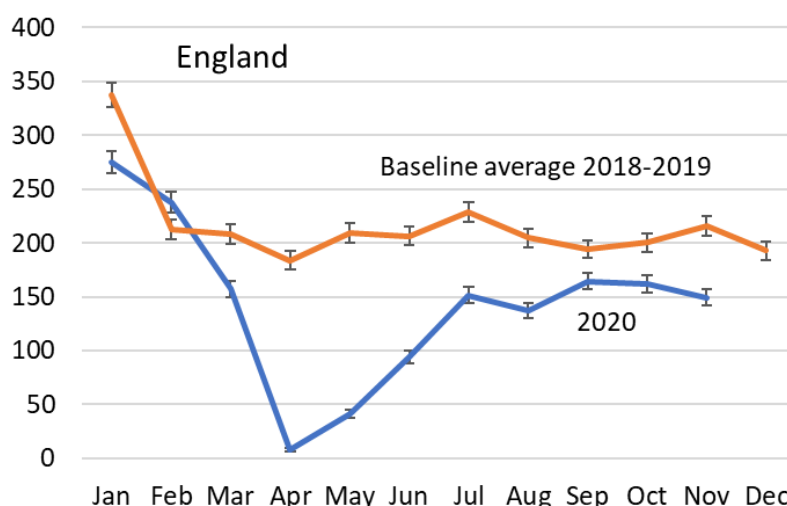
Nationally, GP data shows that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on referrals by GPs to memory clinics for dementia assessment.

The rate of referrals fell in February 2020, and again in March and (more steeply) in April 2020, during time of the first national lockdown.

By September and October 2020, rates had recovered, but remained around 15% below the average for the 2018-19 baseline.

Data for November shows another drop as the second national lockdown started (from 5 Nov20).

Dementia and Alzheimer's disease record of a referral to a memory clinic (aged 65 years and over) per 1,000,000



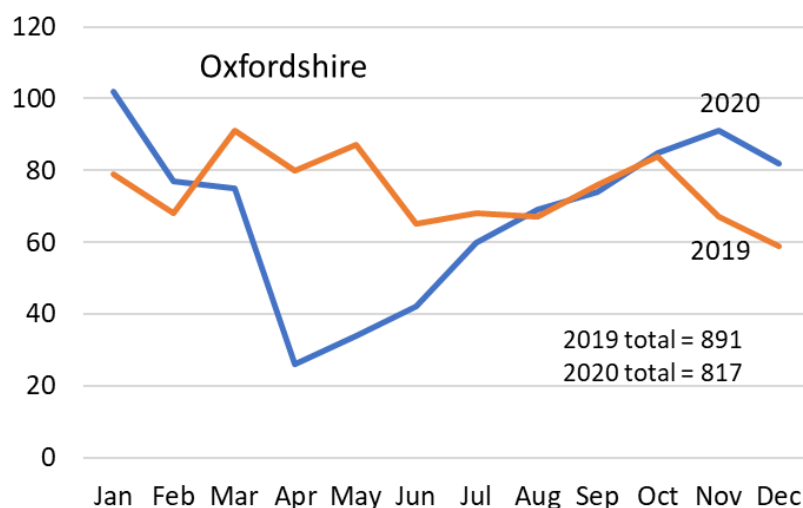
Analysis using the monthly dementia Quality Outcomes Framework (QOF) dataset. Baseline comparison with the mean monthly rate over 2 calendar years 2018 and 2019. From [Wider Impacts of COVID-19 \(phe.gov.uk\)](https://www.phe.gov.uk/publications/wider-impacts-of-covid-19)

The Dementia Oxfordshire service, which mainly takes referrals from memory clinics and GPs, also saw a big drop in referrals in April 2020. These have since recovered and were above the 2019 numbers in November and December 2020.

The total number of referrals in 2020 was around 8% below 2019.

Note that, due to the difficulty in diagnosing during Covid-19, Dementia Oxfordshire now take referrals for Mild Cognitive Impairment from GPs and the Memory Clinics where the clinician thinks a dementia diagnosis is likely to follow.

Count of referrals to Dementia Oxfordshire



Data from [Dementia Oxfordshire](https://www.dementia-oxfordshire.org.uk)

Finding out more: [Dementia profile for Oxfordshire](https://www.dementia-oxfordshire.org.uk)

We welcome your comments, please email jsna@oxfordshire.gov.uk