

Supporting Healthcare Heroes UK Strategy 2026–2028

Our Mission

Supporting Healthcare Heroes UK (SHH-UK) empowers healthcare workers living with Long Covid by:

- + Providing peer support and evidence-based information
- + Influencing policy and practice to make workplaces safer and fairer

We stand with the healthcare heroes who cared for others - now we care for them.

What This Means In Practice

By the end of 2028, SHH-UK will deliver:

- + Accessible, high-quality resources via the SHH-UK Resources page
- + Facilitated support groups
- + A clear assessment of the needs of healthcare workers with Long Covid
- + A proposed guideline for Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) standards for healthcare settings
- + Evidence of working with partner organisations, agencies, and key stakeholders to advocate for updates to the National Infection Prevention and Control Manual to reflect the airborne transmission of COVID-19

How We Will Do This

Priority 1: Peer Support and Information

Aim: Ensure healthcare workers affected by Long Covid have access to trusted, evidence-based information and safe peer support.

Action: Information and Resources

- + Maintain and expand SHH-UK's Resources page covering:
 - + Living with Long Covid and accessing financial support
 - + Work and Long Covid
 - + Prevention of reinfection
 - + Long Covid stories – the stories of healthcare workers with Long Covid
 - + Research summaries
- + Produce clear, accessible summaries of evidence and policy developments
- + Maintain high-quality, regularly reviewed content

Action: Peer Support

- + Deliver a range of moderated online support groups for healthcare workers with Long Covid
- + Provide training, support, and governance for volunteers
- + Maintain safeguarding, confidentiality, and escalation processes
- + Ensure sustainability and minimise volunteer burnout

Impact

- + Improved wellbeing and reduced isolation and of healthcare workers with Long Covid
- + Increased confidence navigating work, healthcare, and benefits
- + A stronger evidence-base grounded in lived experience

Priority 2. Influencing Policy and Practice

Aim: Drive improvements in healthcare policy and workplace protections, particularly in relation to Long Covid and infection prevention.

Action: Needs of healthcare workers with Long Covid

- + Engage healthcare workers with Long Covid to gather data on experiences and support needs
- + Produce an evidence-based position statement detailing the needs of healthcare workers with Long Covid
- + Deliver coordinated lobbying and engagement to ensure the needs of healthcare workers with Long Covid are met

Impact

- + Clear, evidence-informed policy recommendations
- + Increased visibility of healthcare workers' experiences in decision-making

Action: #SafeAir4All Campaign - Secure recognition of clean indoor air as a core safety standard in healthcare

Workstream 1: Awareness and Understanding

- + Expand resources on airborne transmission, ventilation, Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) monitoring, and Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE)
- + Deliver public and professional communications campaigns
- + Position safe air as equivalent to clean water and safe food

Workstream 2: Data and Evidence

- + Conduct Freedom of Information (FOI) requests across NHS Trusts to assess infection prevention and indoor air quality policies
- + Disseminate the results through accessible reports and briefings to the public, unions and politicians

Workstream 3: Policy Influence

- + Advocate for:
 - + recognition of airborne transmission
 - + access to respiratory protective equipment (RPE) (FFP2/3 or PAPRs)
 - + enforceable IAQ standards Work and Long Covid
- + Engage MPs, professional bodies, unions, and regulators
- + Use data and lived experience to challenge existing guidance

Impact

- + Increased awareness of airborne risk and indoor air quality
- + Robust evidence base linking indoor air quality to workforce safety
- + Policy commitments to improve ventilation, monitoring, and protection

And finally...

In delivering its priorities, SHH-UK will:

- + Centre healthcare workers' experiences in all outputs and decisions
- + Ensure outputs are accessible, inclusive, and evidence-informed
- + Align activities with wider advocacy priorities, including safer healthcare environments
- + Maintain ethical standards in the use of lived experience and research data
- + Build partnerships to increase reach and impact