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SIREN PARTICIPANT NEWSLETTER

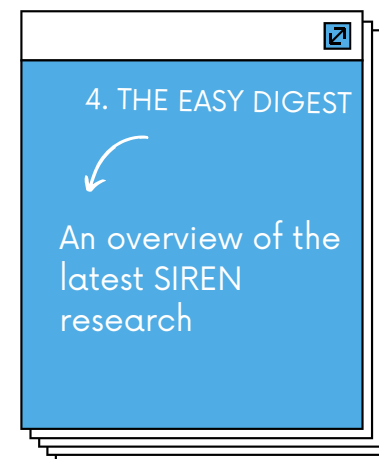
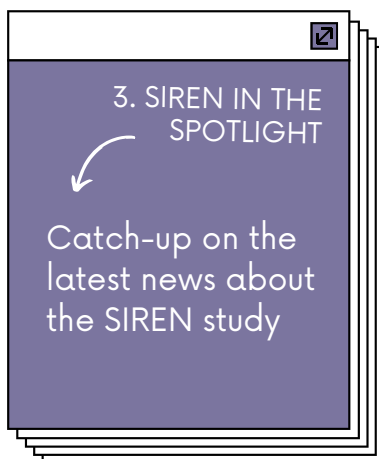
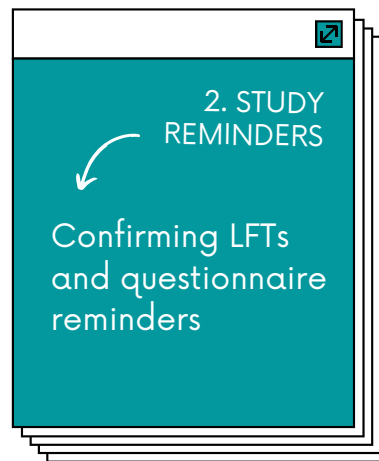
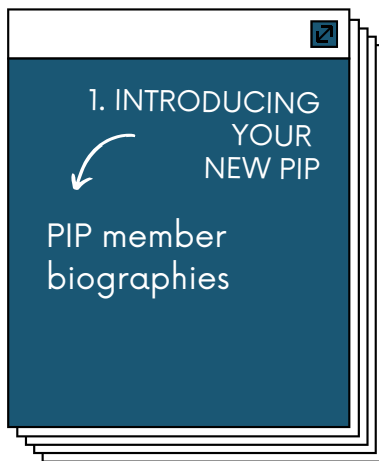
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Dear colleagues,

Welcome to the November issue of the SIREN newsletter! In this issue you will find important updates from the UKHSA SIREN team which we hope you will find helpful. As ever, a huge thank you for your continuing and valuable contribution to the SIREN study - it wouldn't be possible without you.

SIREN is shaped by your feedback and we'd really like to hear from you. If you would like to submit your reflections to be included as a case study in an upcoming issue of the SIREN newsletter, [please fill out our form.](#)

Coming up in this issue...



1. Introducing your new Participant Involvement Panel (PIP)

We are fortunate to have a panel of 10 PIP members representing a range of roles, regions and perspectives in the NHS. PIP members meet on a six-weekly basis to discuss a range of topics relevant to running the SIREN study. Their feedback helps shape and improve the study.

We introduced seven members in the bonus October issue of the SIREN newsletter and introduce the final three members below.

BALENDRA KUMAR

My name is Mr. Balendra Kumar and I am a Breast & General Surgeon from West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Foundation trust. I am also a BMA Eastern regional council elected member and Chair of the Eastern regional SASC committee. I actively support all COVID-19 related research and trials and I am pleased to be a member of the PIP.



ASMAH HASSAN SYED

My name is Asmah Hassan Syed. I am a respiratory trainee in the East of England.

I am looking forward to being part of the PIP and sharing my experience, as well as helping to direct future research.

The impact COVID-19 has had emotionally cannot be expressed in words and I feel qualitative research alongside quantitative research is of paramount importance.

I also feel more work needs to be done with particular communities to ensure COVID-19 booster uptake rates are maintained. A lot of trust is placed in medical professionals and I feel empowered to be able to deliver accurate and informative information to the public.

GLORIA A.A LAMPTEY

My name is Gloria A.A Lamptey. I am currently a Diabetes/Vascular Specialist Nurse and have been for 18 years. Previously I have been a Nephrology and a Practice Nurse.

I saw what happened to people with diabetes during the pandemic. I joined the SIREN for interest as soon as my site was included in the study and also because ethnic minorities were mainly overwhelmed with COVID-19.

I also had COVID-19 the first time with my whole family and encouraged staff to join. It would be interesting to see how this pans out and I am very happy to be part of the group.

Also introducing...

ERIKA AQUINO

Erika Aquino is the Public Engagement Manager at the British Society for Immunology (BSI). BSI are part of the SIREN Consortium with expertise in participant research engagement, and they organise and facilitate the PIP.

Erika works to engage the public to spark interest in and strengthen understanding of immunology through implementing the BSI's public engagement strategy.



Whilst previously working at Breast Cancer Now, Erika involved patients in co-creating improvements in NHS breast cancer services, collaborating closely with healthcare professionals.

Within the SIREN PIP, Erika supports PIP members to enable meaningful involvement, co-chair the meetings to assist the smooth running of the panel and champion the vital role the PIP and SIREN participants have on the study.



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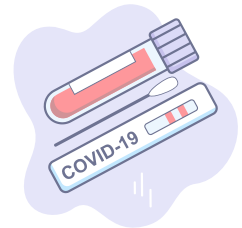
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2. Study reminders



A new postal swab system for positive LFT results



The new system is live for SIREN participant in England, Scotland and Wales!

This new system does not apply to participants based at Northern Ireland sites who will continue to use existing processes in place.

[Click here to read our participant information leaflet about the new system.](#)

If you have any questions, please contact your research team or get in touch with the UKSHA SIREN team via email.

SIREN
SARS-CoV2 Immunity & Reinfection Evaluation

INTRODUCING THE POSTAL SWAB SYSTEM FOR POSITIVE LFT RESULTS

What?
The SIREN study has developed a new system to post participants a PCR swab once we are notified of a positive LFT result.

Why?
Thanks to your feedback we know that SIREN participants are finding it challenging to access PCR tests following a positive LFT result.
After the time and commitment you have dedicated to the study we are keen to ensure all of your results are captured and contribute to the ongoing analysis.
This new system will make sure your efforts don't go to waste.

How?
1. You receive a positive LFT result and fill in the super speedy LFT survey: [click here](#)
2. We review your result and if you meet the criteria for testing we post you a PCR swab
3. You swab at home and post it back to us
• Postage is FREE.
• You can drop the swab off at any postbox
4. You will be notified of the result via your organisation

Who?
All SIREN sites in England, Scotland and Wales have been invited to participate in this new system. SIREN sites in Northern Ireland will continue to use their existing system.

When?
The new system will go live on Monday 7th November 2022. If you receive a positive LFT result on this date or afterwards, please follow the steps outlined in the "How" section above.

And finally!
This is a new system in addition to your regular fortnightly PCR tests. Please keep attending your regular fortnightly PCR tests. These results have led to ground-breaking scientific discovery and policy change and will continue to do so this winter.



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Symptom durability and severity questionnaire

What is it?

A **one-off questionnaire** for participants who have previously tested positive for COVID-19. Participants were asked questions about how long their symptoms lasted, how their daily activities were impacted and whether they required any medical treatment.

Update:

A huge thank you to everyone who responded! We **received over 6,500 responses** and we will let you know the results of our analysis in due course.

THANK YOU!



Enhanced clinical history questionnaire

What is it?

A **one-off questionnaire for all SIREN participants**. Participants will be asked questions about any medical conditions they have, past episodes of illness and their vaccine history.

The questionnaire will also include a section for feedback on the SIREN study so participants can have their say on what works well and what needs to change.

Update:

The questionnaire is now **LIVE!** We have received over 5,000 responses to date but there's still time to respond - the questionnaire **closes on 28 November 2022** and we will send out a reminder in advance.

If you haven't already, please do consider responding. We want to understand how your clinical history may affect your risk of COVID-19 - this could help with things like vaccine prioritisation in the future and increase our understanding of how the virus works.



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3. SIREN in the spotlight

Catch-up on the latest from the [#SIRENstudy](#) on Twitter below.

Barbara Molony-Oates She/Her
@BarbaraMolony

Never underestimate the power of a badge!
(#BluePeter) thank you [#SIRENstudy](#) for thanking me!!
Proud to have been a part of this groundbreaking study
[@UKCovidVaxHub](#) [@britsocimm](#) [@alhowells1](#)
[@Erika_Aqu1no](#)



Victoria_jhall
@victoria_jhall

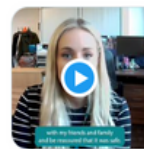
(1/5) We are excited to launch our 3-part video series to showcase the [#SIRENstudy](#)!

We're keen to make our research as accessible as possible, and this includes sharing more about what we do through our videos.

[#AccessibleResearch](#) [@IKHSA](#) [@SMHopkins](#)

BHT Research & Innovation
@BHTResearch

What do [#SIRENstudy](#) participants from across the NHS think about it? [#whywedoresearch](#)
[@BucksHealthcare](#) [@victoria_jhall](#) [@SMHopkins](#)
[@NIHRCRN_tvsm](#)



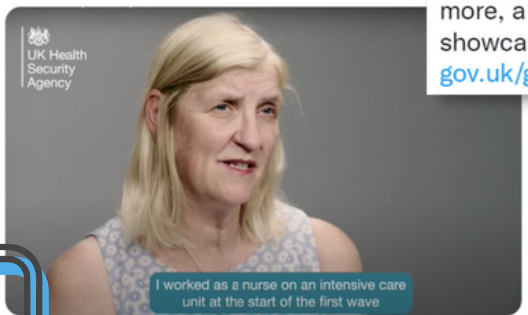
PAHT Research & Development
@PAHResearch

PAHT R&D are proud to share this video from the Siren Study Team - thank you to all participants who have played a critical role in the response to the national pandemic [@victoria_jhall](#) [@SMHopkins](#) [#SIRENstudy](#)
youtu.be/7eKaX4LFjYc via [@YouTube](#)

UK Covid Vaccine Research Hub [@UKCovidVaxHub](#) · Nov 15
ICYMI [@UKHSA](#) recently released three short films about the [#SIRENstudy](#), featuring some of the researchers and participants who made the study possible.

SIREN continues to answer important questions about immunity [#COVID](#).

Watch all three films here
gov.uk/guidance/siren...



Research and Innovation Team BCHFT
@bchft_research

One of the incredible research studies we deliver at BCHFT is the [#SIRENstudy](#). If you would like to hear more, a 3-part series of videos have been developed to showcase the study – these videos can be found at: gov.uk/guidance/siren... [@victoria_jhall](#) [@SMHopkins](#)

youtube.com
The SIREN Study: Hear from our participants
The SARS-CoV2 immunity and reinfection evaluation (SIREN) study is a unique, large-scale partnership with NHS ...

InfectionPrevention
@SHIPGCU

1. [@UKHSA](#) has just released 3 new videos about [#SIRENStudy](#) on the study website

gov.uk
SIREN study
Providing vital research into coronavirus (COVID-19) immunity and vaccine effectiveness nationally.





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4. The Easy Digest

Got 5 minutes?

We have put together a summary of the latest SIREN research paper:

WE WANTED TO KNOW
Did differences in antibodies make people less likely to get reinfected with COVID-19?

WE TESTED
Over 1000 swab and blood samples at 3 different laboratories

WE COMPARED
Antibody levels in SIREN participants who got re-infected and those who didn't

ANSWER: YES!
People who got reinfected had lower Anti-S, LV-N and PV-N antibodies

SO WHAT?
This helps understand COVID-19 immunity and may help vaccine boosters

THANK YOU!
Thanks to all SIREN participants for making this possible

Anti S ↓
LV-N ↓
PV-N ↓

Key messages:

- The study investigated how antibodies can protect people against different COVID-19 variants, before vaccination.
- We were able to identify different ranges of protection offered by different types of antibodies against COVID-19.
- This may be a useful tool for ongoing vaccine development, tests of immune protection, and new treatments.

Got 5 more minutes?

Read on for our extended summary of the paper.



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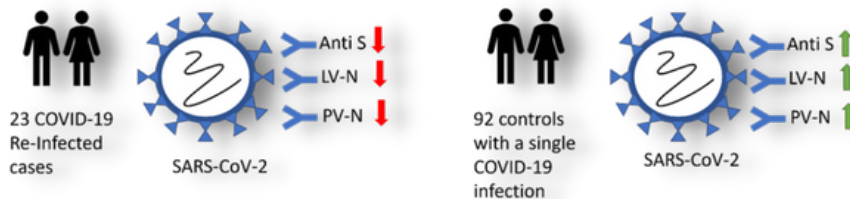
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Research questions:

- How effective are different antibodies at preventing COVID-19?
- Can we find so-called 'correlates of protection' of different antibodies? These are levels of antibody required to prevent COVID-19.
- Is there a difference between different types of antibodies when considering protection against COVID-19?
- How much protection do the antibodies produced after a first COVID-19 infection offer against other variants?

Who participated in the study?

- We analysed blood samples from selected SIREN participants across the UK who have had a COVID-19 reinfection (cases) and others who have had only a single infection (controls).



What are the main findings?

- Before vaccination, participants who had higher levels of anti-S antibodies, LV-N and PV-N levels, specific to Alpha and Wuhan variants, had lower risk of infection with COVID-19.
- Anti-nucleocapsid (anti-N) levels were not associated with protection against COVID-19.
- We identified a quantifiable range of antibody levels that were associated with protection against COVID-19 in the study population, although this might not be applicable at an individual level.
- **Neutralising antibodies are critical in immunity against COVID-19. Previous infection can offer some level of protection against future variants.**



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Why is this significant?

- It demonstrates that quantifiable ranges of antibody levels can offer valuable information on protection against COVID-19 variants.
- It reinforces that neutralising antibodies are key to immunity.
- It shows the unique importance of the SIREN cohort, and the value of being able to study early reinfections in the pandemic. This may be useful for ongoing vaccine and booster development and population COVID-19 management.

“This study addressed one of SIREN’s main questions and demonstrated that high antibody titres acquired from a first infection can prevent reinfection. These findings, which resulted from a successful collaboration between different partners, reiterate the importance of a robust immune response and are particularly relevant to vaccine development.”

Dr Ana Atti, UKHSA SIREN Team



What next?

“We are working on future studies to look at protective levels of antibodies after vaccination and evaluate if there are different antibody responses for new variants.

SIREN participants are a unique cohort, established early in the pandemic. They made this study possible with regular swabs and blood tests, which will help the population’s health.”

Victoria Hall, UKHSA SIREN Study Lead

Read the full article:

