



UK Health
Security
Agency

SIREN PARTICIPANT NEWSLETTER

24 MARCH 2023

Dear colleagues,

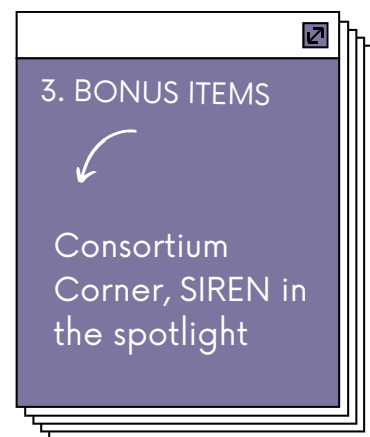
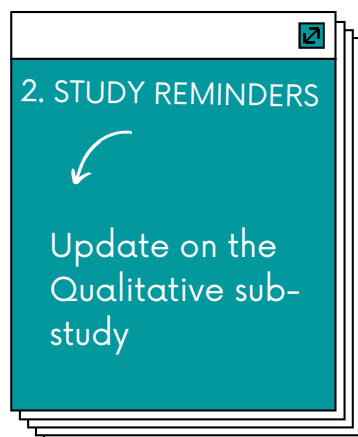
Welcome to the March issue of the SIREN newsletter! After almost three years SIREN has grown into an **impressive and active community** of healthcare workers, NHS organisations, academic researchers, and national public health bodies. **Thank you for being part of this ongoing community** which was set-up during the most challenging and uncertain of times.

The value of a study that follows a cohort of healthcare workers cannot be underestimated. You have been at the forefront of the COVID-19 pandemic response, and the data you have provided has enabled us to:

- Investigate the durability of immunity against COVID-19 infection following previous infection and vaccination
- Monitor reinfections and vaccine breakthroughs through successive variant waves
- Collaborate with academic partners to provide authoritative and timely analyses, including a role in national surveillance
- Examine the impact of COVID-19 and additional respiratory viruses on illness and staff absence in healthcare workers, in addition to the protection offered by seasonal flu vaccines, through the rapid roll out of the Flu and Winter Pressures sub-study

The volume and quality of data you have provided means that SIREN is of huge scientific value, and an incredible resource to continue answering questions about COVID-19. This month we would like to provide an update on our anticipated plans for the future of SIREN.

Coming up in this issue...





UK Health
Security
Agency

SIREN PARTICIPANT NEWSLETTER

24 MARCH 2023

1. Announcements

A) Next steps for SIREN beyond April 2023

We are currently waiting on funding confirmation for the next financial year. This means that **there will be a pause in PCR testing and serology from 1 April 2023** while we scope out next options for the study going forwards. We are actively working to establish potential testing pathways and **hope to keep this pause as short as possible.**



We will be in touch with participants who are still undergoing active testing shortly, to confirm this pause.

During this pause in data collection we will continue with our regular communications and engagement

activities for all participants, including the newsletter and upcoming video interviews with the SIREN team.

SIREN will continue to offer **important scientific value to the public health and research community** going forwards, for COVID-19 and beyond. We are **actively scoping future testing arrangements and ongoing study activity.**

We understand this is a challenging time for the study and **thank you again for your patience.** We are extremely eager to provide confirmed next steps with you all and we will **provide a further update as soon as possible.**



UK Health
Security
Agency

SIREN PARTICIPANT NEWSLETTER

24 MARCH 2023

1. Announcements

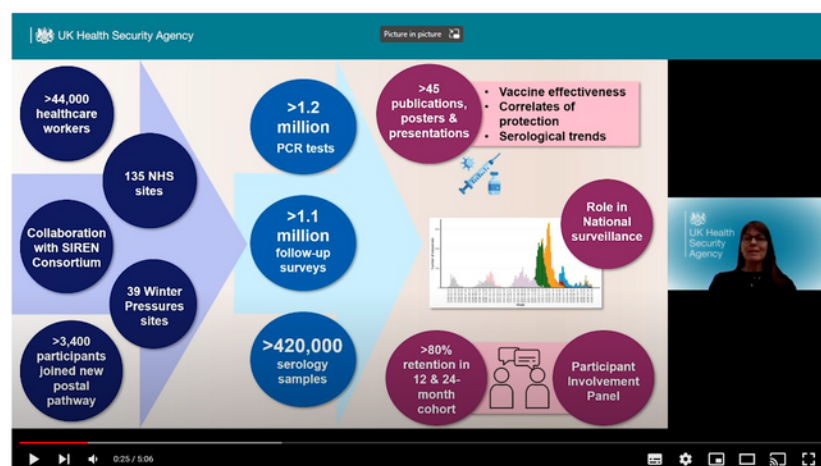
B) SIREN study webinar 17 March

Many thanks to all those who attended the webinar on 17 March. The webinar was an opportunity to:

- Say thank you for your contribution to date,
- Showcase how your data has contributed to key research findings, and
- Provide an opportunity to discuss anticipated next steps for SIREN

If you missed it, you can catch-up on the full webinar recording by [following this link](#).

We have also created summary videos for you:



Click the video above to view a thank you message from Professor Susan Hopkins, who also highlighted the impact of the SIREN study to date.

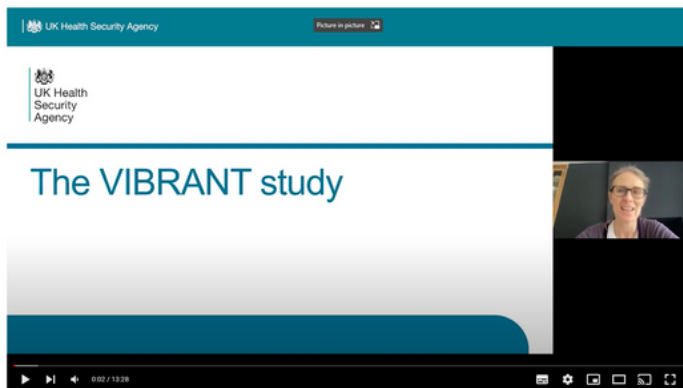
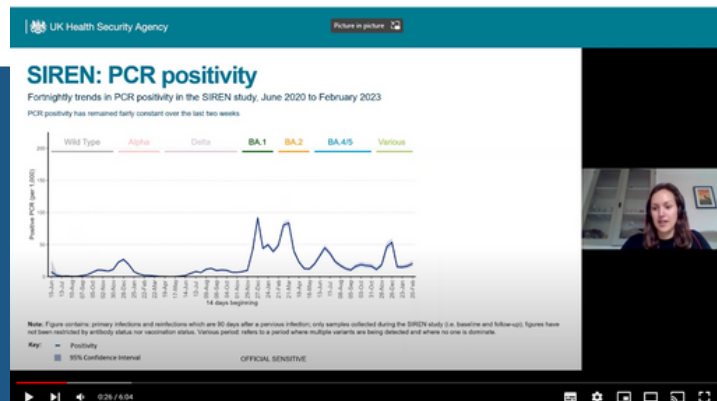


UK Health
Security
Agency

SIREN PARTICIPANT NEWSLETTER

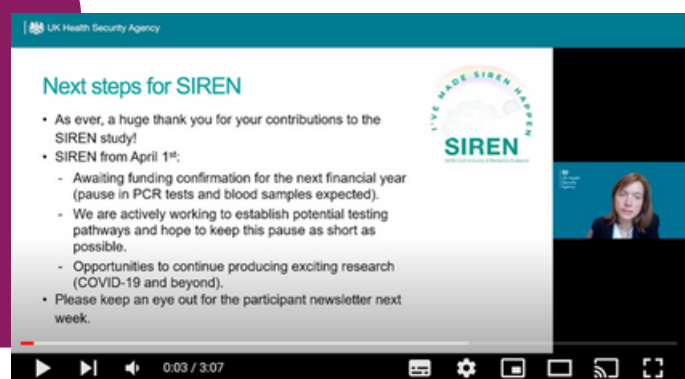
24 MARCH 2023

Next we heard from Sarah Foulkes, SIREN Principal Scientist, who highlighted the key role SIREN data has played in national surveillance.



Professor Alex Richter joined us to share more about the VIBRANT study, a SIREN Consortium partner. VIBRANT is aiming to identify risk factors for COVID-19 infection following vaccination, and SIREN data has contributed to this valuable area of research.

And finally, we heard from Victoria Hall, SIREN Study Lead, who provided an update on anticipated next steps (including the pause in active testing) and the value of continuing SIREN in the future.





UK Health
Security
Agency

SIREN PARTICIPANT NEWSLETTER

24 MARCH 2023

2. Study reminders

Qualitative research sub-study

Many thanks to everyone who attended a recent focus group as part of the Qualitative Research sub-study.

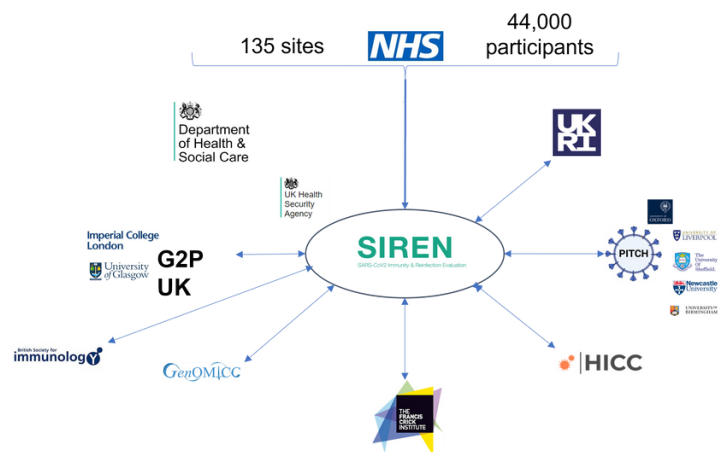
We really appreciate your input into this new and exciting area of research and will be sharing the results of this study in due course.



3. SIREN in the spotlight

A) Consortium corner

The SIREN Consortium is a unique, multidisciplinary collaboration established to answer key questions about the mechanisms and durability of COVID-19 immunity.



Consortium members include:

Each SIREN Consortium member focuses on its own particular research area. To provide more insight into the Consortium and some of the people behind the research, we asked representatives from different organisations to share a bit about themselves and their work with SIREN. **Please click the videos below to watch:**



UK Health
Security
Agency

SIREN PARTICIPANT NEWSLETTER

24 MARCH 2023



"My name is Wendy Barclay, I'm Professor of Virology at Imperial College London. I also lead a consortium in the UK called G2P-UK, which is a bunch of virologists really interested in the way SARS-CoV-2 is evolving. Our role in the

SIREN study is to think very specifically about whether or not some of the vaccine breakthroughs people have experienced are because they got infected with a specific mutated form of the current variant to which their own immune system couldn't really help them with. We're doing very focused, specific assays between the sera taken from SIREN participants with vaccine breakthrough and their own virus, for which we have sequence data and sometimes real live virus isolates. The hypothesis is that we'll find mismatches which will explain their vaccine breakthrough."

"Hi my name is Rupert Beale and I work at the Francis Crick Institute. I'm part of a large team of people there who have been measuring neutralising antibodies for SIREN and other


groups across the UK. It's a great privilege to be here at the UK Health Security Agency discussing the project with colleagues"




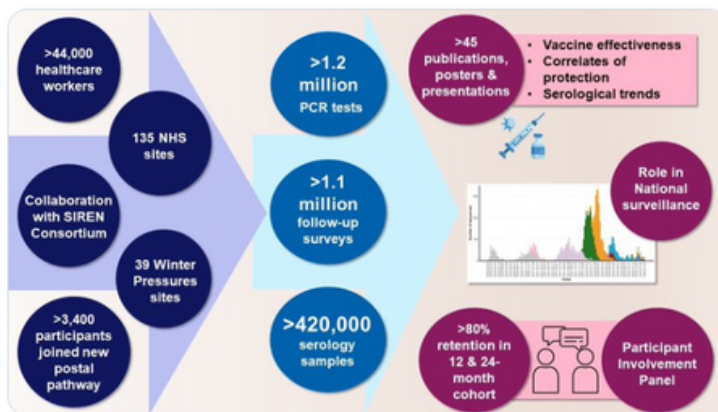
B) The latest from Twitter

 **Victoria_jhall** @victoria_jhall · Mar 10 ...
Read [#SIRENstudy](#) public health fellow [@alhowells1](#) describing how and why the SIREN Participant Involvement Panel has been so important for us, and how we benefited from the brilliant expertise at [@britsocimm](#) to set up and run our panel.
Thanks to [@HRA_Latest](#) for sharing




 **Professor Alex Richter** @AlexRichter3 ...
Excited for the [#SIREN](#) webinar!@SMHopkins [@victoria_jhall](#) to talk about the success and progress of the SIREN study and contributing to talk about [@vibrant_uk](#)


 **Anna Howells** @alhowells1 ...
The [#SIRENstudy](#) webinar is underway! Great to start with hearing from [@SMHopkins](#) about the story & success of SIREN to date



[#SIRENstudy](#)



 **British Society for Immunology** @britsocimm · Mar 10 ...
It's a privilege to work with [#SIRENstudy](#) to run their Participant Involvement Panel to ensure input from study participants is embedded across research design & delivery [#SharedCommitment](#) [#PublicInvolvement](#)

 **Victoria_jhall** @victoria_jhall · Feb 20 ...
Great to see this in print [@LanceTurtle!](#)
Demonstrating the importance of studying T cells alongside antibodies, and the value of our ongoing collaboration between [@pitchstudy](#) and [#SIRENstudy](#).
Thanks to all our extra special participants who are enrolled in both studies!
[Med by Cell Press](#) @MedCellPress · Feb 16
ONLINE NOW: [@LanceTurtle](#) and colleagues studied immune responses to COVID-19 vaccines before/after dose 3. T cells recognized variants better and for longer than antibodies. Differences due to vaccine regimen and previous infections evened out over time. [cell.com/med/fulltext/S...](#)

