



LONG COVID LIVES

Chapter 1 of 3

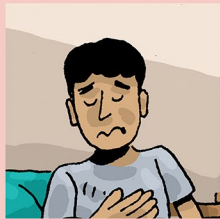
Long Covid Lives

Chapter 1 of 3: A long way to diagnosis

These are stories of what it is like to be a young person living with Long Covid, created in collaboration with those who have experienced it.

They are based on 72 young people's accounts generated through interviews with researchers. No individual characters represent one story – we have brought different people's stories together to represent multiple experiences.

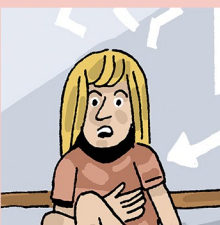
Introducing...



Santi: Santi (he/him) is a 19-year-old Asian British student taking a year out of university because he is experiencing Long Covid symptoms including chronic fatigue, increased heart rate, brain fog, and loss of taste and smell. Doctors tell him he is just having panic attacks, but he has experienced anxiety and panic attacks before, so he knows that something else is going on. He has a supportive family who help him find ways to get help outside of the NHS.



Rowan: Rowan (they/them) is a White British, 23-year old nursery practitioner living in shared housing. They are experiencing long-term symptoms from Covid-19 including chronic fatigue, dizziness, and nausea and face a high risk of getting ill again because of their work and living situation. They are struggling to access healthcare and when they finally get a GP appointment they have to decide whether to talk about Long Covid symptoms or accessing a gender identity clinic.



Elena: Elena (she/her) is a 16-year-old White British student who couldn't finish her GCSEs because of Long Covid. She goes to the GP with symptoms of chronic fatigue, migraines, breathlessness, and hallucinations, but doesn't feel taken seriously by her GP, who puts her symptoms down to depression and autism. She lives with a single mum who has to take time off work to support her. She sees people recommending private clinics but she can't afford them.

Content warning: *This chapter contains stories relating to illness experience, medical gaslighting, inaccessibility to trans healthcare, misgendering, and financial difficulties. The things said by characters (including doctors) relate to real experiences, but do not constitute medical advice. For advice on how to manage Long Covid, visit: www.longcovidkids.org. Scan the QR code on the back cover for a glossary of key terms.*

Santi, at home, 12 weeks after getting Covid...

Why's my heart going so fast?



Santi needs to come back to uni.

He can't even get out of bed...

Rowan, at work, 12 weeks after getting Covid...

LITTLE DUCKS NURSERY

Are you OK?

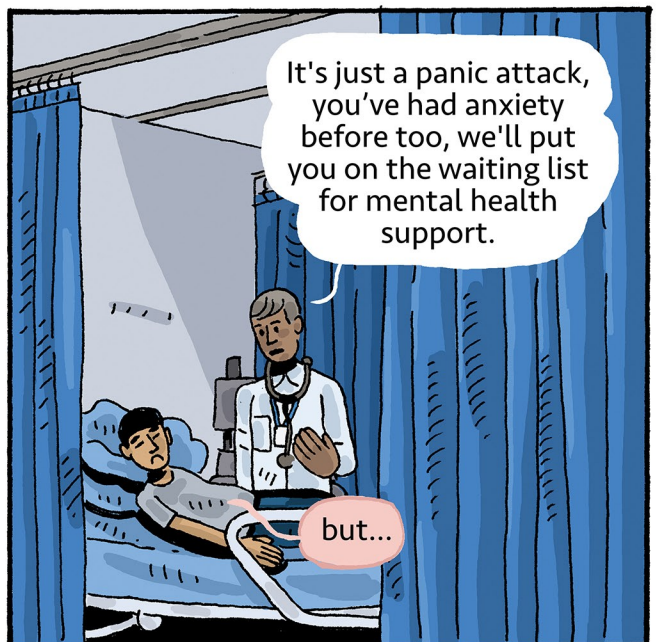
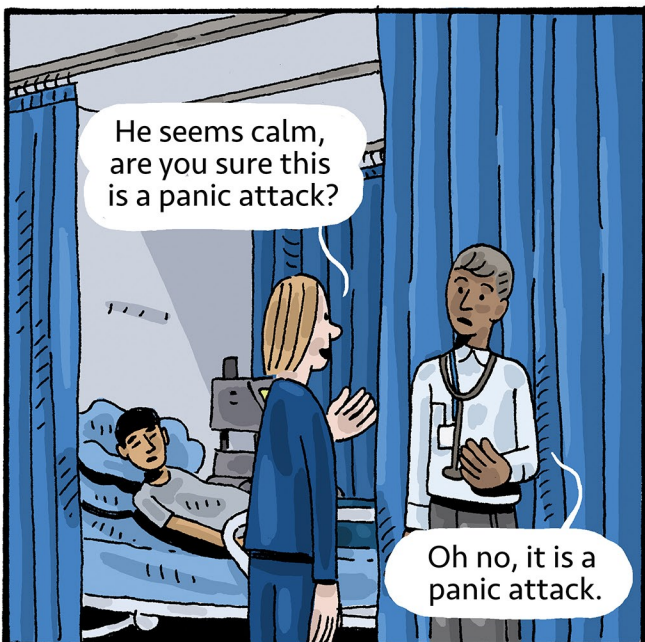
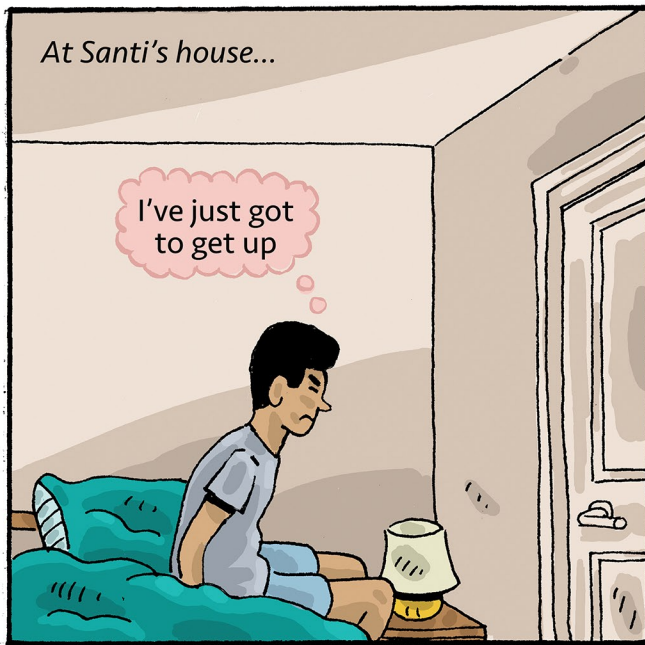
I think I need to sit down for a minute... I'm feeling really weird.

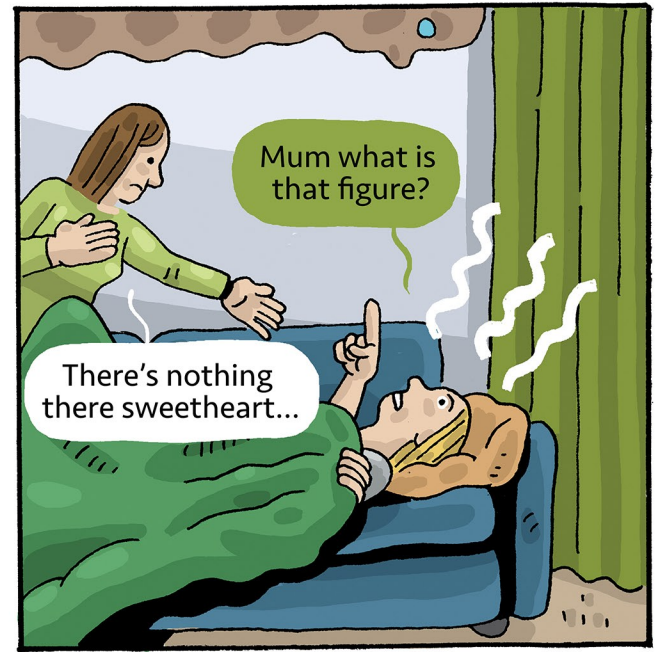
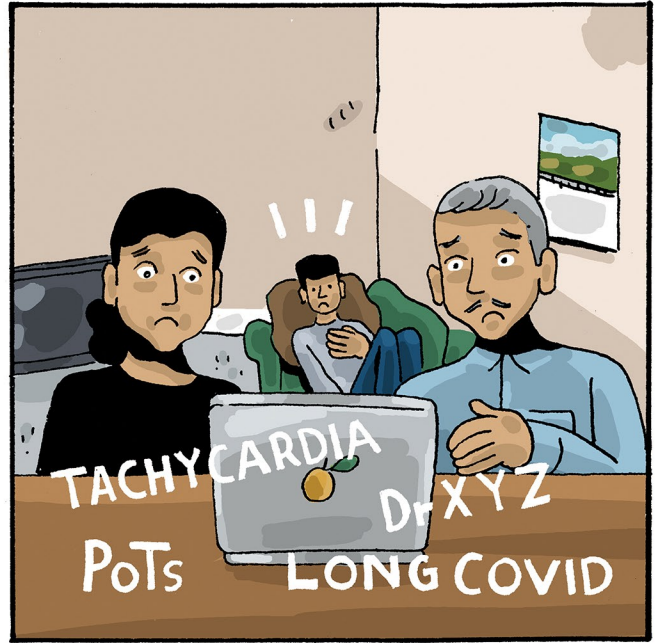
LITTLE DUCKS NURSERY

Elena, at home, 12 weeks after getting Covid...

What is happening to me !?!







Elena's mum on the phone to the doctors...

We've phoned up every morning at 8am for weeks now, we're getting desperate.

We have a slot in two weeks' time...

2 weeks later...

I just haven't got better from Covid, no energy... migraines... breathlessness... and I'm seeing things that aren't even there...

She's had a sudden onset of what might be OCD as well...

Try these anti-depressants. I'll put you on the waiting list for therapy.

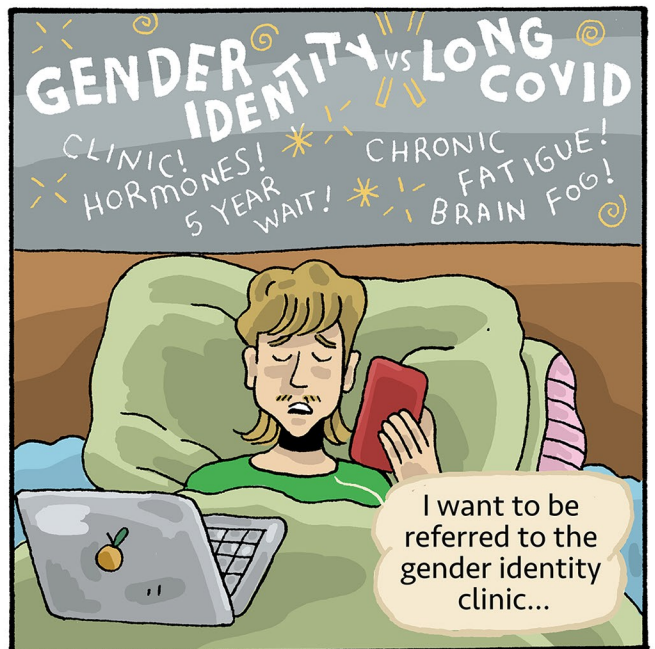
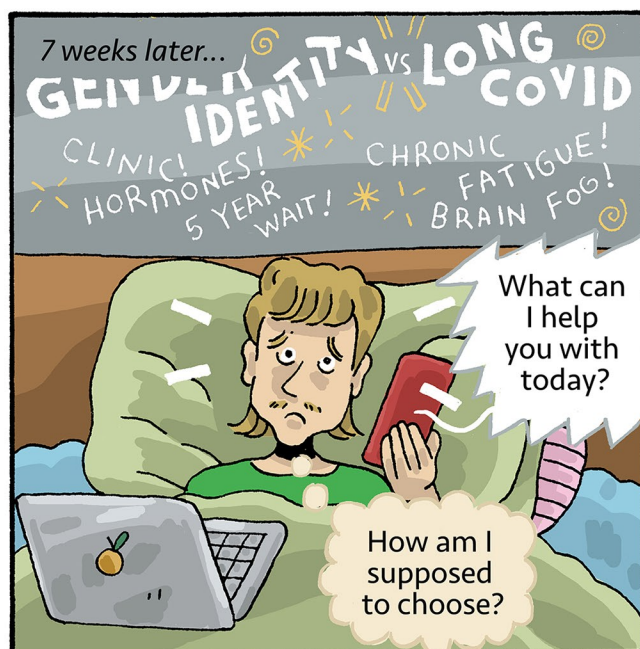
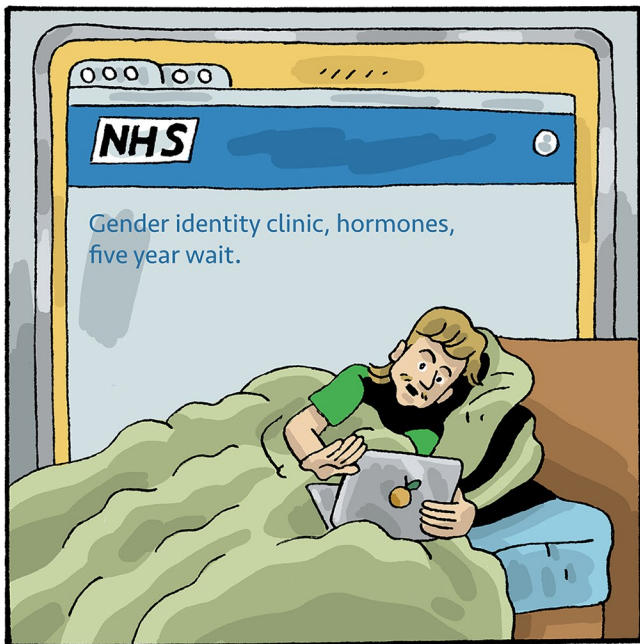
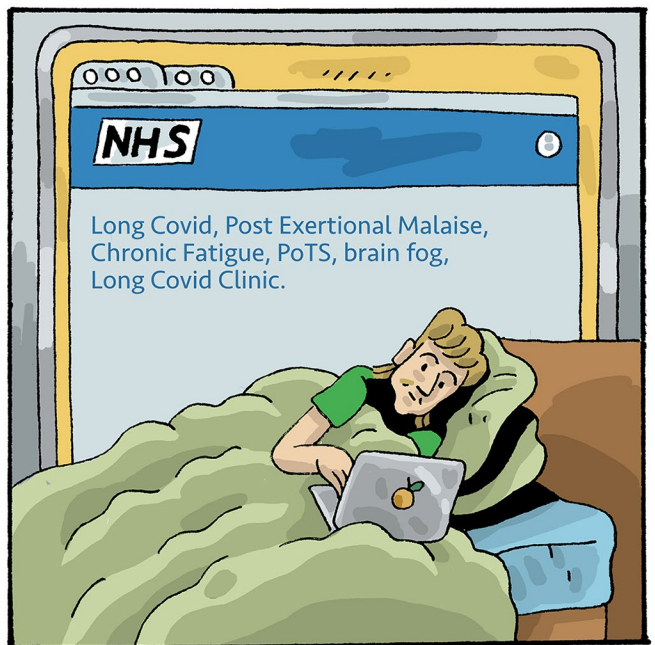
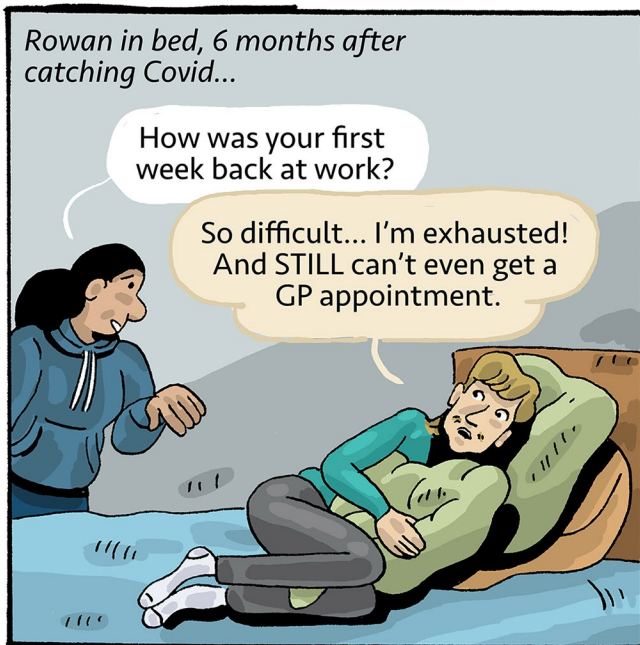
And... has Elena been assessed for autism?

Sorry, what has this got to do with Covid?

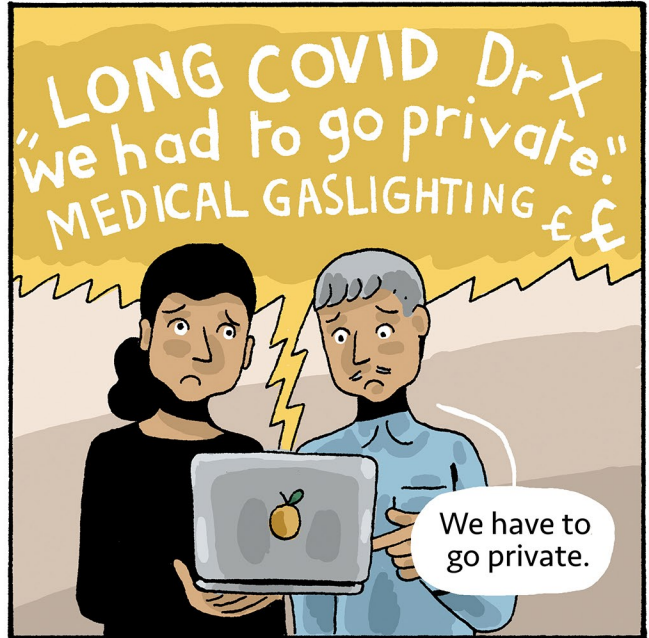
Young people aren't affected by Covid.

Are you sure giving counselling a go wouldn't help? All this time I'm taking off work is getting tricky financially...

?!?!?



Meanwhile, Santi's still stuck at home...



Elena is also looking for help...

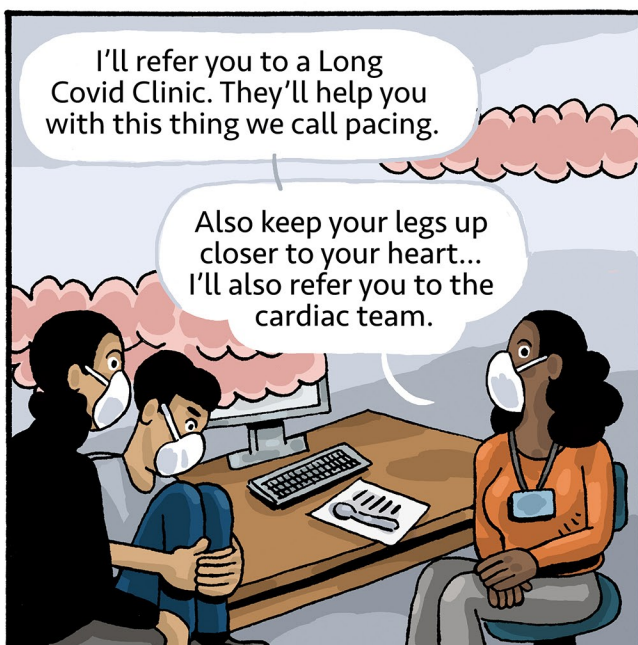
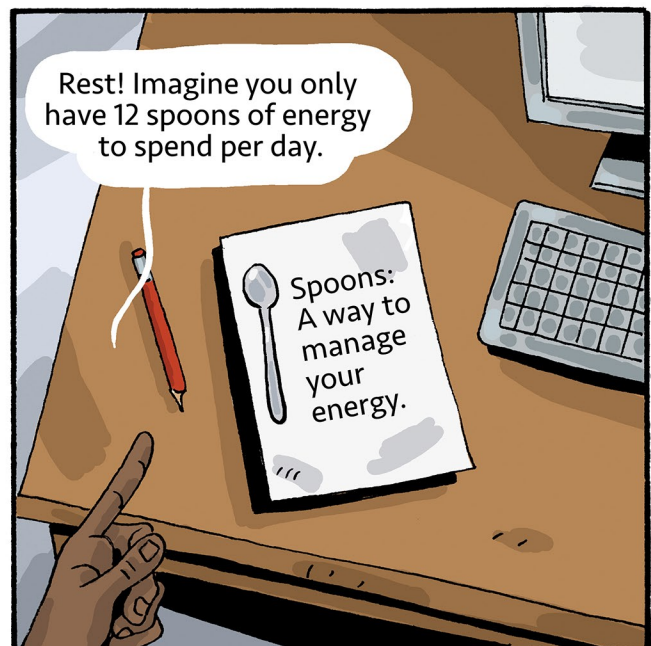
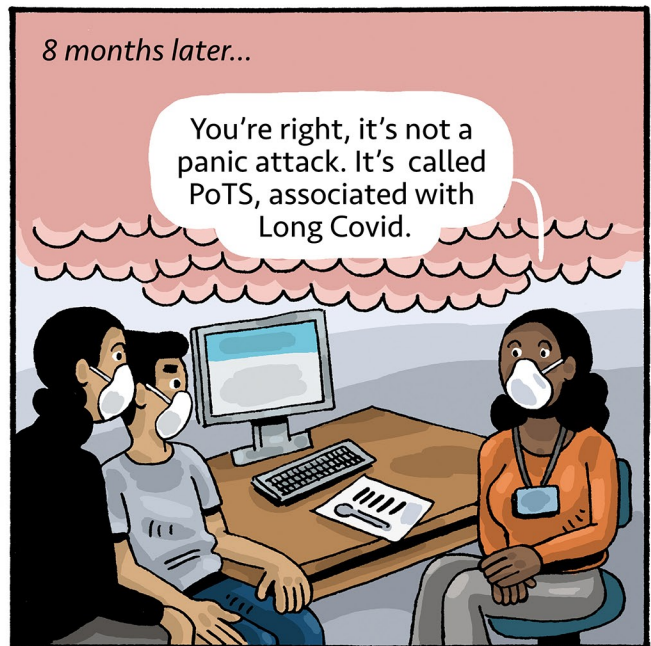
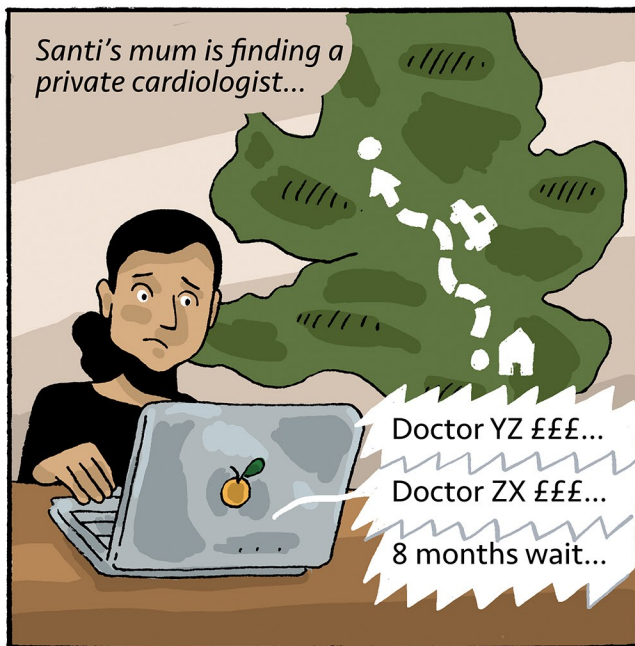


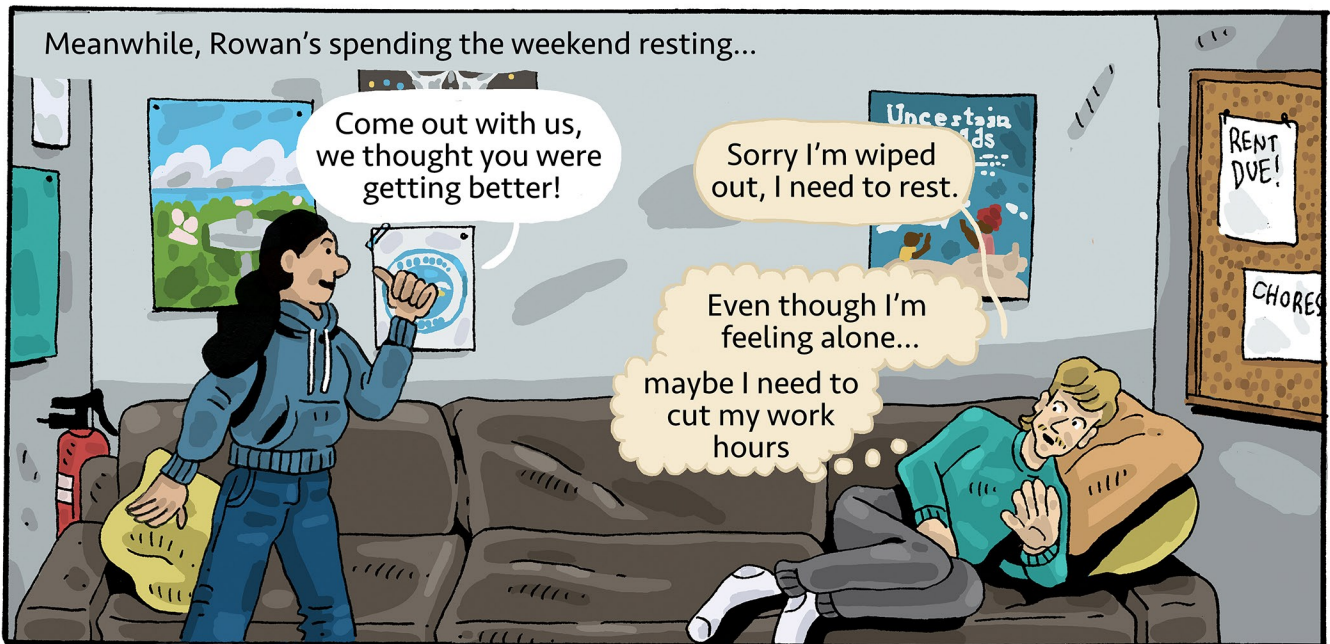
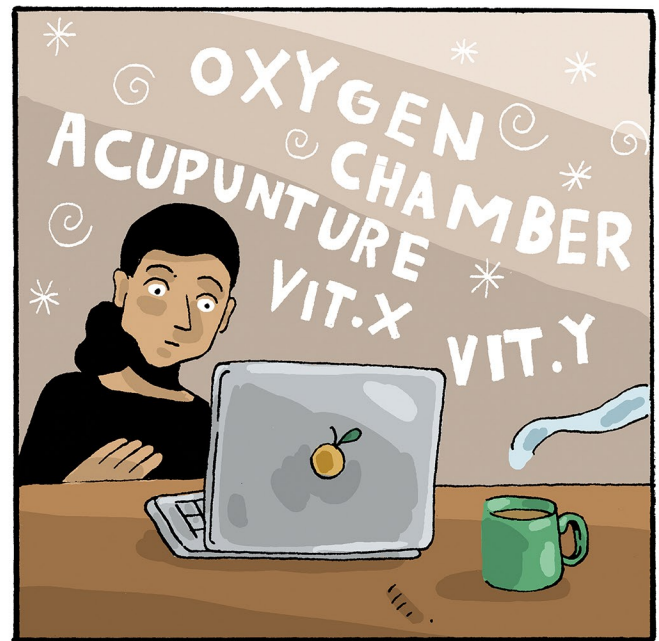
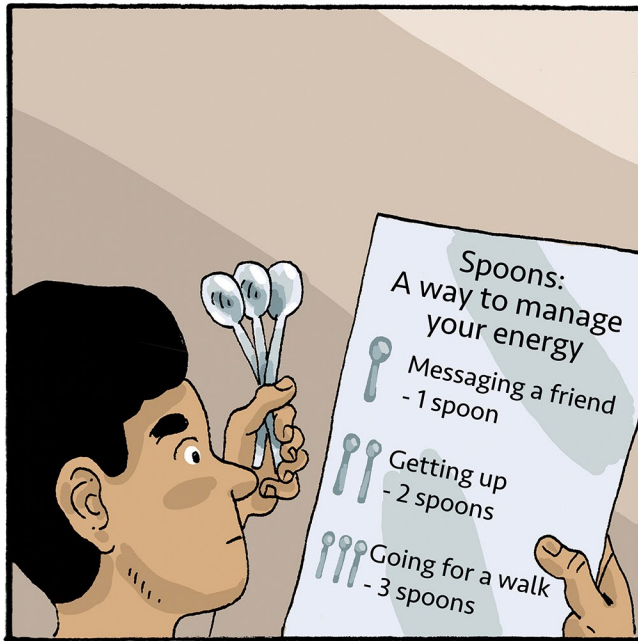
Rowan has had to go back to work...



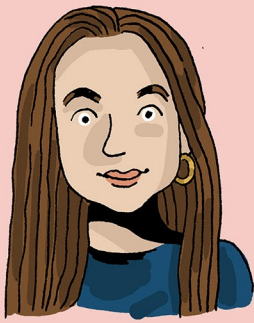
I need the help,
I'll have to let the
pronouns go for now...







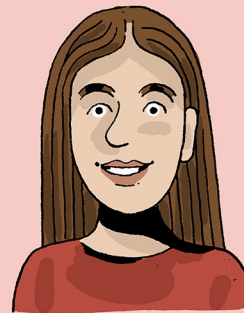
Long Covid Lives was made with:



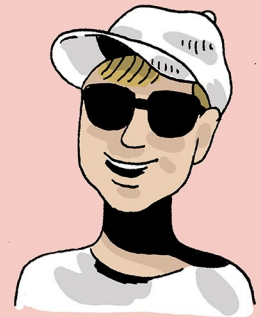
A. Haynes



Cal Bloodworth



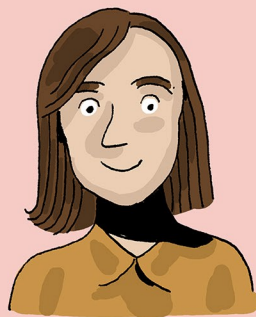
Eden Byrne



William George



Emily Miller



Hannah Cowan



Juliette Gunn-Roberts



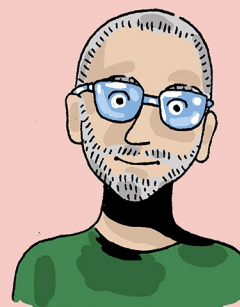
Zaira Clarke



Lucinda Leal



Praveena Fernes



Tim Rhodes



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Benjamin Worku-Dix

Long Covid Lives

Credits

Produced from research by:

Covid Made Long Project, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine



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Produced By



Stories Drawn from Research

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Long Covid Lives is a three-part graphic series which explores the lived experiences of young people living with Long Covid. It is based on a research project where young people were interviewed about their experiences. Our research shows that young people living with Long Covid can struggle to access care and support as well as to have their voices heard.

Part One explores the difficulties young people experiencing a range of ongoing symptoms face in being believed and accessing care and support. Part Two explores the multiple, varying impacts of Long Covid and the pandemic on young people's lives, and how the care available is often fragmented, failing to see young people's illness experience as a whole. Part Three explores how, despite the challenges of chronic illness, young people adapt and remake their worlds in order to live with Long Covid.

Long Covid Lives has been illustrated by Daniel Locke and produced by PositiveNegatives from research undertaken by the Covid Made Long Project at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in partnership with Imperial College London, Long Covid Kids, and Long Covid Support.

Visit: www.lshtm.ac.uk/research/centres-projects-groups/covid-made-long
Contact: Tim.Rhodes@lshtm.ac.uk

See our lived experience glossary: <https://www.lshtm.ac.uk/covid-made-long#resources>

