

The Government's response to Sars Covid 2 Tim Wilson – Member of the Health Equity Maintenance strategy (HEMS) group

It was reputed that on his death bed Pasteur the exponent of specific aetiology, that diseases have specific causation e.g., a microorganism said “the terrain is everything the microbe is nothing “by the terrain he was perhaps referring to a person's innate inner immunology. The biome and microbiota and social interaction with their environment – their food and immunological and health defences and the state of the environment, the state of public health provision and the number of inequities a person suffers from.

This article details some of the issues why the UK has such a high number of deaths and morbidities due to Sars co-vid 2, when you compare New Zealand's 25 deaths, yes only 25, Australia's 800 Norway and Finland around 500 deaths from co-vid 19 UK's as of 12/3/21 is officially count 125000 but many experts see Richard Marmot actual think the count nearer to 170,000

Respiratory diseases are diseases of poverty, social diseases, deprivation. Inequities, air pollution, obesity (associated with and inequities poverty) poor working conditions overcrowding , discrimination, poor housing and lack of power create health problems – we have in last 42 neo-liberal years never been “all in it together” - this ideological power (markets, laissez faire, minimal state private good, public bad polarisation started by Thatcher) has contributed to millions of early deaths and un -equal morbidities at relatively early age (sometimes 15 years before those living in affluence). This is a form of structural violence see Galtung 1969 (example since 2010 deliberate austerity) by the state on the people. Globally this ideology has led to climate change and habitat and ecological destruction, the main cause of increasing zoonosis (animal to human transmission Covid 19 is a zoonosis). The 21 st century could be the century of pandemics, ones far worse than Sars 2. Ecological destruction increases inequalities habitat change and climate change and much more. The growth of anti-microbial, resistance (AMR) and factory farming and over prescribing of antibiotics, highly processed food, inflammatory food creating huge health /public health (e.g. obesity) time-bombs. The UK is a main air polluting country particularly in deprived urban areas. There is too much air travel yes inequities and is a disease of destruction and has produced in UK stark inequalities in health and contributed to pandemic growth by weakening the terrain. Inequities and intersectionality factors (people experience existence structurally) are drivers of inequalities in health.

Tragic mistakes and not prepared for pandemics -Governments response to Sars covid 2

In late February 2020 should have had a complete travel ban abroad, no ins or out – those people who had to come back should have 14 days quarantine– UK only instigated a travel ban in Feb 2021 but not for all countries -thus 12 months too late! Johnson didn't attend the first four cobra meeting on the threat of Covid.

March 2020 allowed Cheltenham and Rugby internationals to go ahead events and 3000 Spanish football fans to come to Liverpool, it is estimated that because of this football match 43 people died of Covid– all the wrong approach totally – needed people with public health experience shoe leather public health to guide country, required people with experience of public health e.g., environmental health officers and local directors of public health.

In Feb 2020 should have instigated a local authority-based test track trace and isolate system importantly run by a local authority elite environmental health practitioners and directors of public health – with strong links to local GP's. The Government in the summer of 2020 gave testing to private companies (why the delay?) like Serco and Delotte using call centre staff who had no expertise in infection control only traced and tracked 55%. Local authorities when given some information and power in August/September 2020 were reaching 98% of contacts.

Significantly the government never had a comprehensive finance package for self-isolating so infected care workers had to choose between no money or passing the virus on to the elderly, they did.

Not prepared for pandemic: In the last 40 years increased inequities in health (particularly since 2010) deliberate austerity policies to cripple the poor and disabled, benefit cuts and cuts to local authority funding particularly in poorer labour voting areas, reduced local authority funding, and money for public health, library closing and support were cut as were day centres closed in places like Liverpool /Knowsley.

The growth in poorer working conditions, zero-hour contracts, less health and safety inspections or environmental health officers to inspect overcrowding housing has reduced the terrain of poorer groups and BAME individuals and families, child poverty is far too high. In neo-liberalism one of their dominant ideologies is of a minimum state. This and the 2012 Health and Community

Care Act stripped all the of infrastructure of public health, these are some of the reasons why the UK has a terrible response to this virus and one of the highest deaths tolls in the World.

They the Government have run down the health and terrain of the people – too much deliberate poverty , deprivation , lack of nutritious food, poor housing poor health conditions, racialism and discrimination , lack of community resources in deprived areas – hence widening inequalities in health and inequalities in morbidity , inequalities in mortality and morbidity are stalk in the UK In the last 42 years and particularly since 2010 deliberate policies to make rich richer and poor poorer Co vid deaths were highest in poorer, and BAME communities and this included at work. The poor and BAME were often on the front line, keeping the country running, nine Arriva Merseyside bus drivers died from covid.

The Government Ignored the 2016 Cygnet report findings for pandemics, report spoke of lack of PPE, and public health, integrated preparedness, lack of public health /Local authority infra structures lack of personal. There is a lack of GP's doctors environmental health officers, local public health resources all been deliberately been run down and starved of adequate funding. Up-stream has become dominated by downstream for a long time. Nothing done about Cygnet report – criminal and someone needs to be prosecuted under corporate manslaughter, crime and a violation (stalk inequalities in mortality and morbidity) of people's human rights, surely the right to health is an intrinsic right.

From 2003 closed 60 public health labs and the environmental protection agency done away with. So, when pandemic which had been predicted, hit inadequate preparedness. Johnson when elected leader of conservatives in 2019, one of his first decisions was get rid of the pandemic committee, why?

Running down NHS staff vacancies, many inverse care laws so those who need care most get least, GP's Environmental health officers, other doctors, public health personal cut to minimum - too much emphasis on health services instead of upstream public health and social models of health – expecting a magic bullet the vaccine to solve all the problems. Health is mainly to do social economic political social justice and environmental health issues, the health also of the environment.

Should never have stopped lock down in early December 2020. Q. why did come out of it, shopping? Christmas? Should have remained in lock-down, the R number too high should have given clear message about Christmas no mixing at all even on Christmas day – too late in stopping 4 day intended mixing, people did mix.

They were far too late to lock down in January 2021 why did they open upon December is a tragedy which led to many deaths.

Lock down in March 2020 four weeks too late – governing idea in public health (practical shoe leather and upstream public health) is to get the R number as low as possible by the above measures – aim should be to try and eliminate covid 19 or get R number below 0.1 this is something we as a country we didn't do as of 10 march 2021 still haven't got test track isolate right

Not enough attention given to air flowing in building (demonstrates again a lack of environmental health savvy) should have been compulsory to open windows e.g., on buses don't rely on artificial air conditions may spread co-vid also haphazard approach to masks should have been introduced for all in February 2020. When UK introduced masks about a year too late.

UK came out of first lock down too early R number far too high nearer to one needed to aim for 0.1 and below now variants given the opportunity to development and have which may make the vaccine less effective in the long run.

Government responsible for 20,00 deaths in transferring Covid 19 patients from hospitals into care homes, releasing infected people into care homes, who is going to take responsibility for this?

In the last 40 years increasingly privatised (care homes) and used temporary staff who travelled to different care homes increasing infection spread– generally there was lack of appropriate PPE in care homes.

The “eat out scheme” of summer 2020 was a disaster in terms of covid spread. Also, the Government allowing people to go abroad in summer late summer of 2020 a disaster and wrong, should have had a total ban on foreign travel.

Should not in September 2020 allowed all children to go back to school and allowed students to travel to universities from all over the country – maybe they should have stopped universities for a year.

Locked down 5 weeks too late in October 2020 -still had not got R number down.

Government's decisions lack of decisions confusing messages and delaying decisions, has paved the way to this crisis

Q why did they open up from lock-down in December 2020 when R

number far too high

Q. why did they drop 2 metre rules to one?

thus, increasing likelihood of new variants to develop

no local preventive up stream public health approach. The Government is relying on a magic bullet – the vaccine.

From 1850 to 1945 most respiratory diseases fell due to better public health and state intervention, better nutrition, before vaccination see Thomas McKeown 1974 The Role of Medicine.

Why has New Zealand (an island like the UK) had only 25 deaths they had early travel ban and good quarantine

UK has no clear plan to get R down below 0.1 no border policy still as of 11/3/21 no comprehensive border control and quarantine, no expert local authority led track trace and isolation of contacts.

We paid for summer holidays with winter deaths

why do other countries like Finland Norway who have deaths below 500 offer generous isolation allowances.

The dominant ideology neo -liberalism has a negative view of liberty individualistic not the common good or all citizens flourishing and equal opportunities, in UK privilege is often mistaken for talent e.g., Johnson.

Why did it take months for the UK Government to inform local authorities about people who had tested positive for Covid, and why no notification to environmental health officers and local directors of public health?

The semi privatising health and social care act 2012 reduced finance to and fragmented public health – why?

Public health England lacks independence from government doesn't critique or speak up enough for the people's health, public health, too quiet about inequities the causes of inequalities in health, poor work conditions overcrowding air pollution, poor housing – why – clinicians or too strong links to big pharm, not practical public health people.

This has big implications for how we decide who specialises in public health. Should select people on their knowledge and practical experience of shoe leather up stream public health not on psychometric testing – Johnson is responsible for all these deaths but public health England didn't have a good early pandemic many examples e.g., telling people it was alright to

have Liverpool football match, evidence of lack of knowledge of proper public health.

Why did government abandon testing on the 12 march 2020 because probably for the last ten unnecessary austerity years they had run down local authorities' public health and fact that councils didn't have enough money to employ more environmental health officers – government wants a minimal state and laissez faire part of its dominant ideological madness.

As Albert Camus in the plague correctly stated (pandemics) “it brings the hidden truth of a corrupt world to the surface) and death making, (TW) lots of it.

Why did the government ignore and starve local authorities and spent billions (37 billion on ineffective test track and trace) giving money to its private chums and friends and the money spent was very poor service for the amount spent – robbery and corrupt, Camus was right.

Why in the budget of March 2021 did the government give 30 out of 36 areas (areas which voted conservative and not in the top deprived areas, e.g., Richmond - were was the money to Liverpool or Knowsley and other deprived and cash starved areas by the cons in last ten years?

Why from 2010 the greater the need the greater the reduction in money why – in poorer areas more social care cuts compared to rich areas so govt deliberately creating inequities all the time.

IN last 250 years, 200 of them UK been in debt, in 1945 seven times more in debt than 2009 but promoted the common good and created NHS and other welfare in 2010 the conservative dominated coalition decide to cripple the poor, the disabled the marginalised and cripple they did – hence the low terrain of many sectors of society when the predicted pandemic struck

It was reported on 10 March 2021, concern over the findings in the new report from the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) on the Government's flagship Test and Trace programme.

Set up to support efforts to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic, NHS Test and Trace was designed to give a clear picture of the spread of the virus, allowing the Government to target specific households and areas for isolation and lock down measures.

The programme has cost £37bn, with most of the funds being spent on labs, testing systems, and a 12,000 strong contact tracing team. {(who have done very little tracing and isolating people virtually redundant but getting paid – amateurs not experts in test track trace and isolate)}

However, the report from the PAC has outlined serious concerns over the reliance on an expensive army of consultants, the lack of scrutiny for the awarding of private sector contracts, and repeated missed targets to process tests in 24 hours.

These findings are perhaps not surprising.

Since last spring, organisations like the Directors of public health the Chartered Institute of environmental health CIEH has been calling for the UK Government and Public Health England to utilise existing local networks and expertise when creating their test and trace system. They also offered hundreds of Environmental Health Practitioners as volunteers to support the setting up of the system.

Unfortunately, government was wedded to pursuing an overly centralised approach from the very beginning and chose to ignore existing structures (structures they had run down but still available). Deciding to build this all from scratch, instead of working with local authorities, has obviously proven to be very costly.

There is still time for the government to change, the Government needs to focus on working with local authorities going forward, and to ensure that the significant resource put into NHS Test and Trace is also made available to support local efforts.

This is all deliberate to privatise the NHS further maybe offering NHS workers only 1 % was a deliberate act to increase discontent leading to an explosion of health leavers so they can privatise more – what do you think?

So, who is responsible for 200,000 deaths – I know who is? Another example of structural violence by the state on the people particularly since 2010 – we need a revolution for health and all flourishing.

Galtung 1969 violence peace and peace research 2014-15 Journal of peace research 6(3) : 167-91

Mckeown T, The role of Medicine Basil Blackwell

