

The cyber-victimisation of disabled people in Scotland during the Covid-19 pandemic

Project exploring cyber-victimisation against disabled people, which has long-term health impacts and worsened during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Key details

Lead institution	The Open University
Principal researcher(s)	Dr Zhraa Alhaboby zhraa.alhaboby@open.ac.uk
Collaboration and partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glasgow Disability Alliance (GDA) • Inclusion Scotland • Police Scotland
Level of research	Professional/work based
Project start date	July 2022
Date due for completion	December 2024

Research context

The Covid-19 pandemic redefined our norms and raised concerns over the escalation of discrimination against disabled people. This included the cyber-victimisation of disabled people, a prevalent phenomenon that impacts physical health, mental wellbeing, social relationships and living conditions.

The project team engaged with disabled people with a range of disabilities and chronic conditions who shared their experiences of online communication during the pandemic, how online harassment impacted their self-management of health, and reflections on the support available.

The results were further contextualised with Police Scotland to identify ways to improve formal support available to disabled victims.

Research methodology

The project uses mixed-method research, drawing upon quantitative data (survey) and qualitative data (interviews) from disabled people in Scotland. This was achieved via an online survey disseminated in collaboration with disability organisations in Scotland and social media campaigns.

Interim reports or publications

Dr Zhraa Alhaboby, '[The cyber-victimisation of disabled people in Scotland during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)', [internet] The Open University [Accessed August 2024]