

DAVID & CORONA

David (61) from Glasgow (Scotland), married, Emeritus Professor of Molecular Immunology

'We are hoping the vaccine roll-out will start to take effect by the end of February'

Moments of happiness

Luckily we are doing fine. With Shiona, my wife, our son Alastair and dog Bobo I have good company in our house in the north of Glasgow. We enjoy the beautiful local countryside for walks, running and cycling. We are very fortunate to have some nice options close to home.

Zoom as a weak substitute

I do miss meeting up with my close family who live elsewhere – particularly our daughter who lives in the North of England and my mother on the other side of Glasgow. Also the restrictions in meeting up with our friends are tough. We can see one other person from our locality outside, for example to do a socially distanced walk. Zoom meetings do help us keep in contact but are a weak substitute for face-face contact.

Direct experience

Shiona's dad died of Covid in a care home in November 2020. He had severe dementia and was struggling, so his passing away was not unexpected. Our daughter Katy had corona at Christmas and had to self-isolate but apart from reduced exercise tolerance she is doing fine. The bug has been very widespread and so most families now have direct experience.

Out of retirement

I've come out of retirement for two days a week to do ward work in the Department of Medicine for the Elderly at Glasgow Royal Infirmary. I am glad I can do a bit to help. Things are not too bad in hospitals in Glasgow at present, I can say. However we still have around 150 Covid in-patients in our hospital. It was worse in October and November, when we had a lot of deaths. We are hoping the vaccine roll-out will start to take effect by the end of February. I've had my first dose.

Reasonable measures

The current measures that the Scottish government are taking, in terms of lock-down and restriction of social interaction, I feel are reasonable. However the relaxation of restrictions in July last year was premature, and consequently a further wave of infection was inevitable. In addition, the approach to testing has been weak, and the UK has missed the opportunity that it had between the first and second waves last Summer to set up an effective test, trace and isolate system.

Great hope

The biggest difference between the two Covid waves is in the increased infectivity of the new UK variant. As well as the national statistics, I am personally aware of many more people who have caught the virus. However the starting up of the vaccination program gives great hope that we can get things back under control.

Extraordinary efforts

I am impressed by how communities have pulled together to support their vulnerable people, and the extraordinary efforts of healthcare workers in care homes and hospitals, and the mutual support that is being provided within health care teams. In this time of great difficulty and uncertainty, this has been a tremendous positive.