TELE-THERAPIES LTD

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Mental wellbeing · Respiratory health · Workplace resilience

MindBody Synergy CIC

Policy Briefing:

Closing the Gap of Emotional Breathlessness in Chronic Respiratory Disease in the UK

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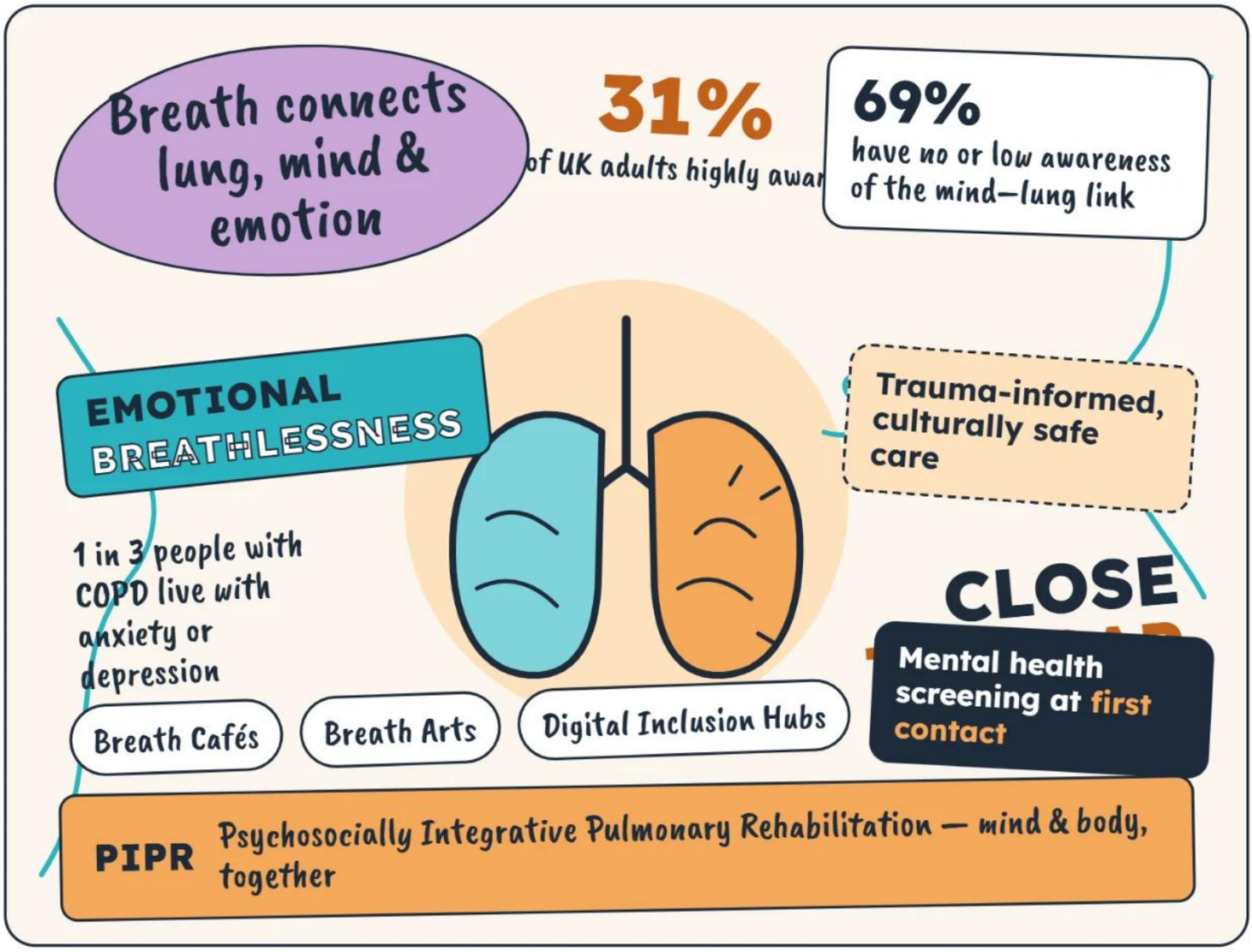
Breath & Mind National Awareness Survey · 2025



Research
R&D in social sciences & humanities

Insight
Market research & public opinion polling

Practice
Specialist medical practice activities

What the survey found

Tele-Therapies commissioned YouGov to ask a nationally representative, weighted sample of **2,173 UK adults** (online, 7–8 October 2025): *"How aware are you that people with chronic respiratory diseases are at increased risk of mental health challenges (e.g. anxiety, depression)?"* Answers on a 1–5 scale were grouped as not at all aware (1), low (2–3) and high (4–5).

27%
not at all aware of the link

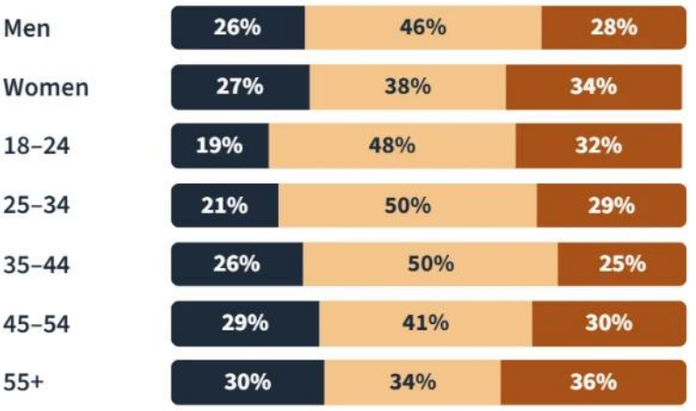
42%
have only low awareness

31%
are highly aware — leaving a **69% awareness gap**

Not at all aware (1) · Low awareness (2–3) · High awareness (4–5)

By gender and age

Men and adults aged 35–44 are least aware; low awareness peaks at 50% among 25–44s — the core of the workforce.

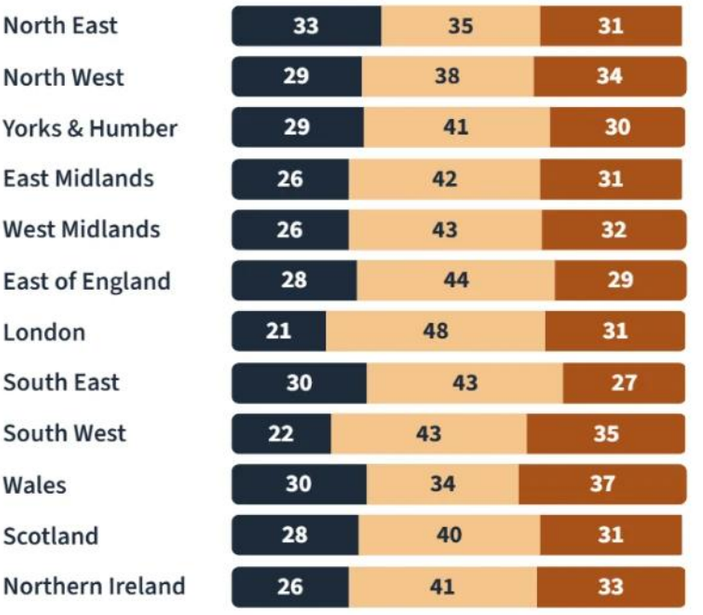


Work and life stage

Only 28% of workers are highly aware and 46% have low awareness. Retired and widowed adults record some of the highest "not at all aware" rates (31–32%).

By nation and region

The North East has the highest share not at all aware (33%); London the highest low awareness (48%).



Values are % of adults in each area.

Source: YouGov Plc for Tele-Therapies Ltd. Total sample 2,173 UK adults; fieldwork 7–8 October 2025, online; figures weighted and representative of all UK adults (18+). Rows may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Why this matters

Emotional breathlessness is the psychological and emotional distress — anxiety, fear, panic, low mood — that amplifies physical breathlessness, cough and fatigue in chronic respiratory disease (CRD). It shapes how symptoms are felt, whether people engage with care, and their quality of life.

12m+
UK adults live with a chronic respiratory disease

1 in 3
people with COPD report anxiety or depression

<10%
referral to pulmonary rehab, with 30–75% dropout

1.7m
workers with work-related ill-health (2023/24); 46% stress, anxiety or depression

The policy gap

NICE QS10, the NHS Long Term Plan and DHSC Integrated Care Frameworks centre on early diagnosis, admissions and physical rehabilitation. Psychosocial assessment, trauma-informed practice and behavioural interventions are rarely commissioned within respiratory pathways.

The economic case

Lung conditions cost the UK around £11bn a year (COPD £1.9bn; asthma £3bn). The report estimates that embedding psychosocial–behavioural care could save the NHS **£100–500m a year**.

Recommendations, 2026–2030

For DHSC, NHS England and Integrated Care Systems.

1. **Screen for mental health from first contact**
   In every NHS respiratory clinic, and in occupational health screening within CRD pathways.

2. **Fund PIPR pilots across Integrated Care Systems**
   Psychosocially Integrative Pulmonary Rehabilitation, treating breath and mind together.

3. **Mandate trauma-informed, psychosocial training**
   For respiratory and primary-care clinicians, with culturally competent practice built in.

4. **Launch a national awareness campaign**
   On mental health and emotional breathlessness in CRD, targeting workplaces (e.g. construction, manufacturing), universities and communities.

5. **Scale community projects**
   Breath Cafés, Breath Arts and Digital Inclusion Hubs, to widen access, education and equity.

Who can deliver change

Action	Key partners
1 · Mental health screening	NHS England / ICSs, Royal Colleges, British Thoracic Society, Asthma + Lung UK, VCSE community groups
2 · PIPR pilots	ICBs / NHS England, British Thoracic Society, NIHR Applied Research Collaborations, DHSC
3 · Trauma-informed training	NHS England workforce, training & education (e-Learning for Health), Royal Colleges, DHSC
4 · National awareness campaign	DHSC, UKHSA, Asthma + Lung UK, VCSE sector, Health & Safety Executive and sector bodies (e.g. CITB)
5 · Community projects	VCSE sector, arts & health organisations, Good Things Foundation, local authorities, ICBs

Aligned with

NHS Long Term Plan · NICE QS10 · DHSC Major Conditions Strategy (2024) · DHSC Integrated Care Frameworks (2025) · WHO ICARE–NCD · WHO Europe FPICS · SDG 3: Good Health & Well-Being

Definitions

Chronic respiratory disease (CRD): asthma, COPD, interstitial lung disease, bronchiectasis, post-TB COPD and other long-term lung conditions.

PIPR: Psychosocially Integrative Pulmonary Rehabilitation.

> **"Together, we can reshape the perception of chronic respiratory disease — from a condition to be endured, to a lived experience, validated and acknowledged with dignity."**
>
> Dr Devi Sundar, PhD, FHEA — Founder, Tele-Therapies Ltd & MindBody Synergy CIC

About Tele-Therapies Ltd

Our tailored programmes support mental wellbeing, respiratory health and workplace resilience through online and in-person consultation and training. We work across:

— Research and experimental development on social sciences and humanities
— Market research and public opinion polling
— Specialist medical practice activities

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