

Special feature: GAD's coronavirus response 1 year on

[This time last year](#) the coronavirus pandemic appeared to have passed its peak in the UK. While challenges remained, there was optimism that we were moving in the right direction and that a new normal would develop.

Twelve months on and we are again at a lower point following a peak. There is renewed optimism about the future as the roll-out of the vaccination programme continues at pace.

This special feature looks back at GAD's coronavirus response over the last year and looks ahead to what could come next.

Supporting the response

Throughout the pandemic, GAD staff have been working with colleagues around the public sector to support the coronavirus response. Some of the many areas in which we have been supporting:

- providing modelling and actuarial expertise to support the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport develop a solution to allow the UK [film and TV production industry](#) to operate, supporting over 180,000 UK jobs
- seconding staff to the [NHS Test and Trace](#) analytics team, carrying out system-level modelling and analysis to assess future demand and support policy decisions
- seconding staff to the Department of Health and Social Care to support in the delivery of the [COVID-19 Population Risk Assessment](#) ensuring those at high-risk from COVID-19 are added to the Shielded Patient List and prioritised for vaccination
- producing the Government Actuary's annual report on the financial position of the [National Insurance Fund](#) considering the impact of the pandemic on the income and expenditure from the fund
- working as part of a team to ensure community pharmacies had the clinical negligence indemnity cover needed to administer vaccines in key areas of England
- GAD also supported the British Business Bank and the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy to forecast the costs of the

various coronavirus loan schemes which have supported businesses that were losing revenue due to the pandemic

Thought Leadership

Throughout this period, we have sought to share our learnings and experiences with clients and colleagues across the public sector.

Our [webinar series](#) has covered such areas as potential implications for longevity and the impact COVID-19 has had on commercial insurance.

We continue to develop new event content and welcome views from our clients and public sector colleagues on areas of interest.

Supplementing our event series, we also produce a range of [publications](#), including some which you can subscribe to, including:

Partnering with clients

Clients have had to respond quickly to issues arising from COVID-19 and at GAD we've also adapted our approach which is:

- flexible and iterative
- getting involved earlier in project development stages
- creating innovative methods to analyse the incomplete data sets available for the fast-moving projects

GAD has delivered substantial pieces of work at short notice. We have worked together with our clients to form an integral part of the policy partnership.

As well as providing direct support on pandemic responses and thought leadership, we have continued to support our clients with other challenges they face.

New ways of working

Many clients have been under considerable pressure with regular activity continuing in addition to demands related to the pandemic response, while also managing new ways of working.

We have not been able to work onsite with clients as we had done in many cases before the start of the crisis. Instead we have made use of video conferencing technologies to increase our opportunities for discussions.

This has allowed us to join team meetings and project discussions much more flexibly and as a result become a fully embedded member of the team.

Clients have recognised the value of this close collaboration and the added value we can provide when we better understand the background and other

issues involved in a project.

Screen sharing has meant that work can be discussed as it progresses and problems can be solved collaboratively, strengthening the partnership approach to projects.

Looking ahead

As the restrictions on our lives begin to ease, we look ahead with hope, expectation and no little uncertainty. The pandemic has impacted all of us in some way, and as we gradually ease lockdowns, we will try to retain the positive aspects of the last year:

- our secondment programme has helped us immerse ourselves in some of our clients' challenges and provide the immediate support required
- the use of technology to deliver events and maintain regular client contact has allowed closer engagement with larger groups
- the pandemic required rapid responses and we have improved our approach to redeploying support to meet new demands and building collaborative links across the public sector
- technology has also ensured that we can work remotely very effectively, providing greater flexibility to staff and the opportunity to develop a more hybrid style of working

With these lessons learnt, GAD is in a stronger position to support government through any challenges which may arise in the future.