

COVID-19: Experiences of people with a lung disease



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Background

COVID-19 and long COVID have highlighted the importance of lung health for all. Despite this, as we move into a new phase of living with COVID-19, some groups, such as those living with preexisting lung diseases, are being left behind.

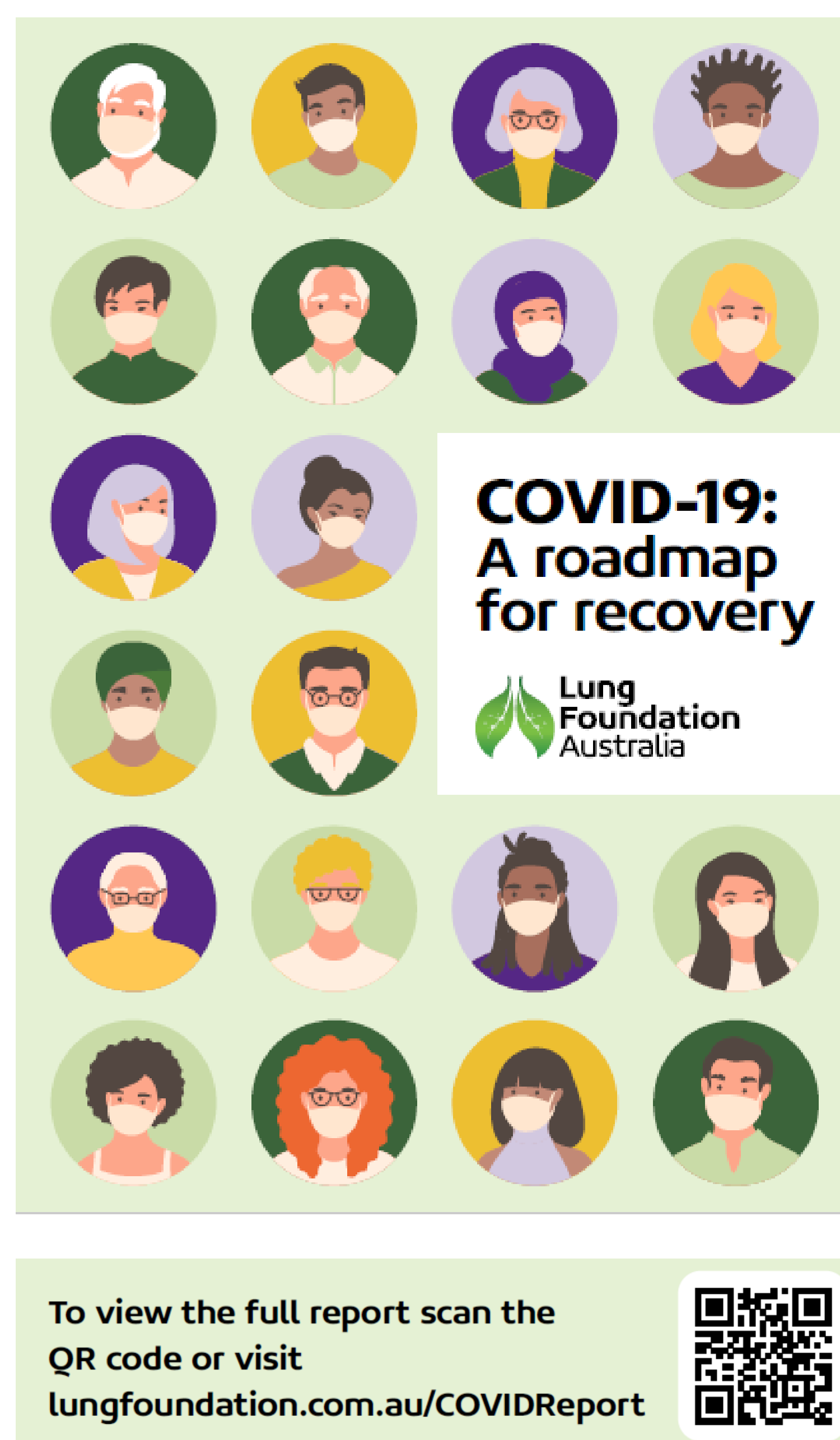
Methods

Rapid review

- Conducted by The George Institute
- Aim: to assess the characteristics and impact of long COVID in people with lung disease

Community survey

- Aim: to better understand the experiences of Australians living with ongoing COVID-19 symptoms
- Conducted in: July '22



Results

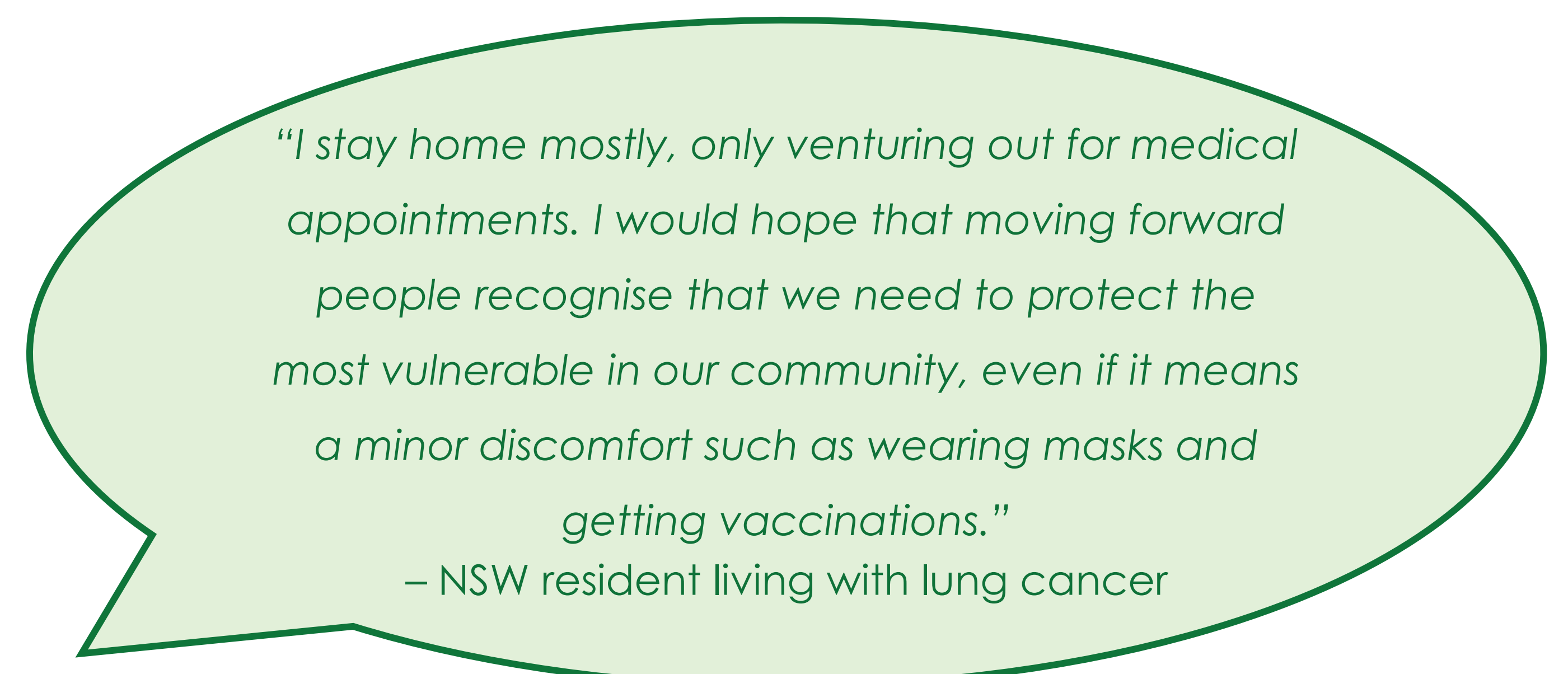
- 2,196 respondents, 46% were living with a lung disease or lung cancer

Of those living with a lung disease or lung cancer....

57% had ongoing symptoms (higher than the no chronic health condition, 51%)

Less than **1 in 2** reported their ongoing symptoms have mostly or completely resolved.

46% said the virus was more severe than other respiratory viruses

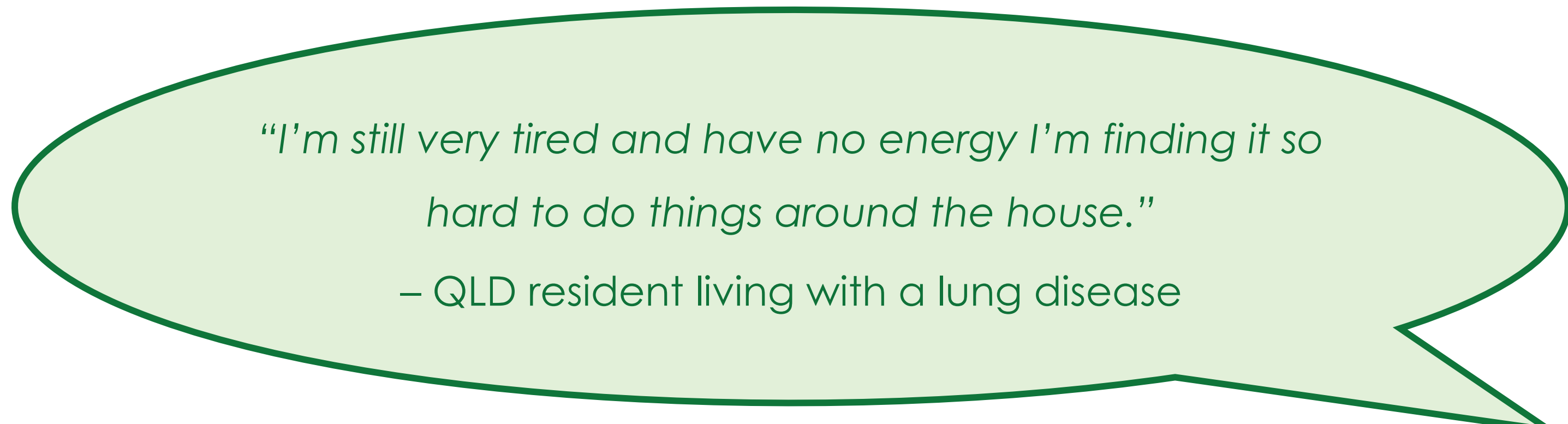


The most common ongoing COVID-19 symptoms:

- breathing problems (51%)
- extreme tiredness (fatigue) (50%)
- cough (34%)
- brain fog (31%)
- less able to do physical activity (23%)

Conclusion

This study highlights the continuing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on people living with a lung disease or lung cancer. Lung Foundation Australia have 10 recommendations for the Australian Government to support our community.



To support those recovering from COVID-19 Lung Foundation Australia recommend:

- Fund respiratory nurses to support people with ongoing symptoms
- Ensure access to quality information and tailored support to manage COVID symptoms and recovery
- Enhance physical activity and self-management through pulmonary rehabilitation
- Address the unique mental health needs of Australians living with a lung disease
- Transition long COVID clinics to multipurpose respiratory clinics
- Utilise and strengthen both telehealth and face-to-face healthcare
- Create a health-professional strategy and COVID-19 training
- Adopt a national long COVID definition to enhance data collection and research
- Harness acceptance of vaccinations now and expand the National Immunisation Program
- Invest in the National Preventive Health Strategy