# How an at‑home blood test and a move out of London helped a burnt‑out worker reclaim her health



At 35, Isabella Pastore had what many would call a classic success story: a senior role in sustainability, a London flat and a diary filled with back‑to‑back calls. But the image masked a steady deterioration in her health — crippling anxiety, deep fatigue and persistent bloating — symptoms she came to recognise as burnout only after rest and short breaks failed to help. Speaking to the Daily Mail, she described the mental load of constant client meetings, long screen hours and the “sense you can never really switch off” in the capital.

Desperate for answers without months-long waits for NHS appointments, Isabella turned to an at‑home blood test from MyHealthChecked. The results flagged low vitamin D and low iron, and confirmed a suspected lactose intolerance — findings she says gave her the clarity to act. According to the company’s investor announcement, MyHealthChecked offers a range of at‑home sample kits analysed by partner laboratories and has recently registered phlebotomy test kits in the UK and EU as it prepares to expand services. The company claims these services speed access to biomarkers that might otherwise be delayed by stretched primary‑care pathways.

Isabella’s experience maps closely on to what clinicians describe as work‑related stress and burnout. NHS guidance warns that sustained workplace pressure can lead to emotional exhaustion, withdrawal and loss of motivation, along with behavioural changes such as working longer hours, avoiding problems and ruminating. The health service recommends practical steps — from setting clearer boundaries and practising relaxation techniques to seeking support from managers, charities or NHS mental‑health services — and says people who are struggling should ask for help early.

Her specific test results also have straightforward medical explanations. The NHS notes vitamin D is important for bone and muscle health; those with limited sun exposure, darker skin or other risk factors are advised to consider supplements and, in some cases, testing. Iron deficiency can explain persistent tiredness, breathlessness and palpitations and is diagnosed by blood tests arranged by a GP; treatment typically combines iron supplementation and dietary changes with follow‑up testing. Lactose intolerance, meanwhile, commonly causes bloating and abdominal discomfort after dairy and is usually managed with dietary adjustments or lactase supplements, with diagnostic options ranging from elimination diets to breath testing.

Moving 50 miles north‑east to the village of Felsted gave Isabella the physical distance she says she needed. The quieter environment allowed her to sleep better, walk daily, reduce caffeine intake and reintroduce regular meals — changes she credits with easing the bloating and lifting her mood. She admitted that mentally switching off took time and that she initially felt guilty for being less “productive”, but that the slower pace now forms a deliberate part of her health strategy.

Her choice to leave London is part of a broader shift. Research summarised by recruitment analysts shows a net outward migration from the capital since 2014, with more than one million professionals moving away; younger workers in their mid‑20s to mid‑30s have been particularly likely to leave, citing unaffordable housing and cost‑of‑living pressures. Employers grappling with talent dispersal are being urged to offer flexible working, better season‑ticket support and return‑to‑office incentives to retain staff.

The rise of consumer health testing sits alongside these demographic changes. MyHealthChecked’s recent investor statement outlines plans to commercialise phlebotomy services in the first half of 2025 and to broaden its at‑home testing portfolio, a move the company says will improve access to timely health data. Editorially, it is important to note that while at‑home tests can provide useful information, NHS guidance still recommends GP involvement for diagnosing and managing conditions such as iron deficiency anaemia or medically significant vitamin D deficiency; not all private tests replace the need for clinical assessment and follow‑up.

Isabella’s story underlines two linked realities: the physical and psychological toll of sustained workplace pressure, and the practical steps individuals and employers can take. Listen to persistent physical symptoms rather than dismissing them as “just stress”; seek GP assessment for unexplained tiredness, breathlessness or digestive symptoms; consider sensible lifestyle changes such as regular physical activity and sleep routines; and where appropriate, use regulated tests to fill diagnostic gaps while ensuring results are discussed with a clinician. For employers, the lesson is equally clear — flexible, humane workplace practices are increasingly not just desirable but essential to retain talent and protect workers’ health.

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* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14999397/London-making-sick-plagued-deep-fatigue-anxiety-stress-escaped-countryside-realised-you-dont-sacrifice-health-career.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14999397/London-making-sick-plagued-deep-fatigue-anxiety-stress-escaped-countryside-realised-you-dont-sacrifice-health-career.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[7]](https://investors.myhealthchecked.com/corporate-news/archive/2025/140125)
* Paragraph 3 – [[2]](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/lifes-challenges/work-related-stress/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[3]](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vitamins-and-minerals/vitamin-d/), [[4]](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/iron-deficiency-anaemia/), [[5]](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/lactose-intolerance/), [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14999397/London-making-sick-plagued-deep-fatigue-anxiety-stress-escaped-countryside-realised-you-dont-sacrifice-health-career.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14999397/London-making-sick-plagued-deep-fatigue-anxiety-stress-escaped-countryside-realised-you-dont-sacrifice-health-career.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
* Paragraph 6 – [[6]](https://www.onrec.com/news/news-archive/reversal-of-the-brain-drain-one-million-young-workers-set-to-leave-london-turning), [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14999397/London-making-sick-plagued-deep-fatigue-anxiety-stress-escaped-countryside-realised-you-dont-sacrifice-health-career.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
* Paragraph 7 – [[7]](https://investors.myhealthchecked.com/corporate-news/archive/2025/140125), [[4]](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/iron-deficiency-anaemia/), [[3]](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vitamins-and-minerals/vitamin-d/)
* Paragraph 8 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14999397/London-making-sick-plagued-deep-fatigue-anxiety-stress-escaped-countryside-realised-you-dont-sacrifice-health-career.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/lifes-challenges/work-related-stress/), [[6]](https://www.onrec.com/news/news-archive/reversal-of-the-brain-drain-one-million-young-workers-set-to-leave-london-turning)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14999397/London-making-sick-plagued-deep-fatigue-anxiety-stress-escaped-countryside-realised-you-dont-sacrifice-health-career.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/lifes-challenges/work-related-stress/> - This NHS guidance explains work-related stress, its causes, common signs and coping strategies. It states that prolonged workplace pressure can lead to burnout, a state of physical and emotional exhaustion, and lists emotional signs such as withdrawal, loss of motivation and intense reactions. It outlines behavioural and cognitive changes including working longer hours, avoidance and negative thinking. Causes include high demands, lack of control, poor management and bullying. The page offers practical steps: set boundaries, practise relaxation and breathing techniques, build resilience, seek support from managers or charities, and access NHS mental health services and self‑help resources for everyone today.
3. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vitamins-and-minerals/vitamin-d/> - This NHS page explains vitamin D’s role in maintaining healthy bones, muscles and teeth, describes sources such as sunlight, oily fish, eggs and fortified foods, and highlights who is at risk of deficiency. It advises routine supplementation of 10 micrograms daily during autumn and winter, and recommends year‑round supplements for people with limited sun exposure, darker skin or other risk factors. The page outlines consequences of deficiency, including bone pain, osteomalacia and rickets in children, and warns against excessive supplementation. Practical guidance covers recommended doses, who should be tested, and when to seek medical advice to maintain vitamin D levels.
4. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/iron-deficiency-anaemia/> - This NHS information explains iron deficiency anaemia, its causes, typical symptoms and diagnostic approach. It describes common signs such as persistent tiredness, breathlessness, palpitations, pale skin, headaches and muscle weakness, and notes less common features like pica and restless legs. The page advises people who suspect anaemia to see their GP, who will arrange blood tests including a full blood count to confirm diagnosis and identify causes such as heavy periods or dietary insufficiency. Treatment options include iron tablets and dietary advice, with guidance on duration of therapy, possible side‑effects, follow‑up testing to ensure recovery and further specialist referral.
5. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/lactose-intolerance/> - The NHS page on lactose intolerance outlines symptoms, causes, diagnosis and management. It explains that lactose intolerance arises when the small intestine produces insufficient lactase enzyme, leading to bloating, tummy pain, flatulence and diarrhoea after consuming dairy. The page differentiates intolerance from milk allergy, notes who is more likely to be affected and describes diagnostic options including elimination diets, hydrogen breath tests and blood tests. Management focuses on dietary changes, lactose‑free alternatives, lactase enzyme supplements and ensuring adequate calcium and vitamin D intake. It advises seeing a GP if symptoms are severe or persistent and offers links to dietetic support.
6. <https://www.onrec.com/news/news-archive/reversal-of-the-brain-drain-one-million-young-workers-set-to-leave-london-turning> - This Onrec report summarises research from Totaljobs and ONS analyses showing net outward migration of young workers from London since 2014. It states that over one million professionals left the capital while fewer arrived, producing a net loss attributed largely to those aged 25–34 who cited unaffordable housing and cost of living pressures. The article highlights increases in outbound migration among thirty‑somethings, and warns of recruitment challenges for London employers as talent disperses to commuter towns and regions with better housing prospects. It recommends flexible working, season ticket support and local talent retention strategies to mitigate the impact on businesses.
7. <https://investors.myhealthchecked.com/corporate-news/archive/2025/140125> - This investor announcement from MyHealthChecked plc reports registration of its phlebotomy test kits in the UK and EU and outlines plans to commercialise a phlebotomy service. It explains the company's portfolio of at‑home rapid tests and blood, urine and swab sample collection kits analysed by partner laboratories, enabling consumers to access biomarker testing without long waits for GP appointments. The statement notes plans to launch the phlebotomy service in H1 2025, expanding existing at‑home testing offerings, and highlights the firm’s aim to improve accessibility to health insights through home sample collection and rapid lab analysis, supporting personalised wellness decisions nationwide.