Office for National Statistics

Statistical bulletin

Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional: week ending 10 April 2020

Provisional counts of the number of deaths registered in England and Wales, including deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19), by age, sex and region, in the latest weeks for which data are available.

Contact:
Sarah Caul
health.data@ons.gov.uk
+44 (0)1633 456 490

Release date:
21 April 2020

Next release:
28 April 2020

Table of contents

1 . Other pages in this release

- Comparison of weekly death occurrences in England and Wales: up to week ending 10 April 2020
- Death registrations and occurrences by local authority and health board

2 . Main points

- The provisional number of deaths registered in England and Wales in the week ending 10 April 2020 (Week 15) was 18,516; this represents an increase of 2,129 deaths registered compared with the previous week (Week 14), is 7,996 deaths more than the five-year average and is the highest weekly total since Week 1 in 2000.
- Of the deaths registered in Week 15, 6,213 mentioned “novel coronavirus (COVID-19)”, which is 33.6% of all deaths; this compares with 3,475 (21.2% of all deaths) in Week 14.
- In London, over half (53.2%) of deaths registered in Week 15 involved COVID-19; the West Midlands also had a high proportion of COVID-19 deaths, accounting for 37.0% of deaths registered in this region.
- Total deaths registered by place of occurrence between Week 11 (when first COVID-19 deaths were registered) and Week 15, the number of deaths in care homes has doubled by 2,456 deaths (99.4% increase); whilst we have seen a 72.4% increase (3,603 deaths) in hospitals, and 51.1% increase in private homes (1,392 deaths).
- Of deaths involving COVID-19 registered up to Week 15, 83.9% (8,673 deaths) occurred in hospital with the remainder occurring in care homes, private homes and hospices.
- Week 15 included the Good Friday bank holiday; the five-year average does show a decrease in registrations over the Easter holiday; however, the Coronavirus Act 2020 allowed registry offices to remain open over Easter, which may have reduced any drop in registrations for Week 15 2020.

3 . Deaths registered by week

Figure 1: The number of deaths involving COVID-19 increased, while the number of deaths from “Influenza and Pneumonia” decreased compared with the previous week

Number of deaths registered by week, England and Wales, 28 December 2019 to 10 April 2020

Notes:

1. Figures include deaths of non-residents.
2. Based on date a death was registered rather than occurred.
3. Estimates for 2020 are provisional.
4. The ICD-10 definitions are as follows: COVID-19 (U07.1 and U07.2), Influenza and Pneumonia (J09-J18).
5. A death can be registered with both COVID-19 and Influenza and Pneumonia mentioned on the death certificate. Because pneumonia may be a consequence of COVID-19, deaths where both were mentioned have been counted only in the COVID-19 category.

Download this chart

.xls

The provisional number of deaths registered in England and Wales in Week 15 (week ending 10 April 2020) increased from 16,387 in Week 14 (week ending 3 April 2020) to 18,516. This is 7,996 more deaths than the five-year average of 10,520 and is the highest weekly total since Week 1 2000 (more information in Measuring the data).

The number of death registrations involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) increased from 3,475 in Week 14 to 6,213 in Week 15. The number of deaths mentioning “Influenza and Pneumonia” on the death certificate decreased from 2,367 in Week 14 to 2,003 in Week 15. There were 2,333 deaths in Week 15 that mentioned both “Influenza and Pneumonia” and COVID-19 on the death certificate.

In Week 15, 44.4% of all deaths mentioned “Influenza and Pneumonia”, COVID-19, or both. In comparison, for the five-year average, 19.7% of deaths mentioned “Influenza and Pneumonia”. “Influenza and Pneumonia” has been included for comparison, as a well-understood cause of death involving respiratory infection that is likely to have somewhat similar risk factors to COVID-19.

More about coronavirus

- Find the latest on coronavirus (COVID-19) in the UK.
- All ONS analysis, summarised in our coronavirus roundup.
- View all coronavirus data.

4 . Deaths registered by age group

Figure 2: Deaths from COVID-19 were registered in all age groups apart from those aged under 15 years

Deaths by age group, England and Wales, week ending 10 April 2020

Download this chart

.xls

In Week 15 (week ending 10 April 2020), there were no deaths registered involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) in the two youngest age groups (that is, those aged 1 year or under and those aged 1 to 14 years). The highest number (2,210) and proportion (39.4% of deaths in this age group) of COVID-19 deaths were among those aged 75 to 84 years.

5 . Deaths by region

Figure 3: The highest number of deaths involving COVID-19 was recorded in London, while the lowest number was in the North East of England

Deaths by regions in England, and Wales, week ending 10 April 2020

Download this chart

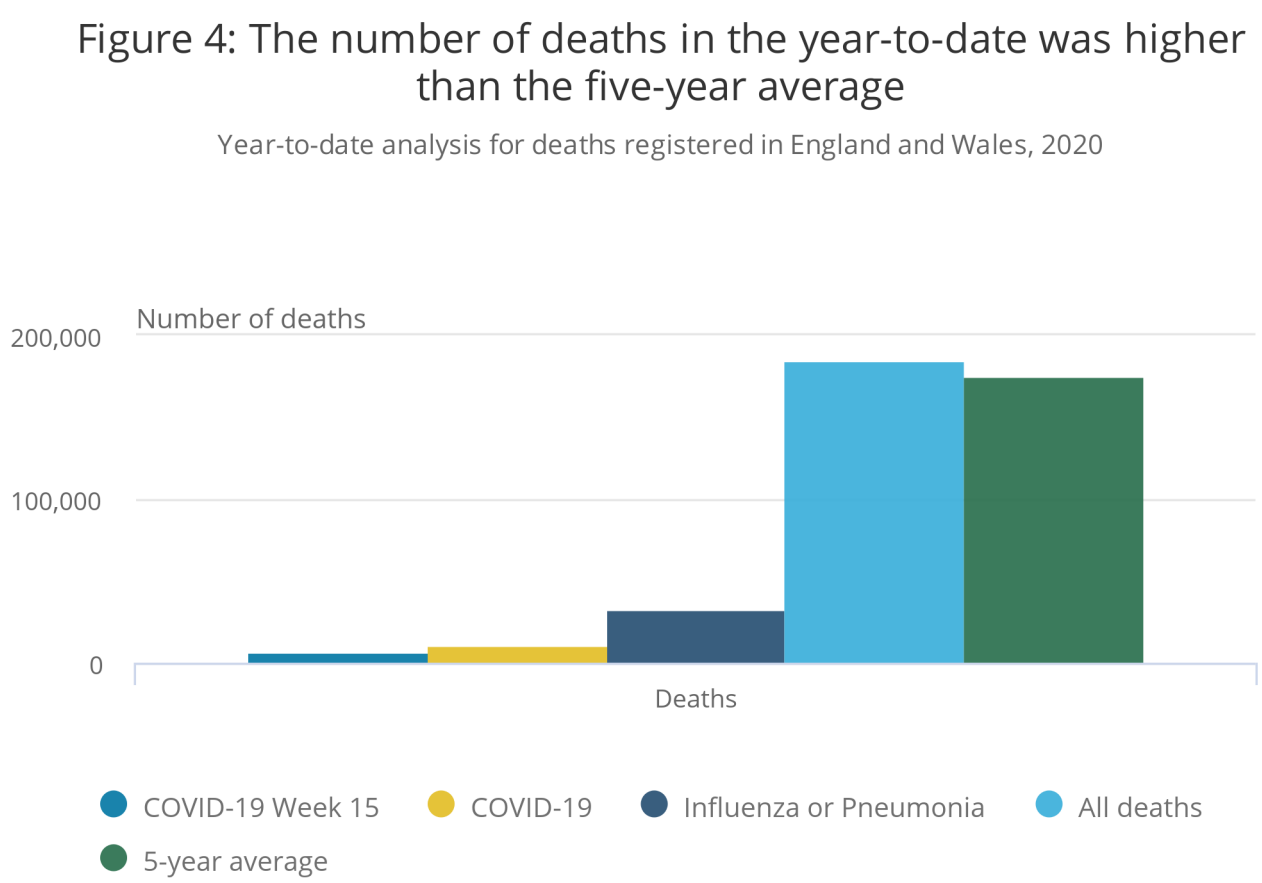
.xls

In Week 15 (week ending 10 April 2020), there were 288 deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) registered in the North East of England. The region with the largest number and proportion of deaths involving COVID-19 was London with 1,506 deaths; 53.2% of all London deaths and 24.3% of all COVID-19 deaths.

6 . Deaths registered in the year-to-date, Week 1 to 15

Figure 4: The number of deaths in the year-to-date was higher than the five-year average

Year-to-date analysis for deaths registered in England and Wales, 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales

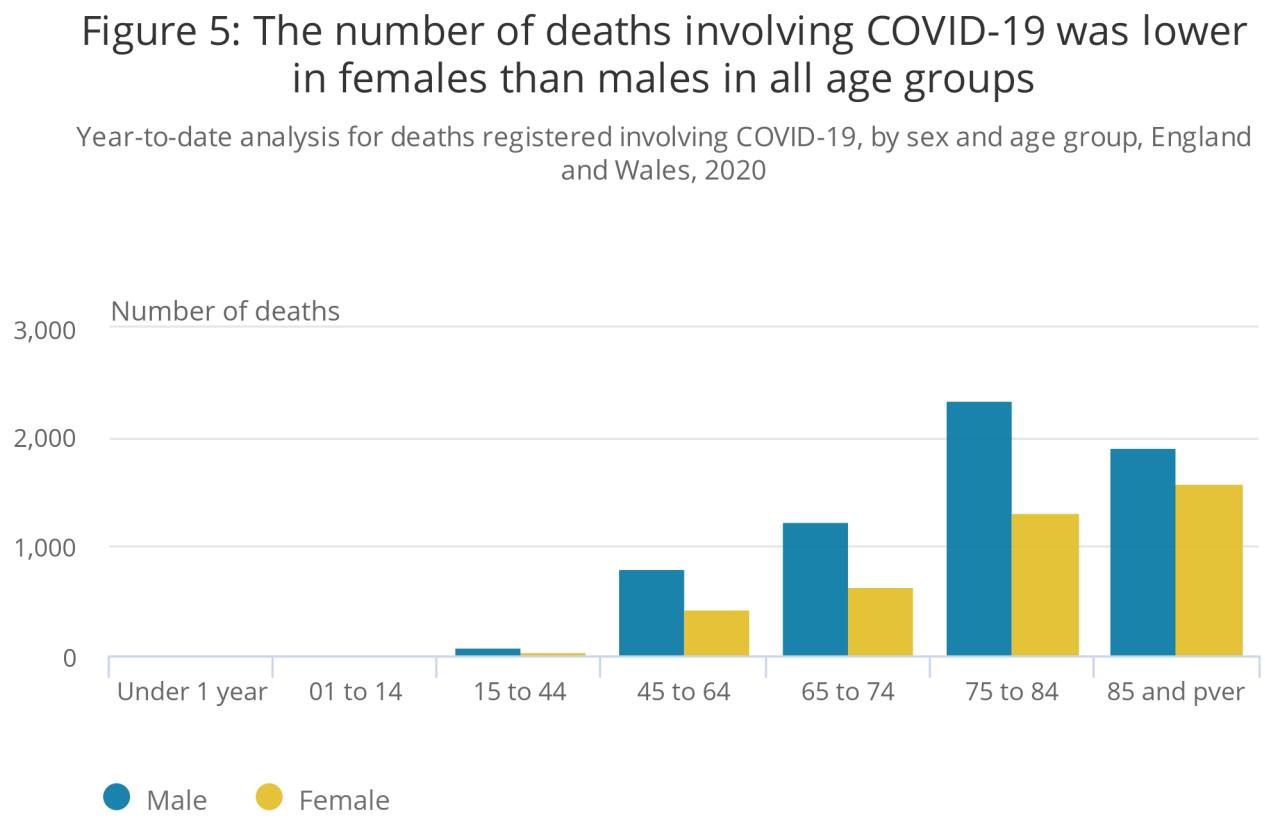
Notes:

1. Figures include deaths of non-residents.
2. Based on date a death was registered rather than occurred.
3. Estimates for 2020 are provisional.
4. The ICD-10 definitions for COVID-19 are U07.1 and U07.2.
5. Individual weeks may not sum to the year-to-date analysis as previous weeks have been recalculated in order to have the most up-to-date estimates.

Looking at the year-to-date (using the most up-to-date data we have available to get the most accurate estimates), the number of deaths is currently higher than the five-year average. The current number of deaths is 184,950, which is 10,232 more than the five-year average. Of the deaths registered by 10 April 2020, 10,350 mentioned the coronavirus (COVID-19) on the death certificate; this is 5.6% of all deaths.

Figure 5: The number of deaths involving COVID-19 was lower in females than males in all age groups

Year-to-date analysis for deaths registered involving COVID-19, by sex and age group, England and Wales, 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales

Notes:

1. Figures include deaths of non-residents.
2. Based on date a death was registered rather than occurred.
3. Estimates for 2020 are provisional.
4. .The ICD-10 definitions for COVID-19 are U07.1 and U07.2.
5. Individual weeks may not sum to the year-to-date analysis as previous weeks have been recalculated in order to have the most up-to-date estimates.

In each age group there have been more deaths involving COVID-19 in males than in females. The largest difference was in age group 75 to 84 years where there were 2,346 deaths involving COVID-19 in males and 1,315 in females.

7 . Deaths registered by place of occurrence

The year-to-date analysis shows that, of deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) up to Week 15, 83.9% (8,673 deaths) occurred in hospital, with the remainder occurring in hospices (87 deaths), care homes (1,043 deaths) and private homes (466 deaths).

Figure 6a: The majority of COVID-19 deaths occurred in hospitals

Year-to-date analysis for deaths registered in England and Wales, 2020

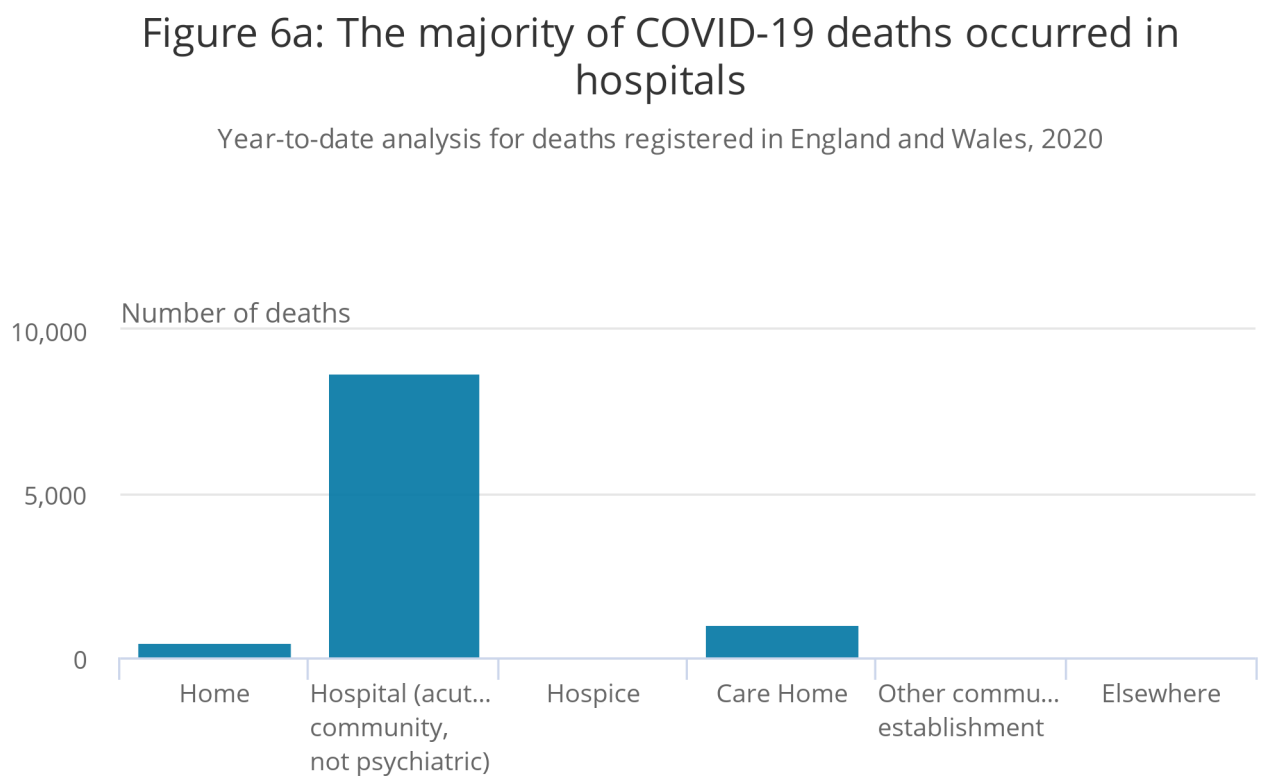
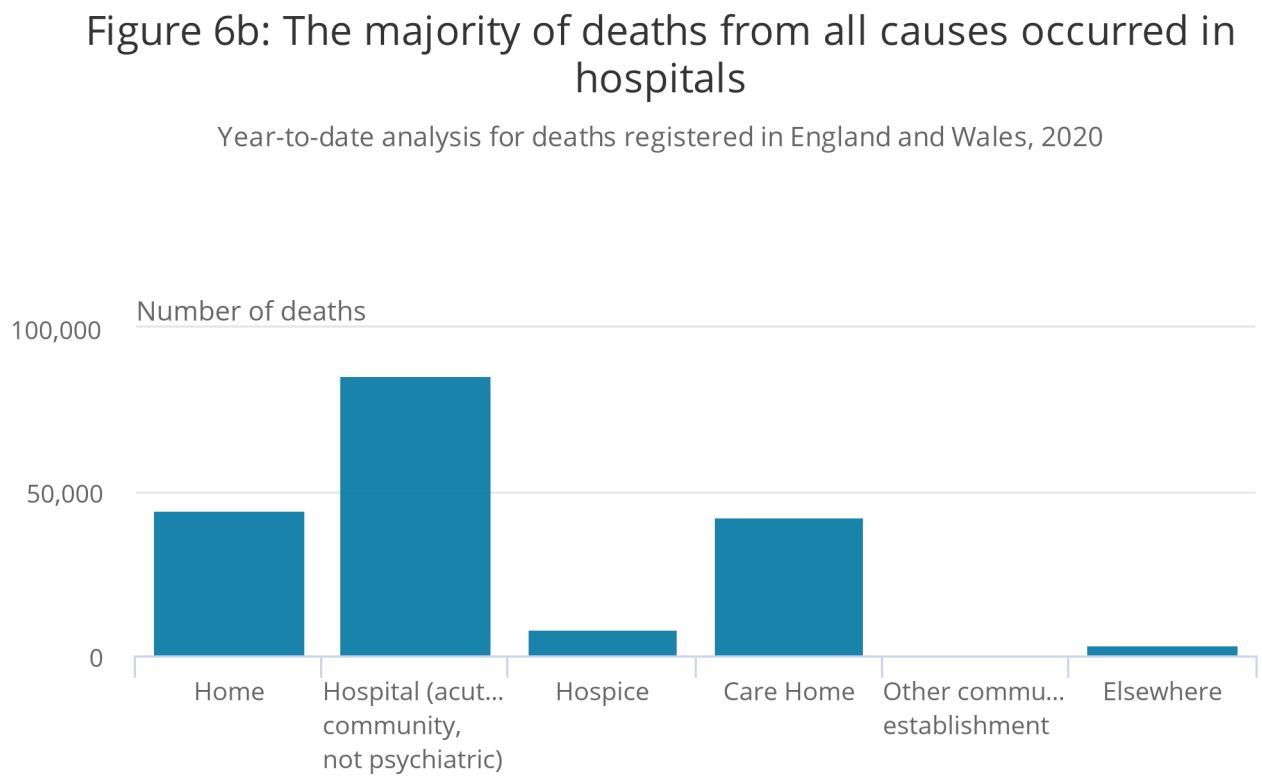


Figure 6b: The majority of deaths from all causes occurred in hospitals

Year-to-date analysis for deaths registered in England and Wales, 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional

Notes:

1. For all deaths registered from 28 December 2019 to 10 April 2020.
2. Figures include deaths of non-residents.
3. Estimates are provisional.
4. The International Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD-10) definitions for COVID-19 are U07.1 and U07.2.

When looking at the change in total deaths registered by place of occurrence between Week 11 (when the first COVID-19 deaths were registered) and Week 15, we see that the number of deaths in care homes has doubled from 2,471 deaths to 4,927 (99.4%). There has also been a 72.4% increase (4,975 deaths to 8,578) in deaths occurring in hospitals, and 51.1% increase in deaths occurring in private homes (2,725 deaths to 4,117).

When looking in more detail at the large increase in care home deaths we can see that in Week 11, care home deaths made up 22.4% of all deaths, which has risen to 26.6% of all deaths in Week 15. In Week 15, 16.8% (826 deaths) of all deaths occurring in care homes involved COVID-19. This is lower than the 57.8% of hospital deaths (4,957) that involved COVID-19, but higher than the 8.0% (330 deaths) that occurred in private homes.

The ONS is working with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Public Health England to better understand deaths that are occurring in care homes. From 28 April, the ONS will publish counts of deaths involving COVID-19 in care homes, based on reporting from care home operators to CQC.

8 . Deaths data

Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional
Dataset | Released 21 April 2020
Provisional counts of the number of deaths registered in England and Wales, by age, sex and region, in the latest weeks for which data are available. Includes data on coronavirus (COVID-19) deaths.

9 . Glossary

Coronavirus (COVID-19) deaths

Coronavirus (COVID-19) deaths are those deaths registered in England and Wales in the stated week where COVID-19 was mentioned on the death certificate as “deaths involving COVID-19”. A doctor can certify the involvement of COVID-19 based on symptoms and clinical findings – a positive test result is not required.

10 . Measuring the data

Week 15 includes the Good Friday bank holiday. Based on past years, we would expect the proportion of deaths occurring in the week ending Good Friday to drop for the period. The Coronavirus Act 2020 permitted Registry Offices to continue to take death registrations over the holiday period this year. This may reduce the usual drop in registration of deaths occurring in the week.

The high number of deaths recorded in Week 1 of 2000 should be treated with caution. While we saw a high number of influenza cases in this period we also need to consider caveats around early January registration data. The number of registration days in a reference period can impact upon mortality statistics. For example, bank holidays can affect the number of registrations within a week or month because of registration offices being closed. Because of the Christmas period we often see high death registrations in the first two weeks of January when registration services are back in office and dealing with any backlog over the bank holiday period.

More quality and methodology information on strengths, limitations, appropriate uses, and how the data were created is available in the Mortality statistics in England and Wales QMI.

To meet user needs, we publish very timely but provisional counts of death registrations in England and Wales in our Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional dataset. These are presented by sex, age group and regions (within England) as well as for Wales as a whole. To allow time for registration and processing, these figures are published 11 days after the week ends. Because of the rapidly changing situation, in this bulletin we have also given provisional updated totals based on the latest available death registrations, up to 18 April 2020.

Because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, our regular weekly deaths release now provides a separate breakdown of the numbers of deaths involving COVID-19: that is, where COVID-19 or suspected COVID-19 was mentioned anywhere on the death certificate, including in combination with other health conditions. If a death certificate mentions COVID-19 it will not always be the main cause of death, but may be a contributory factor. This new bulletin summarises the latest weekly information and will be updated each week during the pandemic.

These figures are different from the daily surveillance figures on COVID-19 deaths published by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) on the GOV.UK website, for the UK as a whole and constituent countries. Figures in this report are derived from the formal process of death registration and may include cases where the doctor completing the death certificate diagnosed possible cases of COVID-19, for example, where this was based on relevant symptoms but no test for the virus was conducted. Our figures also include any deaths that occur outside hospital.

In contrast to the GOV.UK figures, we include only deaths registered in England and Wales, which is the legal remit of the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Table 1 provides an overview of the differences in definitions between sources.

Table 1: Definitions of COVID-19 deaths between different sources

	DHSC COVID-19 (as published on GOV.UK)	ONS COVID-19 deaths registered	ONS COVID-19 death occurrence (actual date of death)	NHS England
Coverage	UK (however we only include England and Wales breakdowns for comparable coverage with ONS data)	Registrations in England and Wales In discussions with devolved nations to create UK estimates in the near future	Registrations in England and Wales In discussions with devolved nations to create UK estimates in the near future	England
Inclusion	Deaths in hospitals Deaths where patient has been tested for COVID-19	Any place of death, including Nursing homes Deaths where COVID-19 has been mentioned on the death certificate	Any place of death, including Nursing homes Deaths where COVID-19 has been mentioned on the death certificate	Deaths in hospitals Deaths where patient has been tested for COVID-19
Timeliness	Provided daily but not officially registered. Data are provided to NHS-E directly by hospitals. Data only published once confirmed family have been notified of death	Weekly registrations are 11 days behind because of the time taken to register, process and publish. Registered in the week ending the 10 April 2020 (Week 15).	Weekly registrations are 11 days behind because of the time taken to register, process and publish. Deaths which occurred in Week 15 but were registered up to 18 April 2020.	Updated daily for each date of death

Source: Office for National Statistics

We will publish accompanying articles periodically, giving enhanced information such as age-standardised and age-specific mortality rates for recent time periods and breakdowns of deaths involving COVID-19 by associated pre-existing health conditions.

Within the accompanying dataset we have also provided weekly provisional figures on COVID-19 deaths registered in the UK along with age breakdowns by UK, and sex and age breakdowns by Great Britain estimates.

There is usually a delay of at least five days between occurrence and registration. More information on this issue can be found in our impact of registration delays release.

Our User guide to mortality statistics provides further information on data quality, legislation and procedures relating to mortality and includes a glossary of terms.

11 . Strengths and limitations

Figures are based on the date the death was registered, not when it occurred. There is usually a delay of at least five days between occurrence and registration. More information on this issue can be found in our impact of registration delays release.

12 . Related links

Deaths registered in England and Wales: 2018
Bulletin | Released 6 August 2019
Registered deaths by age, sex, selected underlying causes of death and the leading causes of death. Contains death rates and death registrations by area of residence and single year of age.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) product page
Product page | Updated when new data are available
Brings together the latest data and analysis on the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in the UK and its effect on the economy and society.