

Statistical bulletin

Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional: week ending 1 May 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.



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19 May 2020

Correction

14 May 2020 16:16

A small error occurred in the data download in Figure 1. In the data download the maximum deaths over five years contained minimum values instead. The error did not affect the graph associated with the data download. We have now corrected this error and the data download now contains the maximum deaths over five years. We apologise for any inconvenience.

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1 . Other pages in this release

- [Comparison of weekly death occurrences in England and Wales: up to week ending 1 May 2020](#)
- [Death registrations and occurrences by local authority and health board](#)
- [Deaths involving COVID-19 in care homes notified to the Care Quality Commission, England](#)

2 . Main points

- The number of deaths registered in England and Wales in the week ending 1 May 2020 (Week 18) was 17,953, a decrease for the second week running, but 8,012 more than the five-year average for Week 18.
- Of the deaths registered in Week 18, 6,035 mentioned “novel coronavirus (COVID-19)”, which was 33.6% of all deaths; a decrease of 2,202 deaths compared with Week 17 (37.4% of all deaths).
- The number of deaths involving COVID-19 decreased in most age groups, the exceptions being age groups 15 to 19 and 35 to 39 years (which increased by 1 death each).
- The number of deaths in care homes (from all causes) for Week 18 decreased to 6,409; however, deaths involving COVID-19 as a percentage of all deaths in care homes rose to 37.8% compared with 35.3% in Week 17.
- For the first time, all regions showed a decrease in the percentage of deaths involving COVID-19 in Week 18; the South East had the highest number of COVID-19 deaths, making this the first week that London did not have the highest count.
- In Wales, there were 281 deaths registered in Week 18 involving COVID-19, accounting for 30.2% of all deaths registered.
- Of deaths involving COVID-19 registered up to Week 18, 68.5% (22,873 deaths) occurred in hospital, with the remainder mainly occurring in care homes (8,312), private homes (1,562) and hospices (386).
- The number of deaths registered in the UK in the week ending 1 May 2020 (Week 18) was 20,033, of which 6,676 deaths involved COVID-19.

3 . Deaths registered by week

Figure 1: The total number of deaths (all cause) and the number of deaths involving COVID-19 decreased for the second week running

Number of deaths registered by week, England and Wales, 28 December 2019 to 1 May 2020

The provisional number of deaths registered in England and Wales decreased from 21,997 in Week 17 (week ending 24 April 2020) to 17,953 in Week 18 (week ending 1 May 2020). This is 8,012 more deaths than the five-year average (Figure 1). More information is in [Measuring the data](#).

The number of deaths was around or below the five-year average up to Week 12. The number of deaths increased between Weeks 13 and 16 before decreasing in Weeks 17 and 18.

The number of death registrations involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) also decreased from 8,237 in Week 17 to 6,035 in Week 18. This means that 33.6% of all deaths registered in Week 18 mentioned COVID-19, compared with 37.4% and 39.2% of all deaths in Weeks 17 and 16 respectively.

Similar patterns can be seen for England and Wales separately, with the number of deaths in England decreasing from 20,841 in Week 17 to 17,004 in Week 18, which is 7,715 above the Week 18 average. Of the Week 18 deaths, 33.8% (5,748 deaths) involved COVID-19.

For Wales, the number of deaths decreased from 1,124 deaths in Week 17 to 929 deaths in Week 18, 305 deaths higher than the Week 18 average. Of these, 30.2% (281 deaths) involved COVID-19.

The number of deaths mentioning "Influenza and Pneumonia" on the death certificate (without COVID-19) decreased from 1,696 in Week 17 to 1,450 in Week 18. There were 2,944 deaths in Week 17 that mentioned both "Influenza and Pneumonia" and COVID-19 on the death certificate, this decreased to 2,089 deaths in Week 18.

In Week 18, 41.7% of all deaths mentioned "Influenza and Pneumonia", COVID-19, or both. In comparison, this was 45.2% for Week 17 and the five-year average of deaths mentioning "Influenza and Pneumonia" was 18.2%. "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](#).
- Find out how our studies and surveys are [serving public need](#).

Figure 2: The total number of weekly deaths has been higher than the five-year average for seven weeks in a row

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

Looking at the year-to-date (using the most up-to-date data we have available), the number of deaths up to 1 May 2020 was 247,251, which is 41,627 more than the five-year average (Figure 2). Of the deaths registered by 1 May, 33,408 mentioned COVID-19 on the death certificate, this is 13.5% of all deaths.

Between Weeks 1 and 12, 138,916 deaths were registered, which was 4,822 less than the five-year average for these weeks. However, between Weeks 13 and 18, 108,345 deaths were registered, which was 46,494 more than the five-year average. The number of COVID-19 deaths contributed 75.3% of the excess deaths when compared with the five-year average in week 18 (Figure 2). We are continuing to investigate the number of non-COVID-19 related deaths and will publish detailed analysis on this in the future.

4 . Deaths registered by age group

Figure 3: People aged 90 years and over had the highest number of COVID-19 deaths in Week 18

Deaths by age group, England and Wales, week ending 1 May 2020

In Week 18 (week ending 1 May 2020), the number of deaths decreased across most age groups compared with Week 17. The number of deaths involving COVID-19 decreased in all age groups apart from age groups 15 to 19 and 35 to 39 years (which increased by 1 death each).

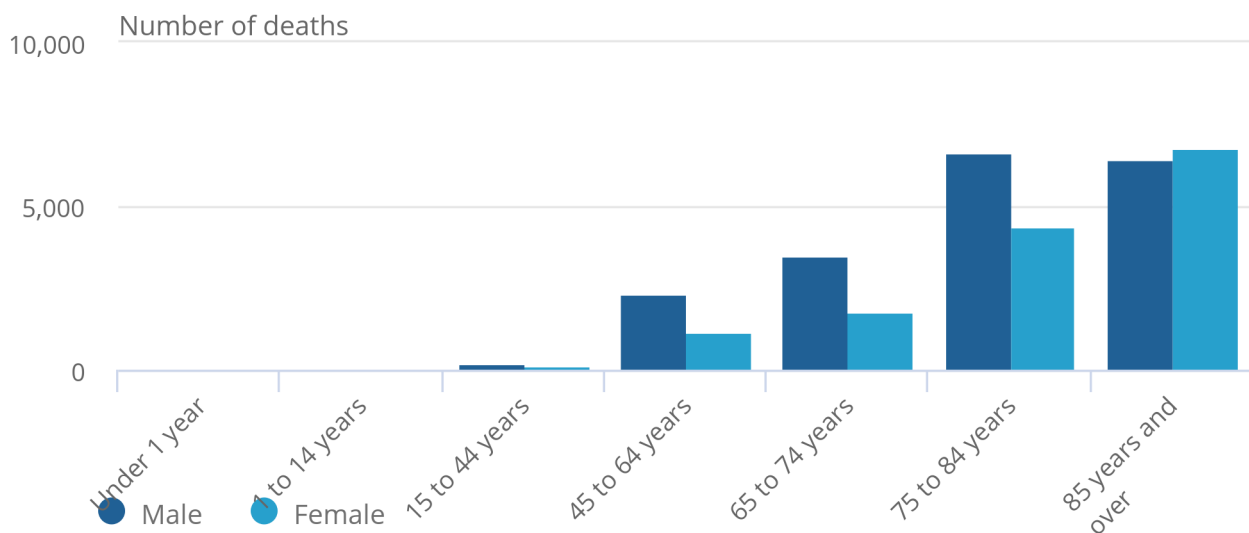
The highest proportion of COVID-19 deaths was in age group 80 to 84 years where 36.7% of deaths involved COVID-19 (1,096 deaths). The largest number of COVID-19 deaths was in those aged 90 years and over with 1,494 deaths.

Figure 4: The number of deaths involving COVID-19 was highest in women aged 85 years and over for the first time

Deaths involving COVID-19 registered between Week 1 and Week 18 of 2020 by sex and age group, England and Wales

Figure 4: The number of deaths involving COVID-19 was highest in women aged 85 years and over for the first time

Deaths involving COVID-19 registered between Week 1 and Week 18 of 2020 by sex and age group, England and Wales



Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Figures include deaths of non-residents.
2. Based on date a death was registered rather than occurred.
3. All figures 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 figures.

Looking at the year-to date, for most age groups there have been more deaths involving COVID-19 in males than in females. However, there were 2 female deaths in the 1 to 14 years age group, but no male deaths. The inclusion of Week 18 in the year-to-date has meant that for the first time there were more deaths for females aged 85 years and over (6,780 deaths) than males (6,434) as seen in Figure 4. The largest difference between males and females was in the 75 to 84 years age group where there were 6,625 deaths involving COVID-19 in males and 4,363 in females.

Looking closer at the age group 85 years and over, one of the reasons why the number of deaths is higher could be because the female population is higher than the male population in this age group. England and Wales [population projections for 2020](#) show 939,000 females compared with 564,000 males.

5 . Deaths by region in England and Wales

Figure 5: The number of deaths involving COVID-19 was highest in the South East

Deaths by regions in England, and Wales, week ending 1 May 2020

Figure 6: The number of deaths (all causes) and deaths involving COVID-19 fell across all English regions and Wales

Deaths by regions in England, and Wales, week ending 1 May 2020

In Week 18 (week ending 1 May 2020), there were 281 deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) registered in Wales. The English region with the largest number of deaths involving COVID-19 was the South East with 966 deaths, making up 16.0% of all deaths involving COVID-19 and 33.9% of all deaths in the South East. However, London still had the highest proportion of deaths involving COVID-19 with 40.2% of all deaths being COVID-19 related. The number of deaths for all causes and deaths involving COVID-19 has decreased for all regions.

6 . Deaths registered by place of occurrence

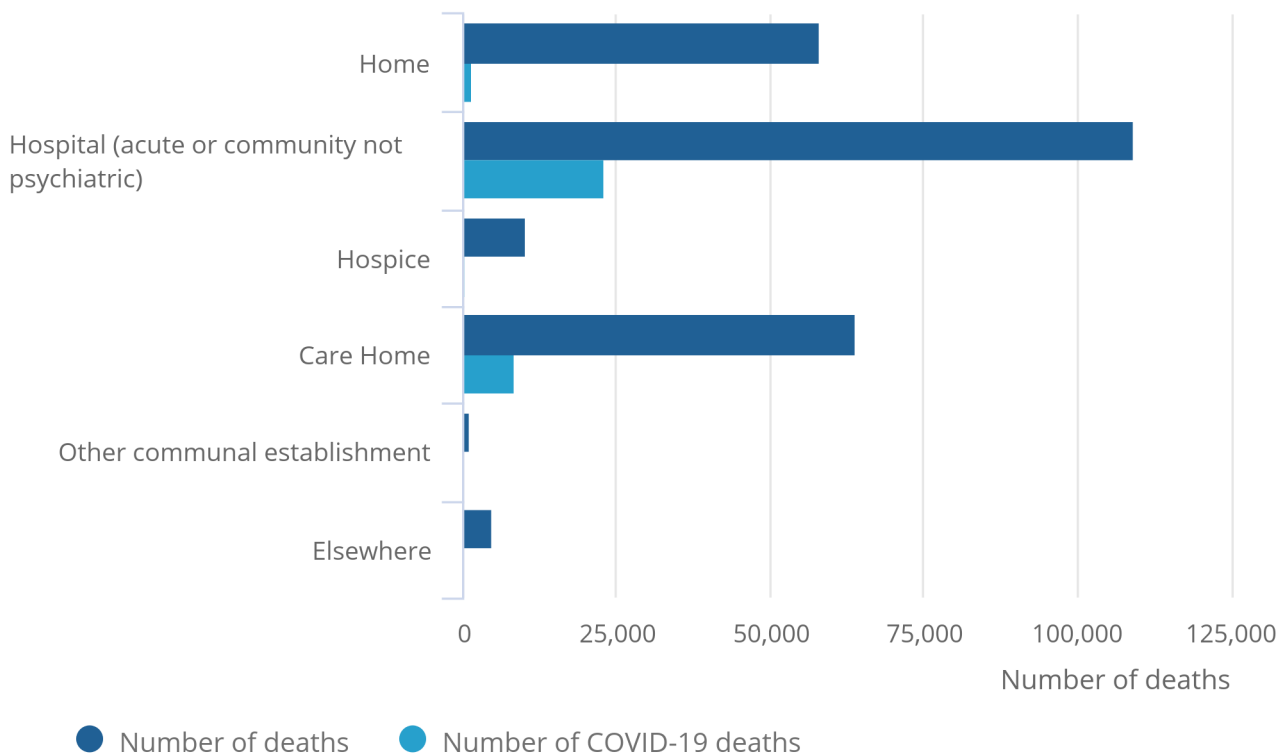
The year-to-date analysis shows that, of deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) up to Week 18 (week ending 1 May 2020), 68.5% (22,873 deaths) occurred in hospital, with the remainder occurring in care homes (8,312 deaths), private homes (1,562 deaths), hospices (386 deaths), other communal establishments (142 deaths), and elsewhere (133 deaths).

Figure 7: The highest number of COVID-19 deaths occurred in hospitals

Deaths involving COVID-19 registered between Week 1 and Week 18 of 2020 by place of occurrence, England and Wales

Figure 7: The highest number of COVID-19 deaths occurred in hospitals

Deaths involving COVID-19 registered between Week 1 and Week 18 of 2020 by place of occurrence, England and Wales



Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Figures include deaths of non-residents.
2. Based on date a death was registered rather than occurred.
3. All figures for 2020 are provisional.
4. The ICD-10 definitions for COVID-19 are U07.1 and U07.2.

Deaths in care homes made up 32.7% of all deaths in Week 16, 36.0% in Week 17 and 35.7% in Week 18 (Figure 7). Between Week 17 and Week 18, the number of deaths in care homes decreased by 19.0% to 6,409. However, the proportion of care home deaths that involved COVID-19 increased, and 37.8% of all deaths in care homes involved COVID-19 in Week 18.

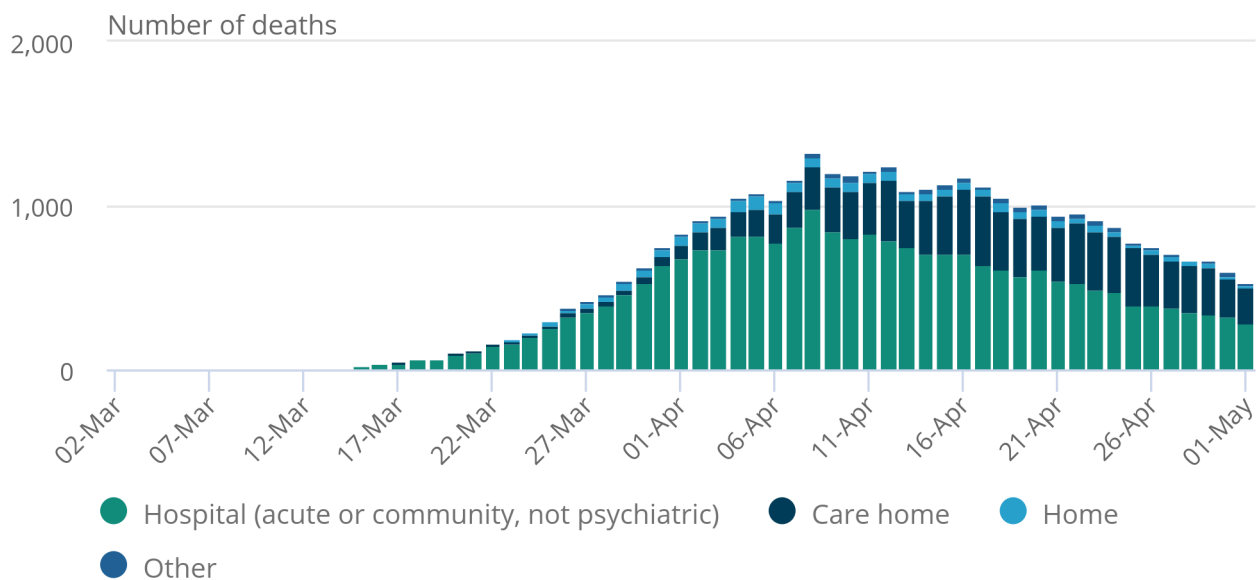
Between Week 17 and Week 18, there has been an 11.7% decrease in deaths occurring in private homes (4,834 to 4,268 deaths) while deaths occurring in hospitals decreased by 22.4% (8,243 to 6,397 deaths) compared with Week 17.

Figure 8: The proportion of COVID-19 deaths occurring in hospitals is decreasing

Number of deaths by actual date of death registered up to 9 May, by the place the death occurred and per day for England and Wales, 2020

Figure 8: The proportion of COVID-19 deaths occurring in hospitals is decreasing

Number of deaths by actual date of death registered up to 9 May, by the place the death occurred and per day for England and Wales, 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Figures include deaths of non-residents.
2. Based on date of death registered up to 9 May.
3. All figures for 2020 are provisional.
4. The ICD-10 definitions for COVID-19 are U07.1 and U07.2.

Figure 8 is based on date of death for deaths registered up to 9 May 2020, rather than date of registration. This means as more deaths are registered, deaths per day are likely to increase, especially later dates. On each day, over half of deaths involving COVID-19 occurred in hospitals, with deaths occurring in private homes and care homes increasing. In the most recent days, the proportion of deaths occurring in care homes has accounted for 40.4% of all deaths involving COVID-19. Although we expect numbers of deaths to increase as more are registered, it currently appears that deaths per day are decreasing.

The Office for National Statistics (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, we have published counts of deaths reported by care home operators to CQC involving COVID-19. More information can be found in our [comparisons article](#).

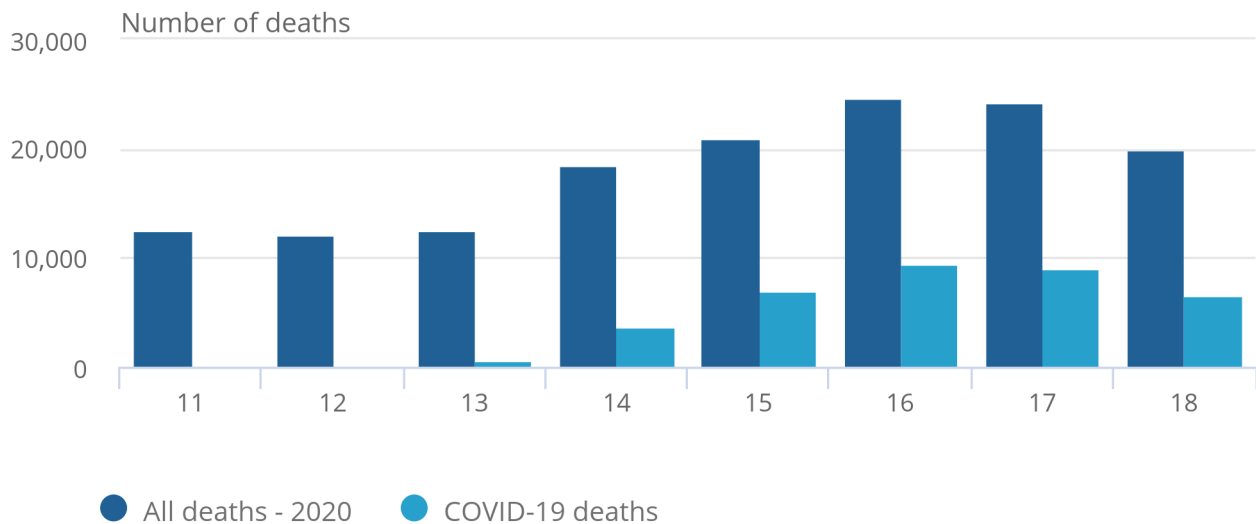
7 . Deaths registered in the UK

Figure 9: The number of COVID-19 deaths registered in the UK has decreased since week 16

Number of deaths registered by week, UK, week ending 13 March to week ending 1 May 2020

Figure 9: The number of COVID-19 deaths registered in the UK has decreased since week 16

Number of deaths registered by week, UK, week ending 13 March to week ending 1 May 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Based on date of death registered rather than occurred.
2. All figures for 2020 are provisional.
3. Figures exclude deaths of non-residents.
4. The ICD-10 definitions for COVID-19 are U07.1 and U07.2.
5. National Records of Scotland produce figures for Scotland.
6. Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency produce figures for Northern Ireland.

Across the UK, there were 20,033 deaths (all causes) registered in Week 18 (ending 1 May), of which 6,676 deaths involved the coronavirus (COVID-19). There were 5 deaths involving COVID-19 in the UK as a whole registered in Week 11 (ending 13 March); this increased to 9,495 deaths registered in Week 16 (ending 17 April) but has fallen to 6,676 deaths registered in Week 18. In Week 18, England had the highest number of deaths involving COVID-19 with 5,748 deaths, followed by Scotland with 523 deaths, Wales with 281 deaths and Northern Ireland with 124 deaths.

8 . Deaths data

[Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional](#)

Dataset | Released 12 May 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 the most up-to-date figures available for deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19).

[Death registrations and occurrences by local authority and health board](#)

Dataset | Released 12 May 2020

Provisional counts of the number of deaths registered in England and Wales, including deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19), by local authority, health board and place of death in the latest weeks for which data are available.

[Deaths involving COVID-19 in care homes notified to the Care Quality Commission, England](#)

Dataset | Released 12 May 2020

Provisional counts of deaths in care homes caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) by local authority. Published by the Office for National Statistics and Care Quality Commission.

[Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional](#)

Dataset | Released 12 May 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 the 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. A doctor can certify the involvement of COVID-19 based on symptoms and clinical findings – a positive test result is not required.

Definitions of COVID-19 for deaths in Scotland and Northern Ireland are similar to England and Wales.

10 . Measuring the data

Week 17 includes the Easter Monday bank holiday. Based on past years, we would expect the proportion of deaths occurring in the week including Easter Monday 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.

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 2 May 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.

From 29 April 2020, DHSC started to publish as their [daily announced figures on deaths from COVID-19](#) for the UK, a new series that uses improved data for England produced by Public Health England (PHE). These figures provide a count of all deaths where a positive test for COVID-19 has been confirmed, wherever that death has taken place, a change from previously reporting only confirmed COVID-19 deaths in hospitals. Figures for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have already begun to include deaths outside hospitals, so this change ensured that the UK-wide series has a shared and common definitional coverage. A [statement](#) was published by the ONS, which provides more detail of the changes.

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

	DHSC COVID-19 (as published on GOV.UK) before 29 April	DHSC COVID-19 (as published on GOV.UK) from 29 April	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)	UK (however we only include England and Wales breakdowns for comparable coverage with ONS data)	Registrations in England and Wales	Registrations in England and Wales	England only
			Selected UK figures are included in the weekly release	In discussions with devolved nations to create UK estimates in the near future	
Inclusion	Deaths in hospitals Deaths where patient has been tested for COVID-19	Includes any place of death, including care homes and community Deaths where patient has been tested for COVID-19	Any place of death, including care homes and community Deaths where COVID-19 has been mentioned on the death certificate	Any place of death, including care homes and community 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	Provided daily but not officially registered	Weekly registrations are 11 days behind because of the time taken to register, process and publish	Weekly registrations are 11 days behind because of the time taken to register, process and publish	Updated daily for each date of death
			Registered in the week ending 1 May (week 18)	Deaths which occurred in week 18 but were registered up to 2 May	

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.