

Statistical bulletin

Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional: week ending 27 March 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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1 . Main points

- The provisional number of deaths registered in England and Wales in the week ending 27 March 2020 (Week 13) was 11,141; this represents an increase of 496 deaths registered compared with the previous week (Week 12) and 1,011 more than the five-year average.
- A total of 150,047 deaths were registered in England and Wales between 28 December 2019 and 27 March 2020 (year to date), and of these, 647 involved the coronavirus (COVID-19) (0.4%); including deaths that occurred up to 27 March but were registered up to 1 April, the number involving COVID-19 was 1,639.
- For deaths that occurred up to 27 March, there were 1,568 deaths in England registered by 1 April involving COVID-19 compared with 1,649 deaths reported by NHS England for the same period in a newly published dataset.
- Of the deaths registered in Week 13, 539 mentioned "novel coronavirus (COVID-19)", which is 4.8% of all deaths; this compared with 103 (1.0% of all deaths) in Week 12.
- This is slightly lower than the figures reported by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) for Week 13 (739) as it takes time for deaths to be reported and included in Office for National Statistics (ONS) figures.
- Of deaths involving COVID-19 in Week 13, 92.9% (501 deaths) occurred in hospital with the remainder occurring in hospices, care homes and private homes.
- Please note, where Easter falls in previous years will have an impact on the five-year average used for comparison.

2 . Comparisons of COVID-19 death counts

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) release daily updates on the GOV.UK website counting the total number of deaths reported to them that have occurred in hospitals among patients who have tested positive for the coronavirus (COVID-19) up until 5pm the day before.

Since 2 April, NHS England have been releasing daily updates of [deaths in hospitals](#) among patients who have tested positive for COVID-19 in England, which includes updates on previous days numbers.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) provides figures based on all deaths registered involving COVID-19 according to death certification, whether in or out of hospital settings. More information can be found in the [Measuring the Data](#) section.

Using these three sources for England only, Figure 1 shows for each day:

- the numbers of deaths involving COVID-19 that were announced each day by DHSC
- the numbers of deaths that occurred each day, as released by NHS England (the same data as DHSC announce, but counted by date of death)
- the numbers of deaths that occurred each day for those that were registered by and informed to the ONS by 1 April

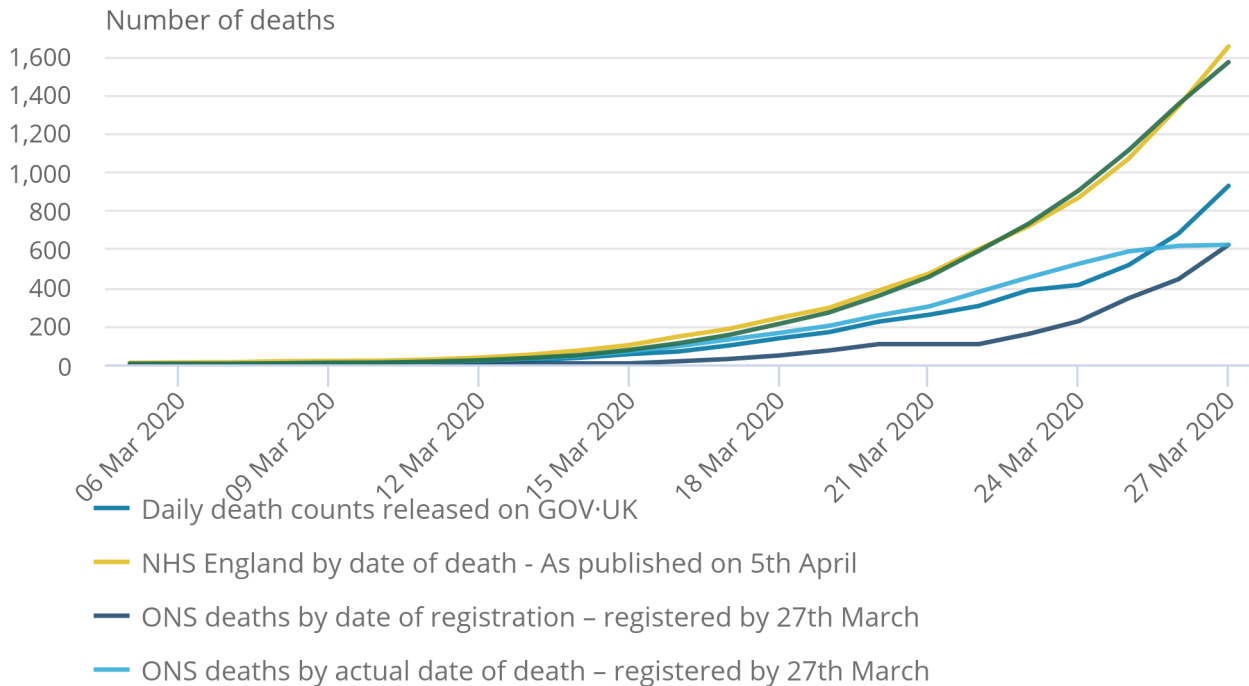
At the time of publication, further work is in progress across government to reconcile all sources of COVID-19 deaths data. We will be reviewing the comparisons section in light of these developments in the coming weeks.

Figure 1: The cumulative number of deaths involving COVID-19 in England using different data sources, up to 27 March 2020

Cumulative number of deaths involving COVID-19 in England

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Cumulative number of deaths involving COVID-19 in England



Source: Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. [DHSC figures](#).
2. [NHS England figures](#).
3. Figures include deaths of non-residents.
4. Estimates are provisional.
5. The ICD-10 definitions for COVID-19 are U07.1 and U07.2.

Figure 1 shows that on 27 March, the DHSC reported 926 total deaths had taken place in hospitals in England (deaths by 5pm on the 27 March as announced on the 28 March). NHS England’s reconciled figures now report 1,649 deaths in hospitals by the same date (published on 5 April). The number of deaths registered by 1 April involving COVID-19, by the same date of death, was 1,568 occurring both within and outside of hospitals. This is more than double that published by the DHSC but slightly lower than NHS England’s latest reconciled figures. This is because of the time taken for deaths to be registered.

We have undertaken some preliminary analysis to understand how many deaths registered in England and Wales so far have taken place outside of hospital settings. The analysis shows that of deaths involving COVID-19 in Week 13, 92.9% (501 deaths) occurred in hospital with the remainder occurring in hospices, care homes and private homes.

Table 1: The majority of COVID-19 deaths occurred within hospitals
England and Wales

	Number of deaths	Number of COVID-19 deaths
Home	2,785	15
Hospitals (acute or community not psychiatric)	5,105	501
Hospice	504	2
Care Home	2,489	20
Other communal establishments	33	0
Elsewhere	225	1
Total	11,141	539

Source: Office for National Statistics – Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional: week ending 27 March 2020

Notes

1. For all deaths registered from 20 to 27 March 2020. [Back to table](#)
2. Figures include deaths of non-residents. [Back to table](#)
3. Estimates are provisional. [Back to table](#)
4. The International Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD-10) definitions for COVID-19 are U07.1 and U07.2. [Back to table](#)

The figures published on GOV.UK are valuable because they are available very quickly and give an indication of what is happening day by day. Their definition is also clear, so the limitations of the data can be understood. But they will not necessarily include all deaths involving COVID-19, such as those in England that are not in a hospital or where no test result was available. Although the main GOV.UK figure reported is for the whole UK, breakdowns by area are available.

NHS England's reconciled numbers are valuable as they give a good indication of the lags in the daily deaths in hospital reporting process. They allow analysis by date of death to be carried out, which is a better indicator of the growth in the number of deaths.

Numbers produced by the ONS take longer to prepare because they have to be certified by a doctor, registered and processed. But once ready, they are the most accurate and complete information. The ONS provides figures based on deaths registered in England and Wales with COVID-19 (more information can be found in the [Measuring the data section](#)).

Comparisons of data sources at the England and Wales level are available in the [accompanying datasets](#).

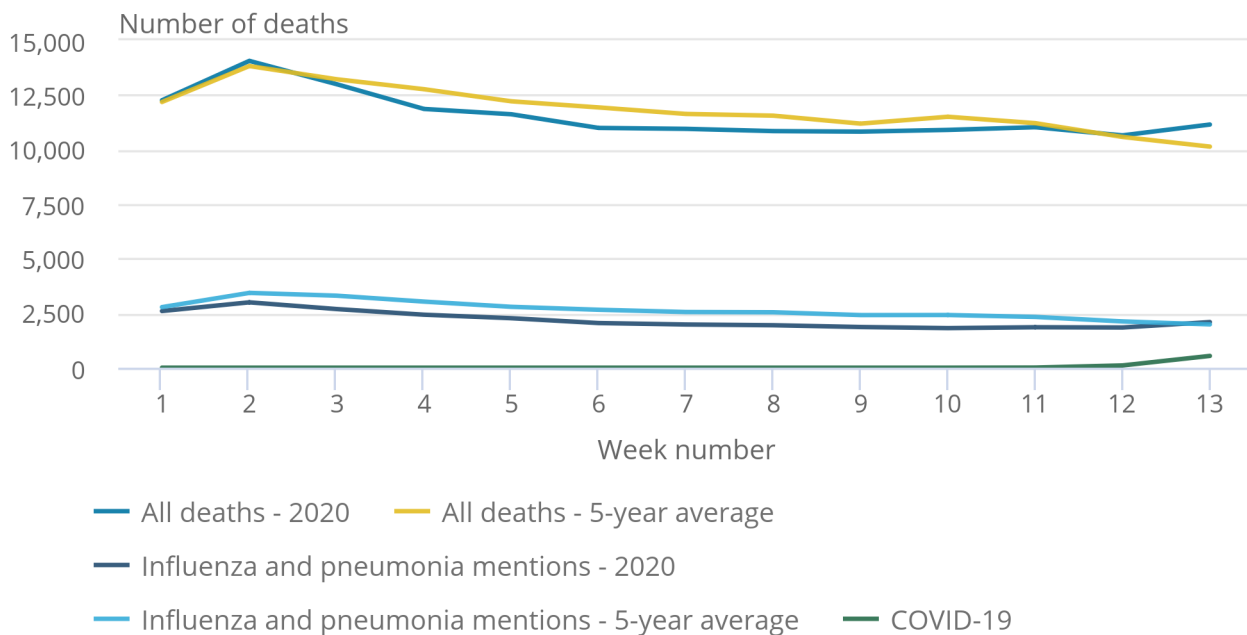
3 . Deaths registered by week

Figure 2: The number of deaths involving COVID-19 and "Influenza and Pneumonia" increased compared with the previous week

Number of deaths registered by week, England and Wales, 28 December 2019 to 27 March 2020

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Number of deaths registered by week, England and Wales, 28 December 2019 to 27 March 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Death registrations

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, therefore a death may be counted in both categories.

The provisional number of deaths registered in England and Wales in Week 13 (week ending 27 March 2020) increased from 10,645 in Week 12 (week ending 20 March 2020) to 11,141. This is 1,011 more deaths than the five-year average of 10,130.

The number of death registrations involving coronavirus (COVID-19) increased from 103 in Week 12 to 539 in Week 13. Including deaths that occurred in Week 13 but were registered up to 1 April, the number involving COVID-19 was 1,268 (this is not shown in Figure 2).

The number of deaths mentioning “Influenza or pneumonia” on the death certificate increased from 1,841 in Week 12 to 2,090 in Week 13.

In Week 13, 18.8% of all deaths mentioned “Influenza or Pneumonia”, COVID-19, or both. In comparison, for the five-year average, 19.6% 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 3: Deaths involving COVID-19 were registered in all age groups apart from those aged under 15 years

Deaths by age group, England and Wales, week ending 27 March 2020

[Download the data](#)

In Week 13 (week ending 27 March 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). There were 99 deaths among those aged 65 to 74 years, which was 5.5% of deaths of that age group, the highest proportion. The highest number of deaths in a specific age group occurred in those aged 85 years and over, with 188 deaths (4.2% of deaths in this age group).

5 . Deaths by region

Figure 4: The highest number of deaths involving COVID-19 was recorded in London, while the lowest number was in the East and Yorkshire and The Humber

Deaths by regions in England and Wales, week ending 27 March 2020

[Download the data](#)

In Week 13 (week ending 27 March 2020), there were 12 deaths involving coronavirus (COVID-19) registered in both the East of England region and Yorkshire and The Humber region. The region with the largest number and proportion of deaths involving COVID-19 was London with 237 deaths; 18.3% of all London deaths.

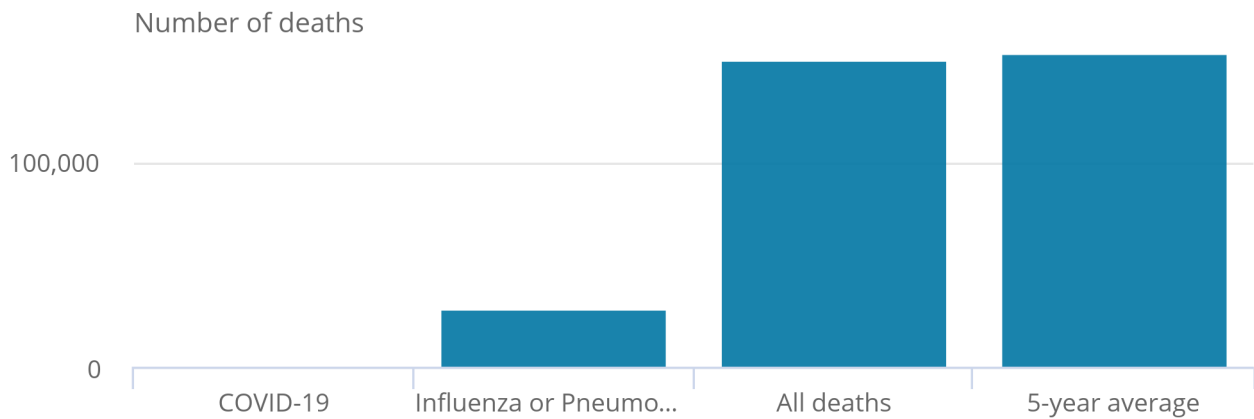
6 . Deaths registered in the year-to-date, Week 1 to 13

Figure 5: The number of deaths in the year-to-date was lower than the five-year average

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

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



Source: Office for National Statistics – Death registrations

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.

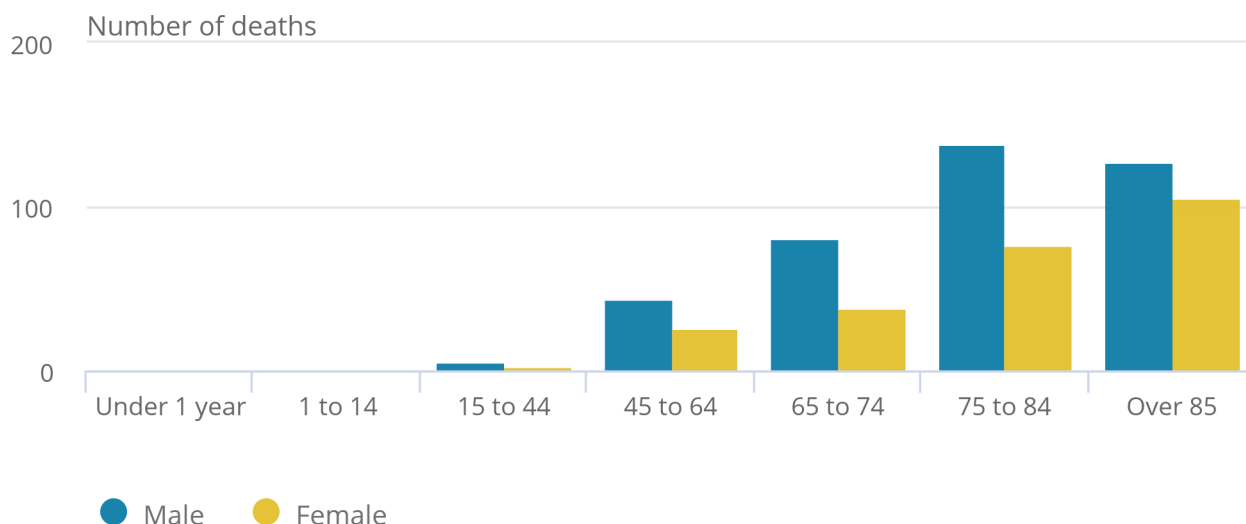
Looking at the year-to-date (using refreshed data to get the most accurate estimates), the number of deaths is currently lower than the five-year average. The current number of deaths is 150,047, which is 3,350 fewer than the five-year average. Of the deaths registered by 27 March 2020, 647 mentioned the coronavirus (COVID-19) on the death certificate; this is 0.4% of all deaths.

Figure 6: The number of deaths involving COVID-19 for females was lower 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

Figure 6: The number of deaths involving COVID-19 for females was lower 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 – Death registrations

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 138 deaths involving COVID-19 in males and 77 in females.

7 . Deaths data

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

Dataset | Released 7 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 the coronavirus (COVID-19) deaths.

8 . 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.

9 . Measuring the data

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 1 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 2: 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)
Coverage	UK (however we only include England and Wales breakdowns for comparable coverage to ONS data)	Registrations in England & Wales In discussions with devolved nations to create UK estimates in the near future	Registrations in England & Wales 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	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
Timeliness	Provided daily but not officially registered. Data is provided to NHS-E directly by hospitals. Data only published once confirmed family have been notified of death	Weekly registrations are 11 days behind due to the time taken to register, process and publish. Registered in the week ending the 20th March (week 12)	Weekly registrations are 11 days behind due to the time taken to register, process and publish. Deaths which occurred in week 12 but were registered up to 26 March

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.

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](#).

10 . 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](#).

11 . 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.