

Statistical bulletin

Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional: week ending 4 September 2020

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

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1 . Main points

- The number of deaths registered in England and Wales in the week ending 4 September 2020 (Week 36) was 7,739; this was 1,293 deaths fewer than in Week 35.
- In Week 36, the number of deaths registered was 15.7% below the five-year average (1,443 fewer deaths); this is the first time since Week 32 that weekly deaths have been below the five-year average.
- Of the deaths registered in Week 36, 78 mentioned "novel coronavirus (COVID-19)", the lowest number of deaths involving COVID-19 in the last 25 weeks and a 22.8% decrease compared with Week 35 (a difference of 23 deaths), accounting for 1.0% of all deaths in England and Wales.
- The week ending 4 September (Week 36) contained the late August bank holiday, which would have contributed to the decreased number of deaths registered and the decrease in deaths registered involving COVID-19.
- The numbers of deaths in hospitals, care homes and other locations were below the five-year average in Week 36, while the number of deaths in private homes was above the five-year average.
- The number of deaths involving COVID-19 decreased across the majority of the English regions, and all regions had lower overall deaths than the five-year average.
- In Wales, the number of deaths involving COVID-19 increased to four deaths (from three deaths in Week 35), while the total number of deaths in Week 36 was below the five-year average (64 deaths).
- The number of deaths registered in the UK in the week ending 4 September 2020 (Week 36) was 8,996, which was 1,403 fewer deaths than the five-year average and 1,341 fewer deaths than Week 35; of the deaths registered in the UK in Week 36, 83 deaths involved COVID-19, 27 fewer deaths than in Week 35.

2 . Deaths registered by week

Figure 1: The number of deaths in England and Wales involving COVID-19 decreased for the 20th consecutive week

Number of deaths registered by week, England and Wales, 28 December 2019 to 4 September 2020

The provisional number of deaths registered in England and Wales decreased from 9,032 in Week 35 (week ending 28 August 2020) to 7,739 in Week 36 (week ending 4 September 2020) (Figure 1). The number of deaths was below the five-year average for the first time since Week 32, with 1,443 fewer deaths (15.7%). Week 36 contained the late August bank holiday, which would have contributed to a lower number of deaths registered. More information on how bank holidays affect death registrations can be found in our [Week 20 bulletin](#).

The number of death registrations in England and Wales involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) decreased by 23 deaths from 101 in Week 35 to 78 in Week 36, the lowest number of COVID-19 deaths registered since Week 11 (week ending 13 March), the first week COVID-19 deaths were registered (five deaths). Of all deaths registered in Week 36, 1.0% mentioned COVID-19, down from 1.1% in Week 35. The number of death registrations may have been affected by the August summer bank holiday (31 August) as this can cause delays in deaths being registered.

In England, the number of deaths decreased from 8,425 in Week 35 to 7,232 in Week 36, which was 1,372 fewer deaths than the Week 36 five-year average. Of the Week 36 deaths, 1.0% (74 deaths) involved COVID-19 in England.

In Wales, the number of deaths decreased from 591 in Week 35 to 488 in Week 36, which was 64 fewer deaths than the five-year average. Of these, 0.8% (four deaths) involved COVID-19.

In Week 36, in England and Wales, 12.8% of all deaths mentioned "Influenza and Pneumonia", COVID-19 or both, compared with 12.6% in Week 35. "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.

Figure 2: The number of deaths not involving COVID-19 was below the five-year average for first time since Week 32

Number of deaths registered by week, England and Wales, 28 December 2019 to 4 September 2020

Between Weeks 1 and 12, 138,916 deaths were registered, which was 4,822 fewer than the five-year average for these weeks. However, between Weeks 13 and 36, 285,919 deaths were registered, which was 56,721 more than the five-year average. Week 36 was the first time in four weeks when deaths were lower than the five-year average (1,443 fewer deaths) (Figure 2).

Looking at the year-to-date (using the most up-to-date data we have available), the number of deaths up to 4 September was 424,808, which is 52,872 more than the five-year average. Of the deaths registered by 4 September, 52,376 mentioned COVID-19 on the death certificate, which is 12.3% of all deaths in England and Wales.

Looking at the year-to-date for England and Wales separately, the number of deaths for England was 398,815, which is 51,280 (14.8%) more than the five-year average. Of these, 49,732 (12.5%) mentioned COVID-19. In Wales, the number of deaths up to 4 September was 25,363, which is 2,054 (8.8%) more than the five-year average; of these, 2,569 deaths (10.1%) mentioned COVID-19.

3 . Deaths registered by age group

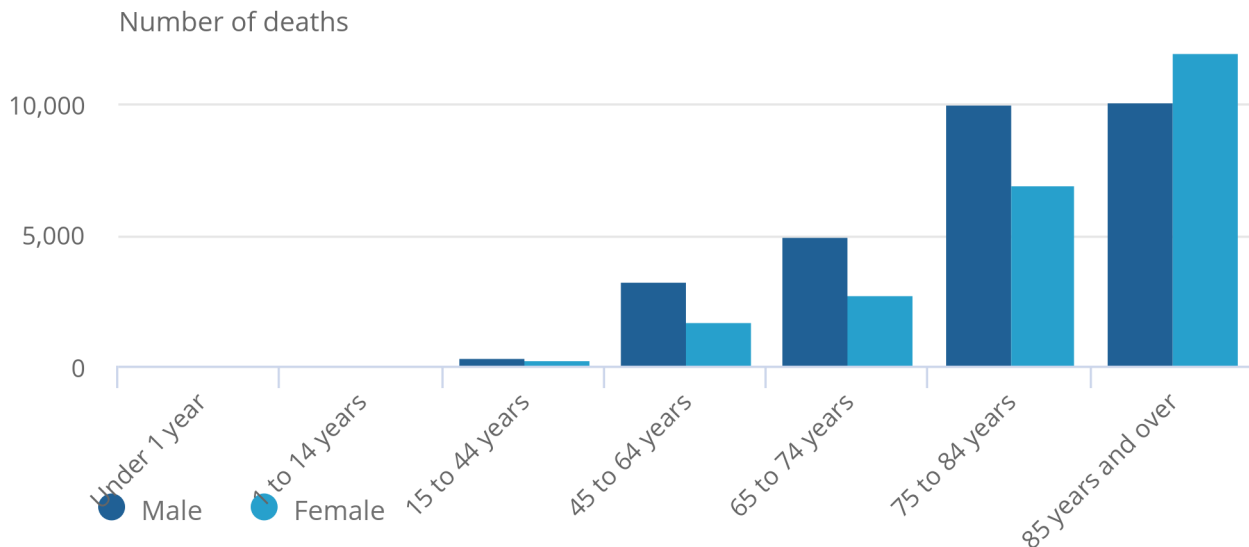
In Week 36, the number of deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) in England and Wales decreased or remained the same across most age groups, compared with Week 35, with the largest difference in those aged 80 to 84 years and 85 to 89 years among whom deaths decreased by six. The number of deaths involving COVID-19 remained higher in the older age groups, with those aged 90 years and over accounting for the highest number of deaths involving COVID-19 (20.5%).

Figure 3: The number of deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) was highest in males across the majority of age groups

Number of deaths involving COVID-19 by sex and age group, England and Wales, registered between 28 December 2019 and 4 September 2020

Figure 3: The number of deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) was highest in males across the majority of age groups

Number of deaths involving COVID-19 by sex and age group, England and Wales, registered between 28 December 2019 and 4 September 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. All figures for 2020 are provisional.
4. The International Classification of Diseases, tenth edition (ICD-10) definitions are as follows: coronavirus (COVID-19) (U07.1 and U07.2).
5. Individual weeks may not sum to the year-to-date analysis as previous weeks have been recalculated 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 (Figure 3). Across Weeks 1 to 36 of 2020, 55.0% of all deaths involving COVID-19 were in males. However, there were more deaths in females aged 85 years and over (11,970) than males aged 85 years and over (10,136). This could be because [the over-85-years female population \(939,000\) is larger than the over-85-years male population \(564,000\)](#) in England and Wales.

4 . Deaths by region in England and Wales

Figure 4: The number of deaths in Week 36 decreased in Wales and across all English regions and fell below the five-year average

Number of deaths in Wales and regions in England, registered between 28 December 2019 and 4 September 2020

In Week 36 (week ending 4 September 2020), there were four deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) registered in Wales. Out of the English regions, the South East had the largest number of deaths involving COVID-19 (17 deaths), but the East Midlands the highest proportion of deaths involving COVID-19 (1.6%). The number of death registrations may have been affected by the August summer bank holiday (31 August) as this can cause delays in deaths being registered. More detailed geographic analysis between 1 March and 31 July 2020 can be found in our [Deaths involving COVID-19 by local area and socioeconomic deprivation release](#).

Table 1: The number of deaths registered was below the five-year average in all English regions and Wales
Number of deaths in Wales and regions in England, registered week ending 4 September 2020

Region name	Number of deaths	Five-year average	Difference	Percentage above average
North East	431	487	-56	-11.5
Wales	488	552	-64	-11.6
North West	1,057	1,213	-156	-12.9
South East	1,208	1,400	-192	-13.7
Yorkshire and The Humber	780	906	-126	-13.9
London	737	884	-147	-16.6
South West	803	973	-170	-17.5
West Midlands	770	942	-172	-18.3
East	806	1,003	-197	-19.6
East Midlands	640	797	-157	-19.7

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

Notes:

1. Based on area of usual residence boundaries correct as of May 2020.
2. Figures exclude deaths of non-residents.
3. Based on date a death was registered rather than occurred.
4. All figures for 2020 are provisional.
5. The averages are based on the number of death registrations in each region, recorded for each corresponding week over the previous five years. Moveable public holidays, when register offices are closed, affect the number of registrations made in the published weeks and in the corresponding weeks in previous years.

The number of deaths registered in Week 36 was lower than the five-year average in all English regions. In Wales, the number of deaths registered in Week 36 was 11.6% (64 deaths) lower than the five-year average (Table 1).

5 . Deaths registered by place of occurrence

The year-to-date analysis shows that of deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) up to Week 36 (week ending 4 September 2020), 63.4% (33,214 deaths) occurred in hospital, with the remainder occurring in care homes (15,501 deaths), private homes (2,485 deaths), hospices (750 deaths), other communal establishments (224 deaths) and elsewhere (202 deaths).

Between Weeks 35 and 36, the number of deaths involving COVID-19 decreased across the majority of settings. Deaths involving COVID-19 in hospitals as a proportion of all deaths in hospitals decreased from 1.9% to 1.6%. Deaths involving COVID-19 in care homes as a proportion of all deaths in care homes decreased from 1.3% in Week 35 to 1.1% in Week 36. Detailed analysis on deaths of care home residents is available in [Deaths involving COVID-19 in the care sector, England and Wales: deaths occurring up to 12 June 2020 and registered up to 20 June 2020](#).

As well as Office for National Statistics (ONS) data, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) provides numbers of deaths involving COVID-19 in care homes in England that are based on the date the death was notified to the CQC. From 10 April (the first day when data were collected using the CQC's new method of identifying deaths involving COVID-19) to 11 September 2020, there were 14,232 deaths of residents in care homes involving COVID-19. Of these deaths, 21 were notified in the week up to 11 September. More information on the data provided by the CQC can be found in our [joint transparency statement](#).

In Wales, the [Welsh Government](#) publishes the number of deaths of care home residents involving COVID-19 notified to the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). Between 17 March and 11 September 2020, there were 506 deaths of residents in care homes involving COVID-19.

More information on how these numbers have compared throughout the pandemic can be found in our previous [Comparison of weekly death occurrences in England and Wales](#) release.

Figure 5: Deaths in private homes remained above the five-year average in Week 36

Number of excess deaths by place of occurrence, England and Wales, registered between 7 March 2020 and 4 September 2020

In Week 36, deaths in hospitals, care homes and other locations were below the five-year average by 1,032, 448 and 108 deaths respectively, while the number of deaths in private homes was higher than the five-year average by 143 deaths (Figure 5).

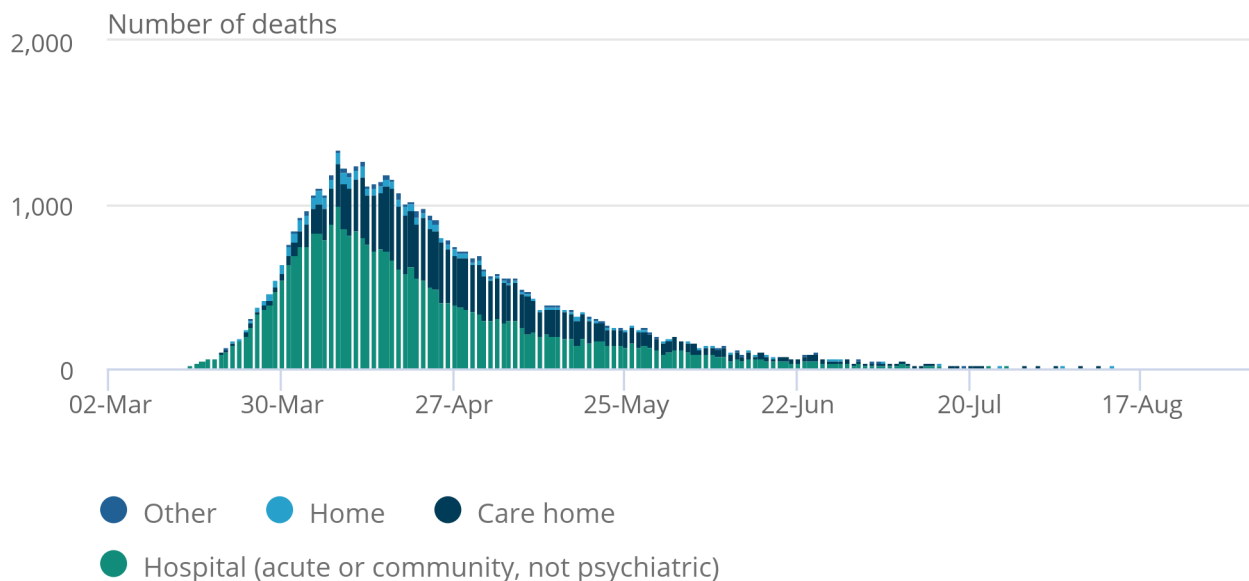
Looking in more detail at deaths in private homes in Week 36, females accounted for more excess deaths (118 deaths) than males (25 deaths). Overall, those aged 70 years and over had 146 excess deaths, while those aged under 70 years did not have any excess deaths in Week 36 for those who died in private homes. More [detailed analysis of excess deaths in England](#) is produced by Public Health England (PHE) on a weekly basis.

Figure 6: Over half of deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) that occurred in Week 36 were in hospital

Number of deaths involving COVID-19 by place of occurrence, England and Wales, occurring up to 4 September 2020 and registered up to 12 September 2020

Figure 6: Over half of deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) that occurred in Week 36 were in hospital

Number of deaths involving COVID-19 by place of occurrence, England and Wales, occurring up to 4 September 2020 and registered up to 12 September 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 of death, registered up to 12 September 2020.
3. All figures for 2020 are provisional.
4. The International Classification of Diseases, tenth edition (ICD-10) definitions are as follows: coronavirus (COVID-19) (U07.1 and U07.2).

Figure 6 is based on date of death for deaths registered up to 12 September 2020, rather than date of registration. As more deaths are registered, deaths per day are likely to increase, especially for later dates. Looking at the number of deaths that occurred in Week 36, 64.6% of deaths occurred in hospitals, and care homes accounted for 26.2% of all deaths involving COVID-19; this may change as more deaths are registered.

A death of a man aged 80 to 84 years was registered in the week ending 4 September 2020 (Week 36), which occurred in the week ending 31 January 2020 (Week 5). We are reviewing the details of this registration.

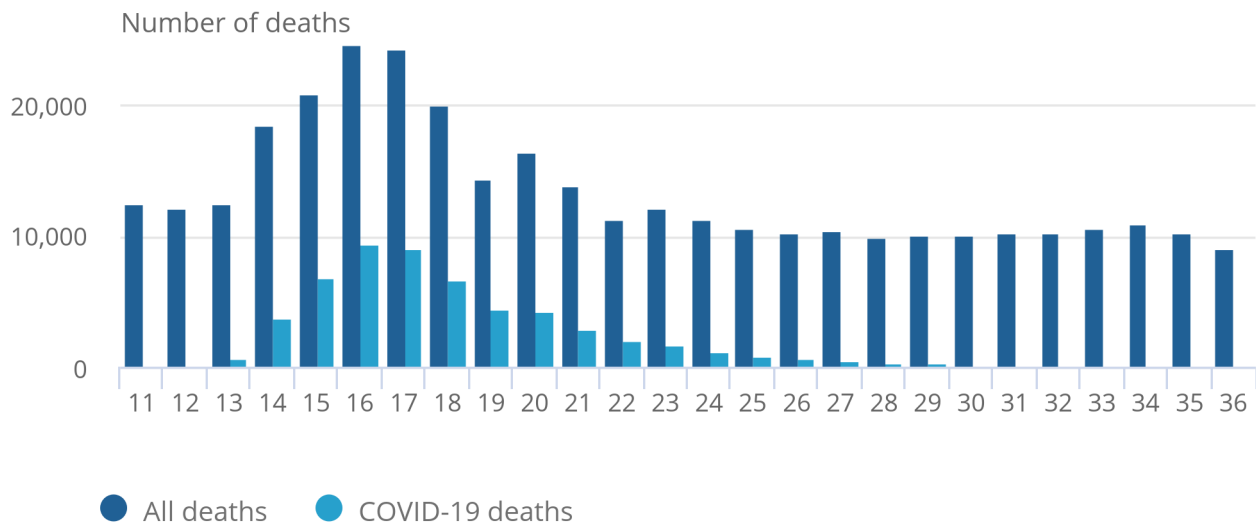
6 . Deaths registered in the UK

Figure 7: The number of deaths in the UK involving COVID-19 decreased in Week 36

Number of deaths registered by week, UK, week ending 13 March 2020 to week ending 4 September 2020

Figure 7: The number of deaths in the UK involving COVID-19 decreased in Week 36

Number of deaths registered by week, UK, week ending 13 March 2020 to week ending 4 September 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics, National Records of Scotland, and Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

Notes:

1. Figures exclude deaths of non-residents.
2. Based on date a death was registered rather than occurred.
3. All figures for 2020 are provisional.
4. The International Classification of Diseases, tenth edition (ICD-10) definitions are as follows: coronavirus (COVID-19) (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 8,996 deaths (all causes) registered in Week 36 (week ending 4 September 2020), which was 1,403 fewer deaths than the UK five-year average and 1,341 fewer deaths than in Week 35. Of these deaths, 83 involved the coronavirus (COVID-19), 27 fewer deaths than in Week 35.

In Week 36, England had the highest number of deaths involving COVID-19 with 74 deaths, followed by Wales with four deaths, Northern Ireland with three deaths and Scotland with two deaths.

7 . Comparison of weekly death occurrences in England and Wales

We previously published this section as a [separate article](#) on the Office for National Statistics (ONS) website, which provided a more thorough description of the differences between different data sources. This section will look at the number of deaths by date of death produced by the ONS compared with death notifications reported by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). For Wales, we can also compare the reconciled DHSC data by date of death released by Public Health Wales (PHW).

On 12 August 2020, Public Health England (PHE) revised their data series to include two measures: deaths of positively tested individuals where the death occurred within 28 days and deaths within 60 days of a positive test. More information on these changes can be found in their [technical summary](#).

In England, including deaths that occurred up to 4 September 2020 but were registered up to 12 September 2020, of those we have processed so far, the number involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) was 49,777. The [comparative number of death notifications](#) reported by the DHSC on GOV.UK where the deaths occurred within 28 days of testing was 36,892 and the number of deaths by date of death showed 36,915; the comparative number of death notifications where the deaths occurred within 60 days of testing was 40,797 and the number of deaths by date of death showed 40,865.

In Wales, including deaths that occurred up to 4 September 2020 but were registered up to 12 September 2020, of those we have processed so far, the number involving COVID-19 was 2,569; the comparative number of death notifications reported by the DHSC on GOV.UK where the death occurred within 28 days of testing was 1,597 and [PHW numbers](#), which come from the same source as the DHSC figures but are continuously updated, also showed 1,597 deaths.

8 . Deaths data

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

Dataset | Released 15 September 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.

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

Dataset | Released 15 September 2020

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

[Number of deaths in care homes notified to the Care Quality Commission, England](#)

Dataset | Released 15 September 2020

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

Filter these data

Try the new way to filter and download these data:

- [Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales by age and sex: COVID-19](#)
- [Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales by region: COVID-19](#)
- [Death registrations and occurrences by local authority and place of death](#)
- [Death registrations and occurrences by health board and place of death](#)

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

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 5 September 2020.

Because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, our regular weekly deaths release now provides a separate breakdown of the number 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 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 its 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.

From 29 April 2020, the 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 had already begun to include deaths outside hospitals, so this change ensured that the UK-wide series had a shared and common definitional coverage. A [statement](#) was published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), which provides more detail on the changes.

On 12 August 2020, the PHE data series was revised to include two measures: deaths of positively tested individuals where the death occurred within 28 days and deaths within 60 days of a positive test. More information on these changes can be found in their [technical summary \(PDF, 854KB\)](#).

In contrast to the GOV.UK figures, we include only deaths registered in England and Wales, which is the legal remit of the ONS. Tables 2 and 3 provide an overview of the differences in definitions between sources.

Table 2: Definitions of COVID-19 deaths between different sources
Number of deaths in Wales and regions in England, registered week ending 4 September 2020

	DHSC COVID-19 (as published on GOV.UK) before 29 April	DHSC COVID-19 (as published on GOV.UK) between 29 April and 12 August	DHSC COVID-19 (as published on GOV.UK) from 12 August	ONS COVID-19 deaths registered	ONS COVID-19 death occurrence (actual date of death)	NHS England	Public Health Wales
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)	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	Wales 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	Includes any place of death, including care homes and community	Includes any place of death, including care homes and community	Any place of death, including care homes and community	Any place of death, including care homes and community	Deaths in hospitals	Includes any place of death, including care homes and community
	Deaths where the patient has tested positive for COVID-19	Deaths where the patient has tested positive for COVID-19	Deaths where the patient has tested positive for COVID-19 within 28 and 60 days of testing	Deaths where COVID-19 has been mentioned on the death certificate	Deaths where COVID-19 has been mentioned on the death certificate	Deaths where patient has been tested for COVID-19	Deaths where patient has been tested for COVID-19
Timeliness	Provided daily but not officially registered	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	Updated daily for each date of death
				Registered in the week ending 4 September (week 36)	Deaths which occurred in week 36 but were registered up to 12 September		

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

Table 3: Definitions of COVID-19 deaths in care homes between different sources

	ONS COVID-19 deaths registered	ONS COVID-19 death occurrence (actual date of death)	Care Quality Commission deaths in care homes (date of notification received)	Care Inspectorate Wales deaths in care homes (date of notification received)
Coverage	Registrations in England and Wales	Registrations in England and Wales	Death notifications sent by registered care home operators in England to CQC	Death notifications sent by registered care home operators in Wales to CIW
	Selected UK figures are included in the weekly release	In discussions with devolved nations to create UK estimates in the near future		
Inclusion	Any place of death, including care homes	Any place of death, including care homes	Deaths in care homes – deaths of care home residents that occurred elsewhere are also collected	Deaths in care homes – deaths of care home residents that occurred elsewhere are also collected
	Deaths where COVID-19 has been mentioned on the death certificate	Deaths where COVID-19 has been mentioned on the death certificate	Deaths where the care home provider has stated COVID-19 as a suspected or confirmed cause of death on the death notification	Deaths where the care home provider has stated COVID-19 as a suspected or confirmed cause of death on the death notification
Timeliness	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	Daily deaths notifications by date of notification - these take on average 4 days to receive and process	Daily deaths notifications by date of notification
			Data are published weekly by ONS	Data are published weekly by Welsh Government
			Deaths which were notified to CQC from 10 April 2020	

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

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](#).

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: 2019](#)

Bulletin | Released 1 July 2020

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 \(COVID-19\) latest data and analysis](#)

Web page | Updated as and when new data become 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.

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) roundup](#)

Blog | Updated as and when new data become available

Catch up on the latest data and analysis related to the coronavirus pandemic and its impact on our economy and society.

[Coronavirus and the latest indicators for the UK economy and society](#)

Bulletin | Released 27 August 2020

Early experimental data on the impact of the coronavirus on the UK economy and society. These faster indicators are created using rapid response surveys, novel data sources and experimental methods.

[Deaths involving COVID-19 by local area and socioeconomic deprivation](#)

Bulletin | Released 28 August 2020

Provisional counts of the number of deaths and age-standardised mortality rates involving COVID-19 between 1 March and 31 July 2020 in England and Wales. Figures are provided by age, sex, geographies down to local authority level and deprivation indices.