Office for National Statistics

Statistical bulletin

Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional: week ending 8 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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1 . Other pages in this release

- Comparison of weekly death occurrences in England and Wales: up to week ending 8 May 2020
- Where to find statistics on UK deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) and infection rates by country

2 . Main points

- The number of death registrations was impacted by the Early May Bank Holiday; the number of registrations decreased from 2,950 deaths on Friday 1 May 2020 to 88 deaths on Friday 8 May 2020.
- The number of deaths registered in England and Wales in the week ending 8 May 2020 (Week 19) was 12,657, a decrease for the third week running but 3,081 more than the five-year average for Week 19.
- Of the deaths registered in Week 19, 3,930 mentioned "novel coronavirus (COVID-19)", which was 31.1% of all deaths; this is a decrease of 2,105 deaths compared with Week 18 (33.6% of all deaths).
- The number of deaths involving COVID-19 decreased in most age groups; the age groups that had small increases were those aged under one year and those aged between 20 and 34 years.
- The number of deaths in care homes (from all causes) for Week 19 decreased from 6,409 to 4,248; however, deaths involving COVID-19 as a percentage of all deaths in care homes continued to rise to 39.2% compared with 37.8% in Week 18.
- In Week 19, the number of deaths in hospitals was 114 deaths lower than the five-year average for the same week, while the number of deaths above the five-year average in care homes decreased to 2,247 deaths from 4,331 in the previous week.
- For the second week running, all regions showed a decrease in the percentage of deaths involving COVID-19; the North West had the highest number of COVID-19 deaths (597 deaths) for the first time.
- In Wales, there were 211 deaths registered in Week 19 involving COVID-19, accounting for 30.5% of all deaths registered.
- Of deaths involving COVID-19 registered up to Week 19, 66.6% occurred in hospital with the remainder mainly occurring in care homes (26.7%), private homes (4.6%) and hospices (1.2%).
- The number of deaths registered in the UK in the week ending 8 May 2020 (Week 19) was 14,408, of which 4,426 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 continued to decrease

Number of deaths registered by week, England and Wales, 28 December 2019 to 8 May 2020

The provisional number of deaths registered in England and Wales decreased from 17,953 in Week 18 (week ending 24 April 2020) to 12,657 in Week 19 (week ending 8 May 2020). This was 3,081 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 Week 13 and Week 16, before decreasing between Week 17 and Week 19.

The number of death registrations involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) also decreased from 6,035 in Week 18 to 3,930 in Week 19. Of all deaths registered in Week 19, 31.1% mentioned COVID-19; this is down from 33.6% in Week 18.

The number of death registrations was impacted by the Early May Bank Holiday, which took place on Friday 8 May 2020. The number of deaths registered on the Early May Bank Holiday fell to 88 deaths compared with 2,950 deaths registered on the previous Friday (Friday 1 May 2020). The trends should therefore be interpreted with caution this week and next week.

Similar patterns can be seen for England and Wales separately, with the number of deaths in England decreasing from 17,004 in Week 18 to 11,946 in Week 19, which was 3,009 above the Week 19 average. Of the Week 19 deaths, 31.1% (3,716 deaths) involved COVID-19.

In Wales, the number of deaths decreased from 929 deaths in Week 18 to 692 deaths in Week 19, 80 deaths higher than the Week 19 average. Of these, 30.5% (211 deaths) involved COVID-19.

The number of deaths mentioning "Influenza and Pneumonia" on the death certificate (without COVID-19) decreased from 1,450 in Week 18 to 994 in Week 19. The number of deaths that mentioned both "Influenza and Pneumonia" and COVID-19 on the death certificate also decreased to 1,313 compared with 2,089 deaths in Week 18.

In Week 19, 38.9% of all deaths mentioned "Influenza and Pneumonia", COVID-19 or both compared with 41.7% in Week 18. The five-year average of deaths mentioning "Influenza and Pneumonia" was 17.7% of the five-year average number of deaths in Week 19. "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 number of deaths in Week 19 not involving COVID-19 was below the five-year average

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

Between Week 1 and Week 12, 138,916 deaths were registered, which was 4,822 less than the five-year average for these weeks. However, between Week 13 and Week 19, 121,002 deaths were registered, which was 49,575 more than the five-year average. Unlike Week 13 to Week 18, the number of COVID-19 deaths exceeded the number of excess deaths in Week 19 when compared with the five-year average (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.

Looking at the year-to-date (using the most up-to-date data we have available), the number of deaths up to 8 May 2020 was 259,906, which is 44,742 more than the five-year average. Of the deaths registered by 8 May 2020, 37,375 mentioned COVID-19 on the death certificate; this is 14.4% of all deaths.

4 . Deaths registered by age group

Figure 3: People aged 90 years and over continued to have the highest number of COVID-19 deaths in Week 19

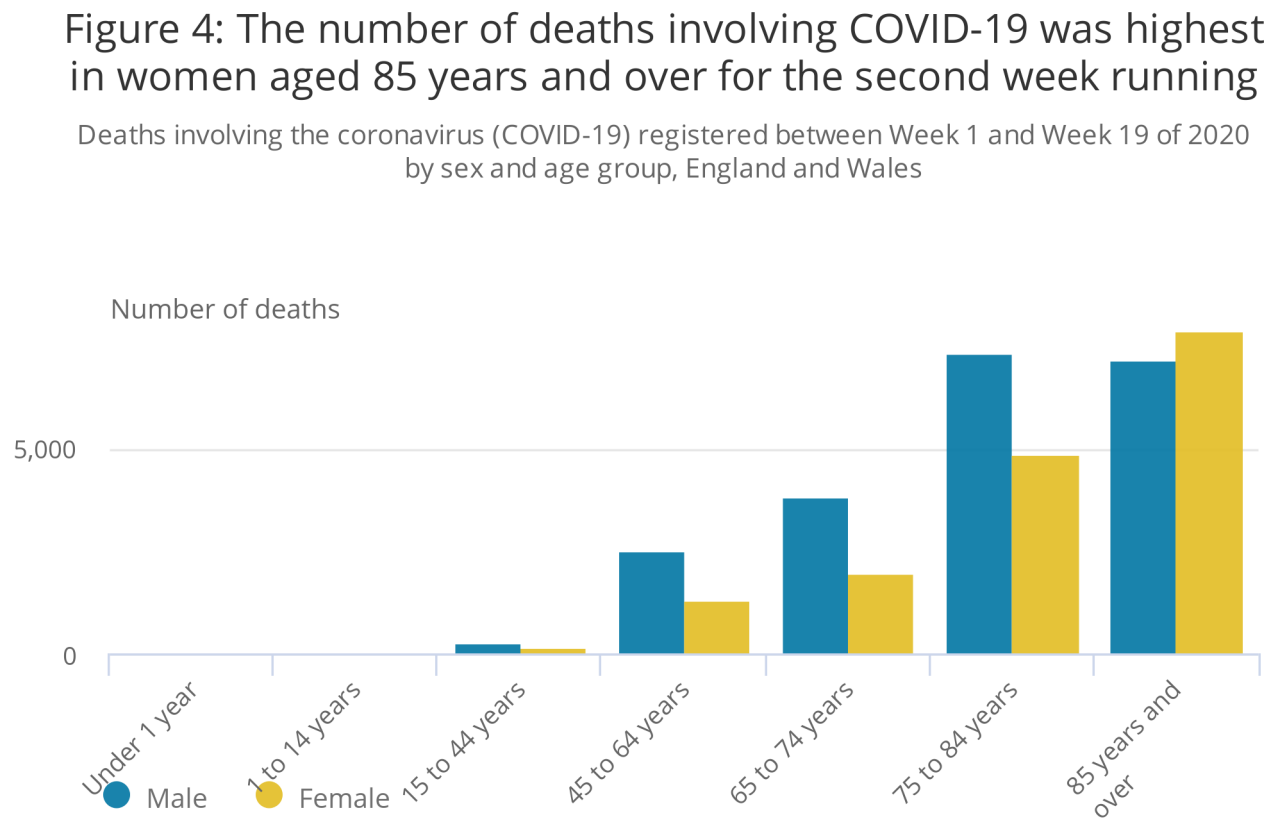
Deaths by age group, England and Wales, week ending 8 May 2020

In Week 19 (week ending 8 May 2020), the number of deaths decreased across most age groups compared with Week 18. This is the first week where a death under the age of one year was recorded. The other age groups to see an increase were aged 20 to 24 years, 25 to 29 years and 30 to 34 years (the former increased by one and the latter two age groups by two).

The highest proportion of coronavirus (COVID-19) deaths was in age group 80 to 84 years where 36.8% of deaths involved COVID-19 (772 deaths). The largest number of COVID-19 deaths was in those aged 90 years and over with 1,015 deaths.

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

Deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) registered between Week 1 and Week 19 of 2020 by sex and age group, England and Wales



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 that 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) and Influenza and Pneumonia (J09-J18).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 (Figure 4). However, there were two female deaths in the 1 to 14 years age group, but no male deaths. For the second week running, there were more deaths for females aged 85 years and over (7,887 deaths) than males (7,192). The largest difference between males and females was in the 75 to 84 years age group where there were 7,340 deaths involving COVID-19 in males and 4,893 in females.

Though there are now more COVID-19 deaths to women aged 85 years and over, this could be because the over-85 years female population (939,000) is larger than the over-85 male population (564,000) in England and Wales.

5 . Deaths by region in England and Wales

Figure 5: The number of deaths involving COVID-19 was highest in the North West for the first time

Deaths in Wales and by regions in England, week ending 8 May 2020

Figure 6: The number of deaths (all causes) and deaths involving COVID-19 continued to decrease across all English regions and Wales for the second week running

Deaths in Wales and by regions in England, week ending 8 May 2020

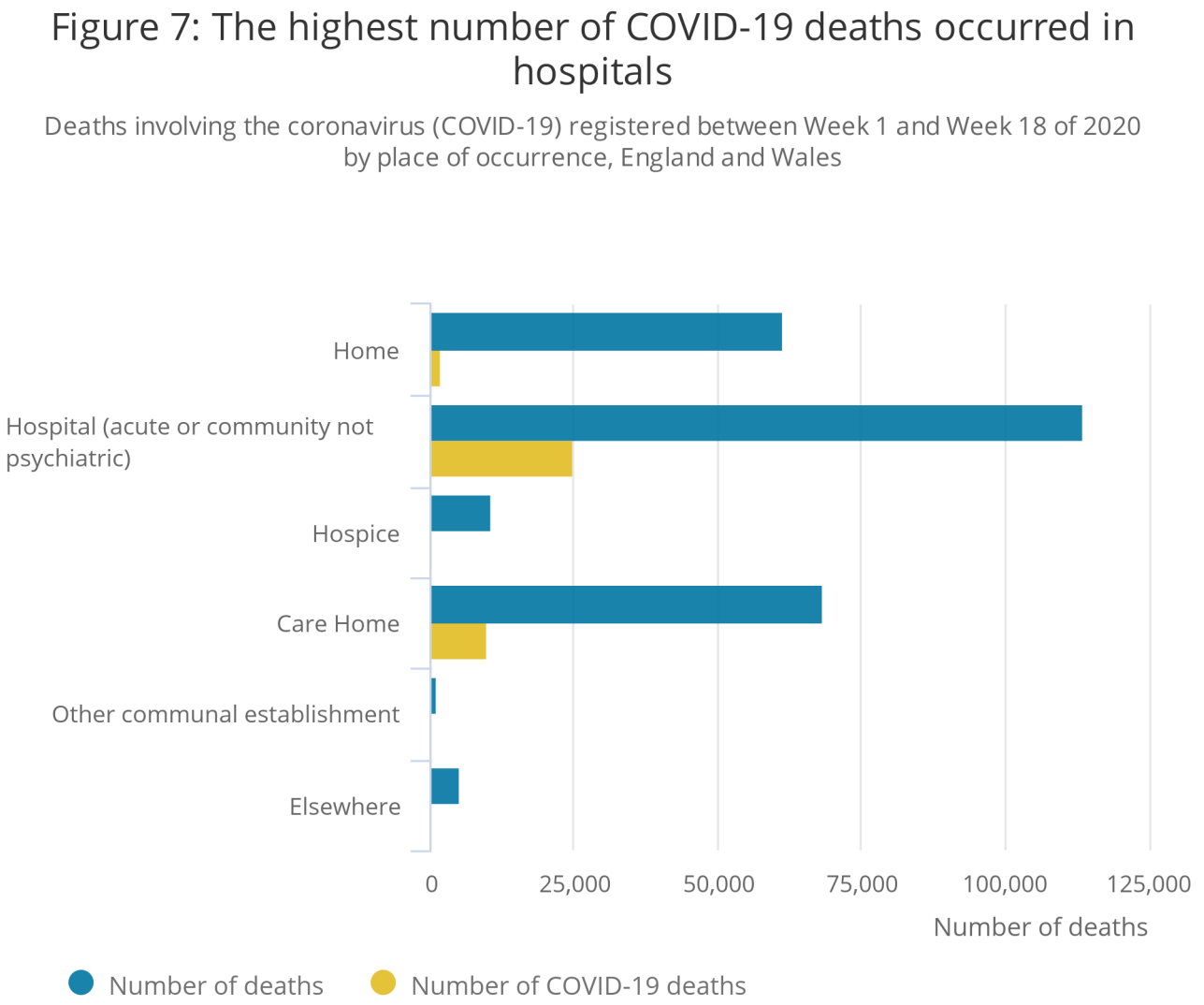
In Week 19 (week ending 8 May 2020), there were 211 deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) registered in Wales. The English region with the largest number of deaths involving COVID-19 was the North West with 597 deaths, making up 15.2% of all deaths involving COVID-19 and 33.4% of all deaths in the North West. However, London still had the highest proportion of deaths involving COVID-19 with 36.2% 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 19 (week ending 8 May 2020), 66.6% (24,883 deaths) occurred in hospital, with the remainder occurring in care homes (9,980 deaths), private homes (1,727 deaths), hospices (464 deaths), other communal establishments (166 deaths) and elsewhere (155 deaths).

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

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



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 that 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) and Influenza and Pneumonia (J09-J18).

Deaths in care homes made up 36.0% of all deaths in Week 17, 35.7% in Week 18 and 33.6% in Week 19 (Figure 7). Between Week 18 and Week 19, the number of deaths in care homes decreased by 33.7% to 4,248. However, the proportion of care home deaths that involved COVID-19 continued to increase, and 39.2% of all deaths in care homes involved COVID-19 in Week 19.

Between Week 18 and Week 19, there was a 25.1% decrease in deaths occurring in private homes (4,268 to 3,195 deaths), while deaths occurring in hospitals decreased by 30.4% (6,397 to 4,451 deaths) compared with Week 18. The percentage of COVID-19 deaths in hospitals continued to decrease (50.5% in Week 19), while the percentage of COVID-19 deaths in care homes increased (42.4% in Week 19).

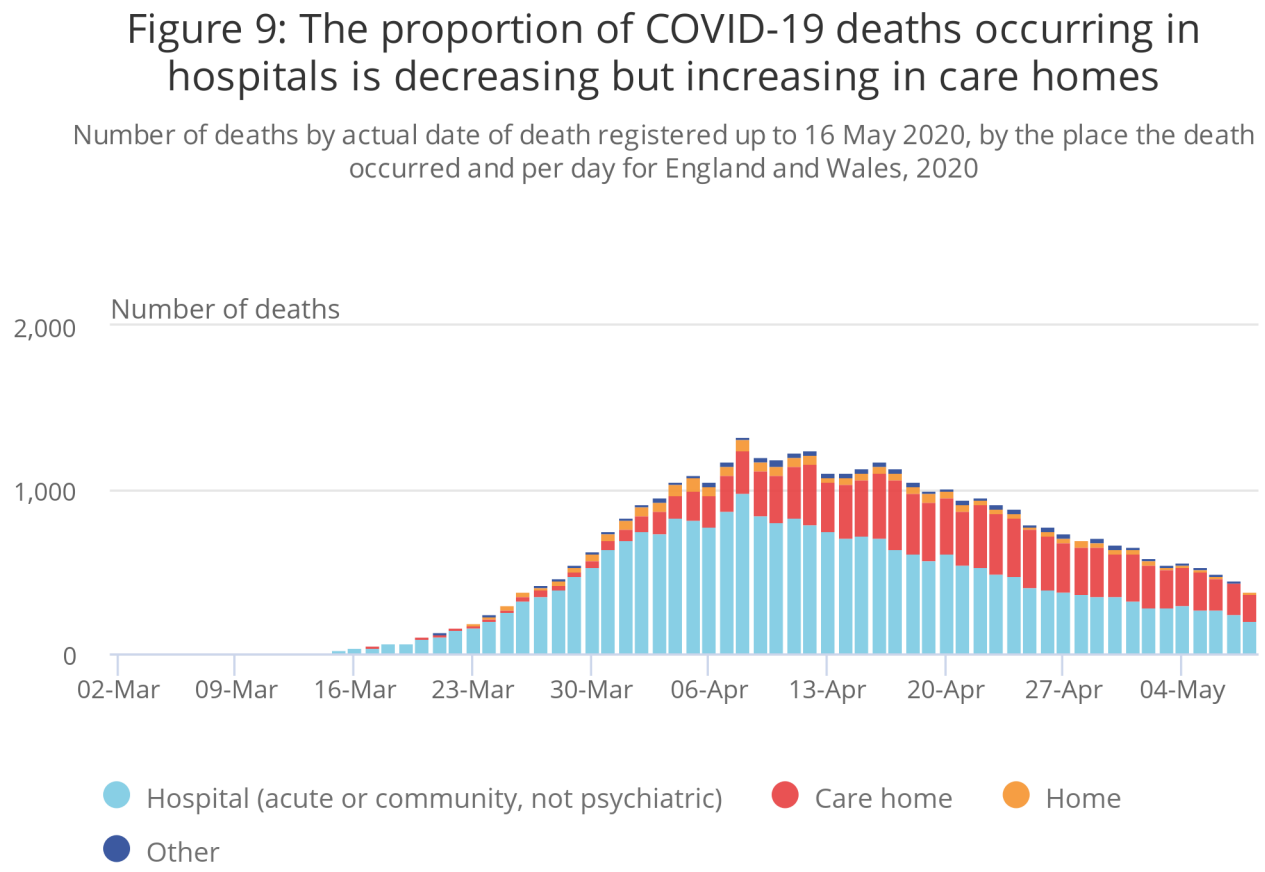
Figure 8: The excess number of deaths decreased in care homes, while deaths in hospitals fell below the five-year average in Week 19

Number of excess deaths by place of death between Week 1 and Week 19 of 2020 by place of occurrence, England and Wales

The number of deaths above the five-year average in hospitals has been falling each week since Week 16, and in Week 19 the number of deaths was 114 deaths fewer than the five-year average for Week 19 (Figure 8). The number of deaths above the five-year average in care homes has also been decreasing; however, in Week 19, there were still 2,247 excess deaths, down from 4,331 in Week 18. Deaths in private homes have seen similar patterns in excess deaths. In Week 19, there were 948 excess deaths compared with 1,962 in Week 18.

Figure 9: The proportion of COVID-19 deaths occurring in hospitals is decreasing but increasing in care homes

Number of deaths by actual date of death registered up to 16 May 2020, by the place the death occurred and per day for 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 of death registered up to 16 May 2020.
3. All figures for 2020 are provisional.
4. The International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Edition (ICD-10) definitions for COVID-19 are U07.1 and U07.2.

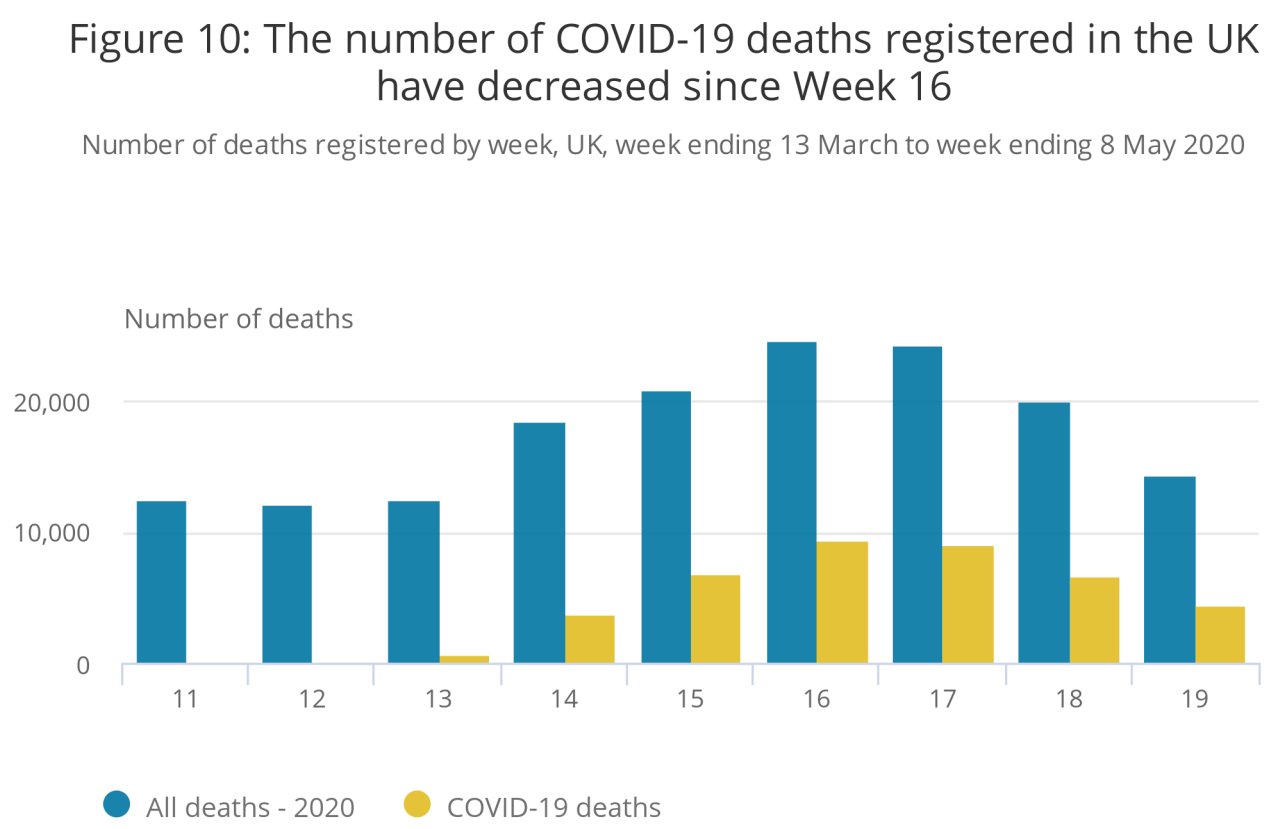
Figure 9 is based on date of death for deaths registered up to 16 May 2020, rather than date of registration. This means as more deaths are registered, deaths per day are likely to increase, especially later dates. Looking at the most recent week, on average, deaths occurring in hospitals have accounted for 52.8% of deaths and care homes have accounted for 41.7% of all deaths involving COVID-19; this may change as more deaths are registered. 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 (PHE) to better understand deaths that are occurring in care homes. From 28 April 2020, we have published counts of deaths reported by care home operators to the CQC involving COVID-19. More information can be found in our comparisons article.

7 . Deaths registered in the UK

Figure 10: The number of COVID-19 deaths registered in the UK have decreased since Week 16

Number of deaths registered by week, UK, week ending 13 March to week ending 8 May 2020



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

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 14,408 deaths (all cause) registered in Week 19 (ending 8 May 2020), of which 4,426 deaths involved the coronavirus (COVD-19). There were five deaths involving COVID-19 in the UK in Week 11 (ending 13 March); this increased to 9,495 deaths registered in Week 16 (ending 17 April) but has fallen to 4,426 deaths registered in Week 19. In Week 19, England had the highest number of deaths involving COVID-19 with 3,716 deaths, followed by Scotland with 415 deaths, Wales with 211 deaths and Northern Ireland with 84 deaths.

8 . Deaths data

Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional
Dataset | Released 19 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 coronavirus (COVID-19) deaths.

Death registrations and occurrences by local authority and health board
Dataset | Released 19 May 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 19 May 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).

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 16 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 8 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, the DHSC started to publish as their daily announced figures on deaths from COVID-19for 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; this is 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 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	Includes any place of death, including care homes and community 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.	Provided daily but not officially registered.	Weekly registrations are 11 days behind because of the time taken to register, process and publish Registered in the week ending 8 May (Week 19)	Weekly registrations are 11 days behind because of the time taken to register, process and publish Deaths which occurred in Week 19 but were registered up to 2 May	Updated daily for each date of death

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.

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.