

Statistical bulletin

Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional: week ending 21 August 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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Table of contents

1. [Main points](#)
2. [Deaths registered by week](#)
3. [Deaths registered by age group](#)
4. [Deaths by region in England and Wales](#)
5. [Deaths registered by place of occurrence](#)
6. [Deaths registered in the UK](#)
7. [Comparison of weekly death occurrences in England and Wales](#)
8. [Deaths data](#)
9. [Glossary](#)
10. [Measuring the data](#)
11. [Strengths and limitations](#)
12. [Related links](#)

1 . Main points

- The number of deaths registered in England and Wales in the week ending 21 August 2020 (Week 34) was 9,631; this was 239 deaths higher than in Week 33.
- In Week 34, the number of deaths registered was 5.2% above the five-year average (474 deaths higher); this is the second consecutive week that weekly deaths have been above the five-year average, however, the rise was not driven by the coronavirus (COVID-19).
- The numbers of deaths in hospitals, care homes and other locations were below the five-year average in Week 34, while the number of deaths in private homes continued to be higher than the five-year average (825 more deaths).
- Of the deaths registered in Week 34, 138 mentioned "novel coronavirus (COVID-19)", the lowest number of deaths involving COVID-19 in the last 22 weeks and a 0.7% decrease compared with Week 33 (1 death), accounting for 1.4% of all deaths in England and Wales.
- The number of deaths involving COVID-19 decreased or remained the same across the majority of the English regions, with two of the nine regions having fewer overall deaths than the five-year average.
- In Wales, the number of deaths involving COVID-19 decreased to 11 deaths (from 14 deaths in Week 33), while the total number of deaths in Week 34 was above the five-year average (21 deaths).
- Of all deaths involving COVID-19 registered up to Week 34, 63.4% occurred in hospital, with the remainder mainly occurring in care homes (29.6%), private homes (4.7%) and hospices (1.4%).
- The number of deaths registered in the UK in the week ending 21 August 2020 (Week 34) was 10,967, which was 572 deaths higher than the five-year average and 390 deaths higher than Week 33; of the deaths registered in the UK in Week 34, 149 deaths involved COVID-19, 3 deaths higher than Week 33.

2 . Deaths registered by week

Figure 1: The number of deaths in England and Wales involving COVID-19 decreased for the 18th consecutive week

Number of deaths registered by week, England and Wales, 28 December 2019 to 21 August 2020

The provisional number of deaths registered in England and Wales increased from 9,392 in Week 33 (week ending 14 August 2020) to 9,631 in Week 34 (week ending 21 August 2020). The number of deaths was above the five-year average for the second consecutive week, with 474 deaths higher (5.2%). The coronavirus (COVID-19) did not drive the increase, as deaths involving COVID-19 continued to decrease in Week 34 (Figure 1).

COVID-19 has had a large impact on the number of deaths registered over the last few months and is the main reason for deaths increasing above what is expected (the five-year average). The disease has had a larger impact on those most vulnerable (for example, those who already suffer from a medical condition) and those at older ages. Some of these deaths would have likely occurred over the duration of the year but have occurred earlier because of COVID-19. These deaths occurring earlier than expected could contribute to a period of deaths below the five-year average, as seen in Weeks 25 to 32.

The number of death registrations in England and Wales involving COVID-19 decreased by 1 death from 139 in Week 33 to 138 in Week 34, the lowest number of COVID-19 deaths registered since Week 12 (week ending 20 March) when 103 deaths involved COVID-19. Of all deaths registered in Week 34, 1.4% mentioned COVID-19, down from 1.5% in Week 33.

In England, the number of deaths increased from 8,767 in Week 33 to 9,021 in Week 34, which was 461 deaths higher than the Week 34 five-year average. Of the Week 34 deaths, 1.4% (126 deaths) involved COVID-19 in England.

In Wales, the number of deaths decreased from 617 in Week 33 to 594 in Week 34, which was 21 deaths higher than the five-year average. Of these, 1.9% (11 deaths) involved COVID-19.

In Week 34, in England and Wales, 13.4% of all deaths mentioned "Influenza and Pneumonia", COVID-19 or both, compared with 12.1% in Week 33. "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 increased above the five-year average for a second week

Number of deaths registered by week, England and Wales, 28 December 2019 to 21 August 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 34, 269,148 deaths were registered, which was 58,373 more than the five-year average. Week 34 was the second consecutive week where deaths were higher than the five-year average (474 deaths higher) (Figure 2).

Looking at the year-to-date (using the most up-to-date data we have available), the number of deaths up to 21 August was 408,032, which is 53,519 more than the five-year average. Of the deaths registered by 21 August, 52,173 mentioned COVID-19 on the death certificate, 12.8% 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 383,154, which is 51,897 (15.7%) more than the five-year average. Of these, 49,537 (12.9%) mentioned COVID-19. In Wales, the number of deaths up to 21 August was 24,285, which is 2,067 (9.3%) more than the five-year average; of these, 2,562 deaths (10.5%) mentioned COVID-19.

3 . Deaths registered by age group

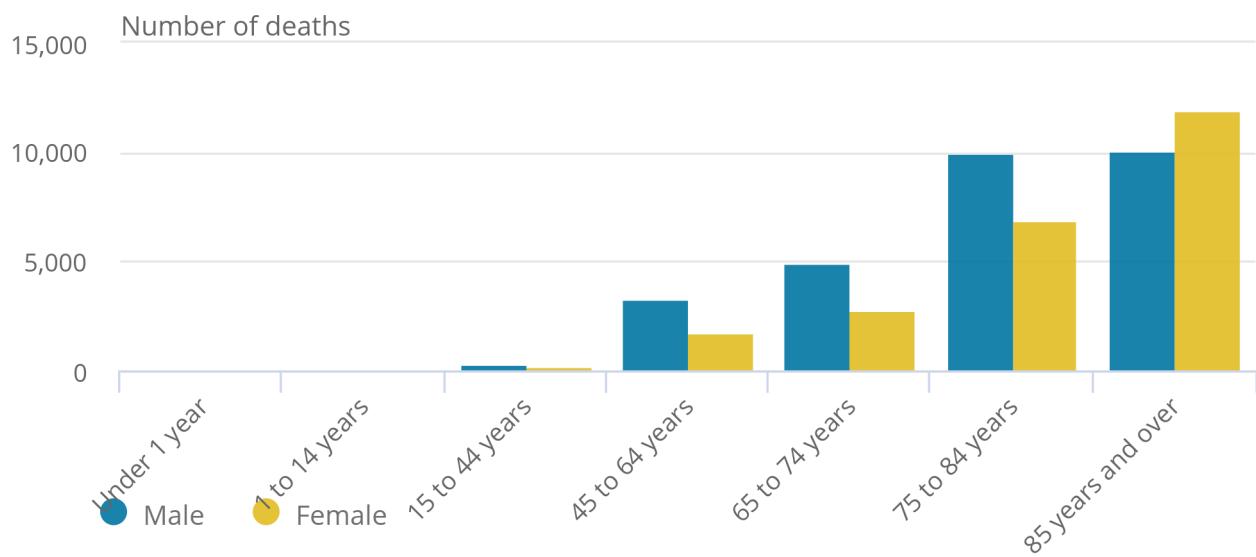
In Week 34, the number of deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) in England and Wales remained similar across most age groups, compared to Week 33, with the largest difference in those aged 90 years and over where deaths decreased by 21. The number of deaths involving COVID-19 remained higher in the older age groups, with those aged 85 to 89 years accounting for the highest number of deaths involving COVID-19 (25.4%).

Figure 3: The number of deaths involving 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 21 August 2020

Figure 3: The number of deaths involving 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 21 August 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 34 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 (11,939) than males aged 85 years and over (10,098). 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 34 increased in Yorkshire and The Humber, the West Midlands, the East of England, the South East and South West

Number of deaths in Wales and regions in England, registered between 28 December 2019 and 21 August 2020

In Week 34 (week ending 21 August 2020), there were 11 deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) registered in Wales. Out of the English regions, the North West had the largest number of deaths involving COVID-19 (33 deaths) while the East Midlands had the highest proportion of deaths involving COVID-19 (2.7%). 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 above the five-year average in the majority of the English regions and Wales

Number of deaths in Wales and regions in England, registered week ending 21 August 2020

Region name	Number of deaths	Five-year average	Difference	Percentage above average
South East	1,608	1,413	195	13.8
London	920	853	67	7.9
South West	1,043	973	70	7.2
West Midlands	1,028	975	53	5.4
East	1,024	979	45	4.6
North West	1,269	1,222	47	3.8
Wales	594	573	21	3.7
East Midlands	780	766	14	1.8
North East	479	488	-9	-1.8
Yorkshire and The Humber	870	893	-23	-2.6

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 34 was higher than the five-year average in the majority of the English regions except the North East (1.8% below) and Yorkshire and The Humber (2.6% below). In Wales, the number of deaths registered in Week 34 was 3.7% (21 deaths) higher 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 34 (week ending 21 August 2020), 63.4% (33,076 deaths) occurred in hospital, with the remainder occurring in care homes (15,460 deaths), private homes (2,468 deaths), hospices (746 deaths), other communal establishments (221 deaths) and elsewhere (202 deaths).

Between Weeks 33 and 34, the number of deaths involving COVID-19 decreased in hospitals but increased or remained similar across all other settings. Deaths involving COVID-19 in hospitals as a proportion of all deaths in hospitals decreased from 2.3% in Week 33 to 1.9% in Week 34. Deaths involving COVID-19 in care homes as a proportion of all deaths in care homes increased from 2.0% in Week 33 to 2.2% in Week 34. 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 28 August 2020, there were 14,193 deaths of residents in care homes involving COVID-19. Of these deaths, 16 were notified in the week up to 28 August. More information on the data provided by the CQC can be found in our [joint transparency statement](#).

The [Welsh Government](#) publishes the number of deaths of care home residents involving COVID-19 notified to the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) which can be found on their website.

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 34

Number of excess deaths by place of occurrence, England and Wales, registered between 28 December 2019 and 21 August 2020

In Week 34, deaths in hospitals, care homes and other locations were below the five-year average by 300, 1 and 51 deaths respectively, while the number of deaths in private homes continued to be above the five-average, with 825 excess deaths (Figure 5).

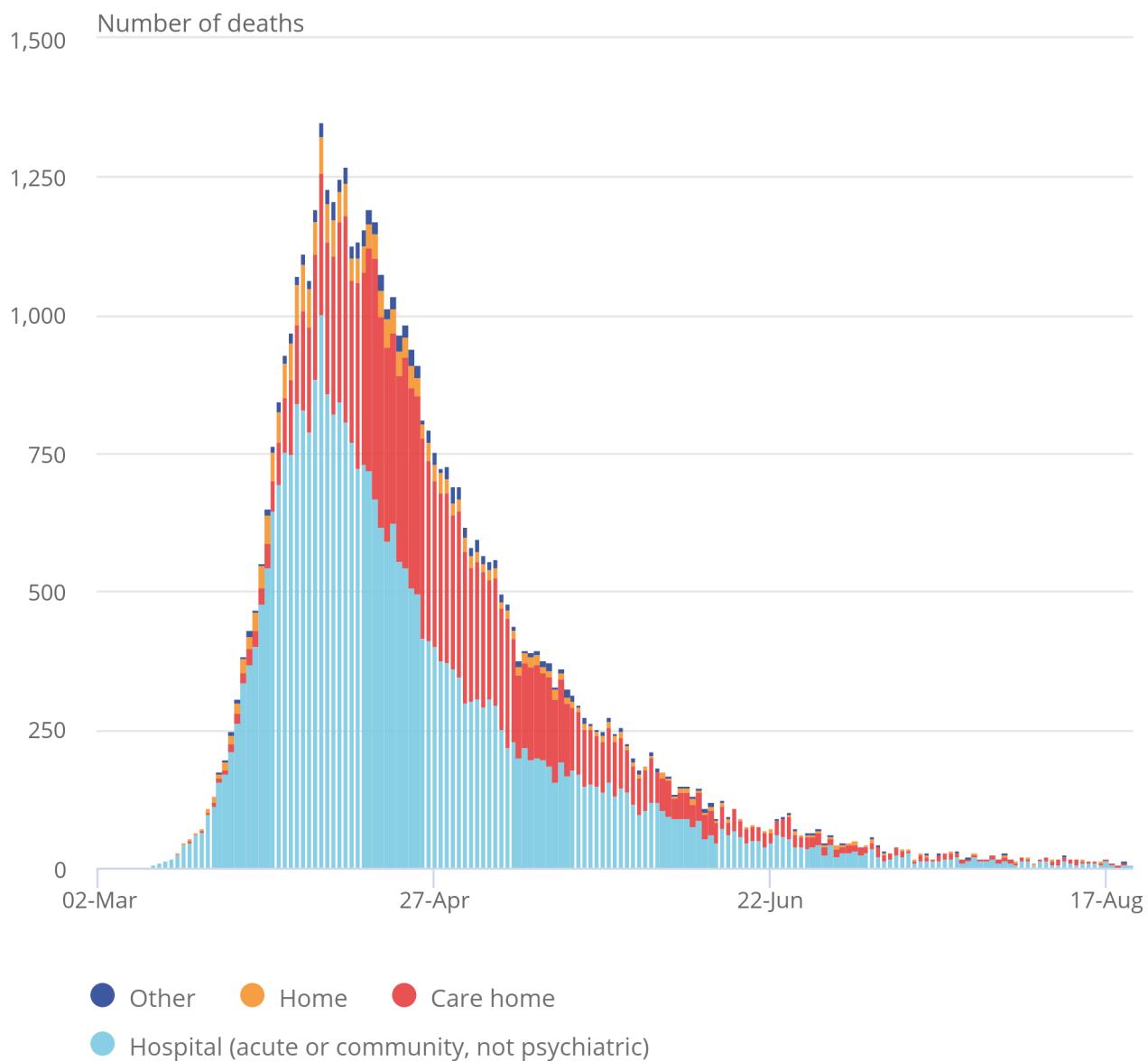
Looking in more detail at deaths in private homes in Week 34, females accounted for more excess deaths (439 deaths) than males (386 deaths), while those aged 70 years and over accounted for the majority of the excess compared with younger age groups (707 deaths in those aged 70 years and over, compared with 118 in those aged under 70 years). 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 COVID-19 that occurred in Week 34 were in hospital

Number of deaths involving COVID-19 by place of occurrence, England and Wales, occurring up to 21 August 2020 and registered up to 29 August 2020

Figure 6: Over half of deaths involving COVID-19 that occurred in Week 34 were in hospital

Number of deaths involving COVID-19 by place of occurrence, England and Wales, occurring up to 21 August 2020 and registered up to 29 August 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 29 August 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 29 August 2020, rather than date of registration. This means 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 34, 65.4% of deaths occurred in hospitals, and care homes accounted for 23.4% of all deaths involving COVID-19; this may change as more deaths are registered.

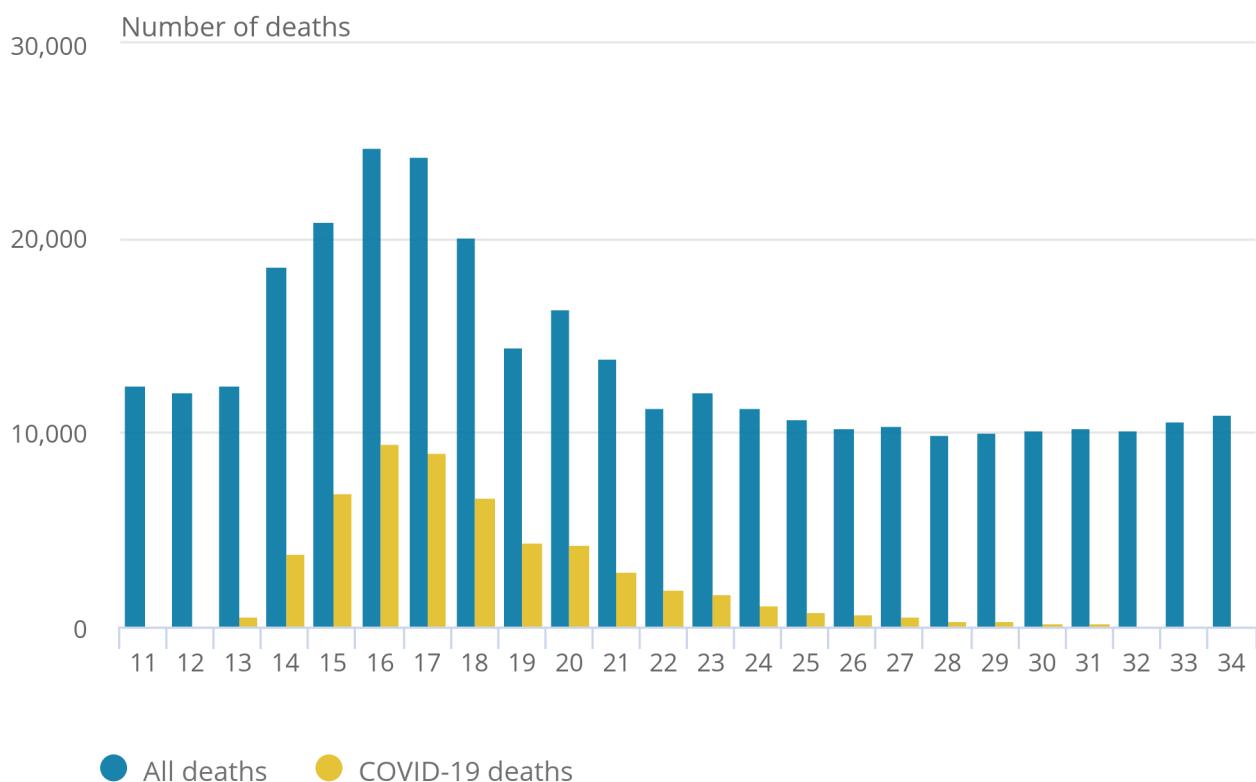
6 . Deaths registered in the UK

Figure 7: The number of deaths in the UK involving COVID-19 increased in Week 34

Number of deaths registered by week, UK, week ending 13 March 2020 to week ending 21 August 2020

Figure 7: The number of deaths in the UK involving COVID-19 increased in Week 34

Number of deaths registered by week, UK, week ending 13 March 2020 to week ending 21 August 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 10,967 deaths (all causes) registered in Week 34 (week ending 21 August 2020), which was 572 deaths higher than the UK five-year average and 390 deaths higher than Week 33. Of these deaths, 149 involved the coronavirus (COVID-19), three deaths higher than in Week 33.

In Week 34, England had the highest number of deaths involving COVID-19 with 126 deaths, followed by Wales with 11 deaths and Northern Ireland and Scotland with 6 deaths each.

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 21 August 2020 but were registered up to 29 August 2020, of those we have processed so far, the number involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) was 49,579. The [comparative number of death notifications](#) reported by the DHSC on GOV.UK where the deaths occurred within 28 days of testing was 36,782 and the number of deaths by date of death showed 36,807; the comparative number of death notifications where the deaths occurred within 60 days of testing was 40,590 and the number of deaths by date of death showed 40,672.

In Wales, including deaths that occurred up to 21 August 2020 but were registered up to 29 August 2020, of those we have processed so far, the number involving COVID-19 was 2,564; the comparative number of death notifications reported by the DHSC on GOV.UK where the death occurred within 28 days of testing was 1,590 and [PHW numbers](#), which come from the same source as the DHSC figures but are continuously updated, showed 1,593 deaths.

8 . Deaths data

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

Dataset | Released 2 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 2 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 2 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 29 August 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 of 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

	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 21 August (week 34)	Deaths which occurred in week 34 but were registered up to 29 August		

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)
	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
Coverage	Selected UK figures are included in the weekly release	In discussions with devolved nations to create UK estimates in the near future		
	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
Inclusion	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
	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
Timeliness			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.