



# COVID 19 pandemic update

Reading Health and Wellbeing Board  
14<sup>th</sup> July 2023

# Current situation: WHO

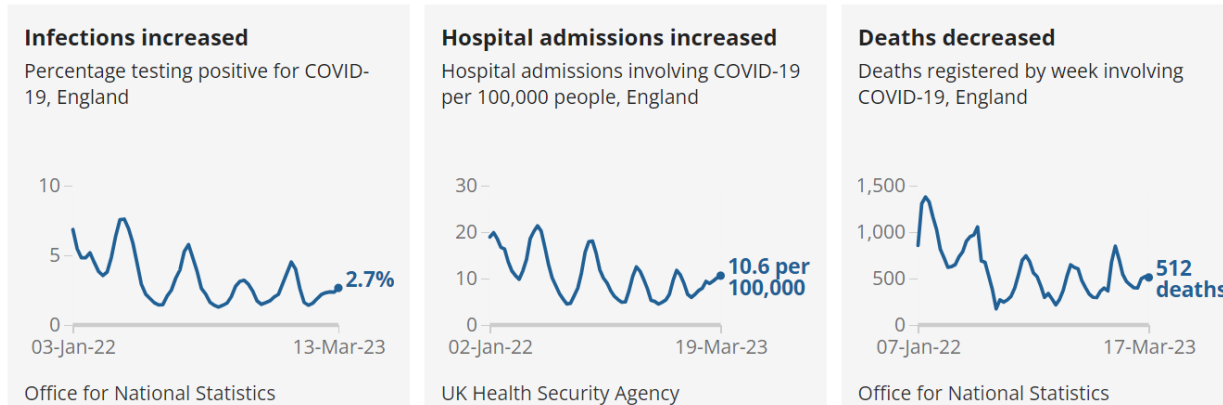
## End of the public health emergency

- On 5<sup>th</sup> May 2023 the Director General of the UN World Health Organization (WHO) declared an end to COVID-19 as a public health emergency.
- For over 12 months, the pandemic had been assessed as on a downward trend with immunity increasing due to the vaccination programmes. Death rates have decreased and the pressure on once overwhelmed health systems, has eased.
- This did not mean that the disease is no longer a global threat.
- Cumulative cases worldwide now stand at 765,222,932, with 6,921,614 deaths that are known about
- As of 30 April, a total of more than 13.3 billion vaccine doses have been administered worldwide.
- COVID 19 is still killing and changing. With estimations of three deaths per minute globally. The risk remains of new variants emerging that cause new surges in cases and deaths.
- In The United Kingdom, from 3 January 2020 to 12:23pm CEST, 7 June 2023, there have been 24,618,868 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with 226,645 deaths, reported to WHO. As of 11 September 2022, a total of 151,248,820 vaccine doses have been administered.

<https://covid19.who.int/?mapFilter=cases>



# Current situation England



- Between 28 May 2023 and 3 June 2023, 4,331 people had a confirmed positive test result. This shows a decrease of 27.1% compared to the previous 7 days.
- 3,232,651 people had been given a spring booster by the end of 31 May 2023.
- Between 16 May 2023 and 22 May 2023, 2,268 went into hospital with coronavirus. This shows a decrease of 13.5% compared to the previous 7 days.
- There were 3,116 patients in hospital with coronavirus on 24 May 2023
- There were 81 coronavirus patients in hospital beds with a mechanical ventilator on 24 May 2023.
- Between 6 May 2023 and 12 May 2023, there have been 252 deaths with COVID-19 on the death certificate. This shows a decrease of 7.4% compared to the previous 7 days.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/articles/coronaviruscovid19/latestinsights>

<https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/>

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/bulletins/coronaviruscovid19infectionsurveyplot/1june2022>



# Current situation Reading

- On the 29<sup>th</sup> May the number of people receiving a PCR test and positivity in the previous 7 days was 180 5.6% from 5% on 21<sup>st</sup> May
- By 31<sup>st</sup> May the uptake of the spring booster was 65%
- On 22<sup>nd</sup> May 4 COVID 19 patients were admitted to hospital RBFT
- On 24<sup>th</sup> May there were 18 COVID 19 patients in hospital
- 19th May was the last day on which there was COVID 19 patient on mechanical ventilation
- There was 1 death on 19<sup>th</sup> May and none recorded since



# Vaccine Booster Programme 2023

- At the start of 2023 the transition continued away from a pandemic emergency response towards pandemic recovery.
- In January 2023 the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation advised that the 2021 booster offer (third dose) for persons aged 16 to 49 years who are not in a clinical risk group should close in alignment with the close of the autumn 2022 booster vaccination campaign.
- The autumn 2022 booster campaign and the first booster offer closed on 12 February 2023.
- Vulnerable people aged 75 years and older, residents in care homes for older people, and those aged 5 years and over with a weakened immune system were offered the spring booster until 30 June 2023
- In January the JCVI advised further booster vaccines for persons at higher risk of serious illness through into an autumn booster programme later in Autumn 2023 yet to be announced.
- Emergency surge vaccine responses may be required should a novel variant of concern emerge with clinically significant biological differences compared to the Omicron variant.



# Ongoing Concerns

- On 24<sup>th</sup> February the government removed the last domestic restrictions and moved to 'Living with Covid' which depends upon everyone getting vaccinated and adopted behaviours that reduce the risk of respiratory infection
- The global pandemic is not yet over and the Government's Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) is clear there is considerable uncertainty about the path that the pandemic will now take in the UK
- There have been 226,645 deaths in the UK
- It is estimated that there are 2m cases of self reported Long Covid in the UK ( 3.1% of the population)
- The coronavirus is still a challenge in areas of the world not fully covered by vaccine programmes, it has the ability to mutate into a more virulent form and present a new risk
- The risk of an influenza pandemic remains high so resources for vaccinations and pandemic control measures need to be maintained and embedded within systems
- The structural barriers that restricted uptake by vulnerable population groups remain with the potential to impact on the uptake of other important vaccination and immunisation programmes



