



This report summarises the information from the surveillance systems which are used to monitor the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic in England. More information on the surveillance systems are available [here](#).

The report is based on week 34 (data between 17 August and 23 August 2020) and where available daily data up to 25 August 2020. References to COVID-19 represent the disease name and SARS-CoV-2 represent the virus name.

### Summary

A number of COVID-19 surveillance indicators suggest that COVID-19 activity remained stable at a national level during week 34. Case detections in England decreased from 6,871 in week 33 to 5,965 in week 34. Case rates were highest in North West and Yorkshire and Humber. At a local authority level, incidence is highest in Oldham, although this has decreased from the previous week, followed by Blackburn with Darwen. Case rates were highest in the 15-44 year age group. Pillar 1 and Pillar 2 positivity remained stable compared to the previous week.

The following local authorities have been included in the watchlist following the weekly Local Action Committee meeting: Pendle, Oldham, Blackburn with Darwen, Leicester, Bradford, Manchester, Rochdale, Northampton, Salford, Bury, Kirklees, Calderdale, Tameside, Preston, Swindon, Burnley, Birmingham, Sandwell, Bolton, Trafford, Stockport, Hyndburn, Stoke-on-Trent, Newark & Sherwood, Wakefield, Oadby and Wigston, Luton, Peterborough and Slough.

The overall number of acute respiratory infection incidents reported to PHE Health Protection Teams decreased from the previous week. There have been declines in the number of incidents in care homes and workplace settings in comparison to the previous week.

Community and syndromic surveillance indicators remained stable during week 34. Increases in google search queries were noted.

Through the GP sentinel swabbing scheme, detections of cases continue to be low with an overall positivity of 0.0% among those with symptom onset (0/42) in week 33 compared to the same in the previous week. Less than 10 samples have been reported so far for week 34. There has been a decline in testing through the GP sentinel scheme which is likely due to increased access to testing through other routes.

Emergency department attendances with a COVID-19-like diagnosis and overall hospitalisation and ICU/HDU admission rates for confirmed COVID-19 admissions remained stable.

COVID-19 deaths continue to decline. Excess mortality was observed overall in week 33. This excess coincides with a heatwave occurring in week 33.

New adjusted seroprevalence estimates based on samples from adult blood donors in London and the South West were 8.2% and 2.9% respectively. The change in prevalence seen in some regions is likely to be largely driven by changes in the precise locations of sample collection and differences in the donor population as lockdown measures are relaxed. There is also some suggestion that waning immunity may be a contributing factor to declines in prevalence seen in some areas.

Following this week's meeting of the Local Action Committee, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, drawing on epidemiological advice from the CMO, NHS Test and Trace, JBC and PHE, has determined the following Watchlist (Table 1), highlighting the local authorities of greatest concern.

The Watchlist is produced by first considering the lower tier local authorities with the highest weekly incidence rate and its trend, combined with a range of other indicators including the test positivity rate, an assessment of the local response and plans, and the trend of other metrics such as healthcare activity and mortality. The classification decision is therefore a blended assessment drawing on professional judgement.

Whilst this list is determined at the granularity of lower tier local authority, the Contain Framework places responsibility for local action at the level of the upper tier local authority. Later in this report, we list the UTLA with the highest incidence rate in the country from a purely statistical viewpoint (Figure 11).

The Watchlist classification uses definitions as set out in the Contain Framework:

- Area(s) of concern—for areas with the highest prevalence, where the local area is taking targeted actions to reduce prevalence e.g. additional testing in care homes and increased community engagement with high risk groups
- Area(s) for enhanced support—for areas at medium/high risk of intervention where there is a more detailed plan, agreed with the national team and with additional resources being provided to support the local team (e.g. epidemiological expertise, additional mobile testing capacity)
- Area(s) of intervention—where there is divergence from the measures in place in the rest of England because of the significance of the spread, with a detailed action plan in place, and local resources augmented with a national support

Maps representing the areas from this week's Watchlist (Table 1) by Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) are available [here](#).



Table 1: Local Authority Watchlist areas

Lower Tier Local Authority	Individuals tested per day per 100,000 population (7 day moving average)	Trend	Incidence per 100,000 population (weekly)	Trend	Contain Framework Watchlist Status – week beginning 24 August 2020	Change in Watchlist Status from previous week	Area with household mixing prohibited?
Pendle *	345.2	↗	67.8	↘	Intervention	↔	YES
Oldham *	208.9	↘	67.1	↘	Intervention	↔	YES
Blackburn with Darwen**	176.7	↘	52.4	↘	Intervention	↔	YES
Leicester	223.5	↘	49.5	↘	Intervention	↔	YES
Bradford ***	130.3	↘	44.1	↘	Intervention	↔	YES
Manchester *	145.0	↘	44.0	↘	Intervention	↔	YES
Rochdale *	159.5	↘	41.4	↘	Intervention	↔	YES
Northampton*	198.2	↗	37.3	↘	Intervention	↔	NO
Salford *	144.0	↘	31.8	↘	Intervention	↔	YES
Bury *	136.8	↗	31.6	↗	Intervention	↔	YES
Kirklees ***	106.6	↘	30.3	↘	Intervention	↔	YES
Calderdale ***	129.1	↗	29.5	↘	Intervention	↔	YES
Tameside *	132.3	↘	25.3	↘	Intervention	↔	YES
Preston	190.1	↗	23.3	↘	Intervention	↔	YES
Swindon	138.5	↗	43.7	↗	Enhanced Support	↔	NO
Burnley *	305.2	↗	24.9	↘	Enhanced Support	↘	NO
Birmingham	103.9	↗	24.6	↘	Enhanced Support	↗	NO
Sandwell	90.6	↘	20.2	↘	Enhanced Support	↗	NO
Bolton *	102.5	↘	18.9	↘	Enhanced Support	↘	NO
Trafford *	132.4	↘	17.8	↘	Enhanced Support	↘	NO
Stockport *	146.1	↘	15.1	↘	Enhanced Support	↘	NO
Hyndburn *	221.1	↗	13.6	↘	Enhanced Support	↘	NO
Stoke-on-Trent	169.8	↗	31.7	↗	Concern	↗	NO
Newark & Sherwood*	166.6	↘	23.9	↘	Concern	↔	NO
Wakefield	137.3	↗	18.8	↘	Concern	↔	NO
Oadby and Wigston	147.0	↗	17.5	↘	Concern	↔	NO
Luton	146.5	↘	14.9	↘	Concern	↘	NO
Peterborough	113.8	↗	12.9	↘	Concern	↔	NO
Slough	114.6	↗	9.4	↘	Concern	↔	NO
England	114.9	↗	11.3	↘			

Data for specimens taken between 14 August and 20 August as extracted on 25 August

\*Local authority is part of an area in which overall infection rates are high, with household transmission a key infection pathway.

\*\*Within this Local Authority the interventions have been restricted to the Blackburn wards.

\*\*\*Within these Local Authority[ies] the interventions have been restricted to some wards only

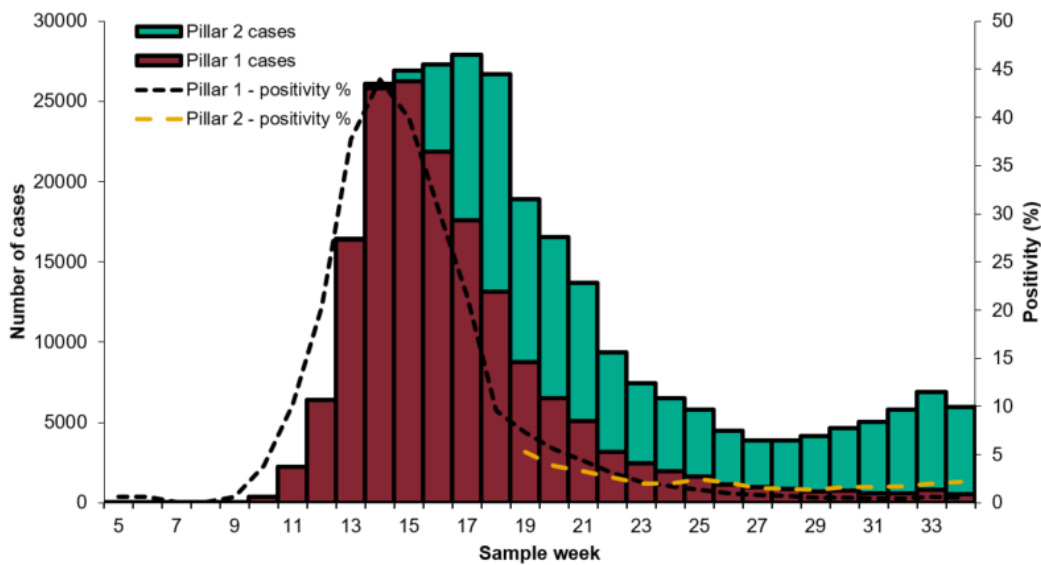
Trend arrow indicates whether there has been an increase, decrease or no change between this week and last week (specimens taken between 7 August and 13 August)



As of 09:00 on 25 August 2020, a total of 2,512,332 people have been tested under Pillar 1. A total of 283,280 have been confirmed positive for COVID-19 in England under Pillar 1 and 2.

Overall case numbers decreased slightly in week 34, with the majority of cases reported from Pillar 2. The highest case rates continued to be seen in the 15-44 year olds followed by 85+ year olds. The highest test positivity is in the over 85s. Cases rates and positivity continue to be highest in the North and Central regions of England.

**Figure 1: Laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases tested under Pillar 1 (n=166,612) and Pillar 2 (n=116,641), based on sample week with overall positivity for Pillar 1 and 2 (%)**



\* For the most recent week, more samples are expected therefore the decrease seen in this graph should be interpreted with caution. The data are shown by the week the specimen was taken from the person being tested. This gives the most accurate analysis of this time progression, but it does mean that the latest days' figures may be incomplete.

Age and gender

Figure 2: Age/sex pyramids for laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases tested under Pillar 1 and 2 (a) cumulative number since week 5 (n=279,530) and (b) in the weeks 33 and 34 (n=12,601)

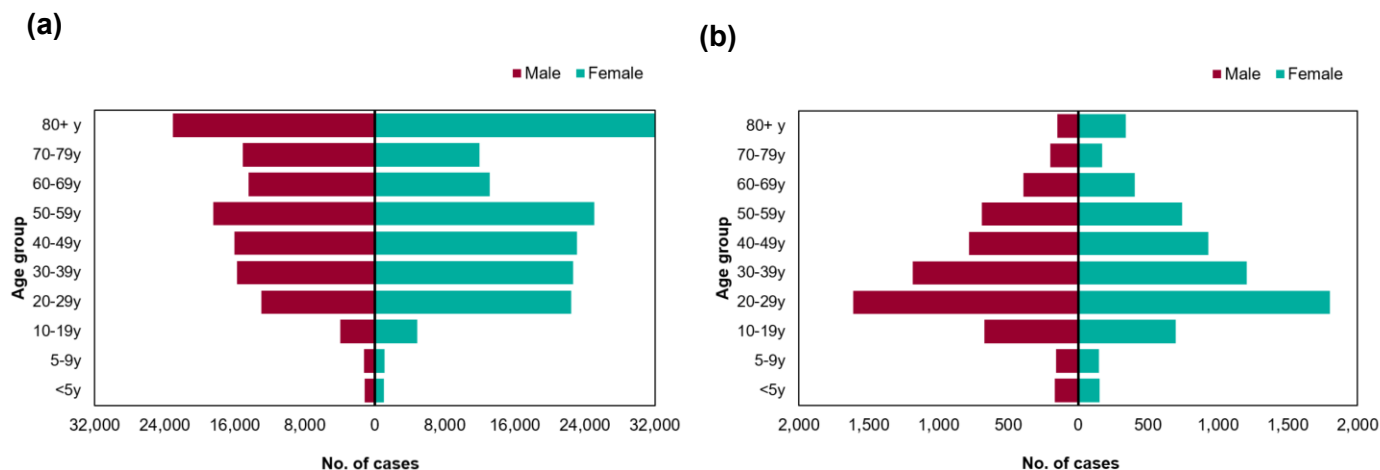


Figure 3: Weekly laboratory confirmed COVID-19 case rates per 100,000, tested under Pillar 1 and Pillar 2, by sex

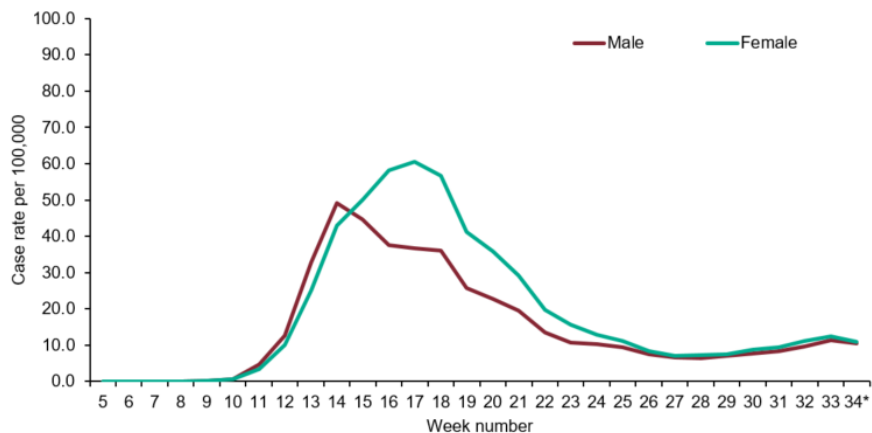
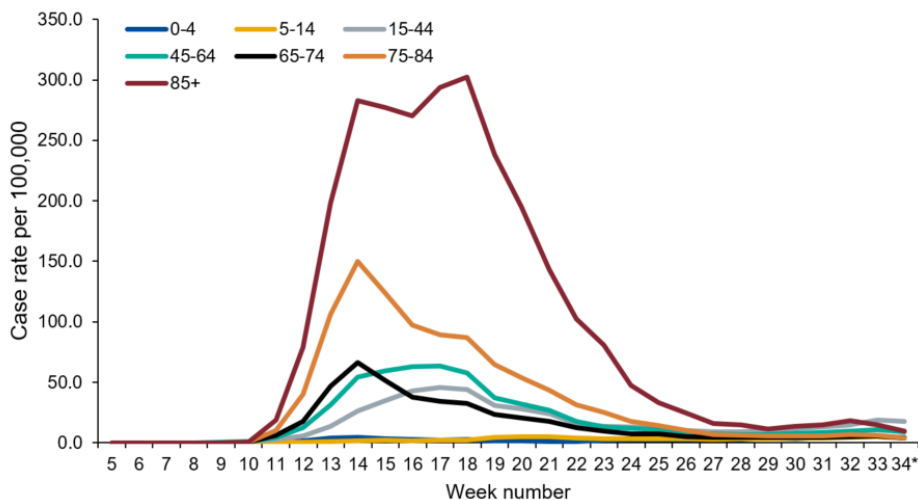
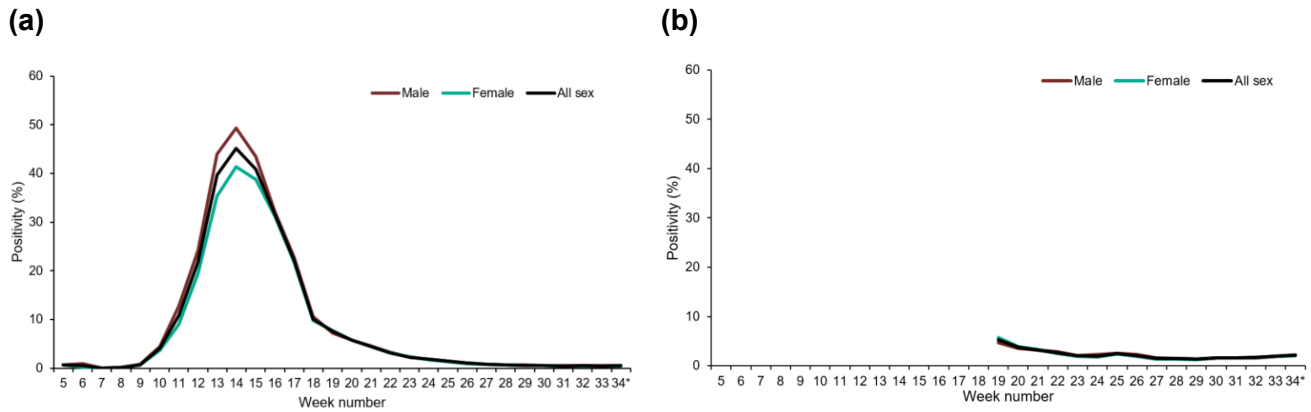


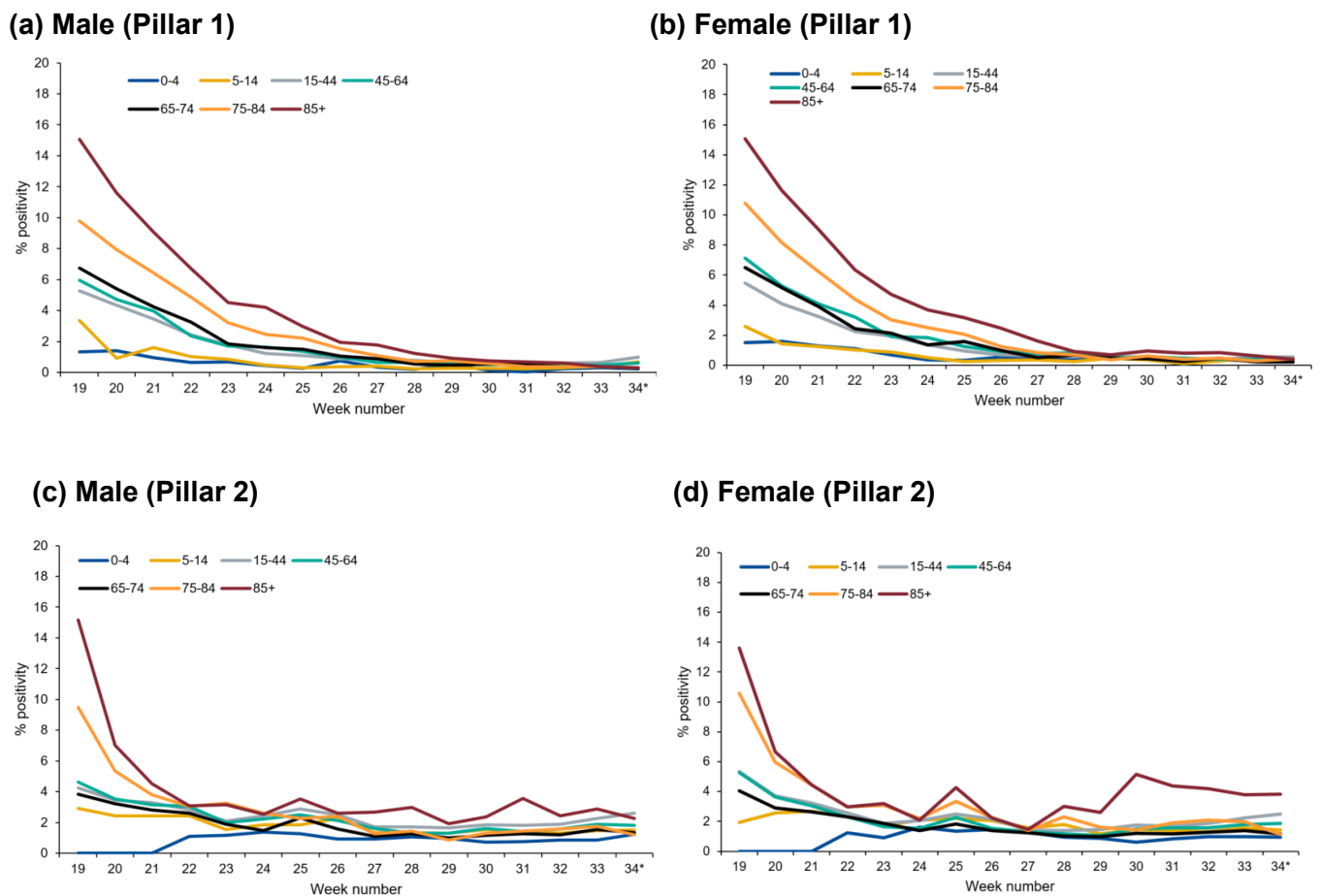
Figure 4: Weekly laboratory confirmed COVID-19 case rates per 100,000, tested under Pillar 1 and Pillar 2, by age group



**Figure 5: Weekly positivity (%) of laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases tested overall and by sex under (a) Pillar 1 and (b) Pillar 2, (SGSS and Respiratory DataMart)**



**Figure 6: Weekly positivity (%) of laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases tested under Pillar 1, (a) by male and age group and (b) by female and age group and; under Pillar 2, (c) by male and age group and (d) by female and age group, (SGSS and Respiratory DataMart)**

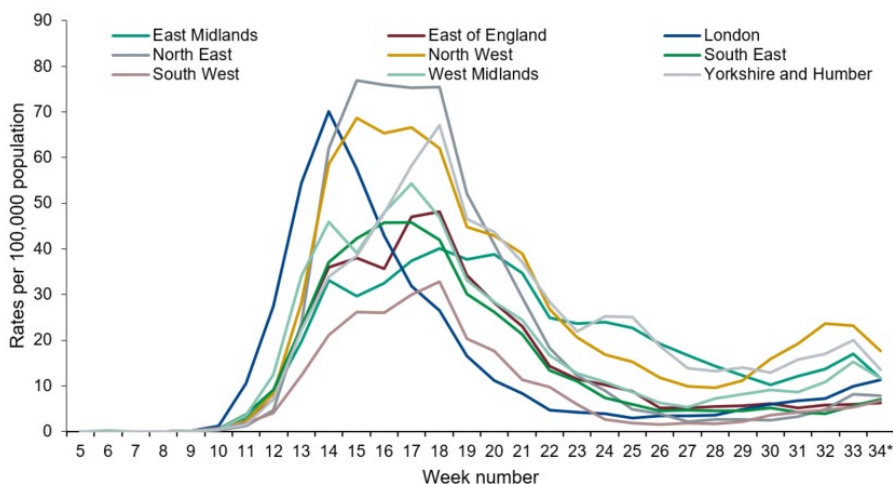


Geography

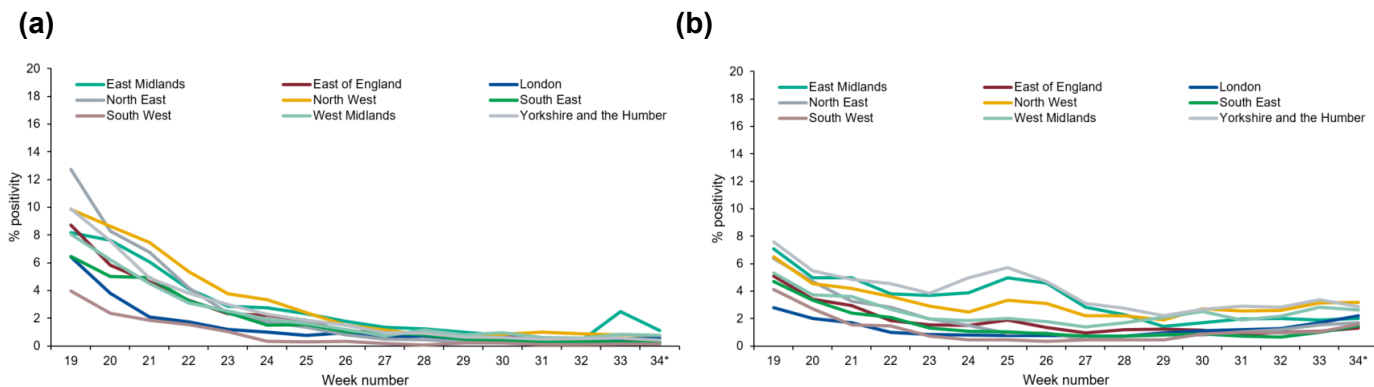
**Table 2: Cumulative number of cases under Pillar 1 and 2 (n=274,553) and total number of people tested under Pillar 1 and 2 (6,042,057) by PHE Centres**

PHE Centres	Pillar 1 + 2 cases	Total number of people tested (under Pillar 1 + 2)
North East	15,958	265,406
North West	51,708	890,313
Yorkshire & Humber	35,305	629,490
West Midlands	29,637	578,333
East Midlands	25,846	567,132
East of England	27,083	684,260
London	38,388	861,190
South East	36,259	972,911
South West	14,369	593,022

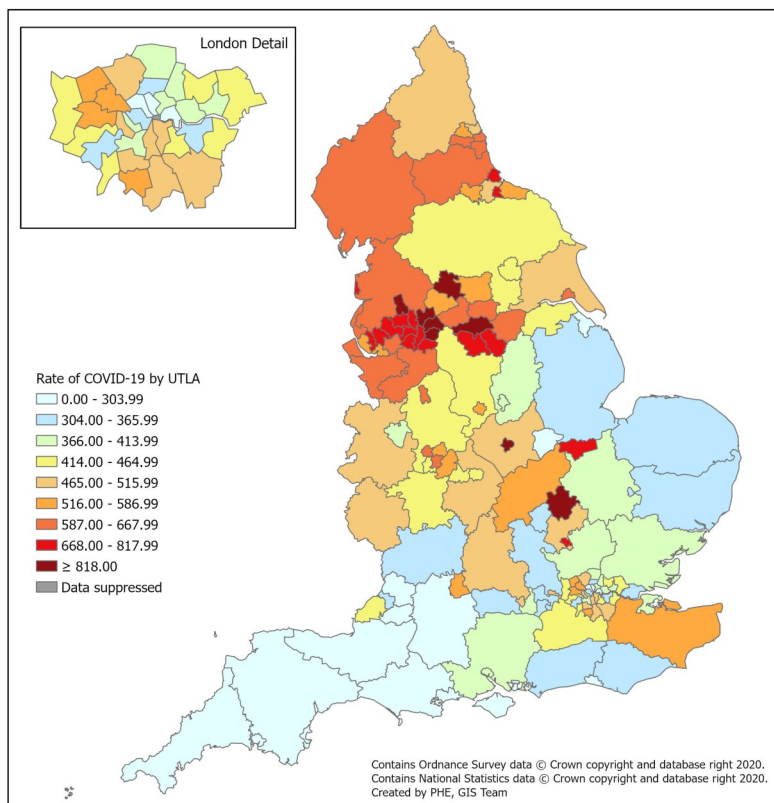
**Figure 7: Weekly laboratory confirmed COVID-19 case rates per 100,000 population tested under Pillar 1 and Pillar 2, by PHE Centres and sample week**



**Figure 8: Weekly positivity of laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases tested under (a) Pillar 1 (%) and (b) Pillar 2 (%), by PHE Centres and sample week, (SGSS and Respiratory DataMart)**



**Figure 9: Cumulative rate of COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population tested under Pillar 1 and 2, by upper-tier local authority, England (box shows enlarged map of London area)**



**Figure 10: Weekly rate of COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population tested under Pillar 1 and 2, by upper-tier local authority, England (box shows enlarged map of London area)**

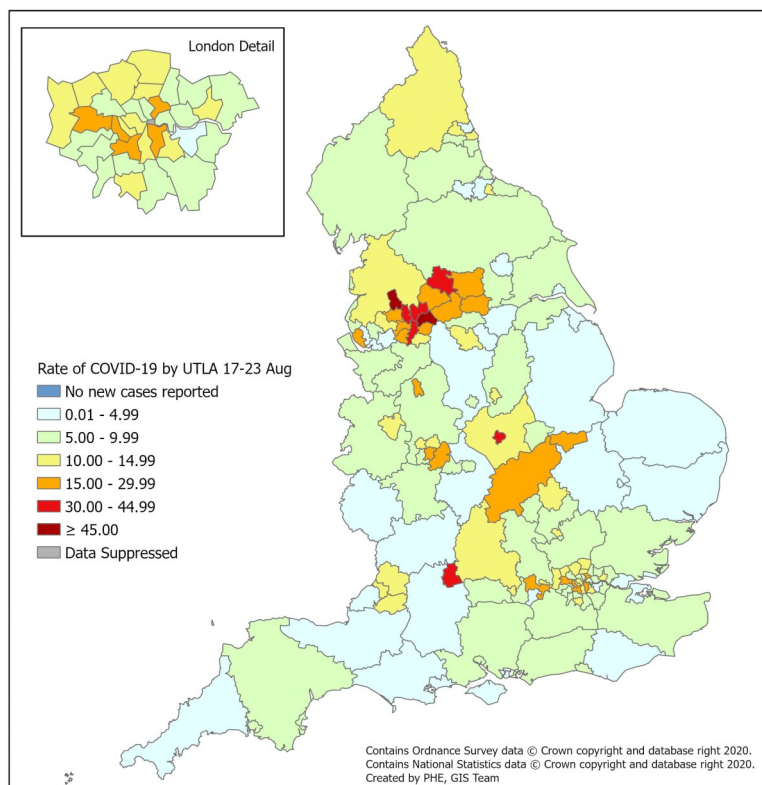
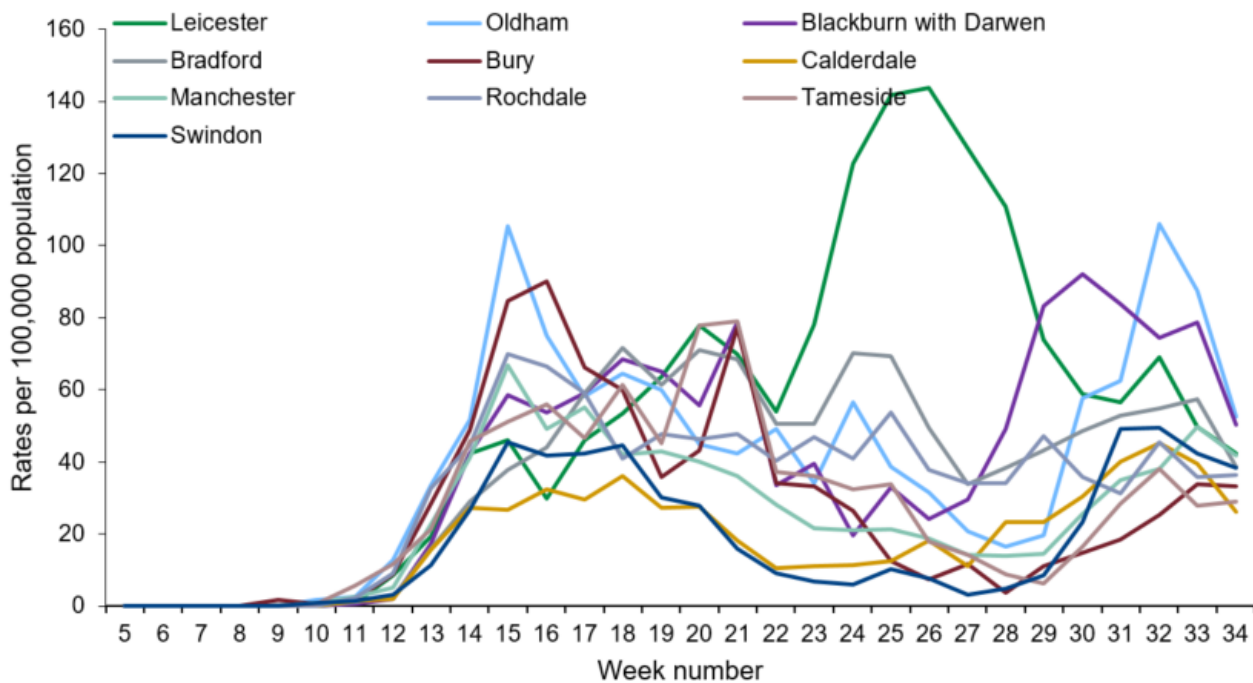




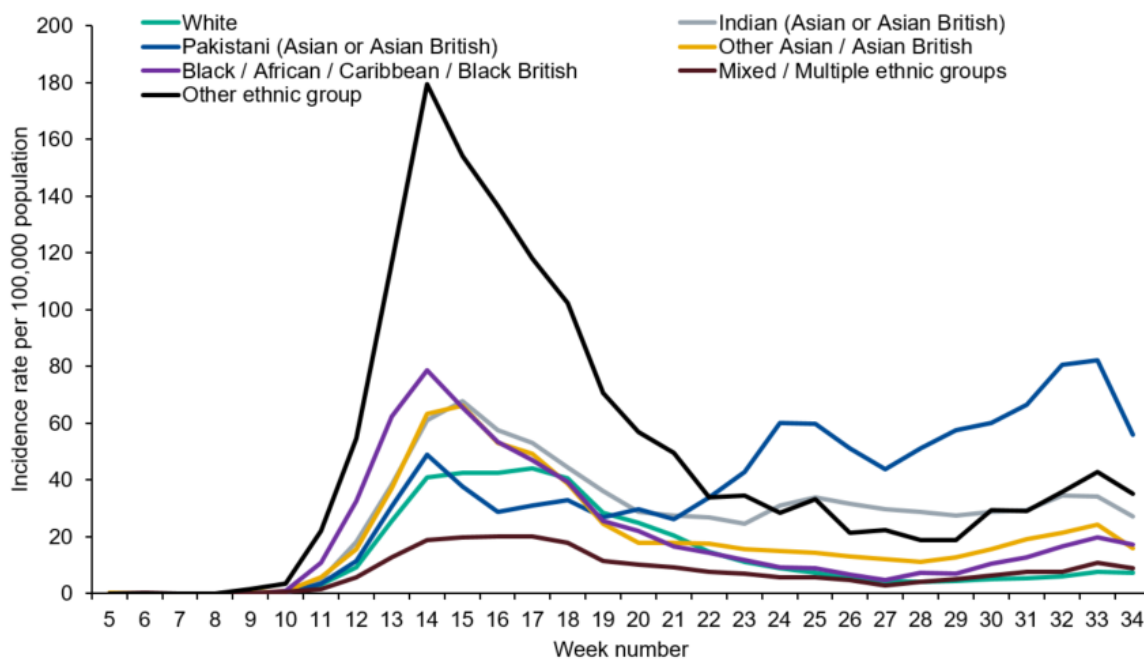
Figure 11: UTLA with the highest weekly rate of COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population tested under Pillar 1 and 2\*



\*The UTLA data presented in this figure, is based on data extracted on Tuesday 25 August, covering the period of 17 August to 23 August 2020 (week 34).

Ethnicity

Figure 12: Weekly incidence per 100,000 population by ethnicity, England



### Incidence rates by Region

In the regions with the highest overall rates and with most local authorities on the watchlist, the age groups most affected appears to be young working age adults (20-29 years). This is consistent with mixing patterns in this age group who may be more likely to be working away from home, including in public facing roles. In those regions, highest rates are also observed in Asian communities of either Indian or Pakistani origin, most likely reflecting the ethnic mix in the most affected local areas. In some regions the daily numbers of cases in each ethnic group can be small, so minor variations in rates should be interpreted with caution.

**Figure 13: Weekly incidence per 100,000 population by age group and region, weeks 30-34**

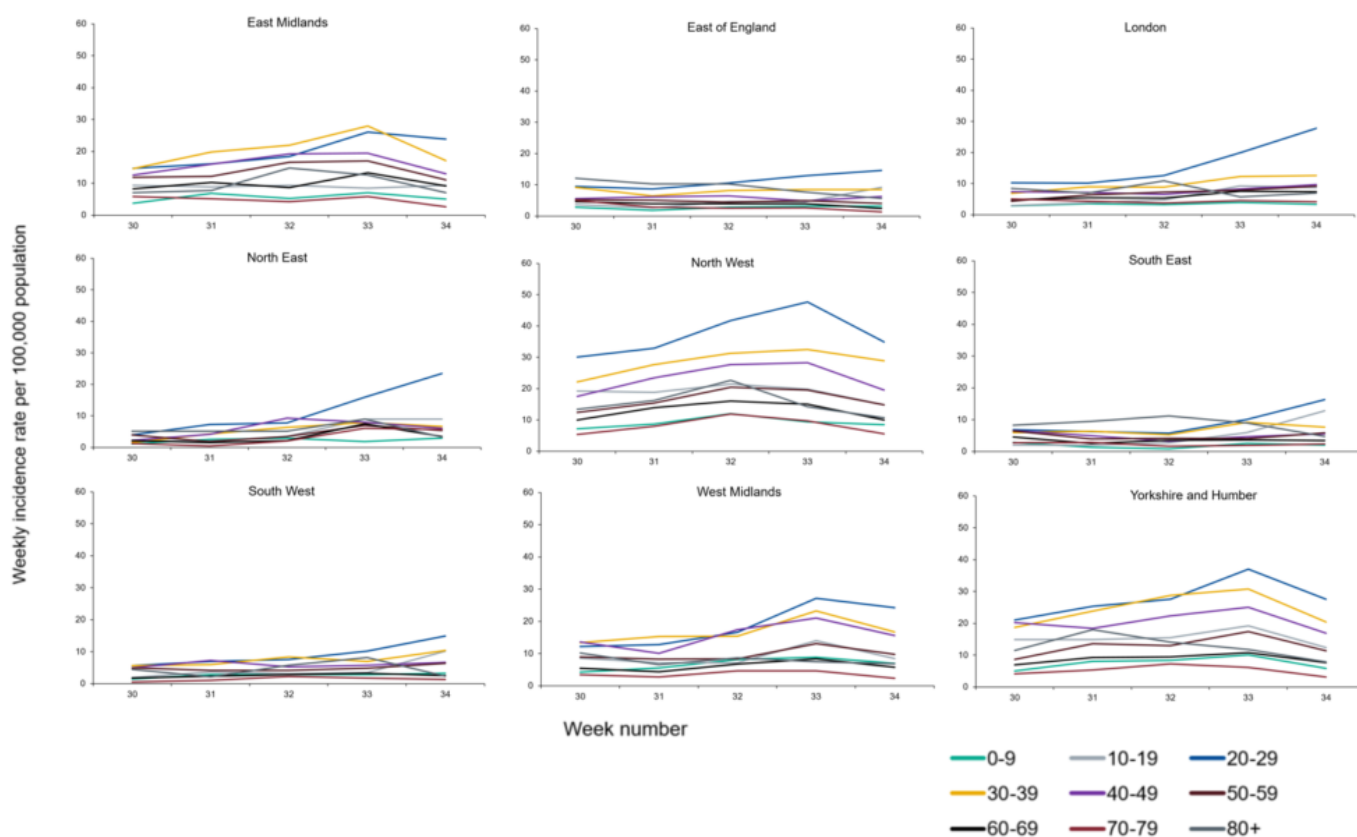
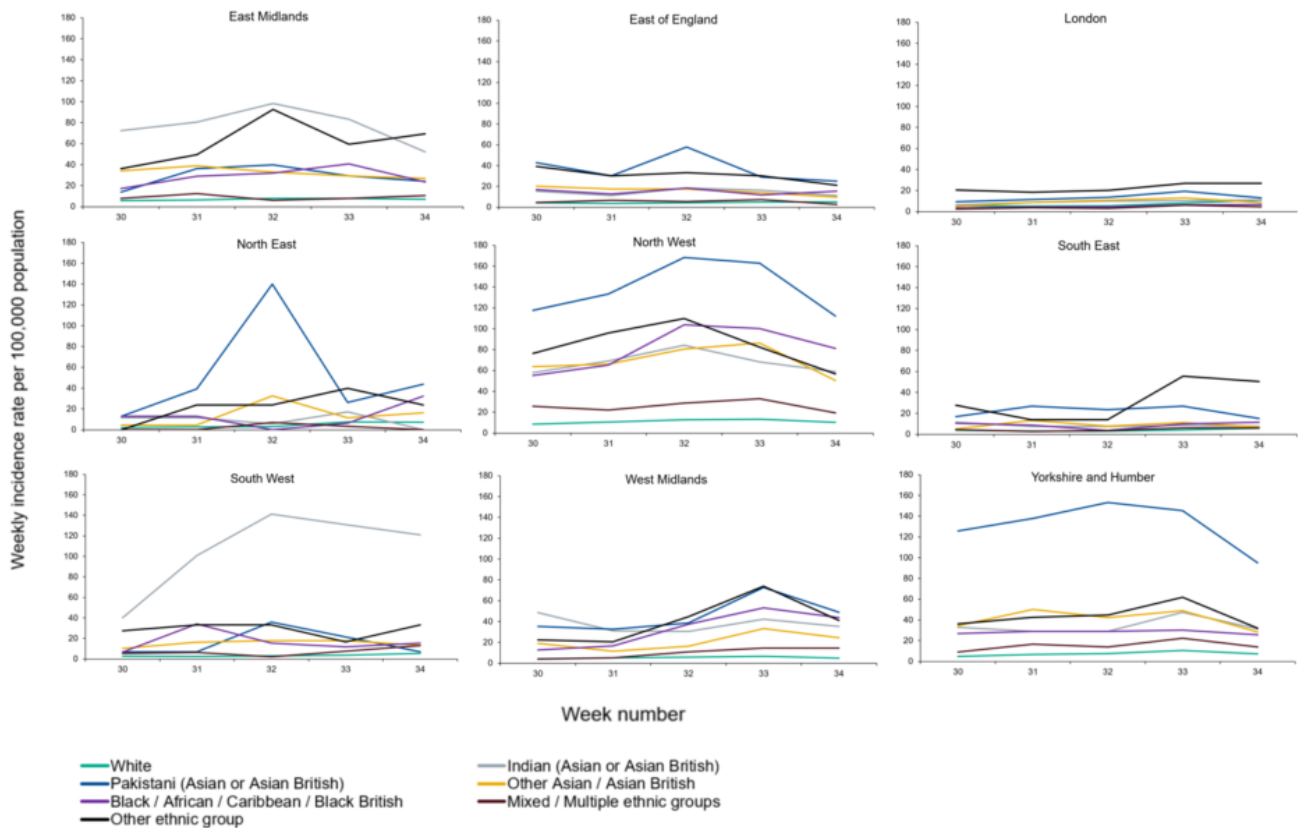


Figure 14: Weekly incidence per 100,000 population by ethnicity and region, weeks 30-34



\*Data presented in Figures 13 & 14 are calculated using Government Office Region denominators

This section summarises the monitoring of acute respiratory infection incidents and internet based surveillance systems for COVID-19.

### Acute respiratory infection incidents, England

Information on acute respiratory infection (ARI) incidents is based on situations reported to PHE Health Protection Teams (HPTs). These include:

- confirmed outbreaks of acute respiratory infections i.e. two or more laboratory confirmed cases (COVID-19, influenza or other respiratory pathogen) linked to a particular setting
- situations where an outbreak is suspected. All suspected outbreaks are further investigated by the HPT in liaison with local partners and a significant proportion do not meet the criteria of a confirmed outbreak. For example if suspected cases test negative for COVID-19 or other respiratory pathogens, or cases are subsequently found not to have direct links to the setting. Since Pillar 2 testing became open to everyone during week 21 more incidents of mild disease have been detected in settings with healthy young populations.

Processes for reporting ARI incidents vary between PHE Centres.

The number of incidents in each setting with at least one laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19 are reported below.

175 new ARI incidents have been reported in week 34 (Figure 15):

- 94 incidents were from care homes where 65 had at least one linked case that tested positive for SARS-CoV-2
- 8 incidents were from hospitals where all had at least one linked case that tested positive for SARS-CoV-2
- 5 incidents were from educational settings where 3 had at least one linked case that tested positive for SARS-CoV-2
- 1 incident was from prison where the incident had at least one linked case that tested positive for SARS-CoV-2
- 32 incidents were from workplace settings where 23 had at least one linked case that tested positive for SARS-CoV-2
- 11 incidents were from food outlet/restaurant settings where 8 had at least one linked case that tested positive for SARS-CoV-2
- 24 incidents were from the other settings category where 17 had at least one linked case that tested positive for SARS-CoV-2

Acute respiratory infection incidents, England

Figure 15: Number of acute respiratory infection (ARI) incidents by institution, England

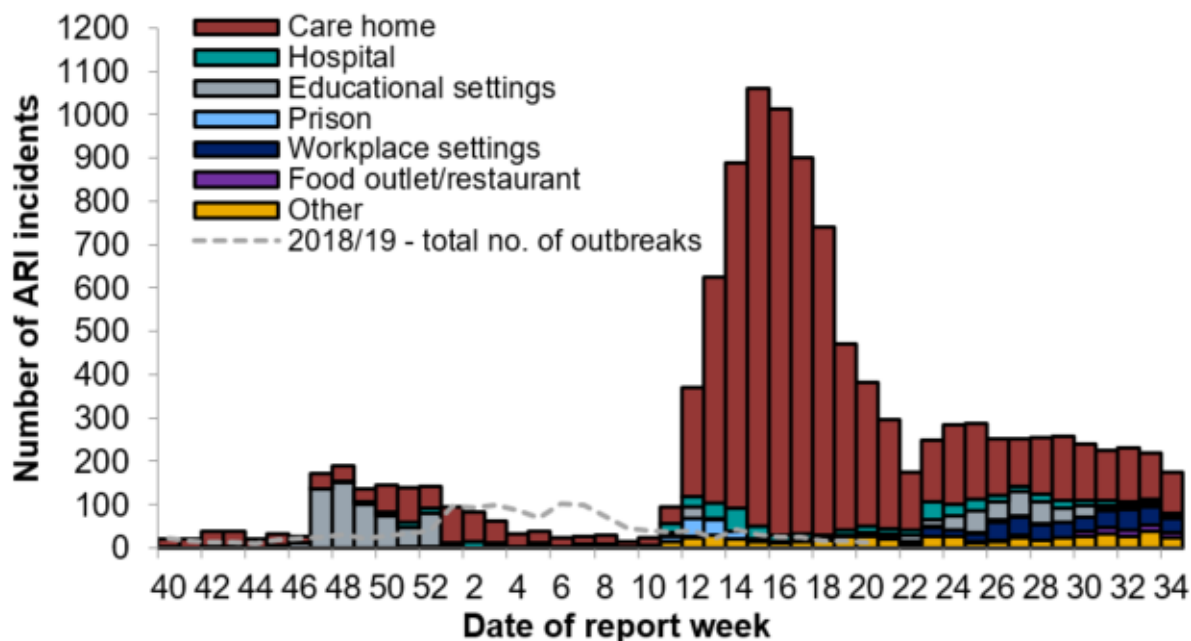


Table 3: Total number of situations/incidents by institution and PHE Centres over the past four weeks with the total number in the last week in brackets

PHE Centres	Cumulative total number of incidents by institution over the past 4 weeks with total number in the last week in brackets							
	Care home	Hospital	Educational settings	Prisons	Workplace settings	Food outlet/restaurant settings	Other settings	Total
East of England	52(9)	1(0)	2(0)	2(0)	6(1)	2(1)	6(1)	71(12)
East Midlands	37(7)	1(0)	3(1)	1(0)	18(4)	4(0)	3(1)	67(13)
London	39(11)	2(1)	5(2)	0(0)	15(3)	3(2)	11(3)	75(22)
North East	17(3)	0(0)	1(1)	1(1)	4(1)	5(4)	10(2)	38(12)
North West	102(23)	3(1)	10(2)	2(0)	53(9)	24(2)	35(5)	229(42)
South East	68(10)	7(1)	2(0)	1(0)	4(0)	3(1)	10(0)	95(12)
South West	32(8)	4(1)	3(0)	0(0)	16(3)	3(1)	8(4)	66(17)
West Midlands	41(11)	4(0)	4(2)	0(0)	25(5)	3(0)	24(2)	101(20)
Yorkshire and Humber	52(12)	4(1)	5(0)	2(0)	21(6)	5(0)	17(6)	106(25)
<b>Total</b>	<b>440(94)</b>	<b>26(5)</b>	<b>35(8)</b>	<b>9(1)</b>	<b>162(32)</b>	<b>52(11)</b>	<b>124(24)</b>	<b>848(175)</b>

## Contact tracing

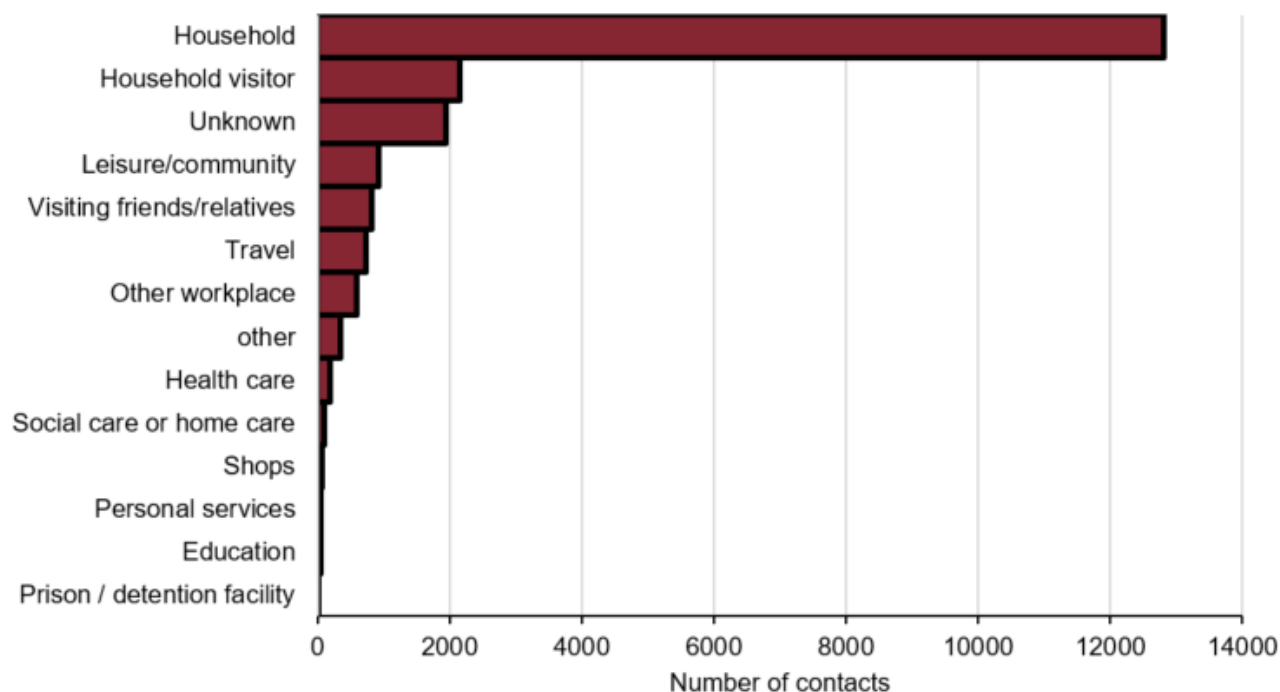
Once a person has a confirmed positive test result for coronavirus, this person is transferred to NHS Test and Trace and a case is opened for them. The NHS Test and Trace service will get in contact via a text, email alert or phone call. People are asked to share details of other people with whom they have had close, recent contact and places they have visited. They can respond online via a secure website or by telephone with a contract tracer. Once contacts have been identified, they will be contacted in turn by the NHS Test and Trace service and advised to self-isolate.

Contacts in Figure 16 are those named by people testing positive and contact traced by NHS Test and Trace. The setting is the potential exposure setting as reported by the person who tested positive, when they had close interaction with the named contact. The most common setting was the household, where 61.5% of all contacts were identified. The next most common setting was visitors to the household of the person who tested positive (10.3%).

The number of contacts excludes those identified as part of management of complex cases: such as those investigated as part of an outbreak, for example, if someone works in or has recently visited a health or care setting such as a hospital or care home, a prison or other secure setting, or a school for people with special needs. For complex cases, contacts are often managed at a situation rather than individual level, with advice being issued to the contact institution (for example in a care home or prison). Therefore information on individual contacts associated with these situations is not available.

**Figure 16: Contacts by exposure/activity setting in week 34, England**

(Data source: NHS Test and Trace)



Note: categories have been grouped as follows: leisure / community includes eating out, attending events and celebrations, exercising, worship, arts, entertainment or recreation, community activities and attending play groups or organised trips; other workplace includes: retail, manufacturing or construction, hospitality, transport, emergency services or border force, food production and agriculture, prison, financial services, civil service or local government, information and communication, military, critical national infrastructure. Personal services includes hairdressers, barbers, tattooists and nail bars.

NHS 111

The NHS 111 service monitors daily trends in phone calls made to the service in England, to capture trends in infectious diseases such as influenza and norovirus.

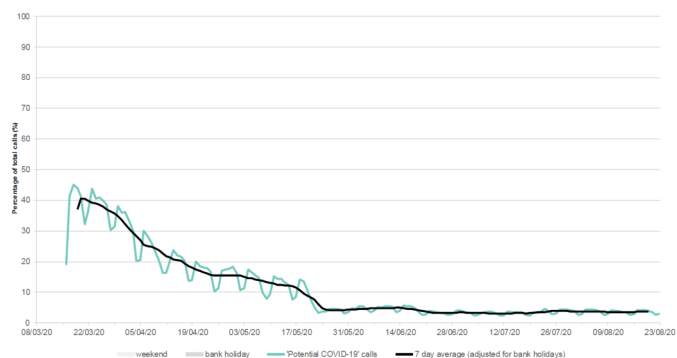
Up to 23 August 2020, the daily percentage of NHS 111 ‘potential COVID-19-like’ and cold/flu calls (as a percentage of total NHS 111 calls) remained stable (Figure 17). The daily number of NHS 111 ‘potential COVID-19’ and cold/flu completed online assessments remained stable (Figure 18).

Please note that NHS 111 callers (from 11 May 2020) and NHS 111 online users (from 11 June 2020), who are assessed as having probable COVID-19 symptoms are now triaged using symptom specific pathways e.g. cold/flu, which are included in routine syndromic indicators.

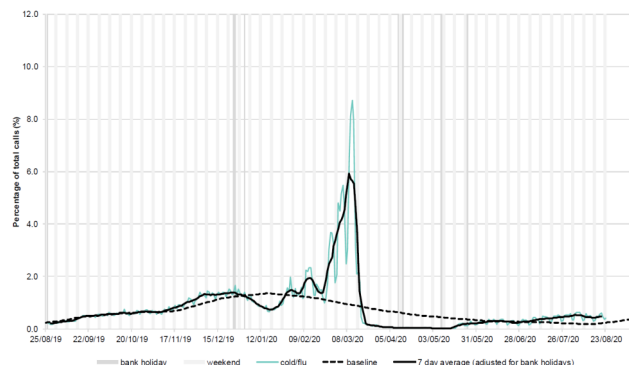
Further information about these caveats is available from the PHE Remote Health Advice Syndromic Surveillance bulletin.

**Figure 17 (a-b): NHS 111 telephony indicators (and 7-day moving average), England**

(a) Daily potential COVID-19 calls as a percentage of total calls, all ages

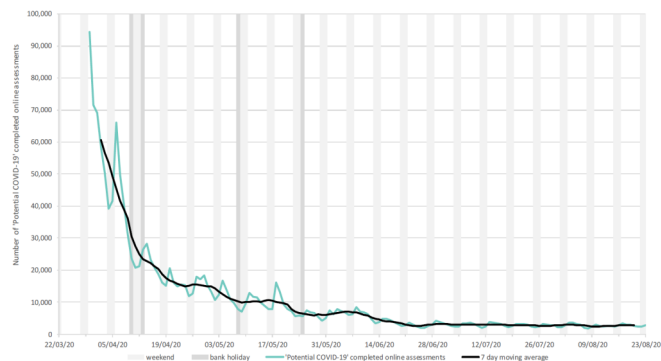


(b) Daily cold/flu calls as a percentage of total calls, all ages

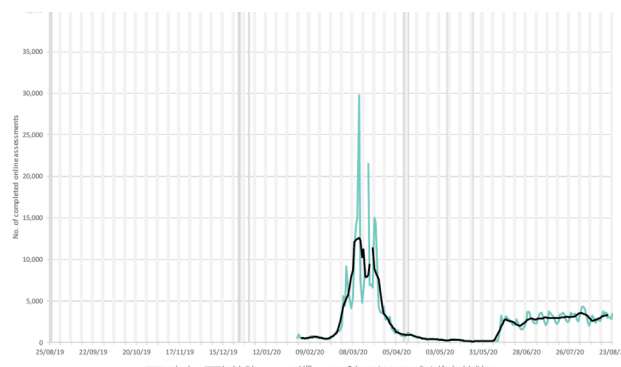


**Figure 18 (a-b): NHS 111 completed online assessments (and 7-day moving average), England**

(a) Daily ‘potential COVID-19’ online assessments as the number of completed online assessments, all ages



(b) Daily cold/flu online assessments as the number of completed online assessments, all ages



Legend: weekend (light grey box), bank holiday (dark grey box), indicator (teal line), 7 day mov avg (black line), baseline (dotted line)



## Internet based surveillance

PHE's internet based surveillance systems aim to monitor the volume of people searching for typical symptoms of COVID-19 on the internet as well as tracking self-reported respiratory symptoms and health seeking behaviour patterns related to COVID-19.

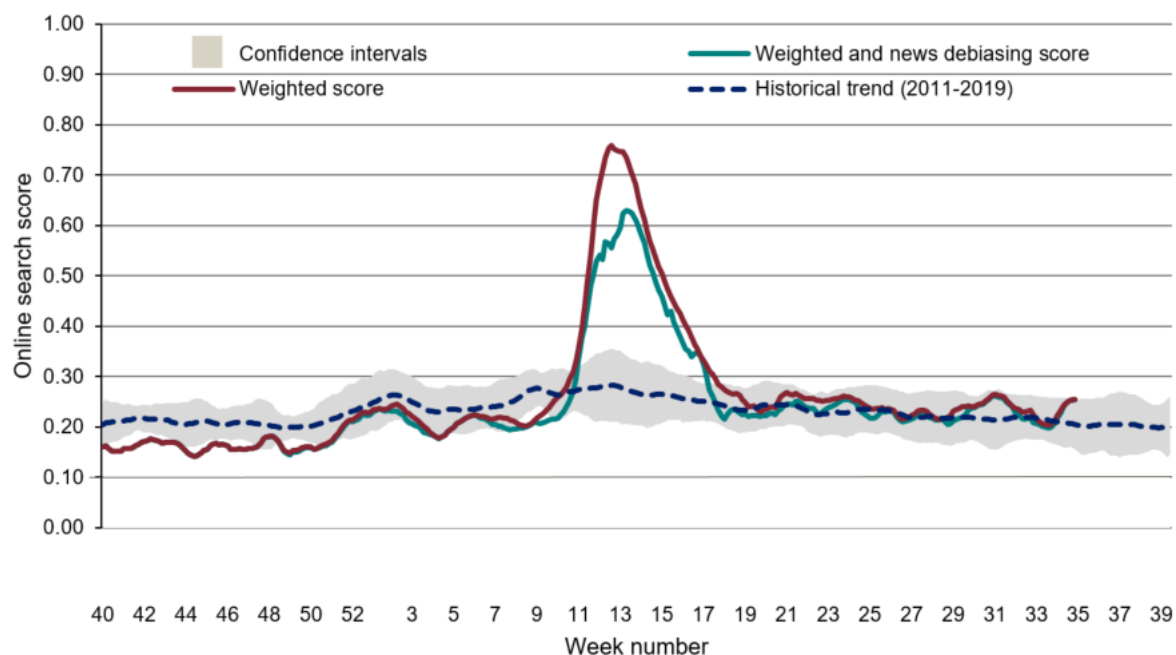
### Google search queries

This is a web-based syndromic surveillance system which uses daily search query frequency statistics obtained from the Google Health Trends API [1]. This model focuses on search queries about COVID-19 symptoms as well as generic queries about "coronavirus" (e.g. "covid-19"). The search query frequency time series has been weighted based on symptom frequency as reported in other data sources. Frequency of searches for symptoms is compared with a baseline calculated from historical daily data.

The overall and media-debiasing weighted scores increased during week 34 (Figure 19).

[1] For more information about this model, please see <https://arxiv.org/abs/2003.08086>

**Figure 19: Normalised Google search score for COVID-19 symptoms, with weighted score for media-debiasing and historical trend, England**



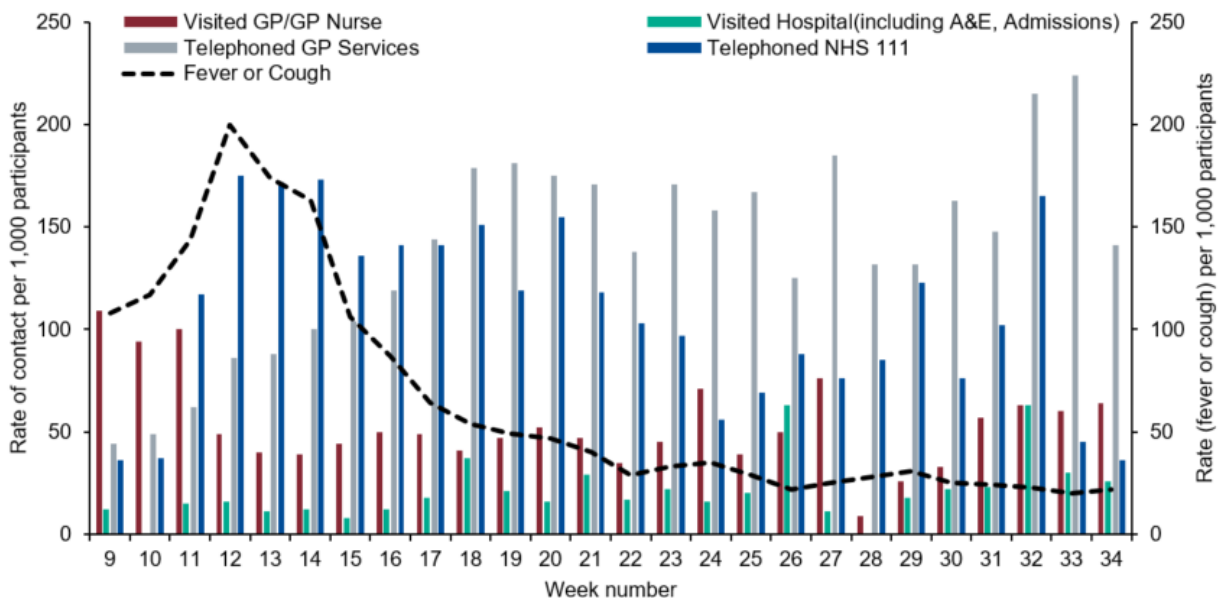
Internet based surveillance

FluSurvey

An internet based surveillance system has been developed based on FluSurvey. FluSurvey is a web tool survey designed to monitor trends of influenza like illness (ILI) in the community using self-reported respiratory symptoms from registered participants. The platform has been adapted to capture respiratory symptoms, exposure risk and healthcare seeking behaviours among registered participants to contribute to national surveillance of COVID-19 activity.

A total of 3,499 participants completed the weekly COVID-19 surveillance survey in week 34, of which 78 (2.2%) reported fever or cough. The most commonly reported method of access to healthcare services continue to be through telephoning a GP practice (Figure 20).

**Figure 20: Rate of contact with different healthcare services among FluSurvey participants reporting fever or cough symptoms, week 09 to 34, England**



**GP In Hours (GPIH) and GP Out of Hours (GPOOH), Syndromic surveillance**

The GP In Hours (GPIH) syndromic surveillance system monitors the number of GP visits during regular hours of known clinical indicators. The GP Out of Hours (GPOOH) syndromic surveillance system monitors the numbers of daily unscheduled visits and calls to GPs during evenings, overnight, on weekends and on public holidays. Both systems cover around 55% of England’s population.

Up to 23 August 2020, GPIH consultations for potential COVID-19-like and ILI consultations remained stable (Figure 21). Please note that the GPIH COVID-19-like indicator presented in this report is derived from a reduced denominator population, compared to ILI.

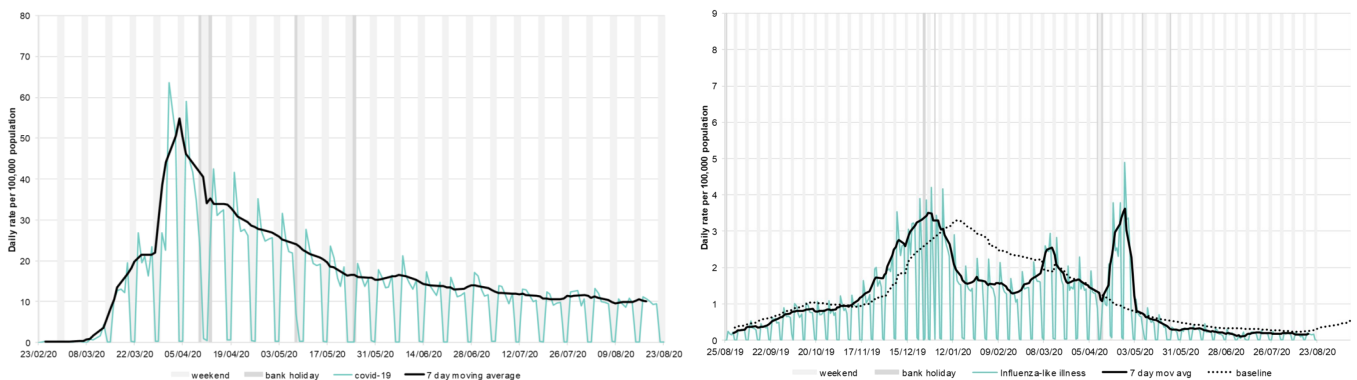
Rates should therefore be treated with caution (baselines are also not available this week). Through GPOOH consultations (up to 23 August 2020), the daily percentage (as a percentage of total contacts with a Read code) for ILI and difficulty breathing/wheeze/asthma contacts remained stable (Figure 22).

Please note GP data should be interpreted with caution due to changes in advice regarding accessing GP surgeries due to COVID-19. Further information about these caveats is available from the PHE GP In Hours Syndromic Surveillance bulletin.

**Figure 21 (a-b): GPIH clinical indicators, England**

(a) potential COVID-19 GP consultations, daily incidence rates per 100,000 population, all ages

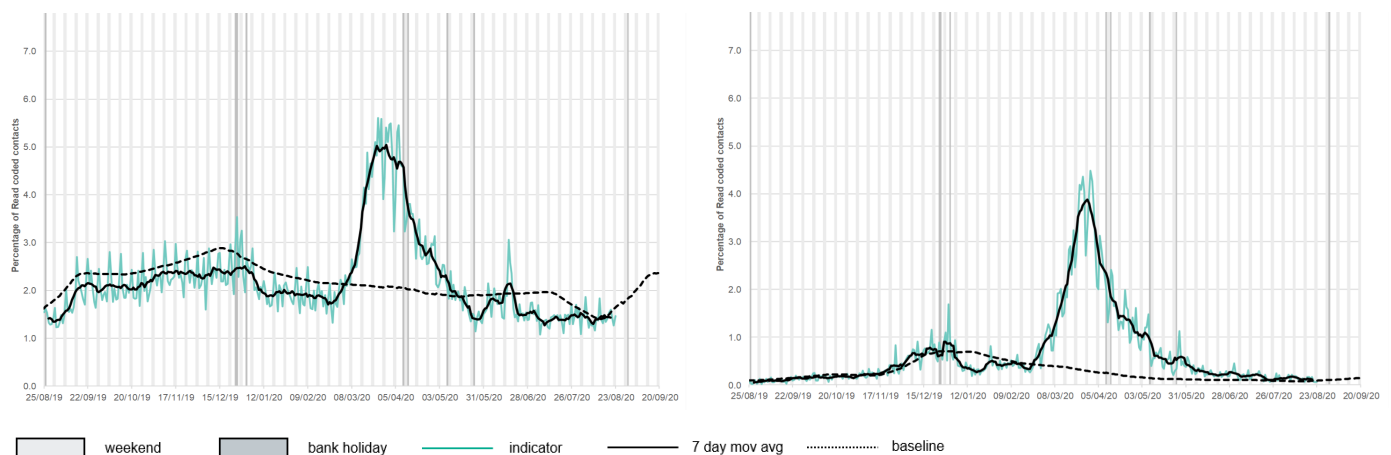
(b) Influenza-like illness consultations, daily incidence rates per 100,000 population, all ages



**Figure 22 (a-b) : GPOOH contacts indicators, England**

(a) Difficulty breathing/wheeze/asthma, daily contacts (%), all ages

(b) Influenza-like illness, daily contacts (%), all ages

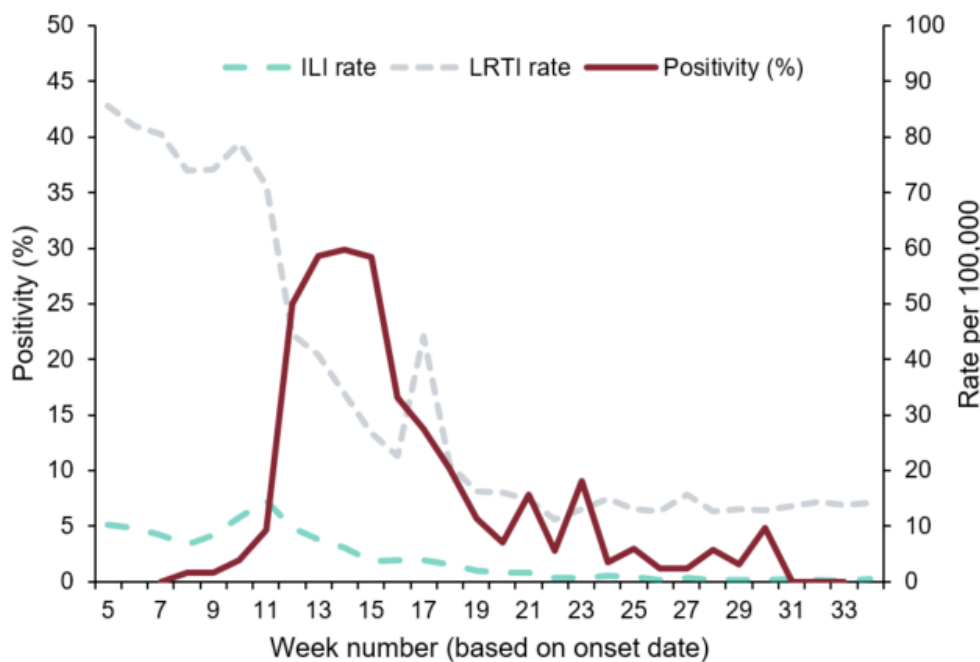


**RCGP Swabbing Scheme**

This is an extended primary care surveillance system through the RCGP sentinel integrated clinical and virological scheme. The extension of the scheme was initiated on 24 February 2020. A sample of patients presenting to around 300 GP practices with Influenza-like Illness (ILI) and Lower Respiratory Tract Infections (LRTI) (not suspected for COVID-19) will be tested. This enables the week on week monitoring of test “positivity rate” to observe the trend in the proportion of people with confirmed COVID-19.

Up to 25 August 2020, a total of 5,247 patients have been tested of which 614 have tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 through this scheme. The overall positivity was at 0.0% (0/42) in week 33 compared to the same in the previous week (Figure 23). Less than 10 samples have been reported so far in week 34. This should be interpreted with caution as the overall denominator for patients tested through GPs has decreased due to an increase in patients being tested under Pillar 2. Consultations for ILI and LRTI remained stable (Figure 23).

**Figure 23: Overall weekly positivity (%), ILI and LRTI consultations rates (per 100,000), RCGP, England**



\*For the most recent week, more samples are expected to be tested therefore the graph in Figures 23-25 should be interpreted with caution

\*Positivity (%) is not calculated when the total number tested is less than 10

RCGP Swabbing Scheme

Figure 24: Overall positivity (%) (weekly) by PHE Region, England (RCGP)

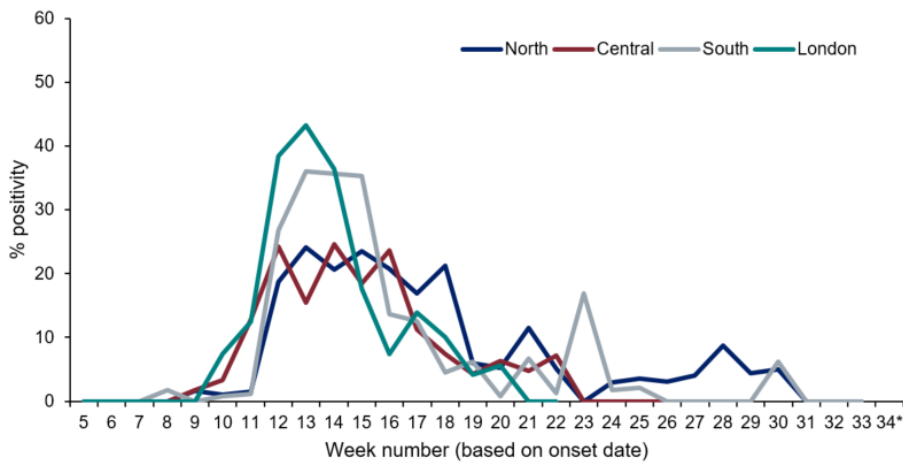
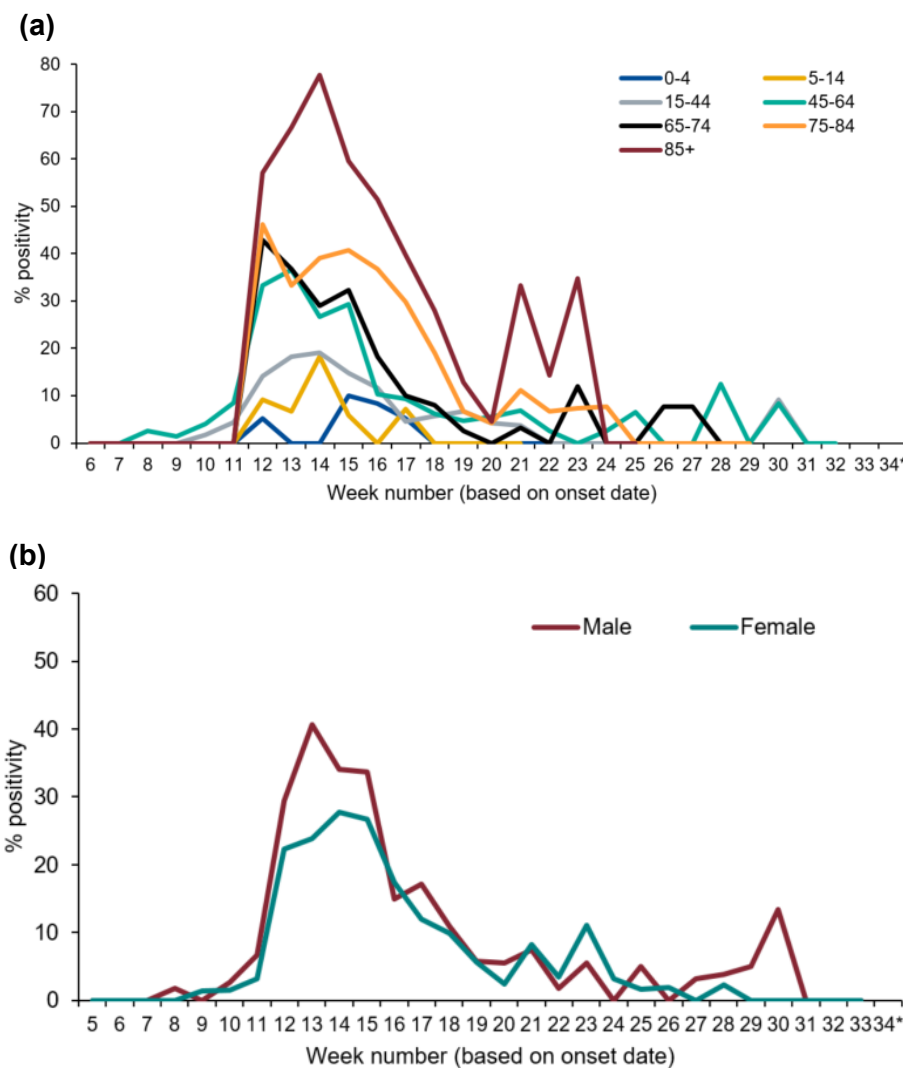


Figure 25: Positivity (%) (weekly) by (a) age group and (b) gender, England (RCGP)



\*For the most recent week, more samples are expected to be tested therefore the graph in Figures 23-25 should be interpreted with caution

\*Positivity (%) is not calculated when the total number tested is less than 10

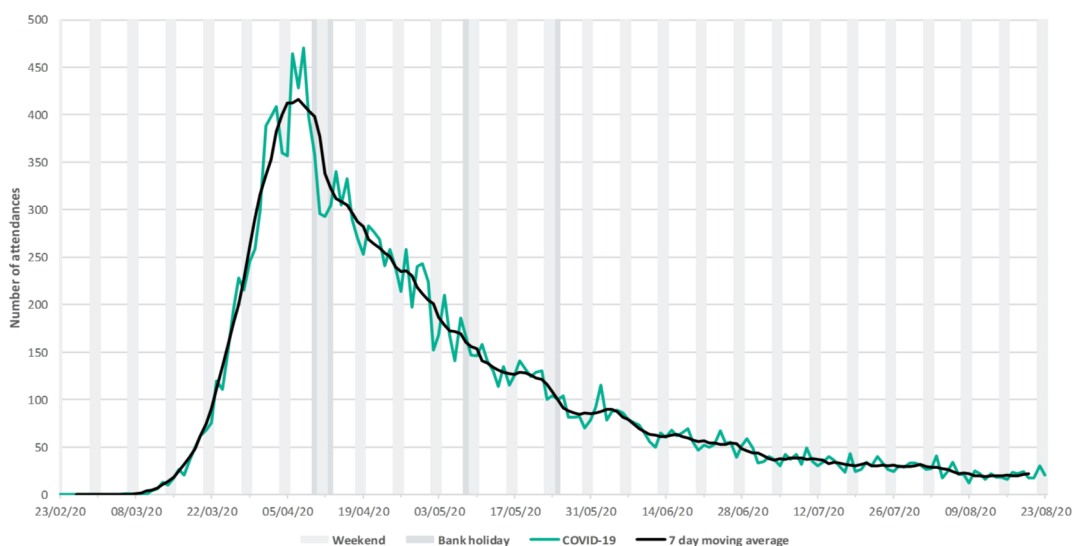
## Emergency Department attendances, Syndromic surveillance

The Emergency Department Syndromic Surveillance System (EDSSS) monitors the daily visits in a network of emergency departments across England.

Up to 23 August 2020, the daily number of ED attendances for all ages as reported by 81 EDs in England during week 34, for COVID-19-like attendances were stable (Figure 246).

Please note: the COVID-19-like ED indicator is an underestimation of the number of COVID-19 attendances as it only includes attendances with a COVID-19-like diagnosis as their primary diagnosis. The EDSSS COVID-19-like indicator should therefore be used to monitor trends in ED attendances and not to estimate actual numbers of COVID-19 ED attendances. Further information about these caveats is available from the PHE Emergency Department Syndromic Surveillance bulletin.

**Figure 26: COVID-19-like, daily ED attendances, all ages, England**



**COVID-19 Hospitalisation in England Surveillance System (CHES)**

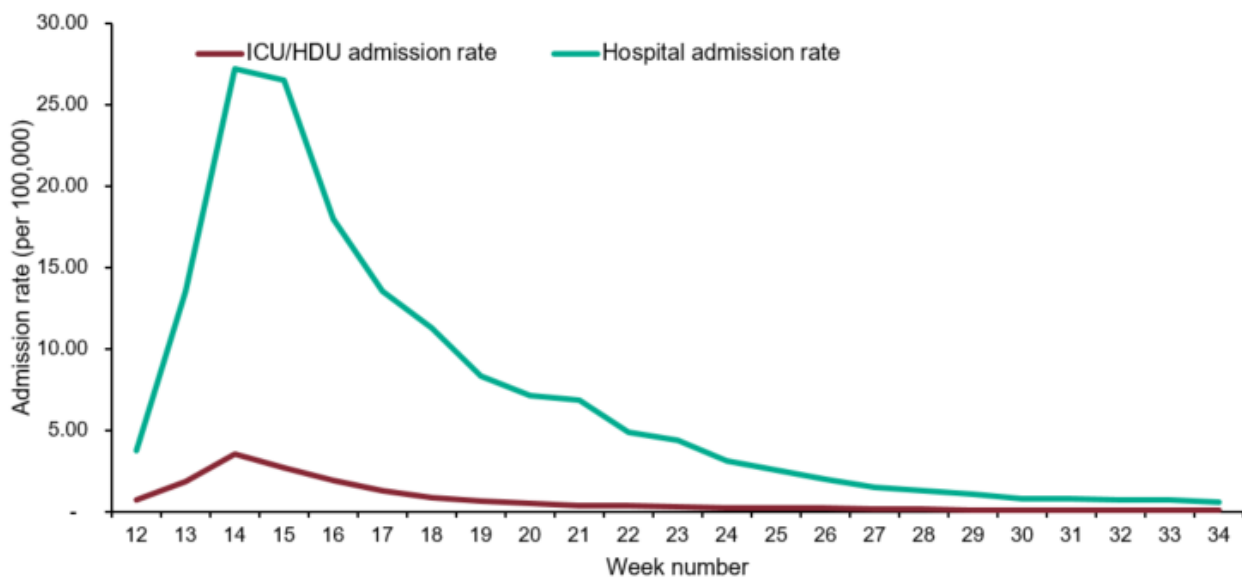
The CHES surveillance system monitors daily new acute respiratory infections (ARI) and new laboratory confirmed COVID-19 admissions to hospital including critical care (ICU/HDU). Trends in hospital and critical care admission rates need to be interpreted in the context of testing recommendations.

A total of 134 NHS Trusts are now participating, although the number of Trusts reporting varies by day. The weekly rate of new admissions of COVID-19 cases is based on the trust catchment population of those NHS Trusts who made a new return. This may differ from other published figures such as the total number of people currently in hospital with COVID-19.

In week 34, the weekly admission rates for both hospitalisations and ICU/HDU COVID-19 admissions increased remained stable.

The hospitalisation rate was at 0.58 per 100,000 in week 34 compared to 0.70 per 100,000 in the previous week. The ICU/HDU rate was at 0.08 per 100,000 in week 33 compared to 0.05 per 100,000 in the previous week (Figure 27). By NHS regions, the highest hospitalisation and ICU/HDU rates continued to be observed in the North West (Figure 28). By age group, the highest hospitalisation rate was observed in the 65-74 year olds and the highest ICU/HDU rate was observed in the 65-74 year olds (Figure 29).

**Figure 27: Weekly overall hospital and ICU/HDU admission rates per 100,000 of new COVID-19 positive cases reported through CHES, England**



COVID-19 Hospitalisation in England Surveillance System (CHES)

Figure 28: Weekly admission rate for (a) hospital admissions and (b) ICU/HDU admissions by NHS regions of new COVID-19 positive cases reported through CHES

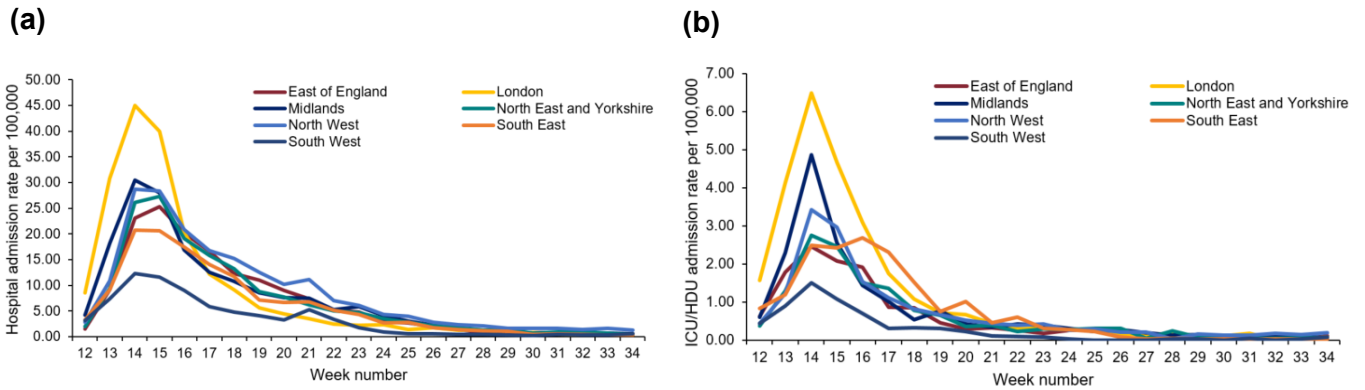
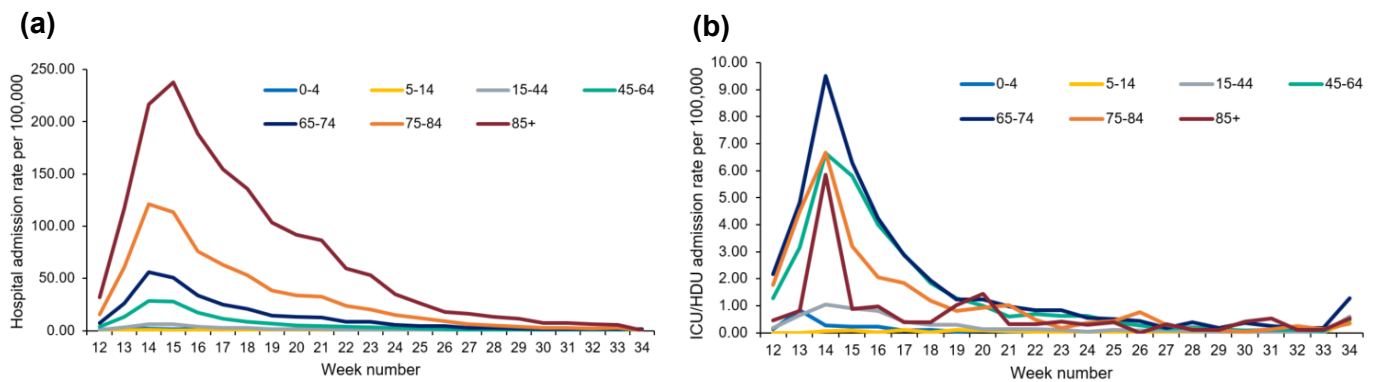


Figure 29: Weekly admission rate for (a) hospital admissions and (b) ICU/HDU admissions by age group of new COVID-19 positive cases reported through CHES



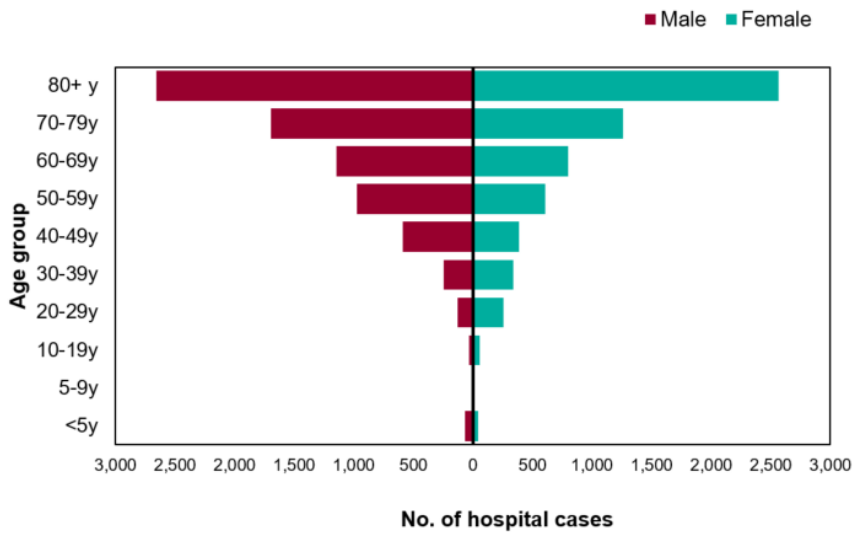


COVID-19 Hospitalisation in England Surveillance System (CHES)

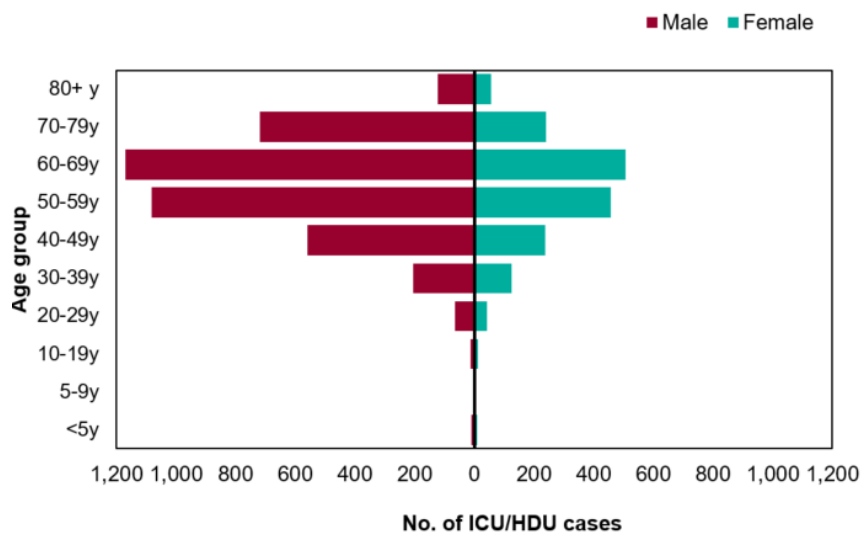
Figure 30 and 31 are based on individual patient level data which are provided to CHES from a subset of NHS Acute Trusts, therefore the data should be interpreted with caution as the distribution of age, sex and ethnic group may not be representative of all hospitalised patients.

Figure 30: Age/sex pyramid of new (a) hospital (lower level of care) (n=13,866) and (b) ICU/ HDU (n=5,630) COVID-19 cases reported through CHES, England

(a)

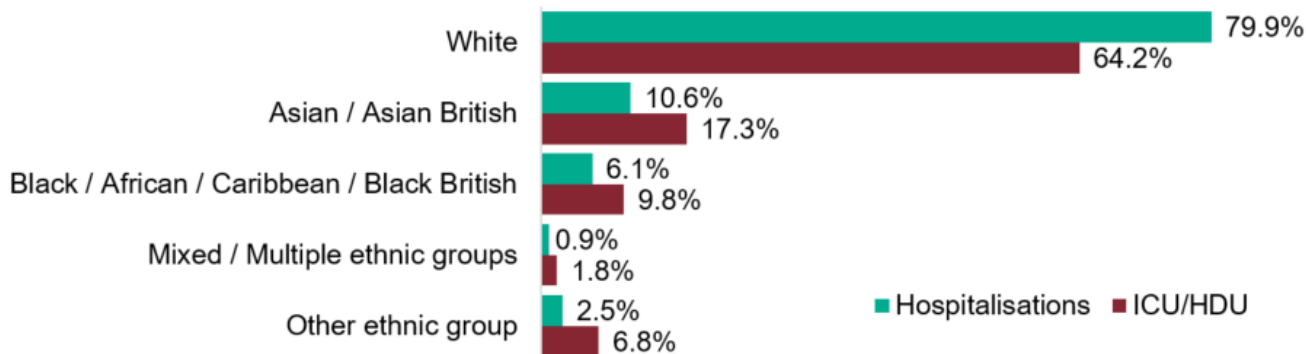


(b)



COVID-19 Hospitalisation in England Surveillance System (CHES)

Figure 31: Ethnic group of new hospitalisations (lower level of care) (n=13,309) and ICU/HDU (n=5,172) COVID-19 cases reported through CHES, England

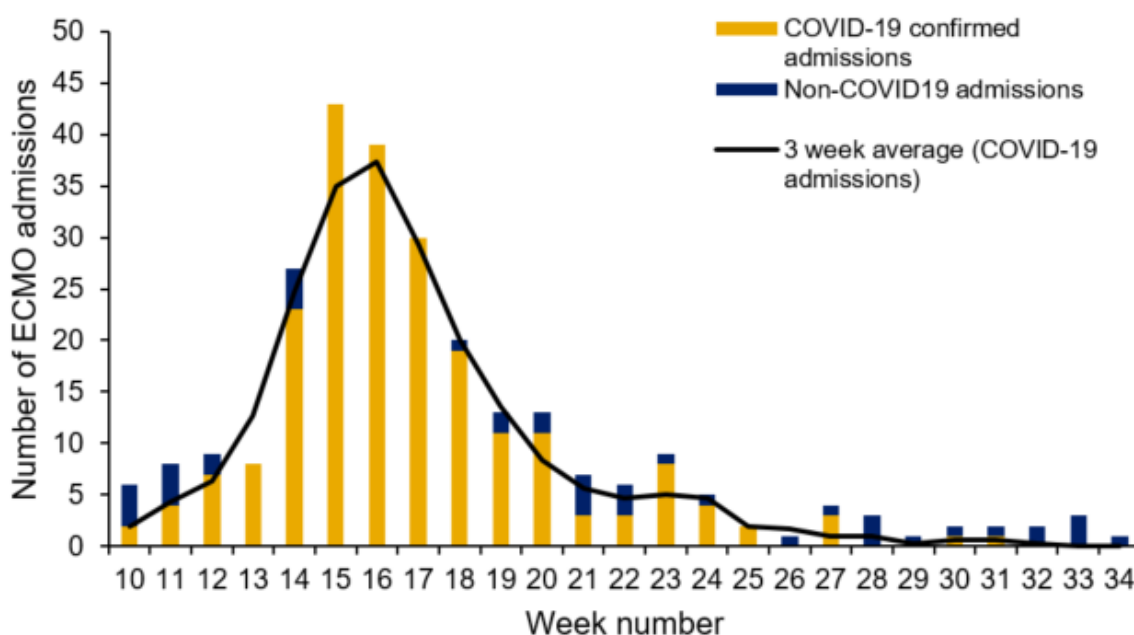


proportion of admitted cases (%)

UK Severe Respiratory Failure (SRF) centres admissions

Between 03 March and 18 August 2020, a total of 222 laboratory confirmed COVID-19 admissions have been reported from the 5 SRFs in England. There was no new laboratory confirmed COVID-19 admission reported in week 34.

Figure 32: Laboratory confirmed ECMO admissions (COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 confirmed) to SRFs, England



### Cumulative deaths

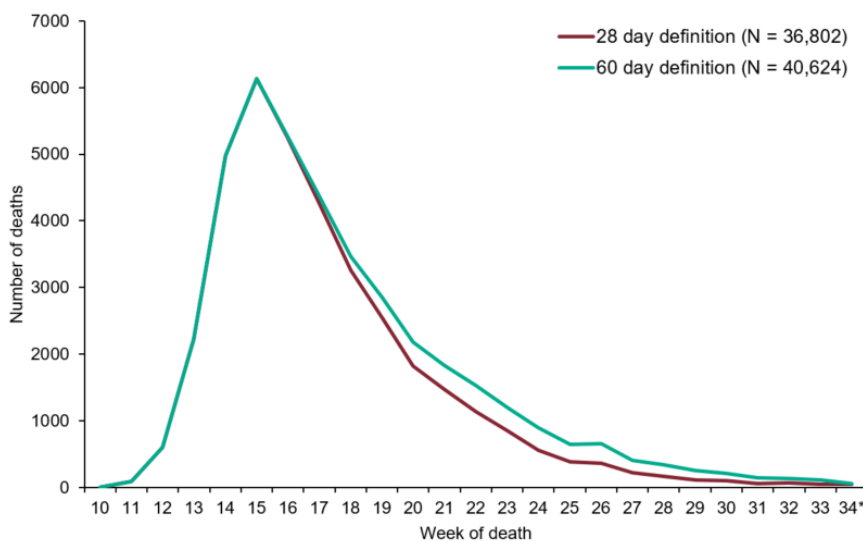
Changes to the definitions of COVID-19 related deaths in England are described in more detail in an [accompanying PHE technical summary](#).

The current definitions used for mortality surveillance of COVID-19 in England are:

- 28 day definition: A death in a person with a laboratory-confirmed positive COVID-19 test and died within (equal to or less than) 28 days of the first positive specimen date
- 60 day definition: A death in a person with a laboratory-confirmed positive COVID-19 test and either: died within 60 days of the first specimen date OR died more than 60 days after the first specimen date only if COVID-19 is mentioned on the death certificate

The introduction of these definitions will affect the numbers which have been presented in past reports and therefore Figure 31 represents these differences by definition.

**Figure 33: Cumulative number of deaths by week of death and time since laboratory confirmation of COVID-19, England**



\* For the most recent week, more deaths will be reported therefore the decrease seen in this graph should be interpreted with caution

Figure 34: Age/sex pyramid of laboratory confirmed COVID-19 deaths

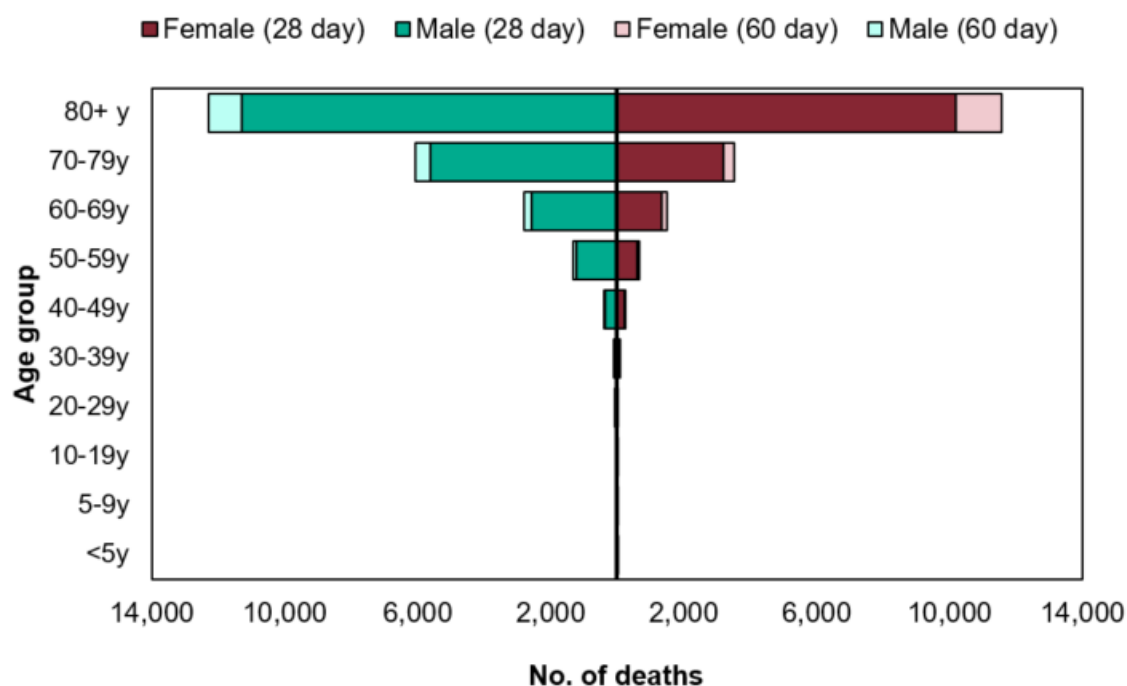


Table 4: Ethnic group (%) of COVID-19 deaths and time since laboratory confirmation of COVID-19, England

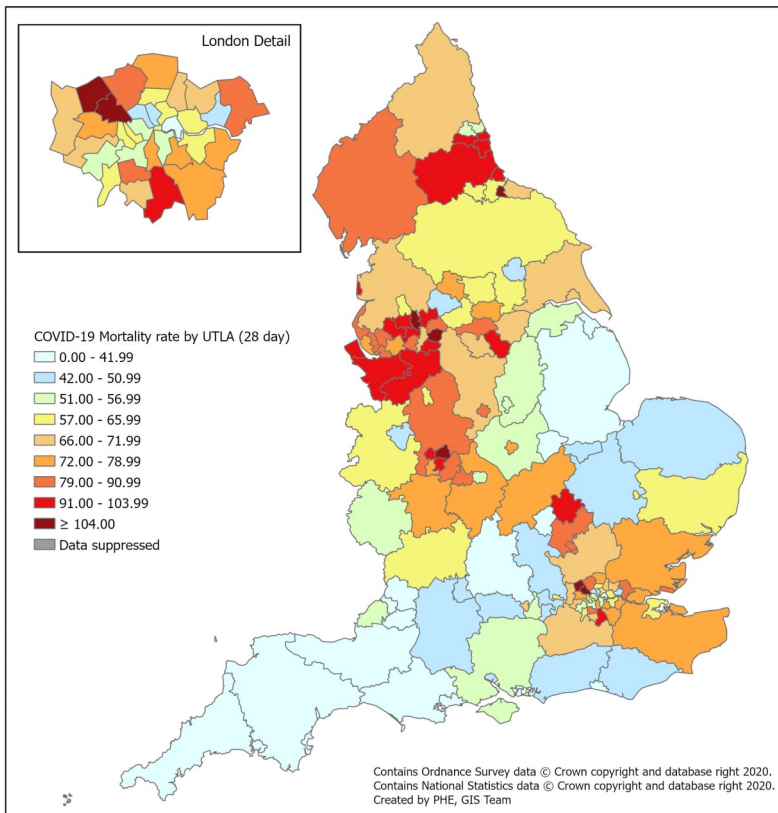
Ethnicity	28 day definition	60 day definition
White	86.6%	86.9%
Asian / Asian British	6.4%	6.2%
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	4.3%	4.2%
Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups	0.6%	0.6%
Other ethnic group	2.2%	2.2%

Table 5: Cumulative number of COVID-19 deaths and time since laboratory confirmation of COVID-19 by PHE Centres

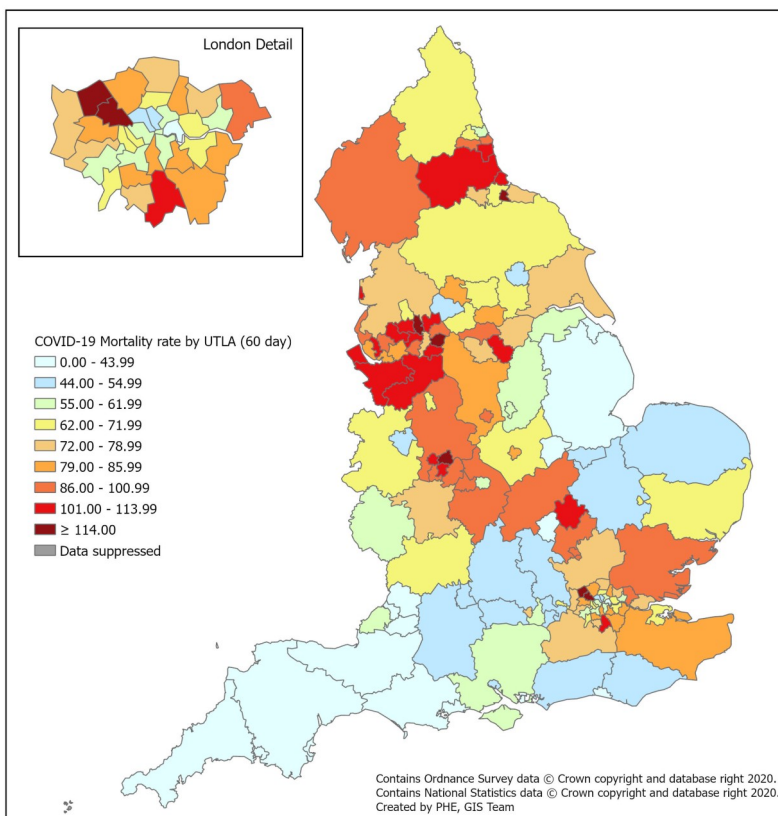
PHE Centres	Number of deaths by definition	
	28 day definition	60 day definition
North East	2,124	2,360
North West	6,137	6,808
Yorkshire & Humber	3,599	3,981
West Midlands	4,545	5,033
East Midlands	2,935	3,267
East of England	4,230	4,646
London	6,171	6,705
South East	4,867	5,436
South West	1,882	2,062

**Figure 35: Cumulative mortality rate of COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population tested under Pillar 1 and 2 by (a) 28 day definition and (b) 60 day definition**

(a)



(b)



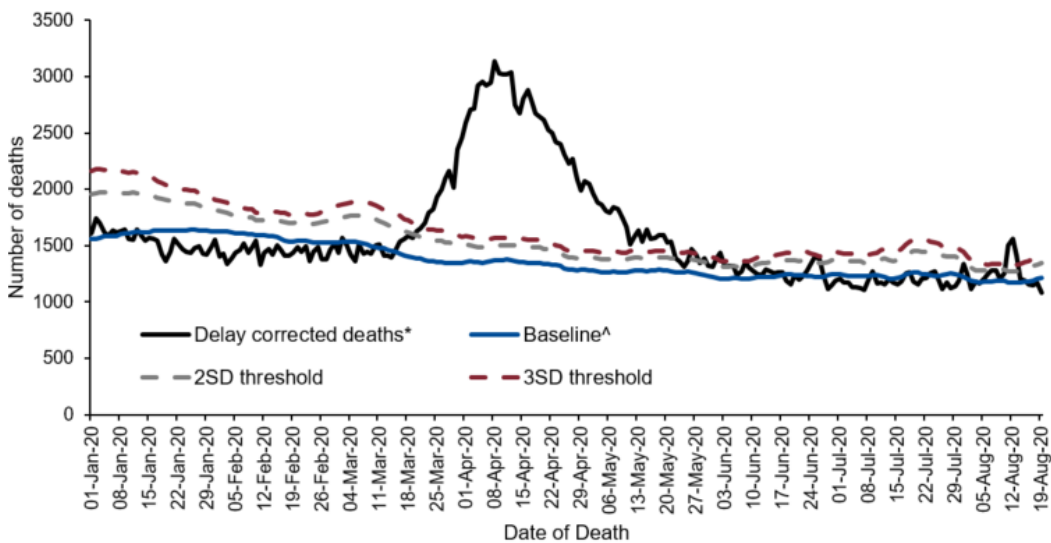
### Daily excess all-cause mortality, UK

Deaths occurring from 01 January to 19 August 2020 were assessed to calculate the daily excess above a baseline using age-group and region specific all cause deaths as provided daily by the General Register Office (GRO). The deaths were corrected to allow for delay to registration based on past data on these delays and the baseline was from the same day of the year in the previous 5 years +/- 7 days with an extrapolated time trend, and with 2 and 3 standard deviation (SD) limits shown (Figure 36).

Weeks in which at least 2 days exceeded the 3SD threshold are shown in Table 6 and the daily difference from the baseline by age and region is given in Figure 36. Note that as these data are by date of death with delay corrections, numbers are subject to change each week, particularly for more recent days.

Significant excess all-cause mortality was observed in week 33 overall, by age group in the 75-84 year olds and the 85+ year olds and subnationally in the North East, South East and South West. This excess coincides with a heat wave occurring in week 33 (Figure 36, 37 and Table 6).

**Figure 36: Daily excess all-cause deaths in all ages, England, 01 January 2020 to 19 August 2020**



^ based on same day in previous 5 years +/- 1 week with a linear trend projected

\* corrected for delay to registration from death

## Daily excess all-cause mortality, UK

Table 6: Excess all-cause deaths by (a) age group and (b) PHE centres , England

(a)

	Excess detected in week 33 2020?	Weeks in excess since week 10 2020
Age group		
All	✓	13 to 21, 23, 33
under25	x	None
25 to 44	x	13 to 16, 32
45 to 64	x	12 to 19
65 to 74	x	12 to 19
75 to 84	✓	13 to 21, 33
85+	✓	13 to 21, 33

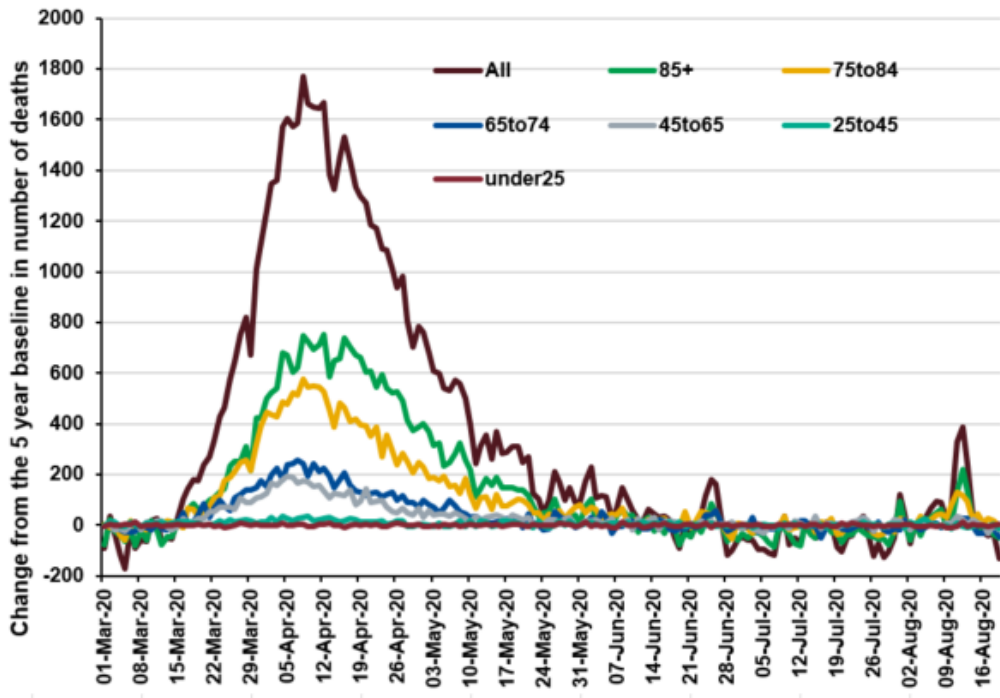
(b)

	Excess detected in week 33 2020?	Weeks in excess since week 10 2020
PHE centres		
East of England	x	14 to 19, 21
East Midlands	x	13 to 19
London	x	12 to 19
North East	x	14 to 21
North West	✓	13 to 20, 33
South East	✓	13 to 21, 33
South West	✓	14 to 19, 33
West Midlands	x	13 to 20
Yorkshire and Humber	x	14 to 21, 23

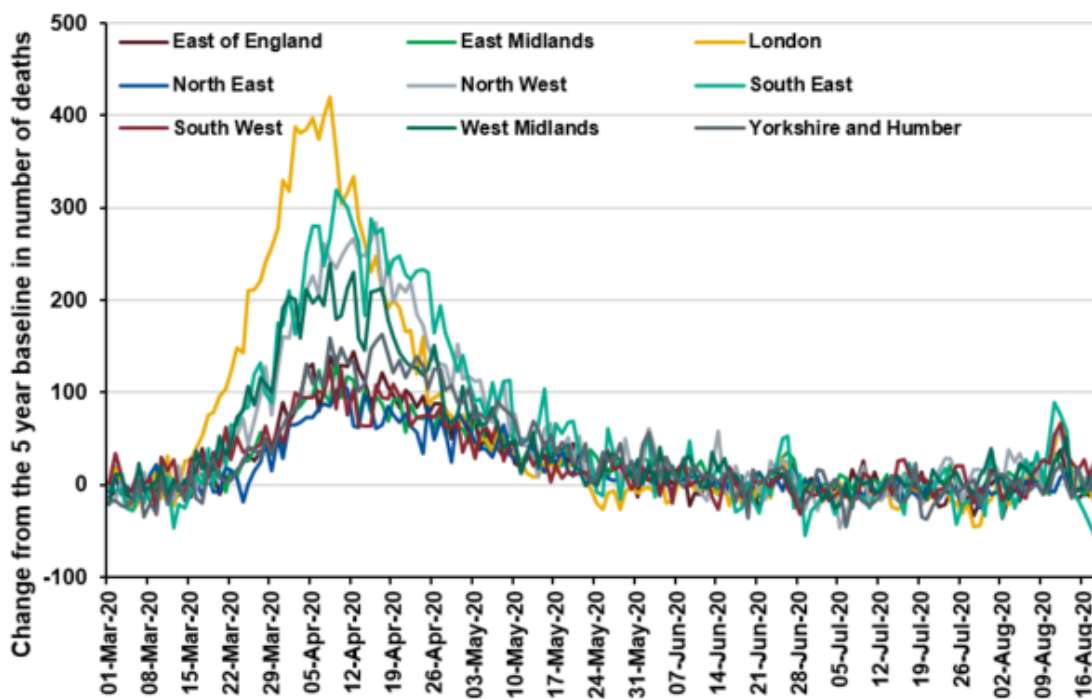
Daily excess all-cause mortality, UK

Figure 37: Daily excess all-cause deaths by (a) age group and (b) PHE centres , England, 01 March 2020 to 19 August 2020

(a)



(b)





## Sero-prevalence epidemiology, England

In this week's report the results from testing samples provided by healthy adult blood donors aged 17 years and older, supplied by the NHS Blood and Transplant (NHS BT collection) between weeks 13 -33 are summarised. Donor samples from two different geographic regions (approximately 1000 samples per region) in England are tested each week. Recently an exclusion of donors aged 70 years and older donating throughout lockdown was lifted, and therefore data from the most recent sampling periods include donors in this older age group.

### Seroprevalence in Adults aged 17 years and older (blood donors)

The results presented here are based on testing using the Euroimmun assay for blood donor samples collected between weeks 13-33. This week's report includes the results of testing the 10<sup>th</sup> set of samples from the London region (week 33) and the 5<sup>th</sup> set from the South West region (week 33).

#### National Prevalence

Overall population weighted prevalence among blood donors aged 17 years and older in England was 5.3% (95% CI 4.8% - 5.8%) (unadjusted) or 5.5% (95% CrI 4.9% - 6.1%) after adjustment for the accuracy of the Euroimmun assay (sensitivity 83.0% and specificity 99.3%) for the period 20<sup>th</sup> July – 16<sup>th</sup> August (weeks 30-33). Estimates are based on 8940 samples, of which 510 were positive. This compares with 7.8% (95% CI 7.2% - 8.6%) (unadjusted) or 8.3% (95% CrI 7.5% - 9.2%) (adjusted) for the period of 6<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> May (weeks 19-22). Declines in prevalence can partially be explained by demographic differences in the donor population, such as later data including donors aged 70 years and older who were previously excluded from donating during lockdown. Waning immunity may also be a contributing factor to the lower prevalence.

#### Regional Prevalence over Time

Figure 38 shows the overall prevalence in each region over time which has been adjusted for the sensitivity and specificity of the Euroimmun assay. It is important to note that the sensitivity and specificity of assays are subject to change as further data becomes available. Sensitivity and for the Euroimmun assay is based on data from testing of convalescent sera taken 3 to 6 weeks after symptom onset.

Adjusted prevalence estimates vary across the country and over time. In London where prevalence estimates are highest, overall adjusted prevalence increased from 2.6% (week 13) to 15.7% (week 21). More recent data showed lower and eventual plateauing of adjusted prevalence in London with estimates at 8.7% (week 31) and 8.2% (week 33) respectively.

Prevalence estimates from other regions have been consistently lower than those from London; compatible with the lower incidence of COVID-19 observed in other surveillance systems.

In the most recent data (week 33) for donors in the South West region the adjusted prevalence was 2.9% (95% CrI 1.4-1.5%). This has decreased from 5% (week 17) and has fluctuated between 3.6 (week 25-26) and 1.9% (week 29-30).

In the North East and Yorkshire NHS region the adjusted prevalence was 5.0% (95% CrI 3.3%-6.9%) in week 32 which is similar to 4.7% (95% CrI 3.1%-6.5%) in week 28 but lower than the prevalence of 7.1% (95% CrI 5.2%-9.3%) in week 20. Similar plateauing has been seen across other regions. In the North West the adjusted prevalence was 8.4% (95% CrI 6.3% and 10.6%) in week 27 and 7.0% (95% CrI 5.1% - 9.1%) in week 31. In the North East and Yorkshire in week 32 adjusted prevalence was 5.0% (95% CrI 3.3%-6.9%) down from 7.1% (95% CrI 5.2%-9.3%) in week 20.

In the East of England adjusted prevalence amongst donors fluctuated between 8.8% (95% CrI 6.7% - 11.2%) in week 19 to 5.0% (95% CrI 3.3% - 6.9%) in weeks 26-27 and 6.6% (95% CrI 4.8% - 8.6%) in the most recent data (weeks 30-31).

The adjusted prevalence for donors in the Midlands was 4.6% (95% CrI 3.0% - 6.5%) in week 32 which is lower than that seen in the previous survey in week 28 when prevalence was 6.5% (95% CrI 4.7% - 8.6%).

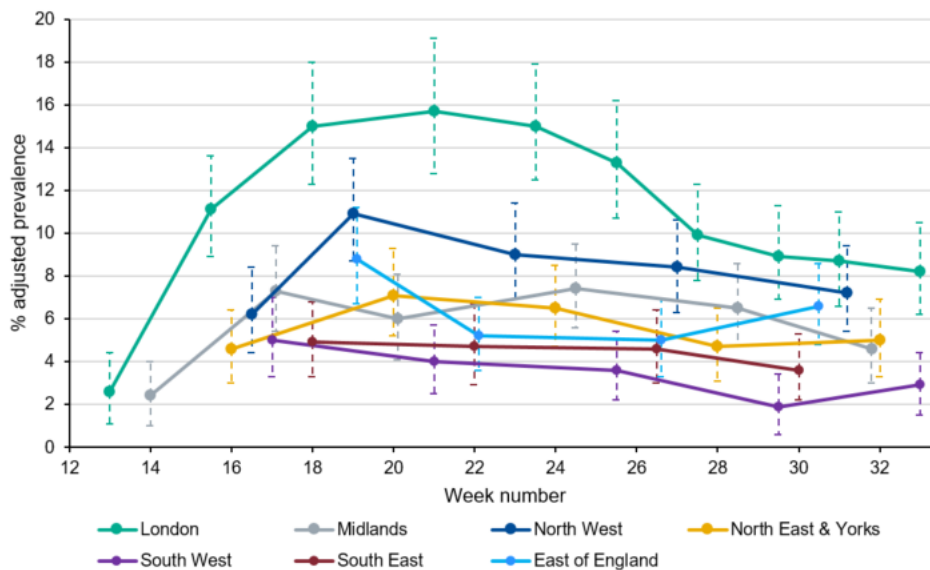
These stable or lower prevalence estimates in more recent sampling periods suggest that recent transmission levels are very low.

The change in prevalence seen in some regions is likely to be largely driven by changes in the precise locations of sample collection, for example in the most recent East of England collection, greater numbers of samples came from areas closer to London where prevalence appears to be higher. Declines in prevalence can be partially explained by demographic differences in the donor population as lockdown measures are relaxed, for example regular donors aged 70 years and above were not allowed to donate during lockdown, but this exclusion was lifted from week 26. Waning immunity may also be a contributing factor to the lower prevalence.

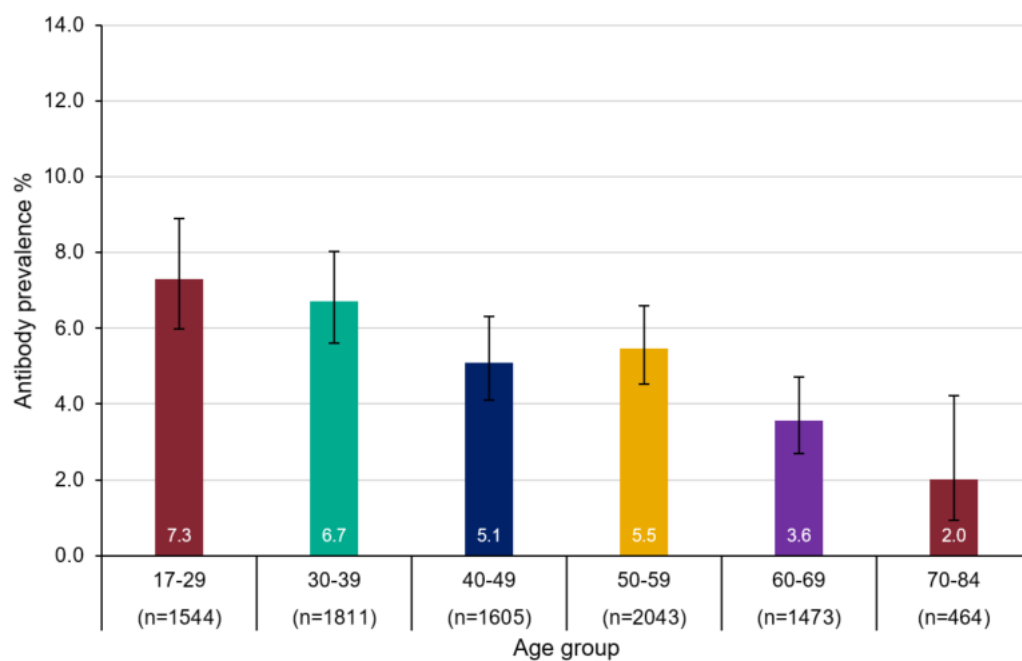
Prevalence by Age Group

Population weighted antibody prevalence (unadjusted) estimates in donors aged 70-84 years are included in the most recent data (weeks 30-33) as this age group, who were advised to shield during lockdown, have been able to return to donor clinics since week 26 (Figure 39). Prevalence is highest in the youngest age group (age 17-29) and lowest in the oldest age group (age 70-84).

**Figure 38: Overall SARS-CoV-2 antibody seroprevalence (%) in blood donors by PHE centres, using Euroimmun test adjusted for sensitivity (83.0%) and specificity (99.3%) and 95% confidence intervals (dashed lines)**



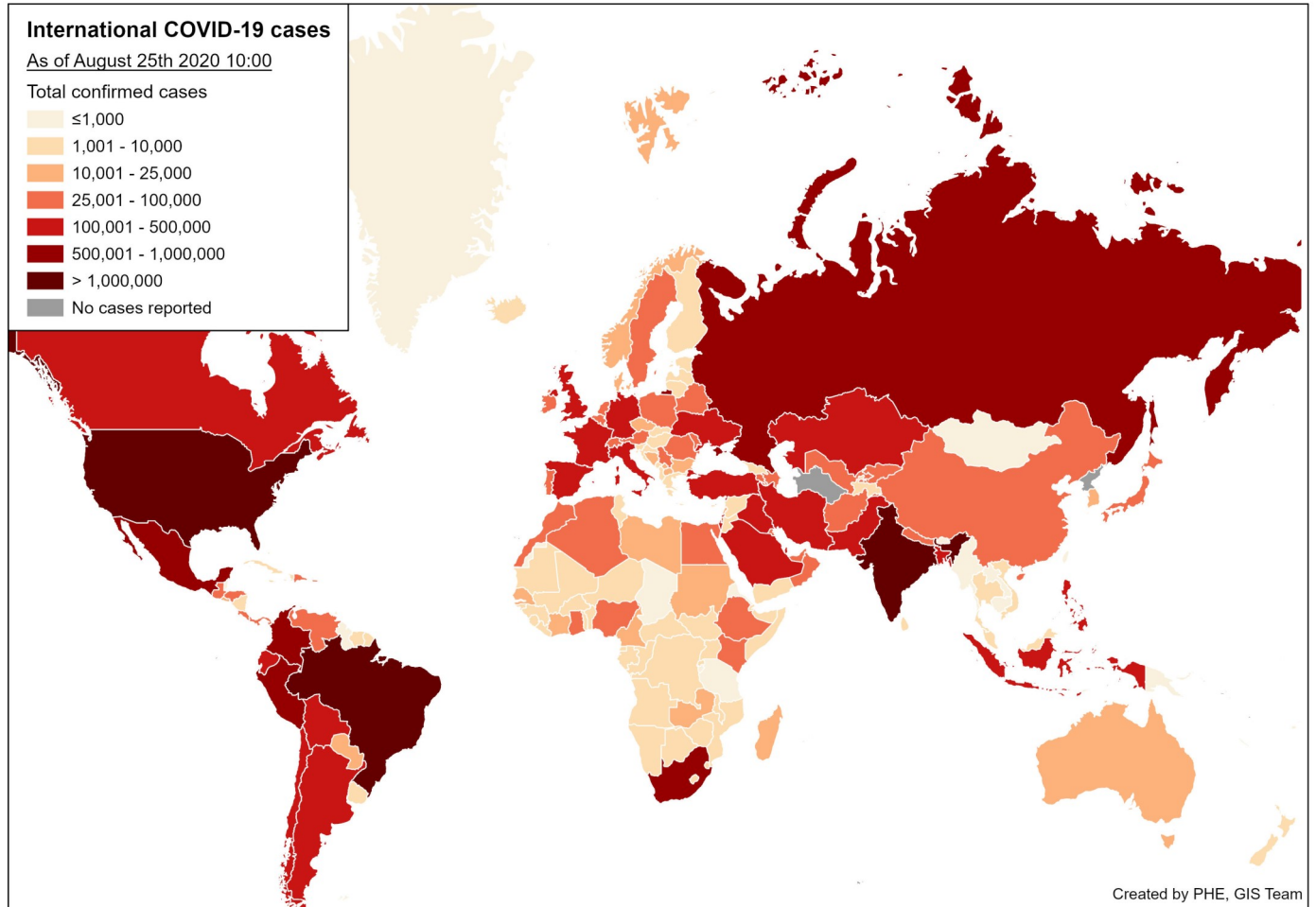
**Figure 39: Population weighted SARS-CoV-2 antibody seroprevalence in blood donors by age group, weeks 30-33, using Euroimmun test; error bars show 95% confidence intervals**



Global situation

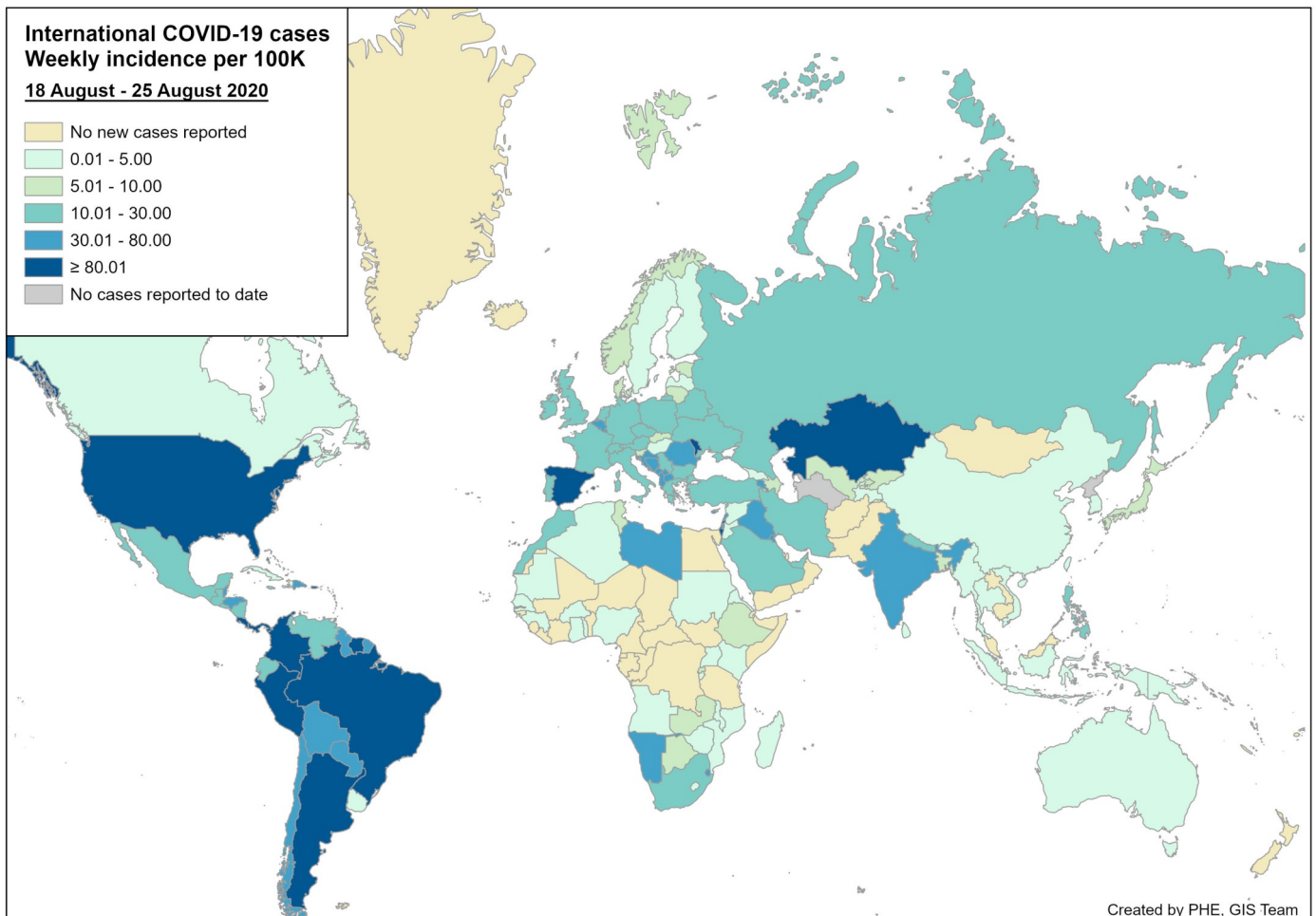
Globally, up to 25 August 2020, a total of 23,707,342 cases of COVID-19 infection have been reported worldwide, including 814,802 COVID-19 related deaths.

Figure 40: Global map of cumulative COVID-19 cases



Global situation

Figure 41: Global map of weekly COVID-19 case incidence rate per 100,000, week 34 2020



PHE has delegated authority, on behalf of the Secretary of State, to process Patient Confidential Data under Regulation 3 The Health Service (Control of Patient Information) Regulations 2002

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2002/1438/regulation/3/made>. Regulation 3 makes provision for the processing of patient information for the recognition, control and prevention of communicable disease and other risks to public health.