



UK Health  
Security  
Agency

# Weekly statistics for NHS Test and Trace (England)

5 to 18 May 2022

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## Main points

### People tested, England:

- 1,042,213 people were tested for coronavirus (COVID-19) in the latest reporting week (12 to 18 May 2022) – this is a decrease of 10.4% compared to the previous week, where 1,163,161 people tested (5 to 11 May 2022)
- 53,226 people tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) at least once<sup>1</sup> in the latest reporting week – this is a decrease of 18.9% compared to the previous week, where 65,592 people tested positive

### Pillar 1 testing turnaround times, England:

- in the latest week, 97.7% of pillar 1 test results (355,310 tests) were made available within 24 hours of taking a test, remain the same at 97.7% in the previous week (354,742 tests)

### Pillar 2 testing turnaround times, England:

Due to the closing of free testing services at test sites on 1 April 2022, turnaround figures are only available for satellite test centres and home testing kits. Figures for regional test sites, local test sites and mobile testing units for the period prior to the closure are available at [Weekly Statistics for NHS Test and Trace \(England\): 31 March to 6 April 2022](#).

- in the latest reporting week, 89.9% of pillar 2 combined satellite and home test kits were returned with 48 hours of taking a test (37,438 tests), a decrease from the 90.4% of tests returned in the previous week (53,022 tests)

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<sup>1</sup> Deduplicated for the reporting week. For information on how the number of people are tested and tested positive in a reporting week is measured see the [NHS Test and Trace statistics methodology](#).

## Introduction

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) publishes weekly statistics on NHS Test and Trace (England) across all 4 testing pillars. The purpose of this publication is to provide a weekly update on the implementation and performance of NHS Test and Trace in England.

For NHS Test and Trace (England), this includes (testing):

- people tested for COVID-19
- people testing positive for COVID-19
- time taken for test results to become available

Data collected for NHS Test and Trace is primarily for operational purposes and was not designed to track the spread of the virus. Studies into the spread of the virus in the UK are carried out by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Further guidance can be found in [comparing methods used in the COVID-19 Infection Survey and NHS Test and Trace, England](#).

A list of data sources relating to the COVID-19 pandemic in the UK can be found at [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) statistics and analysis](#). All data used in the report can be found in the UKHSA Test and Trace data tables on the [weekly collection page](#). A full explanation of the data sources and methods used to produce these statistics can be found in the additional methodology document for [NHS Test and Trace statistics](#).

Data and methodology for the NHS COVID-19 app are available on the [NHS COVID-19 app support website](#).

## Revisions to figures previously published

Figures given in previous releases are routinely revised each week going back to the start of Test and Trace for people tested for COVID-19, people testing positive for COVID-19, pillar 1 and pillar 2 testing turnaround times. The figures presented are based on a data cut 5 to 6 days after the end of the reporting period. This is to give time for data relating to the end of the 7-day period to be collected. Some data may continue to be collected after this period, and therefore may need to be revised over time.

Figures for pillar 1 testing turnaround times are not routinely revised as only minor changes occur to past weeks post-publication. Figures are only revised when substantial changes occur. More detail on routine revisions is given in the quality section.

## Publication update

As anticipated, as a result of '[Living with COVID-19](#)' with the end of free universal testing for the general public on 1 April 2022 there has been an overall decline in recent weeks across key statistics within this publication. The frequency of this publication and [accompanying data tables](#) was reduced from weekly publications to fortnightly publications of weekly data from 14 April 2022 (period covering 31 March 2022 to 6 April 2022). Furthermore, the changes in testing policy have resulted in a noticeably smaller publication, with a reduction in data output tables.

Free tests are still being offered in some health and social care settings. [Information on who can access free tests](#) has been published by UKHSA.

Due to the changes in testing policy announced in '[Living with COVID-19](#)', the following adjustments have been made to this publication and accompanying data tables:

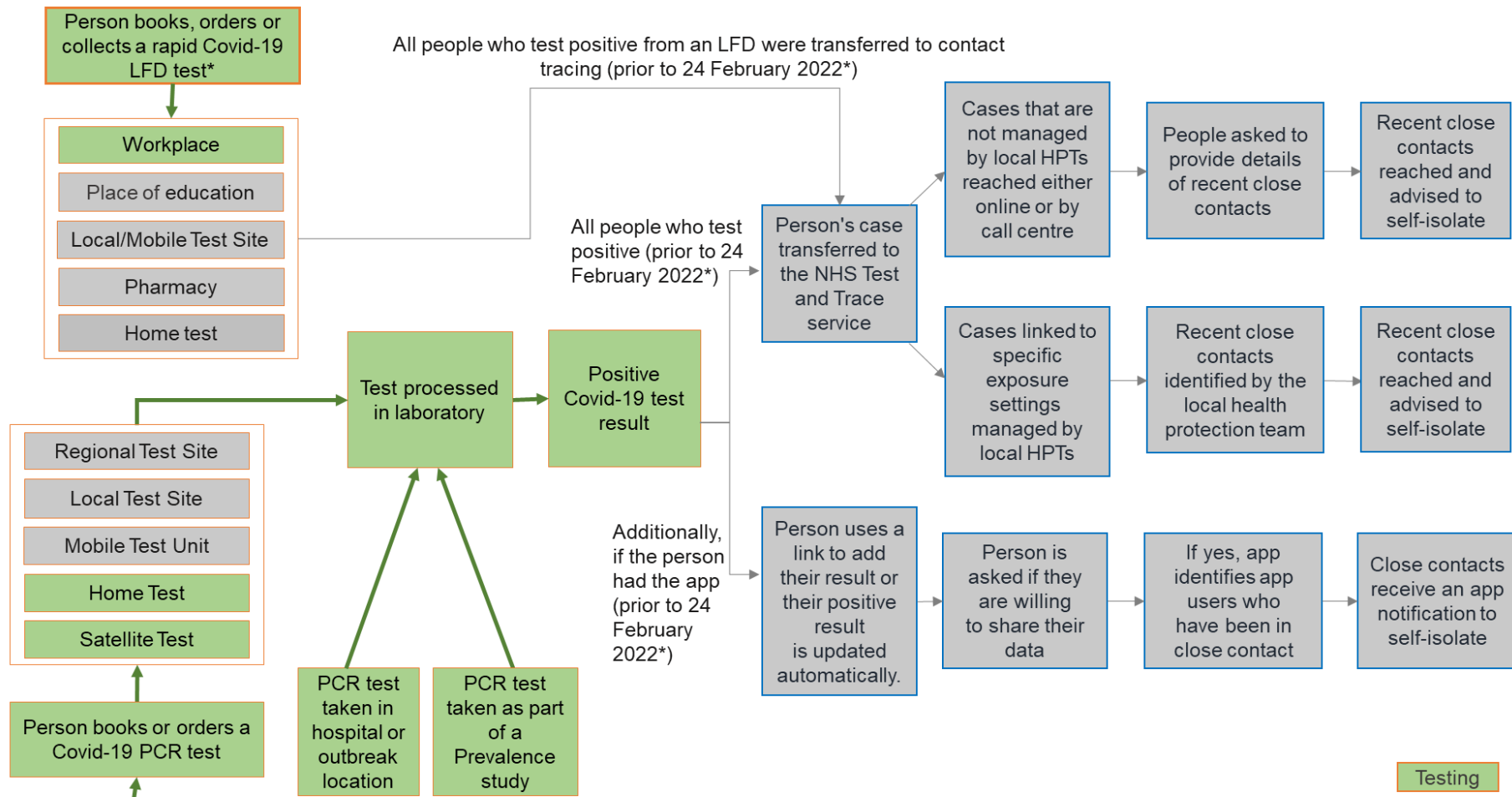
1. Free testing services at test sites closed on 1 April 2022. Therefore, tables relating to in-person testing (previously Tables 3 to 5 and Table 9) have now been removed from this publication and the remaining tables have been renumbered. Furthermore, previously Table 8, now table 5, has been updated with respect to satellite test centres and home testing kits, but regional test sites, local test sites and mobile testing units have now been removed from this publication.
2. Routine contact tracing in England ended on 24 February 2022. Therefore, contact tracing tables (previously Tables 10 to 18), the regional contact tracing data, and the interactive map have now been removed from this publication.
3. From 18 March 2022, passengers were no longer required to take COVID-19 tests or quarantine upon arrival in England. Therefore, the Managed Quarantine Service (MQS) section in this bulletin along with the accompanying data tables (previously Tables 19 to 21) have now been removed from this publication.
4. As of 24 February 2022, the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme in England was ended. People could still make claims if they were told to self-isolate before 24 February, provided they made a claim within 42 days of the first day of self-isolation and no later than 6 April. Therefore, Test and Trace Support Payment tables (previously Tables 22 to 23) have now been removed from this publication.

Please note that data for the retired tables (up to 6 April 2022) can be accessed from an earlier publication: [Weekly Statistics for NHS Test and Trace England \(31 March to 6 April 2022\)](#).

# 1. NHS Test and Trace

NHS Test and Trace was launched in England on 28 May 2020 to ensure that anyone who developed symptoms of COVID-19 could quickly be tested to find out if they have the virus. It then helped trace recent close contacts of anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 and, if necessary, notified them that they must self-isolate at home to help stop the spread of the virus. The flow of how people moved through the NHS Test and Trace service prior to routine contact tracing ending on 24 February 2022 is shown in [Figure 1](#) and the remaining testing routes are shown in green.

**Figure 1. Flowchart showing how people have moved through NHS Test and Trace**



Symptomatic individuals and some other use cases can directly book PCR tests\*

\*Note: a number of testing routes ended on 1 April 2022

\*Note: routine contact tracing ended on 24 February 2022

Testing

Testing – ended routes

Tracing

[Figure 1](#) shows, in green, the remaining elements of NHS test and trace since contact tracing ended on 24 February 2022 and in-person testing routes ended on 1 April 2022. This includes either an LFD COVID-19 test within a workplace, or a PCR COVID-19 test at home or swab tests carried out at satellite testing centres.

Figure 1 shows, in grey, testing routes that have now ended and routine contact tracing that has now ended. Prior to the removal of free testing on 1 April 2022, for those taking LFD tests, they could collect their test from their workplace, pharmacy or local or mobile test site. They could also order a free LFD test to be delivered to their home.

Currently, booked PCR tests can be conducted at home via home test kits or at satellite test centres. PCR tests can also be taken in hospital or as part of a prevalence study. After tests have been taken, they are sent to a laboratory for processing. Once processed, a person will be emailed or texted their result. From 11 January 2022 in England, people who received positive LFD test results for COVID-19 were required to self-isolate immediately and were not required to take a confirmatory PCR test. Since 24 February 2022, the requirement to self-isolate has been removed. From 1 April 2022 booked PCR tests are no longer conducted at regional test sites, local test sites or mobile test units.

Prior to contact tracing ending on 24 February 2022, if a person had a positive COVID-19 test result, then their case was transferred to NHS Test and Trace and could be managed in one of 2 ways. First, cases not managed by local health protection teams (HPTs) were reached either online or by a call centre. They would then be asked to provide details of recent close contacts. These recent close contacts were then reached by NHS Test and Trace and advised to self-isolate. Second, cases linked to certain exposure settings were escalated to local HPTs who work to identify and reach recent close contacts and advise them to self-isolate. Additionally, if the person had the app and used the app to book their test, their positive result would be updated automatically. If they had the app but booked their test via a different route, they could use a link to add their positive result to the app. After entering their positive result into the app, the person would then have been asked if they are willing to share their data and if they said yes, the app would identify other app users who had been in close contact with the person who tested positive. Close contacts would then receive an app notification to self-isolate. On 24 February, routine contact tracing ended. Local health teams continue to use contact tracing and provide context-specific advice where they assess this to be necessary as part of their role in managing infectious diseases.

Since 1 April 2022, free LFD tests are no longer available to the public and individuals should only report the results of LFD tests they received prior to this date. In-person testing (at regional test sites, local test sites and mobile testing units) also ended on 1 April 2022.



## 1.1 Testing in England

NHS Test and Trace started with an individual taking a swab test for the virus, either in pillar 1 (testing in hospitals and outbreak locations), pillar 2 (national swab testing) or pillar 4 (prevalence studies). Those who went on to test positive will have had their case transferred to NHS Test and Trace for contact tracing, until 24 February 2022 when contact tracing ended:

- from 11 January 2022 in England, people who received positive lateral flow device (LFD) test results for COVID-19 were required to self-isolate immediately and were not required to take a confirmatory PCR test
- on 24 February 2022 (in line with the government's plan for [Living with COVID-19](#)) the legal requirement to self-isolate following a positive test was removed – routine contact tracing also ended on this date

Statistics in this section are given for England only. Weekly figures for UK testing are available to download from the latest report in the [weekly collection page](#) and are also available daily on the [coronavirus in the UK dashboard](#). Information on contact tracing in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland can be found directly from Public Health Scotland, the Welsh government, and the Northern Ireland Public Health Agency.

### People tested and people testing positive, England

The headline figures reported in this publication for people tested and people testing positive include both LFD tests and PCR tests, deduplicated for each reporting week.<sup>2</sup> Information on the differences between these types of tests can be found in the [NHS Test and Trace statistics methodology](#).

From 7 January 2021, positivity rate is not calculated as part of this publication but can instead be found on the [coronavirus in the UK dashboard](#) for PCR only positive cases in England. This is because the figures in this publication include both PCR and LFD tests and it is likely that LFD tests have a different positivity rate to PCR tests due to the use of LFDs in rapid testing. As the number of LFD tests reported is increasing over time, a consistent positivity rate cannot be calculated using these figures.

A statistical commentary on rapid testing in England along with data tables for the number of tests reported, broken down for LFD and PCR tests, is available on the [weekly collection page](#).

The number of people tested and number of people testing positive via PCR tests in each reporting week, by age, gender and local authority is also available on the [weekly collection page](#).

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<sup>2</sup> Figures also include a small number of people tested using LAMP tests. See [NHS Test and Trace statistics methodology](#) for more information.

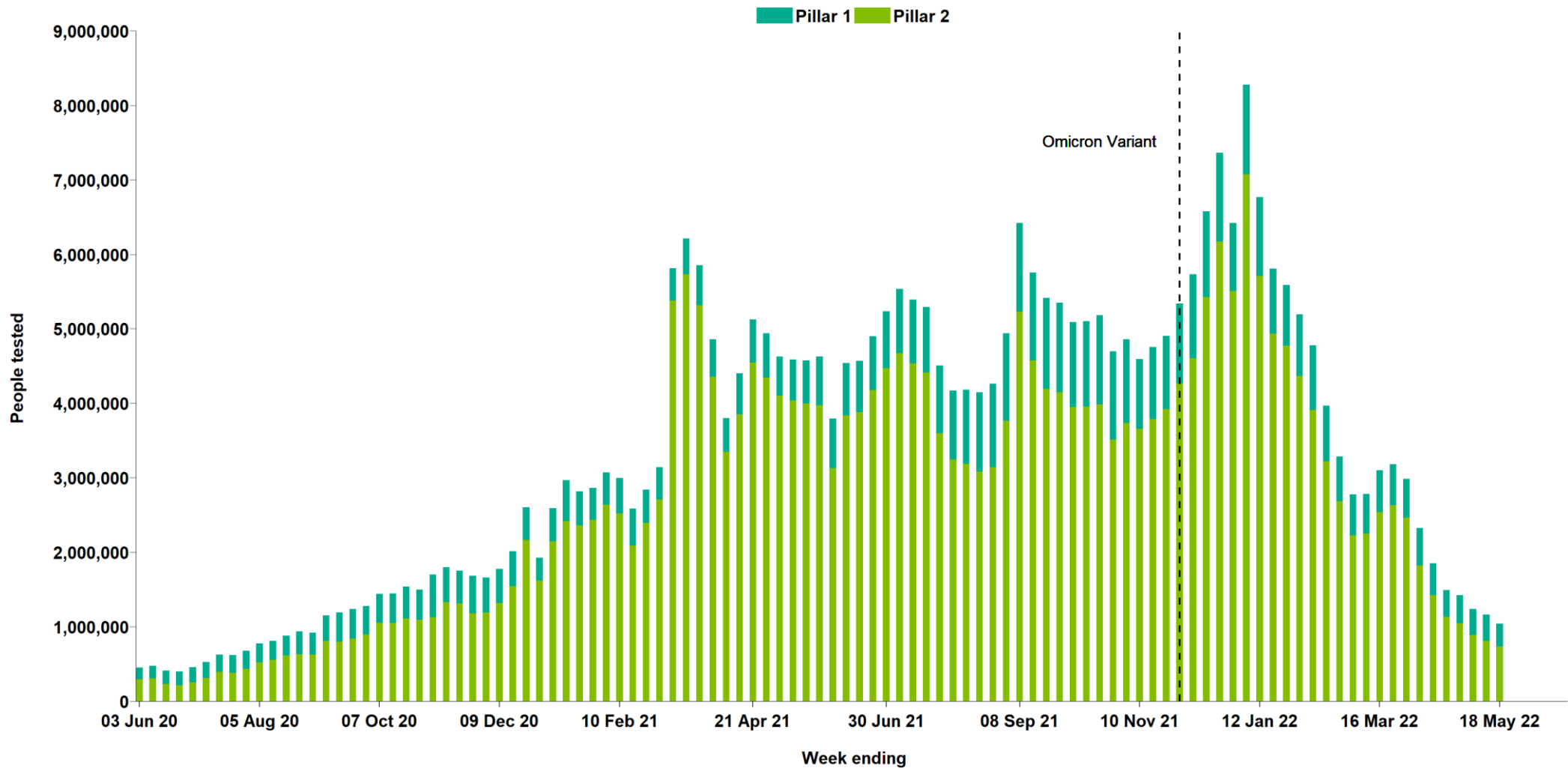
Between 12 and 18 May 2022, 1,042,213 people were tested for COVID-19<sup>3</sup> at least once.

[Figure 2](#) shows the number of people tested for COVID-19 in each reporting week by pillar since Test and Trace began. Note that pillar 2 turnaround comprises of home test kits and satellite test centres only. The number of people tested increased from the launch of Test and Trace until an initial peak in week ending 17 March 2021, after which numbers have fluctuated in line with school term times. In the week ending 5 January 2022, the number of people tested reached an all-time high of 8,274,943. In the week ending 18 May 2022, 1,042,213 people were tested for COVID-19 at least once, a 10.4% decrease compared to the previous week where 1,163,161 were tested.

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<sup>3</sup> Deduplicated for the reporting week, methodology was revised from 15 October 2020. See [NHS Test and Trace statistics methodology](#) for more information.

Figure 2. Number of people tested for COVID-19 in each reporting week by pillar, England



This data can be found in the 'table\_1' tab of the 'NHS Test and Trace Statistics 28 May 2020 to 18 May 2022: data tables' on the [Weekly Statistics for NHS Test and Trace](#) page.

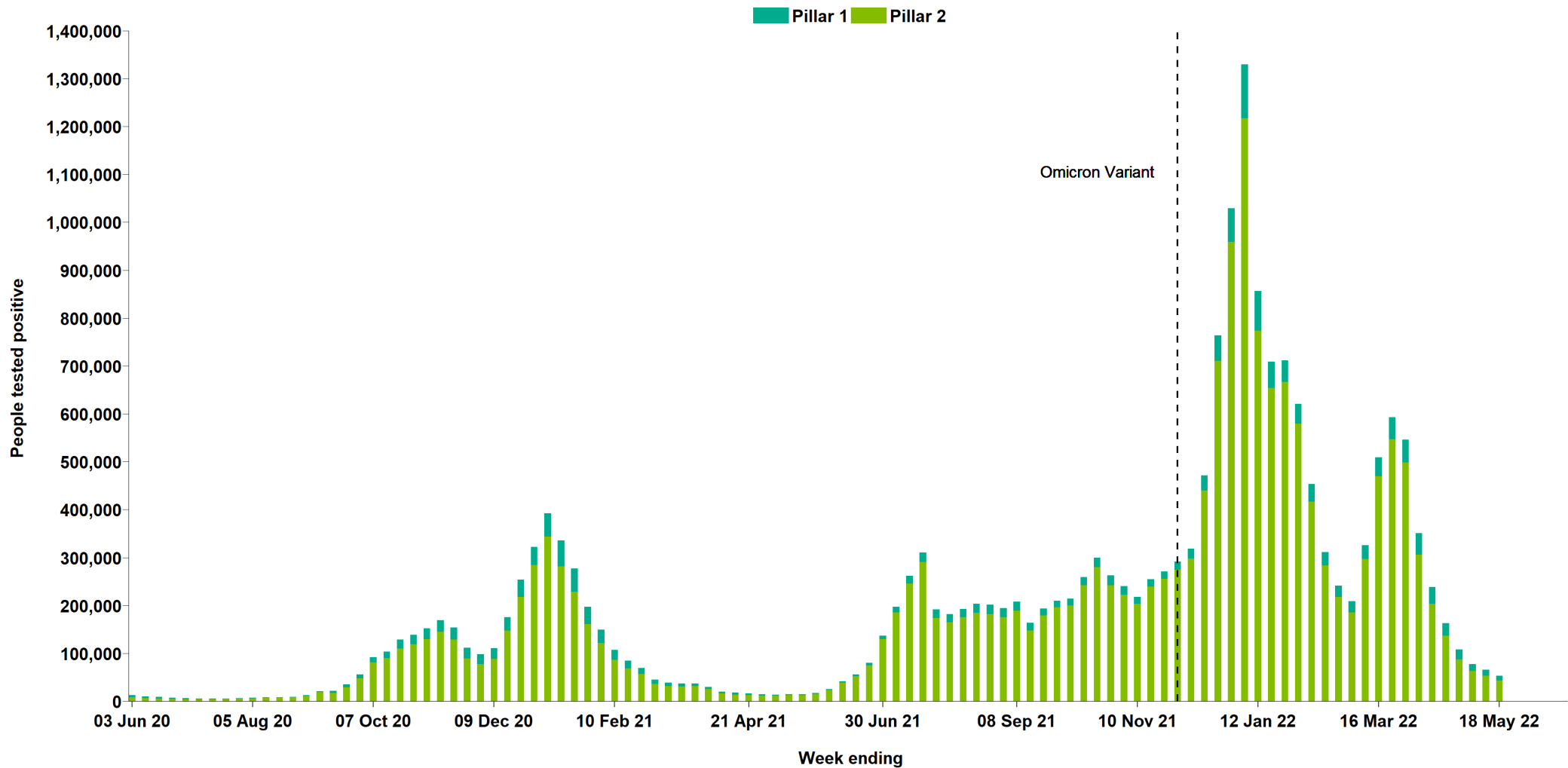
Between 12 and 18 May 2022, 53,226 people tested positive for COVID-19<sup>4</sup> at least once.

[Figure 3](#) shows the number of people tested positive for COVID-19 each reporting week by pillar since Test and Trace began. Note that pillar 2 turnaround comprises of home test kits and satellite test centres only. In the week ending 5 January 2022, positive cases reached an all-time high of 1,329,307 however, they have since fallen. In the latest reporting week 12 to 18 May 2022, 53,226 people tested positive, a 18.9% decrease from the previous week. Pillar 1 tests accounted for 9,984 (18.8%) and pillar 2 tests accounted for 43,242 (81.2%) of people tested positive in the latest reporting week 12 to 18 May 2022.

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<sup>4</sup> Deduplicated for the reporting week, methodology was revised from 15 October 2020. See [NHS Test and Trace statistics methodology](#) for more information.

**Figure 3. Number of people testing positive for COVID-19 in each reporting week by pillar, England**



This data can be found in the 'Table\_1' tab of the 'NHS Test and Trace Statistics 28 May 2020 to 18 May 2022: data tables' on the [Weekly Statistics for NHS Test and Trace](#) page.

## Pillar 1 testing turnaround times, England

Pillar 1 testing refers to swab testing for the virus in UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) labs and NHS hospitals for those with a clinical need, and health and care workers.

Since some pillar 1 tests are conducted in a hospital setting, it is not practical for those administering the tests to record the exact time that a test was taken. Therefore, the time taken to receive a COVID-19 test result is measured from the time that a test is received by a laboratory for processing to the time when the results are published to the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS).

This data is only available from 9 July 2020 due to differences in the reporting methodologies between UKHSA labs. More details can be found in the [NHS Test and Trace statistics methodology](#).

Between 12 and 18 May 2022, 335,310 (97.7%) of pillar 1 test results were made available within 24 hours of the laboratory receiving the test.

In the latest week, 343,305 pillar 1 test were reported and 335,310 (97.7%) test results were made available within 24 hours. The proportion of pillar 1 tests completed within 24 hours has remained the same at 97.7% in the latest week. Since reporting began, 95.1% (42,073,340 tests) of pillar 1 test results have been made available within 24 hours.

## Pillar 2 testing turnaround times, England

Due to the closing of free testing services at test sites, the latest week's turnaround figures only include satellite test centres and home testing kits, while regional test sites, local test sites and mobile testing units have been retired from this publication. See [Publication update](#) section for more information.

There are now 2 routes for getting tested within pillar 2 (national swab testing) which has an impact on turnaround times.<sup>5</sup> Data on the time taken to receive a COVID-19 test result for pillar 2 is split up to reflect this. These routes include:

### 1. Satellite test centres

These include test kits provided directly to 'satellite' centres at places such as care homes that have a particularly urgent or significant need.

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<sup>5</sup> For all measures of time taken to receive a COVID-19 test result, there are a number of tests that were not completed. This covers any test where the results were not communicated, which may be because communication details (for example, phone number or email address) were not provided or were incorrect, or because the test was cancelled or abandoned, or no result was available. It also includes some tests which are still being processed.

## 2. Home test kits

These are delivered to someone's door so they can test themselves and their family.

The percentage of test results received within 48 hours and within 72 hours for home and satellite tests are presented in this bulletin.

There are normal fluctuations in this operational process which can sometimes cause the time taken to receive a test result to go over 24 hours, but still be turned around the next day. Therefore, we also provide the percentage of tests turned around the day after a test was taken where appropriate. The median turnaround times are also given as an indication of the average time taken.

Turnaround times are measured and reported in 2 ways:

- time from booking a test to receive a test result
- time from taking a test to receive a test result

All figures presented in this bulletin relate to time from taking a test. More information on these definitions is in the [terminology section](#) and the [NHS Test and Trace statistics methodology](#).

LFD tests are not included in this section on turnaround times as they do not require processing in a lab.

Between 12 and 18 May 2022, the median time (hours) taken to receive test results has decreased for both satellite and home test kits.

[Table 1](#) below, shows the median time taken to receive test results reported by satellite test centres and home test kits; for the previous week, latest reporting week and since the launch of Test and Trace.

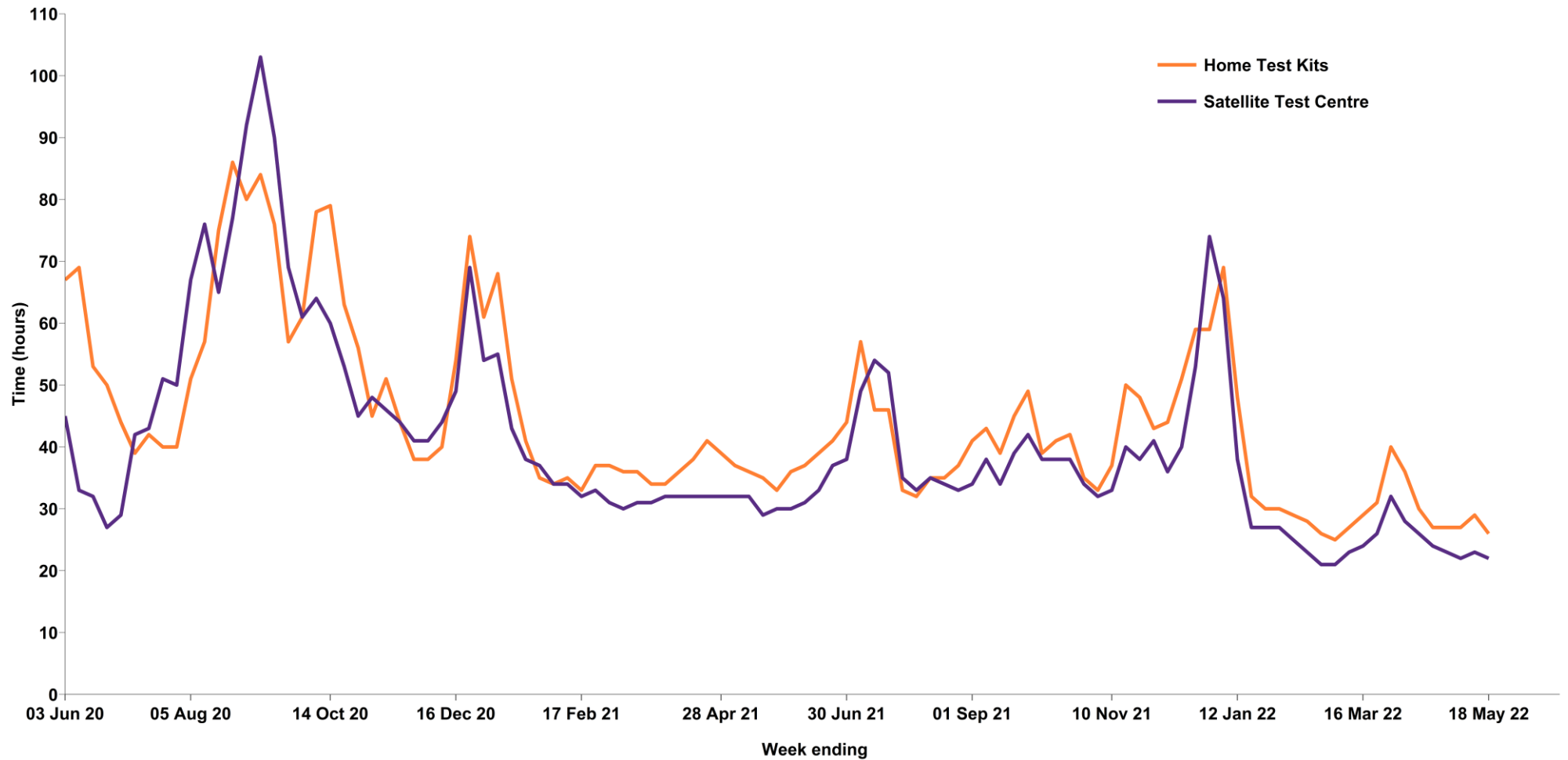
**Table 1. Median time taken (hours) to receive test results, by route, England**

<b>Median time taken (hours) to receive test result</b>	<b>Previous week</b>	<b>Latest reporting week</b>	<b>Since Test and Trace launched: 28 May 2020 to 18 May 2022</b>
Satellite test centres	23	22	38
Home testing kits	29	26	43

[Figure 4](#) below, shows the median time taken to receive test results by testing route since the launch of Test and Trace. Median time for satellite test centres peaked in week ending 9 September 2020 and home test kits peak in week ending 26 August 2020.



**Figure 4. Median time (hours) from taking a test to receiving test results by route, England**



This data can be found in the 'Table\_8' tab of the 'NHS Test and Trace statistics 28 May 2020 to 18 May 2022: data tables' on the [Weekly Statistics for NHS Test and Trace](#) page

Between 12 and 18 May 2022, 89.9% of tests results from satellite test centres and home test kits combined were received within 48 hours of taking a test.

In the latest reporting week, 41,639 tests were reported by satellite test centres and home test kits combined, a decrease from 58,644 tests in the previous week by 29.0%. Of these, 89.9% combined tests were received within 48 hours of taking a test (37,438 tests), a decrease from the 90.4% received within 48 hours in the previous week (53,022 tests). In the week ending 18 May 2022, 94.0% of combined tests were received within 72 hours of taking a test (39,159 tests), a decrease from the 95.8% received within 72 hours in the previous week (56,120 tests).

**Table 2. Percentage of results received within 24 hours, 48 hours and 72 hours by route, England**

Percentage of results received within timeframe	Previous week	Latest reporting week	Since Test and Trace launched: 28 May 2020 to 18 May 2022
<b>Satellite test centres and home testing kits within 24 hours</b>	<b>51.7</b>	<b>55.7</b>	<b>14.5</b>
Satellite test centres within 24 hours	55.3	58.3	17.1
Home testing kits within 24 hours	22.3	31.1	8.8
<b>Satellite test centres and home testing kits within 48 hours</b>	<b>90.4</b>	<b>89.9</b>	<b>62.3</b>
Satellite test centres within 48 hours	91.6	90.8	65.2
Home testing kits within 48 hours	80.8	81.5	55.8
<b>Satellite test centres and home testing kits within 72 hours</b>	<b>95.8</b>	<b>94.0</b>	<b>83.9</b>
Satellite test centres within 72 hours	96.6	94.5	85.8
Home testing kits within 72 hours	89.1	89.7	79.8

**Table 3. Number of tests reported by route, England**

<b>Number of tests reported</b>	<b>Previous week</b>	<b>Latest reporting week</b>	<b>Since Test and Trace launched: 28 May 2020 to 18 May 2022</b>
<b>Satellite test centres and home testing kits</b>	<b>58,644</b>	<b>41,639</b>	<b>72,424,016</b>
Satellite test centres	52,238	37,683	49,926,689
Home testing kits	6,406	3,956	22,497,327

## 2. Terminology

### 2.1 Testing

The following explains types of tests, testing routes and metrics.

#### Pillar 1 testing

Swab testing for the virus in UKHSA labs, NHS hospitals for those with a clinical need, and health and care workers

#### Pillar 2 testing

Swab testing for the virus for the wider population, through commercial partnerships<sup>6</sup>, either processed in a lab or more rapidly via LFD tests. Tests processed in a lab have been carried out through several different routes:

##### 1. Satellite test centres

These include test kits provided directly to 'satellite' centres at places such as care homes that have a particularly urgent or significant need.

##### 2. Home test kits

These are delivered to someone's door so they can test themselves and their family.

#### Pillar 3 testing

Serology testing to show if people have antibodies from having had COVID-19.

#### Pillar 4 testing

Blood and virus testing for national surveillance support by UKHSA, ONS and research, academic and scientific partners to learn more about the prevalence and spread of the virus and for other testing research purposes.

#### Virus testing

Swab testing using PCR assay within pillars 1, 2 and pillar 4 to show if someone currently has COVID-19.

#### Antibody testing

Testing of a blood sample within pillar 3 and pillar 4 to show if people have antibodies from having had COVID-19.

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<sup>6</sup> See more detail in [Scaling up our testing programmes](#).

## People tested each week

This refers to people who have been tested at least once in each reporting week. Therefore, if someone had multiple tests in each week they would be counted once.

## People testing positive each week

This refers to the number of people who tested positive at least once in each reporting week. Therefore, if someone tested positive multiple times in each week they would only be counted once.

## Time taken to receive a COVID-19 test result

For pillar 2 satellite test centre and home test kits, the time taken to receive a COVID-19 test result is defined as the time from when a person completes a test registration (or the time a person indicates their test was taken for home testing kits) until the time that they receive a notification of the result of their test via an email or an SMS.

## 3. Measuring the data

### 3.1 How the data was collected

Testing data for pillars 1 and 2 for England is provided by UKHSA and commercial partners. Contact tracing data is collected from management information from the NHS Test and Trace service. Details about the data sources used can be found in the [NHS Test and Trace statistics methodology document](#).

### 3.2 Strengths and limitations

Given the importance of this service and the commitment of NHS Test and Trace to be open and transparent with the public it serves, this data is being released at the earliest possible opportunity. However, new IT systems and statistical outputs often take a period of time to bed in. The caveats and data quality issues in this publication should be taken into consideration when interpreting results, and this analysis should be taken in the wider context of [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) statistics and analysis](#).

More information on data limitations and how the figures in this publication can and cannot be used is outlined in the [NHS Test and Trace methodology](#).

### 3.3 Quality

These statistics have been put together by NHS Test and Trace with advice from the Office for National Statistics. As part of the quality assurance process, UKHSA ensures that all published figures are replicable and any issues impacting on the quality of the data are clearly stated within the publication. Furthermore, the figures are often triangulated with other published sources to verify trends in the data.

#### Revisions to figures previous published

Figures for people tested and people testing positive for COVID-19 in previous releases have been revised. These revisions are because:

- there are sometimes delays in laboratories submitting data to UKHSA
- quality checks are conducted on the data to refine figures over time

Figures for pillar 2 testing turnaround times in previous releases have been revised. These revisions are because:

- the figures presented are based on a data cut several days after the end of the reporting period – some tests may continue to be being processed after this period and therefore data may need to be revised over time

Figures for contact tracing in previous releases have been revised. These revisions are because:

- the figures presented are based on a data cut several days after the end of the reporting period, to give time for cases reported towards the end of the 7-day period to have an outcome – some cases may continue to be in progress after this period, and therefore data may need to be revised over time
- typically, one week after initial publication the number of cases reached and consequently the number of contacts identified is expected to increase – similarly, the number of cases and contacts reached within 72 hours is likely to increase

More information about the revision of statistics published by UKHSA can be found in the [statement on revision policy](#). More information on quality and how this publication adheres to the Code of Practice for statistics is available in the [Statement of Compliance](#).

## 3.4 Feedback

For questions about the release please refer to the [Information for Users document](#) initially. For feedback and any further questions, please contact [testandtrace.statistics@ukhsa.gov.uk](mailto:testandtrace.statistics@ukhsa.gov.uk).

# About the UK Health Security Agency

UKHSA is responsible for protecting every member of every community from the impact of infectious diseases, chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear incidents, and other health threats. We provide intellectual, scientific, and operational leadership at national and local level, as well as on the global stage, to make the nation health secure.

[UKHSA](#) is an executive agency, sponsored by the [Department of Health and Social Care](#).

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