

COVID-19 National and Local timeline during 2022

- Around 132 million COVID-19 vaccinations were administered across the 4 nations of the UK in 2021, with over 1.6 million people receiving their booster or third dose in the final week of the year. Almost 34 million people are now fully protected. 50 million received a first dose and over 47 million received a second dose last year. Data now shows that over 90% of those aged 12 and over have now had a first dose and 82.4% have had their second – *2nd January 2022*
- Secondary schools to provide one on-site test for pupils prior to their return to the classroom. Education staff and college students to self-test at home before they return. University students have also been advised to test before returning to campus. Testing for all in education should then continue twice a week – *3rd January 2022*
- One year ago, UK became the first country in the world to administer the Oxford University/AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine. Since then, 50 million doses have been administered in UK and 2.5 billion doses across the world

Due to disruption to the workforce caused by the spread of Omicron, UK Government is providing 100,000 critical workers with free lateral flow tests each working day in a bid to keep essential services and supply chains running – *4th January 2022*

- From 11th January, a temporary measure is to be introduced whereby people who do not have COVID-19 symptoms but receive a positive lateral flow test will be required to self-isolate immediately and won't be required to take a confirmatory PCR test. As previously, anyone who develops symptoms should self-isolate and take a PCR test

Despite the latest evidence that Omicron causes less severe disease than previous variants, the case rates are rising rapidly and so Government advice remains to work from home whenever possible, wear face coverings on public transport and in most indoor places and to take a test before going to high-risk venues or meeting vulnerable people. Plan B conditions to continue at present

From Friday 7th January, eligible fully vaccinated passengers and under 18s will no longer need to take a pre-departure test or self-isolate on arrival in England but must continue to take their post-arrival tests. From Sunday 9th January eligible fully vaccinated travellers and under 5s will be able to take a lateral flow test instead of a PCR test on or before day 2 of their arrival in England – *5th January 2022*

- Businesses in England most impacted by the Omicron variant to benefit from £700 million in government grants delivered by local councils. Hospitality, leisure, and accommodation businesses will be able to apply for cash grants of up to £6,000

UK Health Security Agency data shows 3 months after receiving the third jab, protection against hospitalisation among those aged 65 and over remains at about 90%. For those with just 2 vaccines protection drops to around 70% after 3 months and to 50% after 6 months. Priority should be to give the booster jab to all ages and to encourage unvaccinated people to come forward as soon as possible – *7th January 2022*

- New advertising campaign launched over social media and radio to urge pregnant women to take the COVID-19 vaccine. Almost all pregnant women hospitalised or admitted to intensive care with COVID-19 were unvaccinated – *10th January 2022*
- Most people with a positive lateral flow test do not need to take a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test to confirm they have COVID-19. The exceptions are: 1) People who wish to claim the Test and Trace Support Payment; 2) People who have received an email or letter from the NHS because of a health condition; 3) People who are taking LFD tests as part of a research or surveillance programme which requires a follow-up PCR test; 4) People who have a positive Day 2 LFD test result after they arrive in England. These people must continue to have a confirmatory PCR test – *11th January 2022*
- Sixty councils in areas of low vaccine uptake to benefit from a share of £22.5 million of government funding to encourage people in hard-to-reach communities to take part in the vaccination programme. According to NHS statistics, over 4.6 million people aged 18 or older remain unvaccinated

Free personal protective equipment (PPE) for frontline health and care staff extended until March 2023. A new platform using central procurement will make the process quicker and easier to use

From Monday 17th January, to support essential public services and supply chains, people with COVID-19 in England can end their self-isolation after 5 days, as long as they test negative on day 5 and day 6

Latest UK Health Security Agency report shows that case rates were highest in those aged 20-29, with a weekly rate of 1,903.3 per 100,000 population. Weekly case rates were highest in the North-East at 2,350.8 per 100,000 population, also hospital admission rates were highest in the North-East at 28.42 per 100,000 population – *13th January 2022*

- Advertising campaign launched to encourage 18 to 34-year-olds to have their booster jabs. So far, just 57% of that age group have been boosted

UK is sending 9 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine to the most vulnerable parts of the world. This is part of the Government's pledge of 100 million doses to be shared within the next year. 80 million of the 100 million doses will be offered through the COVAX Facility

As of 10th January, 53 sequences of the BA.2 sub-lineage of Omicron have been identified in the UK. The sub-lineage does not have the spike gene deletion that causes S-gene target failure (SGTF) which has been used to detect cases of Omicron. The UK Health Security Agency are closely monitoring the data of the BA.2 sub-lineage – *14th January 2022*

- Due to the success of the booster programme in slowing the spread of Omicron, England is to gradually reduce the restrictions imposed under Plan B (introduced in December). From 19th January, the government is no longer asking people to work from home if they can. From 20th January face coverings will no longer be required in classrooms for both staff and pupils. On Thursday 27th January, we return to Plan A whereby face coverings will no longer be mandatory in indoor venues and organisations will be able to choose whether to require NHS Covid Passes. However public health guidance suggests individuals should continue to wear a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces – *19th January 2022*
- Latest UK Health Security Agency report shows case rates were highest in those aged 5-9, with a weekly rate of 1,935.7 per 100,000 population. Weekly case rates were highest in the North-East at 1,410.0 per 100,000 population, also hospital admission rate for week 2 was highest in the North East at 27.09 per 100,000 population – *20th January 2022*
- Omicron sub-lineage BA.2 designated as a variant under investigation (VUI) by the UK Health Security Agency based on increasing numbers identified. There have been 426 cases of Omicron BA.2 confirmed by Whole Genome Sequencing (WGS)

Knowsley Outbreak Management Board sat on 20th January and reported COVID-19 case levels in Knowsley Borough to be 970 cases per 100,000 population. Highest case rates are for school-aged children but also still very high in people over 60. Regarding the vaccination programme, 45.09% of the eligible Knowsley population are fully vaccinated (two doses and a booster). This leaves almost 55% without adequate protection against the virus – *21st January 2022*

- The Department for Transport have announced that from 11th February, eligible fully vaccinated passengers arriving in the UK will no longer have to take a post-arrival,

lateral flow test. When fully vaccinated passengers travel to UK on or after that date, they just have to verify their status via a passenger locator form. For incoming passengers that are not fully vaccinated on or after that date they will no longer be required to do a day 8 test after arrival or self-isolate but will have to complete a passenger locator form to demonstrate proof of a negative COVID-19 test taken 2 days before travel and must take a post-arrival PCR test. Additionally, from 3 February, 12–15-year-olds in England will be able to prove their vaccination status via the digital NHS Pass for international outbound travel – *24th January 2022*

- Adults over the age of 50 or with an underlying health condition who test positive for COVID-19 are urged to sign up for a world-first study which is providing life-saving antivirals. To join the study, sign up at the PANORAMIC trial website

As testing and quarantine restrictions end for fully vaccinated visitors and Britain becomes one of the most open countries in Europe, PM Boris Johnson is launching a £10 million campaign VisitBritain to encourage international tourists to visit – *25th January 2022*

- The latest study into COVID-19 infections by the government-backed REACT-1 (round 17) show prevalence increased at all ages from the previous round. The highest prevalence was in those aged 5-11 (7.81%) and next highest, those aged 12-17 (5.17%). Prevalence also increased in every region, the highest figure being for the North-East (6.85%), followed by Yorkshire and The Humber at 5.58%. Omicron now being the dominant variant detected.

Over 5,000 vulnerable people have now enrolled with the PANORAMIC study, which evaluates the use of antivirals to reduce the severity of symptoms from COVID-19 infection, another avenue to ease pressure on the NHS – *26th January 2022*

- Britain returns to “Plan A” following the success of the vaccination programme, all measures under “Plan B” now lifted. Also, restrictions put in place in adult social care under “Plan B” will change. From Monday 31st January, there will be no limit on the number of visitors allowed, isolation periods will be reduced from 14 to 10 days for those who test positive with further reduction if the person test negative on both days 5 and 6. Care homes now to follow outbreak management rules for 14 days not 28 days

Latest data from UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) reinforces the safety of COVID-19 vaccinations in pregnant women. The agency also stated that data continues to show high levels of protection against hospitalisation from the booster jab. Vaccine effectiveness was found to be similar against the Omicron variant sub-lineage known as BA.2 – *27th January 2022*

- From Thursday 10th January, the UK's second ground-breaking antiviral PF-07321332+ritonavir (Paxlovid), will be made available for those with weakened immune systems i.e., people who are immunocompromised, cancer patients or those with Down's Syndrome. This new antiviral reduced the risk of COVID-19-associated hospitalisation or death by 88% in those who received treatment within five days of symptoms appearing

As of 24th January, there were 1,072 genomically confirmed cases of the latest Omicron sub-lineage BA.2. Initial data show BA.2 to have an increased growth rate compared to BA.1 but there is currently no data on the severity of BA.2 – 28th January 2022

- As Omicron is now the dominant variant representing 96% of all cases, the legal requirement for health and social care staff to be double jabbed is to be removed, subject to public consultation and Parliamentary approval. Although most health and social care staff are vaccinated, the remainder are urged to Get Boosted Now as a professional responsibility

From today, the UK's Health Security Agency has begun to include data on possible reinfections in its COVID-19 dashboard. Positive tests of COVID-19 within a 90-day time period are now considered part of the same case episode, while positive tests outside that parameter are to be considered reinfections – 31st January 2022

- Regulatory approval has been granted for COVID-19 vaccine Nuvaxovid by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)

Latest UK Health Security Agency report shows that case rates were highest in those aged 5-9, with a weekly rate of 1,925.5 per 100,000 population. Weekly case rates were highest in the South-East at 1,199.8 per 100,000 population. Hospital admission rate for week 4 was highest in the North-East at 25.15 per 100,000 population – 3rd February 2022

- From 17th January, people in England with COVID-19 can end their self-isolation after 5 full days if they test negative on day five and on day six – 4th February 2022
- Hospitality, leisure, and accommodation businesses are encouraged to apply to their local council for one-off cash grants of up to £6,000 through the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant scheme

The UK Health Security Agency release the results of their study of the booster vaccine's effect on hospitalisations and estimate 105,600 hospitalisations have been prevented in those aged 25 and over. The prevention numbers can be broken down

as follows: 87,300 in those aged 65 and over; 14,300 in those aged 45 to 64 and 4,000 in those aged 25-44

The Rosalind Franklin laboratory in Royal Leamington Spa which opened in June 2021 has now processed 5 million PCR tests but also carries out genomic sequencing and can rapidly detect COVID-19 mutations

Latest UK Health Security Agency report shows that case rates were highest in those aged 10-19, with a weekly rate of 1,315.1 per 100,000 population. Weekly case rates were highest in the South-East at 1,013.9 per 100,000 population. The hospital admission rate for week 5 was highest in the North-East at 18.92 per 100,000 population

The UK has uploaded over 2 million genome sequences to the international GISAID database, accounting for a quarter of all SARS-CoV-2 genomes shared globally – *10th February 2022*

- Changes to travel rules come into force in UK today. Eligible fully vaccinated passengers arriving in UK no longer need to take any COVID-19 tests and are only required to fill in a simplified passenger locator form. Those not qualified as fully-vaccinated will need to take a pre-departure test in the 2 days prior to departure and a PCR test on or before the end of Day 2 after they arrive in UK as well as completing the passenger locator form – *11th February 2022*
- A review by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) shows that people who have had one or more doses of a coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine are less likely to develop long COVID than those who remain unvaccinated – *15th February 2022*
- Following advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), the government is to make a non-urgent offer of COVID-19 vaccines to all children aged 5-11 in England. It would be issued as 2 doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech paediatric Vaccine with an interval of at least 12 weeks between doses. The purpose being to increase the protection against severe illness in advance of a potential future wave of COVID-19 – *16th February 2022*
- Latest UK Health Security Agency report shows that case rates were highest in those aged 30-39, with a weekly rate of 720.7 per 100,000 population. Weekly case rates were highest in the South-West at 728.1 per 100,000 population. The hospital admission rate for week 6 was highest in the North-East at 15.84 per 100,000 population

Results of the latest UK Health Security Agency-backed SIREN study into COVID-19 antibodies confirmed that vaccination provides a significantly greater level of

protection against infection from COVID-19, whether or not you have been previously infected. It also highlighted the fact that the protection wanes over time and stressed the importance of the booster jab – *17th February 2022*

- Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid has accepted the advice of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) to offer, from the Spring, an additional COVID-19 booster jab to people aged 75 years and over, older adults in care homes and people aged 12 and over who are immunosuppressed. Those eligible will receive their vaccine around six months after their last dose

The new world-class research facility dedicated to the development and testing of new COVID-19 vaccines has opened at the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) Porton Down site in Salisbury

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has set out the Government's plans to live with COVID following the successful vaccination programme. This includes the removal on 24th February, of all remaining domestic legal restrictions to public freedom. The legal requirement to self-isolate ends. Until 1st April, people who test positive are still advised to stay at home for at least five days and follow the guidance. From April new Government guidance will be set out. Self-isolation support payments, national funding for practical support and the medicine delivery service will no longer be available. Routine contact tracing ends, including venue check-ins on the NHS COVID-19 app. On 24th March, the Government will remove the COVID-19 provisions within the Statutory Sick Pay and Employment and Support Allowance regulations – *21st February 2022*

- COVID-19 legal restrictions are lifted in England. Government asks the public to practice safe and responsible behaviours: maintaining good hand hygiene, ventilating rooms, and wearing a mask in enclosed spaces will minimise the risk

Latest UK Health Security Agency report shows that case rates were highest in those aged 30-39, with a weekly rate of 583.2 per 100,000 population. Weekly case rates were highest in the South-West at 557.8 per 100,000 population. The hospital admission rate for week 7 was highest in the North-East at 13.78 per 100,000 population – *24th February 2022*

- The forthcoming public inquiry set up to examine the UK's response to the pandemic (to be Chaired by Rt Hon Baroness Heather Hallett) now has its own independent website at <https://covid19.public-inquiry.uk> – *28th February 2022*
- Following a previous announcement on the extension of free COVID-19 PPE until the end of March 2023, a new online platform (to be managed by NHS Supply Chain) to order the personal protective equipment (PPE) has been launched

UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) urges pregnant women to be vaccinated as latest data reinforces previous findings on safety of COVID-19 vaccines in pregnancy

Regulations requiring COVID-19 vaccination to work in Care Quality Commission (CQC) registered care homes to be lifted from 15th March. Also, the legal requirement for health and social care staff to be double jabbed from 1st April is to be removed. Health and Social Care Secretary reminds the minority of unvaccinated health and care workers of their professional responsibility to be vaccinated – *1st March 2022*

- UK bilaterally donated 1 million doses of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine to Bangladesh. This adds to the 4 million doses the UK donated through COVAX last year – *2nd March 2022*
- Latest UK Health Security Agency report shows COVID-19 activity decreased in all indicators in week 8 of 2022. Case rates were highest in those aged 30-39, with a weekly rate of 419.9 per 100,000 population. Weekly case rates were highest in the South-West at 394.5 per 100,000 population. The hospital admission rate for week 8 was highest in the South-East at 12.68 per 100,000 population – *3rd March 2022*
- Latest government-backed REACT-1 study results (round 18) for COVID-19 show prevalence in England (covering the period 8th February to 1st March) was 2.88%. Therefore approximately 1 in 35 people were infected with the virus. Rates of Omicron sub-lineage BA.2 were highest in London with 44.3% of all positive cases and in the southern region. Increasing prevalence was found among those aged 55 and over

Government has published the draft Terms of Reference for the forthcoming public inquiry into the COVID-19 pandemic. Coverage includes preparedness, the public health response, the response in the health and care sector and our economic response

Latest UK Health Security Agency report shows COVID-19 activity increased in most indicators in week 9 of 2022. Case rates were highest in those aged 30-39, with a weekly rate of 542.7 per 100,000 population. Weekly case rates were highest in the South-West at 528.7 per 100,000 population. The hospital admission rate for week 9 was highest in the South-West at 17.22 per 100,000 population – *10th March 2022*

- Due to the success of the vaccination programme, the government will remove the remaining COVID-19 international travel restrictions for all passengers from 4am on Friday 18th March. Therefore, no-one entering UK will need to take tests or complete

a passenger locator form. Also, managed hotel quarantine will cease from the end of March

Knowsley Outbreak Management Board sat on 11th March and reported COVID-19 case levels in Knowsley Borough have increased recently as with all other areas of the UK. Current case levels are 394 per 100,000 population with the majority of cases in the 35 to 39-year-old age range. Additionally, the number of COVID-19 patients in local hospitals has increased over the past week. Plans for a Spring booster campaign for the over 75s, care home residents and the immune suppressed is already underway. However, with the publication of the Government's *Living with COVID-19 plan* which includes lifting all remaining restrictions, it was decided that this would be the last meeting of the Knowsley Outbreak Management Board. Any future meetings will be arranged at short notice if required – 14th March 2022

- Latest UK Health Security Agency report shows COVID-19 activity increased in most indicators in week 10 of 2022. Case rates were highest in those aged 30-39, with a weekly rate of 878.7 per 100,000 population. Weekly case rates were highest in the South-West at 939.3 per 100,000 population. The hospital admission rate for week 10 was highest in the South-East at 19.31 per 100,000 population

A new medicine, Evusheld (a combination of tixagevimab and cilgavimab, two long-acting antibodies) has been approved by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) for use in adults who are unlikely to mount an immune response from COVID-19 vaccination or for whom vaccination is not recommended – 17th March 2022

- Latest UK Health Security Agency report shows COVID-19 activity increased in most indicators in week 11 of 2022. Case rates were highest in those aged 30-39, with a weekly rate of 1,122.1 per 100,000 population. Weekly case rates remain highest in the South-West at 1,269.1 per 100,000 population. The hospital admission rate for week 11 was highest in the South-West at 28.71 per 100,000 population

A new law the 'Commercial Rent (Coronavirus) Act 2022' comes into force in England and Wales today whereby a legally binding arbitration process will be available for eligible commercial landlords and tenants who have not already reached agreement to resolve disputes about pandemic rent debt

More than half (53.7%) of pregnant women have now had received at least one dose of a coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine – 24th March 2022

- The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) finds Omicron BA.2 now the dominant variant in England and is accounting for approximately 93.7% of all cases, the highest being in the South-East (96.4%) and the lowest in the East Midlands (91.1%). Since mid-February, the growth rate has remained at approximately 75% higher than other

circulating Omicron lineages in England. However, analysis has found no evidence that infection with Omicron BA.2 results in a greater risk of hospitalisation, compared to Omicron BA.1 – *25th March 2022*

- From 1st April, changes occur to those eligible for free coronavirus (COVID-19) tests.

Symptomatic testing:

NHS patients in hospital; those eligible for COVID-19 antiviral and other treatments; NHS staff and staff working in NHS-funded independent healthcare provision; adult social care staff and residents in care homes, homecare organisations, extra care and supported living settings and adult day care centres; adult social care social workers, personal assistants, Shared Lives carers and CQC inspectors; staff and patients in hospices; staff and detainees in places of detention (including prisons); staff and detainees in immigration removal centres; staff and users of high-risk domestic abuse and homelessness settings

Asymptomatic testing will continue to be provided during periods of high prevalence for:

Adult social care staff and a few visitors providing personal care; hospice staff; patient-facing staff in NHS and NHS-funded independent healthcare provision; some staff in prisons, other places of detention and some refuges and shelters.

Also, care home outbreak testing for all staff and residents will continue all year – *30th March 2022*

- Latest UK Health Security Agency report shows COVID-19 activity remained stable in most indicators in week 12 of 2022. Case rates were highest in those aged 30-39, with a weekly rate of 1,123.7 per 100,000 population. Weekly case rates remain highest in the South-West at 1,190.5 per 100,000 population. The hospital admission rate for week 12 was highest in the South-West at 28.61 per 100,000 population – *31st March 2022*
- To protect those most at risk from the COVID-19 virus, a new set of guidance has been presented by UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) providing important public health advice for those with a positive COVID-19 test and their contacts and advice on safer behaviours for everyone. A set of health principles has also been published for employers to consider in managing the risk to their workforce – *1st April 2022*
- Findings of the latest government-backed REACT-1 study (round 19) into COVID-19 shows that during the period 8th March-31st March, prevalence in England was 6.37%. This was the highest figure since the beginning of the study in May 2020 and up on the 2.88% recorded in the previous round (8th February – 1st March). Therefore, in this latest study), approximately 1 in 16 people were infected with the virus – *6th April 2022*

- Latest UK Health Security Agency report shows COVID-19 activity was variable in indicators for week 13 of 2022. Case rates were highest in those aged 30-39, with a weekly rate of 820.0 per 100,000 population. Weekly case rates remain highest in the South-West at 804.5 per 100,000 population. The hospital admission rate for week 13 was highest in the North-East at 31.14 per 100,000 population – *7th April 2022*
- Thousands more vulnerable people are eligible to receive the UK's second antiviral Paxlovid which in clinical trials reduced the risk of hospitalisation or death by 88%. The antiviral is already available directly to highest-risk patients and has been added to the PANORAMIC national study – *12th April 2022*
- The COVID-19 vaccine developed by Valneva has been given regulatory approval by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and becomes the sixth COVID-19 vaccine to be granted an MHRA authorisation. This is also the first, whole-virus inactivated COVID-19 vaccine to gain MHRA approval

The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance reports now focus on high-risk groups i.e., patients in NHS hospitals, those eligible for antiviral and other treatments, NHS staff and adult social care and has been named 'Pillar One' data. The latest report shows COVID-19 activity decreased in week 14 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England was 788 compared with 952 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 14 was highest in the North-East at 25.94 per 100,000 population

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has approved the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine 'Spikevax' for use in 6 to 11-year-olds – *14th April 2022*

- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows COVID-19 activity decreased in week 15 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England was 559 compared with 788 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 15 was highest in the North-East at 22.79 per 100,000 population – *21st April 2022*
- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows COVID-19 activity decreased once again in week 16 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England was 440 compared with 559 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 16 was highest in the North-East at 22.01 per 100,000 population – *28th April 2022*
- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows COVID-19 activity has decreased in week 17 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England was

229 compared with 440 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 17 was highest in the North-East at 18.44 per 100,000 population – *5th May 2022*

- UK Health Security Agency has supplied a routine variant data update on the current circulating lineages. As of 2nd May, 21 confirmed cases of Omicron BA.4 and 19 confirmed cases of Omicron BA.5 have been detected in England. Data is limited now but cases of BA.4 and BA.5 have doubled in the last week in South Africa so assessment continues – *6th May 2022*
- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows COVID-19 activity has decreased in week 18 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England was 198 compared with 229 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 18 was highest in the North-East at 13.00 per 100,000 population – *12th May 2022*
- Take up of the Spring COVID-19 booster jab for eligible over-75-year-olds for the period between 21st March and 8th May is recorded at 79.2%. The booster is offered to all over-75s, those aged 12 and over who are immunosuppressed and residents in care homes for older people, around 6 months after their last dose

Vaccine uptake for pregnant women is increasing month by month but pregnant women of Black ethnicity and those living in the most deprived areas of England remain the least likely to be vaccinated – *13th May 2022*

- G7 Foreign Ministers and the High Representative of the European Union endorse an Action Plan on COVID-19 at their meeting in Germany – *14th May 2022*
- UKs Emergency Medical Team (EMT) have been supporting and equipping key health facilities in the Solomon Islands for the last nine weeks so following assessment and training they are able to respond to subsequent waves of COVID-19 – *16th May 2022*
- UK Health Security Agency updates its guidance for living safely with respiratory infections, including coronavirus (COVID-19) – *18th May 2022*
- The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has provided interim advice to the government regarding COVID-19 booster doses this autumn. The likelihood for the booster dose is to be for the more vulnerable adults and frontline social care and health workers

The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows COVID-19 activity has decreased in week 19 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England was 127 compared with 198 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 19 was highest in the North-East at 10.04 per 100,000 population – *19th May 2022*

- The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has elevated the classification of the COVID-19 variants Omicron BA.4 and Omicron BA.5 to variants of concern (VOCs). As of 17th May, there were 115 confirmed cases of BA.4 and 80 confirmed cases of BA.5 – 20th May 2022
- The UK Health Security Agency's New Variant Assessment Platform (NVAP) is continuing to expand its work to other countries and regions to help global health security efforts. Nine countries have now received support from NVAP to improve early detection of new variants – 23rd May 2022
- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows COVID-19 activity has again decreased in week 20 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England was 129 compared with 127 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 20 was highest in the North-East at 11.69 per 100,000 population – 26th May 2022
- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows COVID-19 activity has again decreased in week 21 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England was 69 compared with 129 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 21 was highest in the North-East at 7.56 per 100,000 population – 6th June 2022
- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows COVID-19 activity has increased slightly in week 22 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England was 78 compared with 69 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 22 was highest in the North-East at 8.3 per 100,000 population – 9th June 2022
- The core functions of the Vaccine Taskforce (VTF) will merge with UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and the Office for Life Sciences (OLS) in the autumn – 15th June 2022
- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has increased in week 23 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England was 170 compared with 78 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 23 was highest again in the North-East at 10.7 per 100,000 population – 16th June 2022
- Pharmaceutical company Moderna in partnership with the Government is to build a state-of-the-art research and manufacturing centre in the UK. This will provide NHS patients with the latest vaccines for a range of respiratory diseases including COVID-19. The first new mRNA vaccine (messenger ribonucleic acid vaccine teaches our cells how to make a protein that will trigger an immune response) is expected to be produced in the UK in 2025 – 22nd June 2022

- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has increased in week 24 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England was 261 compared with 170 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 24 was highest again in the North-East at 12.45 per 100,000 population – *23rd June 2022*
- The latest UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) data show that Omicron BA.4 and Omicron BA.5 have become dominant in the UK and together now make up more than half the new COVID-19 cases in England at 22% and 39% respectively and are responsible for the recent increase in infections. The latest analysis shows no evidence that the above variants cause more severe illness than previous variants – *24th June 2022*
- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has increased in week 25 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England was 382 compared with 261 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 25 was highest in the North-West at 15.09 per 100,000 population – *30th June 2022*
- The Department of Health and Social Care has issued a notice to GPs, NHS Digital and NHS England requiring that data be shared in the effort of fighting coronavirus (COVID-19) – *1st July 2022*
- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has increased in week 26 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England increased to 504 compared with 382 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 26 was highest in the West Midlands at 16.97 per 100,000 population – *7th July 2022*
- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has increased in several indicators in week 27 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England increased to 537 compared with 504 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 27 was highest in the West Midlands at 24.45 per 100,000 population – *14th July 2022*
- The Department of Health and Social Care have accepted the recommendations by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) that adults aged 50 and over; those aged 5 to 49 in a clinical risk group, including pregnant women; those aged 5 to 49 who are household contacts of people with immunosuppression; those aged 16 to 49 who are carers; residents and staff in a care home for older adults; frontline health and social care workers, will all be offered a free COVID-19 booster and flu jab this autumn – *15th July 2022*

- UK donates 1 million more doses of Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine to Bangladesh; this adds to the 4 million doses already donated through COVAX last year – *17th July 2022*
- The Government has today set out the membership and terms of reference for the UK Commission on Covid Commemoration. The commission will work with the Devolved Administrations and with the public to decide how to remember those who lost their lives during the Coronavirus pandemic and how to recognise those involved in the country's response

The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has increased slightly in some indicators in week 28 of 2022. Although the number of suspected outbreaks in England decreased to 528 compared with 537 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 28 was again highest in the West Midlands at 25.33 per 100,000 population – *21st July 2022*

- Analysis by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has indicated that Omicron BA.5 has become the dominant SARS-CoV-2 variant in the UK. An estimated 78.7% of confirmed cases in England are now identified as BA.5. Also, the Omicron variant BA2.75 has now been categorised as a separate variant and data will be reported independently from other BA.2 cases (as of 18th July, there were 24 cases of BA2.75 in the UK: 20 in England, 3 in Scotland and 1 in Wales) – *22nd July 2022*
- The UK Commission on Covid Commemoration, established on 21st July to obtain a consensus from all the United Kingdom on how we commemorate the COVID-19 pandemic has set up a short on-line survey to let people from around the UK inform the commission about commemoration activities taking place in their area.

The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has decreased in several indicators in week 29 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England decreased to 416 compared with 528 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 29 was highest in the North-East at 20.19 per 100,000 population – *28th July 2022*

- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has decreased in several indicators in week 30 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England decreased to 271 compared with 416 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 30 was highest in the West Midlands at 17.49 per 100,000 population – *4th August 2022*
- The latest estimates of both the [R] number and the growth rate in England is as follows:
(The reproduction number [R] is the average number of secondary infections produced by a single infected person).

England overall: R range = 0.8 to 1.0, growth rate = -5% to -2%

NHS England regions:

East of England: R range = 0.7 to 0.9, growth rate = -6% to -2%

London: R range = 0.7 to 0.9, growth rate = -7% to -3%

Midlands: R range = 0.7 to 0.9, growth rate = -5% to -2%

North-East & Yorkshire: R range = 0.7 to 1.0, growth rate = -5% to -2%

North-West: R range = 0.7 to 0.9, growth rate = -6% to -2%

South-East: R range = 0.7 to 0.9, growth rate = -6% to -3%

South-West: R range = 0.7 to 0.9, growth rate = -6% to -3%

– 5th August 2022

- UK Health Security Agency published their latest update: How to use the free NHS COVID-19 app on iPhone and Android smartphones
[NHS COVID-19 app: user guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/nhs-covid-19-app-user-guide)

Office for National Statistics (ONS) publishes their latest data survey results: How people spent their time after coronavirus restrictions were lifted in UK (data collected in March 2022)

UK Health Security Agency publish their latest guidance: Finding and choosing a private coronavirus (COVID-19) test provider.

[Finding and choosing a private coronavirus \(COVID-19\) test provider - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/finding-and-choosing-a-private-coronavirus-covid-19-test-provider)

– 9th August 2022

- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has decreased in several indicators in week 31 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England decreased to 239 compared with 271 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 31 remain highest in the West Midlands at 15.13 per 100,000 population – 11th August 2022
- The first “bivalent” vaccine that targets two coronavirus variants made by Moderna has been approved for adult booster doses by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) after meeting regulatory standards. In each dose of the new vaccine (of 50 micrograms), half the dosage targets the original virus strain from 2020 and the other half targets Omicron

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has published its advice on which vaccines should be used in this year’s autumn booster programme:

For adults aged 18 and above:

Moderna (Spikevax) bivalent Omicron BA.1/Original ‘wild-type’ vaccine

Moderna (Spikevax) Original ‘wild-type’ vaccine

Pfizer-BioNTech (Comirnaty) Original ‘wild-type’ vaccine

Novavax (Nuvaxovid) may be used when no other approved COVID-19 vaccine is available

For people aged 12 to 17 years:

Pfizer-BioNTech (Comirnaty) Original 'wild-type' vaccine

For people aged 5 to 11 years:

Pfizer-BioNTech (Comirnaty) Original 'wild-type' vaccine (paediatric formulation) –
15th August 2022

- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has decreased in most indicators in week 32 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England decreased to 172 compared with 239 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 32 is highest in the North-East at 13.42 per 100,000 population – *18th August 2022*

Government figures show £21.3 billion was allocated to micro, small and medium-sized businesses in England through the COVID-19 business grants scheme. The main sectors supported were accommodation, food services, wholesale and retail, arts, entertainment, and recreation – *19th August 2022*

- Due to a continued fall in COVID-19 cases, from 31st August, routine asymptomatic testing will be paused across the remaining settings including hospitals and care homes.

Testing for individuals with symptoms, including health and social care staff, will continue.

Immunocompromised patients in hospitals and people being admitted into care homes and hospices will also continue to be tested – *24th August 2022*

- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has decreased in most indicators in week 33 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England decreased to 124 compared with 172 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 33 is highest in the North-East at 9.67 per 100,000 population – *25th August 2022*

- Following a review of the safety, quality, and effectiveness of the COVID-19 vaccine Nuvaxovid (developed by Novavax), the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has granted an extension to its existing approval for use with 12-17-year-olds – *26th August 2022*

- Following UK Health Security Agency advice, the recommendation to ministers is to move the COVID-19 alert level from level 3 to level 2 due to the reduction in severe illness cases caused by variants during the summer – *31st August 2022*

- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has decreased in most indicators in week 34 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England decreased to 111 compared with 124 in the

previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 34 is highest in the West Midlands at 8.23 per 100,000 population – *1st September 2022*

- The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has now included an additional bivalent vaccine approved by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) to its vaccine list for possible use in the autumn booster programme. The addition is the Pfizer-BioNTech bivalent vaccine

To counter false claims on social media, the advice from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has not changed in regard to COVID-19 vaccines being safe and effective during pregnancy and breastfeeding – *3rd September 2022*

- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has decreased in most indicators in week 35 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England increased to 116 compared with 111 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 35 is highest in the North-East at 6.71 per 100,000 population – *8th September 2022*
- UK Health Security Agency estimates that the R value currently stands at 0.8-1.0 for England in general, 0.8-1.1 for the North-West of England (due to the time delay, estimates represent transmission of COVID-19 about 2 to 3 weeks ago) – *16th September 2022*
- The UK Commission on Covid Commemoration met for a second meeting and considered a range of commemoration options and public engagement options. The commission is keen for organisations and members of the public to complete the Local Covid Commemoration Survey with their views. The commission will meet again in October – *21st September 2022*
- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has remained stable in most indicators in week 37 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England increased to 133 compared with 131 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 37 was highest in the North-East at 7.19 per 100,000 population – *22nd September 2022*
- The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) is urging everyone eligible to take up the offer of a free flu vaccine and a COVID-19 booster as soon as possible as we move into the winter months – *28th September 2022*

- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has increased in most indicators in week 38 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England increased to 170 compared with 133 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 38 was highest in the North-East at 10.82 per 100,000 population – *29th September 2022*
- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has increased in most indicators in week 39 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England increased to 273 compared with 170 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 39 was highest in the South-West at 16.67 per 100,000 population – *6th October 2022*
- Additional funding of £10.65 million given by the Government’s Vaccine Taskforce to support the launch of the Darlington RNA vaccine innovation centre – *7th October 2022*
- Another milestone reached as community diagnostic centres across the country have now delivered over 2 million vital tests, checks and scans to break the COVID-19 backlog and speed up access to services for patients – *11th October 2022*
- The UK Commission on Covid Commemoration met for the third time on 4th October to discuss a range of options for commemoration and to look in detail at the public consultation that is to be launched shortly

The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has increased in most indicators in week 40 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England increased to 370 compared with 270 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 40 was highest in the North-East at 15.84 per 100,000 population – *13th October 2022*

- The UK government has donated 123,000 items of personal protective equipment (PPE) to Honduras to support their frontline health care staff and help control the spread of COVID-19 – *17th October 2022*
- A notice has been issued by the Secretary of State under the Health Service Control of Patient Information Regulations 2002 requiring that GPs and NHS England share date for the purposes of COVID-19. Compliance with Data Protection Standards remains – *18th October 2022*
- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has decreased in most indicators in week 41 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England decreased to 347 compared with 370 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 41 was highest in the South-

West at 15.96 per 100,000 population. Cases of flu have quickly risen this past week with ICU admissions rising the fastest in children under 5 years – *20th October 2022*

- New COVID-19 and flu marketing campaign launches on 24th October urging those eligible to top up their immunity with booster vaccines prior to the winter months. Adverts will air on television, radio, social and digital media – *23rd October 2022*
- The UK Commission on Covid Commemoration has launched a consultation giving people across the UK the opportunity to say how they think the pandemic should be remembered. Responses to be received by 5th December online, by post or email

Updated guidance by the UK Health Security Agency for finding and choosing a private coronavirus (COVID-19) test provider is published

Updated information from SARS-CoV2 immunity and reinfection evaluation (SIREN) study has provided valuable evidence on immunity and COVID-19 vaccination and has supplied data on infection and emerging variants. This evidence has played a critical role in the national COVID-19 response – *24th October 2022*

- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has decreased in most indicators in week 42 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England decreased to 280 compared with 347 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 42 was highest in the South-West at 14.08 per 100,000 population
Flu surveillance for week 42 shows a continued increase and now stands at 5.2%. It is highest in 5-14-year-olds at 12% followed by 15-44-year-olds at 9.6%. Hospitalisation rates for flu are highest in those aged 0-4 at 3.19 followed by those 85+ at 2.48 per 100,000
Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) swab positivity increased to 6.5% in week 42, with highest positivity in children under 5, at 23.4% – *27th October 2022*
- Latest [R] value estimate for England stands at 0.8 to 1.1 and the latest growth rate range for England is -3% to 1% per day

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has designated 2 new COVID-19 variants, neither of which has been designated as a variant of concern. They are BQ.1 (V-22OCT-01), a sub-lineage of the BA.5 variant and XBB (V-22OCT-02) derived from 2 previous sub-lineages. Monitoring continues – *28th October 2022*

- The latest Coronavirus Infection Survey reported the estimated percentage figures for the population's antibodies against SARS-CoV2 in the week beginning 26 September as follows:
England was 95.8% (at or above 179 ng/ml) and 69.7% (at or above 800ng/ml)

Wales was 95.9% (at or above 179 ng/ml) and 68.1% (at or above 800ng/ml)
Northern Ireland was 95.5% (at or above 179 ng/ml) and 69.1% (at or above 800ng/ml)
Scotland was 95.0% (at or above 179 ng/ml) and 69.6% (at or above 800ng/ml)

Latest Home Office guidance advice produced for UK visa applicants and temporary UK residents – *2nd November 2022*

- Office for National Statistics estimates 2.1 million people were experiencing self-reported long COVID as of 1 October 2022

The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has decreased in most indicators in week 43 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England decreased to 182 compared with 280 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 43 was highest in the North-East at 11.49 per 100,000 population

Swab positivity for influenza has increased to 6.1%; it is highest in 15 to 44-year-olds at 13.4%, followed by 5 to 14-year-olds at 10.4% - *3rd November 2022*

- Approval granted by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) for a Pfizer/BioNTech ‘bivalent’ Covid vaccine that targets both the original strain of SARS-CoV-2 and the Omicron Ba.4 and BA.5 sub-variants. The vaccine is approved as a booster dose for individuals 12 years and above – *9th November 2022*
- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has decreased in most indicators in week 44 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England decreased to 140 compared with 182 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 44 was highest in the North-East at 7.38 per 100,000 population
Swab positivity for flu has remained stable at 6.6%; it is highest in 15 to 44-year-olds at 12.4%, followed by 5 to 14-year-olds at 11.2% - *10th November 2022*
- The UK Commission on Covid Commemoration met for the fourth time on 11th November. The key theme is both national remembering and having local spaces where communities can come together

The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has decreased in most indicators in week 45 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England decreased to 123 compared with 140 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 45 was highest in the South-West at 6.22 per 100,000 population

Swab positivity for flu has remained stable at 6.9%; it is highest in 5 to 14-year-olds at 12.3%, followed by 15 to 44-year-olds at 10.5% – *17th November 2022*

- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has decreased in most indicators in week 46 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in England decreased to 122 compared with 123 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 46 was highest in the South-East at 5.48 per 100,000 population

Swab positivity for flu has increased slightly, now at 8.2%; it is highest in 5 to 14-year-olds at 18%, followed by 15 to 44-year-olds at 15.8% – *24th November 2022*
- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has decreased in most indicators in week 47 of 2022. The number of suspected outbreaks in care homes in England increased to 83 compared with 49 in the previous week. The hospital admission rate for week 47 was highest in the East Midlands at 6.07 per 100,000 population.

Swab positivity for flu has increased further, now at 10.5%; it remains highest in 5 to 14-year-olds at 18.5% – *1st December 2022*
- Approval granted by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) for the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (Comirnaty) for use in infants and children aged 6 months to 4 years – *6th December 2022*
- The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has decreased in some indicators but increased in others in week 48 of 2022. The hospital admission rate for week 48 was highest in the North East at 7.56 per 100,000 population.

Swab positivity for flu has increased further, now at 14.3%; it remains highest in 15 to 44-year-olds at 24.3% – *8th December 2022*
- NHS COVID-19 app user guide for iPhone and Android smartphones updated by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) – *9th December 2022*
- COVID-19 activity shows a mixed picture in week 49 of 2022. The number of hospitalisations and suspected outbreaks in care homes in England have increased slightly. The hospital admission rate for week 49 was highest in the South West at 9.68 per 100,000 population.

Swab positivity for flu has increased further, now at 20.2%; it remains highest in 5 to 14-year-olds at 32.9% – *15th December 2022*
- The UK Commission on Covid Commemoration met for the fifth time on 13th December following the closure of the public consultation process. The Commission will now produce a report with a final set of recommendations to the Prime Minister by next March – *19th December 2022*

- A new vaccine, VidPrevtyn Beta developed by Sanofi has become the seventh COVID-19 vaccine authorised by the UK regulator the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) – *21st December 2022*
- UK commits to a 10 year partnership with Moderna who will invest and build a state-of-the-art vaccine manufacturing centre in the UK with the capacity to produce up to 250 million vaccines a year cementing the UK's status as a life sciences superpower

The latest UK Health Security Agency surveillance report shows at a national level COVID-19 activity has increased in all indicators in week 50 of 2022. The hospital admission rate for week 50 was highest in the South West at 15.21 per 100,000 population.

Swab positivity for flu has increased further, now at 26.4%; it remains highest in 5 to 14-year-olds at 40.1% – *22nd December 2022*

- Ahead of borders re-opening, from 5th January 2023, people flying in to England from mainland China will be asked to take a pre-departure test. Additionally, a sample of arrivals from China will also be tested for COVID-19 in order to monitor for new variants – *30th December 2022*

[This summary presently covers the period to the end of December 2022 but will be updated on a monthly basis]

Compiled by Knowsley Archives

National content courtesy of GOV.UK (Open Government Licence), UK Health Security Agency and The World Health Organization [WHO]

Local content: Knowsley MBC