**COVID-19 daily deaths:**

This section contains information on deaths of patients who have died in hospitals in England and had tested positive for COVID-19 at time of death or where COVID-19 was mentioned on the death certificate. All deaths are recorded against the date of death rather than the date the deaths were announced.

**The Daily file contains only deaths from the latest reporting period, 5pm 2 days prior to publication until 5pm the day before publication. The Total file contains all reported deaths.**

From Tuesday 28 April, NHS England and NHS Improvement started to report the number of patient deaths where there has been no COVID-19 positive test result, but where COVID-19 is documented as a direct or underlying cause of death on part 1 or part 2 of the death certification process.   This change has been introduced for deaths that occurred on 24th April and subsequently and is shown separately in the region data table only. When making comparisons over time these figures should not be included.

Interpretation of the figures should take into account the fact that totals by date of death are likely to be updated in future releases for more recent dates. For example, a positive result for COVID-19 may occur days after confirmation of death. Cases are only included in the data when the positive COVID-19 test result is received, or death certificate confirmed with COVID-19 mentioned. This results in a lag between a given date of death and exhaustive daily death figures for that day.

These figures will be updated at 2pm each day and include confirmed death cases reported at 5pm the previous day. Confirmation of COVID-19 diagnosis, death notification, death certificates and reporting in central figures can take up to several days and the hospitals providing the data are under significant operational pressure. This means that the totals reported at 5pm on each day may not include all deaths that occurred on that day or on recent prior days.

These figures do not include deaths outside hospital, such as those in care homes. This approach makes it possible to compile deaths data on a daily basis using up to date figures.

In addition to our data, the Office for National Statistics are now publishing weekly counts of deaths in which COVID-19 was mentioned on the death certificate. This publication is to be issued every Tuesday, starting on 31st March. It will include cases outside hospital and will also include some cases where COVID-19 is suspected, but no formal diagnostic test has taken place. ONS data will initially cover England and Wales only and will report on registered deaths up to 11 days before the date of publication.

Disclosure risk for this publication has been reviewed, considering [GSS/GSR policy](https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/policy-store/gssgsr-disclosure-control-guidance-for-tables-produced-from-administrative-sources/) and [ONS disclosure policy for births and deaths statistics](https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/methodologytopicsandstatisticalconcepts/disclosurecontrol/policyonprotectingconfidentialityintablesofbirthanddeathstatistics). It has been concluded that the data is suitable for release in the published form as the data contain limited information, with age breakdowns only provided at a national level and within broad age brackets. Individuals or their attributes cannot be identified from the counts of the numbers of COVID deaths by trust by day. The risk that this data could be combined with other information to infer that a particular patient who had died in hospital had tested positive for COVID-19 has also been considered.

This guidance was developed with advice from the Office for Statistics Regulation in UKSA.