

**The demography of COVID-19 deaths (<https://dc-covid.site.ined.fr/en/>)**  
**Summary of metadata for England & Wales**  
**(Last revised 07/09/2022)**

**Development of data collection systems during the pandemic**

In England and Wales, there are multiple sources of COVID-19 mortality data, depending on the territorial entity studied. For England and Wales as a whole, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) produces figures from the analysis of death certificates. This is the source we consider to be the most comprehensive and reliable. For England, we also present data from the National Health Service (NHS), but only hospital deaths are counted. For Wales, Public Health Wales provides daily information on deaths in hospitals and nursing homes, but does not provide breakdowns of these deaths by age or sex.

**Summary description of each source as of 21 April 2022**

**A.1. Data source 1**

Office for National Statistics (ONS):  
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/>

**A.2. Coverage**

**2.1 COVID-19 definition**

Confirmed and suspected COVID-19 cases.

**2.2 Place of death**

All places.

**2.3. Geographical coverage**

England and Wales.

**2.4. Time coverage**

From 14/04/2020 to 21/04/2022.

**A.3. Data collection method**

Death certificate with mention of COVID-19.

**A.4. Collected data**

4.1. Age group: 0, 1-4, 5-9, 10-14, 15-19, 20-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45-49, 50-54, 55-59, 60-64, 65-69, 70-74, 75-79, 80-84, 85-89, 90+

4.2. Sex: male and female, broken down by age group

4.3. Reference date type: date of death for the tabs “ONS\_WeeklyOccurrenceDeaths” and “ONS\_Total”; date of registration of death for the tabs “ONS\_WeeklyRegisteredDeaths” and “ONS\_PlaceofDeath”

4.4. Place of death: Hospital, Care home, Home, Elsewhere

**A.5. Update frequency and data cut-off time**

Weekly data provided every Tuesday. The published data cover the period up to the Friday 11 days earlier.

### **B.1. Data source 2**

National Health Service (NHS):  
<https://www.nhs.uk/>

### **B.2. Coverage**

#### **2.1 COVID-19 definition**

Confirmed and suspected COVID-19 deaths.

#### **2.2 Place of death**

Hospital only.

#### **2.3. Geographical coverage**

England.

#### **2.4. Time coverage**

From 22/04/2020 to 22/04/2022.

### **B.3. Data collection method**

Deaths of patients with a positive COVID test or for whom COVID-19 is indicated as an immediate or primary cause of death on the death certificate.

### **B.4. Collected data**

- 4.1. Age group: 0-19, 20-39, 40-59, 60-79, 80+
- 4.2. Sex: No breakdown by sex
- 4.3. Reference date type: date of occurrence
- 4.4. Place of death: *Not applicable*

### **B.5. Update frequency and data cut-off time**

Daily update at 14:00, including confirmed deaths reported up to 16:00 the previous day.

### **C.1. Data source 2**

Public Health Wales (GIG):  
<https://phw.nhs.wales/>

### **C.2. Coverage**

#### **2.1 COVID-19 definition**

Confirmed COVID-19 deaths.

## **2.2 Place of death**

Hospitals and care home.

## **2.3. Geographical coverage**

Wales.

## **2.4. Time coverage**

From 29/04/2020 to 22/04/2022.

## **C.3. Data collection method**

Daily transmission by the Local Health Board of residence to the GIG of deaths confirmed by a laboratory test.

## **C.4. Collected data**

4.1. Age group: *Not applicable*

4.2. Sex: *Not applicable*

4.3. Reference date type: date of occurrence

4.4. Place of death: *Not applicable*

## **C.5. Update frequency and data cut-off time**

Updates are published at 12:00, based on a data cut-off time of 13:00 the previous day.

## ANNEX: Detailed metadata sheet for England and Wales (Last revised 28/12/2021)

### **Data Source 1**

Office for National Statistics (ONS)

#### **Coverage**

All deaths involving COVID-19 in England and Wales, all places of death.

#### **Data collection method**

Weekly electronic transmission from local registration offices to the ONS. The death registration system in England and Wales is described in detail here:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/methodologies/userguidetomortalitystatisticsjuly2017>

The report is published weekly and made available here:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/datasets/weeklyprovisionalfiguresondeathsregisteredinenglandandwales>

Provisional data on deaths registered in each week (ending on a Friday) are compiled at the end of the following week.

Case definition: COVID-19 or suspected COVID-19 mentioned anywhere on the death certificate, including in combination with other health conditions. Certification is carried out according to the professional judgement of the attending physician based on available information such as symptoms and clinical findings, and does not require a positive virological test.

The time series coming from this data source and published in the excel sheets "ONS\_WeeklyOccurrenceDeaths", "ONS\_Total" and "ONS\_PlaceofDeath" include death counts occurred since the beginning of the pandemic and may account for retrospective corrections.

#### **Data Collected**

The data collected by the ONS contain the full medical and demographic information recorded when deaths are certified and registered. The variables used in the weekly report are:

Age

Sex

Cause of death

Local area of residence

Place of death

Date of death (with distinction between dates of registration and occurrence)

#### **Data cut off time**

Weekly figures are provided every Tuesday. The data published cover the time period up to the Friday 11 days before. However, some additional figures are calculated based on more recent registrations.

---

## **Data Source 2**

National Health Service (NHS)

### **Coverage**

All deaths in England that occurred in hospital in people who tested positive for COVID-19.

### **Data collection method**

Daily electronic transmission from hospitals to the NHS via the COVID-19 Patient Notification System, described in the document: “[covid-19-patient-pathway-v2.3.pdf](#)”

The data published daily are available here:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/covid-19-daily-deaths/>

Case definition: up to 28 April 2020, deaths of patients who died in hospitals in England and tested positive for COVID-19. From 28 April 2020, deaths of patients where COVID-19 is documented as a direct or underlying cause of death on part 1 or part 2 of the death certification process.

Deaths for which positive tests result for COVID-19 was not received but COVID-19 is mentioned on their death certificate are also included. These counts are reported separately, and only by region.

All deaths are recorded against the date of death rather than the date on which the death was reported.

Details are given in the document: [Data-notes-for-COVID-19-daily-deaths-publication.docx](#) (available in the documentation and downloadable here:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/04/Data-notes-for-COVID-19-daily-deaths-publication-1.docx>)

The time series coming from this data source and published in the excel sheets “NHS\_Daily\_Data” and “NHS\_DailyTotal”, include death counts occurred since the beginning of the pandemic and may account for retrospective corrections.

### **Data collected**

The data collected by the NHS in the daily report contain the following variables:

Age

Sex

Region and trust

Ethnicity (weekly)

Pre-existing condition (weekly)

Date of death

### **Data cut off time**

From 30 June 2020, updated at 14:00 each day and include confirmed deaths reported as of 16:00 the previous day. Before 30 June 2020, updated at 16:00 each day and included confirmed deaths reported as of 17:00 the previous day.

---

### **Data Source 3**

Public Health Wales (GIG)

#### **Coverage**

Deaths in Wales in individuals with laboratory confirmation of COVID-19, whether death occurred in hospital or not.

#### **Data collection method**

Daily transmission from Local Health Boards of residence of deaths suspected to be caused by COVID-19 in people who have tested positive for COVID-19. Figures do not include individuals who died from COVID-19 without laboratory confirmation; data may include deaths where COVID-19 was not the leading cause and will differ from ONS official statistics.

Deaths are reported by date of death.

Public Health Wales Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre is responsible for operating the surveillance system and the data published daily are available here:

<https://public.tableau.com/profile/public.health.wales.health.protection#!/vizhome/RapidCOVID-19virology-Public/Headlinesummary>

The majority of deaths reported occurred in hospital settings, with a smaller proportion occurring in care home settings.

The true number of COVID-19 deaths is very likely to be higher (see ONS reports for a more precise overview based on completion of the death registration process).

The time series coming from this data source is published in the excel sheet "GIG\_DailyTotal"; it includes death counts occurred since the beginning of the pandemic and may account for retrospective corrections.

#### **Data collected**

The daily data collected by Public Health Wales contain only information about Local Health Boards (administrative units within GIG Wales)

#### **Data cut off time**

From 23 July 2020, the cut off time is 13:00 the previous day. Before 23 July 2020, the cut off time was 17:00 the previous day.