

COVID-19 Wales Situational Report

COVID-19 Intelligence Cell: 28 April
2022

Data as at 27 April 2022 unless otherwise
specified

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COVID-19 Situation Report Summary

Indicators and case surveillance

ONS estimates that an average of 172,300 people in Wales had COVID-19 (95% credible interval: 151,300 to 194,700) equating to around 1 in 18 people.

PHW are not currently providing calculations of the reproduction number and doubling time for COVID-19 cases, as estimation of these values is not currently valid due to the quickly decreasing level of community testing following changes in testing policy.

Due to a technical issue a national comparison of wastewater data is not currently available. At a site and regional level, the levels of SARS-CoV-2 in wastewater appear to have declined in the last four weeks compared to a peak that was observed during March 2022.

NHS and social care

NHS officials report non-COVID-19 urgent & emergency pressures continue to result in high levels of hospital bed occupancy and escalation across hospital sites, although the number of COVID-19 confirmed patients has decreased. As at 25 April 2022, the number of COVID-19 related patients in hospital beds (confirmed, suspected and recovering) is 1,357; (9%) lower than the same day last week. Of these, 667 are confirmed COVID-19 patients; 181 (21%) lower than the same day last week. The total number of occupied beds in a critical care environment is 167; 1 higher than the same day last week and 15 higher than the pre-COVID-19 baseline of 152 critical care beds. Of these, 22 are COVID-19 related patients in critical care, 8 lower than the same day last week. 125 adult care homes in Wales have notified CIW of one or more confirmed cases of COVID-19, in staff or residents, in the last 7 days, out of a total of 1,033 adult care homes in Wales.

Children and education

Due to the recent Easter Holidays, PHW education data reporting will resume in the middle of May (next week)

Variants, vaccination and population immunity

As at 28 April, PHW report that the current dominant variant in Wales is VOC-22JAN-01 (Omicron, BA.2) which accounted for 99.48% of sequenced cases in the last 14 days. To date there have been 56,235 cases of VOC-21NOV-01 (Omicron, BA.1) and 26,046 cases of VOC-22JAN-01 (Omicron, BA.2). UKHSA reports that the recombinant XE (BA.1 x BA.2) continues to have an increased growth rate compared to BA.2 growth.

The COVID-19 vaccination rollout has slowed in Wales. As at 23 April 2022, 92% of people aged 12 and over had received at least one COVID-19 vaccine in Wales. Of people aged 12 and over, 4% had exactly one vaccine dose, 14% had exactly two doses, and 74% have also had a third dose or booster, so 88% have had at least 2 doses.

Slide 6: Medium term Projections (MTPs)






The most recent Swansea University MTPs suggest that we are at the peak of healthcare pressures and project a decline in hospital bed occupancy and ICU occupancy over the next several weeks. Current pressures in ICU and deaths are much lower than at the peak of previous waves, however deaths are projected to increase slightly to a peak at the start of May before declining. The MTPs also estimate that prevalence is declining and will continue to do so over the next few weeks, although the joint model fitting to all the data

causes the magnitude of MTP-estimated prevalence to be lower than ONS-estimated prevalence.

Key indicators

All COVID-19 indicators have decreased over the previous week.

Please note that the arrows represent a change in comparison for the last week.

	Current value (23/04/22)	Change since previous week (16/03/22 – 23/04/22 unless stated otherwise)	
		Percentage change	Value change
Test positivity (<u>7 day</u> RA)	14.4%	-31.5%	 (-6.6 percentage points)
Population estimated to have COVID-19 (prevalence) ¹	5.67%	-13%	 (-0.86 percentage points)
NHS COVID-19 Admissions ²	34	-42%	 (-25)
ONS deaths (<u>7 day</u> sum) ³	40	-38%	 (-24)
PHW deaths (<u>7 day</u> sum)	44	-6%	 (-3)

Footnotes

1. Latest Covid Infection Survey data is taken from 17 April 2022 to 23 April 2022.
2. Seven day rolling average to the current date of confirmed COVID-19 admissions.
3. Latest ONS deaths data is to 15 April 2022 (rather than 23 April 2022) for the current value. Data to 8 April 2022 is used for the change since previous week.

Infection and Case Surveillance

ONS Coronavirus (Covid-19) Infection Survey results, 29 April 2022

In Wales, for the week ending 23 April 2022, it is estimated that 5.67% of the community population had COVID-19 (95% credible interval: 4.98% to 6.41%). This equates to approximately 1 person in every 18 (95% credible interval: 1 in 20 to 1 in 16), or 172,300 people during this time (95% credible interval: 151,300 to 194,700).

This compares to 1 in 25 people in England, 1 in 25 people in Scotland, and 1 in 25 people in Northern Ireland.

Long Covid

As of 5 March 2022, an estimated 1.7 million people living in private households in the UK (2.7% of the population) were experiencing self-reported long COVID (symptoms persisting for more than four weeks after the first suspected coronavirus).

PHW Case surveillance and Reproduction number

Note the reliability of PHW case data will be heavily impacted by changes to testing behaviours and recent policy changes around test availability.

As at 26 April 2022, the 7-day cumulative case incidence in Wales is 36.1 per 100,000 population and test positivity is at 14.7%. Case incidence is decreasing in all local authorities, except Neath Port Talbot, which increased by 4.9 per 100,000. The highest 7-day incidence is in Conwy, which has 54.6 cases per 100,000. This is 50% higher than the Wales average, and 5% higher than the next LA (Denbighshire). As at 26 April 2022, case incidence is decreasing in all age groups, except amongst 90+ year olds, which currently has the highest incidence.

Deaths

As at 27 April 2022, registered 'all-cause' deaths remained stable in the most recent week and are currently in line with the 5-year average. In Wales, there were 3,203 deaths registered in March 2022. This was 138 (4.5%) more deaths than the five-year average for March. Of the deaths registered in March 2022 in Wales, there were 133 deaths (4.2% of all deaths) due to COVID-19. Including all deaths involving Covid increases the number to 207 deaths (6.5% of all deaths).

Reproduction number

The UKHSA consensus estimate of the reproduction number (R_t) for Wales is between 0.7 and 1.0 and a doubling time of -21 to -12 days (28 April 2022). PHW are not currently providing calculations of R_t and doubling time for COVID-19 cases, as estimation

is not currently valid due to the quickly decreasing level of community testing following changes in testing policy.

Welsh Government Wastewater Surveillance, 27 April 2022

Due to a technical issue a national comparison of wastewater data is not currently available. At a site and regional level, the levels of SARS-CoV-2 in wastewater appear to have declined in the last four weeks compared to a peak that was observed during March 2022. While a solution has been identified, officials have paused analysis of wastewater samples in the interim to ensure statistical analysis is reliable and representative.

Figure 1: ONS Infection Survey – Positivity Rates (%) Across UK Nations – 29 April

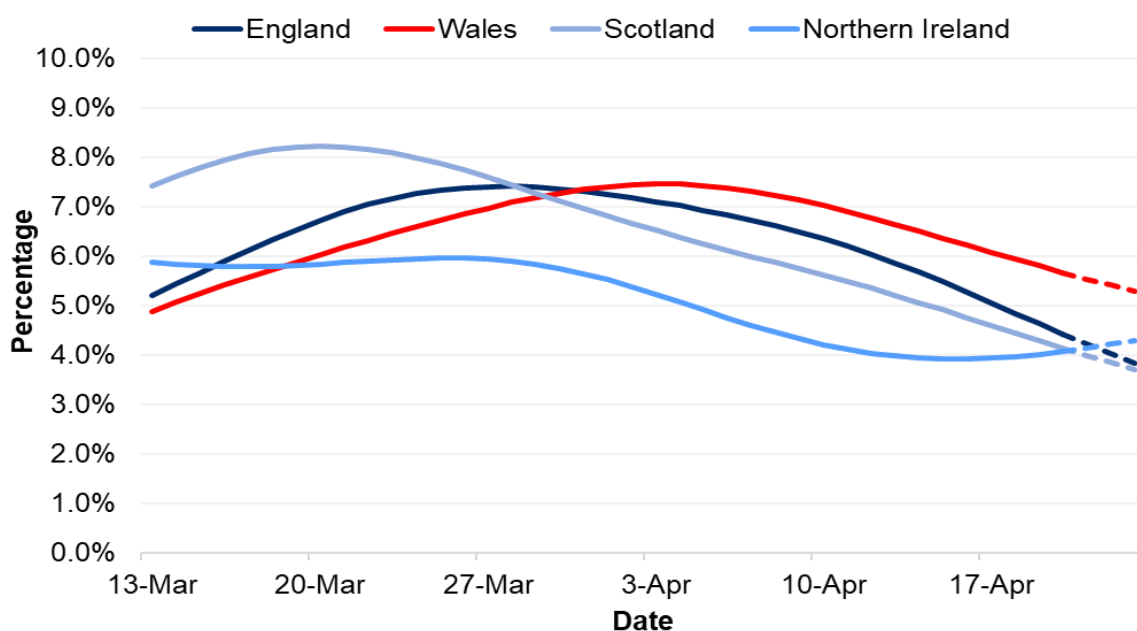


Figure 2: ONS Infection Survey – estimated % testing positive for COVID-19, Wales long term trends

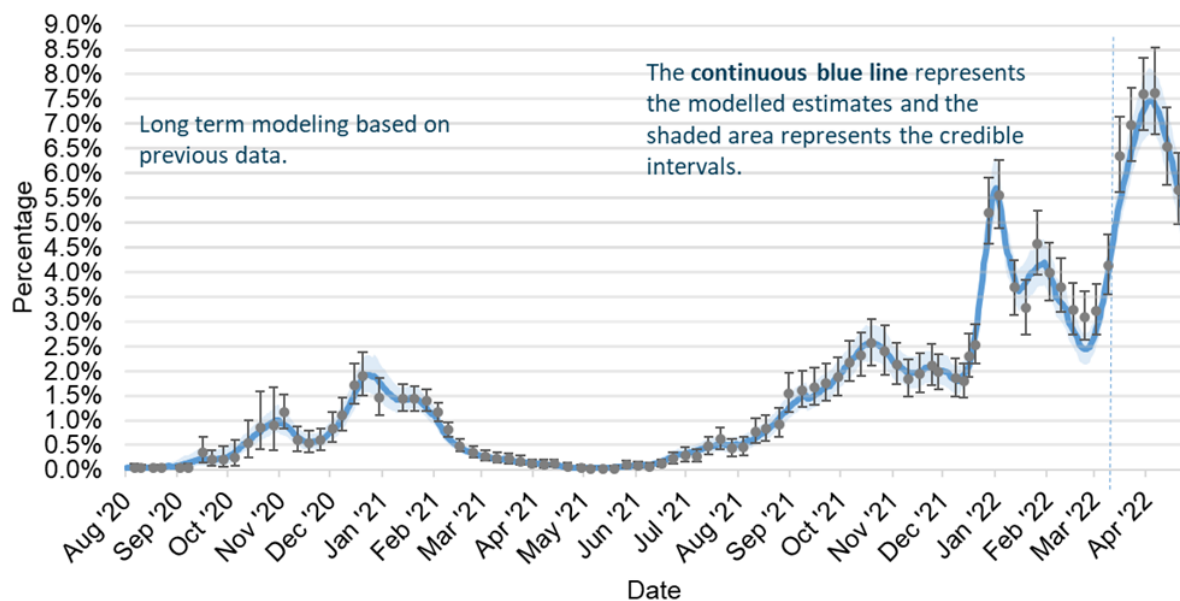


Figure 3: Confirmed cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 population in the previous 7 days, by sample date and health board

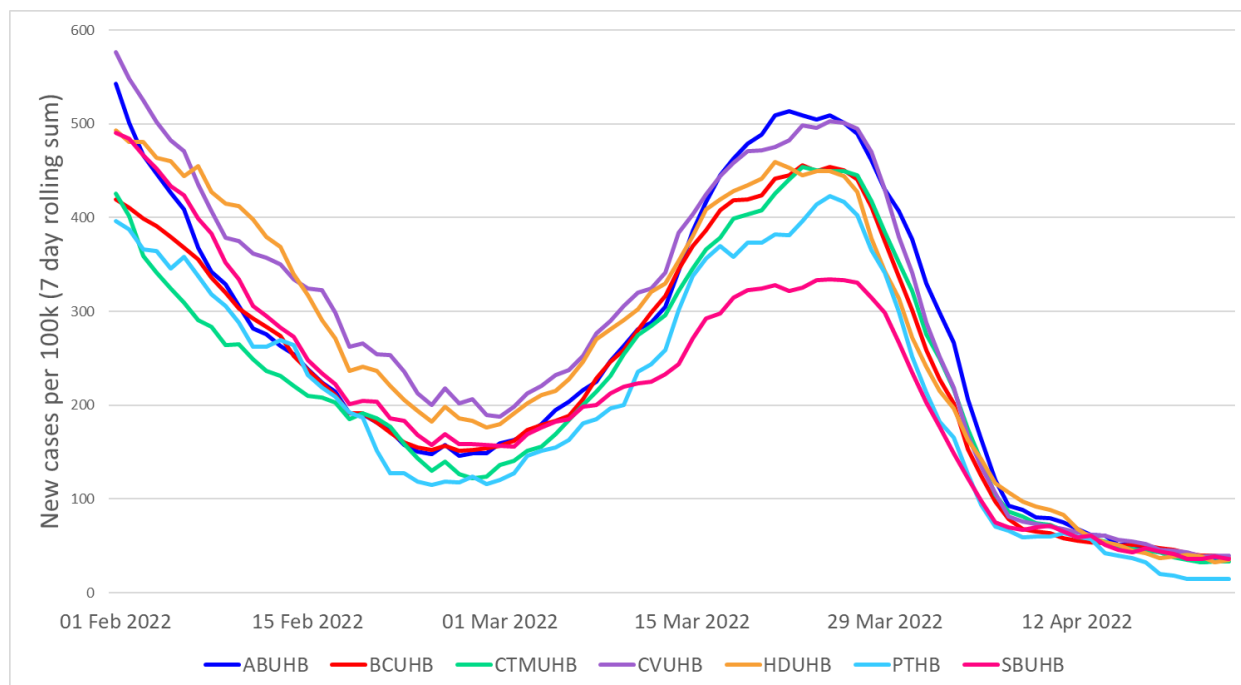
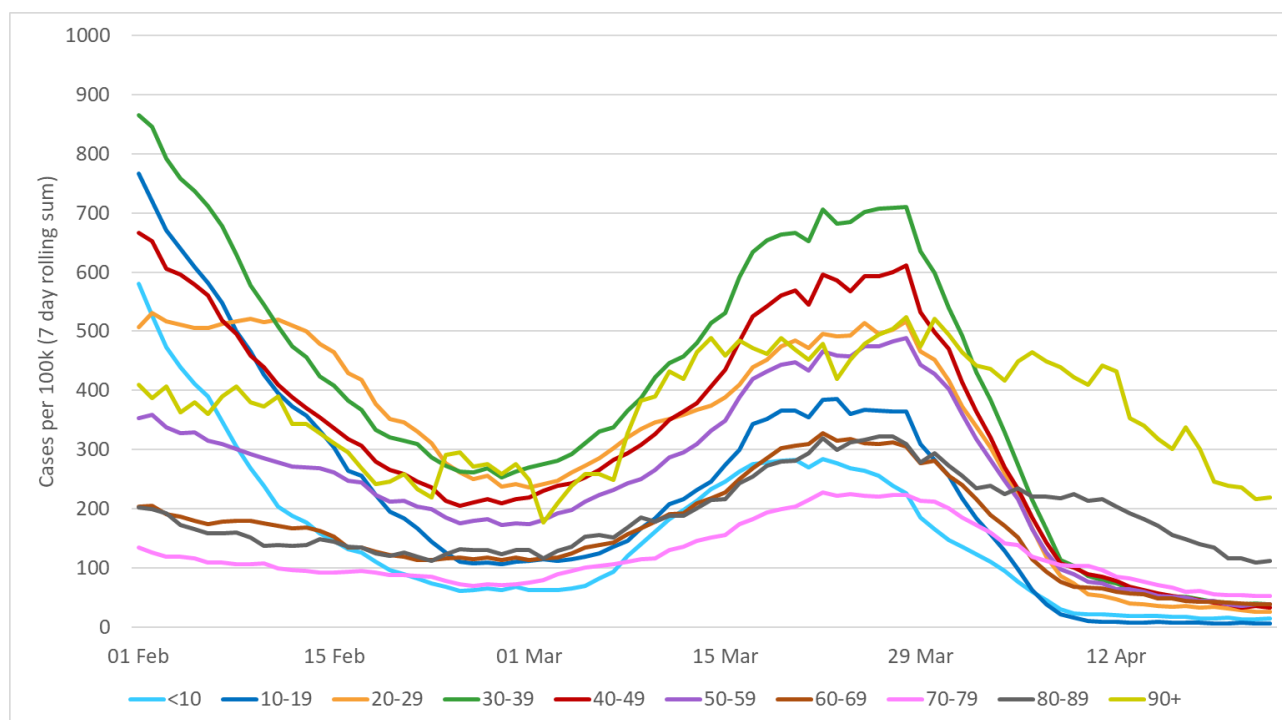


Figure 4: Confirmed cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 population in the previous 7 days, by sample date and age



NHS and Social Care

NHS Wales

The number of beds occupied with COVID-19 related patients (confirmed, suspected and recovering) fluctuates. Hospital admissions continue to decrease, from a peak in early April. However, due to the recent change in testing policy in healthcare settings, the reliability of data will be impacted.

As at 25 April 2022, the number of COVID-19 related patients in hospital beds (confirmed, suspected and recovering) is 1,357; (9%) lower than the same day last week. Of these, 667 are confirmed COVID-19 patients; 181 (21%) lower than the same day last week.

The total number of occupied beds in a critical care environment is 167; 1 higher than the same day last week and 15 higher than the pre-COVID-19 baseline of 152 critical care beds. Of these, 22 are COVID-19 related patients in critical care, 8 lower than the same day last week. Note - this does not include patients from community hospitals, field hospitals and mental health units, and patients in Velindre NHS Trust.

Social Care

To 13 April 2022, 150 adult care homes in Wales have notified Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) of one or more confirmed cases of COVID-19, in staff or residents, in the last 7 days, with 319 notified in the last 20 days. There are 1,032 adult care homes and 17 adult and child care homes in Wales.

CIW have been notified of 14,369 deaths of residents in adult care homes since 1 March 2020. This covers deaths from all causes, not just COVID-19. 66.9% of total deaths from 1 March 2020 were for residents in care homes with nursing. CIW has been notified of 2,171 care home resident deaths with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 since 1 March 2020. This makes up 14.8% of all adult care home resident reported deaths during this period. In the last two weeks, there has been 21 reported deaths of care home residents relating to suspected or confirmed COVID-19.

Figure 5: StatsWales Hospital bed occupancy of suspected and confirmed COVID-19 positive patients (7 day rolling average)

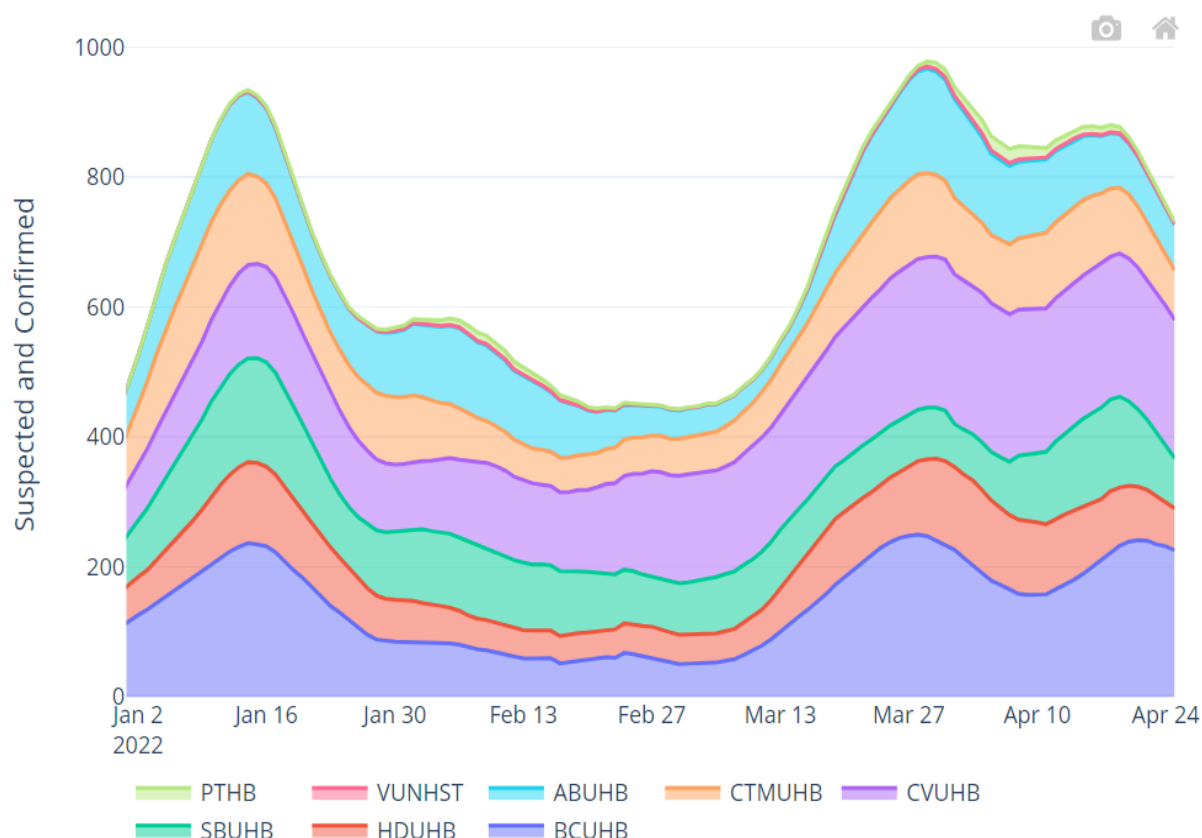


Figure 6: Stats Wales Invasive ventilated bed occupancy of suspected and confirmed COVID-19 positive patients (7 day rolling average)

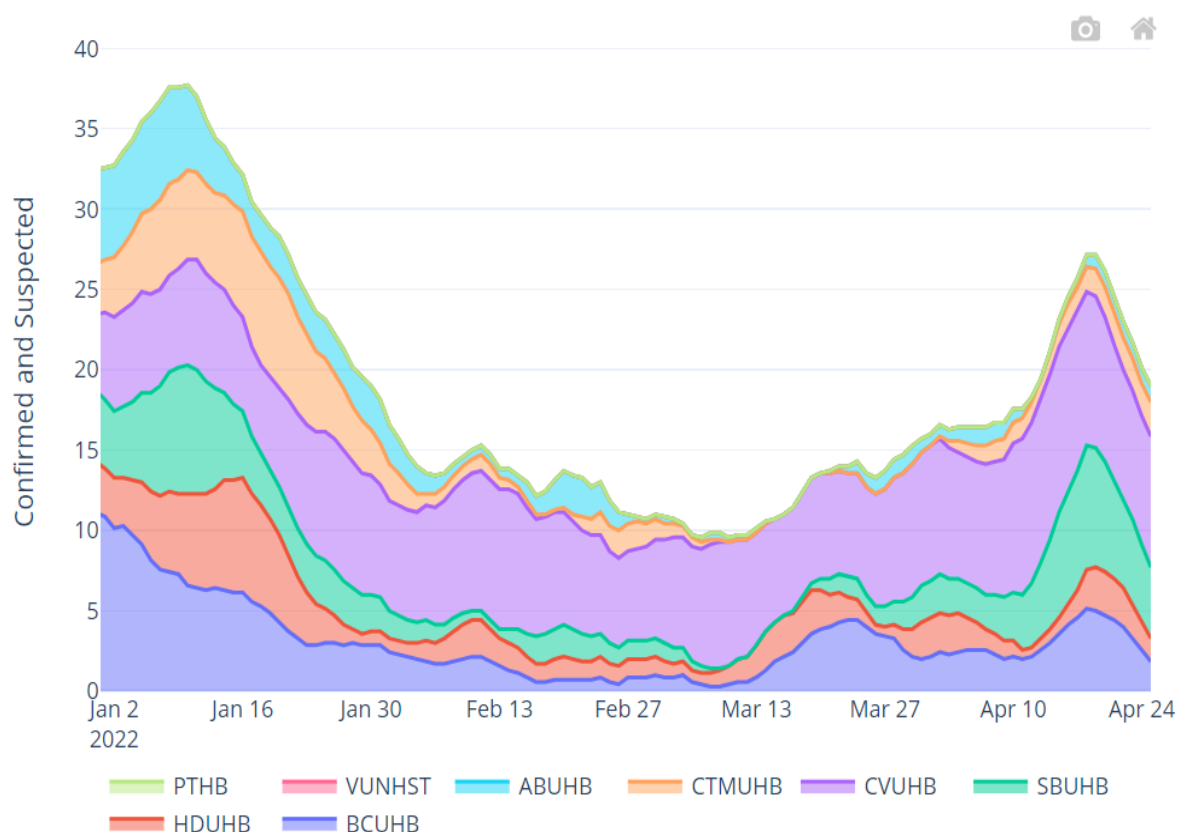
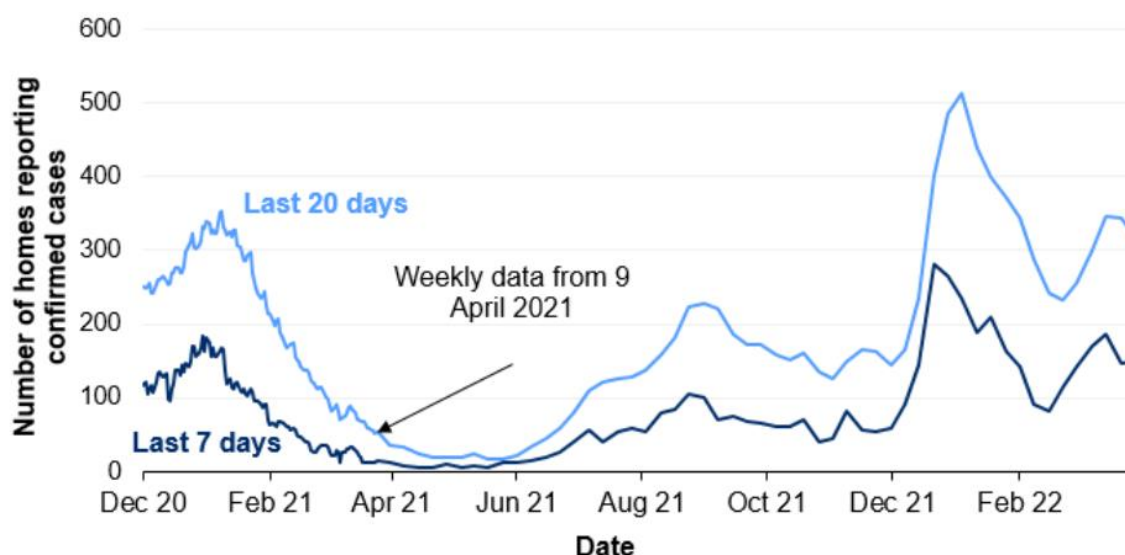
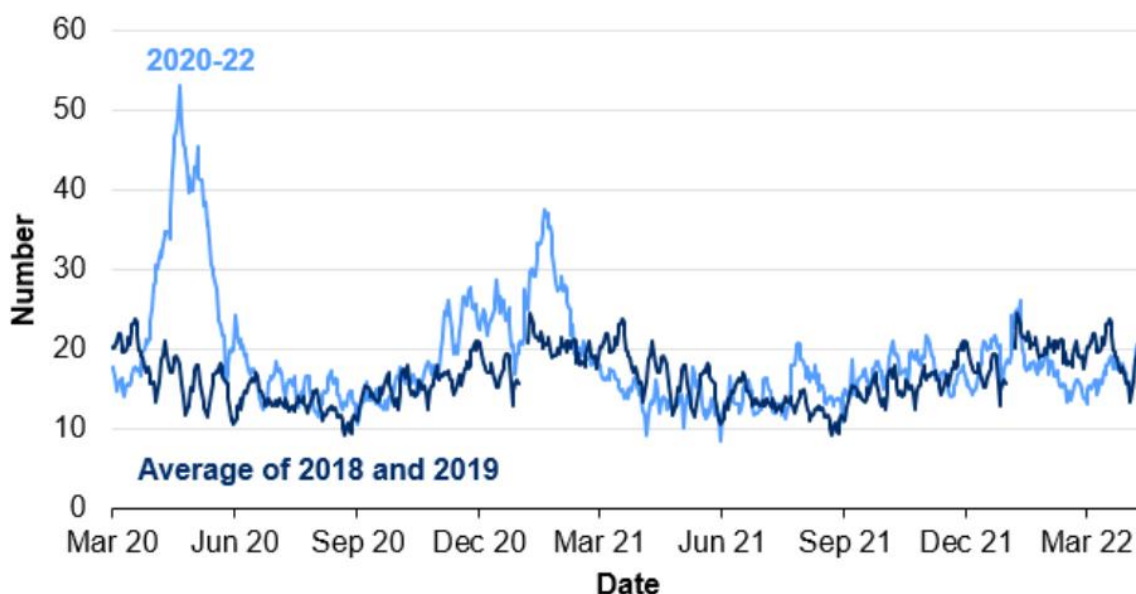


Figure 7: Number of adult care homes which have notified CIW of one or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the past 7 or 20 days, up to 13 April 2022



Source: Notifications of Cases received by Care Inspectorate Wales

Figure 8: Deaths notified to CIW of care home residents by cause of deaths and day of notification (7 day rolling average), up to 13 April 2022



Source: Notifications of Service User Deaths received by Care Inspectorate Wales

Variants, Vaccination and Immunity Status

Variant Surveillance reporting, PHW:

As at 19 April PHW have reported in the most recent weekly period:

- Omicron (NEC) accounted for 100% of all variant cases
- VOC-22JAN-01 (Omicron, BA.2) accounted for 0% of all variant cases
- VOC-21NOV-01 (Omicron, BA.1) accounted for 0% of all variant cases

The current dominant variant in Wales is VOC-22JAN-01 (Omicron, BA.2) which accounted for 97.77% of sequenced cases in the last 14 days. To date there have been 56,196 cases of VOC-21NOV-01 (Omicron, BA.1) and 24,884 cases of VOC-22JAN-01 (Omicron, BA.2)

In the reporting week 2022 W15 there were 0 Critical Care Admission (CCA) cases. Please note, not all CCA cases are sequenced or genotyped.

As a result of the emergence of two Omicron subvariants, the genotyped cases have been separated out into their own category called "Omicron (NEC)" (NEC = not elsewhere classified). This category is likely to have negative weekly changes as genotyped cases are retrospectively confirmed as a specific lineage and moved into their respective categories. NEC also includes sequenced cases defined as another lineage (e.g. BA.3), or private lab cases where PHW do not have enough information to further classify the case.

Vaccination:

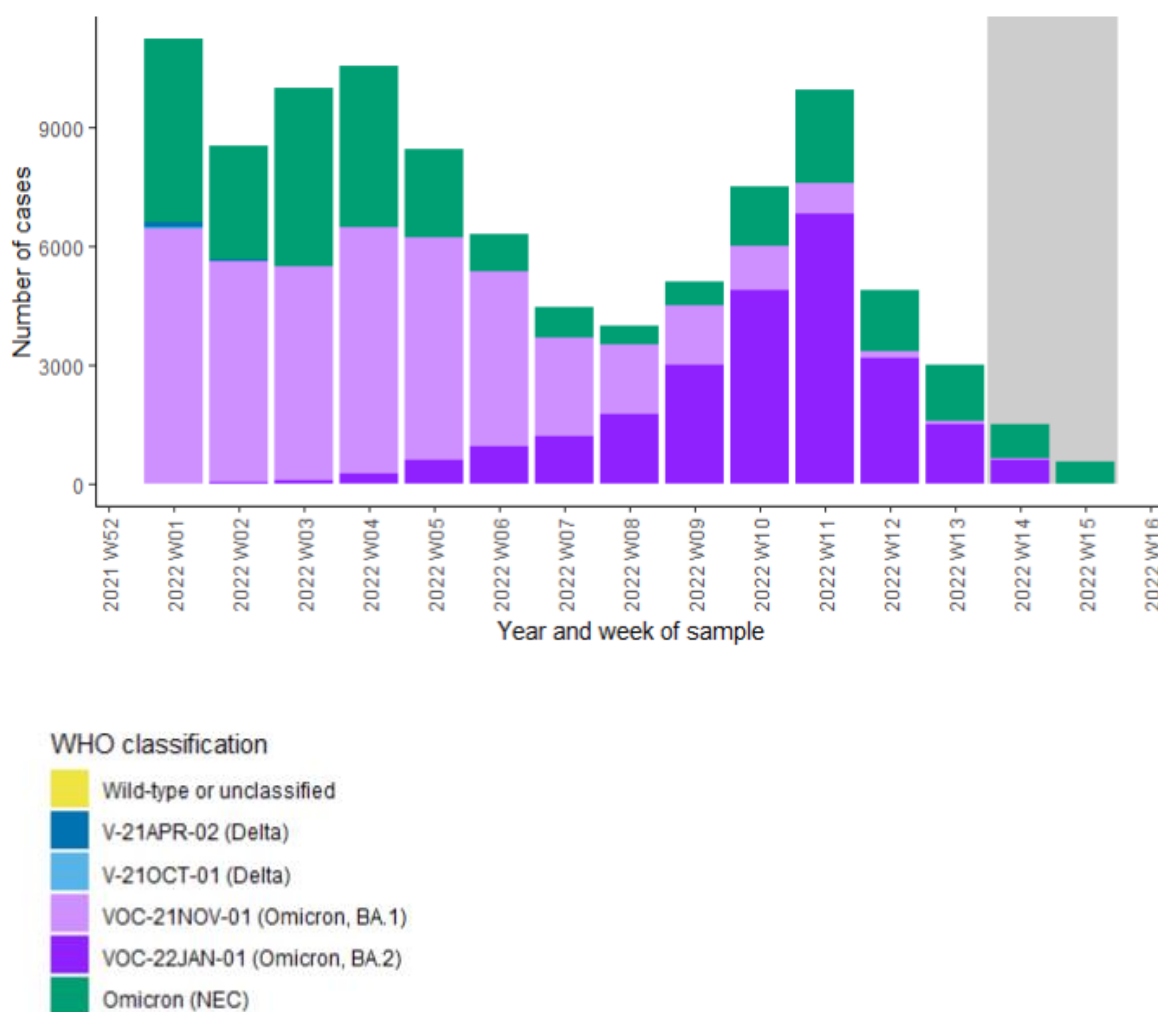
The COVID-19 vaccination rollout has slowed in Wales. As at 23 April 2022, 92% of people aged 12 and over had received at least one COVID-19 vaccine in Wales. Of people aged 12 and over, 4% had exactly one vaccine dose, 14% had exactly two doses, and 74% have also had a third dose or booster, so 88% have had at least 2 doses.

In the week beginning 28 March 2022, the ONS COVID-19 Infection Survey estimated that 98.8% of the community population aged 16 and over in Wales had antibodies against SARS-CoV-2 above a [threshold](#) of 179 nanograms per millilitre (ng/ml).

Population Immunity:

As at 23 April 2022, it is estimated that 72% of people aged 12 and over in Wales had some immunity against COVID-19 infection from the Omicron variant. The lower and higher estimates of immunity are 56% and 88% of people aged 12 and over in Wales. Note that this assumes that immunity from vaccine and infection wanes after 9 months.

Figure 9: PHW, Epicurve of variant cases in recent weeks in Wales, data as at 5 April



Please note data in the grey shaded region should be interpreted with caution as this is indicative of a lag in sequencing data.

Figure 10: Vaccination status of individuals aged 12+

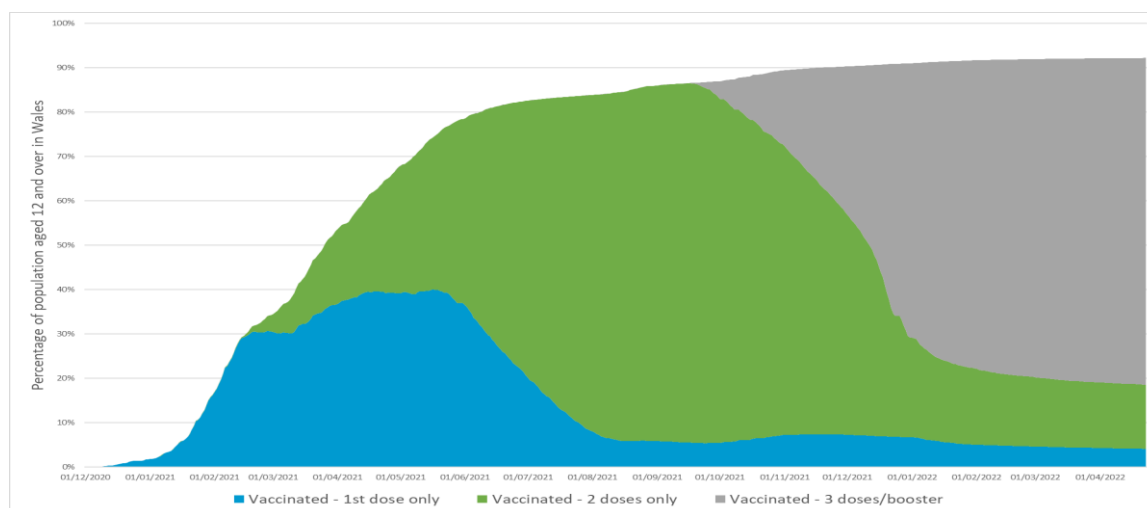
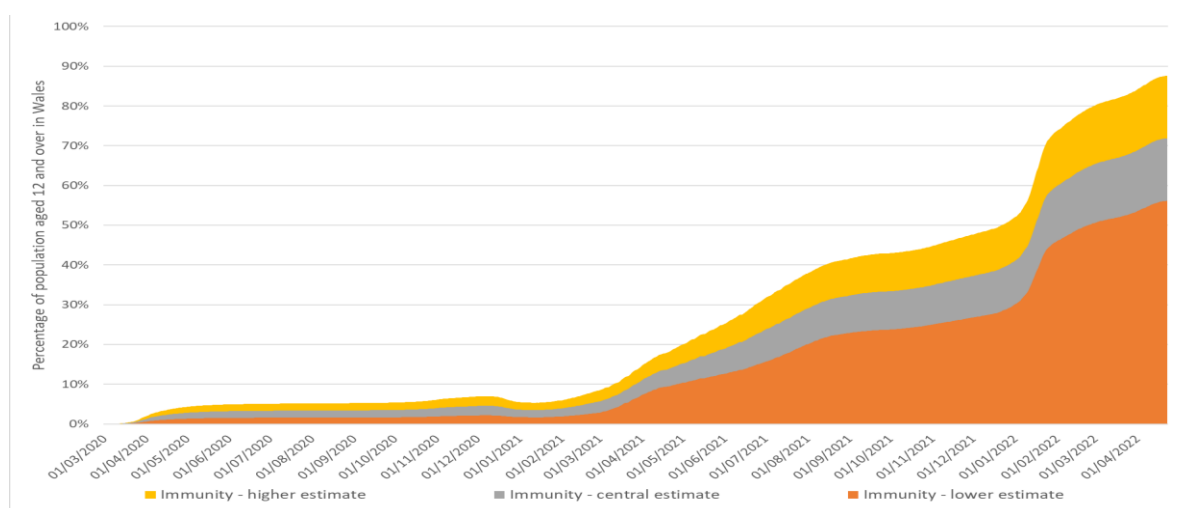


Figure 11: Immunity estimates and antibody status of individuals aged 12+



Forward Projections

*These Medium Term Projections (MTPs) are based on current trends and represent a scenario in which the trajectory of the epidemic continues to follow the trends that were seen in the data available to 22nd April. **They are not forecasts or predictions.***

Swansea University Medium term Projections – 22 April

Although hospital bed occupancy is currently higher than in January 2022, the most recent MTPs from Swansea University suggest that we are at the peak of healthcare pressures and project a decline in hospital bed occupancy and ICU occupancy over the next several weeks.

Current pressures in ICU and deaths are much lower than at the peak of previous waves, however deaths are projected to increase slightly to a peak at the start of May before declining.

The most recent data from ONS estimates that prevalence (percentage testing positive for COVID-19) in Wales is decreasing. The MTPs also estimate that prevalence is declining and will continue to do so over the next few weeks, although the joint model fitting to all the data causes the magnitude of MTP-estimated prevalence to be lower than ONS-estimated prevalence.

These scenarios are recalibrated every week depending on what has happened the week before; during the last week there has been a slight increase in occupancy compared to what the previous MTPs projected, so this week's MTPs are peaking at slightly higher values than last week and the start date for the projected decline has been delayed a few days.

UKHSA Combined Model Projections – 22 April

UKHSA's consensus view is that the number of hospitalisations per day in Wales will decrease over the next three weeks.

UKHSA's models project the number of deaths in Wales will remain low over the next three weeks. The number of deaths in both nations is currently too small for projections to be reliable.

Figure 12: SPI-M, New hospital admissions per day, based on trends to 14 March 2022

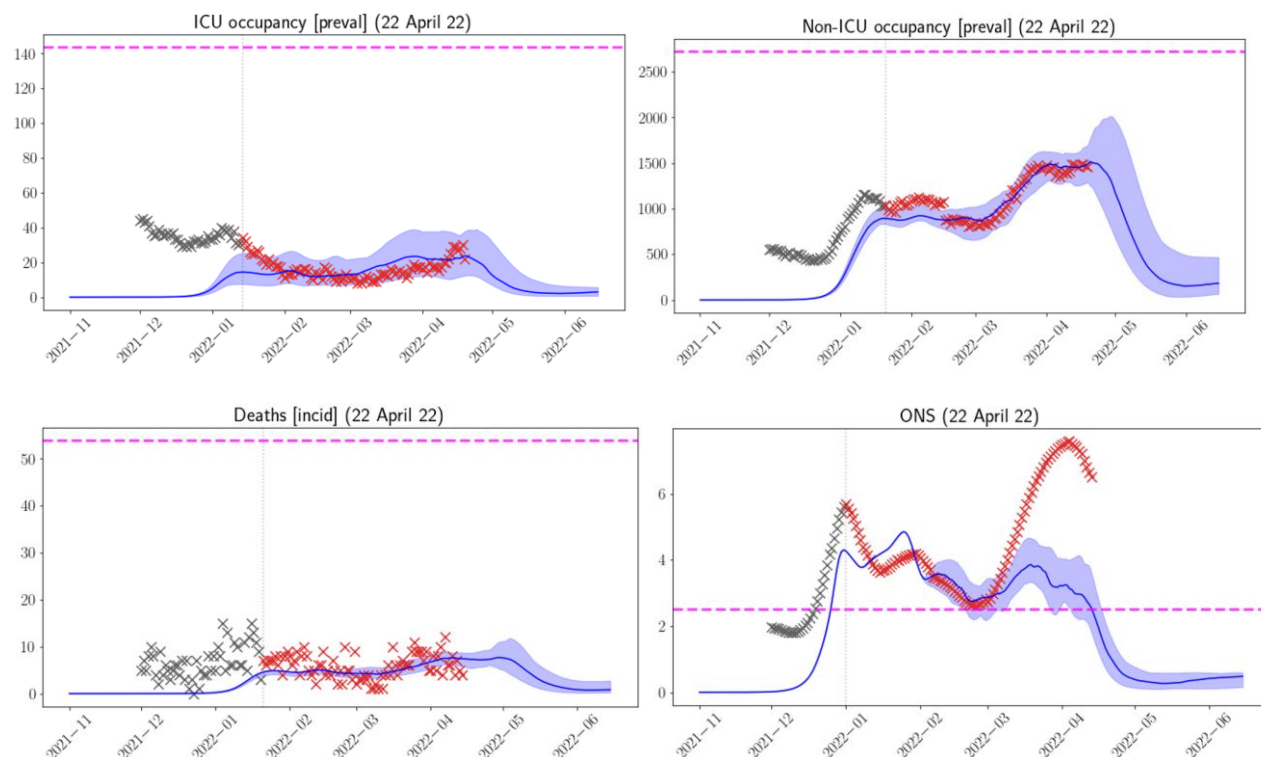


Figure 13: SPI-M, New hospital admissions per day, based on trends to 22 April 2022

