Latest numbers on COVID-19 in the UK – 26 November 2021

1. Vaccinations
2. Cases
3. Hospitalisation and Death
4. Europe
5. Variants

With many thanks to Bob Hawkins for his help in collating the data.
Vaccination data
Thanks to Bob Hawkins for the chart

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Percent of Total Population Unvaccinated (no dose given), Partially Vaccinated (1 dose), Fully Vaccinated (2 doses) and Booster (3 Doses) as at 24 Nov
(Source: Covid Daily Update and Mid-2020 ONS Population Estimates)
Proportion of First, Second, and Booster Doses given by age group in England as at 24 Nov

Data from https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk
Chart by Bob Hawkins
Booster Dose coverage by Deprivation for Over 50’s in England as at Nov 21
(Source: PHE Weekly Vaccination Reports, Tom Forth IMD Data, and Mid-2020 ONS Population Estimates)

Cases
Number of new UK confirmed COVID-19 cases by reported date (people who have had a positive test) to 25 November 2021

Data from https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk
Cases per 100,000 people per rolling week by home nation by date of test to 20 November

Data from https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk
Cases per 100,000 people per rolling week by home nation by date of test to 20 November

Data from https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk
Positivity Rate for Home Nations
Comparison of week ending Nov 20 to prior week

Data from:
Scotland: https://www.opendata.nhs.scot/dataset/covid-19-in-Scotland

Visualisation courtesy of Bob Hawkins
ONS infection survey now has highest prevalence in children under 11. Lowest (by far) in over 70s.

Data from https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/
Hospitalisation and deaths
Number of people in hospital per million people – UK nations
7 day rolling average to 25 November

Data from https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk.
Number of hospital admissions with Covid every day in England to 23 Nov

Data from https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/covid-19-hospital-activity/
7-day average of Covid hospital admissions in England since May 2021 for adults

Data from https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/
Number of deaths within 28 days of +ve COVID test reported per day across the UK to 28 October

Data from https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/

Deaths are going down – this is most likely a booster effect and very welcome.
Europe
Covid surges across Western Europe

Chart from [https://www.travellingtabby.com/uk-coronavirus-tracker/](https://www.travellingtabby.com/uk-coronavirus-tracker/)
Similarly sized EU countries: rolling cases per week per 100,000 people

- UK
- Germany
- France
- Italy
- Spain
Similarly sized EU countries: rolling cases per week per 100,000 people
Similarly sized EU countries: rolling deaths per week per million people

Deaths since 1 July 2021

- DEU cases
- ESP cases
- FRA cases
- ITA cases
- UK cases
Number of deaths within 28 days of +ve COVID test reported per day across the UK to 28 October

Number of Deaths

Over 45,000 hospital admissions since 1 July in over 60s in England.

Over 6,000 deaths in over 60s in England.

Over 3,000 in 60+ in Oct

24,000 hospital admissions in 18-64 year olds in July & Aug – how many waiting for 2nd vax?

Data from https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/
Variants
Rapid case growth in Gauteng (includes Johannesburg) in South Africa

Charts from Ministry of Health briefing: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vh4XMueP1zQ&t=2999s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vh4XMueP1zQ&t=2999s)

NOTE: variant has been detected and tracked in S Africa – no indication that it arose there!
New variant B.1.1.529 identified this week.

B.1.1.529 genomes detected in GP

Sequences from KZN due today or tomorrow. PCR proxy for variant in most other provinces.

Charts from Ministry of Health briefing: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vh4XMueP1zQ&t=2999s
New variant B.1.1.529 identified this week. Like Alpha last year, can track it using “S Gene” drop out

- Variant can be detected with one particular PCR assay (before whole genome sequencing)
- New increase in S-gene dropout noted by NHLS and private labs very recently - from mid-November
- Now rapidly increasing in most provinces

Charts from Ministry of Health briefing: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vh4XMueP1zQ&t=2999s
New variant B.1.1.529 identified this week. Like Alpha last year, can track it using “S Gene” drop out.

S gene target failure by province

- Rapid increase in proportion with SGTF noted across multiple provinces (caution low number of tests in most provinces)

- 77 samples with SGTF sequenced from Gauteng (samples collected 12-20 Nov) – 77/77 (100%) were B.1.1.529

- Hundreds of recently collected samples being sequenced currently by NGS-SA labs – results available by end of week (today we received 70 samples from Gauteng 67/70 were SGTF and sequencing tonight, in KZN approximately 20%).

Charts from Ministry of Health briefing: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vh4XMueP1zQ&t=2999s
New variant B.1.1.529 identified this week. Spreading very fast so far (but *very early days and increased testing*)

Cases in SA: Tues 868, Weds 1,275, Thurs 2,645

https://twitter.com/jburnmurdoch/status/1463956686075558042?s=20
New variant B.1.1.529 identified this week. It has a LOT of potentially worrying mutations.

**B.1.1.529 – potential impact of mutations**

- Multiple RBD and NTD mutations associated with **resistance to neutralizing antibodies** (and therapeutic monoclonal antibodies)
- Cluster of mutations (H655Y + N679K + P681H) adjacent to S1/S2 furin cleavage site – associated with more efficient cell entry ➔ enhanced transmissibility
- nsp6 deletion (Δ105-107) – similar to deletion to Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Lambda – may be associated with **evasion of innate immunity (interferon antagonism)** ➔ could also enhance transmissibility
- R203K+G204R mutations in nucleocapsid - seen in Alpha, Gamma, Lambda – associated with **increased infectivity**

Charts from Ministry of Health briefing: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vh4XMueP1zQ&t=2999s
South Africa added to red list as UK brings in urgent travel restrictions to block ‘worst ever’ Covid variant

Flights from South Africa and five more countries – Botswana, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Eswatini – will be temporarily banned from noon on Friday and all UK travellers will be asked to quarantine in a government-run hotel.

The @EU_Commission will propose, in close coordination with Member States, to activate the emergency brake to stop air travel from the southern African region due to the variant of concern B.1.1.529.

Charts from Ministry of Health briefing: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vh4XMueP1zQ&t=2999s
But

And Belgian health authorities now saying they have two suspected cases of B.1.1.529. Any bets on when first UK case will crop up? Within 12 or within 24 hours?

Israel has identified four cases of the B.1.1.529 variant, all recent travellers. One case, a 32-year-old woman returning from South Africa, was triple vaccinated with Pfizer and had her 3rd dose just two months ago.

11:15 AM · Nov 26, 2021 · TweetDeck

Charts from Ministry of Health briefing: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vh4XMueP1zQ&t=2999s
South Africa has done the world a great service

The UK and other countries should offer support in research and containing the new variant, whether that be financial, personnel, logistics or something else.

We should also offer financial support to travellers hit by the red list, if their travel is necessary (e.g. compassionate family visits, taking up a new job etc).

We should go back to requiring PCR tests for all returning travellers (regardless of origin) to make sure we can track this variant.

This situation also highlights continued need for global vaccine equity to reduce chance of new variants arising, particularly since many countries with poor vaccine access also have few resources for sequencing and variant tracking.
• Cases rising in children, fastest in 5-9 year olds. EMA has just approved Pfizer vaccine for 5-11 year olds. No word on whether MHRA is even considering it.

• Cases and admissions are falling in the over 60s – likely due to the good uptake of booster jabs in these age groups. We should see cases and admissions in the over 60s continue to fall over the coming weeks.

• Many European countries are in difficult situations. While the UK is unlikely to see a big surge, we have been at very high levels for five months now – with a lot of avoidable illness and death. Countries on the continent are acting to contain spread – many at lower case rates than UK is experiencing.

• The new B.1.1.529 variant detected in South Africa (and a handful of other countries) is potentially very concerning. We welcome the UK’s precautionary approach, which should be combined with other measures to reduce transmission, and urge our government to support South Africa in its response to this variant.