



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

STATISTICS

# NHS activity and capacity during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic: 24 September 2020

Data on coronavirus and NHS activity and capacity up to 23 September 2020.

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## 1. National headline figures

In response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, daily information on health care has been produced to support transparency and understanding of the NHS activity and capacity. The release includes figures on invasive ventilated beds by use, admissions and hospitalisation of COVID-19 related patients, and attendances to Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments.

Accompanying tables for this release are available, including all the data shown below and also data concerning general and acute beds, 111 and NHS Direct calls, NHS staff absence, and emergency ambulance calls.

The data are taken from management information and are subject to change. They have not been subject to the same validation processes undertaken for official statistics releases. Where available, the official statistics should continue to be considered the authoritative source of data. Please see the [Chief Statistician's blog](#) for more information on reporting management information, data quality and transparency.

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## Main points

- As at 22 September 2020, 18 invasive ventilated beds were occupied with COVID-19 related patients (confirmed, suspected and recovering), compared to 164 at the peak in April.
- The total number of beds with COVID-19 related patients (confirmed, suspected and recovering) continues to decrease. As at 22 September, 343 beds were occupied with COVID-19 related patients representing 4% of all hospitalisations, compared to 1,347 representing 29% at the peak in April.
- The number of new daily admissions with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 fluctuates, but has fallen since early May. In the last 7 days, an average of 45 people a day were admitted to hospitals as confirmed or suspected with COVID-19.

## 2. Hospital activity and capacity

This section covers the number of admissions and hospitalisations of COVID-19 related patients and invasive ventilated beds occupied with COVID-19 related patients, to support transparency and provide an understanding of NHS activity and capacity during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Following further validation, data prior to 1 April 2020 were decided to not be suitable for publication. Therefore, the time series begins on 1 April 2020.

From 10 July, figures include data for acute hospitals, field hospitals, community hospitals and mental health units. Hospital coverage has changed over time - please see the quality and methodology information section for more information.

Please see the [UK Government COVID-19 dashboard](#) for information on healthcare at a UK level. Note: the healthcare data presented in the UK dashboard differ from this publication. The UK dashboard includes data for acute hospitals only to enable better comparability with other countries, whereas this publication includes data from acute, community, field health hospitals and mental health units to provide a more comprehensive view of the system in

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Wales. Estimates of the number of people who had coronavirus in England and Wales is also published by the Office for National Statistics in their [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Infection Survey](#).

Please note that health care surveillance data presented in the [Public Health Wales dashboard](#) differ from this publication. The PHW dashboard uses data systematically collected through ICNET, the hospital infection control data system used across Wales. It includes hospital in-patients with a laboratory confirmed result and does not count any patients who were admitted and discharged on the same day.

The Welsh Government publication uses data sourced from daily management information provided by health boards. Guidance was issued to local health boards for completion and submission of the data return. However, data collection methods may vary between health boards. It includes COVID-19 related patients as suspected, confirmed and recovering, as well as non-COVID-19 patients.

The narrower definition used by PHW will likely result in smaller numbers of reported COVID-related admissions compared to the Welsh Government publication, but provides a systematic way of carrying out surveillance of patients requiring hospital stays with confirmed COVID-19.

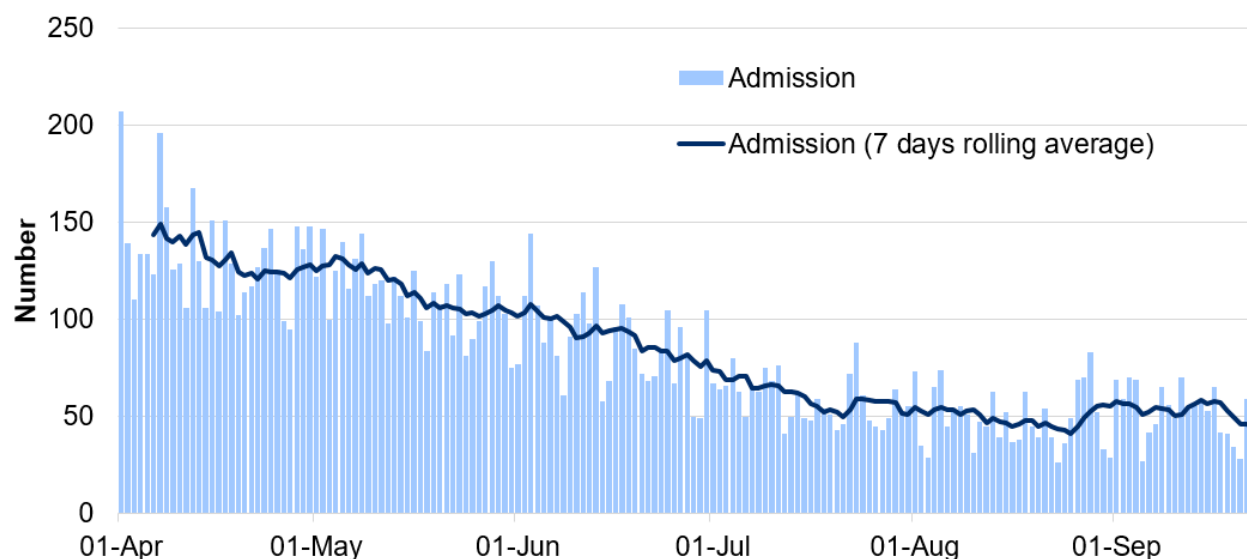
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# Hospital admissions

**Chart 1: Patients admitted to hospital as suspected or confirmed with COVID-19, from 1 April 2020**



Source: NHS Wales Informatics Service

## Patients admitted to hospital as suspected or confirmed with COVID-19, from 1 April 2020 (MS Excel)

Admissions are the number of patients admitted to hospital between 9am on the update date and 9am the day before. COVID-19 related admissions include COVID-19 suspected or confirmed patients.

The health minister announced on 13 March that all non-urgent activity should stop to prepare for the pandemic. Following the re-introduction of elective procedures from June 2020, patients admitted for elective procedures suspected of having COVID-19 were initially captured in COVID-19 related admissions, even if they received a negative test later. This inflated the numbers of suspected cases in hospital at the time of reporting. From 29 June, patients admitted for elective procedures were only included in COVID-19 related admissions if they received a positive COVID-19 test result on arrival at the hospital.

From 29 June, the guidance also changed to explicitly ask health boards to exclude transfers between acute and community hospitals from admissions

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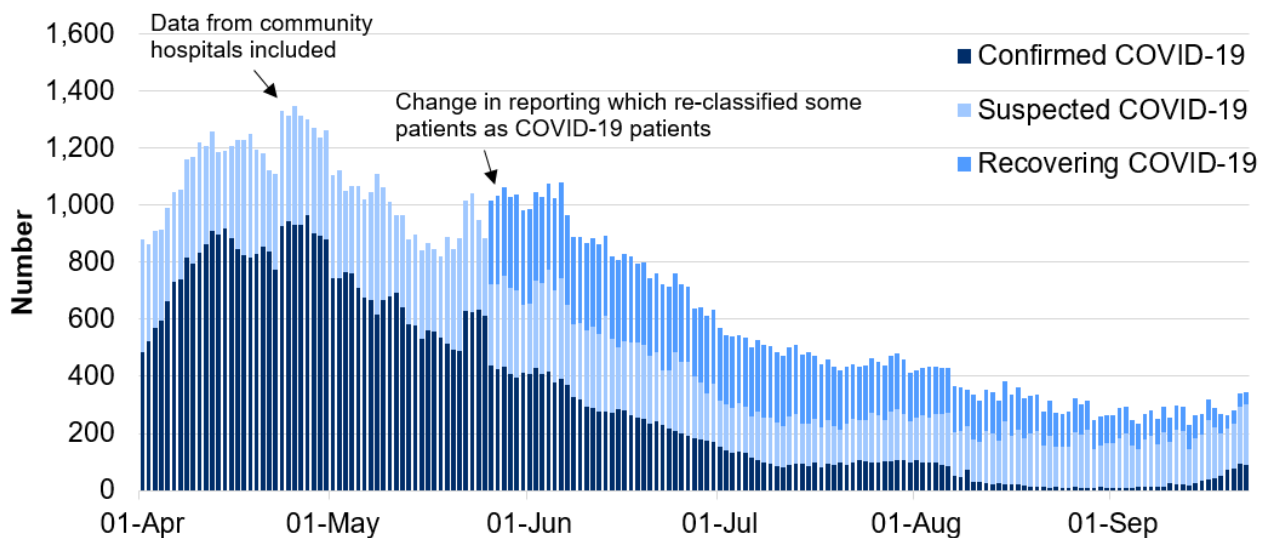
figures. Prior to this, some transfers may have been captured as new admissions.

As at 22 September 2020:

- there has been an overall decline in admissions, although there is a lot of volatility in the daily numbers. In recent days, the 7 days rolling average has remained broadly stable following a small increase at the end of August
- in the last 7 days, an average of 45 people a day were admitted to hospital as confirmed or suspected with COVID-19

## Hospitalisations

**Chart 2: Number of people in hospital as suspected, confirmed or recovering with COVID-19, from 1 April 2020**



Source: NHS Wales Informatics Service

### **Number of people in hospital as suspected, confirmed or recovering with COVID-19, from 1 April 2020 (MS Excel)**

Recovering patients was a category introduced on 26 May to capture patients who were COVID-19 positive in hospital and who showed no symptoms for 14+ days but remained in hospital on a COVID-19 treatment pathway, often for rehabilitation. There have been some differences in reporting by health boards in

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the time series which are outlined in more detail in the Quality and methodology information section.

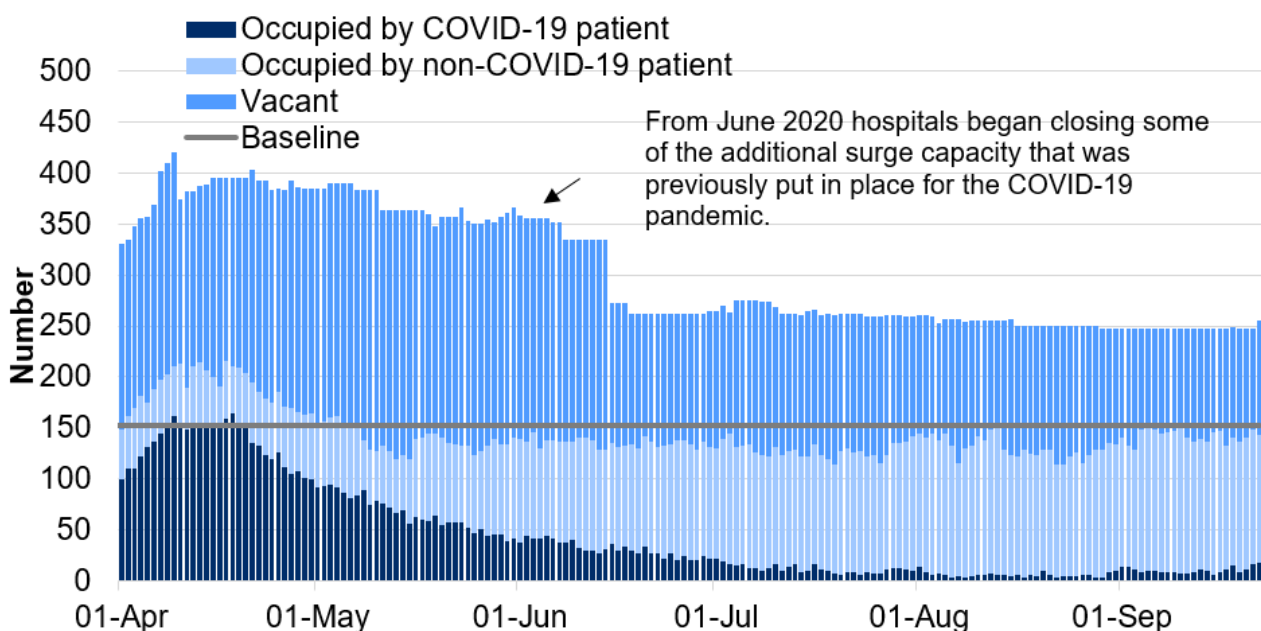
Please see the [Chief Statistician's blog](#) for more information on reporting on recovering patients.

As at 22 September 2020:

- the number of COVID-19 related patients (confirmed, suspected and recovering) in hospital has fallen since the peak in April
- 343 beds were occupied with COVID-19 related patients representing 4% of all hospitalisations. This compares to the peak in April where 1,347 beds were occupied with COVID-19 related patients (29% of all hospitalisations)
- 89 beds were occupied with confirmed COVID-19 patients, 211 with suspected COVID-19 patients and 43 with recovering COVID-19 patients

## Invasive ventilated beds

**Chart 3: Number of invasive ventilated beds by use, from 1 April 2020**



Source: NHS Wales Informatics Service

[Number of invasive ventilated beds by use, from 1 April 2020 \(MS Excel\)](#)

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Baseline relates to the number of beds that were available prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. There are usually 152 critical care beds available. Invasive ventilated beds include beds in and outside a critical care setting, and include surge capacity. COVID-19 patients in this chart include suspected, confirmed, and recovering COVID-19 patients.

From June 2020, hospitals began closing some of the additional surge capacity that was previously put in place for the COVID-19 pandemic.

As at 22 September 2020:

- the number of invasive ventilated beds occupied by COVID-19 related patients (confirmed, suspected and recovering) has decreased since a peak in April, and has remained relatively stable since July
- 18 invasive ventilated beds were occupied with COVID-19 related patients, compared to 164 at the peak in April

### 3. A&E attendances

This section covers daily information on attendances to Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments in Wales, to further support transparency and provide an understanding of NHS activity and capacity during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The data are taken from management information and are subject to change. The latest data have not been subject to the same validation processes undertaken for official statistics releases. The **official statistics** should continue to be considered the authoritative source of data.

Please see the **Chief Statistician's blog** for more information on reporting management information, data quality and transparency.

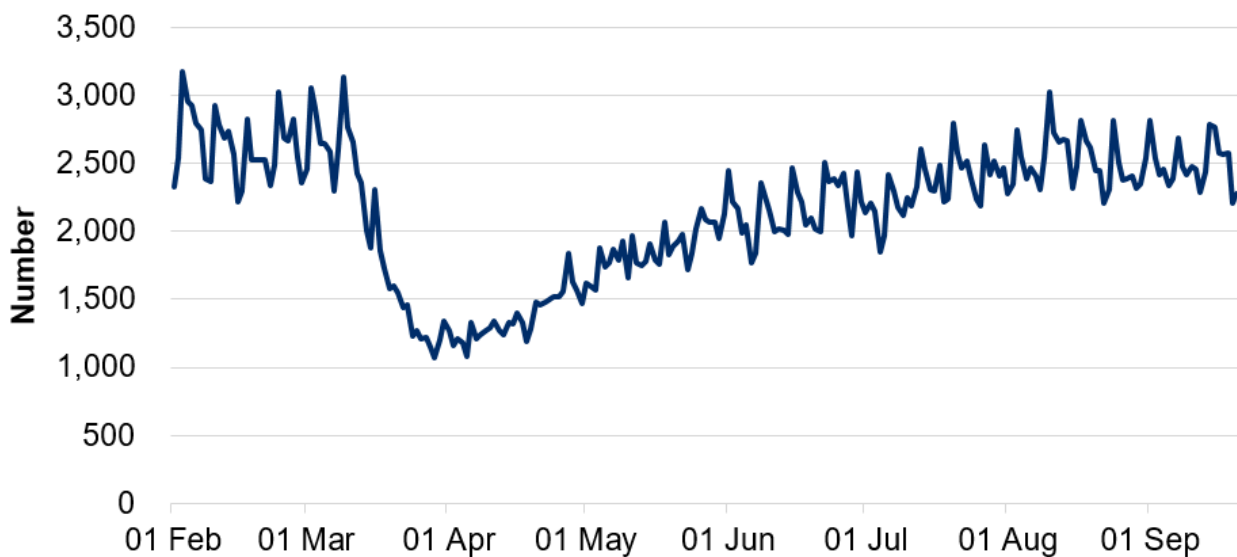
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**Chart 4: Number of daily A&E attendances to major and minor hospitals, from 1 February 2020**



Source: NHS Wales Informatics Service (NWIS)

**Number of daily A&E attendances to major and minor hospitals, from 1 February 2020 (MS Excel)**

A&E attendances to major and minor hospitals, from all mode of transports across Wales.

Some small minor A&E units are not able to submit daily data, therefore there is probably a small undercount in total attendance.

A&E attendances fell sharply from mid-March to around half the previous number. Attendances have increased gradually from early April, returning to pre-pandemic levels since August.

## 4. Quality and methodology information

The data are taken from management information and are subject to change. They have not been subject to the same validation processes undertaken for official statistics releases. However, they are provided to support transparency and understanding of NHS activity at this time. The official statistics should

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continue to be considered the authoritative source of data.

Historic data are subject to revisions and therefore may differ slightly to previously published information.

## Hospital activity and capacity

Figures on hospital and activity include data from acute hospitals from 1 April 2020, field hospitals from 20 April 2020, community hospitals from 23 April 2020, mental health units from 10 July, and exclude data from private hospitals.

Data from mental health units were included retroactively from 10 July for the first time in the release on 20 August 2020. The inclusion of mental health beds had a small impact on beds occupied with COVID-19 patients' figures but a large impact on all beds occupied with non-COVID19 patients and vacant beds, as the majority of mental health patients are not COVID-19 patients. Mental health units data are submitted each Friday, and the Friday position is used as proxy for the following week, unless there is a major change in circumstances.

On reporting recovering patients, Aneurin Bevan started reporting recovering patients from 7 June, but these were captured in the confirmed COVID-19 category before. Cardiff and Vale classified recovering patients as non-COVID-19 patients between 1 May and 22 May. Following the change in guidance, Cardiff and Vale re-categorised these patients as COVID-19 patients, capturing them in the confirmed COVID-19 category until the recovering category was introduced on 26 May.

## National Statistics status

These statistics are not National Statistics. However, as far as has been practicable, they have been collected and validated in accordance with the pillars and principles within the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#). We continue to develop the data collection and quality assurance process to improve the data.

These statistics have been produced quickly in response to developing world

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events.

## Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. The Act puts in place seven wellbeing goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators (“national indicators”) that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the wellbeing goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before the National Assembly. The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016.

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the wellbeing goals and associated technical information is available in the [Well-being of Wales report](#).

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local well-being assessments and local wellbeing plans.

## 5. Contact details

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Media: 0300 025 8099

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