

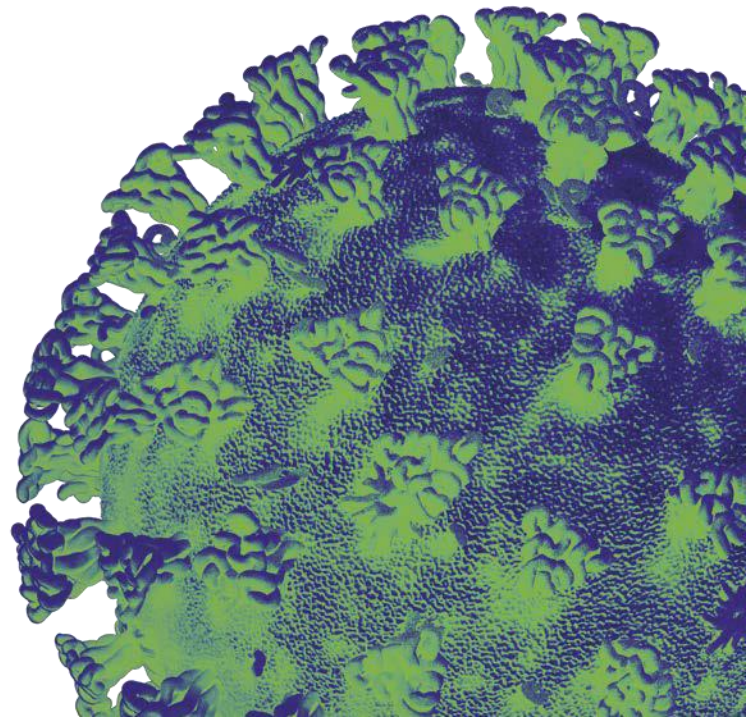
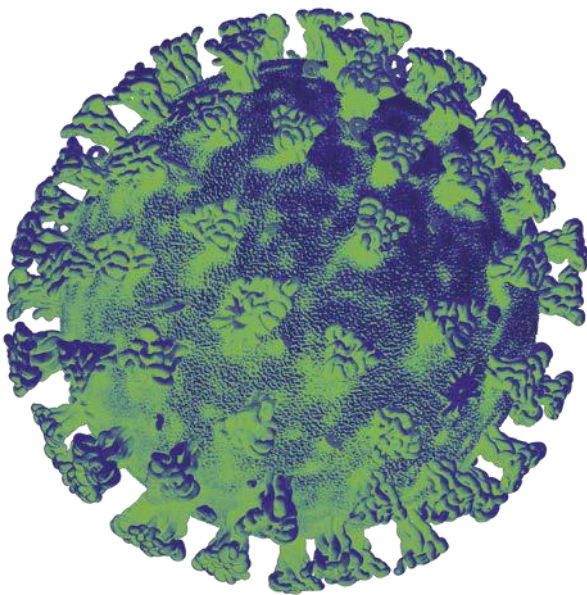
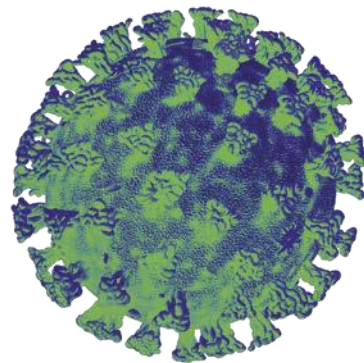


Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

# Technical Advisory Cell

## Summary of advice

21<sup>st</sup> August 2020



# Technical Advisory Cell: Summary Brief

21<sup>st</sup> August 2020

## Top-line summary

- The current growth rate is estimated to be between -0.06 and -0.01 meaning that infections could be shrinking by one to six percent a day. Care should be taken when interpreting the growth rate and reproduction number of Wales. This is because these estimates are based on low case numbers and dominated by clustered outbreaks and are not sufficiently robust to inform policy decisions.
- For the week 07 August to 13 August, an average of 0.04% of the community population in Wales had COVID-19 (95% credible interval: 0.01% to 0.10%). The estimate of 0.04% is largely unchanged from the previous week. There will be considerable uncertainty in this estimate until the sample size increases over further weeks.

## Growth Rate

- The current growth rate is estimated to be between -0.06 and -0.01. There is significant uncertainty around the actual growth rate; infections could be shrinking by one to six percent a day.
- Care should be taken when interpreting the growth rate and reproduction number of Wales. This is because these estimates are based on low case numbers and dominated by clustered outbreaks and are not sufficiently robust to inform policy decisions.

## Reproduction number

- The most recent estimate of the Reproduction number  $R_t$  for Wales from SAGE is predicted to be between 0.70 and 1.0. Due to the low number of cases, the estimate of  $R_t$  is now given as a 90% confidence interval without a central estimate. The large confidence interval suggests a high degree of uncertainty of the exact value of  $R_t$ .
- A consistent  $R_t$  value below 1 will lead to a reduction in cases and hospitalisations, however a consistent  $R_t$  value above 1 will lead to an increase in cases and hospitalisations. As the number of cases falls, the impact of over-dispersion events may increase where instances of the virus being spread to

several people in a short space of time may lead to fluctuations in the number of cases.

### **Current Estimate of $R_t$**

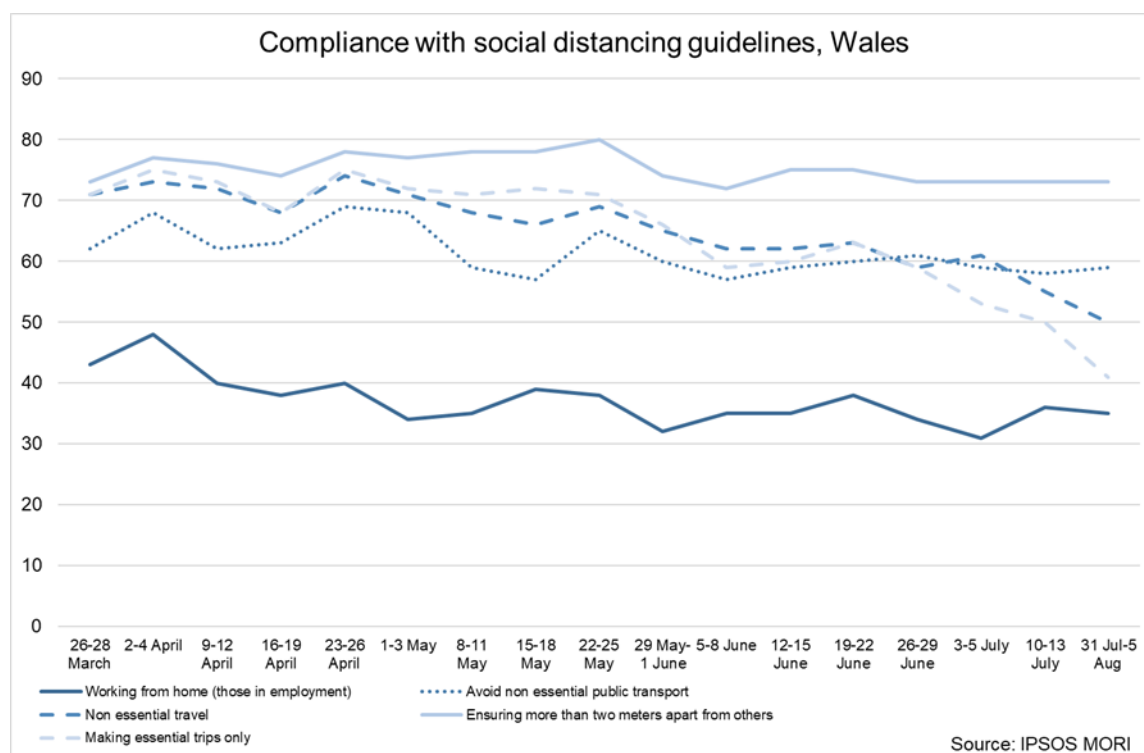
- There is evidence of small variations in  $R_t$  between the different nations of the UK. There is, however, greater uncertainty in the estimates for Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland partly due to the smaller numbers of cases and deaths compared to England.
- Any changes in transmission that may have occurred in the past two to three weeks will not yet be reflected in clinical data, nor therefore in current estimates of  $R_t$ .
- There are three settings which are particularly relevant to the current situation: the community, care homes, and hospitals. These are not independent; infection can be spread between hospitals and care homes, from these settings back into the community, and vice versa. These cannot be captured though estimating  $R_t$  separately for care homes and hospitals.  $R_t$  only considers onward transmission after the virus has been introduced into a particular population.
- SPI-M-O recommends that the situation in particular settings is not monitored using  $R_t$ , but rather in terms of how the number of cases and deaths in them is changing and, where possible, epidemiological investigation of how the three epidemics interact.

### **Halving time**

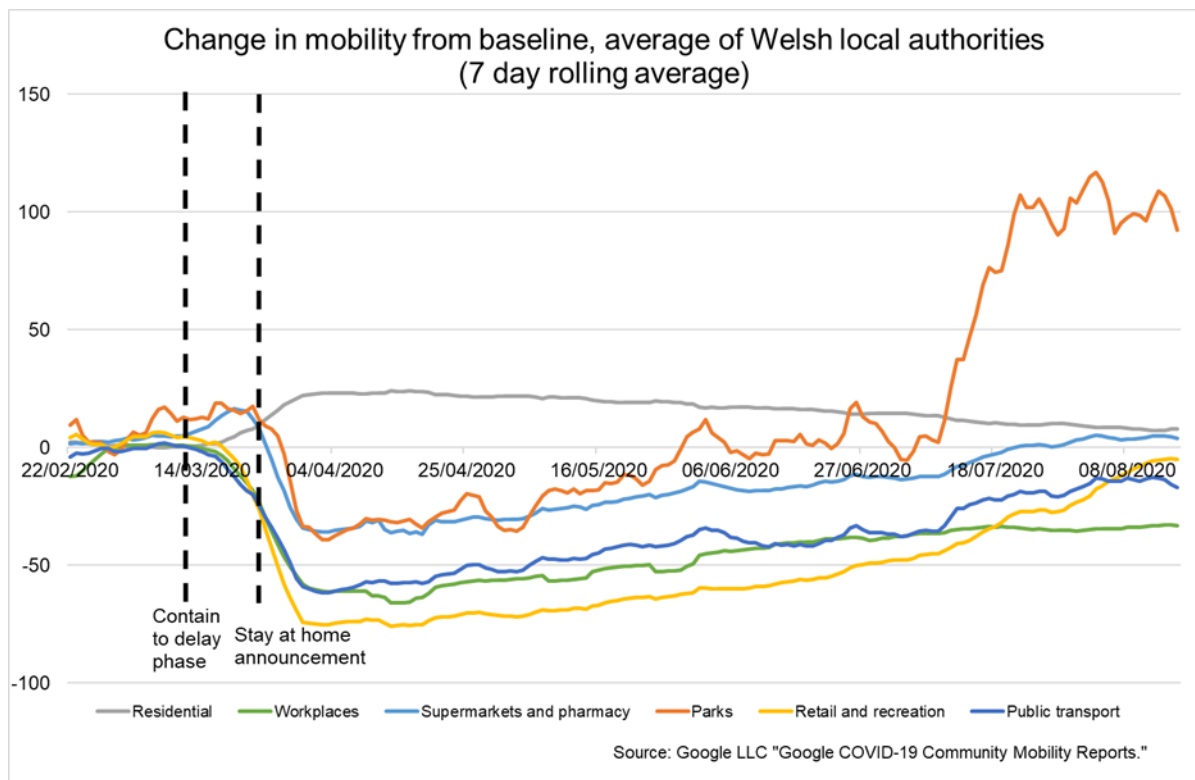
- Reliable estimates of halving times cannot currently be estimated due to low numbers of admissions.

### **Adherence to current measures and mobility**

- The most recent [IPSOS MORI data](#) showed that many people in Wales continued to follow the social distancing guidelines. There were further reductions in those making essential trips in Wales whilst working from home, avoiding non essential public transport and keeping 2 meters away from others remained stable.
- The figure below represents data collected online by IPSOS MORI as part of a multi-country survey on the Global Advisor platform. Each of the waves has included c.600 respondents in Wales. The sample is broadly representative of the adult population aged 16-74. Data is weighted to reflect the age and gender profile of the Welsh population aged 16-74. All samples have a margin of error around them. For a sample of around 500, this is +/- 4.8 percentage points.



- Mobility in the last week shows little change, but with reductions in the Apple driving requests data. Changes in mobility in Wales have been generally similar to the other nations in the last week.
- In mid-April mobility of [Facebook users](#) in Wales was 50% lower than the baseline, this is now around 5% lower and is down slightly from last week. 24% of Facebook users in Wales are staying put, similar to the previous week. In early April around 45% were staying put – this was around 18% in early March.
- [Apple data](#) showing requests for driving directions in Wales have increased significantly since early July and are down from last week. Relative to the baseline the data are higher than the other nations. The [Google mobility data](#) shows continued increases in retail & recreation, but smaller than previous weeks. Public transport shows a small fall (along with parks) whilst other categories show little change.
- After lockdown patterns of mobility between England and Wales were broadly similar. Between mid-May and early-June England saw larger increases in mobility than Wales, with Scotland showing a similar pattern to Wales. During July mobility increased more in Wales than in England and that continued into early August. Since then changes have been similar.
- The figure below shows the change in mobility in Wales using Google mobility data. The figures are based on the average of the local authorities that have data. The baseline is the median value, for the corresponding day of the week, during the 5-week period Jan 3–Feb 6, 2020.



### ONS Infection Study

- For the week 07 August to 13 August, an average of 0.04% of the community population had COVID-19 (95% credible interval: 0.01% to 0.10%). This equates to approximately 1 person in every 2,400 (95% credible interval: 1 in 8,600 to 1 in 1,000), or 1,300 people during this time (95% credible interval: 400 to 2,900).
- The estimate of 0.04% is largely unchanged from the previous week.
- There is considerable uncertainty around the estimates and credible intervals are provided to indicate the range within which we may be confident the true figure lies.

### Research

- There are currently 5151 Welsh patients recruited to COVID-19 urgent public health studies, an increase of 56 in last seven days.

## **COVID-19 weekly surveillance and epidemiological summary from Public Health Wales**

### Trends

- NHS 111 and NHS direct calls for COVID-related symptoms are low and stable.
- Ambulance calls possibly related to COVID peaked in April but have fallen and are now stable.
- During the past week, the number of lab confirmed COVID-19 episodes increased nationally compared to the previous week but remain low.
- Hospital and ICU admissions are low and stable.
- The main foci of activity remains in north Wales, where surveillance indicators were stable or decreasing in most areas. Some increases seen in the east of Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BC UHB); and Cardiff & Vale University Health Board (CV UHB).

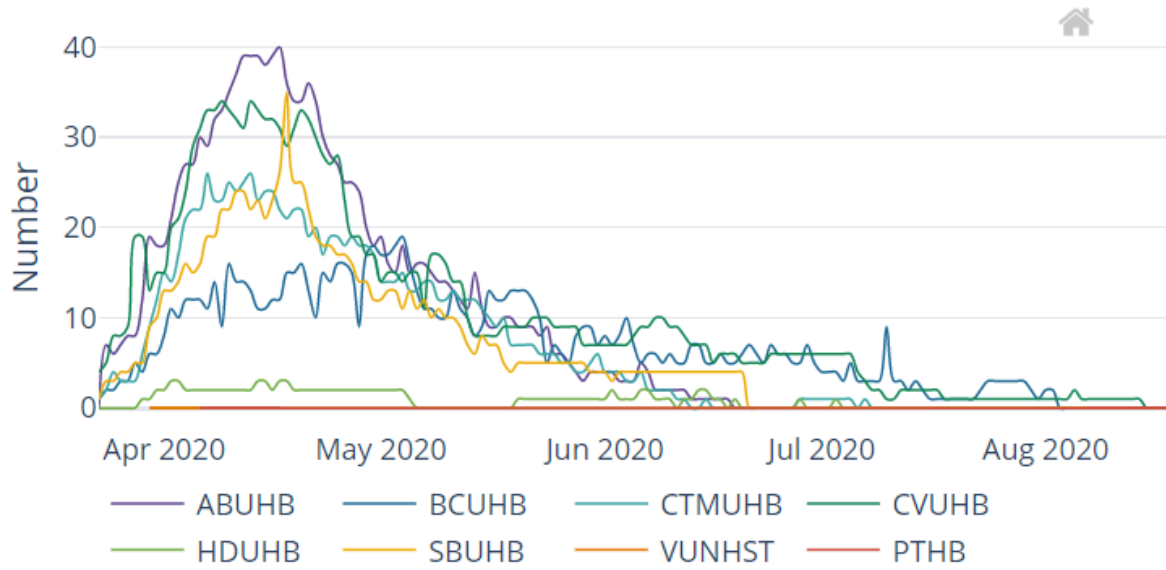
### **NHS Data Dashboard**

- PHW data updated at 19/08/2020
- Hospital data updated at 18/08/2020

### L3 ICU

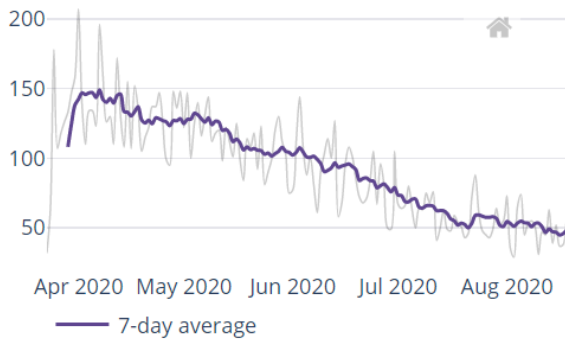
- Of the total of 125 patients in L3 ICU in Wales (down from 138 in previous report):
  - 5 are suspected COVID patients (1 in ABUHB, 1 in BCUHB, and 3 in CVUHB )
- Of the health boards with L3 ICU units:
  - CTMUHB is at 70% occupancy (all non-COVID patients)
  - SBUHB is at 52% occupancy (all non-COVID patients )
  - ABUHB is at 50% occupancy (with 1 suspected COVID patients)
  - BCUHB, CVUHB and HDUHB are at less than 50% occupancy.

### Daily L3 ICU Confirmed COVID19 Patients

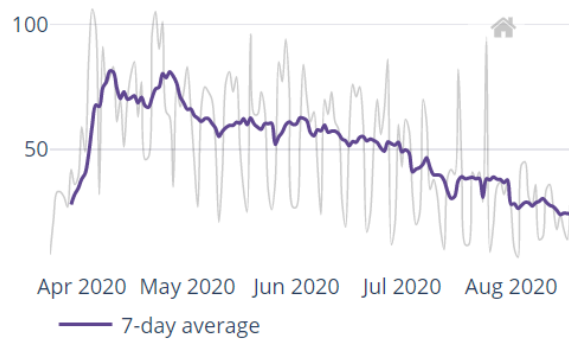


### 7-day Averages

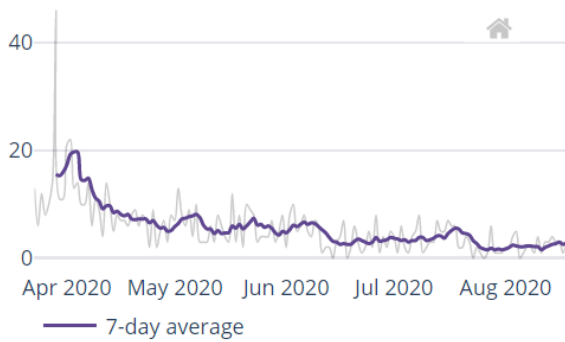
Daily COV+/SUS Hospital Admissions



Daily COV+/SUS Hospital Discharges



Daily COV+/SUS L3 ICU Admissions



**Professional Head of Intelligence Assessment (PHIA) probability yardstick**

- Where appropriate, TAC advice will express Likelihood or confidence in the advice provided using the PHIA probability yardstick to ensure consistency across the different elements of advice.

