

OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

# COVID-19 Wales Situational Report

COVID-19 Intelligence Cell: 24  
February 2022

Health Protection Advisory Group:  
25 February 2022

Data as at 23 February 2022 unless  
otherwise specified

# Contents

<b>COVID-19 Situation Report Summary .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Key points to note .....	2
Key indicators .....	3
<b>What is the current status of the epidemic? .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>What is the situation with the NHS and social care? .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>What is the situation with education, children and young adults? .....</b>	<b>10</b>
School attendance .....	10
Schools.....	10
<b>Wastewater Monitoring for COVID-19 (Pilot) .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>What is the situation with arriving travellers? .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Mobility data and UK Comparison .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Vaccine and Immunity Status.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>What does the situation look like going forward? .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Key risks and sources .....</b>	<b>23</b>
Key risks.....	23
Key Sources for this update.....	24

# COVID-19 Situation Report Summary

## Key points to note

**Wales moved to Alert Level 0 on 28 January 2022.**

**Overall cases of COVID-19 and test positivity have decreased across Wales.** With the return to alert level 0 and easing of restrictions, there is a need to continue monitoring trends.

**The UKHSA consensus estimate of the reproduction number (Rt) for Wales is between 0.7 and 0.9 and a doubling time of 37 to 17 days. (as at 24 February 2022). PHW's Rt estimate is 0.7 with a doubling time of 11 days (23 February 2022).** *Slide 3, Source: PHW*

**Over the latest week, the number of beds occupied with COVID-19 related patients has decreased.** As at 23 February 2022, there were 880 COVID-19 related patients (confirmed, suspected and recovering) occupying a hospital bed. This compares to 883 (3 fewer occupied beds) on 16 February 2022. Confirmed cases accounted for 434 of the total occupied beds. There are 9 patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 in critical care beds in Wales. This is 155 lower than the highest recorded figure during the pandemic.

**Approximately 25% of patients are actively requiring treatment for COVID. 'Medically fit' for discharge patients remain a challenge.** Health Boards are looking at returning to pre covid levels of elective activity over the next few months and how they start dealing with the significant backlog. There is the potential for significant harm in the community (and our hospitals) for people with non-COVID illnesses or injuries, which may exceed the direct harm from COVID-19 at this point in time.

**As at 22 February 2022, the 7 day rolling sum of COVID-19 deaths have decreased to 34 (a 19% drop since the previous week.** *Source: PHW*








**As at 22 February 2022, Wales has had 81,776 (+4,871 compared to previous week) confirmed cases of the Omicron variant, 106,118 (+4) confirmed cases of Delta and 15,018 (+1) confirmed cases of confirmed cases of AY4.2 VUI-21OCT-01.** PHW analysis has confirmed 1,337 sequenced BA.2 cases in Wales as at 22 February, with the earliest case on 30th December.

**As at the week ending 20 February 2022, a total of 6,852,188 doses of COVID-19 vaccine were given in Wales** and recorded in the COVID-19 Welsh Immunisation System. 2,518,462 have received at least one dose. 2,382,176 have received at least 2 doses, 1,891,221 have received a booster dose, 60,329 have received a 3 dose primary course recommended for severely immunosuppressed individuals. *Source: PHW*

## Key indicators

All indicators have decreased over the previous week, except for the ONS COVID infection survey (prevalence) estimates where the trend is less certain

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

	Current value (19/02/22)	Change since previous week (19/02/22 – 12/02/22 unless stated otherwise)	
		Percentage change	Value change
Confirmed case rate (rolling 7 day sum per 100k)	210	-30%	 (-90)
Confirmed case rate for over 60s (rolling 7 day sum per 100k)	115	-20%	 (-29)
Test positivity (7 day RA)	24%	-14%	 (-4 percentage points)
Population estimated to have COVID-19 (prevalence) <sup>1</sup>	3.23%	-13%	 (-0.48 percentage points)
NHS COVID-19 Admissions <sup>2</sup>	35	-23%	 (-10)
ONS deaths (7 day sum) <sup>3</sup>	32	-38%	 (-20)
PHW deaths (7 day sum)	34	-19%	 (-8)

### Footnotes

1. Latest Covid Infection Survey data is taken from 13 February 2022 to 19 February 2022
2. Seven day rolling average to the current date of confirmed COVID-19 admissions
3. Latest ONS deaths data is to 11 February 2022 (rather than 19 February 2022) for the current value. Data to 4 February 2022 is used for the change since previous week.

Data as at 12:00PM 23 February 2022 unless otherwise specified.

# What is the current status of the epidemic?

The UKHSA consensus estimate of the reproduction number ( $R_t$ ) for Wales is between 0.7 and 0.9 and a doubling time of 37 to 17 days. (as at 24 February 2022). PHW's  $R_t$  estimate is 0.7 with a halving time of 11 days (23 February 2022). Source: PHW/UKHSA 7-day cumulative case incidence in Wales is 1483 per 100,000 population and test positivity is at 44.6%.

**The 7-day cumulative case incidence in Wales is 210.7 per 100,000 population and test positivity is at 23.9%.**

**Case incidence is decreasing in all local authorities.** Local authorities with the highest case incidence are Cardiff (274.7), Ceredigion (269.6), Carmarthenshire (259.6), per 100,000 population, respectively.

**As at 22 February 2022, Case incidence is decreasing in most age groups, currently highest in 20-29 year olds.**

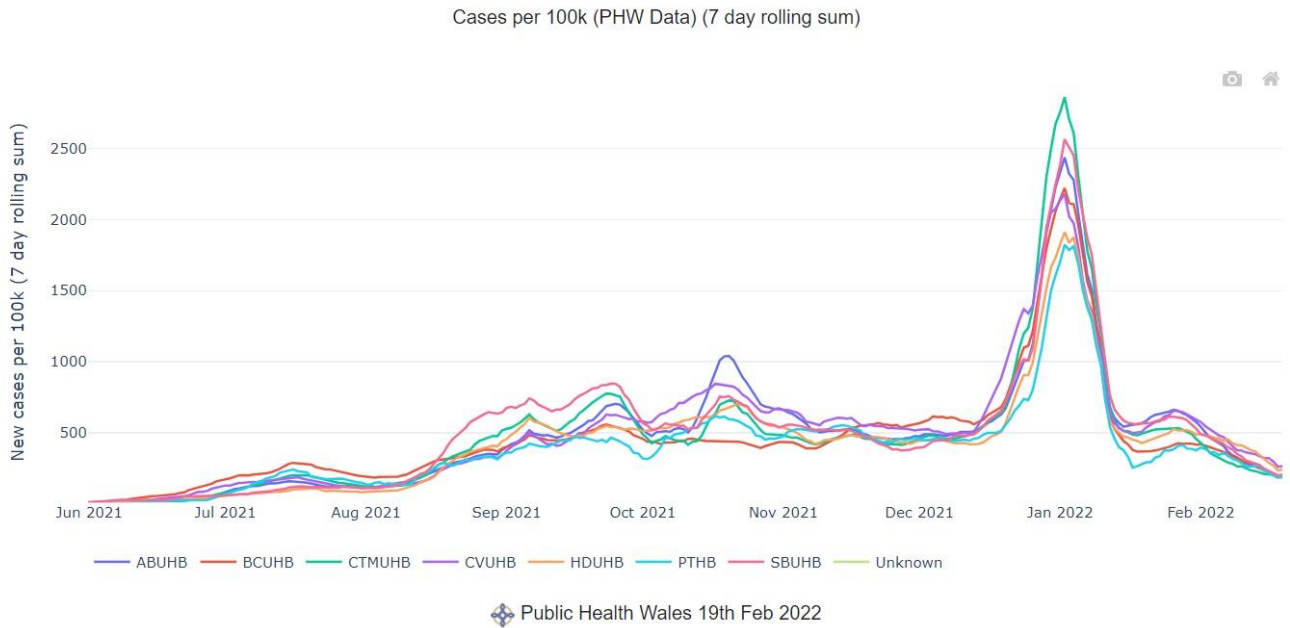
The second table below provides estimates of doubling and halving times based on PHW COVID-19 positive test data. In this table, doubling times are positive, whilst halving times are negative. The 95% confidence intervals are showing in brackets after the central estimate. An asterisk (\*) means that there are small numbers and estimates should be treated with caution. Local health board level estimates of  $R_t$  and halving times will be unstable when incidence is low.

**Note:** all based on PCR test data only, and exclude LFT testing.

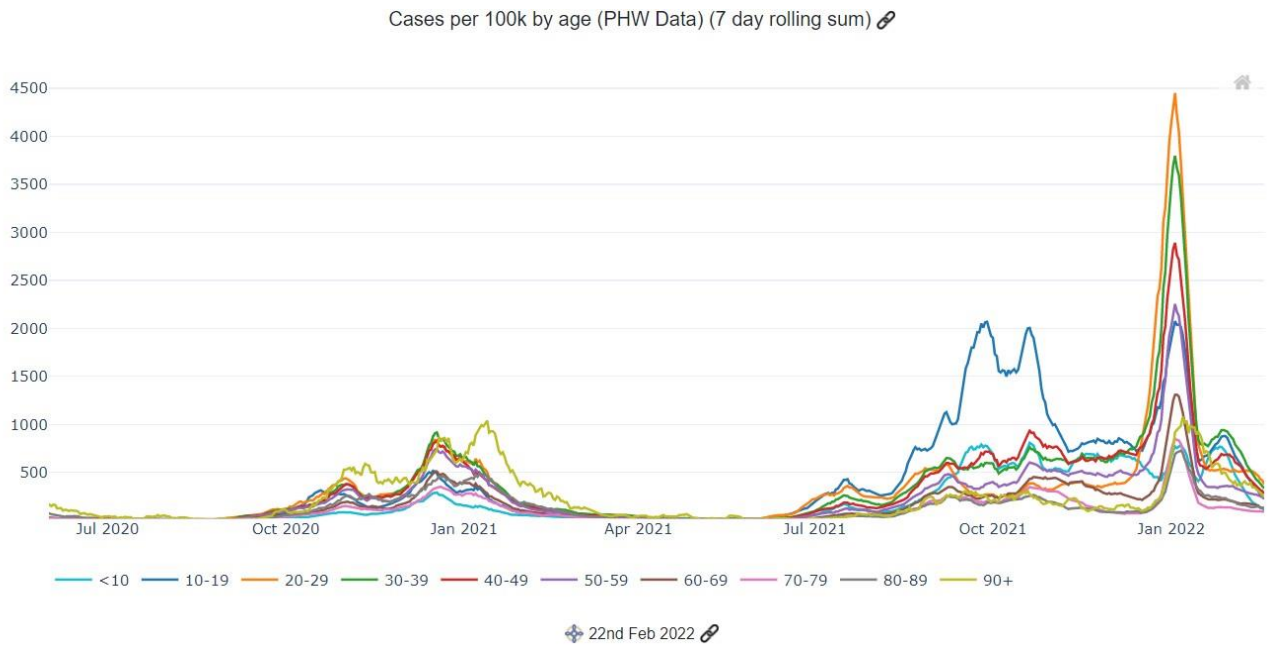
**Table 1: Cases per 100,000 population (7 day period ending 8 January 2022)**

Local Authority	Number	% of All Wales Total	Case Incidence per 100,000	Change from previous week
Cardiff	1008	15.2%	274.7	-26% ↓
Ceredigion	196	3.0%	269.6	-44% ↓
Carmarthenshire	490	7.4%	259.6	-34% ↓
Vale of Glamorgan	313	4.7%	234.3	-25% ↓
Monmouthshire	202	3.0%	213.6	-26% ↓
Blaenau Gwent	149	2.2%	213.3	-34% ↓
Conwy	248	3.7%	211.6	-22% ↓
Neath Port Talbot	297	4.5%	207.2	-22% ↓
Flintshire	320	4.8%	205.0	-34% ↓
Swansea	501	7.5%	202.8	-35% ↓
Merthyr Tydfil	122	1.8%	202.2	-26% ↓
Rhondda Cynon Taf	474	7.1%	196.5	-17% ↓
Torfaen	183	2.8%	194.8	-41% ↓
Denbighshire	185	2.8%	193.3	-29% ↓
Pembrokeshire	242	3.6%	192.3	-35% ↓
Powys	247	3.7%	186.5	-29% ↓
Newport	278	4.2%	179.7	-32% ↓
Wrexham	244	3.7%	179.5	-39% ↓
Gwynedd	219	3.3%	175.8	-38% ↓
Bridgend	255	3.8%	173.4	-19% ↓
Caerphilly	313	4.7%	172.9	-25% ↓
Isle of Anglesey	118	1.8%	168.5	-31% ↓
Unknown	40	0.6%	-	-32% ↓
<b>Total</b>	<b>6644</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>210.7</b>	<b>-30% ↓</b>

**Figure 1: Cases per 100k (PHW Data) (7 day rolling sum to 19 February 2022)**



**Figure 2: Cases per 100k by age (PHW Data) (7 day rolling sum to 22 February 2022)**



**Table 2: Reproduction number and doubling time (PHW methodology) PHW data by Local Health Board (23 February 2022 estimate)**

Local Health Board	All Wales	Swansea Bay UHB	CTM UHB	Aneurin Bevan UHB	Cardiff & Vale UHB	Hywel Dda UHB*	Powys THB*	Betsi Cadwaladr UHB
<b>Rt (cases)</b>	0.7 (0.7 to 0.8)	0.7 (0.7 to 0.8)	0.8 (0.8 to 0.9)	0.7 (0.7 to 0.8)	0.8 (0.7 to 0.8)	0.7 (0.6 to 0.7)*	0.8 (0.7 to 0.8)*	0.7 (0.7 to 0.8)
<b>Doubling time (days)</b>	11.0 (5.6 to 276.5)	8.0 (4.0 to – 452.5)	12.5 (5.7 to – 61.3)	10.2 (5.4 to – 85.6)	10.6 (4.7 to - 45.7)	8.1 (4.2 to – 119.6)*	10.4 (5.2 to - 664.2)*	13.6 (7.5 to 70.0)

## What is the situation with the NHS and social care?

Non-COVID-19 urgent & emergency pressures continue to result in high levels of hospital bed occupancy and escalation across hospital sites, **with this week being particularly challenging in South Wales**. Over the latest week, the number of beds occupied with COVID-19 related patients has decreased. This was due to a decrease in suspected patients despite an increase in recovering patients and no change in confirmed patients.

As at 23 February 2022, there were 880 COVID-19 related patients (confirmed, suspected and recovering) occupying a hospital bed. This compares to 883 (3 fewer occupied beds) on 16 February 2022. Confirmed cases accounted for 434 of the total occupied beds. There are 9 patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 in critical care beds in Wales. This is 155 lower than the highest recorded figure during the pandemic. The total number of patients in critical care for both COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 stands at 168, 16 more than the 152 baseline number of critical care beds available before the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is worth noting that some health boards had been incorrectly classifying some patients as recovering from COVID-19 rather than as non-COVID patients. This resulted in a larger increase in patients classified as recovering. From 16 February 2022, guidance was reiterated to resolve this, resulting in a significant fall in patients recovering from COVID-19 and a corresponding increase in non-COVID patients.

The most recent operational data indicate that only approximately 25% of patients are actively requiring treatment for COVID. 'Medically fit' for discharge patients remain a challenge with around 1,000 patients still occupying a hospital bed. This continues to constrain flow through the whole health and care system resulting in extended waits for ambulance in the community and in emergency departments.

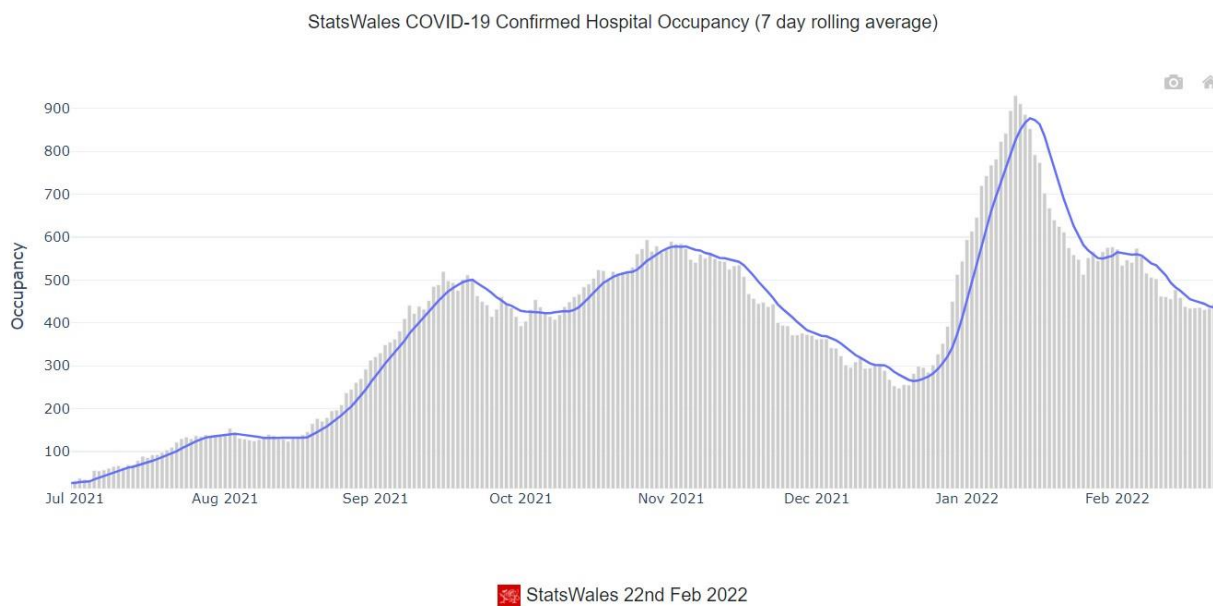
There remains the potential for significant harm in the community (and our hospitals) for people with non-COVID illnesses or injuries, which may exceed the direct harm from COVID-19 at this point in time. Health Boards are looking at returning to pre covid levels of



elective activity over the next few months and how they start dealing with the significant backlog.

An improving picture was reported across the regions in Residential Care Homes, with no significant public health concerns raised. Some regions noted ongoing staffing pressures as a result of workforce absence, but the overall situation a stable picture.

**Figure 3: Covid-19 Confirmed Hospital occupancy (7 day rolling average)**



**Figure 4: Hospital bed occupancy for suspected and confirmed COVID-19 positive patients (7 day rolling average)**

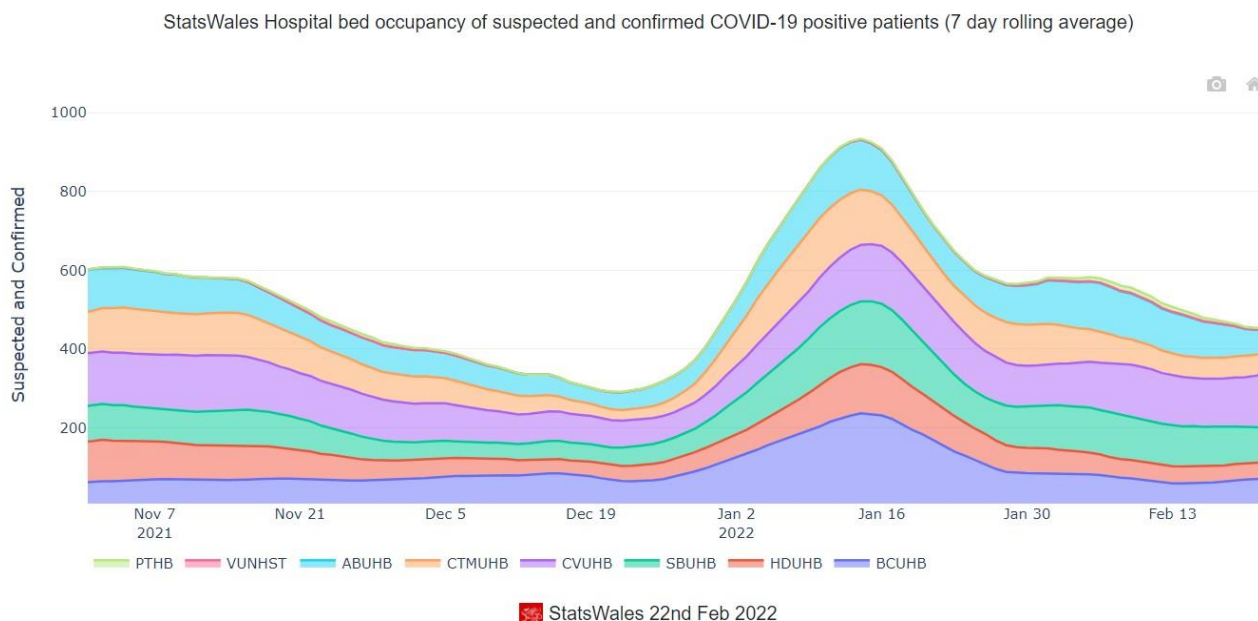
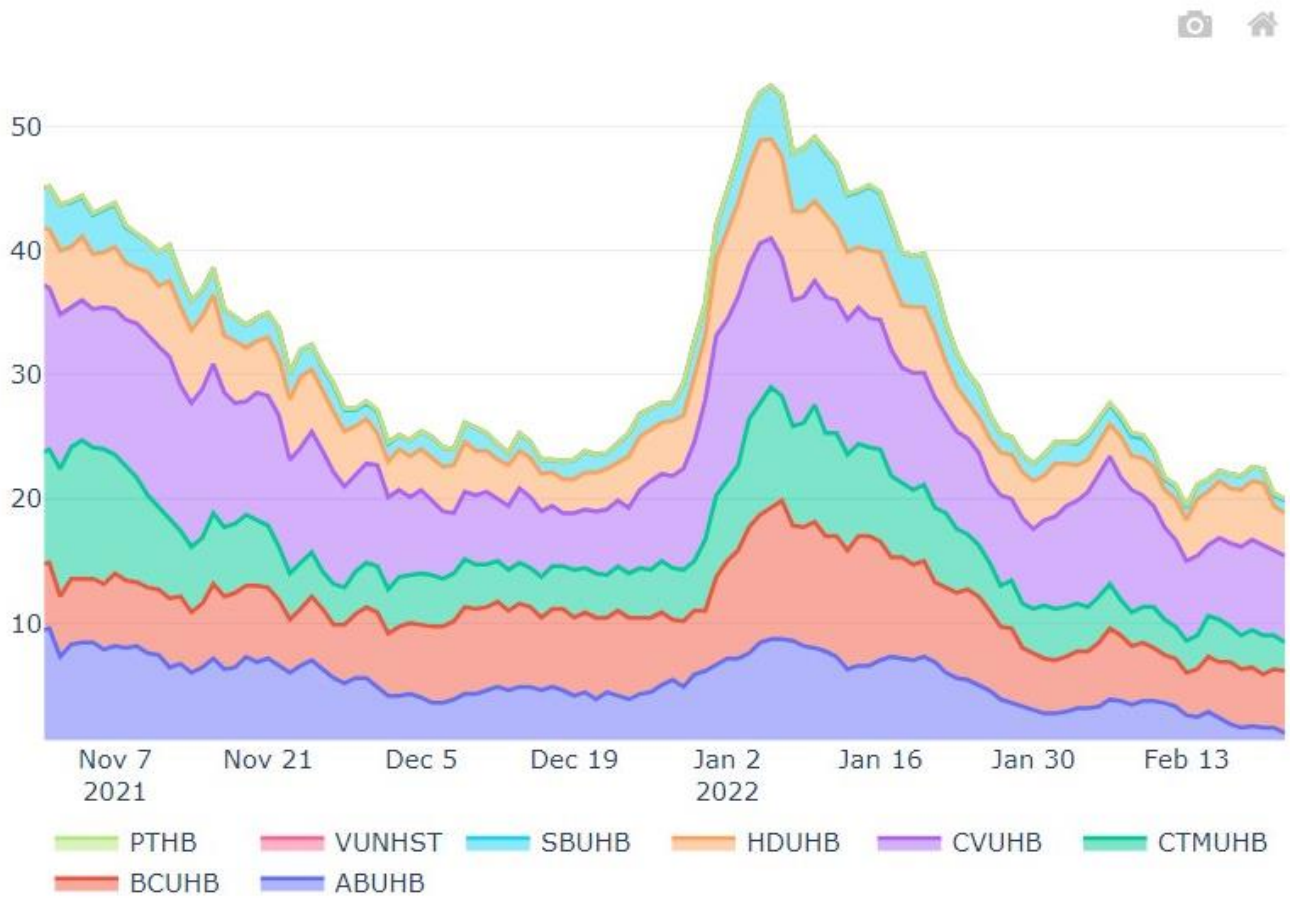
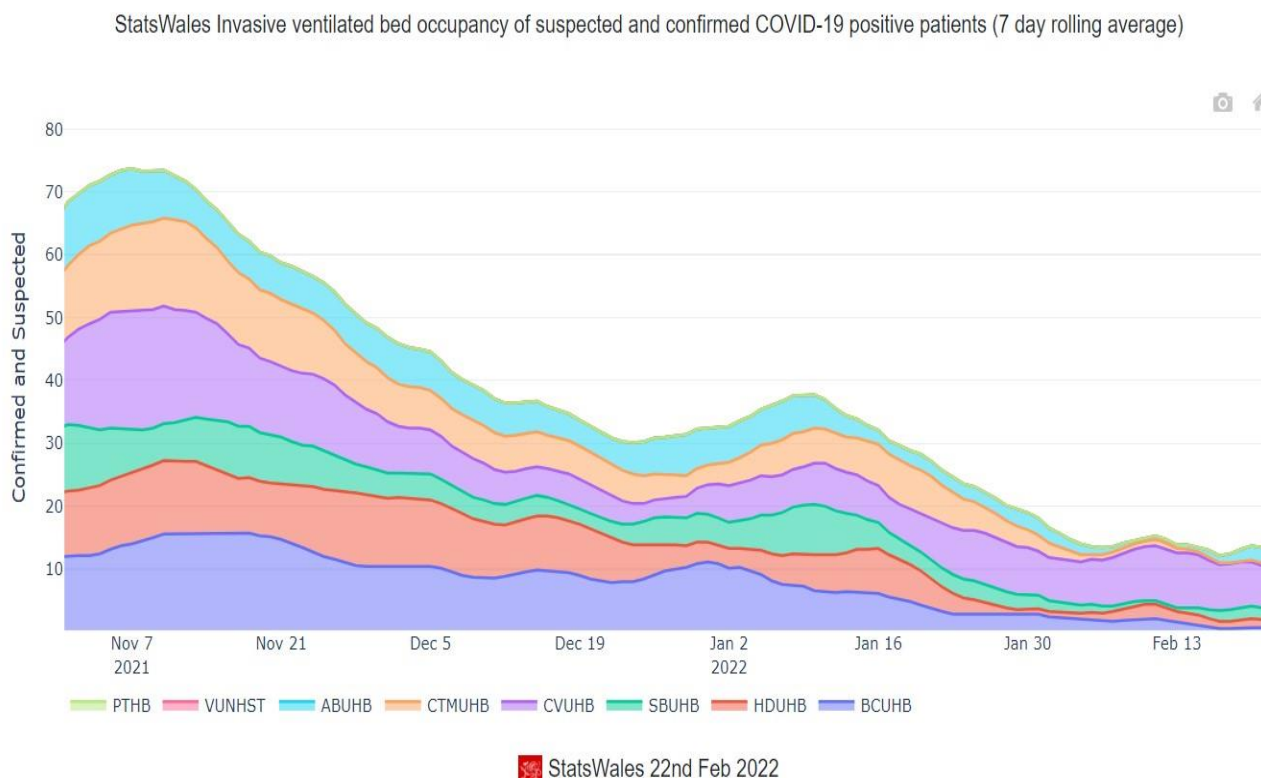


Figure 5: Hospital admissions of suspected and confirmed COVID-19 positive patients (7 day rolling average)



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



Data as at 23 February 22 unless otherwise specified

## What is the situation with education, children and young adults?

### School attendance

An average of 89.8% of all pupils were in attendance in school over the week of 14 to 17 February 2022, up from 89.4% the week before. The figure for 7 to 11 February 2022 has been revised down from 89.5%. Data for the latest two weeks is provisional.

In the same time period, 1.5% of pupils were absent due to a known COVID-19 related reason, with an average of 1.6% of all primary and 1.3% of all secondary pupils absent for this reason. *Source: Stats Wales, Schools in Wales*

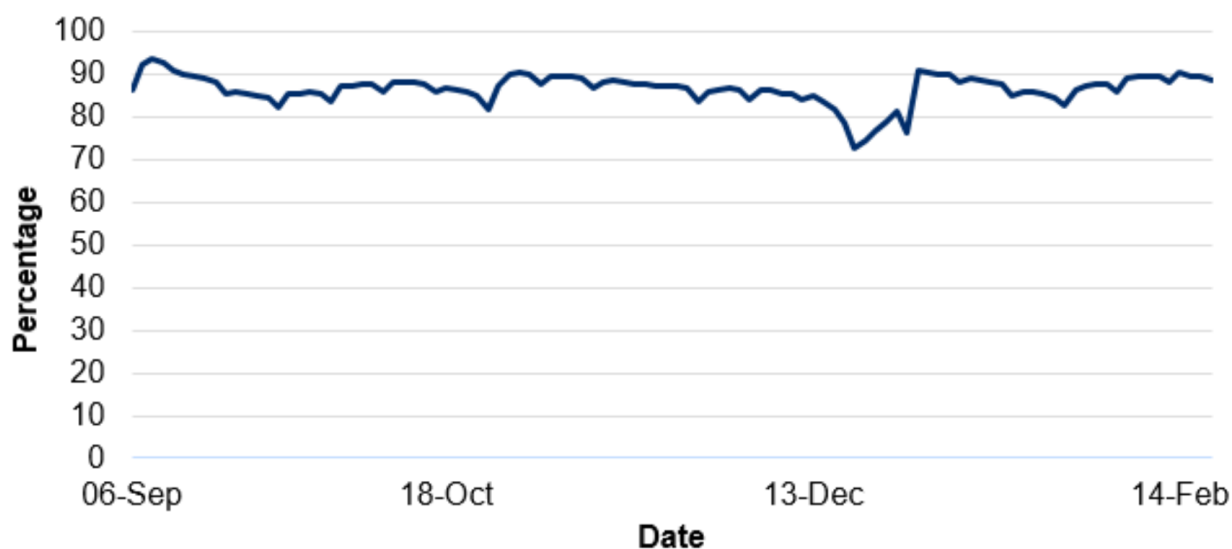
The increased absence rates seen for special schools reflects direct feedback from these settings. Due to the specific context in which they operate it is recognised that they may be more susceptible to instances of pupil absences related to COVID-19. It is also understood that generally special schools have experienced higher levels of staff absences during the first half of the school term. Additional guidance has been provided to support this sector in recognition of this.

### Schools

An improving picture was reported across the regions in Education settings, with no significant public health concerns raised. Some regions noted ongoing staffing pressures as a result of workforce absence, but the overall situation a stable picture.

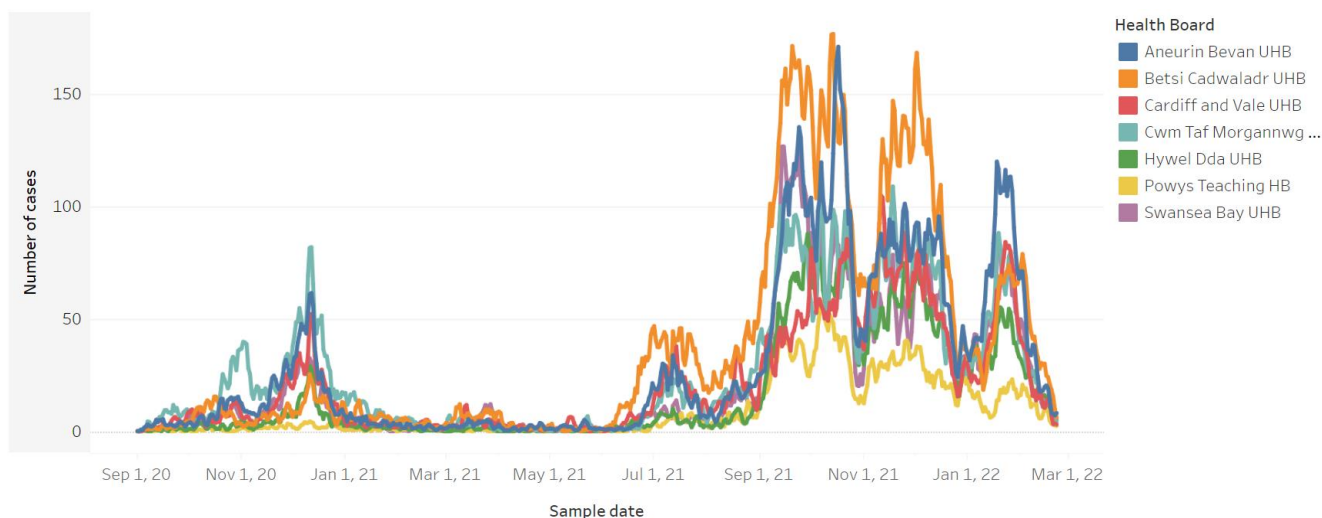
Figure 7: Attendance of pupils in maintained schools by day from 6 September 2021 onwards

### Attendance of pupils by day, 6 September 2021 onwards

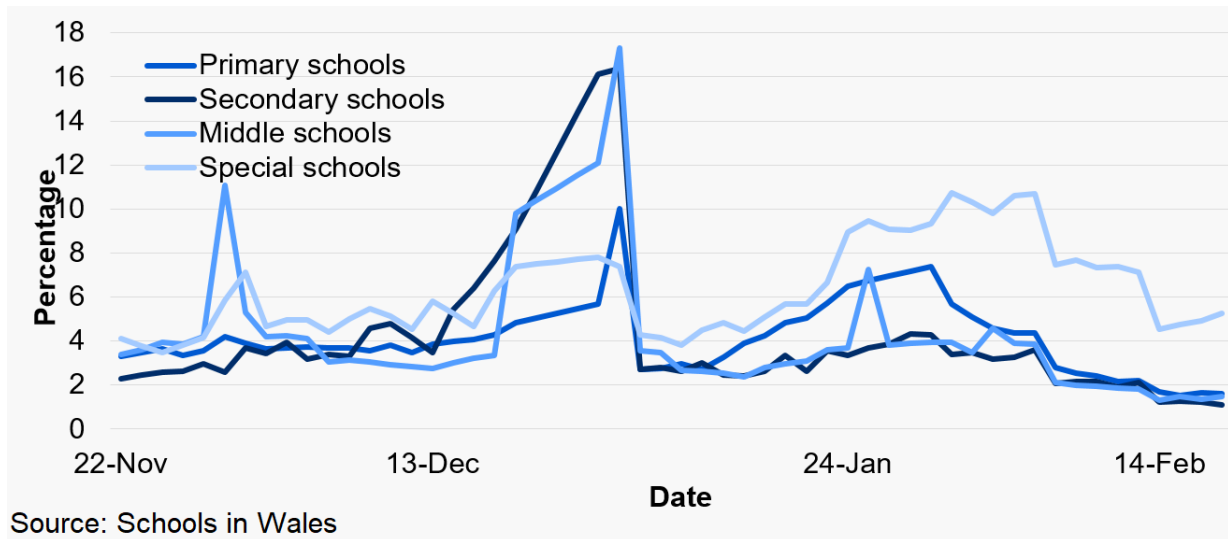


Source: Schools in Wales

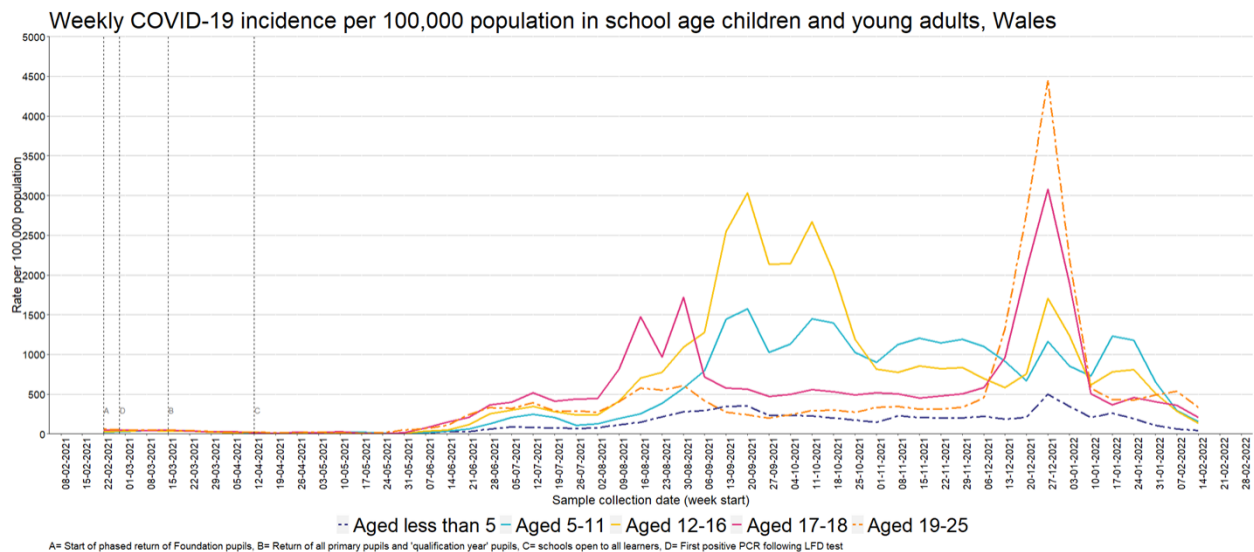
Figure 8: Rolling 3 days average of new C-19 cases in school aged children or staff linked to schools by Health Board and date of test result up to 11 January 2022



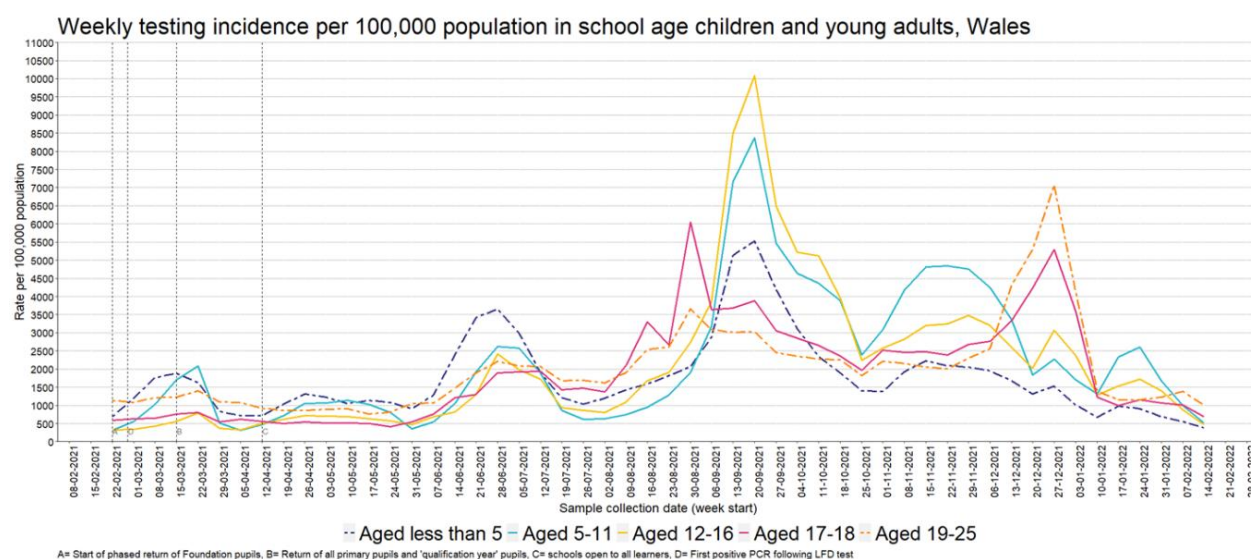
**Figure 9: Absence due to C-19 by day and phase**



**Figure 10: Weekly C-19 Incidence per 100k population in school aged children and young adults, Wales**



**Figure 11: Weekly C-19 PCR Testing Incidence per 100k population in school aged children and young adults, Wales**



## Wastewater Monitoring for Covid-19 (Pilot)

**At a national level, SARS-CoV-2 viral load appears to be increasing.**

- The trends in the national mean wastewater signal appear to be rapidly increasing driven by increases in South Wales.
- Analysis of mutations associated with variants of concern in North Wales indicate that Omicron is dominant across several sites, while Delta is still being detected at several sites.
- No analysis of mutations associated with variants of concern for South Wales sites last week are available for this report, due to problems transporting samples associated with the Red Weather Warning.
- No samples were taken on Friday 18th February due to a Red Weather Warning. Missing samples on this day are not included in the regional summaries.

For further details and analysis please refer to the *Weekly Wastewater Report (24 February 2022)* at [www.gov.wales/technical-advisory-cell](http://www.gov.wales/technical-advisory-cell) or contact [wastewater@gov.wales](mailto:wastewater@gov.wales)

### Regional indicator Table

(indicates the number of sites within those regions that have triggered the indicators)

The **High Signal Level** indicator highlights the catchment areas where the viral concentrations are high. It corresponds to a situation where the viral concentrations exceed half of the highest weekly average recorded in the previous 6 months.

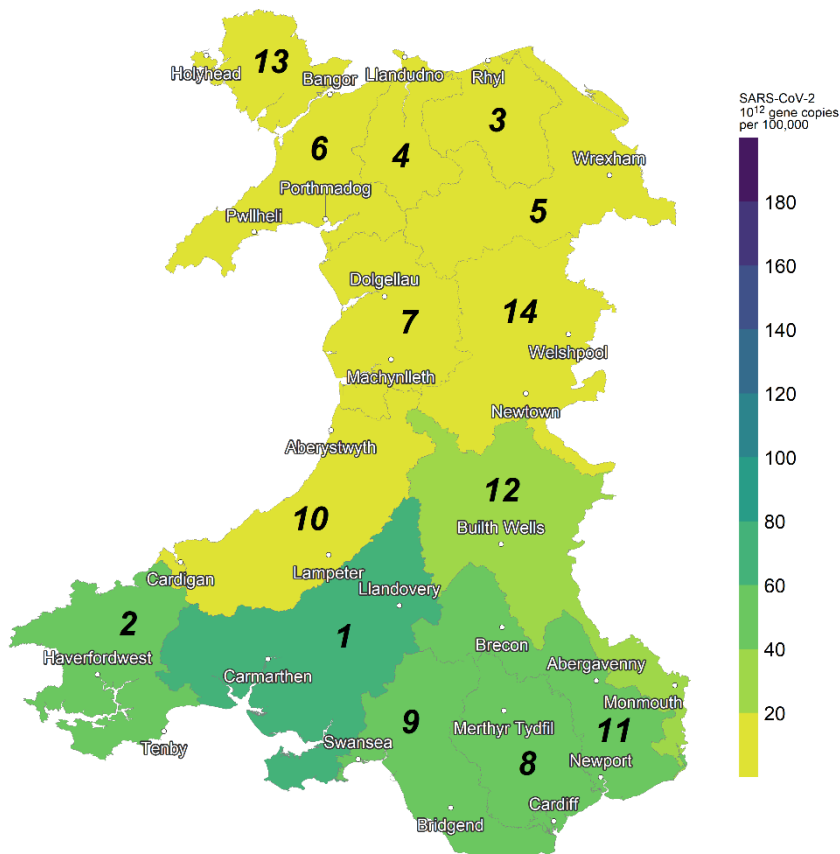
The **Rapid Increase** indicator highlights the catchment areas where the viral concentrations have rapidly increased for the last week compared to the previous week. It corresponds to a situation where the weekly average of the viral concentration has increased by at least 100% since the previous week.

The **Increasing Signal Level** indicator highlights the catchment areas where the viral concentrations are showing signs of continuous increase. It corresponds to a situation where the weekly average of the viral concentration has increased since the previous week for at least 3 weeks in a row.

Region name	Number of sites monitored	% regional population covered	No. sites with High level signal	No. sites with Rapid increase	No. sites with Increasing trend
Region 1: Carmarthen Bay and the Gower	4	57	0	3	0
Region 2: Cleddau and Pembrokeshire Coastal	4	39	1	3	0
Region 3: Clwyd	2	54	0	0	0
Region 4: Conwy	2	82	0	0	0
Region 5: Dee	4	46	0	0	0
Region 6: Llŷn and Eryri	4	27	0	0	0
Region 7: Meirionnydd	3	16	0	0	-
Region 8: South East Valleys	2	82	0	2	0
Region 9: Tawe to Cadoxton	5	73	0	5	0

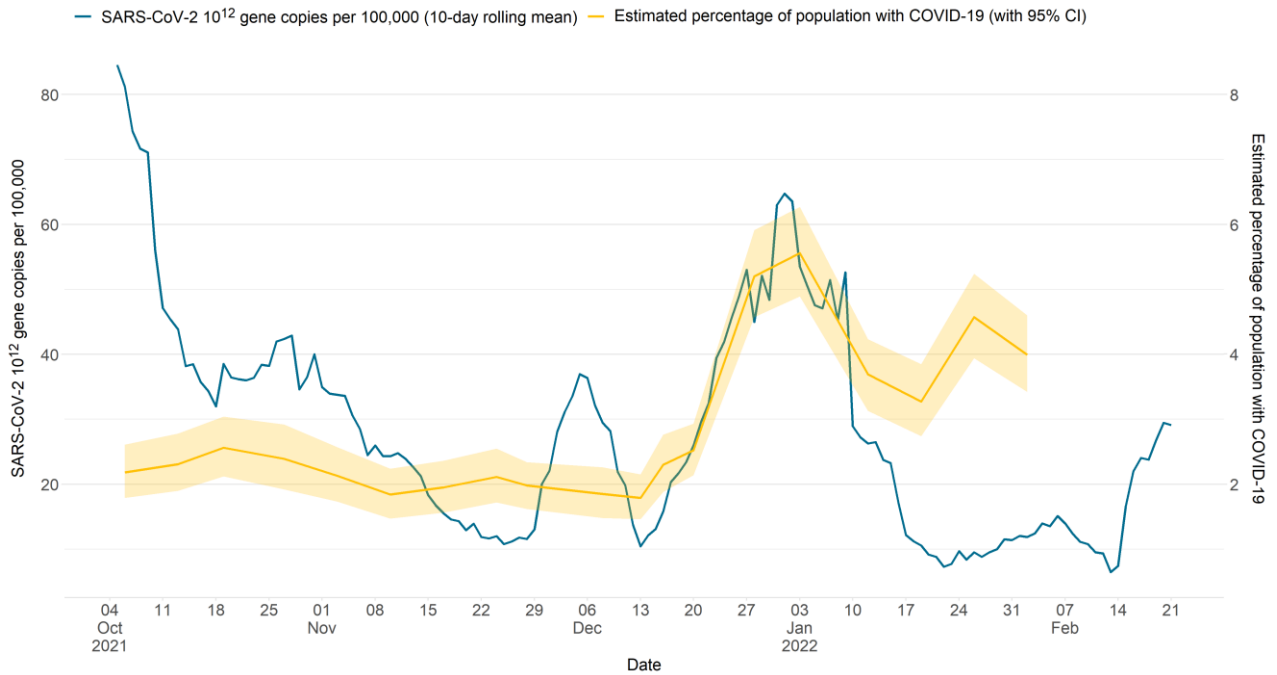
<b>Region 10: Teifi and North Ceredigion</b>	3	30	2	2	0
<b>Region 11: Usk</b>	4	86	0	4	0
<b>Region 12: Wye</b>	4	36	3	4	0
<b>Region 13: Ynys Môn</b>	4	37	0	0	0
<b>Region 14: Hafren Dyfrdwy</b>	3	26	0	0	0

Figure 12: Regional heat map indicating site locations, regional SARS-CoV-2 signal (gc/day per 100k population) Data up to 21 Feb 2022.

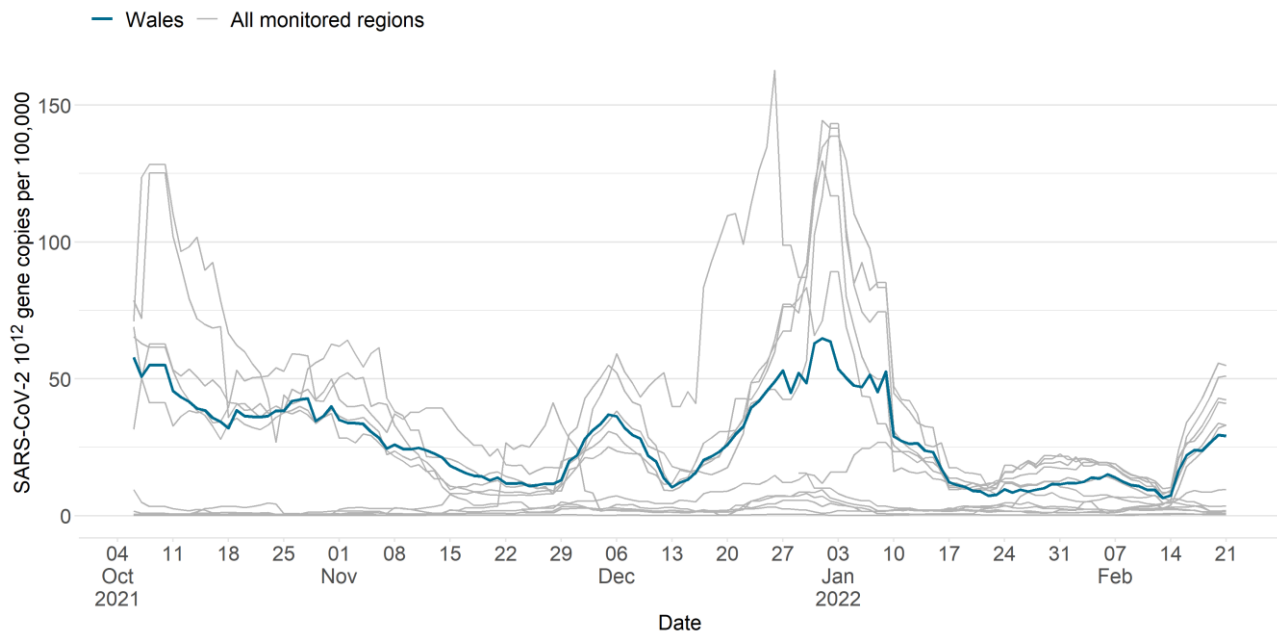




**Figure 13: ONS COVID-19 Infection Survey % population infected vs national average wastewater signal (gc/day per 100k population)- data up to 21 Feb 2022.**



**Figure 14: National average wastewater signal (gc/day per 100k population) and regional average wastewater signal (gc/day per 100k population) Data up to 21 Feb 2022.**



# What is the situation with arriving travellers?

There have been 264 positive travellers (1.21% positivity), compared to 187 for the previous week (1.07% positivity) at time of reporting.

Travellers visiting Spain provide the highest numbers testing positive on return, with 66 to date for the period, with a positivity rate of 1.16% - compared to 49 positives (1.06% positivity) the previous week.

94.9% of travellers declared that they were fully vaccinated in an approved country program, compared to 94.9% the previous week.

21,986 Passenger Locator Form (PLF) submissions, compared to 17,517 for the previous week – an increase of 25.5%.

All age groups saw an increase in traveller numbers compared to the previous week.



Note: Travellers may have travelled through more than one country on their journey.

Figure 15: Positive travellers timeline

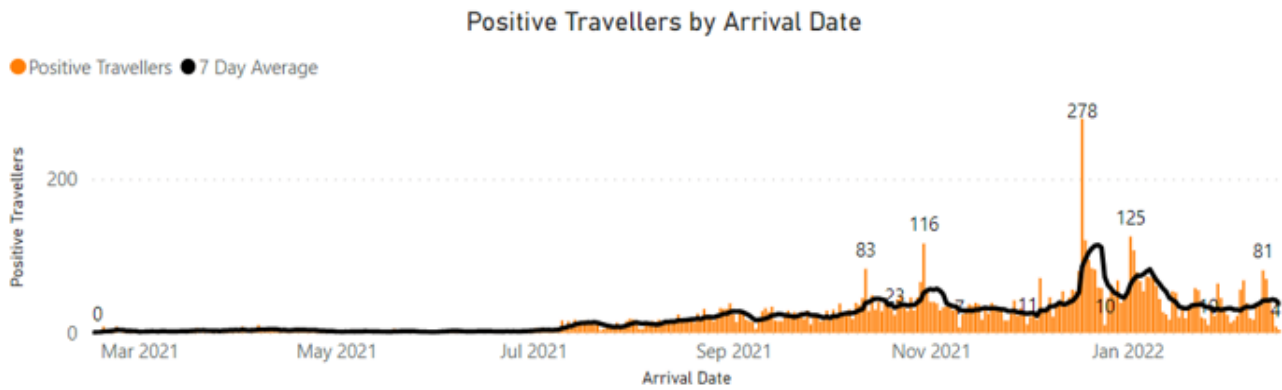


Figure 16: Positive travellers this week by country

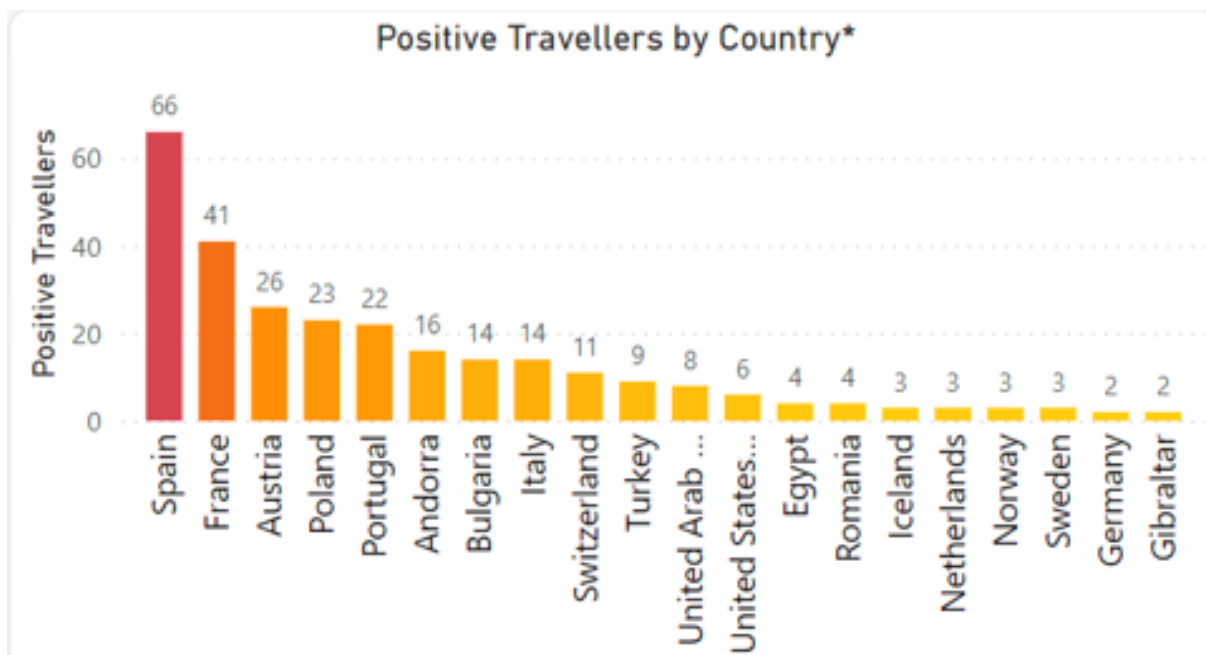
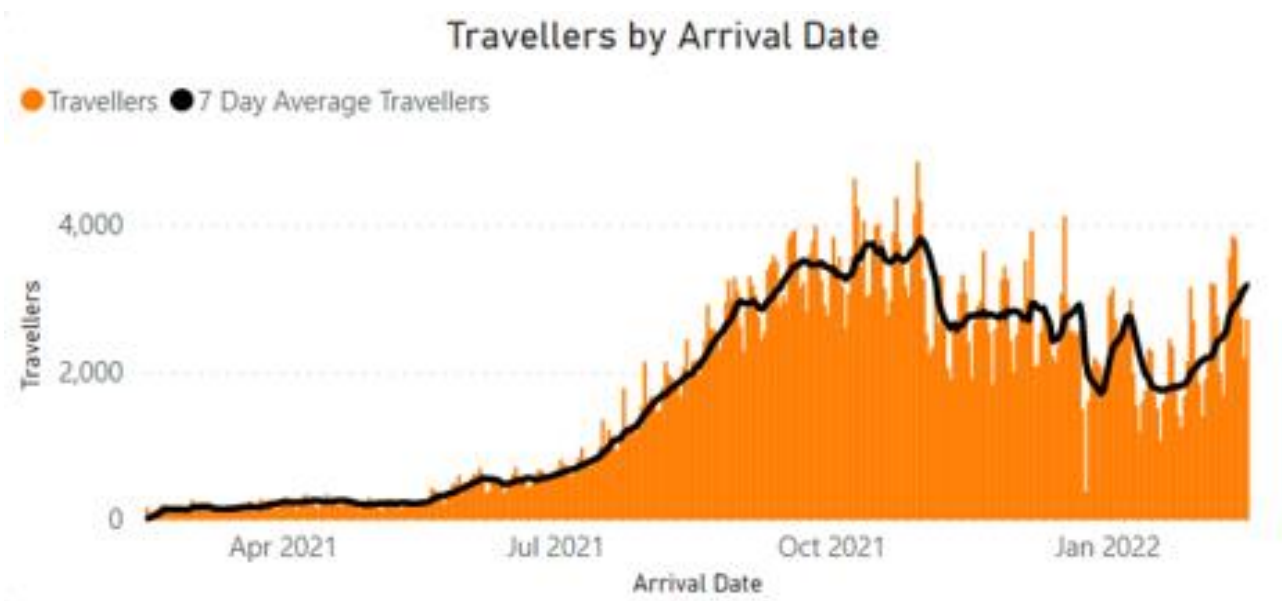


Figure 17: Arriving travellers timeline



Please note that the data provided by the Home Office is derived from Passenger Locator Forms (PLF) which are self-completed by travellers. As such, data may contain inaccuracies. Due to the limitations associated with data capture and legislation, some minor discrepancies may be present in the data. Countries with 10 or less travellers have been included in the overall positive traveller total, but excluded from the Green/Amber/Red positive traveller breakdown totals for personal identifiable information purposes.

## Mobility data and UK Comparison

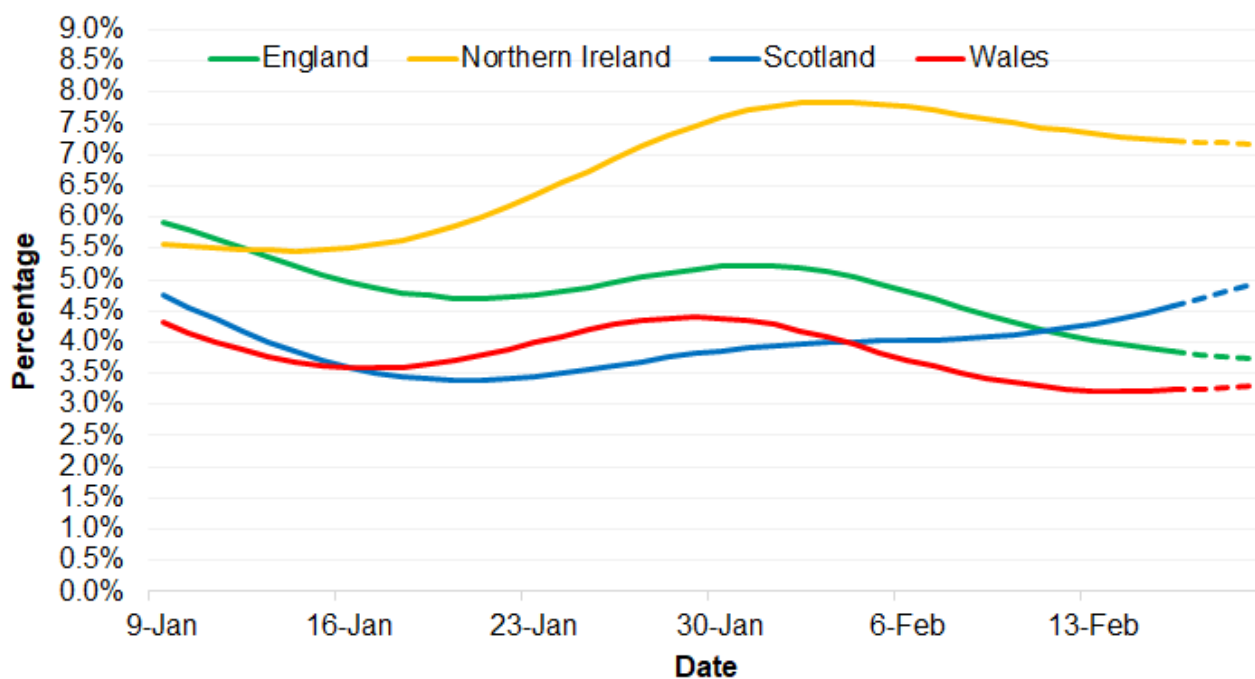
### Coronavirus (Covid-19) Infection Survey results, 14 January

For the week 13 to 19 February 2022, the ONS Coronavirus infection Survey, which provides a **relatively unbiased estimate of levels of infection unaffected by changes to testing**, estimates the percentage of people testing positive has decreased in the latest week in England. In Wales and Northern Ireland, the trend was uncertain. In Scotland, the percentage of people testing positive increased in the most recent week.

ONS estimates that **98,200 people in Wales** had COVID-19 during this period equating to around **1 in 30 people**. This compares to around 1 in 25 people in England, around 1 in 14 Northern Ireland and around 1 in 20 people in Scotland.

Source: [Office for National Statistics COVID-19 Infection Survey](#)

Figure 18: Positivity rates (%) across UK nations up to 19 February



# Vaccine and Immunity Status

**The COVID-19 vaccination rollout of first and second doses has slowed in Wales.** As at 19 February 2022, 92% of people aged 12 and over had received at least one COVID-19 vaccine in Wales. Of people aged 12 and over, 5% had exactly one vaccine dose, 16% had exactly two doses, and 71% have also had a third dose or booster, so 87% have had at least 2 doses.

**As at 19 February 2022, it is estimated that 45% 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 30% and 61% of people aged 12 and over in Wales. **Note that this assumes that immunity from vaccine and infection wanes after 9 months.**

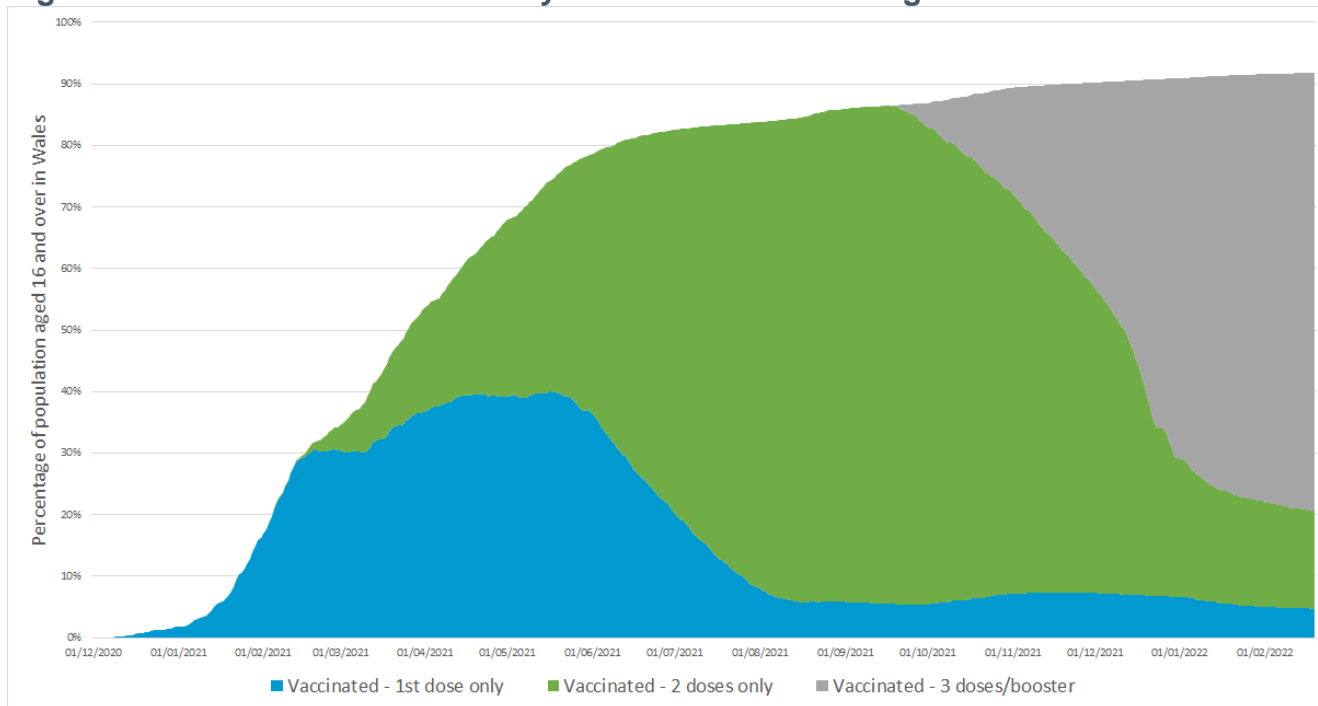
**Between 31 January 2022 and 4 February 2022, the ONS COVID-19 Infection Survey estimated that 99.4% of the community population aged 16 and over in Wales tested positive for COVID-19 antibodies.**

Source: [ONS COVID-19 Infection Survey](#), [PHW](#), [SPI-M](#), Swansea University modelling

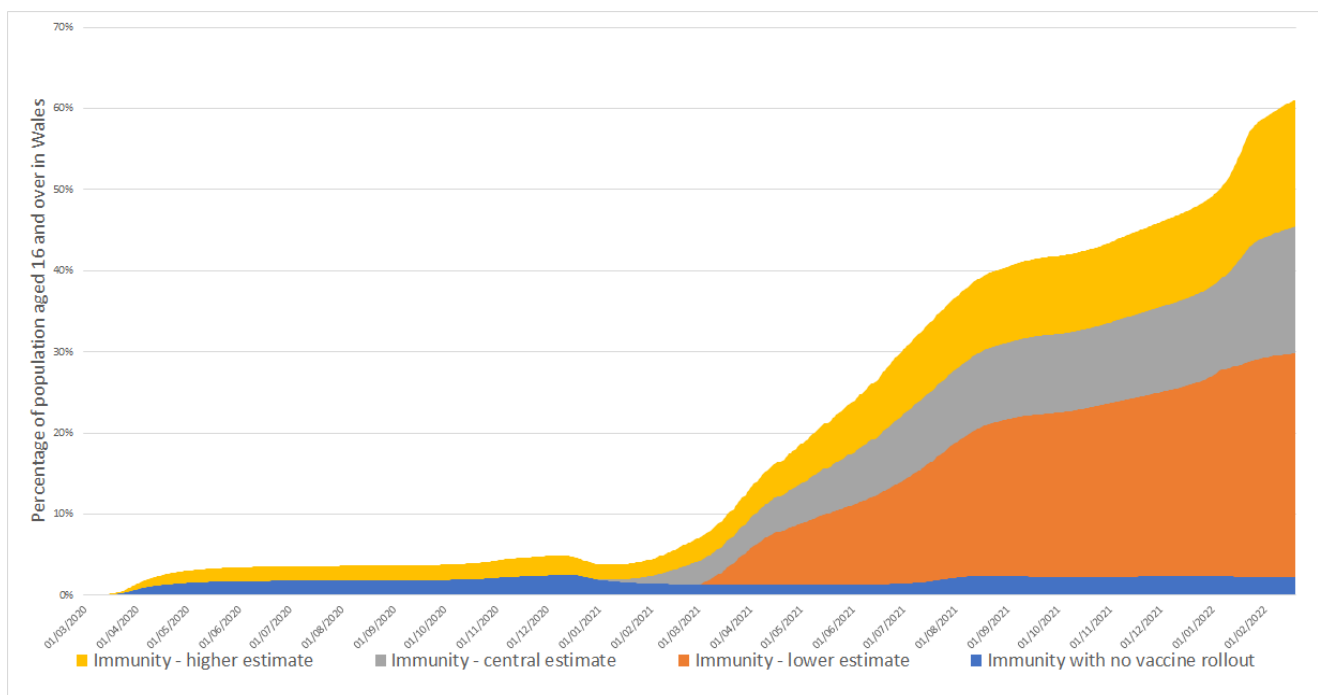
*TAG advice on the Delta variant, published 18 June 2021*

*Note: The lower, central and higher immunity estimates use cautious, central and optimistic vaccine efficacy from SAGE (27/08/21) and immunity-following-natural-infection assumptions, and do not yet account for any additional immunity gained from a third dose or booster.*

**Figure 19: Vaccination and antibody status of individuals aged 12+ in Wales**



**Figure 20: Immunity estimates and antibody status of individuals aged 12+ in Wales**



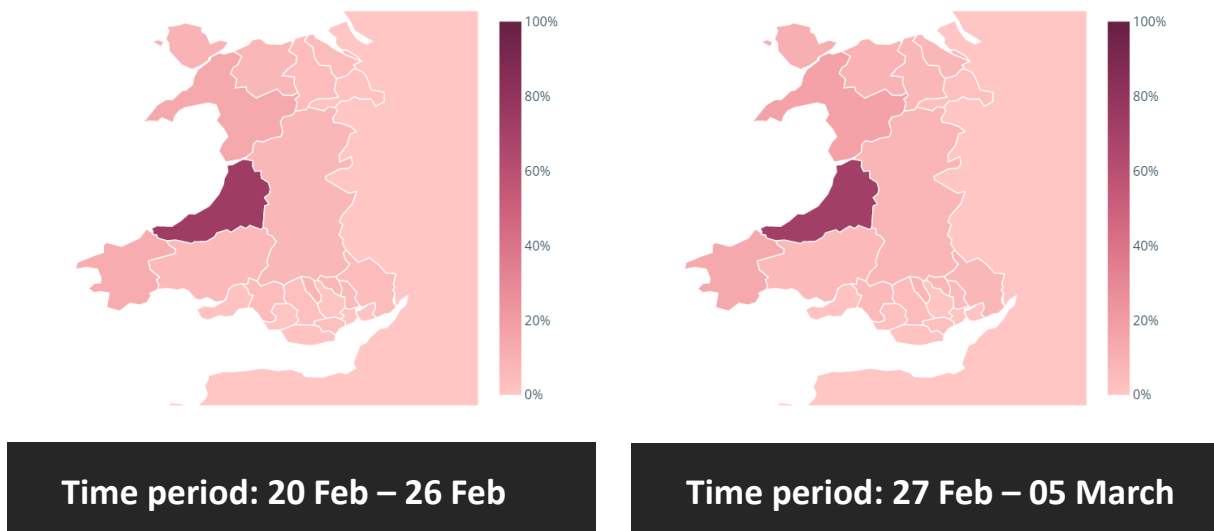
# What does the situation look like going forward?

Based on the current rates observed with current restrictions:

- **Cases - the probability of incidence reaching greater than 500 per 100,000 between 20 – 26 February and 27 – 05 February is above 80% for 0 local authorities across the first time period and is above 80% for 0 local authorities across the latter period.** *Source: Imperial College London*

These projections are based on current trends and will not fully reflect the impact of policy or behavioural changes over the past two to three weeks. The projections include the impact of vaccines, but cannot capture any future increases in transmission resulting from new variants. They are not forecasts or predictions.

Figure 21: Probability of greater than 500 per 100,000 cases by local authority



# Key risks and sources

## Key risks

Area	Assessment
Transmission, incidence and prevalence	<b>Overall cases of COVID-19 and test positivity have decreased across Wales.</b> With the return to alert level 0 and easing of restrictions, there is a need to continue monitoring trends.
NHS Capacity	Over the latest week, the number of <b>beds occupied with COVID-19 related patients has decreased.</b> Approximately 25% of patients are actively requiring treatment for COVID. 'Medically fit' for discharge patients remain a challenge, which continues to constrain flow through the whole health and care system. <b>Health Boards are looking at returning to pre covid levels of elective activity over the next few months and how they start dealing with the significant backlog, however there remains the potential for significant harm for people with non-COVID illnesses or injuries.</b>
Mortality	<b>As at 22 February 2022, the 7 day rolling sum of COVID-19 deaths have decreased to 34 (a 19% drop since the previous week.</b>
Variants	<b>As at 22 February 2022, Wales has had 81,776 (+4,871 compared to previous week) confirmed cases of the Omicron variant, 106,118 (+4) confirmed cases of Delta and 15,018 (+1) confirmed cases of confirmed cases of AY4.2 VUI-21OCT-01.</b> PHW analysis has confirmed 1,337 sequenced BA.2 cases in Wales as at 22 February, with the earliest case on 30th December.
Immunity and Vaccines	<b>As at 22 February 2022, Wales has had 81,776 (+4,871 compared to previous week) confirmed cases of the Omicron variant, 106,118 (+4) confirmed cases of Delta and 15,018 (+1) confirmed cases of confirmed cases of AY4.2 VUI-21OCT-01.</b> PHW analysis has confirmed 1,337 sequenced BA.2 cases in Wales as at 22 February, with the earliest case on 30th December.
International	The proportion of travellers testing positive increased slightly, with numbers remained relatively low.



## Key Sources for this update

Technical Advisory Cell brief:

<https://gov.wales/advice-coronavirus-technical-advisory-cell>

COVID Infection Survey results:

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus-covid-19-infection-survey>

Public Health Wales:

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

Hospital occupancy:

<https://gov.wales/nhs-beds-admissions-and-hospitalisations-during-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic>

Higher Education:

<https://gov.wales/positive-coronavirus-cases-reported-higher-education-institutions-wales-27-september-2020-onwards>

School attendance:

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