

Weekly Deaths in Northern Ireland

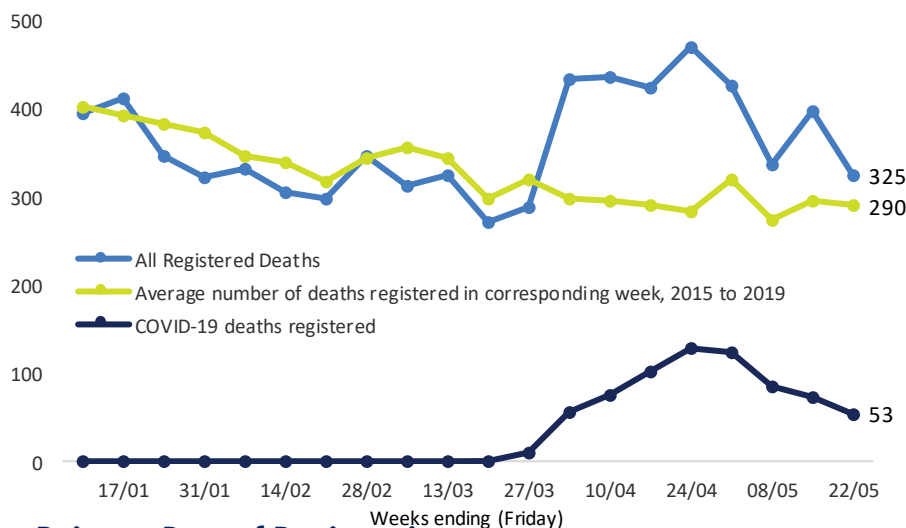
Death Registration Statistics including COVID-19 by Date of Death

Week ending 22nd May 2020 (Week 20)

Section 1: Deaths by Date of Registration

For the eighth consecutive week, there were more deaths registered in Northern Ireland in week 20 than there have typically been in the same week in recent years.

Figure 1: Weekly number of deaths registered in Northern Ireland



Key Points – Date of Registration

- The provisional number of deaths registered in Northern Ireland in the week ending 22th May 2020 (week 20) was 325; 71 less than in week 19 (which will have been impacted by delayed registrations due to the early May Bank Holiday) and 35 more than the 5-year average of 290 (Table 1).
- Around a quarter (27.7%) of all deaths in week 20 were classified as ‘respiratory’ (90). Please note that all COVID-19 related deaths have been included in this classification.
- There have been 7,199 deaths registered in the year-to-date, 32.4% of which (2,331) were classified as ‘respiratory’. The number and proportion of respiratory deaths is higher in the year-to-date than the 5-year average (2,013; 30.7%) (Table 2).
- Fifty-three deaths mentioning COVID-19 on the death certificate were registered in week 20, accounting for 16.3% of all deaths in that week and bringing the total number of COVID-19 related deaths registered in calendar year 2020 to 705. This is the fourth consecutive weekly fall in the number of registered COVID-19 related deaths.
- In the calendar year to 22nd May, males and females accounted for similar proportions of all deaths registered (males: 48.8%, females: 51.2%) and COVID-19 related deaths registered (males: 49.5%; female 50.5%) (Figure 2).
- In the calendar year to 22nd May, the 75 years and over age-group accounted for two-thirds (66.7%) of all deaths and almost four-fifths (79.4%) of COVID-19 related deaths (Figure 3).
- For COVID-19 related deaths, those with an address in Belfast LGD accounted for 209 (29.6%) of the 705 deaths registered in the calendar year to 22nd May (Figure 5).

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Background

Deaths occurring in Northern Ireland are registered on the Northern Ireland General Register Office's Registration System (NIROS). Daily extracts of registration records from NIROS are processed by the NISRA Vital Statistics Unit. Provisional data on deaths registered in each week (ending on a Friday) are compiled at the end of the following week*.

Cause of death coding to the [ICD-10 classification](#) is carried out by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on NISRA's behalf on a quarterly basis. This means that quarterly statistics are the first output to report deaths according to underlying cause. These statistics are currently available up to [Quarter 3 2019](#) with Quarter 4 2019 scheduled for publication on 30th June.

To meet user needs, NISRA publish timely but provisional counts of death registrations in Northern Ireland in the weekly deaths provisional dataset. Weekly totals are presented alongside a 5-year weekly average as well as the lowest and highest number of deaths for the same week over the last five years. To allow time for registration and processing, these figures are published seven days after the week ends.

Because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, from 3rd April 2020 the NISRA weekly deaths release has been supplemented with the numbers of respiratory deaths (respiratory deaths include any death where Pneumonia, Bronchitis, Bronchiolitis or Influenza are mentioned on the death certificate); and deaths relating to COVID-19 (that is, where COVID-19 or suspected COVID-19 was mentioned anywhere on the death certificate, including in combination with other health conditions).

The content of this bulletin will be kept under review and more detail may be presented over the coming weeks.

This is a National Statistics publication.

National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#). They are produced free from any political interference.

The UK Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs
- are well explained and readily accessible
- are produced according to sound methods
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

* Bank Holidays could affect the number of registrations made within those weeks.

Latest death registration statistics

Table 1 shows that the provisional number of deaths registered in Northern Ireland in the week ending 22nd May 2020 (week 20) was 325; 71 less (-17.9%) than in week 19, and 35 more (+12.1%) than the 5-year average of 290. Over the last eight weeks, 902 'excess deaths' (i.e. deaths above the average for the corresponding week in previous years) have been registered in Northern Ireland, with the number of excess deaths in the year to date totalling 643. In terms of the year-to-date figures (weeks 1 to 20), the total number of deaths registered (7,199) is higher (+9.8%) than the 5-year average (6,556).

Table 1: All Deaths registered¹ weekly in Northern Ireland, 2020^P

Registration week	Week ending (Friday)	2020 ^P	Previous 5 Years: 2015 - 2019 ^P		'Excess Deaths' No. of deaths above 5-year average ²	
		Total number of deaths registered in week	Average number of deaths registered in corresponding week ²	Range		
				Minimum	Maximum	
13	10/04/2020	434	298	280	323	136
14	10/04/2020	435	295	221	350	140
15	17/04/2020	424	290	270	316	134
16	24/04/2020	470	284	245	327	186
17	01/05/2020	427	320	292	357	107
18	08/05/2020	336	274	230	335	62
19	15/05/2020	396	295	256	330	101
20	22/05/2020	325	290	259	315	35
Year-to-date (week 1-20) Total		7,199	6,556			643

902 'excess deaths' over these 8 weeks

Note: statistics for the full year are available in the [accompanying spread sheet](#). ^P Weekly published data are provisional.

¹ These data are based on registration dates of deaths, not occurrences. The majority of deaths are registered within five days in Northern Ireland.

² Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Table 2 shows that the number of death registrations mentioning COVID-19 on the death certificate increased from 1 in week 11 to 128 in week 16, and has then fallen for four consecutive weeks to 53 in week 20 (705 in total).

In week 20, 27.7% of all deaths registered mentioned terms relating directly to respiratory causes on the death certificate. These are given as 'respiratory' deaths in the table below and are provided to aid comparison with the COVID-19 statistics (COVID-19 deaths are also included in the respiratory category).

There have been 2,331 respiratory deaths registered in the year-to-date. The number and proportion (32.4%) of respiratory deaths is higher in the year-to-date than the 5-year average (2,013, 30.7%).

Table 2: COVID-19 and respiratory deaths registered¹ weekly in Northern Ireland, 2020^P

Registration week	Week ending (Friday)	2020 ^P		Previous 5 Years: 2015 - 2019 ^P	
		Total number of deaths registered in week	COVID-19 ² deaths registered in week	Average number of respiratory deaths registered in corresponding week ⁴	
				N	%
11	20/03/2020	271	1	84	31.0%
12	27/03/2020	287	9	77	26.8%
13	03/04/2020	434	55	129	29.7%
14	10/04/2020	435	76	162	37.2%
15	17/04/2020	424	101	179	42.2%
16	24/04/2020	470	128	206	43.8%
17	01/05/2020	427	124	180	42.2%
18	08/05/2020	336	84	130	38.7%
19	15/05/2020	396	74	136	34.3%
20	22/05/2020	325	53	90	27.7%
Year-to-date (week 1-19) Total		7,199	705	2,331	32.4%
				2,013	30.7%

Note: Statistics for the full year are available in the [accompanying spread sheet](#)

^P Weekly published data are provisional.

¹ These data are based on registrations of deaths, not occurrences. The majority of deaths are registered within five days in Northern Ireland.

² COVID-19 deaths include any death where Coronavirus or COVID-19 (suspected or confirmed) was mentioned anywhere on the death certificate.

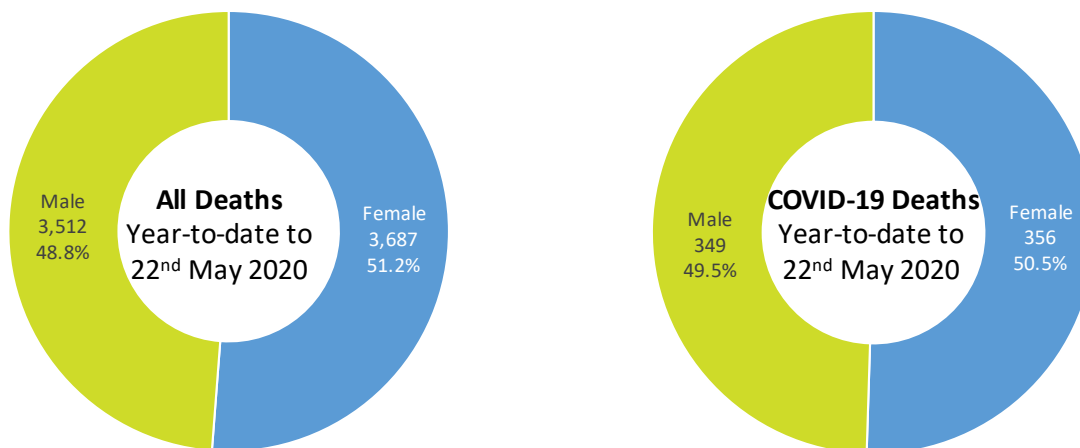
³ Respiratory deaths include any death where terms directly relating to respiratory causes were mentioned anywhere on the death certificate (this includes COVID-19 deaths). This is not directly comparable to the ONS figures relating to 'deaths where the underlying cause was respiratory disease'.

⁴ Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Deaths registered by sex

In the calendar year to 22nd May 2020, males and females accounted for a similar proportion of all deaths registered (males: 48.8%, females: 51.2%) and COVID-19 related deaths registered (males: 49.5%; female 50.5%). A weekly breakdown by sex is provided in the [accompanying spreadsheet](#).

Figure 2: All deaths and COVID-19 deaths registered by sex, year-to-date 2020

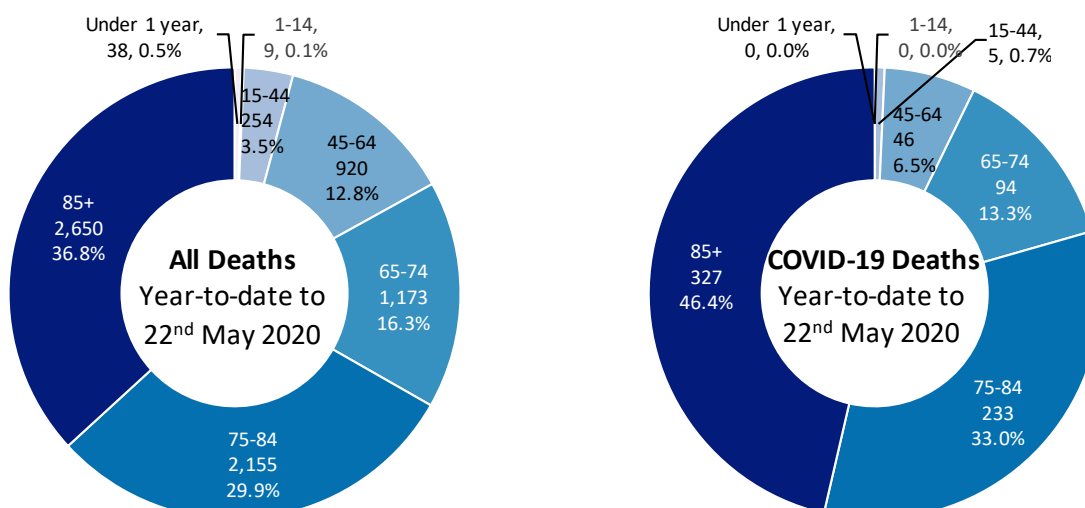


Deaths registered by age-group

In the calendar year to 22nd May the 75 years and over age-group accounted for two-thirds (66.7%) of all deaths and four-fifths (79.4%) of COVID-19 related deaths.

The 43 COVID-19 related deaths registered among those aged 75+ in week 20 (see [accompanying spreadsheet](#)) equated to 20.7% of all deaths registered for this age-group during the week, while the 10 COVID-19 related deaths registered among those aged 45-74 equated to 9.3% of all deaths for this age-group in week 20.

Figure 3: All deaths and COVID-19 deaths registered by age-group, year-to-date 2020

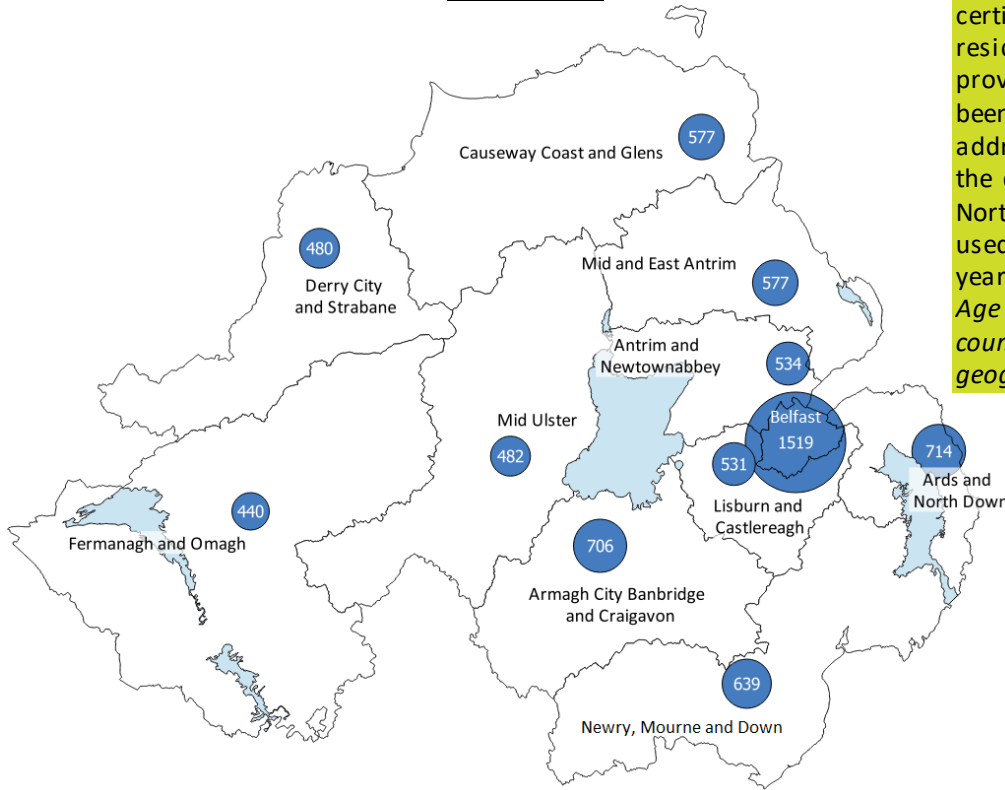


Deaths registered by Local Government District*

Those with an address* in Belfast Local Government District (LGD) accounted for around one in five of all 7,199 deaths registered in the calendar year to 22nd May 2020 (1,519; 21.1%).

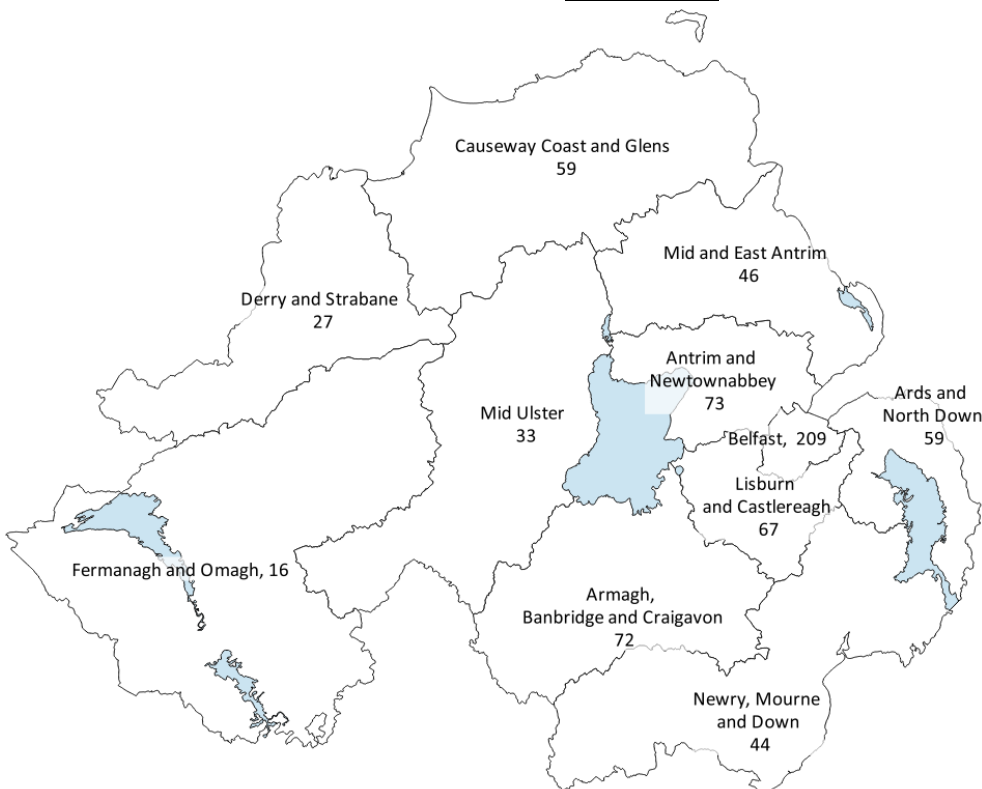
Figure 4: All deaths registered by LGD, year-to-date 2020

* The LGD data provided is based on the usual address of the deceased, recorded on the death certificate. Where the deceased was usually resident in NI and a home address was provided, the deceased's usual postcode has been mapped to an LGD area. If the usual address of the deceased was not provided or the deceased was usually resident outside of Northern Ireland, the place of death address is used (this is approximately 0.4% of deaths per year). *Crude mortality rates are not provided. Age standardised rates will be provided in due course to enable comparisons across different geographical areas.*



For COVID-19 related deaths, those with an address* in Belfast LGD accounted for 209 (29.6%) of the 705 deaths registered in the calendar year to 22nd May. Fermanagh & Omagh LGD had the fewest number of COVID-19 related deaths registered up to 22nd May (16).

Figure 5: COVID-19 deaths registered by LGD, year-to-date 2020

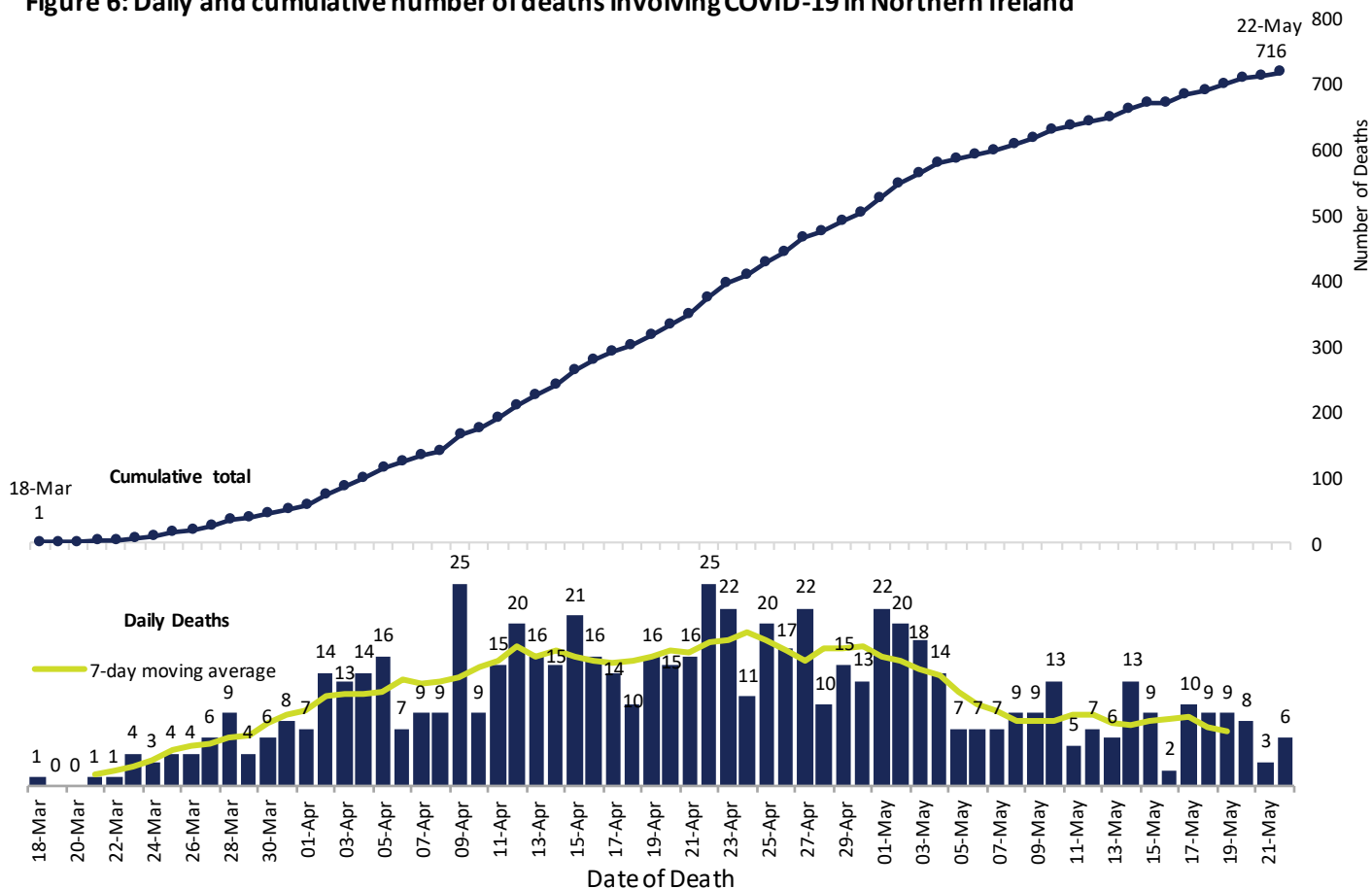


Section 2: COVID-19 Deaths by Date of Death

Because of the rapidly changing situation, this section of the bulletin provides provisional, updated totals of COVID-19 deaths occurring (based on the date of death) up to 22nd May, taking account of the latest available death registrations up to and including 27th May 2020.

Overall, 716 COVID-19 related deaths had occurred in Northern Ireland by 22nd May, 47 of which occurred in the week ending 22nd May. Thursday 9th April and Wednesday 22nd April saw the greatest number of COVID-19 deaths (25) occurring in a single day. A simple 7 day moving average shows the trend in COVID deaths by smoothing daily fluctuations.

Figure 6: Daily and cumulative number of deaths involving COVID-19 in Northern Ireland



Key Points –COVID-19 deaths based on date of death¹

- 716 deaths mentioning COVID-19 on the death certificate have occurred in total, to 22nd May (including those registered up to and including 27th May).
- The comparative number of deaths reported by the Department of Health (DoH) to 22nd May² was 504 (see page 9 for definitions).
- Of the 716 total deaths involving COVID-19 occurring up to 22nd May, 353 (49.3%) occurred in hospital³, 318 (44.4%) occurred in care homes, eight (1.1%) occurred in hospices and 37 (5.2%) occurred at residential addresses or another location (Figure 7).
- The 326 deaths in care homes and hospices involved 76 separate establishments.
- In the week ending 22nd May, 13 (27.7%) of the 47 COVID-19 related deaths were in care homes, down from 51.6% in the week ending 15th May.

¹The majority of deaths are registered within five days in NI; data based on date of death are subject to ongoing change.

²Responsibility for reporting daily death figures moved from the Public Health Agency to the Department of Health on 19th April. Figures based on deaths that occurred up to 15th May but including revisions to 27th May, to account for delayed notifications.

³To aid comparison, the most recent Registrar General Annual Report notes that in 2018, 48% of all deaths occurred in hospital and 19% in care/nursing homes: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/registrar-general-annual-report-2018-deaths>

COVID-19 deaths occurring by place of death

Of the 716 total deaths involving COVID-19 occurring up to 22nd May, 353 (49.3%) occurred in hospital, 318 (44.4%) occurred in care homes, eight (1.1%) occurred in hospices and 37 (5.2%) occurred at residential addresses or another location.

Figure 7: Cumulative number of COVID-19 related deaths occurring by Place of Death in Northern Ireland, to 22nd May 2020

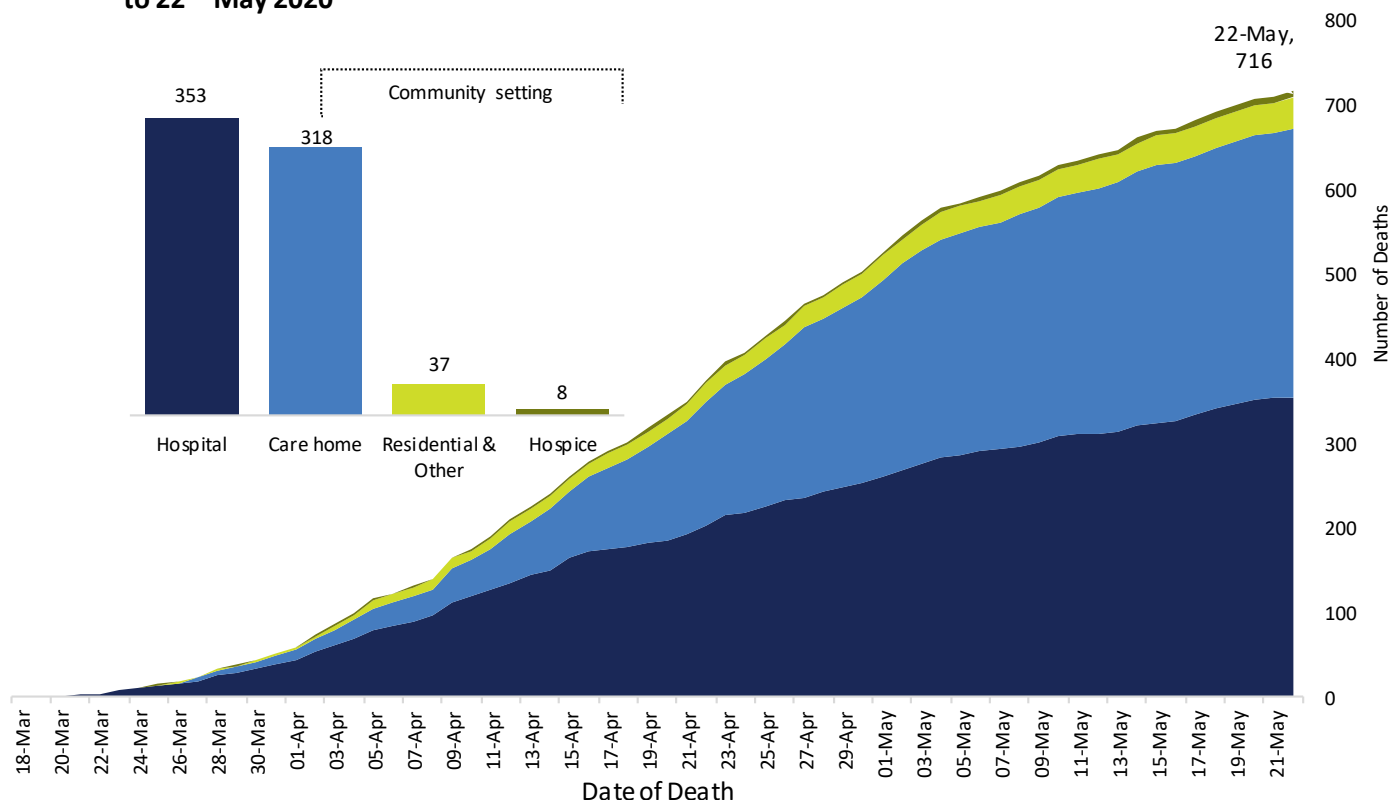


Table 3: Number of COVID-19 related deaths occurring each week, by Place of Death to 22nd May 2020

Week ending	Hospital		Care home ¹		Hospice		Residential & 'Other'		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
20/03/2020	1	100.0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	100%
27/03/2020	17	73.9%	4	17.4%	1	4.3%	1	4.3%	23	100%
03/04/2020	43	70.5%	14	23.0%	1	1.6%	3	4.9%	61	100%
10/04/2020	57	64.0%	25	28.1%	-	-	7	7.9%	89	100%
17/04/2020	57	48.7%	53	45.3%	1	0.9%	6	5.1%	117	100%
24/04/2020	43	37.4%	66	57.4%	-	-	6	5.2%	115	100%
01/05/2020	41	34.5%	72	60.5%	1	0.8%	5	4.2%	119	100%
08/05/2020	37	45.1%	39	47.6%	1	1.2%	5	6.1%	82	100%
15/05/2020	28	45.2%	32	51.6%	1	1.6%	1	1.6%	62	100%
22/05/2020	29	61.7%	13	27.7%	2	4.3%	3	6.4%	47	100%
Total	353	49.3%	318	44.4%	8	1.1%	37	5.2%	716	100%

¹Includes deaths in care homes only. Care home residents who have died in a different location will be counted elsewhere in this table.

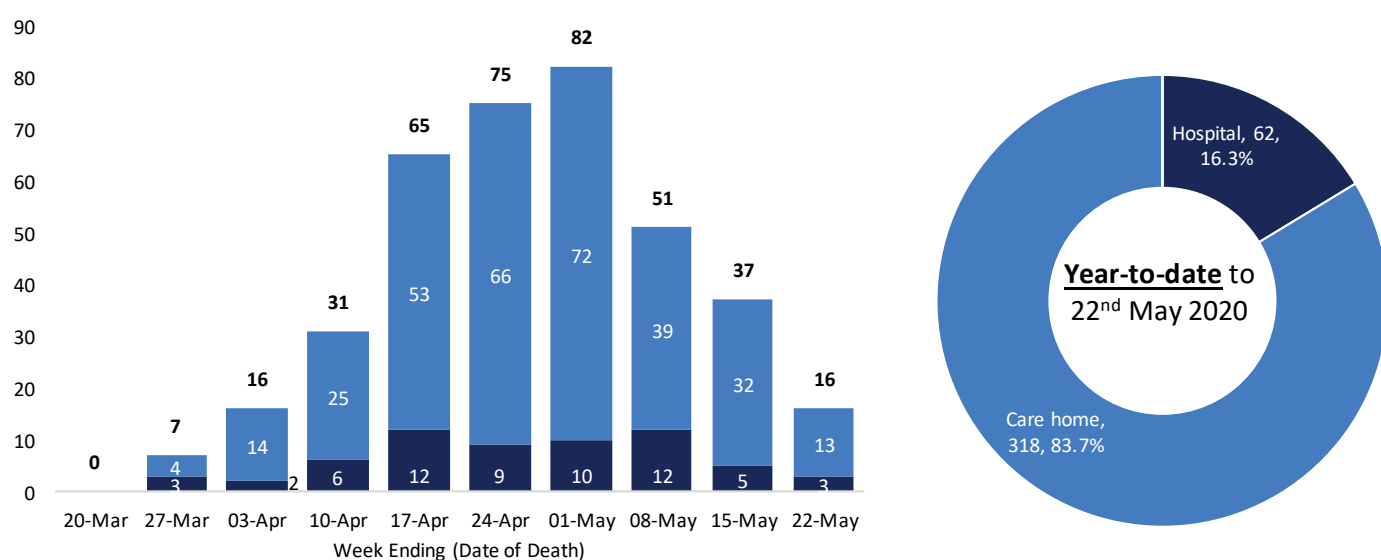
COVID-19 deaths of care home residents by place of death

This section refers to deaths of care home residents, where either (a) the death occurred in a care home, or (b) the death occurred elsewhere but the place of usual residence of the deceased was recorded as a care home. It should be noted that the statistics will not capture those cases where a care home resident died in hospital or another location and the usual address recorded on their death certificate is not a care home.

Based on the definition above, there have been 380 deaths of care home residents involving COVID-19 in the year to date to 22nd May 2020, which is 53.1% of all COVID-19 related deaths. Of the 380 deaths, 83.7% (318) occurred in a care home, with the remaining 62 occurring in hospital (Figure 8).

Of the total deaths involving COVID-19 which occurred in hospital (353) (Table 3), 17.6% (62) were accounted for by care home residents. (Further information in Table 12 of [accompanying spreadsheet](#))

Figure 8: Care home residents: COVID-19 deaths occurring by place of death, weekly and year-to-date 2020



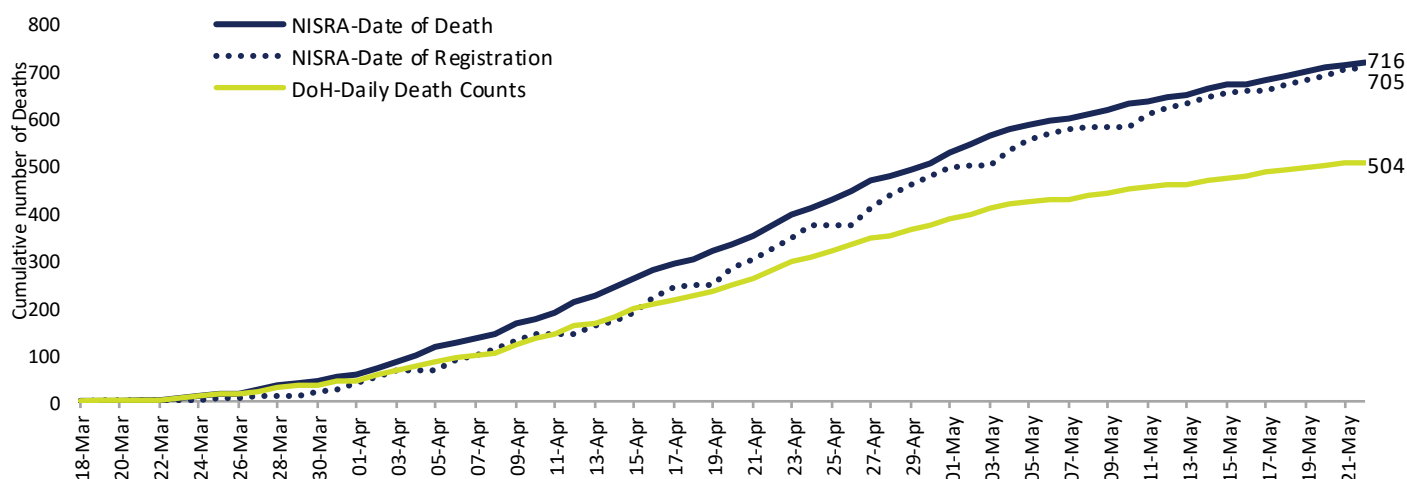
Differences between NISRA's death registration statistics and the Department of Health's daily statistics

- The **daily Northern Ireland Government updates** provided by the Department of Health (DoH) (<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/news>) count the number of deaths reported by health trusts, where the deceased had a positive test for COVID-19 and died within 28 days, whether or not COVID-19 was the cause of death. DoH figures will not capture all deaths that do not meet this definition. These data are important because they are available earlier, and therefore give a quicker indication of what is happening day by day and are broadly comparable with the figures released daily in other parts of the United Kingdom (UK). The DoH **reported 504 deaths associated with COVID-19 by 22nd May 2020**. This figure includes revisions up to 20th May to account for delayed notifications. Responsibility for reporting the daily updates moved from the Public Health Agency (PHA) to the DoH on 19th April.
- NISRA weekly provisional death statistics, which are based on death registration information collected by the General Register Office, count all deaths where COVID-19 was mentioned on the death certificate by the doctor who certified the death, whether or not COVID-19 was the primary underlying cause of death. The figures include cases where the doctor noted that there was suspected or probable coronavirus infection involved in the death. As a result the weekly totals will usually be higher than the relevant daily figures - because the DOH daily updates only include those who have tested positive for the virus. The NISRA figures also include all deaths that occur outside hospital. They are comparable with weekly statistics produced by the Office for National Statistics and National Records Scotland. **NISRA figures published today show the total number of COVID-19 related deaths registered by 22nd May 2020 was 705**. Deaths statistics based on date of registration will be subject to only minimal change.
- However, by analysing the registration based data using the **date the death occurred** (rather than date of registration with the General Register Office), the statistics show that **716 deaths associated with COVID-19 had occurred by 22nd May**. This figure is based on deaths registered up to 27th May 2020 and is the most appropriate figure to use to understand additional deaths beyond those reported via the DoH's daily bulletin. However it is also subject to ongoing change as not all deaths which occurred by 22nd May will have been registered at the time of publishing these statistics.

Figure 9 below graphically demonstrates the cumulative number of deaths involving COVID-19 in Northern Ireland using different data sources up to 22nd May 2020.

The latest NISRA figures show that, by 22nd May 2020, 716 deaths had occurred involving COVID-19, based on registrations up to 27th May 2020. DoH figures available for the same period show a total of 504 deaths.

Figure 9: Cumulative number of deaths involving COVID-19 in Northern Ireland using different data sources up to 22nd May 2020¹



¹Responsibility for reporting daily figures moved from the PHA to the Department of Health on 19th April. These figures are based on deaths that occurred up to 22nd May and include revisions up to 27th May, to account for delayed notifications.

Links to relevant publications

Deaths registered weekly in England & Wales

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths>

Weekly Data on Deaths Registered in Scotland

<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/vital-events/general-publications/weekly-and-monthly-data-on-births-and-deaths-registered-in-scotland>

Vital statistics (Central Statistics Office, Ireland)

<https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/birthsdeathsandmarriages/>

Northern Ireland Department of Health daily COVID-19 figures

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/news> and [daily dashboard](#)

Number of coronavirus (COVID-19) cases and risk in the UK

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

COVID-19 Health Surveillance Monitor (Ireland)

<https://www.gov.ie/en/service/0039bc-view-the-covid-19-coronavirus-dashboard-showing-the-latest-stats-and/>

List of Tables

Data accompanying this bulletin are available from the [NISRA website](#) in Excel format. The spread sheet includes the following tables.

Table 1: Deaths registered each week in Northern Ireland, 2020

Table 2: Deaths registered each week in Northern Ireland, age by sex, 2020

Table 3: Deaths registered in Northern Ireland, by Local Government District (LGD), 2020

Table 4: COVID-19 deaths registered each week in Northern Ireland, age by sex, 2020

Table 5: COVID-19 deaths registered in Northern Ireland, by Local Government District (LGD), 2020

Table 6: COVID-19 deaths registered in Northern Ireland, by place of death, 2020

Table 7: COVID-19 death occurrences by week of death in Northern Ireland, 2020

Table 8: COVID-19 death occurrences in Northern Ireland, by week of death and place of death, 2020

Table 9: COVID-19 deaths of care home residents in Northern Ireland, by place of death

Table 10: COVID-19 death occurrences by date and place of death in Northern Ireland, March-May 2020

Contact Details

We welcome feedback from users, please contact

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