Public Health England
COVID-19 vaccine animations to tackle disinformation
Public Health England has launched a series of animations in a range of languages aimed at tackling disinformation about the COVID-19 vaccine. Aimed specifically at encouraging uptake in ethnic minority groups, the animations are available in 17 different languages and are suitable for use on a wide range of social media platforms. They cover key topics including vaccine safety, how it was tested, how it was developed so quickly, what is in it, and what the side effects are. Files can be downloaded from the campaign resource centre in the form of short clips and also a longer video, and the English versions are also available on YouTube.
Details

Cardiovascular disease prevention packs
These packs estimate the progress of local health economies towards the Public Health England cardiovascular disease prevention, diagnosis and treatment ambitions for hypertension and atrial fibrillation. The packs provide data by CCG and by practice. They also estimate the number of additional patients who need to be treated and diagnosed to meet the national ambitions.
Details

Cancer survival for England
Collection of cancer survival statistics produced by Public Health England
Details

Public Health Matters: Disease Detectives – Finding the UK’s dominant COVID-19 variant and the race to understand its impact
An expert interview on finding the UK’s dominant COVID-19 variant and the race to understand its impact.
Details

Variants of concern or under investigation: data up to 21 April 2021
Significantly: P1 (Manaus) has increased from 40 to 60 total cases B.1.617 (India) has increased from 77 to 132 total cases. B.1.351 (SA) has increased from 600 to 670 total cases
Details

National flu and COVID-19 surveillance report: 22 April 2021 (week 16)

Department of Health and Social Care
9 in 10 pharmacies now offering free, rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) tests
Over 90% of community pharmacies in England now offering free, rapid tests for home use. Rapid, regular testing is now available to everyone in England and the new ‘Pharmacy Collect’ service provides
an additional route to regular testing, making it as easy as possible for people without COVID-19 symptoms to access testing twice a week

Government launches COVID-19 Antivirals Taskforce to roll out innovative home treatments this autumn
Taskforce will search for most promising novel antiviral medicines that can be taken at home and support their development through clinical trials to ensure they can be rapidly rolled out to patients as early as the autumn. The aim is to have at ≥ 2 effective treatments this year.

Further surge testing to be deployed in Birmingham
Additional surge testing and genomic sequencing deployed in Birmingham where a confirmed case of a variant of concern has been identified.

BRIT Awards to go ahead with live audience as latest event in Government research programme
The 2021 BRIT Awards ceremony will go ahead with a live audience as the latest addition to the government’s Events Research Programme.

Coronavirus cases by local authority: epidemiological data, 22 April 2021

Government Office for Science
Latest R number and growth rate
Last updated on 23rd April 2021.
Latest R number range for England
0.8 to 1.0
Latest growth rate range for England
-5% to -1% per day

NHS England and Improvement
NHS Facebook campaign helps 40-plus men prevent Type 2 diabetes
The Facebook adverts will highlight the increased risk among white men of this age and encourage them to sign up for support from the Healthier You NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme to help them to change their lifestyle and avoid the condition.

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence
Neonatal infection: antibiotics for prevention and treatment – guidance (NG195)
Guideline covers preventing and treating bacterial infection in healthy babies from 28 days corrected gestational age and treating pregnant women whose unborn baby is at risk of infection. It aims to reduce delays in treating infection and unnecessary use of antibiotics.
Post-natal care – guidance (NG194)
This guideline covers the routine postnatal care that women and their babies should receive in the first 8 weeks after the birth. It includes the organisation and delivery of postnatal care and identifying and managing common and serious health problems in women and their babies.
Details

Research and analysis from academic journals – non-coronavirus-related
Open Heart: Prevalence and determinants of hypertension control among almost 100 000 treated adults in the UK
This UK population-based study (n=99,468) found only 38.1% of adults with hypertension were controlled (systolic <140mmHg and diastolic <90mmHg). Factors associated with lack of control included older age, higher alcohol use, black ethnicity, and obesity.
Full text

Annals of Internal Medicine: Is Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment Admission Avoidance Hospital at Home an Alternative to Hospital Admission for Older Persons? A Randomized Trial
Study of 1055 older persons (mean age 83.3 years, medically unwell, physiologically stable at 9 hospital and community sites in UK) found admission avoidance with hospital at home with comprehensive geriatric assessment led to similar outcomes as hospital admission at 6 months
Abstract

The Lancet: Children in All Policies 2030
Launched with three objectives; to build coalitions across sectors, advance action on the global climate crisis, and address the problems associated with commercial marketing to improve children's health and wellbeing.
Details

The Lancet Seminar: Alzheimer's disease
By 2050, the prevalence of dementia will double in Europe and triple worldwide, and that estimate is 3 times higher when based on a biological (rather than clinical) definition of Alzheimer's disease.
Details

Research and analysis from academic journals and preprints – coronavirus-related
SSRN (preprint): Enhanced Lateral Flow Testing Strategies in Care Homes Are Associated with Poor Adherence and Were Insufficient to Prevent COVID-19 Outbreaks. Results from a Mixed Methods Implementation Study
DHSC-commissioned project compared outbreaks in care homes that piloted the rapid tests in Liverpool with those in homes in the same area that were not in the pilot. The research found that six of the 11 pilot homes had outbreaks of covid-19 and that only one had a positive result from lateral flow testing before the outbreak.
Full text
MedRxiv (preprint): SARS-CoV-2 infectivity by viral load, S gene variants and demographic 2 factors and the utility of lateral flow devices to prevent transmission

Study modelled how many positive cases picked up through PCR testing as part of the contact tracing system could have been detected with rapid tests. It found that the “most and least sensitive lateral flow tests would detect 89.5% [95% confidence interval 89.4% to 89.6%] and 83.0% [82.8% to 83.1%] of cases with PCR-positive contacts, respectively.”

[Full text](#)


National healthcare databases of the US Dept of Veterans Affairs used to systematically and comprehensively identify 6-month incident sequelae including diagnoses, medication use, and laboratory abnormalities in 30-day survivors of COVID-19. Data from >80,000 people with COVID-19 (most of whom were NOT hospitalised) and 4.9 million controls, shows a dramatic decrease in health affecting multiple organ systems. Analyses of hospitalised patients shows this is far in excess of what occurs with influenza.

[Full text](#)

Oxford University: Impact of vaccination on SARS-CoV-2 cases in the community: a population-based study using the UK’s COVID-19 Infection Survey

Analysis of data from the UK Covid-19 Infection Survey shows vaccination with one dose of the AstraZeneca or Pfizer Covid-19 vaccines reduced the odds of a new Covid-19 infection by 65% (95% CI 60-70%; p<0.001), with no evidence that benefits varied between the two vaccines.

The study found that 21 days after a single dose of either the AstraZeneca or the Pfizer vaccine the rates of all new SARS-CoV-2 infections had fallen by 65% (95% CI 60-70%), symptomatic infections by 72% (69-74%), and asymptomatic infections by 57% (64-47%) (P<0.001 for all).

Among people who had a second dose of the Pfizer vaccine, infections were 70% (62% to 77%; P<0.001) lower and symptomatic infections 90% (82% to 94%; P<0.001) lower, similar to the effects in people who had previously been infected naturally (70% and 87% reductions, respectively).

The study authors commented that the results support the decision to extend the time between the first and second dose to 12 weeks, to maximise initial vaccination coverage. They do however note that the reductions in asymptomatic infections were smaller, highlighting the potential for vaccinated individuals to get Covid-19, and for limited ongoing transmission.

[Full text](#)

Oxford University: The impact of SARS-CoV-2 vaccines on antibody responses in the general population in the United Kingdom

Analysis of data from the UK Covid-19 Infection Survey (n=45,695) found that in those without prior Covid-19 infection, antibody responses to a single dose of the AstraZeneca or Pfizer vaccine were lower in older people, especially those aged over 60 years.

[Full text](#)

The Lancet Infectious Diseases: Diagnostic performance of different sampling approaches for SARS-CoV-2 RT-PCR testing: a systematic review and meta-analysis

Review (23 studies; n=7973 with 16 762 respiratory samples) found that compared with gold standard of nasopharyngeal swabs, pooled nasal and throat swabs offered best diagnostic performance of alternative sampling approaches for diagnosis of SARS-CoV-2 infection in ambulatory care.

[Full text](#)
The pooled nasal and throat swabs gave the highest sensitivity of 97% (95% CI 93–100), whereas lower sensitivities were achieved by saliva (85%, 75–93) and nasal swabs (86%, 77–93) and a much lower sensitivity by throat swabs (68%, 35–94).

Full text

The Lancet Infectious Diseases: Genomic characteristics and clinical effect of the emergent SARS-CoV-2 B.1.1.7 lineage in London, UK: a whole-genome sequencing and hospital-based cohort study
Study (n=496) found emerging evidence of increased transmissibility of B.1.1.7, and increased virus load but no evidence of a link between severe disease and death and lineage (B.1.1.7 vs non-B.1.1.7) in unadjusted or adjusted (hospital/sex/age/comorbidities/ethnicity) analyses.

Full text

The Lancet Infectious Diseases: Safety and immunogenicity of SARS-CoV-2 recombinant protein vaccine formulations in healthy adults: interim results of a randomised, placebo-controlled, phase 1–2, dose-ranging study
Interim analysis of first-in-human evaluation of adjuvanted recombinant protein vaccine against SARS-CoV-2, CoV2 preS dTM (n=441) found that although the vaccine raised antibodies capable of neutralising wild-type SARS-CoV-2 strains in vitro, it had suboptimal immunogenicity.

Full text

The Lancet Infectious Diseases: COVID-19 herd immunity by immunisation: are children in the herd?
Author of this Comment discusses clinical observations relevant for formulating COVID-19 vaccines for deployment in children, from an immunological, public health and ethical perspective, and welcomes the start of efficacy trials in youths aged 12–18 years.

Full text

Early data from v-safe surveillance system, v-safe pregnancy registry, and the VAERS (n=35,691 in US) do not indicate any obvious safety signals with respect to pregnancy or neonatal outcomes associated with Covid-19 vaccination in the third trimester of pregnancy

Full text

Trial (n=39,321) found single dose of Ad26.COV2.S vaccine protected against moderate-severe–critical Covid-19 with onset ≥14 days after administration (116 cases vaccine vs. 348 placebo; efficacy, 66.9%) and ≥28 days after administration (66 vs. 193 cases; efficacy, 66.1%).

Full text

NEJM: Vaccine Breakthrough Infections with SARS-CoV-2 Variants
Report describes two people fully vaccinated with Pfizer–BioNTech or Moderna vaccine, in whom subsequent breakthrough infections with SARS-CoV-2 variants harbouring a number of substitutions of interest developed.

Full text

PNAS: A guideline to limit indoor airborne transmission of COVID-19
New modelling showing that the minimum amount of virus typically needed to become infected is only
10 virus particles. This is an order of magnitude greater than SARS. Without masks and ventilation, physical distancing rapidly becomes inadequate indoors.

Full text

The Lancet Public Health: Mental health and social interactions of older people with physical disabilities in England during the COVID-19 pandemic: a longitudinal cohort study
During the COVID-19 pandemic, significantly more people with ADL impairment had clinically significant symptoms of depression, anxiety, and loneliness than people without ADL impairment. Sleep quality and quality of life were similarly adversely affected.

Full text

Comment: Are older people with disabilities neglected in the COVID-19 pandemic?

Diabetes Care: Diabetes and Overweight/Obesity Are Independent, Nonadditive Risk Factors for In-Hospital Severity of COVID-19: An International, Multicenter Retrospective Meta-analysis
Study (n=7,244; 65.6% overweight/obese) found overweight individuals more likely to require non-invasive (adjusted OR 1.44; 95% CI 1.15–1.80) and invasive mechanical ventilatory support (1.22; 95% CI 1.03–1.46); similar results were seen for patients with obesity and diabetes.

Full text

BMJ Open: Modelling the impact of the tier system on SARS-CoV-2 transmission in the UK between the first and second national lockdowns
Study found tier 3 reduced transmission by 23% (21-25%), tier 2 by 6% (5-7%); tier 1 had negligible effects. The relatively small effect sizes show interventions at least as stringent as tier 3 are required to supress transmission, at least until widespread effective vaccination.

Full text

NEJM: Pathologic Antibodies to Platelet Factor 4 after ChAdOx1 nCoV-19 Vaccination
Report in 23 pts who presented with thrombosis and thrombocytopenia after first dose of Astra Zeneca vaccine notes that 22 were positive for antibodies to platelet factor 4 and advises avoidance of platelet transfusions and consideration of non-heparin anticoagulants and IVIG.

Full text

BMJ Feature: What do we know about India’s Covaxin vaccine?
Article describes the mechanism of action and available evidence for this vaccine, which has had emergency approval in India prior to publication of phase II data and completion of phase II trials.

Full text

BMJ Feature Data Briefing: UK deaths in 2020: how do they compare with previous years?
John Appleby looks at death numbers in England and Wales last year against each year since the mid 19th century. He finds that 2020 was a bad year, with the second highest number of deaths in a year since 1838. Largely excluding the loss of military lives in the two world wars, the most deaths over the past 183 years occurred in 1918 – a year also notable for a pandemic.

Full text

BMJ news analysis: Is the UK heading towards mandatory vaccination of healthcare workers?
Article discusses the pros and cons of mandatory covid vaccines

Full text
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<tr>
<th>BMJ Feature: What the new Health Security Agency means for public health</th>
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<td>Report of a Westminster Health Forum conference where experts debated the future of public health after covid and the agency’s role</td>
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<th>BMJ Briefing: Covid-19: What do we know about airborne transmission of SARS-CoV-2?</th>
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<td>BMJ briefing covers definition, WHO and national governments’ response, prevention, whether masks reduce risk, and how airborne transmission compares outdoors versus indoors.</td>
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<th>BMJ news: Covid-19: Spike in cases in Chile is blamed on people mixing after first vaccine shot</th>
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<td>Chile has one of the most successful vaccine rollouts in the world. However, the transmission rate remains high despite 40% of Chileans having received at least one vaccine dose—the third highest rate in the world after the UK and Israel.</td>
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<th>BMJ news: Covid-19: Unusual blood clots are “very rare side effect” of Janssen vaccine, says EMA</th>
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<td>A possible link exists between very rare cases of unusual blood clots with low blood platelets and the Janssen (Johnson &amp; Johnson) covid-19 vaccine, but the benefits still outweigh the risks.</td>
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<td>Michael Marmot, world expert on social determinants of health, says 10 Downing Street was wrong to pin racial disparities solely on socioeconomic factors. The Sewell report 'misused evidence' to wrongly conclude structural racism does not exist.</td>
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<th>NIHR Dissemination Centre</th>
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<td>NIHR Alert: Mental health care during pregnancy and afterwards: women from some ethnic minority backgrounds face barriers to access</td>
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<td>Expert commentary is provided on research showing that women from Black African, Asian and White Other backgrounds struggle to access services, but once they have accessed the system, they make good use of services. These findings will inform the development of new policies.</td>
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<th>Reuters Health</th>
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<td>British scientists launch trial to expose participants who have already had COVID-19 to coronavirus again</td>
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<td>First stage of trial will seek to establish lowest dose of coronavirus needed in order for it to start replicating in about 50% of participants, while producing few to no symptoms. A second phase, starting in the summer, will infect different volunteers with that standard dose.</td>
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<th>Spain to trial mixing COVID-19 vaccines</th>
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| Trial in Spain aims to recruit 600 people to determine within 28 days whether a second dose of the
Pfizer vaccine can be given to patients who have received the AstraZeneca vaccine. A British study on mixing vaccines was expanded last week to include Moderna and Novavax vaccines.

**Details**

**Positive data from early trial of candidate malaria vaccine announced**
A year-long trial involving 450 children in Burkina Faso found the vaccine (R21/Matrix-M), developed by scientists at the University of Oxford, had 77% efficacy when used with a high dose of adjuvant and 74% when used with a low dose of adjuvant.

**Details**

**Office for National Statistics**

**Number of COVID-19 deaths continues to fall, but death registrations were affected by the Bank Holiday**

*20 April 2021*

There were 379 deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) in England and Wales in the week ending 9 April 2021 – a decrease of 21 deaths compared with the previous week. The number of deaths registered in the week ending 9 April 2021 was affected by the Easter Monday Bank Holiday. There were 9,098 deaths from all causes recorded in the most recent week, which was 11.7% below the five-year average (because of the movement of Easter, Easter Monday may not be included in the average). Around 1 in 25 (4.2%) deaths in the latest week involved COVID-19, the lowest proportion since the week ending 9 October 2020.

**Details**

**The coronavirus (COVID-19) was the third leading cause of death in March 2021 after being the leading cause of death for four consecutive months**

*22 April 2021*

In March, dementia and Alzheimer’s disease were the leading causes of death in England (10.1% of all deaths) and the leading cause of death in Wales was ischaemic heart diseases (11.8% of all deaths). Meanwhile, COVID-19 accounted for 9.2% of all deaths in England and 6.3% of all deaths in Wales.

**Details**

**More people are having contact with others from outside their household**

*22 April 2021*

The proportion of adults reporting socially distanced contact with others from outside their household increased in March 2021. Adults in all four UK nations reported more socially distanced contacts with those aged 18 to 69 years than with people under the age of 18 or 70 years and over. Physical contacts between adults have also increased, although the number of contacts reported was lower. Among school-age children, there have also been increases in socially distanced and physical contacts during March 2021.

**Details**

**The percentage of people with the coronavirus has decreased in most UK countries**

*23 April 2021*

The percentage of people who would have tested positive for the coronavirus (COVID-19) has fallen in...
England, Northern Ireland and Scotland and appears to have been level in Wales.
In England, we estimate that 90,000 people (0.17%) in the community (those not in hospitals, care homes or institutional settings) had COVID-19 in the week ending 16 April 2021; this equates to 1 in 610 people and is a decrease on the 112,600 people we estimated to have had the coronavirus in the week ending 10 April 2021.
In Wales, we estimate that 3,600 people (0.12% or 1 in 840 people) had COVID-19 in the week ending 16 April 2021, similar to the 3,300 people we estimated to have the coronavirus the week before.
In Northern Ireland, an estimated 2,800 people (0.15% or 1 in 660 people) had the coronavirus in the week ending 16 April 2021, similar to the 2,600 people we estimated had the coronavirus in the week ending 10 April 2021, but down from the 6,100 estimated in the week ending 3 April 2021.
In Scotland, we estimate that 9,300 people (0.18% or 1 in 560 people) had COVID-19 in the week ending 16 April 2021, down from 10,500 people in the week ending 10 April 2021.
Because of lower positivity rates, caution should be taken in over-interpreting small movements in the latest trends.

Just over 8 in 10 young people reported positive vaccine sentiment
23 April 2021
During the period 14 to 18 April 2021, 83% of young people (aged 16 to 29 years) reported positive sentiment towards a COVID vaccine, slightly down from 88% last week. This figure includes people who have either received the vaccine, are waiting to be vaccinated, or report being very or fairly likely to have the vaccine if offered.
This change appears to be explained by 8% of young people reporting they are fairly or very unlikely to have the vaccine if offered compared with 4% in the previous week.
Positivity around a vaccine among young people remains considerably higher than at the start of the vaccination programme when 63% of adults aged 16 to 29 years reported positive vaccine sentiment in December 2020.
Across the general population, positive sentiment towards the COVID-19 vaccine remained high (93% compared with 94% the previous week).

The King’s Fund
Developing place-based partnerships: The foundation of effective integrated care systems
Report highlights the potential role of place-based partnerships in improving health and wellbeing and considering how these opportunities can be realised.
It sets out a series of principles to help guide local health and care leaders in these efforts and explores how each principle can be applied, with examples of how they are being put into practice.
A key conclusion of the report is that, as integrated care systems (ICS) move onto a more formal footing with legislation expected imminently, they will need to build up from their constituent places. ICSs should support the development of local place-based partnerships, ensuring they are adequately represented in formal ICS structures and strengthening connections between partners at all levels.

Deaths from Covid-19 (coronavirus): how are they counted and what do they show?
We examine the latest data on deaths from Covid-19 and explore what the numbers to date show
Local Government Association
Coronavirus: information for councils
Useful information for councils on novel coronavirus (COVID-19).
Guidance and resources from the LGA and key partners, as well as the latest official Government information relevant to local government.
Details

LGA responds to Public Accounts Committee report on supporting vulnerable people during lockdown
Protecting the most vulnerable members of our communities has been councils’ number one priority throughout the pandemic.
Details

Case studies:
The London Borough of Havering: Using the COM-B framework to develop a vaccine take up strategy
Hampshire County Council: Worked with the University of Southampton on rapid targeting of audiences including BAME communities to address take up of vaccinations and testing
City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council: Community centred approaches to COVID-19

The Health Foundation
Unemployment and mental health: why both require action for our Covid-19 recovery
This analysis estimates that an increase of 900,000 people in unemployment expected by the end of the year, compared with before the pandemic, will lead to 200,000 more people with poor mental health in the UK. It acknowledges that while government action to reduce a rise in unemployment by extending the furlough scheme to September will support mental health, it suggests that the benefits system and employment support programmes currently fail to properly account for the mental health needs of those who are unemployed. It concludes that there is now an opportunity to ensure that efforts to tackle unemployment in the pandemic recovery are designed to better support mental health.
Details

The Health Creation Alliance
Learning from the community response to Covid-19: how the NHS can support communities to keep people well
This report considers what all community-facing NHS organisations can learn from the community response to Covid-19. The report outlines practical guidance and recommendations to help build a future where people are at the heart of keeping communities well.
Details

Primary care networks and place-based working: addressing health inequalities in a Covid-19 world
This report provides insights from those working to address health inequalities outside the NHS about how primary care, enabled by primary care networks, might access the breadth of potential solutions that are possible when they work in partnership with their communities and local partners.
Details
House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts  
Covid 19: supporting the vulnerable during lockdown  
The Public Accounts Committee found that the UK government failed to reach up to 800 000 clinically extremely vulnerable people who had been added to the shielding list at the start of the pandemic, meaning they could not get support such as food parcels. Nearly half of these people were not reached because of missing or incorrect telephone numbers in NHS records. Local authorities were then asked to contact the people, but the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government still does not know whether the 800 000 people were reached.  
Details

Transparency International UK  
Track and trace: Identifying corruption risks in UK public procurement for the covid-19 pandemic  
Report identified 73 “questionable contracts” worth more than £3.7bn in total that warranted further investigation. Most of these (65), worth £2.9bn, were for personal protective equipment. By value, the 73 contracts accounted for 20% of all reported contracting for the UK’s covid-19 response between February and the end of November 2020.  
Details