

Coronavirus – Friday's figures

Public Health Scotland has published figures showing case numbers which are the highest ever since the beginning of the pandemic.

The First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, held a media briefing earlier on Friday when she explained there was a sharp rise in the number of cases, which have doubled in the last week, and also a rise in the number of people tested.

She said that while vaccination rates are high even among 16 and 17 year olds, around a third of new cases are among people who have been vaccinated.

She also cautioned that while nobody wants to reimpose restoration, and the government is not currently considering a circuit breaker lockdown, the government is keeping a close eye on numbers and she asked everyone to play their part. She reminded people that there are three steps in particular which everyone must take to keep the pandemic under control.

Ms Sturgeon said: "First, if you are eligible and haven't yet done so, please get vaccinated. This remains the single most important thing we can all do to keep each other safe.

"There are drop-in vaccination centres in every mainland health board area – and you can find out details of where they are, on the NHS inform website, or by following local health boards on social media.

“So if you haven’t been vaccinated yet – or if you had your first dose 8 or more weeks ago, and haven’t had a second dose – you can turn up at your nearest centre and get the jab.

“And if you have any doubts about vaccination, go along to a centre anyway – the staff and volunteers there will be able to answer your questions, and talk to you about the process.

“Second, please test yourself regularly. If you do that, then if you have the virus but don’t have symptoms – you have a chance of finding that out before you go out to work or to socialise. Testing yourself therefore makes it less likely that you will inadvertently pass the virus to others.

“You can order free lateral flow tests through the NHS inform website. The tests will then be sent to you in the post, or you can collect them from local pharmacies or test sites.

“If you test positive through one of these lateral flow devices – or if you have symptoms of the virus – make sure that you self-isolate, and book a PCR test. Self-isolation remains a really important way in which we can all slow the spread of the virus.

“And thirdly and finally, please follow the rules and public health guidance which are still in place.

“That’s important for all of us. Even basic steps – wearing face coverings on public transport, and opening a window if you have someone in your house to make sure there is good ventilation – can still make a big difference.

“So please remember it is still a requirement to wear face coverings in certain indoor public places, such as shops, public transport and when entering and moving about in hospitality settings. That’s a simple but important way in which we can protect each other.

“And more generally, it is important in these current

circumstances, we think about how often we're socializing and with how many others, what risks we are running when we go out and about, and the basic steps that reduce those risks.

"Meet outdoors as much as possible.

"If you are indoors, avoid crowded places. And open the windows – the better ventilated a room is, the safer it is.

"Even though it's not the law any more, keep a safe distance from people in other households if you can – especially indoors.

"Continue to minimise physical contact where possible – like handshaking, for example.

"And wash your hands and surfaces regularly and thoroughly.

"If we all comply with all of these measures, we will help limit the spread of Covid.

"We will make ourselves and our loved ones safer.

"And we can maintain the progress that we have made, and to keep on living more freely."

If you wish to see the figures up to 3 August for each day (with some highs and lows from the past few months) then please read this article [here](#), but for the sake of brevity this article now has August information only.

Scotland has now moved beyond Level 0 but the legal requirement for wearing masks in indoor settings is to be retained largely as it has been.

Deaths involving Covid-19 for Week 33: 16 – 22 August 2021

As at 22 August, 10,505 deaths have been registered in

Scotland where the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) was mentioned on the death certificate, according to statistics published today by National Records of Scotland (NRS).

In the week 16 – 22 August, 41 deaths were registered that mentioned COVID-19 on the death certificate, the same number as last week.

12 deaths were of people aged under 65, six were people aged 65-74 and there were 23 deaths of people aged 75 or over. 28 deaths were male, 13 were female.

City of Edinburgh, Fife, Scottish Borders and South Lanarkshire had the highest numbers of deaths at council level last week with four each. In total, 20 council areas had at least one death last week.

The number of deaths from all causes registered in Scotland in this week was 1,163 – 171, or 17%, more than the five year average.

Pete Whitehouse, Director of Statistical Services, said: “The latest figures show that last week there were 41 deaths where COVID-19 was mentioned on the death certificate. This represents no change from the previous week.”

“Deaths from all causes were 17% higher than the five year average – the 13th week in a row where we have seen a higher than average number of deaths.”

Beyond Level 0

The legal requirement for physical distancing and limits on gatherings has been removed from Monday 9 August when all venues across Scotland are able to re-open.

Some protective measures will stay in place such as the use of face coverings indoors and the collection of contact details as part of Test and Protect. Capacity limits of 2000 people

indoors and 5000 people outdoors will also remain in place although some exceptions may be possible on a case by case basis. These will be reviewed on a three weekly basis to ensure they remain proportionate.

Adults identified as close contacts of someone who has tested positive for Covid-19 will also no longer be automatically required to self-isolate for 10 days from 9 August. Anyone who is double-vaccinated with at least two weeks passed since their second dose and who has no symptoms will be able to end self-isolation if they return a negative PCR test. The same conditions will also apply to anyone aged between five and 17 years old, even if they have not been vaccinated. The requirement to take a PCR test will not apply to children under the age of five.

Test and Protect will also implement revised guidance for under 18s. This means that the blanket isolation of whole classes in schools will no longer happen and a targeted approach, that only identifies children and young people who are higher risk close contacts, will be adopted. Fewer young people will have to self-isolate, and most will be asked to self-isolate for a much shorter period of time. To allow time to monitor the impacts of these changes, the majority of the mitigations that were in place in schools in the previous term will be retained for up to six weeks. This will help support a safe and sustainable return to education after the summer break.

While the gateway condition on vaccination has been met, with 92% of those over the age of 40 protected by two doses of the vaccine, there are still many more people who have not had the vaccine, cannot have it, or are not yet eligible for it. Invitations for vaccines are now going out to 12 to 17 year olds with specific health conditions that make them more vulnerable to Covid. This follows the recent advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation. The government expects to have offered first doses to this group

by the end of August.

The JCVI has now recommended vaccination to young people aged 16 and 17.