

Statement from the National Public Health Emergency Team - Thursday 31 December

From [Department of Health](#)

Published on 31 December 2020

Last updated on 4 January 2021

- [1. Hospital statistics](#)
- [2. Gender of patients](#)
- [3. Age range affected](#)
- [4. How COVID-19 is spreading](#)
- [5. Hospitalised cases by age group](#)
- [6. Cases by county](#)
- [7. Slides from press conference](#)

The Health Protection Surveillance Centre has today been notified of 12 additional deaths related to COVID-19.

There has been a total of 2,237* COVID-19 related deaths in Ireland.

(*Validation of data at the HPSC has resulted in the denotification of 1 death. The figure of 2,237 deaths reflects this.)

As of midnight Wednesday 30 December, the HPSC has been notified of 1,620 confirmed cases of COVID-19. There has now been a total of 91,779* * confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Ireland.

(**Validation of data at the HPSC has resulted in the reclassification of 2 probable cases to confirmed. The figure of 91,779 confirmed cases reflects this.)

Of the cases notified today:

- 794 are men and 819 are women
- 65% are under 45 years of age
- the median age is 34 years old
- 498 in Dublin, 203 in Limerick, 89 in Galway, 73 in Cork, 67 in Mayo and the remaining 690 cases are spread across all other counties

As of 2pm today, 490 COVID-19 patients are hospitalised, of which 42 are in ICU. There have been 58 additional hospitalisations in the past 24 hours.

Dr Tony Holohan, Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health said:

“We are once again in the mitigation stage of this pandemic. The alarming escalation in the incidence of the virus in the general population gives great cause for concern. This disease is now widespread in our communities and as a result we are asking everyone to behave as if they are a close contact.

“To support the testing system through this surge, we are no longer advising close contacts of confirmed cases to get tested. Testing and tracing is an exercise in containment and we are no longer in a containment phase. However, it is imperative that if you are a close contact of a confirmed case you restrict your movements and contact your GP immediately if you develop symptoms.

“The average number of contacts per case has risen from 2.5 in November to an average in recent days of 6.3. This is very far from where we need to be and I am appealing to everyone at every age to adhere to the mandated restrictions that the government has introduced – stay at home, except for essential reasons, other than for exercise up to 5km.”

Dr Colm Henry, Chief Clinical Officer, HSE, said:

“The pressure on our public health system, including testing and tracing services is not sustainable. A collective response by every individual, across every county, to follow the public health advice is essential to address the recent acceleration in case numbers that we are now seeing. The reintroduction of Level 5 restrictions is essential to protect our vital public services such as hospital admissions and non-COVID care and to have the maximum impact in shortest possible timeframe to minimise the spread of this disease.”

Dr Ronan Glynn, Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health said:

“While we are currently in a very serious situation, we are not powerless against COVID-19. The best tool we have right now is each other. We have shown on multiple occasions that we can act collectively to break chains of transmission, reduce the intensity of this epidemic and slow down the increase in cases.

“As we look to the New Year, we remember the 2,237 people who have sadly died with COVID-19 in Ireland in 2020, along with all of their families and loved ones who are grieving their loss. Let’s do all we can to ensure that as few families as possible are similarly impacted in 2021.”

Prof. Philip Nolan, Chair of the NPHET Irish Epidemiological Modelling Advisory Group said:

“The epidemiological situation is very serious and the virus is spreading rapidly amongst all age groups, increasing the risk to those most vulnerable to severe infection, such as the medically vulnerable and people over 60 years of age. The reproduction number is at least 1.6-1.8. The daily growth rate is estimated now at 7%-10% giving a doubling time of 7-10 days or less.

“We project significant further increase in cases and hospitalisations in the coming days before public health measures take effect and are likely to see over 700-1000 people in hospital with COVID-19 early in the New Year. While it is difficult to face into further

restrictions, it is vital that everyone plays their part by following the public health advice to protect those most vulnerable in the population.”

Prof. Karina Butler, Chair of the National Immunisation Advisory Committee said:

“The roll out of our national vaccination programme is underway with our first priority to focus on residents of nursing homes and front line healthcare staff. Once additional COVID-19 vaccines have been authorised, it will be possible to increase the capacity of vaccine availability across the country. The vaccine is a vital tool in our strategy to protect us against COVID-19 infection and it goes hand in hand with the public health measures on handwashing, social distancing and staying at home. We need to hold firm now and collectively we can bring the virus numbers down swiftly and protect our vital public services.”

The [COVID-19 Dashboard](#) provides up-to-date information on the key indicators of COVID-19 in the community.

ENDS

Today’s cases, 14-day incidence rate per 100,000 population and new cases in last 14 days (as of midnight 30 December 2020) (incidence rate based on Census 2016 county population)

County	Today’s Cases (to midnight 30/12/20)	14-Day incidence rate per 100,000 population (14 days to midnight 30/12/20)	New Cases during last 14 days (14 days to midnight 30/12/20)
Ireland	1,620	296.7	14,128
Monaghan	34	553.9	340
Donegal	51	532.1	847
Louth	56	529.9	683
Limerick	203	495.1	965
Wexford	58	390.1	584
Cavan	40	342.6	261
Kilkenny	29	335.6	333
Dublin	498	334.4	4,506
Sligo	29	311.3	204
Meath	62	292.2	570
Kerry	16	289.1	427
Carlow	29	279	159
Laois	50	269.2	228
Mayo	67	252.9	330
Cork	73	241.7	1,312
Clare	51	221.4	263
Galway	89	214.7	554
Kildare	20	209.4	466

Waterford	37	208.3	242
Westmeath	18	187	166
Wicklow	18	147.5	210
Offaly	28	130.8	102
Tipperary	32	129.1	206
Longford	18	127.2	52
Roscommon	9	127.1	82
Leitrim	5	112.4	36

- 7-day incidence is 182.9
- 5-day moving average is 1,279

Hospital statistics

Total number of cases	90,159
Total number hospitalised	5,987
Total number admitted to ICU	673
Total number of deaths	1,965
Total number of healthcare workers	13,336
Number clusters notified	10,648
Cases associated with clusters	44,802
Median age	38

*All statistics measured at midnight on Tuesday 29 December.

Gender of patients

Gender	Number of cases
Male	42,852
Female	47,238
Unknown	68
Total	90,159

*All statistics measured at midnight on Tuesday 29 December.

Age range affected

Age range	Number of cases
0 - 4	2,507
5 - 14	6,172
15 - 24	15,901
25 - 34	15,461

35 - 44	14,168
45 - 54	13,421
55 - 64	9,634
65 - 74	5,064
75 - 84	4,235
85+	3,565
Unknown	31

*All statistics measured at midnight on Tuesday 29 December.

How COVID-19 is spreading

Transmission classification	%
Community transmission	32.4
Close contact with confirmed case	62.5
Travel abroad	1.3
Unknown	3.9

*All statistics measured at midnight on Tuesday 29 December.

Note:

When a person tests positive for COVID-19 but hasn't been abroad or had a known contact with another confirmed case in Ireland, that's known as community transmission.

In the event that a person who tests positive for COVID-19 can be linked to another confirmed case in Ireland, that's known as close contact.

Hospitalised cases by age group

Age range	Number of cases
0 - 4	61
5 - 14	63
15 - 24	219
25 - 34	379
35 - 44	469
45 - 54	744
55 - 64	855
65 - 74	1,066
75 - 84	1,317
85+	812
Unknown	2

*All statistics measured at midnight on Tuesday 29 December.

Cases by county

County	Number of cases	Change since the day before
Carlow	871	+19
Cavan	2,533	+66
Clare	1,745	+40
Cork	7,836	+169
Donegal	4,230	+150
Dublin	32,681	+458
Galway	3,290	+112
Kerry	1,838	+30
Kildare	4,714	+43
Kilkenny	1,557	+56
Laois	1,293	+23
Leitrim	306	+4
Limerick	3,845	+81
Longford	753	+4
Louth	23,066	+154
Mayo	1,824	+66
Meath	4,065	+96
Monaghan	1,656	+44
Offaly	1,312	+14
Roscommon	1,059	+7
Sligo	959	+31
Tipperary	1,835	+25
Waterford	1,347	+26
Westmeath	1,711	+29
Wexford	1,866	+52
Wicklow	1,901	+20

*All statistics measured at midnight on Tuesday 29 December.