

Provisional statistics

Statistical bulletin

Weekly Deaths in Northern Ireland

Death Registration Statistics including Covid-19 by Date of Death

Week ending 7 January 2022 (Week 1)

Summary

- This bulletin provides details on the provisional number of deaths registered in Northern Ireland during the dates 1 January to 7 January 2022 (referred to as week 1).
- Provisional estimates show that 416 deaths were registered in Northern Ireland in week 1 of 2022, fewer deaths (-30) than typically registered in the same week in recent years.
- Twenty-nine deaths mentioning Covid-19 on the death certificate were registered in week 1.
- Overall, 4,060 Covid-19 related deaths had occurred (section 2) in Northern Ireland by 7 January, 26 of which occurred in the week ending 7 January.

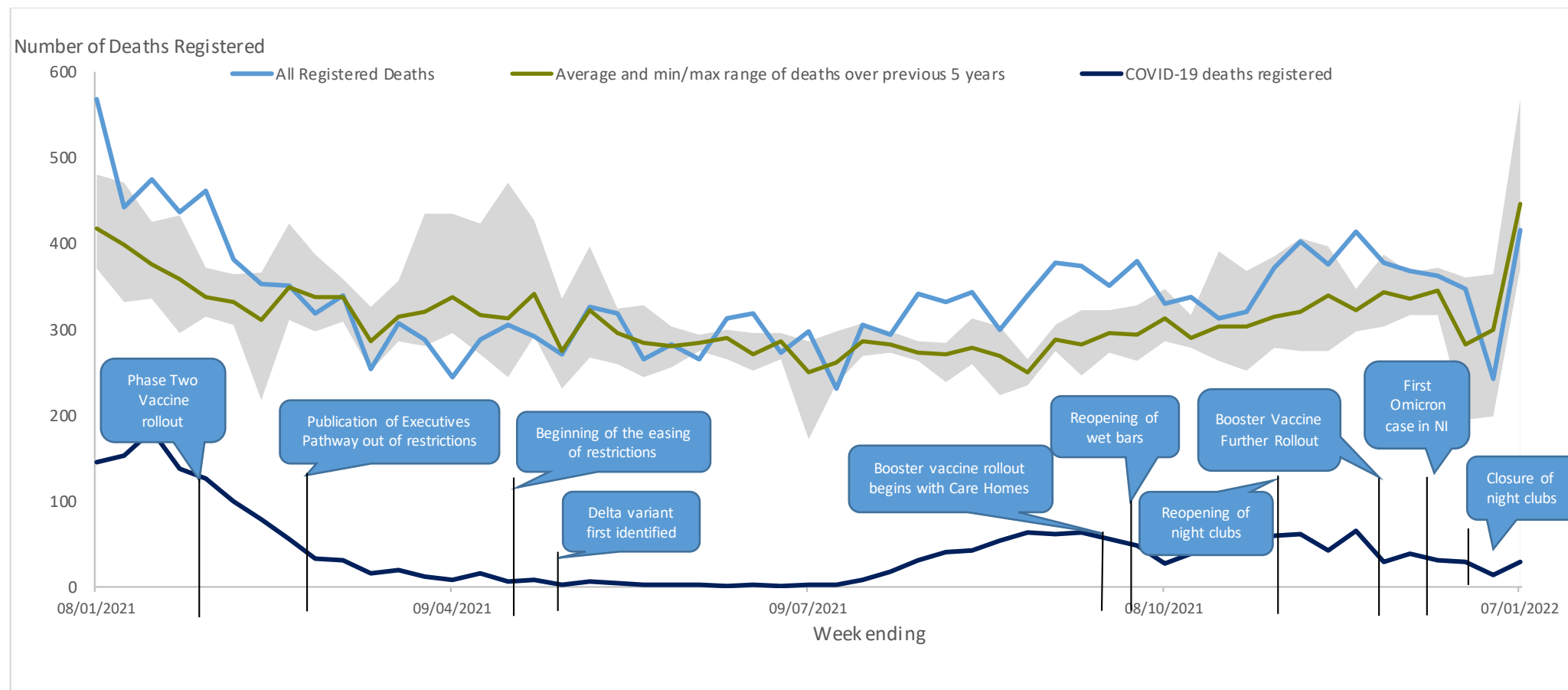
Contents

Summary	1
Section 1: Deaths by Date of Registration.....	3
Key Points – Date of Registration	4
Background	5
Latest death registration statistics.....	6
Table 1: All Deaths registered ¹ weekly in Northern Ireland from week 1 of 2021 to 7 January 2022 ^P	6
Table 2: Covid-19 deaths registered ¹ weekly in Northern Ireland from week 1 of 2021 to 7 January 2022 ^P	6
Figure 2: Weekly number of deaths registered above or below previous 5-year average* from the start of the pandemic in Northern Ireland.....	7
Deaths registered by sex.....	8
Figure 3: All deaths and Covid-19 related deaths registered by sex from 19 March 2020 to 7 January 2022	8
Deaths registered by age-group.....	8
Figure 4: All deaths and Covid-19 related deaths registered by age-group from 19 March 2020 to 7 January 2022	8
Deaths registered by Local Government District.....	9
Table 3: All deaths and Covid-19 related deaths registered by LGD from 19 March 2020 to 7 January 2022 .	10
Section 2: Covid-19 Related Deaths by Date of Death.....	11
Key Points –Covid-19 related deaths based on date of death ¹	11
Covid-19 deaths occurring by place of death	13
Covid-19 related deaths of care home residents by place of death.....	15
Differences between NISRA’s death registration statistics and the Department of Health’s daily statistics	16
Links to relevant publications.....	18
List of Tables	18
Contact Details.....	18

Section 1: Deaths by Date of Registration

In week 1 of 2022, there were fewer deaths registered in Northern Ireland than there have typically been in the same week in recent years (based on the average number of deaths registered in the corresponding week for 2017 to 2021).

Figure 1: Weekly number of deaths registered in Northern Ireland



Note: The average over 5 years shown in the chart relate to 2016-2020 for all data points up to 31 December 2021 and to 2017-2021 thereafter. Data for 2020 are available from the [Historical Weekly Deaths tables](#).

[Download data for week 1 charts](#)

Key Points – Date of Registration

- The provisional number of total deaths registered in Northern Ireland in the week ending 7 January 2022 (week 1) was 416, 173 more than the previous week (243) and 30 less than the 2017-2021 5 year average (446) (Table 1).
- Twenty-nine deaths mentioning Covid-19 on the death certificate were registered in week 1 of 2022, accounting for 7.0% of all deaths registered in that week. This is an increase of 15 from the previous week.
- The total number of Covid-19 related deaths registered from the start of the pandemic was 4,042 by 7 January 2022.
- From the start of the pandemic (from the first Covid-19 related death being registered on 19 March 2020) to 7 January 2022, males and females accounted for relatively equal proportions of all deaths registered (males: 50.1%, females: 49.9%), however, males accounted for a higher proportion of Covid-19 related deaths registered (males: 53.2%; female 46.8%). (Figure 3).
- Since the beginning of the pandemic to 7 January 2022, the 75 years and over age-group accounted for almost two-thirds (65.1%) of all deaths and three-quarters (73.3%) of Covid-19 related deaths (Figure 4).
- Over the period of the pandemic, Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon and Mid-Ulster Local Government Districts have had higher proportions of Covid-19 related deaths (12.3% and 8.2% respectively) compared with their share of all deaths in Northern Ireland (10.3% and 6.6% respectively).

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 2021.

To meet user needs, NISRA publishes 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. The report continues to be supplemented with information on the number of Covid-19 deaths (where Covid-19 or suspected Covid-19 was mentioned anywhere on the death certificate, including in combination with other health conditions).

Provisional Data

Data provided in this bulletin are provisional and subject to change. There may, therefore, be discrepancies with data previously published in light of reviews of individual cases which impact on recorded cause of death.

Impact of Covid-19 on 5-year average comparisons

Excess deaths are calculated by comparing the current year to the five-year average from previous years. This is based on the number of death registrations recorded for each corresponding week in the previous five years. Usually, the previous five years are used to compare against the most recent year to assist understanding of excess deaths, thus in 2020, excess deaths were measured by comparing the 2020 figure against the average for 2015-2019. For 2021 the comparative years were 2016-2020, with an additional four-year average of 2016-2019 shown to directly compare the excess deaths without the impact of the pandemic. For 2022, NISRA have used the 2017-2021 average within this report; tables also provide an average using the years 2016-2019 and 2021, to facilitate comparisons across the rest of the UK. See associated [spreadsheets](#).

Data over Public Holidays

The number of deaths registered in 2021 Weeks 1, 11, 14 and 15, 18, 19, 22, 28, 35, 51 and 52, and week 1 of 2022 were affected by the public holidays at St Patrick's Day, Easter, early and late May, July, August, Christmas and New Year. Registrations for weeks following a bank holiday may be higher than normal as registrars deal with backlogs from the previous weeks. Care should therefore be taken in interpreting weekly data around the occurrence of bank holidays as it may not give a reliable indication of the trend.

Background Changes to the death certification and registration process during the Covid-19 pandemic

During the Covid-19 pandemic, a number of changes have been made to the usual process of certifying and registering a death which have been enabled by the Coronavirus Act 2020. More detail is available from the [Department of Health website](#). This includes guidance to medical practitioners on how to complete the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) in Covid-19 related cases. It also provides information on who can complete the MCCD, upon which these weekly statistics are based.

The process by which an informant registers a death has also been adapted. Usual practice is that the informant attends their local Registration Office to register a death, bringing the MCCD with them. During the pandemic, the MCCD can be sent to the General Register Office (GRO) electronically, directly from the hospital or General Practitioner certifying the death. Information required from the informant can be provided to GRO by telephone and no signature is required from the informant.

* **Bank Holidays or system unavailability could affect the number of registrations made within certain weeks.**

Latest death registration statistics

Table 1 shows that the provisional number of deaths registered in Northern Ireland in the week ending 7 January 2022 (week 1) was 416; 173 more (+58.4%) than in week 52 (243), and 30 less than the 5-year average for corresponding weeks in 2017-2021 (446).

Table 1: All Deaths registered¹ weekly in Northern Ireland from week 1 of 2022^P

Registration week	Week ending on Friday	Total number of deaths registered by week 2022	Average number of deaths registered in corresponding week 2017 to 2021	Minimum number of deaths ³ registered between 2017 to 2021	Maximum number of deaths ⁴ registered between 2017 to 2021	Number of excess deaths registered in the year to date above the 2017 to 2021 five year average
1	07 Jan 2022	416	446	371	568	-30
	2022 TOTAL	416	446			-30

Note: Data for previous years are available from the [Historical Weekly Deaths tables](#).

^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 The 5-year average is not a whole number so comparisons with 2022 week-on-week can vary by up to one death due to rounding.

³ In **green**, where total weekly deaths are less than the five year weekly minimum.

⁴ In **blue**, where total weekly deaths have exceeded the five year weekly maximum.

Table 2 shows that the total number of death registrations mentioning Covid-19 on the death certificate in week 1 was 29. This is an increase of 15 deaths from the previous week. This equates to 7.0% of all deaths registered in week 1. Since the beginning of the pandemic, 4,042 Covid-19 related deaths have been registered, which equates to 12.7% of all deaths registered since 19 March 2020.

Table 2: Covid-19 deaths registered¹ weekly in Northern Ireland from week 1 of 2022^P

Registration Week	Week ending on Friday	Total number of deaths registered in week	Covid-19 ² deaths registered in week	Proportion of deaths related to Covid-19 (%)
1	07 Jan 2022	416	29	7.0
	2022 TOTAL	416	29	7.0
	TOTAL since Pandemic⁴	31,840	4,042	12.7

Note: Data for previous years are available from the [Historical Weekly Deaths tables](#)

^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.

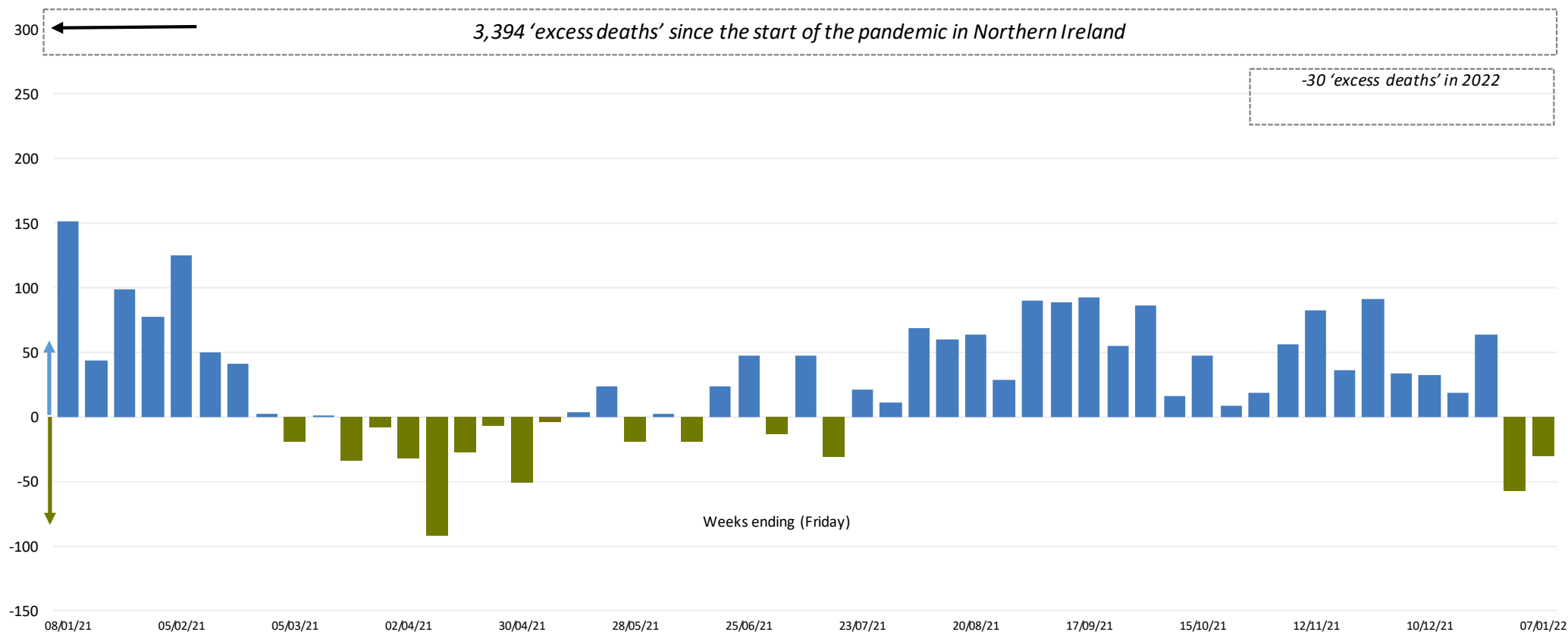
² Covid-19 deaths include any death where Coronavirus or Covid-19 (suspected or confirmed) was mentioned anywhere on the death certificate.

³ Figures may not sum due to rounding.

⁴ First registration of Covid-19 related death was 19 March 2020 (week 11)

So far in 2022, there have been -30 excess deaths compared with the 5-year average for corresponding weeks in 2017-2021. Since the beginning of the pandemic, there have been 3,394 net excess deaths.

Figure 2: Weekly number of deaths registered above or below previous 5-year average* from the start of the pandemic in Northern Ireland



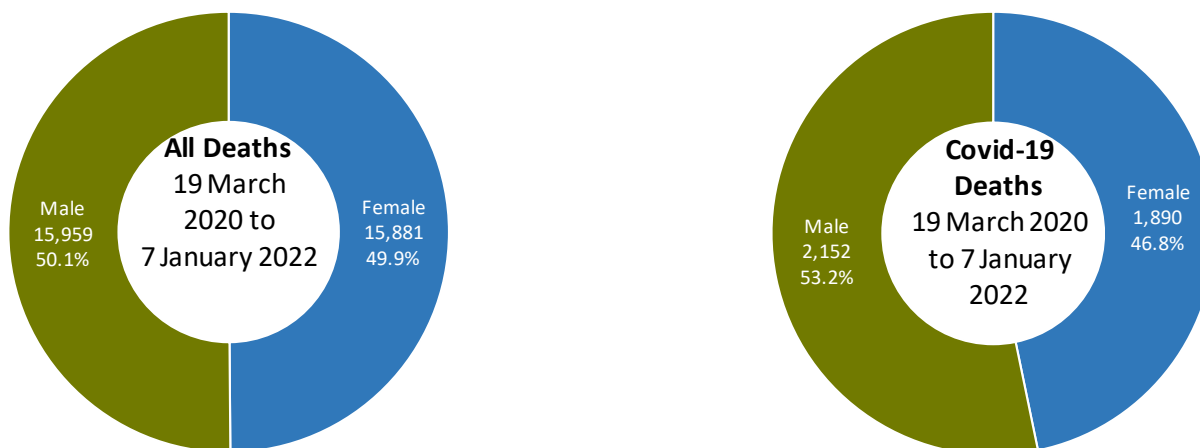
*Note: The 5 year average used in the chart relates to 2016-2020 for all data points up to 31 December 2021, and to 2017-2021 thereafter. Statistics for the full time series starting from 18March 2020 are available in the [Historical Weekly Deaths tables](#)

[Download data for week 1 charts](#)

Deaths registered by sex

Since the first Covid-19 related death was registered on 19 March 2020 until 7 January 2022, males and females accounted for relatively equal proportions of all deaths registered (males: 50.1% (15,959), females: 49.9% (15,881)); however, a higher proportion of Covid-19 related deaths registered are accounted for by males (males: 53.2% (2,152); female 46.8% (1,890)). A weekly breakdown by sex is provided in the [accompanying spreadsheet](#).

Figure 3: All deaths and Covid-19 related deaths registered by sex from 19 March 2020 to 7 January 2021

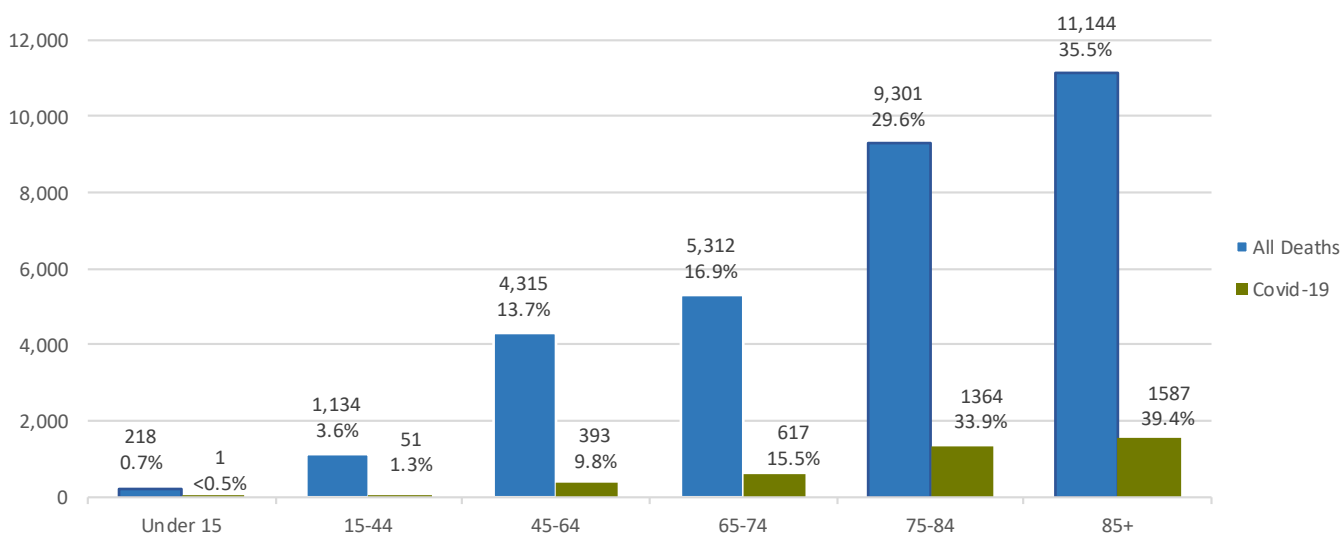


[Download data for week 1 charts](#)

Deaths registered by age-group

From the start of the pandemic to 7 January 2022, the 75 years and over age-group accounted for almost two-thirds (65.1%, or 20,717) of all deaths and just under three-quarters (73.3%, or 2,964) of Covid-19 related deaths. A weekly breakdown by age is provided in the [accompanying spreadsheet](#)

Figure 4: All deaths and Covid-19 related deaths registered by age-group from 19 March 2020 to 7 January 2022

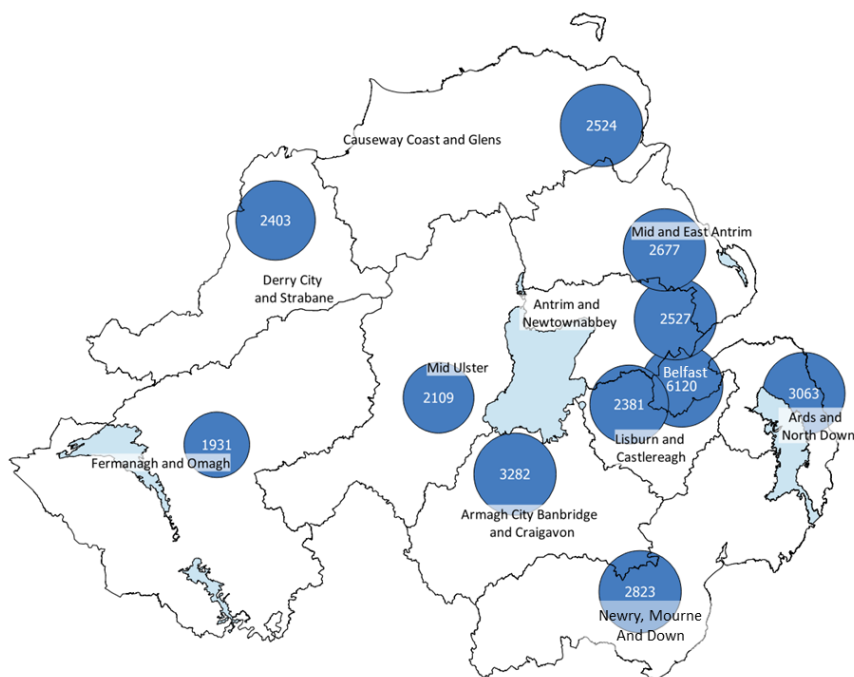


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Deaths registered by Local Government District

Those with an address* in Belfast Local Government District (LGD) accounted for almost one in five of all 31,840 deaths registered from the start of the pandemic to 7 January 2022 (6,120; 19.2%).

Figure 5: All deaths registered by LGD*: 19 March 2020 to 7 January 2022



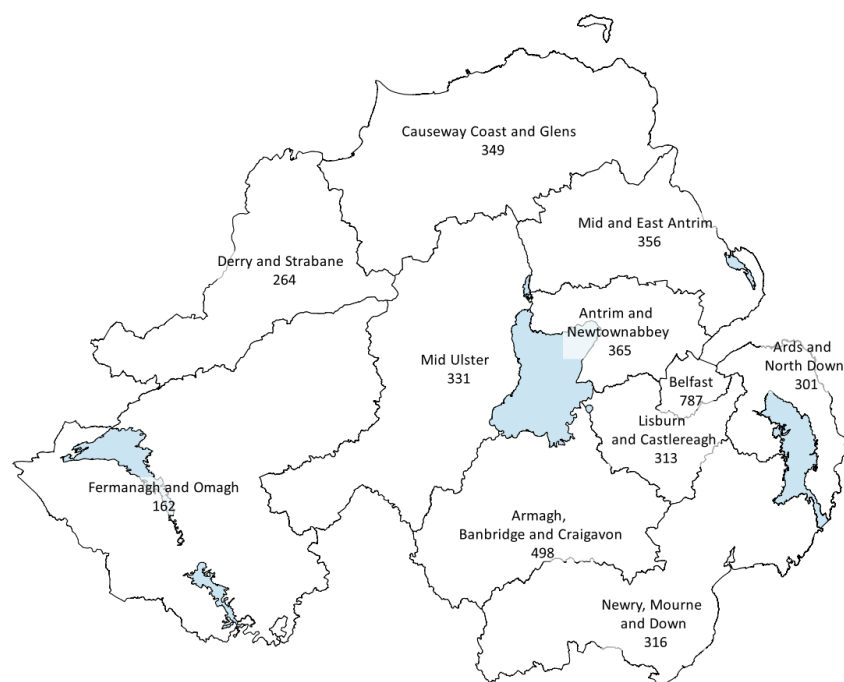
* The LGD data provided are based on the usual address of the deceased, recorded on the death certificate. Where the deceased was usually resident in NI and a home address was provided, the deceased's usual postcode has been mapped to a LGD area. If the usual address was not provided or the deceased was usually resident outside of Northern Ireland, the place of death address is used (this is approximately 0.4% of deaths per year).

Age standardised mortality rates for the period March 2020 – October 2021 are available at [Covid-19 Related Deaths in Northern Ireland | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/covid-19-related-deaths-in-northern-ireland)

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For all Covid-19 related deaths since the start of the pandemic, Fermanagh & Omagh LGD had the fewest registered over the period 19 March 2020 – 7 January 2022 (162), and Belfast had the most registered in the same period (787).

Figure 6: Covid-19 related deaths registered by LGD: 19 March 2020 to 7 January 2022



* Table 8 in the [accompanying spreadsheet](#) shows the numbers of weekly registered Covid-19 deaths which took place in care homes, disaggregated by Local Government District.

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Table 3 shows the share of Northern Ireland deaths across LGDs and the share of all Covid-19 registered deaths since the start of the pandemic (note that the percentages may not sum to 100 in the % of deaths and % of Covid deaths columns due to rounding). Ards & North Down and Fermanagh & Omagh both have relatively low shares of registered Covid-19 related deaths (7.4% and 4.0% of all Covid-19 related deaths respectively) when compared to the proportion of total Northern Ireland deaths registered in those areas (2.2 and 2.1 percentage points lower respectively).

Conversely, Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon and Mid-Ulster have higher proportions of Covid-19 related deaths compared with their share of all deaths in Northern Ireland (2.0 and 1.6 percentage points higher respectively).

Table 3: All deaths and Covid-19 related deaths registered by LGD from 19 March 2020 to 7 January 2022

Local Government District	Number of all deaths	% of all deaths	Number of Covid deaths	% of Covid deaths	% Difference in share of Covid-19 related deaths and all deaths (pps)
Antrim and Newtownabbey	2,527	7.9%	365	9.0%	1.1%
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	3,282	10.3%	498	12.3%	2.0%
Belfast	6,120	19.2%	787	19.5%	0.2%
Causeway Coast & Glens	2,524	7.9%	349	8.6%	0.7%
Derry City & Strabane	2,403	7.5%	264	6.5%	-1.0%
Fermanagh & Omagh	1,931	6.1%	162	4.0%	-2.1%
Lisburn & Castlereagh	2,381	7.5%	313	7.7%	0.3%
Mid & East Antrim	2,677	8.4%	356	8.8%	0.4%
Mid Ulster	2,109	6.6%	331	8.2%	1.6%
Newry, Mourne & Down	2,823	8.9%	316	7.8%	-1.0%
Ards & North Down	3,063	9.6%	301	7.4%	-2.2%
Total	31,840	100.0%	4,042	100.0%	

Section 2: Covid-19 Related Deaths by Date of Death

This section of the bulletin provides provisional, updated totals of Covid-19 related **deaths occurring (based on the date of death)** from 18 March 2020 to 7 January 2021, including those registered up to and including 12 January. Overall, 4,060 Covid-19 related deaths had occurred in Northern Ireland by 7 January, 26 of which occurred in the week ending 7 January. Figure 7 contains a 7-day moving average showing the trend in Covid-19 deaths by smoothing daily fluctuations.

Key Points –Covid-19 related deaths based on date of death¹

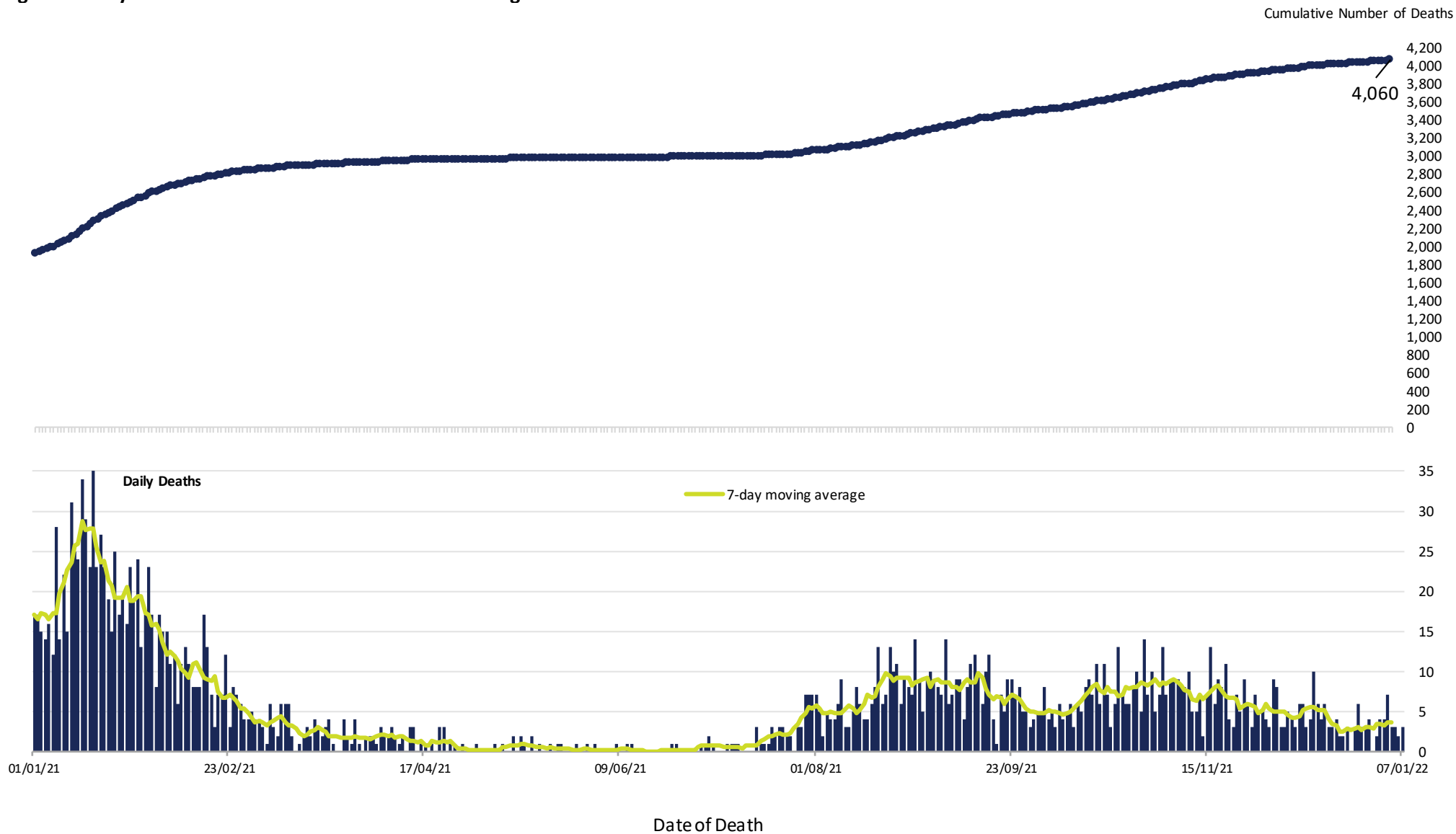
- 4,060 deaths mentioning Covid-19 on the death certificate have occurred in total from 18 March 2020 to 7 January 2022 (including those registered up to and including 12 January). The comparative number of deaths reported by the Department of Health (DoH) to 7 January was 3,006 (see page 16 for definitions).
- At time of reporting, 26 Covid-19 related deaths had occurred in week ending 7 January.
- Of these 4,060 deaths involving Covid-19, 2,836 (69.9%) occurred in hospital³, 871 (21.5%) occurred in care homes, 16 (0.4%) occurred in hospices and 337 (8.3%) occurred at residential addresses or another location (Figure 8). (see Table 11 of [accompanying spreadsheet](#))

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 19 April 2020. Figures based on deaths that occurred up to 7 January 2022 but including revisions up to 12 January 2022, to account for delayed notifications.

³To aid comparison, the most recent Registrar General Annual Report notes that in 2020, 42% of all deaths occurred in hospital and 20% in care/ nursing homes: [2020 Registrar General Annual Report](#)

Figure 7: Daily and cumulative number of deaths involving COVID-19 in Northern Ireland

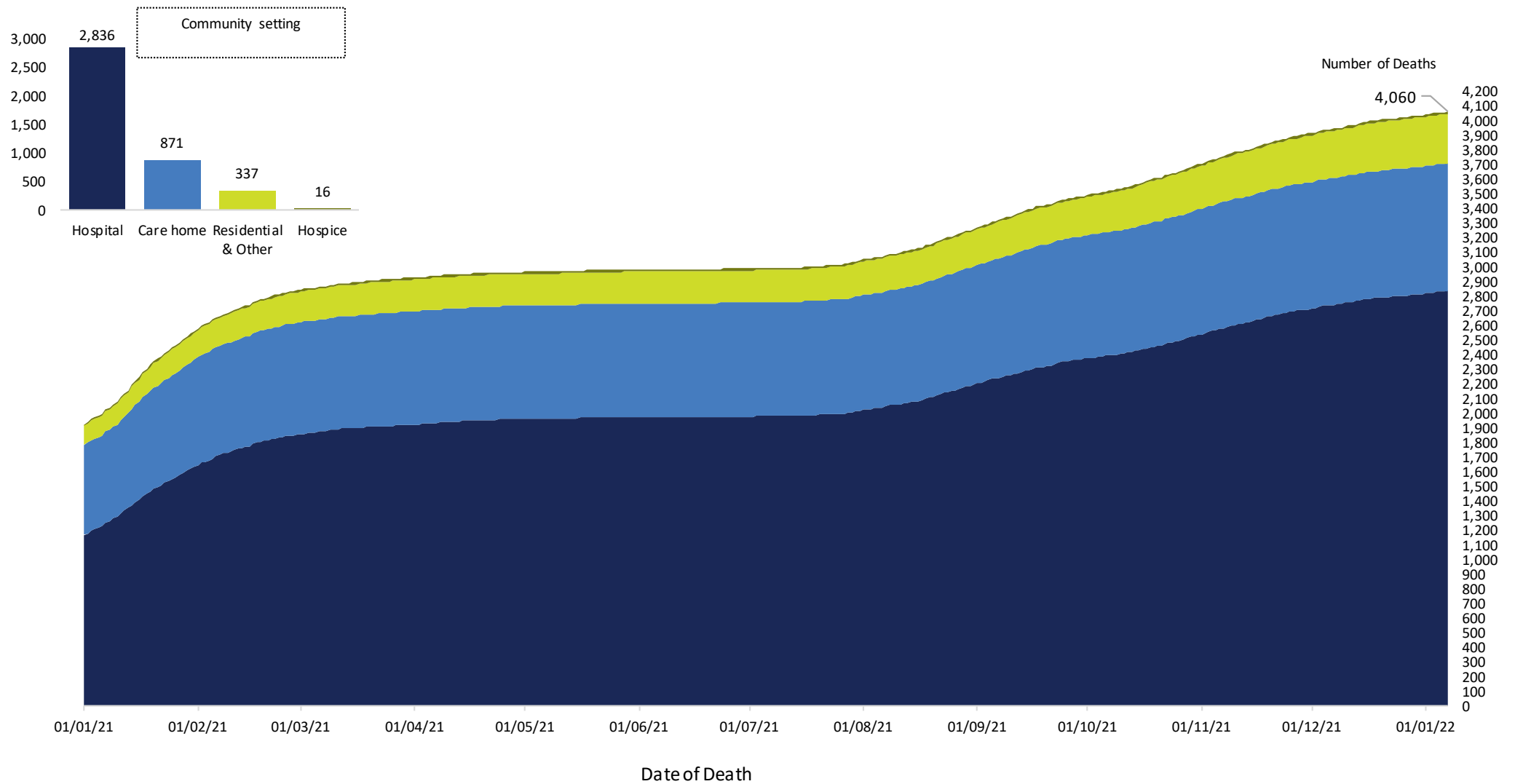


Note: Statistics for the full time series starting from 18 March 2020 are available in the [accompanying spreadsheet](#)

[Download Data for week 1 chart](#)

Covid-19 deaths occurring by place of death

Figure 8: Cumulative number of Covid-19 related deaths occurring by Place of Death in Northern Ireland, up to 7 January 2022



Note: Statistics for the full time series starting from 18 March 2020 are available in the [accompanying spreadsheet](#)

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Table 4: Number of Covid-19 related deaths occurring each week, by Place of Death, 2022

Week ending	Hospital Total	Hospital %	Care Home Total	Care Home %	Hospice Total	Hospice %	Residential & Other Total	Residential & Other %	TOTAL	TOTAL %
2020	1170	60.8%	613	31.9%	9	0.5%	132	6.9%	1924	100%
2021	1642	77.8%	257	12.2%	7	0.3%	205	9.7%	2111	100%
07 Jan 2022	24	92.3%	1	3.8%	0	0.0%	1	3.8%	26	100%
Total from 18 March 2020 to 7 January 2022	2,836	69.9%	871	21.5%	16	0.4%	337	8.3%	4,060	100%

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

Note: Statistics for the full time series starting from 18 March 2020 are available in the [accompanying spreadsheet](#)

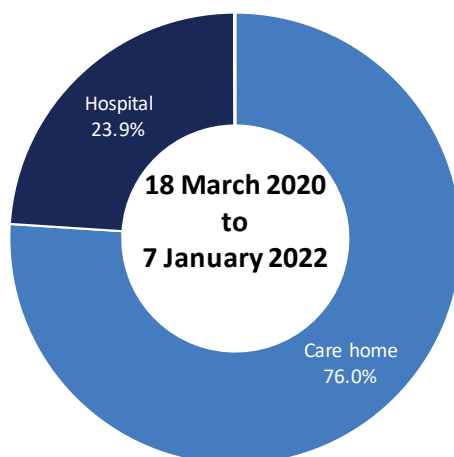
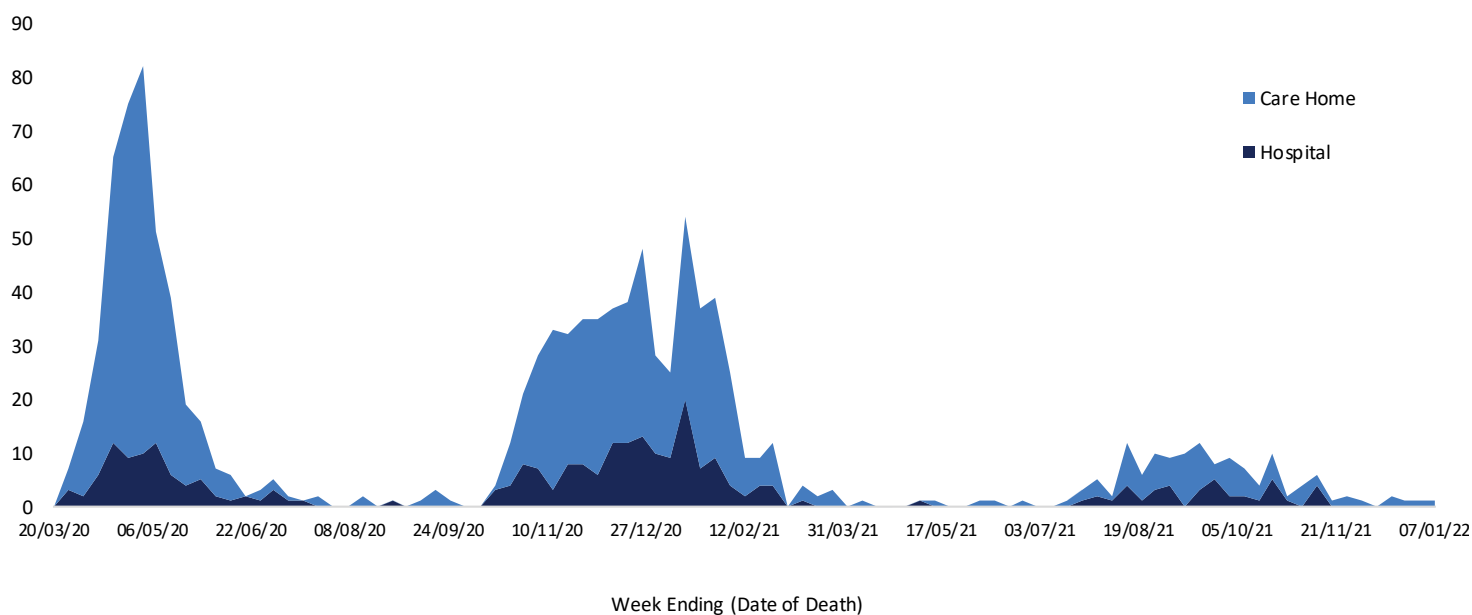
Covid-19 related deaths of care home residents by place of death

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. 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. In relation to part (b) of this definition, no assumptions can be made about where or when the deceased contracted Covid-19 (and all figures include probable or suspect cases).

Based on the definition above, there have been 1,144 deaths of care home residents involving Covid-19 from 18 March 2020 up to 7 January 2022, which is 28.2% of all COVID-19 related deaths. Of the 1,144 deaths, 76.1% (871) occurred in a care home, with the remaining 273 occurring in hospital (Figure 9).

Of the total deaths involving Covid-19 which occurred in hospital (2,836– see Table 11), 9.6% (273) were accounted for by care home residents. (Further information in Table 9 of [accompanying spreadsheet](#)).

Figure 9: Care home residents: Weekly Covid-19 deaths occurring by place of death, from 18 March 2020 to 7 January 2022



[Download data for week 1 charts](#)

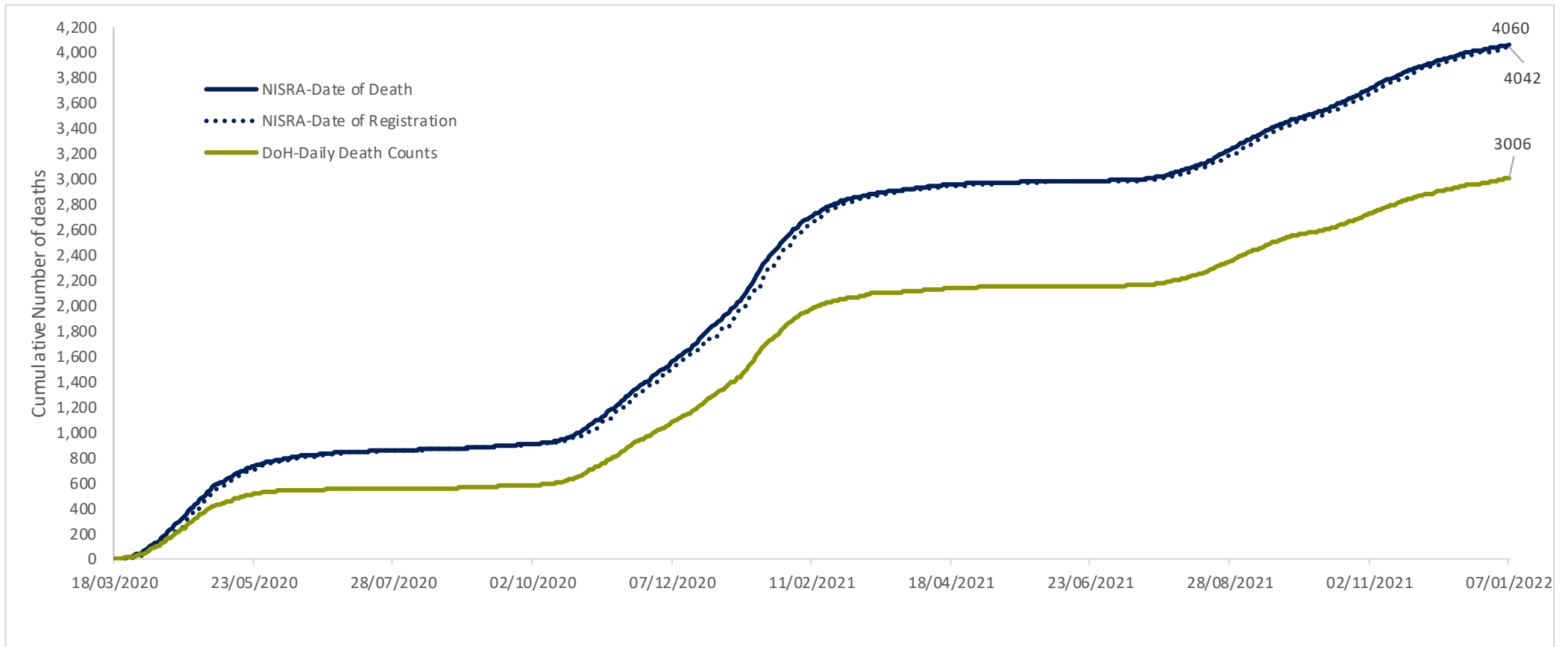
Differences between NISRA's death registration statistics and the Department of Health's daily statistics

- The [daily Northern Ireland Government updates](#) provided by the Department of Health (DoH) 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 3,006 deaths associated with Covid-19 by 7 January 2022**. This figure includes revisions up to 12 January 2022 to account for delayed notifications.
- 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 include all deaths that occur outside hospital and 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 7 January 2022 was 4,042**. Deaths statistics based on date of registration will be subject to only minimal change.
- 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 **4,060 deaths associated with Covid-19 had occurred by 7 January 2022**, but including revisions to 12 January 2021, to account for delayed notifications. This is the most appropriate figure to use to understand additional deaths beyond those reported via the DoH daily bulletin. However it is also subject to ongoing change as not all deaths which occurred by 31 December 2021 will have been registered at the time of publishing these statistics.
- NISRA separately publishes the Registrar General Quarterly Report, provisional figures for which are available up to September 2021 (published on 25 November 2021) and which include cause of death information. These show that the total number of deaths registered since March 2020 (when the pandemic began) to 30 September 2021, with an underlying cause of death of Covid-19 was 3,007. In comparison, the weekly death statistics, which count the number of deaths where Covid-19 was mentioned on the death certificate, reported that in the same period there had been 3,463 deaths registered involving Covid-19. This means that Covid-19 was the underlying, primary cause of death in 86.8 percent of all deaths that mentioned Covid-19 on the death certificate.

Figure 10 below graphically demonstrates the cumulative number of deaths involving Covid-19 in Northern Ireland using different data sources up to 7 January 2021.

The latest NISRA figures show that, by 7 January 2022, 4,060 deaths had occurred involving Covid-19, based on registrations up to 12 January 2022. DoH figures available for the same period show a total of 3,006 deaths.

Figure 10: Cumulative number of deaths involving COVID-19 in Northern Ireland using different data sources up to 7 January 2022¹



[Download data for week 1 charts](#)

¹ Responsibility for reporting daily figures moved from the PHA to the Department of Health on 19 April. These figures are based on deaths that occurred up to 7 January 2022 and include revisions up to 12 January 2022

Links to relevant publications

[Deaths registered weekly in England & Wales](#)

[Weekly Data on Deaths Registered in Scotland](#)

[Vital statistics \(Central Statistics Office, Ireland\)](#)

[Northern Ireland Department of Health daily Covid-19 figures](#) and [daily dashboard](#)

[Number of coronavirus \(Covid-19\) cases and risk in the UK](#)

[Covid-19 Health Surveillance Monitor \(Ireland\)](#)

List of Tables

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

Table 1: Deaths registered each week in Northern Ireland, 2022

Table 2: Deaths registered each week in Northern Ireland, age by sex, 2020-22

Table 3: Deaths registered in Northern Ireland, by Local Government District (LGD), 2020-22

Table 4: Deaths registered in Northern Ireland, by place of death, 2022

Table 5: Covid-19 related deaths registered each week in Northern Ireland, age by sex, 2020-22

Table 6: Covid-19 related deaths registered in Northern Ireland, by Local Government District (LGD), 2020-22

Table 7: Covid-19 related deaths registered in Northern Ireland, by place of death, 2022

Table 8: Covid-19 related care home deaths registered in Northern Ireland, by Local Government District (LGD), 2020-22

Table 9: Covid-19 related deaths registered by date and place of death in Northern Ireland, 2020-22

Table 10: Covid-19 related death occurrences by week of death in Northern Ireland, 2020-22

Table 11: Covid-19 related death occurrences in Northern Ireland, by week of death and place of death, 2020-22

Table 12: Covid-19 related deaths of care home residents in Northern Ireland, by place of death 2020-22

Table 13: Covid-19 related deaths: occurrences by date and place of death in Northern Ireland, 2020-22

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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.

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