

COVID-19 and winter pressures update (26 January 2021)

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Confirmed COVID-19 cases



Norfolk and Waveney
Clinical Commissioning Group

Area	Per 100,000 – seven days to 13/01/21	Per 100,000 – seven days to 20/11/21
Breckland	508	403
Broadland	515	377
East Suffolk	424	304
Great Yarmouth	522	492
King's Lynn and West Norfolk	417	416
North Norfolk	290	245
Norwich	662	492
South Norfolk	366	339
Norfolk	472	397
East of England	561	438
England	523	421

The number of cases per 100,000 is now falling across Norfolk and Waveney.

The rate for Norfolk has fallen from 472 per 100,000 to 397 in the last week, while the rate in East Suffolk has fallen from 424 to 304.

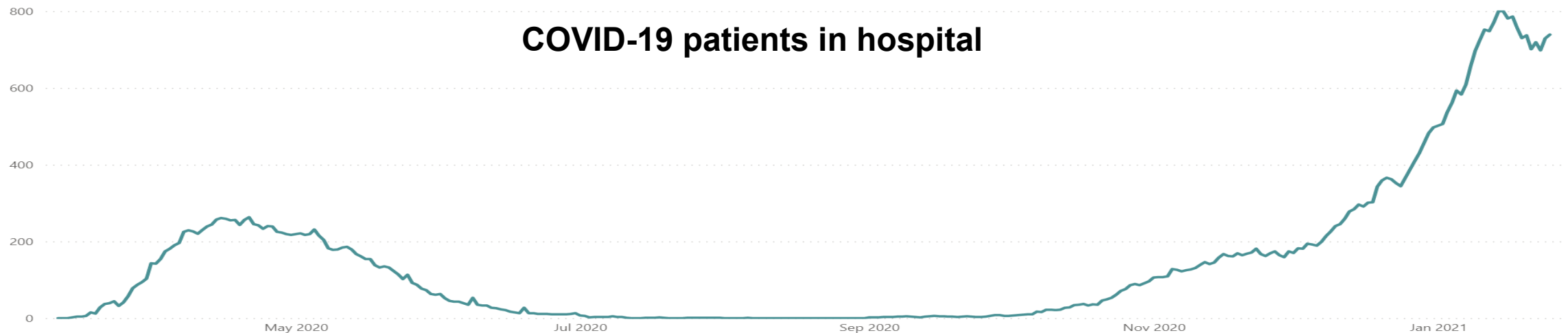
The rates for Norfolk and East Suffolk are below the regional (438) and national (421) rates.

COVID-19 patients



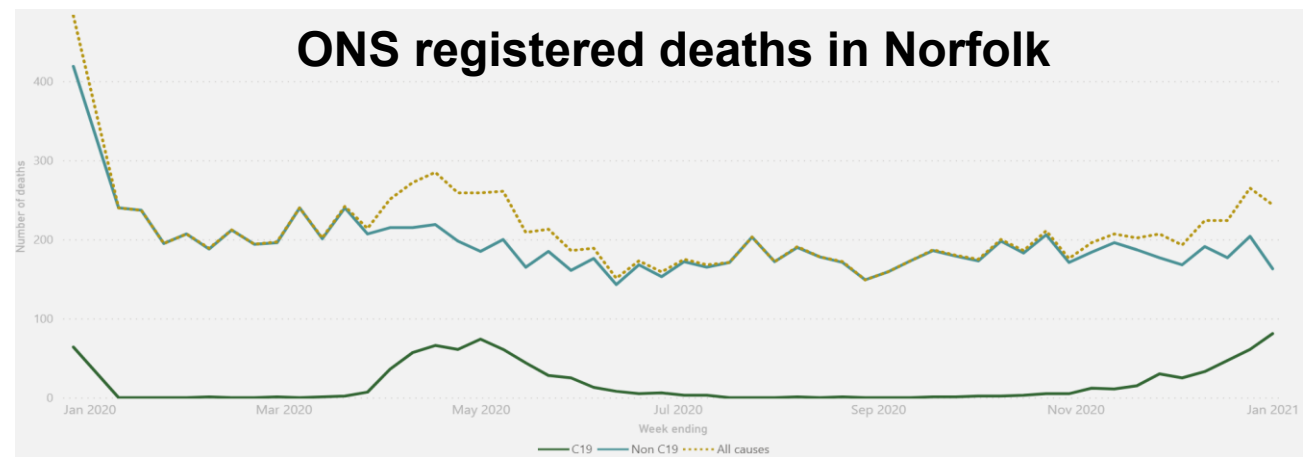
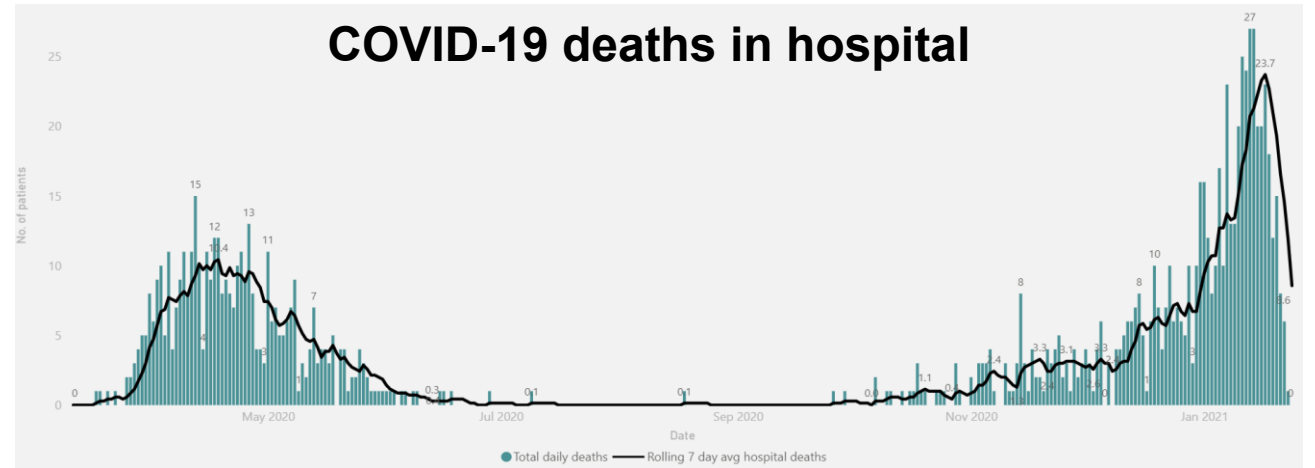
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- Our trusts are now treating 739 patients with COVID-19 compared to 756 a week ago. This is significantly more than they treated during the first wave.
- The number of patients in ICU is also significantly higher than during the first wave. There are currently 53 patients with COVID-19 in ICU, compared to 33 at the peak of the first wave.
- It is too early to say if we have seen the peak in terms of the number of patients being treated. But we do know that even if the number of patients starts to fall, our trusts are going to remain very busy for some time.



COVID-19 deaths

- We have seen a significant increase in deaths over the past two months.
- To date 1,062 people with COVID-19 have died in our hospitals.
- In Norfolk there have been 902 deaths that mention COVID-19 on the death certificate.
- In East Suffolk there have been 300 deaths that mention COVID-19 on the death certificate.



COVID-19 and winter pressures



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- Each year the Norfolk and Waveney system prepares for winter to plan for the expected rise in demand we see as part of the normal seasonal variation across care settings.
- This winter the NHS is under extreme pressure across the country as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The virus is now having a major impact upon the services the NHS delivers and its ability to provide all the operations, diagnostic tests and out-patient appointments, as well primary care provided treatments and on-going patient support.
- The situation is very challenging. This wave and the new variants are affecting Norfolk and Waveney much more than the first wave.
- The Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital (NNUH) is a regional surge centre and for the first time in the pandemic it started to take patients from other areas at the end of the year.

COVID-19 and winter pressures



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- Staffing is also being affected across primary, community and acute sectors, with some staff off sick and some self-isolating, on top of the pre-existing vacancies across the system.
- Primary and community care both have their own pressures, including workforce challenges and of course the rollout of the vaccination programme, and they too also feel the impact of our trusts being under pressure.
- Mental health services have also seen an increase in referrals during the pandemic.

Responding to system pressures



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- Postponing planned operations and procedures at our hospitals is not a decision we take lightly.
- However, in light of the very serious situation of high infection rates and hospital admissions in Norfolk and Waveney, and across the East of England, we need to reduce the amount of elective work to enable us to have the capacity and redeploy staff to treat rising numbers of patients our sickest patients with COVID-19.
- Over the summer and autumn our teams have worked tirelessly to maintain services across our hospitals and we will continue to maintain as much cancer, emergency and urgent care as possible throughout this current wave of the pandemic. We will also continue to run outpatient clinics as virtual appointments as much as possible.
- We know the temporary reduction of some services will be hugely disappointing and cause added anxiety for many patients. Our hospital teams are contacting directly affected patients.

Responding to system pressures



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- As a result of the increasing numbers of coronavirus cases in our acute hospitals, Norfolk Community Health and Care (NCH&C) and East Coast Community Healthcare (ECCH) are stepping-up their efforts to facilitate flow through emergency and acute services, including increasing community bed capacity.
- This means that some community health services, including MSK therapy and physio, wheelchair services, and podiatry, are being scaled back to release staff to support the system and manage the expected pressure over the coming weeks. GPs will continue to refer patients, but as NCH&C and ECCH are prioritising patients with urgent needs, routine referrals will be waiting longer than normal.
- We have local plans and procedures in place, including additional surge capacity, for responding to the increasing demands on the NHS. We continue to work together as a health and care system to provide the best care we can to local people in these challenging times.