Weekly report on the epidemiology of COVID-19 in Ireland

Week 42, 2023

- The epidemiological weeks in this report, run from Sunday to Saturday. Please refer to the HPSC website for a complete list of epidemiological weeks with start and end dates for 2020-2023.

- Data for this report are based on cases notified on the Computerised Infectious Disease Reporting (CIDR) up to midnight 21/10/2023. Data were extracted from CIDR system on 24/10/2023. Data are provisional and subject to ongoing review, validation and update. As a result, figures in this report may differ from previously published figures.

- Data should be interpreted in the context of the current testing policy. Testing policies can affect the number and age distribution of confirmed cases notified on CIDR. Information on the current testing policy in Ireland can be found here

Key points

Notified confirmed cases

- In week 42 (between October 15 and October 21 2023) there were 536 new confirmed COVID-19 cases reported on CIDR. This is a decrease of 16% compared to week 41 when there were 638 confirmed COVID-19 cases notified.

- The highest number of new confirmed COVID-19 cases in week 42 was in the age group of 75-84 years with 24.1% of notified cases in week 42.

Laboratory data of SARS-CoV-2 PCR tests

- In week 42, a total of 4,145 SARS-CoV-2 tests were performed, of which 517 (12.5%) were positive. This is a decrease compared to the previous week, 41, when 13% were positive.

Deaths

- Since the start of the pandemic 9,322 COVID-19 deaths among notified COVID-19 cases have been reported on CIDR. Of these, 4 had a date of death in week 42.

Table 1: Summary characteristics of COVID-19 cases notified in Ireland during week 42, 2023 and 2023 to date

	Week 42, 2023		Total 2023	
	Number	**Percentage**	**Number**	**Percentage**
Total number of confirmed cases	536		29,948	
Incidence rate of confirmed cases per 100,000 population	11.3		628.9	
Severe cases				
Number of cases hospitalised	249*	46.46	12,541*	41.88
Number of cases admitted to ICU	3*	0.56	129*	0.43
Number of deaths among confirmed cases	6*	1.12	647*	2.16

* The number of cases hospitalised, cases admitted to ICU and deaths described in the above table relate only to COVID-19 cases who were notified during this reporting period, and where the outcome is known at the time of reporting. It does not reflect all hospitalisations, ICU admissions and deaths related to COVID-19 which occurred during the period covered by the report. It also does not reflect the final number of cases hospitalised, admitted to ICU or deaths for these cases notified during this period as the outcome may not yet have occurred, or is yet to be notified

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Confirmed cases of COVID-19

Since the start of 2023, a total of 29,948 confirmed COVID-19 cases have been notified on CIDR. In the past week, week 42 2023, 536 confirmed COVID-19 cases were reported on CIDR. This is a decrease of 16% compared to week 41 when 638 confirmed COVID-19 cases were notified. Figure 1 shows the epidemiological curve of COVID-19 cases notified in Ireland for the last one year to week 42 2023. Data since the start of the pandemic is available on the Epidemiology of COVID-19 in Ireland infohub.
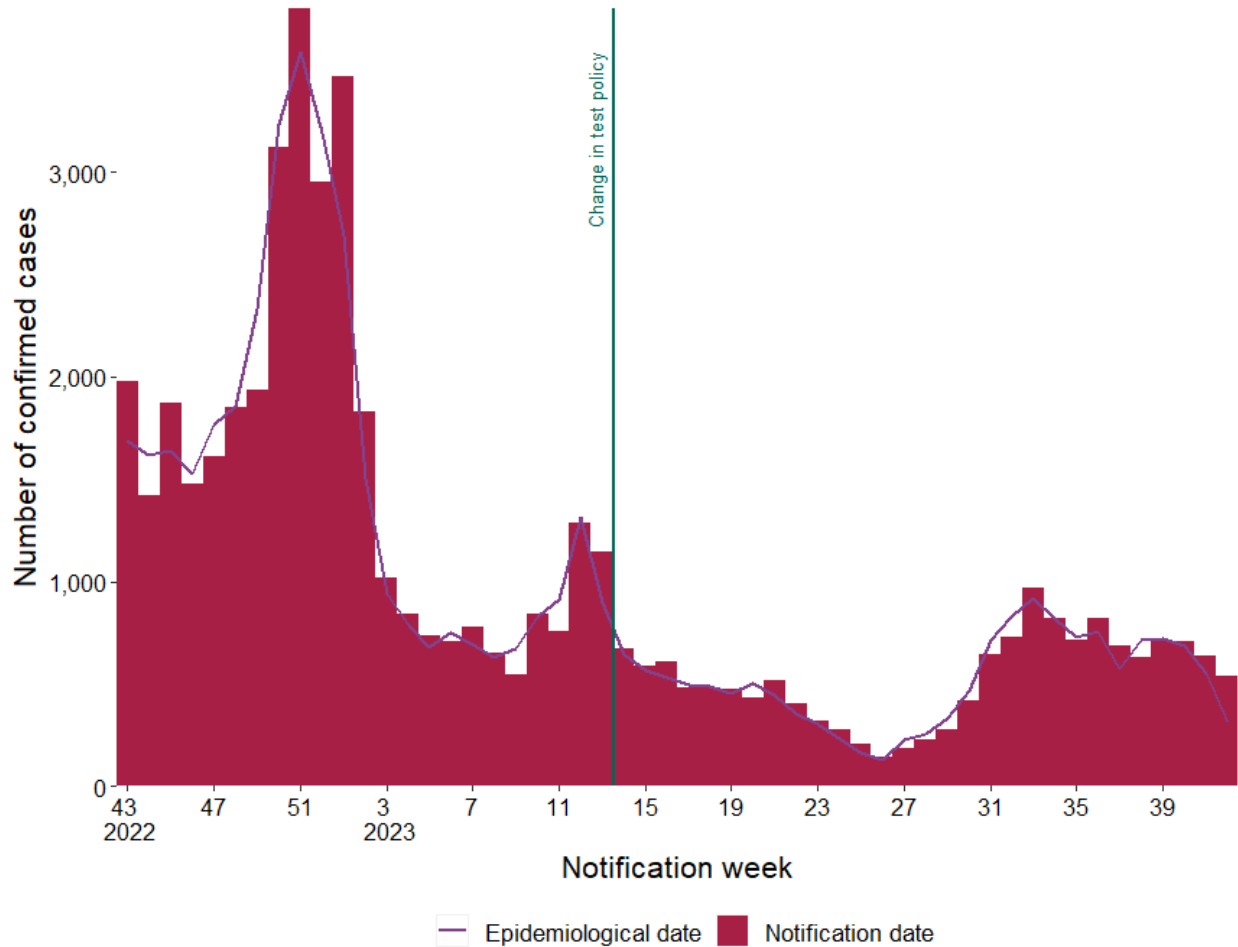

Figure 1a: Number of confirmed COVID-19 cases by notification week and epidemiological date in Ireland between week 43, 2022 and week 42, 2023. The red bars represent the number of confirmed cases by notification date. The purple line represents the number of cases by epidemiological date. The dark blue horizontal lines indicate a change in test policy[1]

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[1] Since 30/03/2023 (week 13, 2023), community test centres closed and PCR testing was only performed based on clinical assessment.

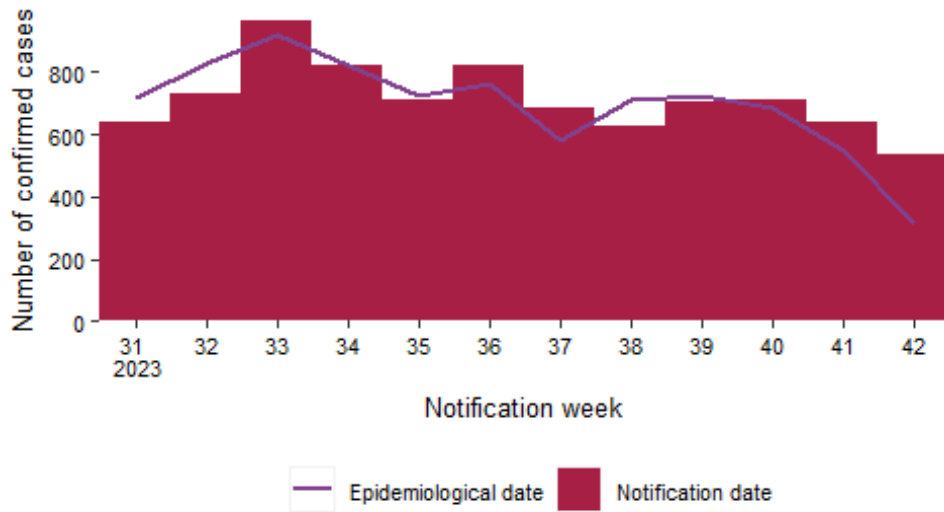Report prepared by Health Protection Surveillance Centre

Figure 1b: Number of confirmed COVID-19 cases by notification week and epidemiological date in Ireland in the last 12 weeks. The red bars represent the number of confirmed cases by notification date. The purple line represents the number of cases by epidemiological date.

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Confirmed COVID-19 cases by age and sex

Table 2: Summary characteristics by age and sex of COVID-19 cases notified in Ireland during week 42, 2023 and 2023 to date

	Week 42, 2023		Total 2023	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Gender				
Males	254	47.4	12,967	43.3
Females	281	52.4	16,975	56.7
M:F ratio	0.9		0.76	
Age (years)				
Mean age	63		57	
Median age	70		61	
Age range	0 - 100		0 - 103	
Age groups (years)				
0-4	31	5.8	1,313	4.4
5-12	3	0.6	316	1.1
13-18	6	1.1	406	1.4
19-24	7	1.3	976	3.3
25-34	29	5.4	2,927	9.8
35-44	43	8.0	3,541	11.8
45-54	43	8.0	3,344	11.2
55-64	53	9.9	3,443	11.5
65-74	93	17.4	4,060	13.6
75-84	129	24.1	5,598	18.7
85+	99	18.5	4,020	13.4
Unknown	NA	0.0	4	0.0

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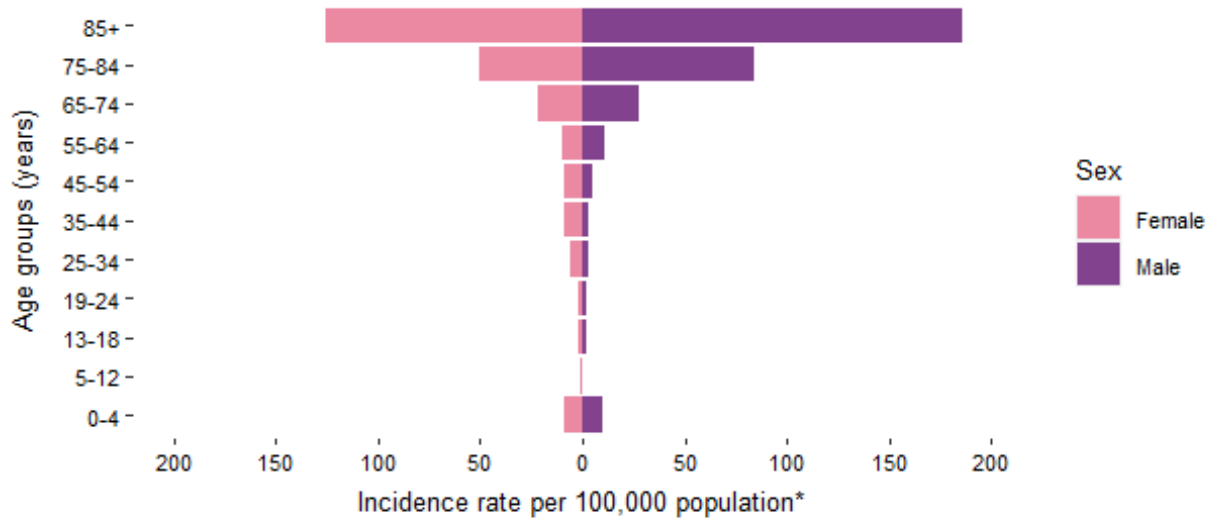
*Excluding 0 for whom age is unknown, 1 for whom sex is unknown and 0 for whom both are unknown

Figure 2: Age and sex specific incidence rates of confirmed COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population for current week 42, 2023
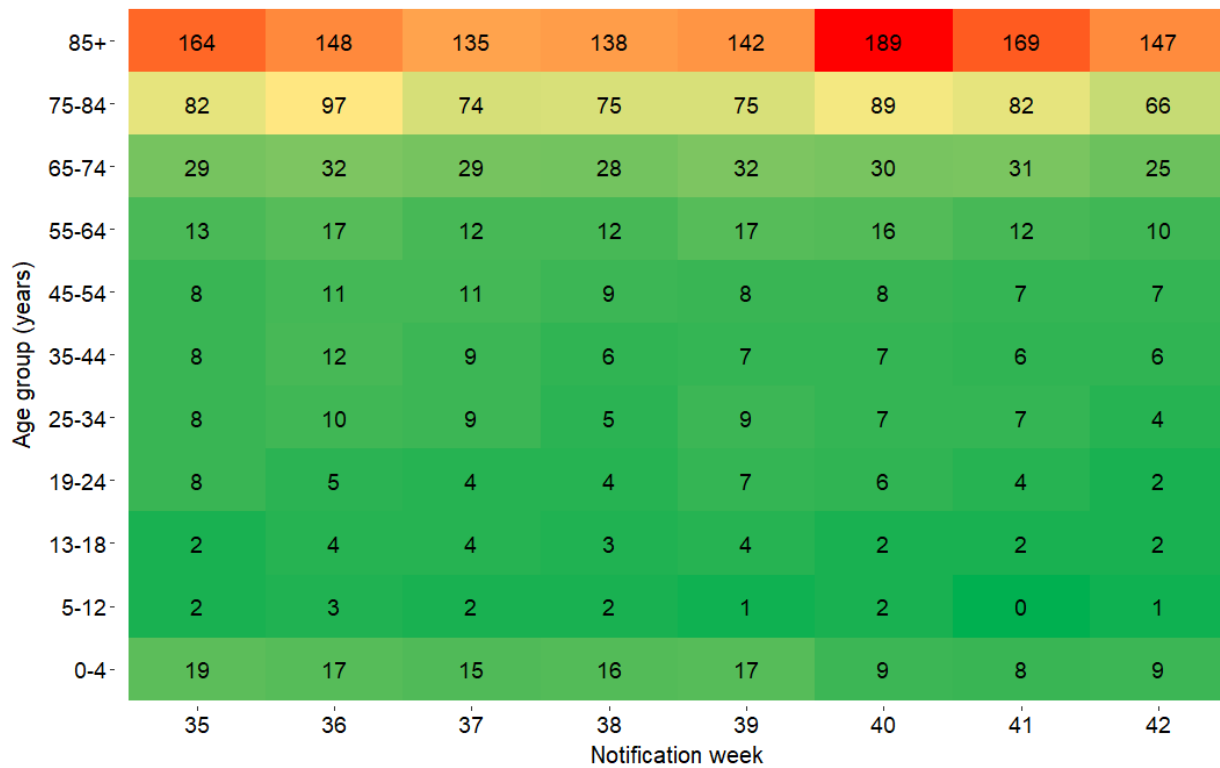

Figure 3: Heat map of weekly age-specific incidence rates of confirmed COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population in Ireland for the last 8 weeks

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Cases and incidence by county

Table 3: Characteristics of confirmed COVID-19 cases by county and descending incidence rate per 100,000 notified in Ireland, during week 42, 2023*

County	Number of cases	Percent	Incidence rate per 100,000
Louth	31	5.8	24.1
Clare	24	4.5	20.2
Waterford	23	4.3	19.8
Limerick	32	6.0	16.4
Kilkenny	16	3.0	16.1
Westmeath	12	2.2	13.5
Tipperary	21	3.9	13.2
Offaly	10	1.9	12.8
Donegal	20	3.7	12.6
Leitrim	4	0.7	12.5
Carlow	7	1.3	12.3
Laois	10	1.9	11.8
Monaghan	7	1.3	11.4
Dublin	151	28.2	11.2
Cork	60	11.2	11.1
Cavan	8	1.5	10.5
Mayo	12	2.2	9.2
Kerry	13	2.4	8.8
Galway	20	3.7	7.8
Longford	3	0.6	7.3
Wexford	11	2.1	7.3
Meath	12	2.2	6.2
Roscommon	4	0.7	6.2
Sligo	4	0.7	6.1
Kildare	13	2.4	5.8
Wicklow	8	1.5	5.6

* County data may not be accurately reflected in the most recent week due to ongoing data validations

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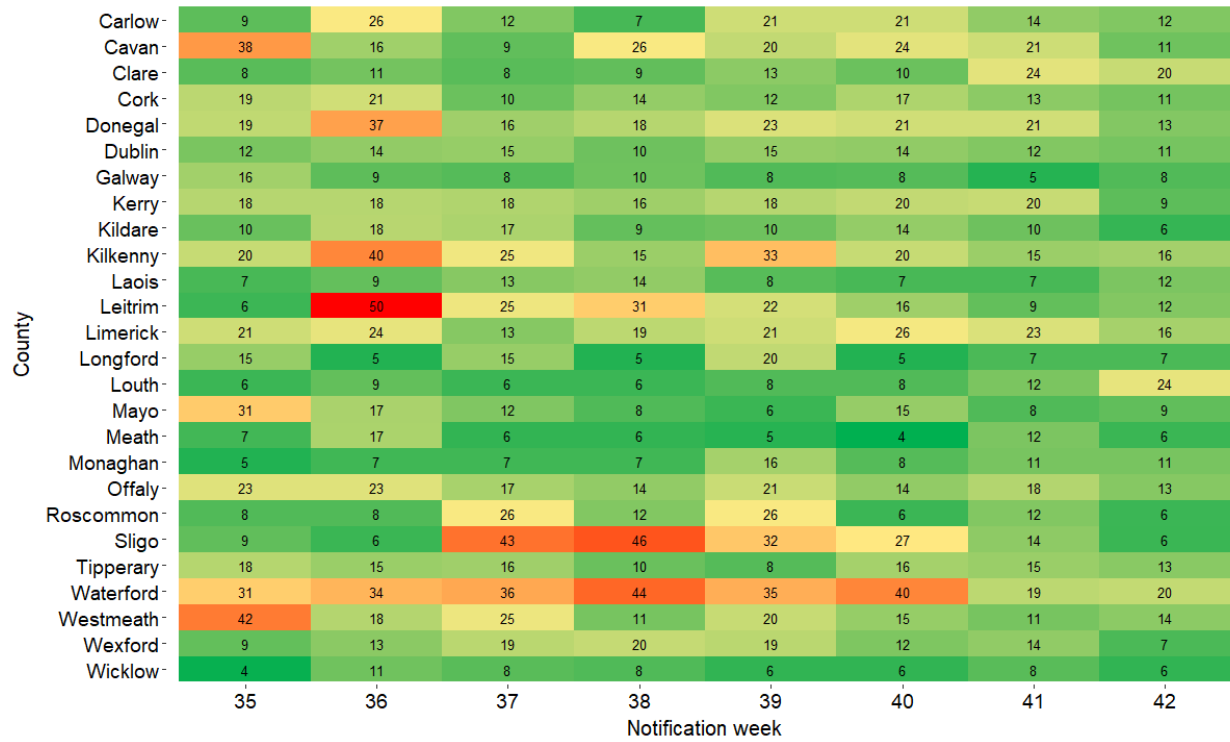| County	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42
Carlow	9	26	12	7	21	21	14	12
Cavan	38	16	9	26	20	24	21	11
Clare	8	11	8	9	13	10	24	20
Cork	19	21	10	14	12	17	13	11
Donegal	19	37	16	18	23	21	21	13
Dublin	12	14	15	10	15	14	12	11
Galway	16	9	8	10	8	8	5	8
Kerry	18	18	18	16	18	20	20	9
Kildare	10	18	17	9	10	14	10	6
Kilkenny	20	40	25	15	33	20	15	16
Laois	7	9	13	14	8	7	7	12
Leitrim	6	50	25	31	22	16	9	12
Limerick	21	24	13	19	21	26	23	16
Longford	15	5	15	5	20	5	7	7
Louth	6	9	6	6	8	8	12	24
Mayo	31	17	12	8	6	15	8	9
Meath	7	17	6	6	5	4	12	6
Monaghan	5	7	7	7	16	8	11	11
Offaly	23	23	17	14	21	14	18	13
Roscommon	8	8	26	12	26	6	12	6
Sligo	9	6	43	46	32	27	14	6
Tipperary	18	15	16	10	8	16	15	13
Waterford	31	34	36	44	35	40	19	20
Westmeath	42	18	25	11	20	15	11	14
Wexford	9	13	19	20	19	12	14	7
Wicklow	4	11	8	8	6	6	8	6

Notification week

Figure 4: Heat map of weekly incidence rates of confirmed COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population, by county, notified in Ireland for the last 8 weeks

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Hospitalisations

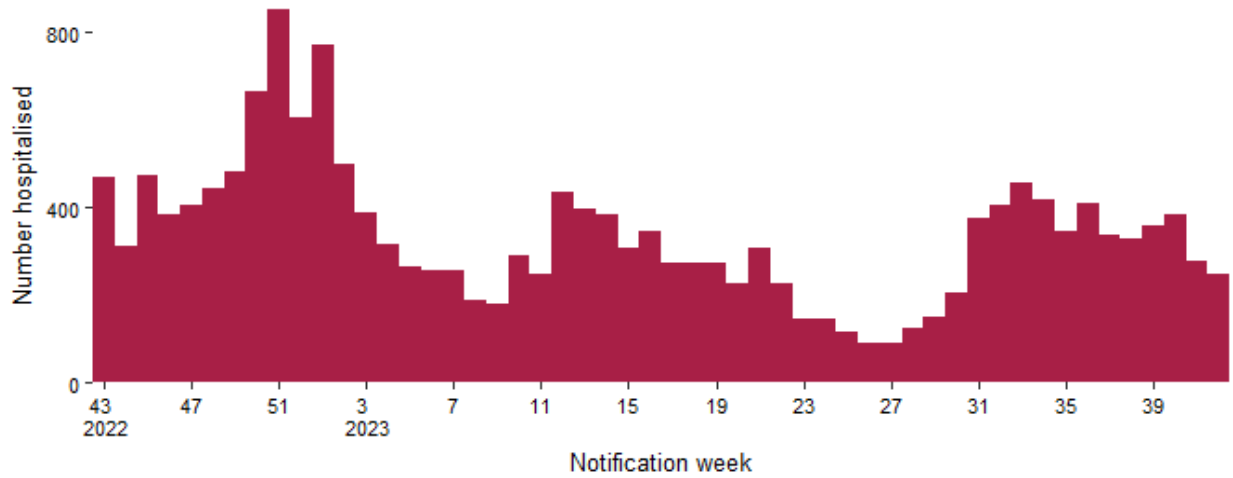A total of 249 hospitalised confirmed COVID-19 cases were recorded in the latest epidemiological week, week 42 2023.

Figure 5: Hospitalisations among confirmed COVID-19 cases notified on CIDR in Ireland between week 43, 2022 and week 42, 2023

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Table 4: Number of COVID-19 cases and hospital admissions by age group in Ireland for week[2] 42, 2023 based on week of notification[3]

| Age group | Week 42, 2023 | | | Total 2023 | | |
| | Total cases | Hospitalised cases | | Total cases | Hospitalised cases | |
	Number of cases	Number of cases	Percentage	Number of cases	Number of cases	Percentage
0-4	31	11	35.5	1,313	753	57.3
5-12	3	1	33.3	316	136	43.0
13-18	6	3	50.0	406	118	29.1
19-24	7	3	42.9	976	193	19.8
25-34	29	7	24.1	2,927	487	16.6
35-44	43	7	16.3	3,541	579	16.4
45-54	43	16	37.2	3,344	696	20.8
55-64	53	17	32.1	3,443	1,199	34.8
65-74	93	52	55.9	4,060	2,352	57.9
75-84	129	77	59.7	5,598	3,586	64.1
85+	99	55	55.6	4,020	2,442	60.7
Unknown	0	0	0.0	4	0	0.0

[2] Hospitalisations may be underestimated for recent weeks as the outcome may not yet have occurred or may not yet have been reported to CIDR
[3] Data are based on the date the case was notified on CIDR, and not the date of hospital admission

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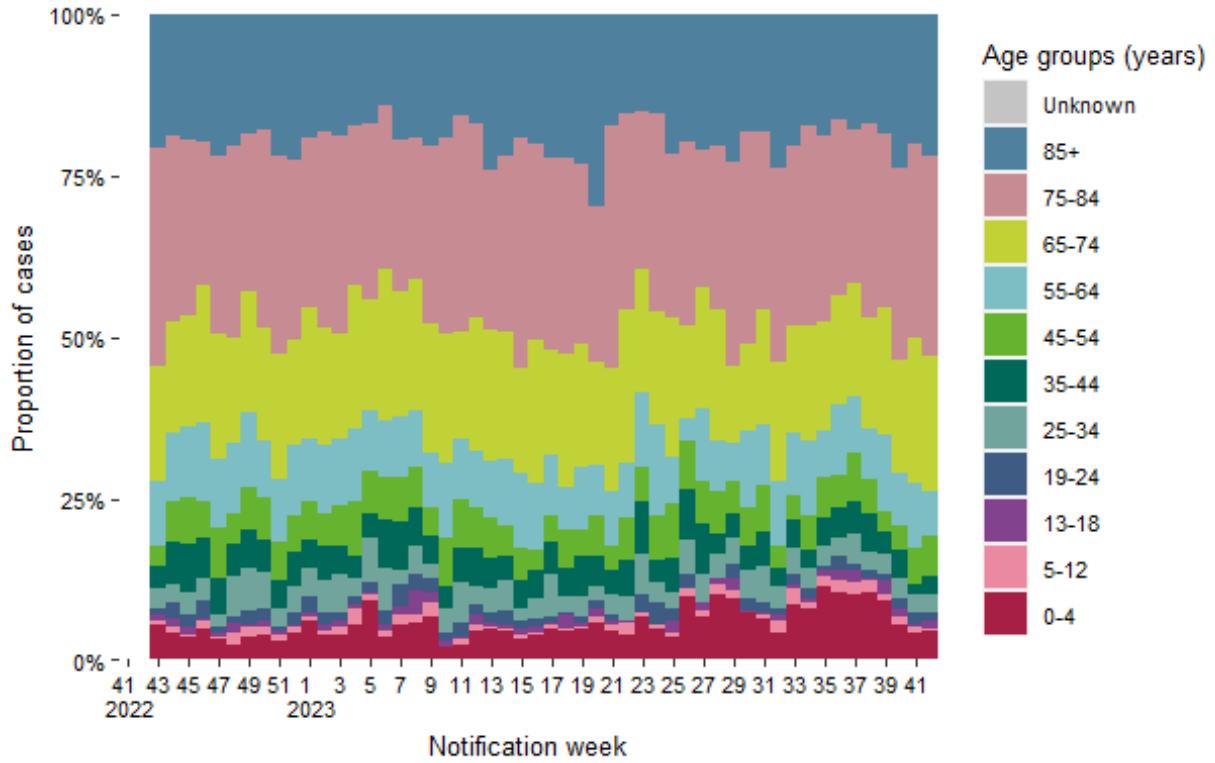
Figure 6: Age distribution of hospitalised confirmed COVID-19 cases notified on CIDR in Ireland between week 43, 2022 and week 42, 2023

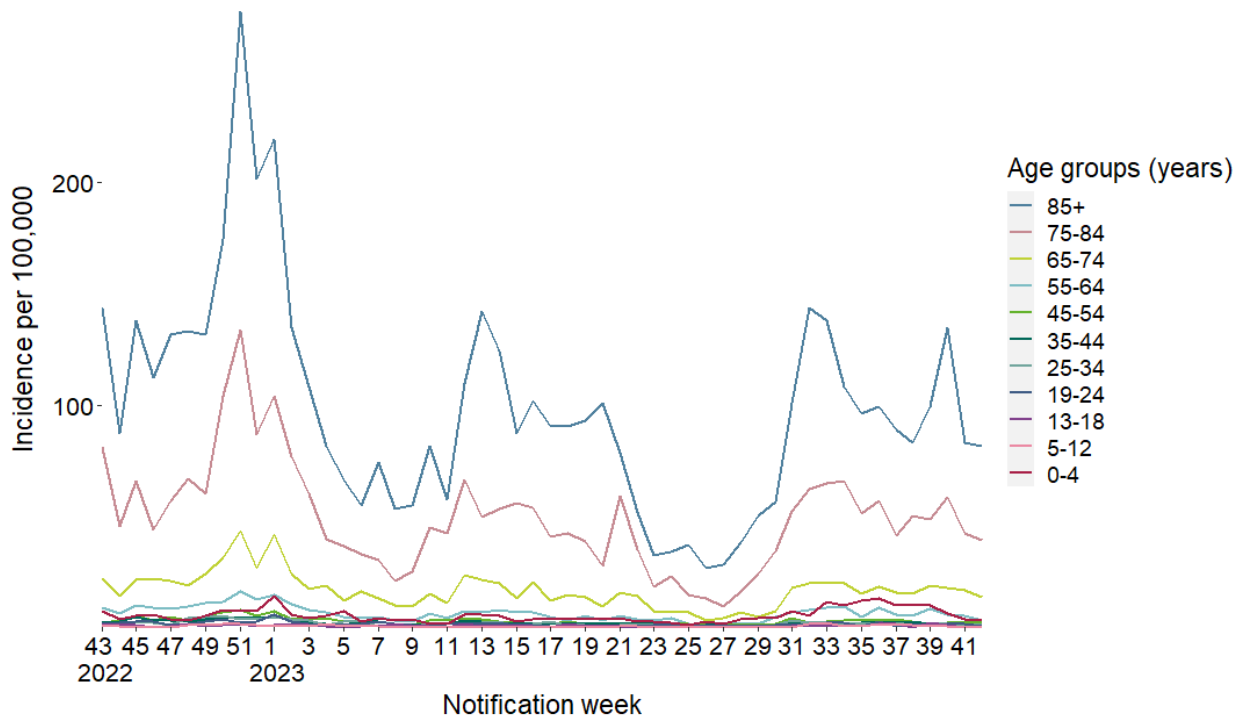

Figure 7: Incidence rate by age group of hospitalisations among confirmed COVID-19 cases on CIDR in Ireland between week 43, 2022 and week 42, 2023

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ICU admissions

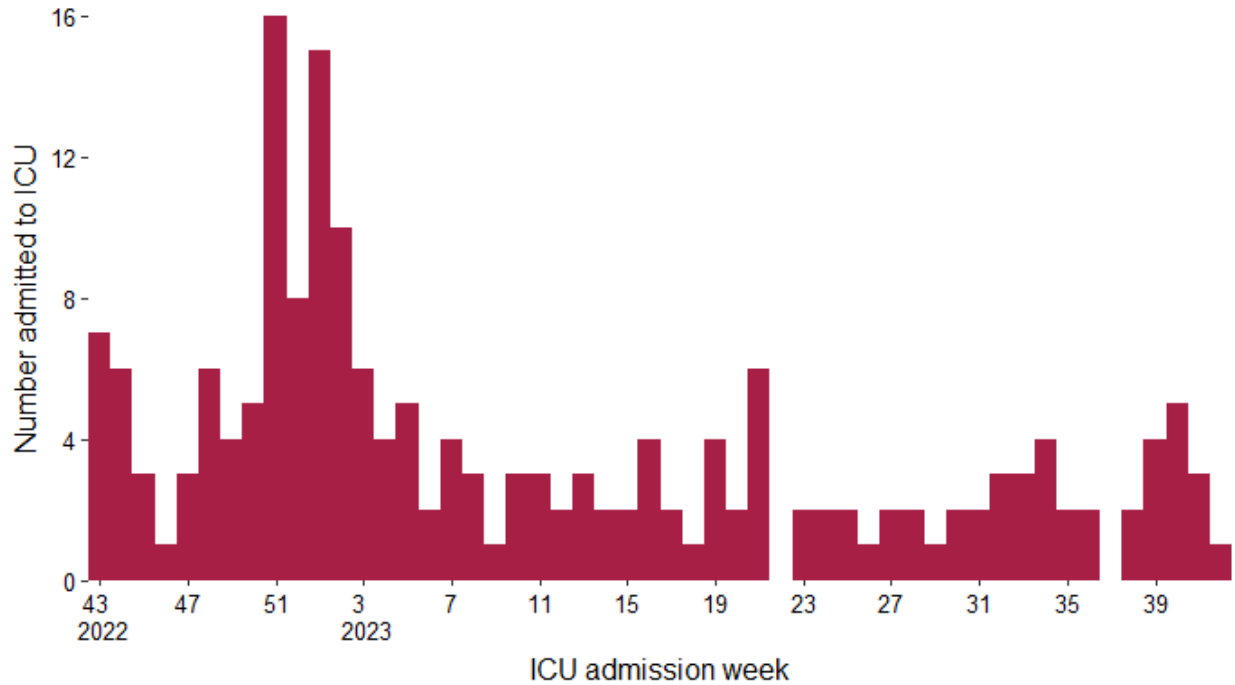A total of 3 COVID-19 cases were admitted to ICU in the latest epidemiological week[3], week 42 2023.

Figure 8: Number of COVID-19 ICU admissions in Ireland by week of ICU admission, between week 43, 2022 and week 42, 2023[4]
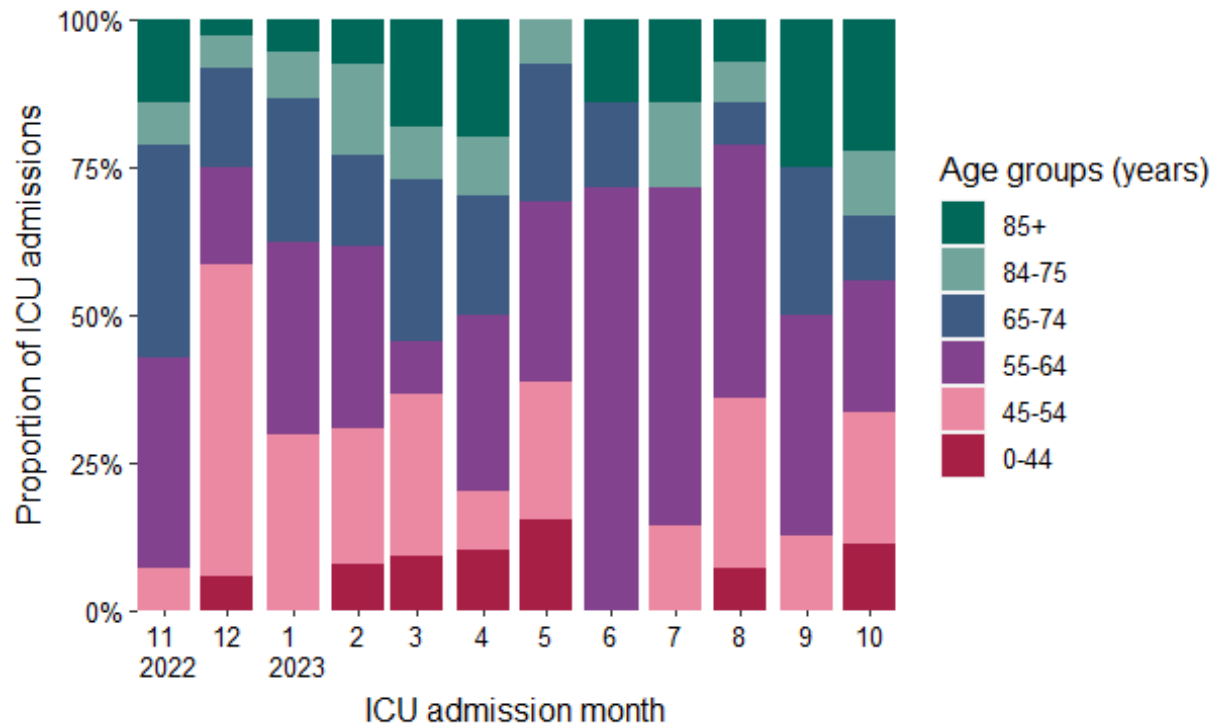
Figure 9: Age distribution of confirmed COVID-19 cases admitted to ICU by month of admission between November, 2022 and October, 2023

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[4] Please note that most recent weeks may not yet reflect all admissions

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Deaths

Please note the below figures and tables include all cases (confirmed, probable and possible) who have died.

A total of 4 cases had a date of death in the latest epidemiological week, 42. The mean and median age of those who died in that week was 89 and 91.5 years respectively.
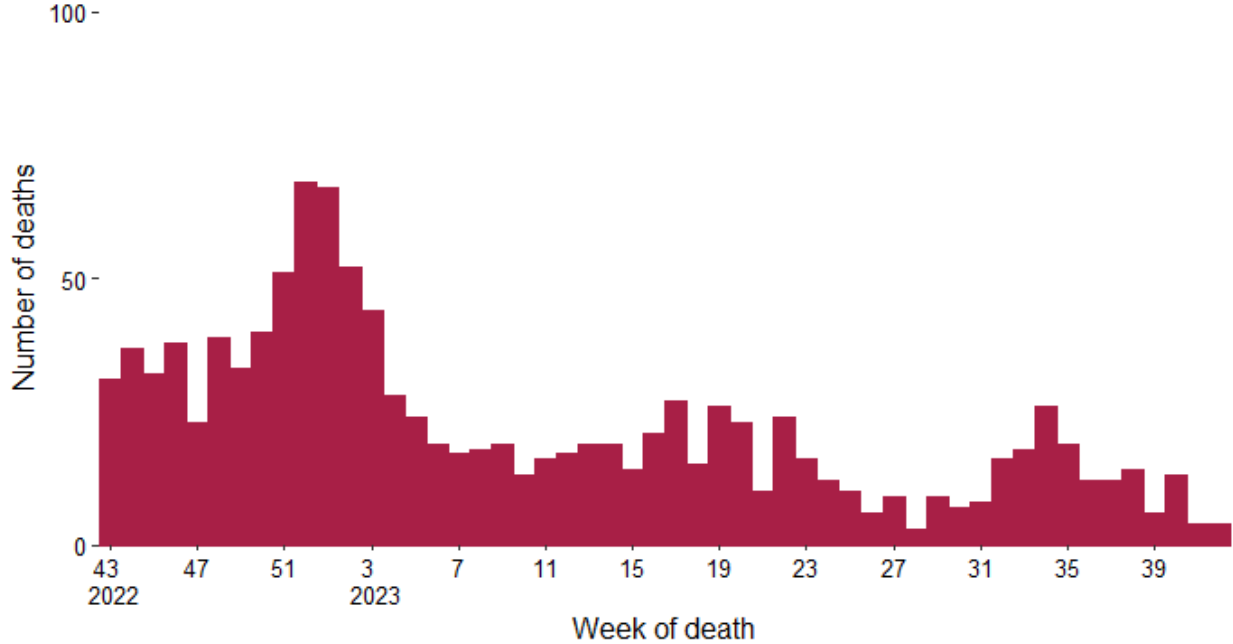

Figure 10: Total number of COVID-19 deaths notified by week of death, cases with a date of notification from week 43, 2022 to 42, 2023[5]. Date of death missing for 0 of the reported deaths

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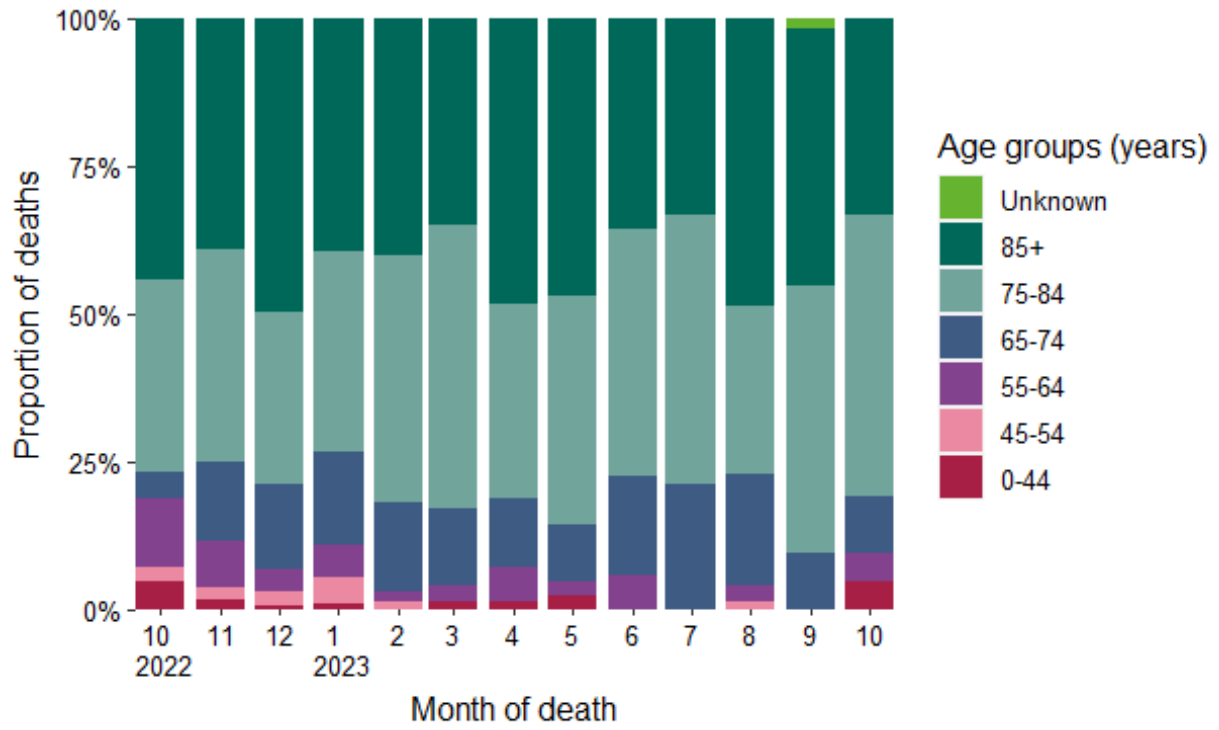[5] Please note that most recent weeks may not yet reflect all deaths

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Figure 11: Age distribution of COVID-19 deaths notified on CIDR in Ireland between November, 2022 and October, 2023

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Laboratory data of SARS-CoV-2 PCR tests

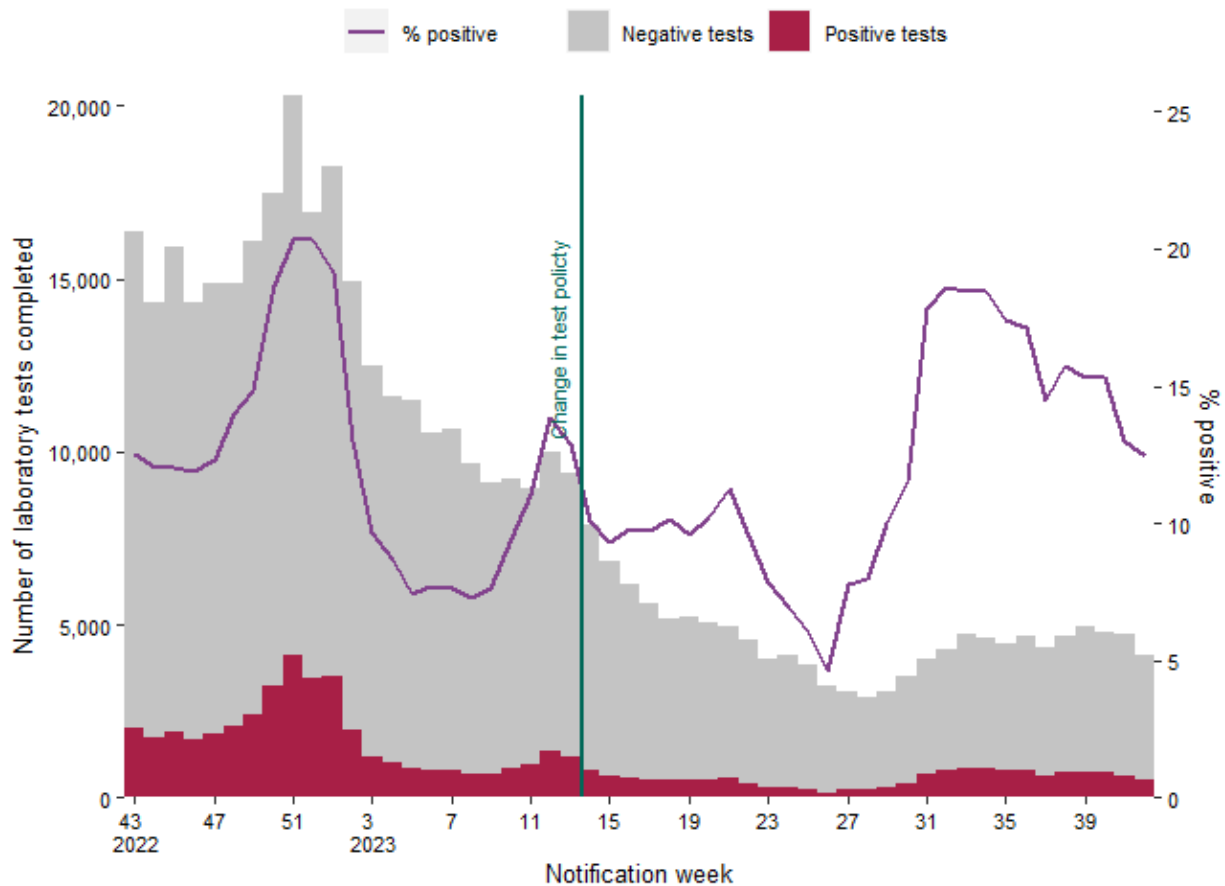In week 42, a total of 4,145 SARS-CoV-2 tests were performed, of which 517 (12.5%) were positive.

Figure 12: Number of completed laboratory tests by result and % positive tests[6] in Ireland between week 43, 2022 and week 42, 2023. Data source: Deloitte Ireland LLP[7]

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[6] Positive tests refer to all positive specimens and includes duplicates and individuals who were retested.
[7] Since 30/03/2023 (week 13, 2023), community test centres closed and PCR testing was only performed based on clinical assessment.

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Notes

Technical Notes

    1.   Data Source

Data are based on statutory notifications and were extracted from Computerised Infectious Disease Reporting (CIDR) system and the HSE COVID care tracker. Data are provisional and subject to ongoing review, validation and update. As a result, figures in this report may differ from previously published figures. Slide with Laboratory testing for SARS-CoV-2 data provided by Deloitte Ireland LLP

    2.   Epidemiological date

Epidemiological date is based on the earliest of dates available on the case and taken from date of onset of symptoms, date of diagnosis, laboratory specimen collection date, laboratory received date, laboratory reported date or event creation date/notification date on CIDR. By using this date rather than event creation/ notification date, adjusts for any delays in testing/notification. Further information on epidemiological dates and weeks can be found on the HPSC website.

    3.   Population data

Population data were taken from Census 2016. Data were aggregated into the following age groups for the analysis: 0-4 years, 5-12 years, 13-18 years, 19-24 years, 25-34 years, 35-44 years, 45-54 years, 55-64 years, 65-74 years, 75-84 years and ≥ 85 years.

Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks are extended to all those who are participating in the collection of data and reporting of data used in these reports. This includes the HSE COVID-19 Contact Management Programme (CMP), staff in ICU units, notifying clinicians, laboratory staff, public health doctors, nurses, surveillance scientists, microbiologists and administrative staff.

Please refer to the Health Protection Surveillance (HPSC) website for

- Epidemiology of COVID-19 in Ireland infohub
- Outbreaks/clusters in Ireland COVID-19 weekly report
- Monthly report on COVID-19 deaths reported in Ireland
- SARS-CoV-2 wastewater surveillance programme weekly reports
- Virus variants in Ireland COVID-19 summary report
- Epidemiology of intensive care admissions in cases of COVID-19 in Ireland

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