



Weekly report on the epidemiology of COVID-19 in Ireland

Week 51, 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 23/12/2023. Data were extracted from CIDR system on 27/12/2023. 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](#)
- **From week 47, 2023 this report uses population data from Census 2022. Rates may therefore differ from those reported previously which used population data from Census 2016.**

Key points

Notified confirmed cases

- In week 51 (between December 17 and December 23 2023) there were 919 new confirmed COVID-19 cases reported on CIDR. This is an increase of 28.5% compared to week 50 when there were 715 confirmed COVID-19 cases notified.
- The highest number of new confirmed COVID-19 cases in week 51 was in the age group of 75-84 years with 24.6% of notified cases in week 51.

Laboratory data of SARS-CoV-2 PCR tests

- In week 51, a total of 7,148 SARS-CoV-2 tests were performed, of which 854 (11.9%) were positive. This is an increase compared to the previous week, 50, when 11.6% were positive.

Deaths

- Since the start of the pandemic 9,463 COVID-19 deaths among notified COVID-19 cases have been reported on CIDR. Of these, 5 had a date of death in week 51.

Summary characteristics of COVID-19 cases notified in Ireland during week 51, 2023 and 2023 to date

	Week 51, 2023		Total 2023	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Total number of confirmed cases	919		34,883	
Incidence rate of confirmed cases per 100,000 population	17.8		677.5	
Severe cases				
Number of cases hospitalised	375*	40.81	14,955*	42.87
Number of cases admitted to ICU	0*	0.22	147*	0.42
Number of deaths among confirmed cases	4*	0.44	769*	2.20

* 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

Confirmed cases of COVID-19

Since the start of 2023, a total of 34,883 confirmed COVID-19 cases have been notified on CIDR. In the past week, week 51 2023, 919 confirmed COVID-19 cases were reported on CIDR. This is an increase of 28.5% compared to week 50 when 715 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 51 2023. Data since the start of the pandemic is available on the [Epidemiology of COVID-19 in Ireland infohub](#).

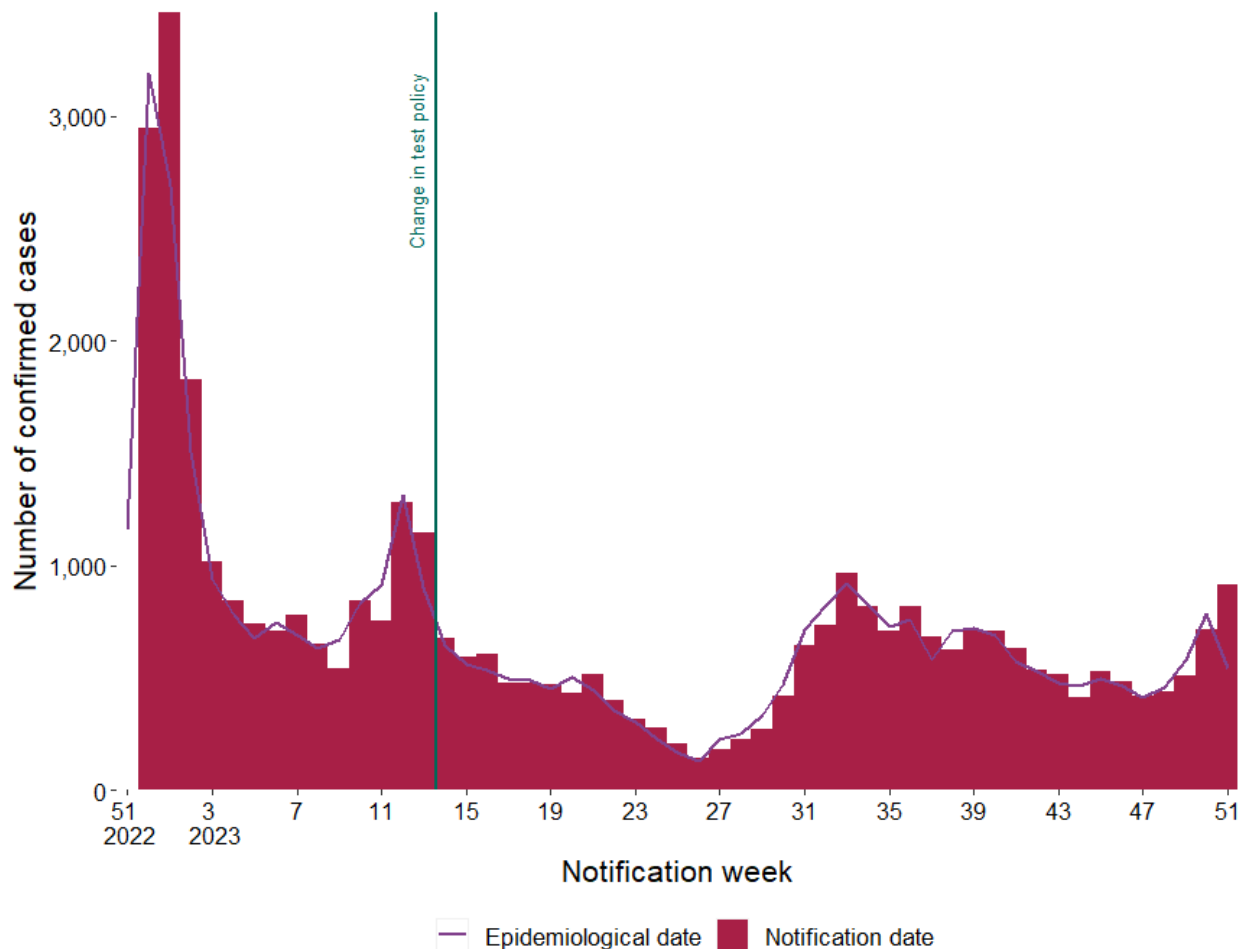


Figure 1a: Number of confirmed COVID-19 cases by notification week and epidemiological date in Ireland between week 52, 2022 and week 51, 2023. The red bars represent the number of confirmed cases by notification date. The purple line represents the number of cases by epidemiological date. The dark blue horizontal lines indicate a change in test policy¹

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

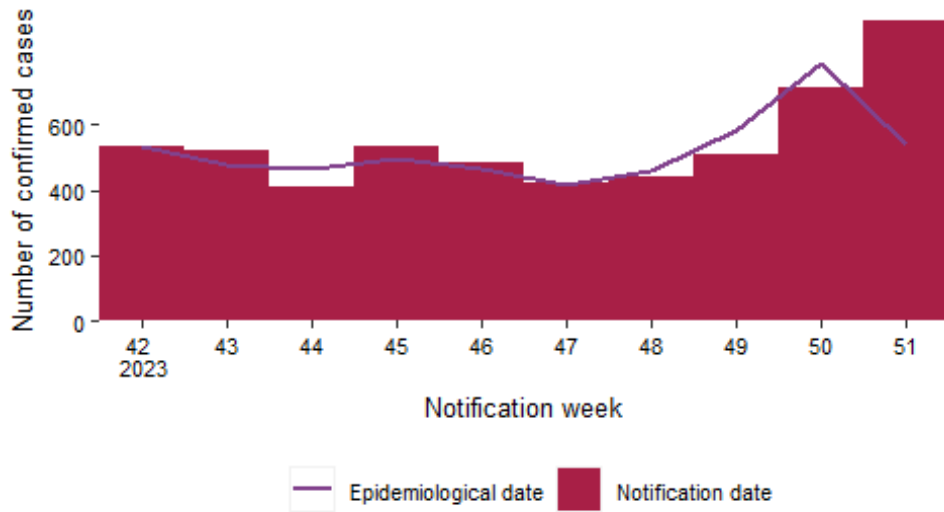
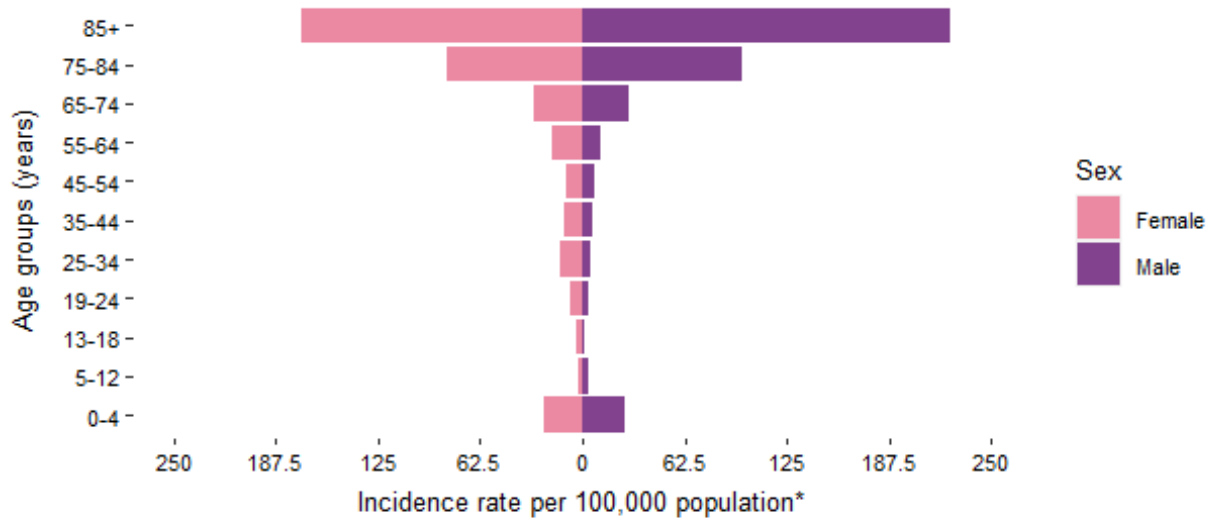


Figure 1b: Number of confirmed COVID-19 cases by notification week and epidemiological date in Ireland in the last 12 weeks. The red bars represent the number of confirmed cases by notification date. The purple line represents the number of cases by epidemiological date.

Confirmed COVID-19 cases by age and sex

Summary characteristics by age and sex of COVID-19 cases notified in Ireland during week 51, 2023 and 2023 to date

	Week 51, 2023		Total 2023	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Gender				
Males	406	44.2	15,304	43.9
Females	510	55.5	19,576	56.1
M:F ratio	0.8		0.78	
Age (years)				
Mean age	60		58	
Median age	70		62	
Age range	0 - 99		0 - 103	
Age groups (years)				
0-4	74	8.1	1,645	4.7
5-12	20	2.2	387	1.1
13-18	10	1.1	452	1.3
19-24	20	2.2	1,067	3.1
25-34	58	6.3	3,216	9.2
35-44	72	7.8	3,907	11.2
45-54	61	6.6	3,748	10.7
55-64	86	9.4	3,931	11.3
65-74	130	14.1	4,865	13.9
75-84	226	24.6	6,787	19.5
85+	162	17.6	4,874	14.0
Unknown	NA	0.0	4	0.0



*Excluding 0 for whom age is unknown, 0 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 51, 2023

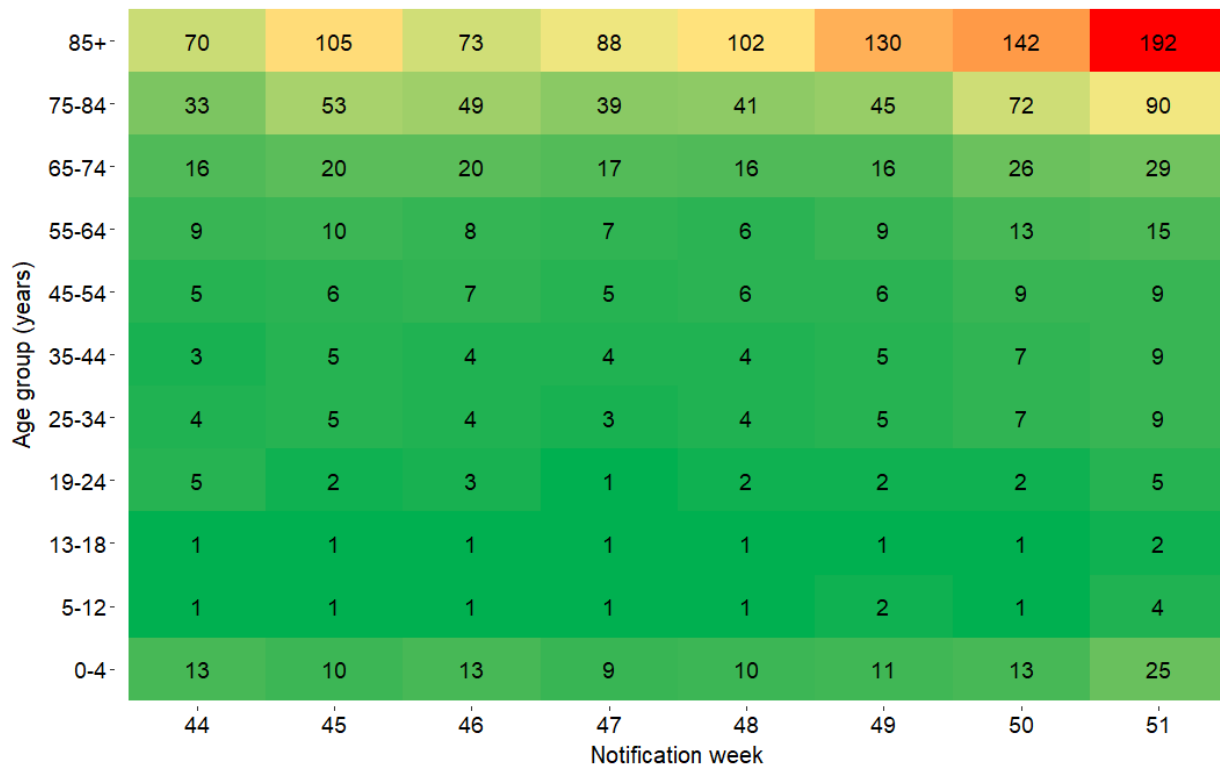


Figure 3: Heat map of weekly age-specific incidence rates of confirmed COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population in Ireland for the last 8 weeks

Cases and incidence by county

Characteristics of confirmed COVID-19 cases by county and descending incidence rate per 100,000 notified in Ireland, during week 51, 2023*

County	Number of cases	Percent	Incidence rate per 100,000
Westmeath	29	3.2	30.1
Kilkenny	31	3.4	29.8
Wexford	47	5.1	28.7
Waterford	34	3.7	26.7
Leitrim	9	1.0	25.6
Offaly	21	2.3	25.3
Donegal	42	4.6	25.1
Dublin	319	34.7	21.9
Carlow	13	1.4	21.0
Tipperary	34	3.7	20.3
Kildare	49	5.3	19.8
Laois	17	1.8	18.5
Roscommon	11	1.2	15.7
Cork	90	9.8	15.4
Kerry	24	2.6	15.3
Cavan	12	1.3	14.7
Sligo	10	1.1	14.2
Mayo	19	2.1	13.8
Longford	6	0.7	12.8
Wicklow	20	2.2	12.8
Limerick	23	2.5	11.0
Clare	13	1.4	10.2
Louth	14	1.5	10.0
Galway	21	2.3	7.6
Meath	11	1.2	5.0
Monaghan	0	0.0	0.0

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

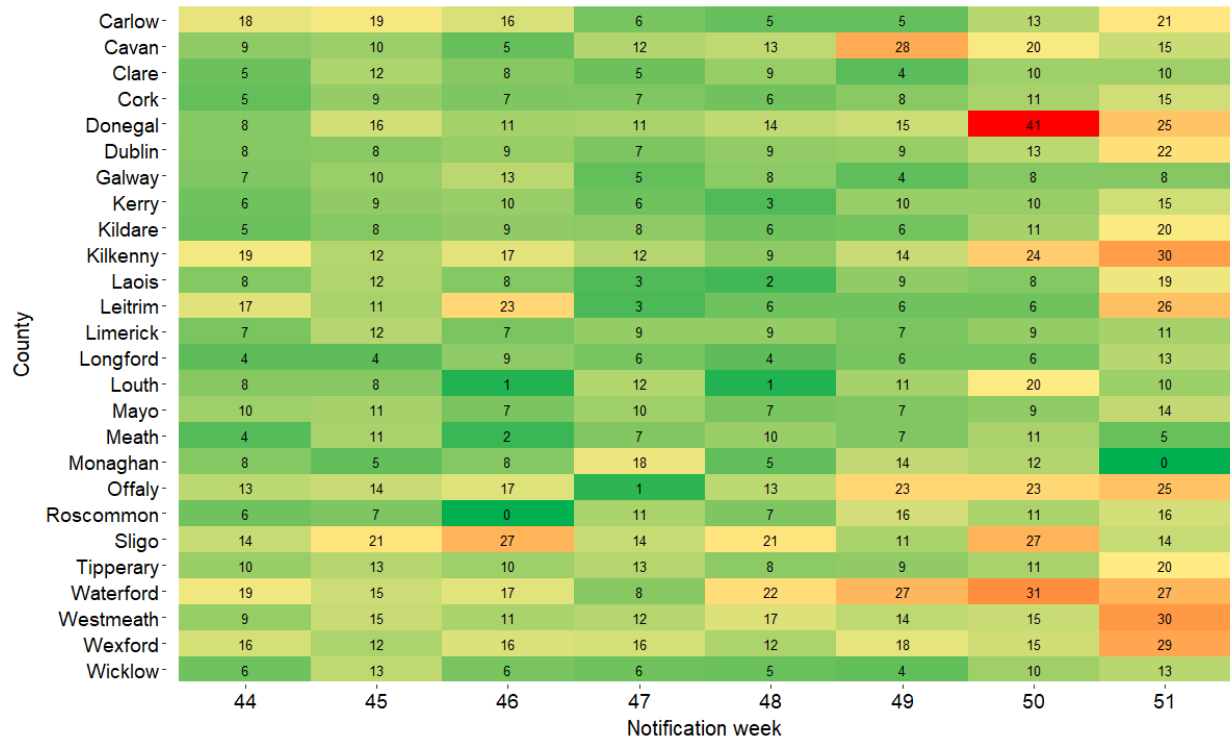


Figure 4: Heat map of weekly incidence rates of confirmed COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population, by county, notified in Ireland for the last 8 weeks

Hospitalisations

A total of 375 hospitalised confirmed COVID-19 cases were recorded in the latest epidemiological week, week 51 2023.

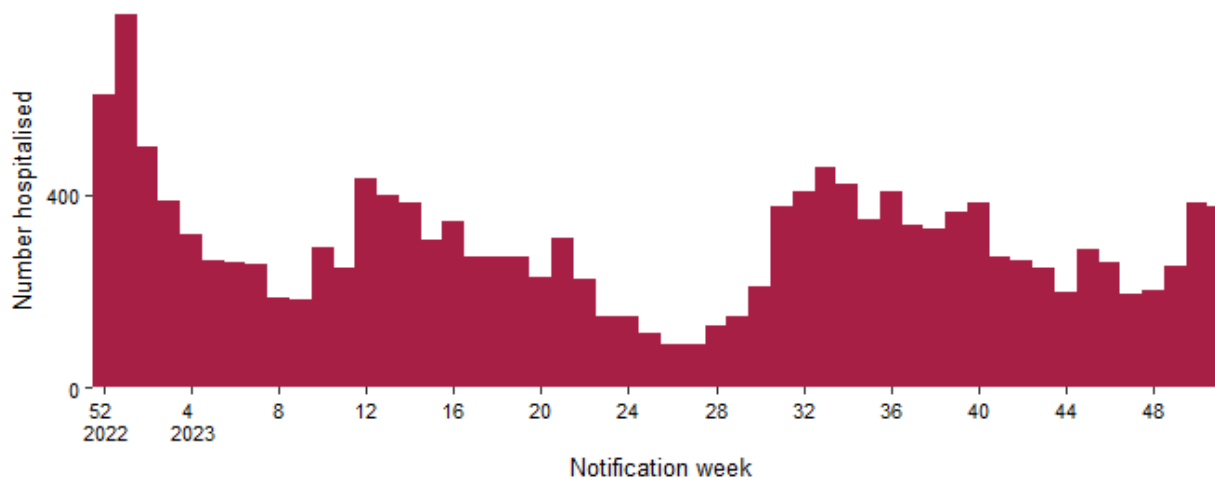


Figure 5: Hospitalisations among confirmed COVID-19 cases notified on CIDR in Ireland between week 52, 2022 and week 51, 2023

Number of COVID-19 cases and hospital admissions by age group in Ireland for week 51, 2023. [Hospitalisations may be underestimated for recent weeks as the outcome may not yet have occurred or may not yet have been reported to CIDR] 51, 2023 based on week of notification. [Data are based on the date the case was notified on CIDR, and not the date of hospital admission]

Age group	Week 51, 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	74	31	41.9	1,645	904	55.0
5-12	20	9	45.0	387	167	43.2
13-18	10	5	50.0	452	134	29.6
19-24	20	4	20.0	1,067	215	20.1
25-34	58	8	13.8	3,216	553	17.2
35-44	72	16	22.2	3,907	668	17.1
45-54	61	13	21.3	3,748	828	22.1
55-64	86	32	37.2	3,931	1,422	36.2
65-74	130	63	48.5	4,865	2,816	57.9
75-84	226	110	48.7	6,787	4,283	63.1
85+	162	84	51.9	4,874	2,965	60.8
Unknown	0	0	0.0	4	0	0.0

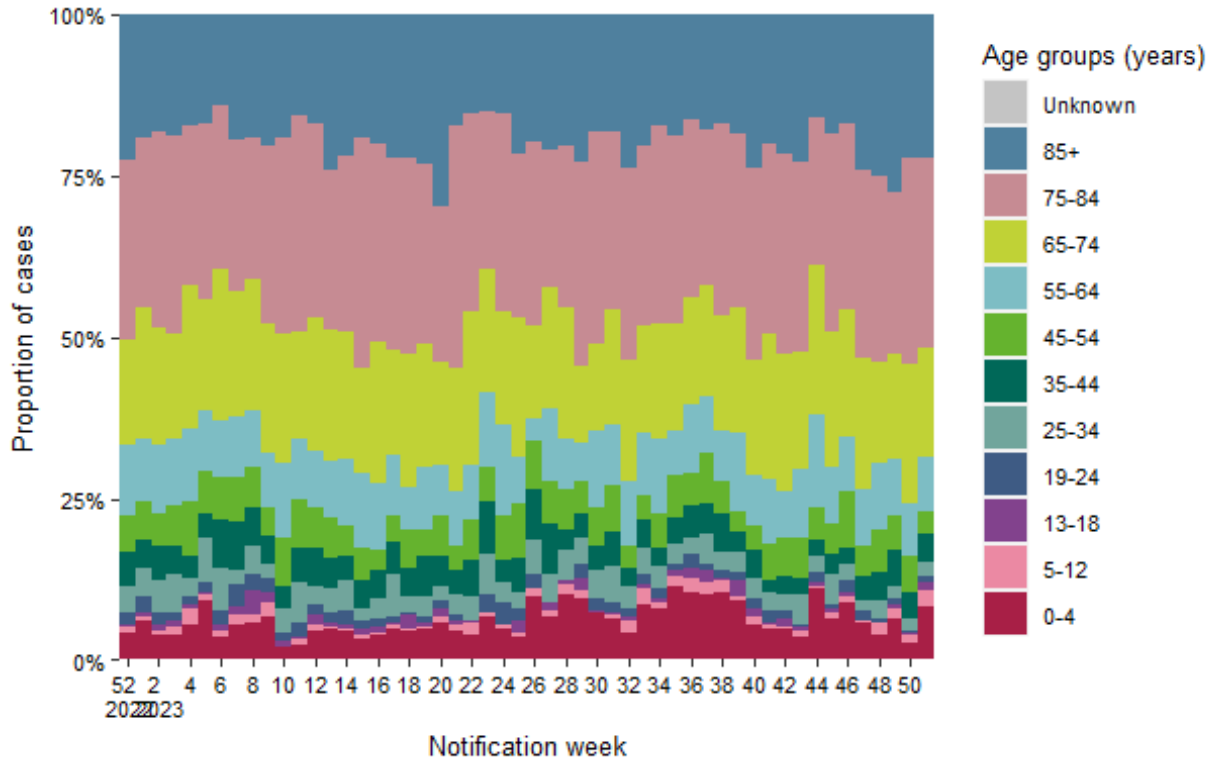


Figure 6: Age distribution of hospitalised confirmed COVID-19 cases notified on CIDR in Ireland between week 52, 2022 and week 51, 2023

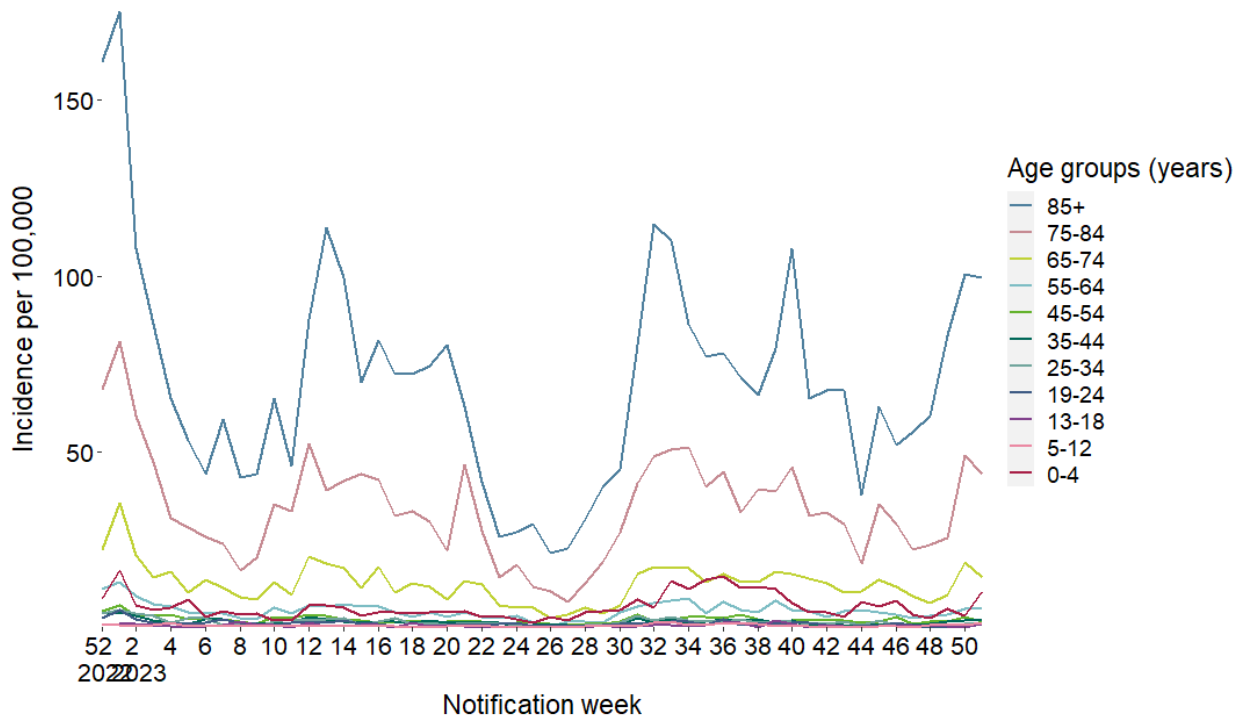


Figure 7: Incidence rate by age group of hospitalisations among confirmed COVID-19 cases on CIDR in Ireland between week 52, 2022 and week 51, 2023

ICU admissions

A total of 0 COVID-19 cases were admitted to ICU in the latest epidemiological week³, week 51 2023.

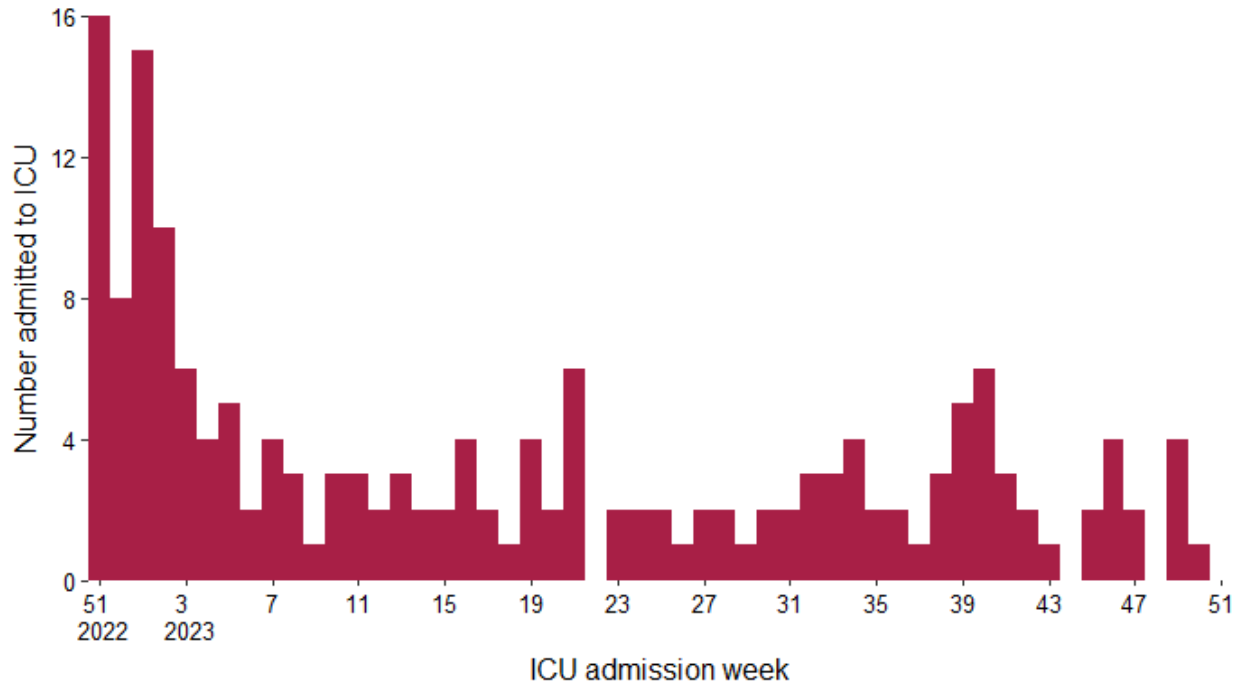


Figure 8: Number of COVID-19 ICU admissions in Ireland by week of ICU admission, between week 52, 2022 and week 51, 2023²

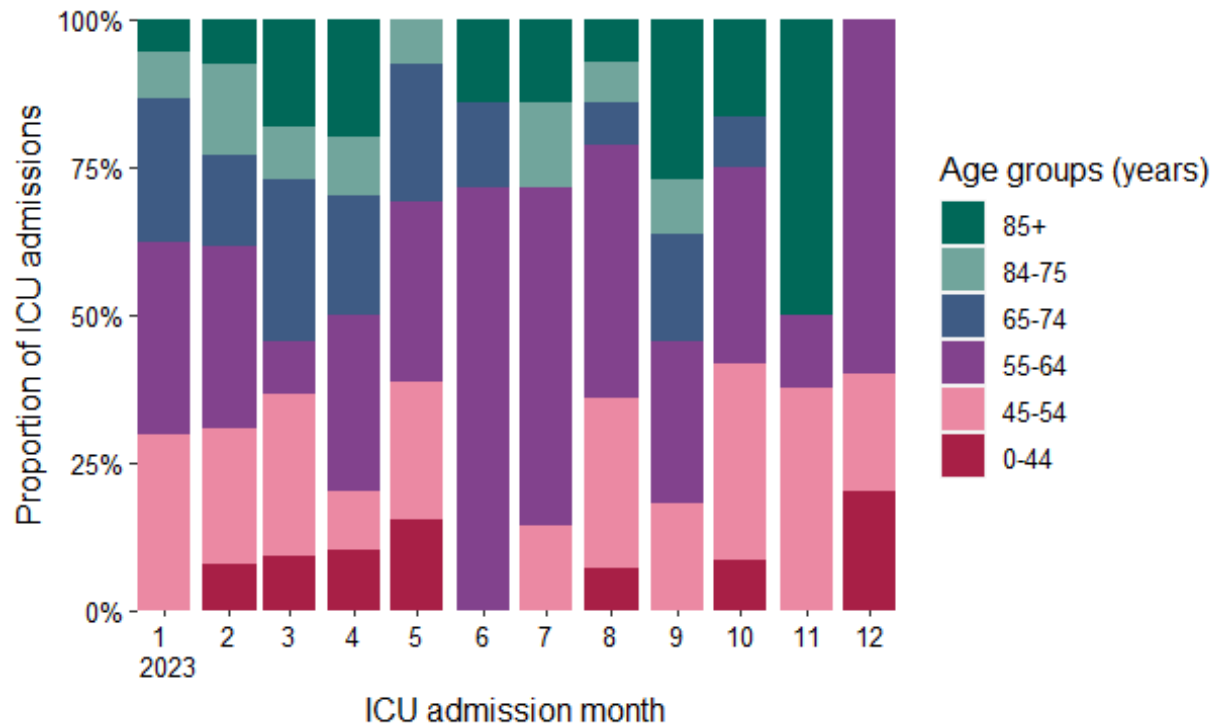


Figure 9: Age distribution of confirmed COVID-19 cases admitted to ICU by month of admission between January, 2022 and December, 2023

² Please note that most recent weeks may not yet reflect all admissions

Deaths

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

A total of 5 cases had a date of death in the latest epidemiological week, 51. The mean and median age of those who died in that week was 81 and 85 years respectively.

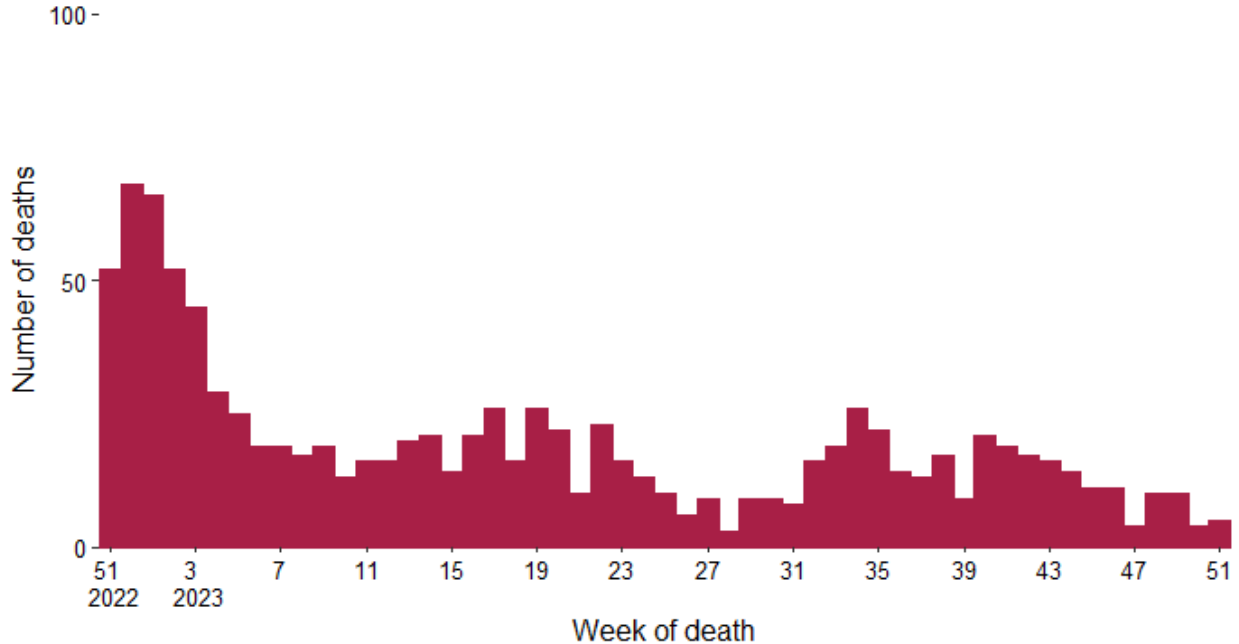


Figure 10: Total number of COVID-19 deaths notified by week of death, cases with a date of notification from week 52, 2022 to 51, 2023³. Date of death missing for 0 of the reported deaths

³ Please note that most recent weeks may not yet reflect all deaths

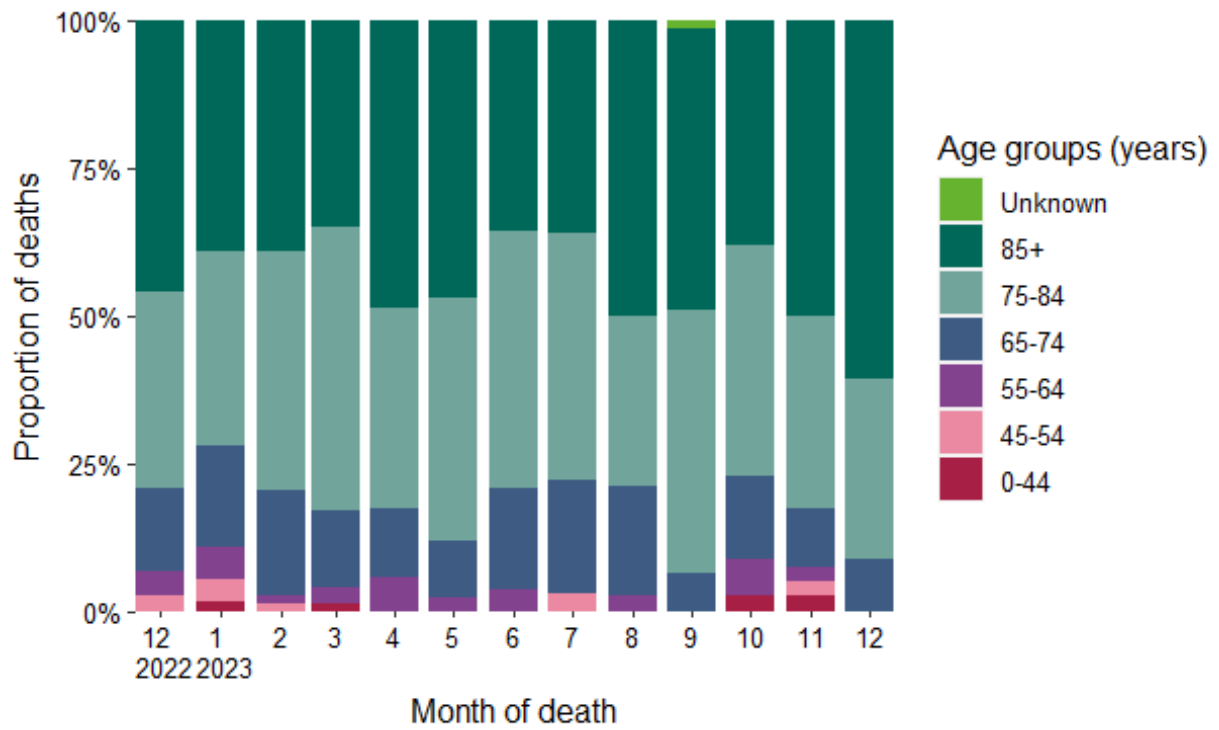


Figure 11: Age distribution of COVID-19 deaths notified on CIDR in Ireland between January, 2022 and December, 2023

Laboratory data of SARS-CoV-2 PCR tests

In week 51, a total of 7,148 SARS-CoV-2 tests were performed, of which 854 (11.9%) were positive.

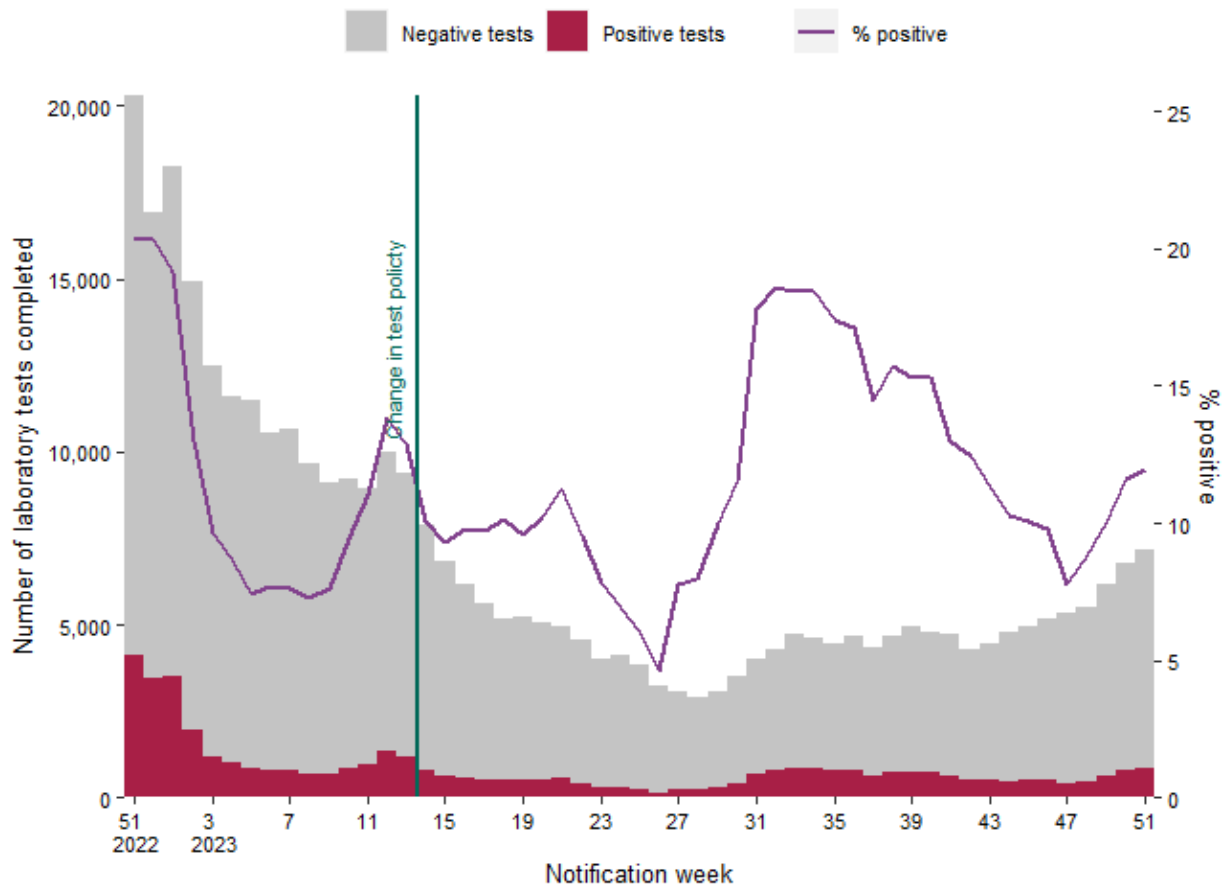


Figure 12: Number of completed laboratory tests by result and % positive tests⁴ in Ireland between week 52, 2022 and week 51, 2023. Data source: Deloitte Ireland LLP⁵

⁴ Positive tests refer to all positive specimens and includes duplicates and individuals who were retested.

⁵ Since 30/03/2023 (week 13, 2023), community test centres closed and PCR testing was only performed based on clinical assessment.

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 2022. 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](#)
- [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](#)