

# Connecting Communities for COVID19 News

1st Dec 2020

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## Isolation Tips

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### **Japan's aged care facilities remain locked down amid a COVID-19 third wave, and now there are fears residents may develop dementia**

The only contact Yuumi Matsuno has had with her mother since coronavirus reached Japan has been over the phone, separated by a pane of glass. For 10 months, the nursing home Hisako lives in has limited all visitors from the outside, except staff, in part to prevent any potential spread of COVID-19. While it has largely been successful, it has come at a cost. "She [my mum] doesn't talk as much as before," Ms Matsuno said. "When you speak on the phone, sometimes it's hard to hear and perhaps she feels it is troublesome, so she speaks less.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-11-29/how-a-third-wave-of-coronavirus-covid-19-hit-japan/12915838>

### **Japan and South Korea see surge of suicides among young women, raising new questions about pandemic stress**

Suicide rates among young women have increased notably in Japan and South Korea, raising possible links to the prolonged coronavirus pandemic as it amplifies stress levels, worsens economic woes and aggravates feelings of loneliness and isolation. No comprehensive global studies are yet available on whether the pandemic has caused higher suicide numbers or how it may have affected different age groups and genders. But Japan and South Korea are among the few countries to issue current data on suicides, with most nations taking a year or two to issue their numbers. Experts worry that the emerging trends in the two countries could be an early warning for the rest of the world as the pandemic and lockdowns take a toll on mental health.

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia\\_pacific/japan-suicides-pandemic-women/2020/11/28/0617e3a2-fdbd-11ea-b0e4-350e4e60cc91\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/japan-suicides-pandemic-women/2020/11/28/0617e3a2-fdbd-11ea-b0e4-350e4e60cc91_story.html)

### **Global pandemic has led to chronic loneliness in young people, study finds**

The global pandemic has caused chronic loneliness and social isolation in young people. Adolescents are also reporting high levels of anxiety about their future in terms of the impact of Covid-19 on their education, careers and family life. A major new global UNESCO study on the toll Covid-19 has had on young people is being spearheaded by NUI Galway, Professor Pat Dolan. Professor Dolan, Director of the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre at NUI Galway is leading the research project with over 100 countries taking part. It is among the first global studies to have adopted the Youth As Researchers model.

<https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/global-pandemic-has-led-to-chronic-loneliness-in-young-people-study-finds-39806945.html>

## Hygiene Helpers

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### **Covid Vaccines: 5 Things An Actual Scientist Wants Anti-Vaxxers To Know**

And the recent flurry of positive news around vaccines has inevitably focused some of this misguided energy into the supposed harms and risks associated with inoculation, once again fuelling the anti-vax movement that began in the 1990s. Most of the concerns raised are old and already debunked news, repackaged for the social media age and propagated by non-experts. So HuffPost UK asked an actual expert, UCL medicine cell biologist Dr Jennifer Rohn, to help debunk the 2020 version of a 1990s phenomenon...

[https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/vaccines-coronavirus-anti-vaxxers-coronavirus\\_uk\\_5fbcf15cc5b66bb88c615c2](https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/vaccines-coronavirus-anti-vaxxers-coronavirus_uk_5fbcf15cc5b66bb88c615c2)

[2?z7i&guccounter=1](#)

### **Coronavirus: NHS Covid-19 app to gain self-isolation payments**

England and Wales' contact-tracing app is to add a Self-Isolation Payment feature as soon as next week. The version 4 update will address a discrepancy that currently exists. Those told to stay at home by human contact-tracers can qualify for £500 of support. But privacy safeguards built into the NHS Covid-19 app had complicated making the same offer to those who had received an automated self-isolate notification. It is hoped the move will encourage more people to install the app and follow its guidance over the Christmas period, when there are concerns that cases of the coronavirus could spike again.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-55133926>

### **Coronavirus: Bournemouth universities to test thousands**

More than 6,000 university students and staff will be tested for coronavirus over the next week. Bournemouth University (BU) and Arts University Bournemouth (AUB) have teamed up to provide 12,000 tests for students and staff, ensuring they can go home for Christmas. Jim Andrews, chief operating officer at BU, said: "We've been working with AUB over the last two weeks to set up a testing facility on the BU campus as part of the government's guide to get all students tested so those who want to go home before Christmas are able to do so.

<https://www.bournemouthecho.co.uk/news/18909397.coronavirus-bournemouth-universities-test-thousands/>

## **Community Activities**

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### **How anti-vaxxers are threatening the UK's Covid programme**

In the imagination of extreme opponents of vaccination — or anti-vaxxers — every human inoculated against coronavirus will be turned into a chimera, injected with nanoparticles that beam out their biometric data and commoditised with bar codes linked to cryptocurrency. In their view, far from liberating us from the recurring nightmare of lockdowns, vaccines in development in Europe and the US are secretly intended to "enslave us to the system". However far-fetched it may appear, this kind of vision has been proliferating online alongside more prosaic forms of misinformation just as the mass roll out of Covid-19 vaccines comes within sight.

<https://www.ft.com/content/f84746af-9a7f-4cc8-a3b5-434d4c08556e>

### **EasyJet launches cut-price Covid-19 tests for travellers**

EasyJet is offering discounted coronavirus tests for passengers in a bid to boost demand for air travel. The Luton-based airline said it has agreed a deal with two private testing firms to offer preferential rates to flyers. Testing has become a requirement for entry to a number of easyJet's most popular destinations, such as Germany, Spain and Italy.

<https://www.eveningexpress.co.uk/news/uk/easyjet-launches-cut-price-covid-19-tests-for-travellers/>

### **International students arrive in Australia after 9 months of COVID lockdown**

The first international students to arrive in Australia since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic have landed in Darwin, signalling another change for the country's locked-down border. Students from China, Hong Kong, Japan, Vietnam and Indonesia have arrived at Darwin International Airport on a charter SilkAir flight from Singapore as part of a pilot program to return international tourists to Australia. The 63 students who landed this morning were to be transferred straight to the Howard Springs Quarantine Facility east of Darwin for 14 days of quarantine, the ABC reported.

<https://www.news.com.au/travel/travel-updates/international-students-arrive-in-australia-after-9-months-of-covid-lockdown/news-story/50edc6c87fb0feecf2977f307b0d7333>

### **Anti-Lockdown Protesters Chant 'Open L.A.' Outside Health Chief's Home Before New Covid Restrictions Begin**

Crowds gathered outside the home of the Los Angeles County's public health director on Sunday to

protest against the latest round of Covid-19 restrictions taking effect this week. Dr. Barbara Ferrer's Echo Park home was surrounded by dozens of demonstrators, carrying placards, waving flags and chanting: "Open L.A." and "No science. No data. No shutdown". Footage from the scene shows few people in the crowd were wearing face masks as they paced up and down the street. LAPD officers could be seen overlooking the scene with a police vehicle parked in what appears to be Ferrer's driveway.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/anti-lockdown-protesters-chant-open-l-a-outside-health-chief-s-home-before-new-covid-restrictions-begin/ar-BB1bucxx>

### **Pandemic Motors: Europeans snap up old cars to avoid public transport**

Want a cheap used car to nip around town without running the gauntlet of coronavirus on public transport? Welcome to Pandemic Motors, we have just what you need. Across Europe, people are snapping up old bangers, clunkers, Klapperkasten, tacots and catorci, desperate to avoid buses and trains but wary of splashing out on a shiny new motor in uncertain economic times. "Public transportation is terrific here, but with the COVID and all that, it's better to avoid it," said Robert Perez, who recently moved to Spain's capital Madrid from Argentina.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-autos-used-insight-idUKKBN28A0FV>

### **How the COVID-19 recession will forever impact Gen Z**

The coronavirus pandemic has brought much of the world's economies into a recession, affecting every sector of the global population. But one demographic – Generation Z, those born between 1997 and 2012 – may never recover. From a lack of socialisation to not being able to start their careers, we are examining how Gen Z'ers from ages eight to 23 will have to manage these unprecedented challenges.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/podcasts/2020/11/30/how-the-covid-19-recession-will-forever-impact-gen-z/>

### **Coronavirus: German anti-lockdown protests shift to Polish border**

Objectors of coronavirus curbs have converged on Frankfurt-an-der-Oder on Germany's border with Poland. Meanwhile, at viral hot spot Hildburghausen in Thuringia state, the local county chief is under police protection.

<https://www.dw.com/en/coronavirus-german-anti-lockdown-protests-shift-to-polish-border/a-55761550>

## **Working Remotely**

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### **Germany plans tax rebate up to €600 for employees working from home**

Chancellor Angela Merkel's government on Monday said it was planning a tax rebate for people working from home during the pandemic, to help offset higher costs for heating, electricity and other bills. Merkel's left-right coalition said it had agreed a proposal that would allow employees working from home to reduce their annual tax bill by per €5 working day, up to a maximum amount of €600 per year. Finance Minister Olaf Scholz said the proposed legislation, expected to be approved by parliament in December, is "good for workers" and "not a big fiscal challenge for the German state".

<https://www.thelocal.de/20201130/germany-plans-tax-rebate-for-employees-working-from-home>

### **If Covid has made working from home our new normal, your boss and Uncle Sam should chip in**

Working remotely isn't new, but the United States has never seen it at its current scale. The shift can benefit workers as well as employers and society writ large — but there can also be costs. When those costs are financial, it's important that the employer or the government covers the bill for remote workers. Prior to the pandemic, approximately 12 percent of the U.S. workforce worked from home for at least one full day per month. Although not directly comparable, as of October, about 32 million Americans, or one-fifth, reported telework due to the pandemic, and almost three-quarters of those workers are between the ages of 25 and 54. The shift might have been inspired by the

coronavirus, but it's almost certainly something this cohort should be prepared for going forward.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/if-covid-has-made-working-home-our-new-normal-your-ncna1248163>

### **How To Continue Working Remotely Even If Your Company Goes Back To The Office**

Many workers who've gotten the option to work from home during the pandemic have discovered something important about themselves: They like it and don't want to go back into the office. That's one reason many companies are finding their cubicles sparsely populated when they've rolled out optional return-to-work plans. It's easier for many people to balance their family responsibilities with their careers when they work from home, especially with many schools switching to remote learning as coronavirus cases spike. Not to mention there's less chance of exposure to the virus when employees work from home.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/elainepofeldt/2020/11/29/how-to-continue-working-remotely-even-if-your-company-goes-back-to-the-office/>

### **Working from home won't create jobs for young in Herefordshire**

I agree with your recent editorial welcoming an increase in working from home and the opportunities for living in Herefordshire which that allows. But it will not provide significantly more jobs for young people. The majority of people who work from home are older with higher qualifications and more experience. They are executives, specialists and communicators. Many are based in London, but are currently anxious to avoid public transport and long commutes (see the latest ONS figures.)

<https://www.herefordtimes.com/news/18906994.working-home-wont-create-jobs-young-herefordshire/>

### **Thinking Of Ditching Your Job To Work-From-Home? Here Are The 7 Things You Should Know**

For all the changes stemming from the intrusion of Covid-19, the relocation of our offices to our living rooms and the normalization of non-working-norms is a big one. That's not necessarily a bad thing. In fact, for some of us, it's turning out to be just the ticket for gaining more control over when, where, and how we work—not to mention on what and for whom.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/anitasands/2020/11/30/thinking-of-ditching-your-job-to-work-from-home-here-are-the-7-things-you-should-know/>

### **This Invitation to Work Remotely in Hawaii Is Pretty Tempting**

As the continental U.S. begins seeing colder temperatures and fewer opportunities to get outdoors safely, this might be the warm weather escape you've been looking for. A new program invites Americans to work remotely from Hawaii.

<https://www.newsweek.com/this-invitation-work-remotely-hawaii-pretty-tempting-1551239>

### **The Covid-19 vaccines will usher the dawn of the true hybrid office**

Office workers won't grind out a full week 9 to 5 at their strip-lit desk ever again. News of three successful vaccine trials will start to unlock re-entry to open-plan workplaces, but after Covid-19 forced white collar employees to mass work from home, employers are accepting homogeneous work habits are over, and the future of office work is hybrid. "There's no real going back to normal, the pandemic has given us an opportunity to rethink how we work and why," says Gerard Grech, CEO of Tech Nation, a network for entrepreneurs that has just announced a 'work from anywhere' (within the UK) that lasts for 12 months. Grech's employees are being offered co-working spaces, an office-experience for people who might not be able to work from home, while assuming remote will be the new default for many.

<https://www.wired.co.uk/article/return-to-office-work-vaccine>

### **As COVID pandemic extends many remote work options, Hawaii seeks to be seen as a remote workplace with a view**

Software engineer Raymond Berger begins his work day at 5 a.m., before the sun comes up over

Hawaii. Rising early is necessary because the company he works for is in New York City, five hours ahead of Maui, where he is renting a home with a backyard that's near the beach. "It's a little hard with the time zone difference," he said. "But generally I have a much better quality of life." The pandemic is giving many workers the freedom to do their jobs from anywhere. Now that Hawaii's economy is reeling from dramatically fewer tourists, a group of state officials and community leaders wants more people like Berger to help provide an alternative to relying on short-term visitors.

<https://www.masslive.com/coronavirus/2020/11/as-covid-pandemic-extends-many-remote-work-options-hawaii-seeks-to-be-seen-as-a-remote-workplace-with-a-view.html>

## **Virtual Classrooms**

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### **North Jersey districts weigh whether to preserve snow days amid virtual learning**

For some, remote learning represents a chance to stay connected. That's not something to overlook, given the youngest generation's penchant to connect electronically, Borden cautioned. For a number of North Jersey school districts, the decision on whether to close schools will remain moot for most of this winter. Districts such as Passaic Valley Regional, Clifton and Passaic are remote until the end of January. Future years are less clear. Could snow days be over?

<https://www.northjersey.com/story/news/2020/11/30/north-new-jersey-school-districts-wrestle-snow-day-policies/6388817002/>

### **School psychologists are more important than ever**

As National School Psychology Week (Nov. 9-13) came to an end, I thought about this year's theme, The Power of Possibility. While the COVID-19 pandemic has changed how school looks for the 1.5 million public school students in North Carolina, school psychologists continued to find creative ways to connect with students to provide support and familiarity during these challenging times.

<https://www.ednc.org/perspective-school-psychologists-and-the-power-of-possibility-in-north-carolina/>

### **'Heartbreaking For These Kids': Virtual Learning Struggles May Leave Some Students Behind, Parents Say**

More schools are making the move to remote learning as the level of community transmission continues to rise. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Education's recommendations, all but one county in the state should be using full-time remote learning. As coronavirus case numbers continue to rise, parents are concerned that students are not getting an education. "It's been heartbreaking for these kids, especially for the little learners," said Cait Riley. Riley's daughter is in the first grade at North Allegheny School District. "If you can't read by the time you are in the second grade, you have problems for life. You are proven to become basically a failure in society if you cannot learn to read," Riley said.

<https://pittsburgh.cbslocal.com/2020/11/30/covid-virtual-learning-struggles-pennsylvania/>

### **As virtual learning continues, here's how to help kids unplug from screens**

Kids are spending more time in front of their screens due to virtual learning, but how do you find a balance between being connected and unplugging? 7 On Your Side talked with a teacher and psychologist who are collaborating to share strategies with parents on how to get kids outside, increase their social-emotional learning and break a screen addiction. As part of National Geographic's back-to-school efforts, they encouraged educators to join the "Nat Geo Education" community on Twitter and use the #TeacherStrong to share strategies that help students learn and grow. One example is the collaboration between Byron McClure, a psychologist at Anacostia High School in D.C., and Kelly Koller, an elementary school teacher in Wisconsin.

<https://foxbaltimore.com/news/local/as-virtual-learning-continues-heres-how-to-help-kids-unplug-from-screens>

## **Public Policies**

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**Swedish epidemiologist sidelined after country's no-lockdown rule leads to rise in**

### **number of deaths**

Sweden "loses faith" with its Covid expert as deaths rise. An epidemiologist who led the no-lockdown strategy appears to have been sidelined by his government. The high-profile epidemiologist who led Sweden's no-lockdown strategy in the spring appears to be being sidelined by his country's government after his prediction that greater immunity would mean a lighter second wave proved badly wrong. Anders Tegnell's biweekly press conference was on Thursday pushed into the shade by an overlapping press conference fronted by Stefan Lofven, Sweden's prime minister, where scenarios prepared by the Public Health Agency were announced.

<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/swedish-epidemiologist-sidelined-after-countrys-no-lockdown-rule-leads-to-rise-in-number-of-deaths/BIEL4I3UOZO7YD2PRQL3DPDD4I/>

### **Turkey tightens coronavirus curbs as death toll hits record high**

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has announced a new round of tight restrictions in a bid to stem a surge in coronavirus infections, extending curfews to weeknights and imposing a full lockdown during the weekend. After only reporting symptomatic cases for four months, Turkey last week resumed reporting all positive COVID-19 cases that saw logged daily infections jump to about 30,000. On Monday, the number of daily new cases reached a record high of 31,219, while the COVID-19 death toll hit a record high for an eighth consecutive day, with 188 fatalities in the last 24 hours, according to figures from the health ministry.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/11/30/turkish-president-erdogan-tightens-coronavirus-restrictions>

### **COVID-19: Another national lockdown not ruled out as minister warns we may not 'get back to normal' until next summer**

It is "too early to say" if another national lockdown will be needed after Christmas, according to a senior minister. George Eustice said "you can't rule anything out" when asked by Sky News if the "stay at home" measures could come back into force to keep coronavirus under control. The environment secretary also admitted it may be as late as "next summer" until "we can all start to get back to normal" - dependent on a vaccine.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-another-national-lockdown-after-christmas-not-ruled-out-by-minister-12146884>

### **Pubs ordered to close by 6pm from Friday as Wales enters new lockdown**

Wales will be placed back under harsh new coronavirus restrictions just three weeks after a 'firebreak' lockdown ended, the First Minister has confirmed. Mark Drakeford announced that there will be a total ban on alcohol sales, with pubs, bars and restaurants across the country told to shut by 6pm on Friday, following a sharp rise in coronavirus cases. He said that without action, government modelling suggested 2,200 people could be in hospital by January 12, with 1,600 people also losing their lives over the winter period. Non-essential retail, hairdressers, gyms and leisure centres will remain open but cinemas, bowling alleys and other indoor entertainment venues will be forced to shut in the run up to Christmas.

<https://metro.co.uk/2020/11/30/wales-to-be-plunged-into-strict-new-covid-rules-this-week-13676015/?ico=related-posts>

### **Covid-19 cases: UK infections have fallen by 30% in lockdown and R rate has dropped to 0.88, study says**

Covid-19 cases have fallen by roughly a third in lockdown, a new study has found. Infections in some of the worst-hit areas dropped, and while experts confirm lockdown restrictions were a success, cases nationally remain high. Health Secretary Matt Hancock said while the drop in cases is "encouraging", the public must stick to the rules in the coming weeks. The findings come just days before England ends its four-week lockdown, when the country will go into tiered restrictions with a review set for 16 December.

<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/health/medical/covid-19-cases-uk-infections-have-fallen-by-30-in-lockdown-and-r-rate-ha>

[s-dropped-to-0-88-study-says/ar-BB1bueuy?MSCC=1605820176](https://www.bbc.com/news/health-55125712)

### **Covid: PM calls for 'unity' as he agrees to publish data behind new tiers**

Boris Johnson has agreed to publish the health, economic and social data behind England's new tier system later, as he seeks to avert a Commons rebellion. MPs will vote on the measures on Tuesday, and numerous Conservative MPs have demanded to see the evidence government is basing its new system on. Writing to a group of around 70 MPs - who are sceptical of the new rules - Mr Johnson called for "unity and resolve". Labour is expected to support the PM, but is yet to confirm its stance. If Labour does decide to get behind the new tier system, the government should easily win the vote - even if there is a sizeable revolt among Conservative MPs.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-55125712>

### **Italy Green-lights New Anti-Covid Stimulus Package**

Italy's government said Monday it had approved a new stimulus package to shore up businesses affected by the latest round of anti-coronavirus restrictions in the eurozone's third-largest economy. The aid package, the fourth since the pandemic gripped the country in March, is worth eight billion euros (\$9.6 billion) and delays tax deadlines for companies in areas subject to harsh lockdown measures. It also offers a 1,000-euro lump sum to workers in tourism, the arts, sports and leisure -- as well as setting aside funds for the conventions sector and a boosted police presence to ensure anti-coronavirus measures are respected.

<https://www.barrons.com/news/italy-green-lights-new-anti-covid-stimulus-package-01606729204>

### **Nationwide Lockdown on Cards? PM Modi to Hold All-party Meet on December 4 to Discuss COVID Situation**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will chair an all-party meeting on Friday to discuss the COVID-19 situation. The second all-party meeting, which comes amid a sudden spurt in COVID-19 cases will be held virtually at 10.30 am. The meeting assumes significance as it is being held after the prime minister's visit to Zydus Cadila, Bharat Biotech, and Serum Institute of India (SII) to personally review coronavirus vaccine development work there.

<https://www.india.com/news/india/lockdown-news-lockdown-in-india-again-nationwide-lockdown-on-cards-pm-modi-all-party-meet-december-4-covid-19-lockdown-4233068/>

### **Gov. Phil Murphy ignores protesters and warns New Jersey state-wide lockdown is 'still on the table'**

New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy told Fox News Sunday that a state-wide lockdown is still 'on the table.' 'It's on the table in terms of a shutdown,' Murphy told Bret Baier on 'Fox News Sunday'. 'I don't anticipate it and I sure as heck don't want to go that route.' The comments came as anti-lockdown protesters swarmed the street where Murphy lives to voice their opposition to pandemic-related restrictions. The Democratic governor was also verbally confronted and filmed while having dinner out with his wife and four kids at a New Jersey restaurant. They called him a 'real d\*\*\*' and told one of his sons to 'go f\*\*\* yourself.' The confrontation where Murphy said nothing came after he urged New Jersey residents to limit their Thanksgiving celebrations to 10 people.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8998875/amp/Gov-Phil-Murphy-ignores-protesters-warns-New-Jersey-state-wide-lockdown-table.html>

### **Kim Jong Un is cutting off his economic lifeline, China, to stave off Covid-19**

Kim Jong Un appears to have kicked North Korea's pandemic prevention plan into overdrive, further tightening the country's nearly impassible borders, cutting off nearly all trade with China, and even allegedly executing a customs official for failing to handle imported goods appropriately. Beijing exported just \$253,000 worth of goods to Pyongyang in October -- a drop of 99% from September to October, according to data published by China's customs administration. For context, that's less in terms of dollar value than China exported to Liechtenstein and Monaco during October.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/29/asia/north-korea-covid-executions-trade-intl-hnk/index.html>

### **South Australia now open to Victoria once again**

As of midnight, South Australia is rolling out a list of changes to COVID-19 restrictions, after the state recorded zero new cases yesterday. Since 12.01am, the border with Victoria has finally been reopened, allowing travel between the two states. Victorians entering South Australia are still required to fill in an online permit form, to get pre-approval. Masks are also mandatory for people in allied health and residential care, and the state is rolling out its QR code mandatory check-in system for businesses and venues. But also, stand-up drinking is returning to pubs and weddings, and patron caps on businesses are now removed.

<https://www.9news.com.au/national/south-australia-records-zero-new-coronavirus-cases/d3ec8864-5e0a-40a7-969d-0762466c8972>

### **Covid-19 vaccines: Belfast Trust staff 'can decide to have jab'**

Staff in the Belfast Health Trust are being asked whether or not they want to receive the Covid vaccine. The BBC has seen an email and questionnaire sent to all employees telling them workers will receive the Pfizer vaccine. Trade unions say they are encouraging front-line workers to get the vaccine but everyone should be given a choice. Another 10 Covid-related deaths and 290 new cases were reported by Stormont's Department of Health on Monday. It brings the department's death toll - which consists of deaths from any cause within 28 days of a positive test - to 996.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-55125164>

### **COVID-19: People who refuse to get vaccine could be denied entry to venues, minister suggests**

People could be refused entry to a host of venues if they decline a coronavirus vaccine, a minister has suggested. Nadhim Zahawi, who is responsible for the rollout of vaccines against COVID-19, said the jabs will not be compulsory.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-people-who-refuse-to-get-vaccine-could-be-denied-entry-to-venues-minister-suggests-12147306>

## **Maintaining Services**

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### **Airlines Face 'Mission of the Century' in Shipping Vaccines**

In cooled warehouses on the fringes of Frankfurt airport, Deutsche Lufthansa AG is preparing its depleted fleet for the gargantuan task of airlifting millions of doses of the vaccines meant to end the global pandemic. Lufthansa, one of the world's biggest cargo carriers, began planning in April in anticipation of the shots that Pfizer Inc. to Moderna Inc. and AstraZeneca Plc are developing in record time. A 20-member task force is at work devising how to fit more of the crucial payload onto the airline's 15 Boeing Co. 777 and MD-11 freighters, along with hold space in a vast passenger fleet now flying at just 25% of capacity.

[https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-11-29/airlines-face-mission-of-the-century-in-distributing-vaccines?ref=Yg3sQEZ2&cmpid=socialflow-twitter-business&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_content=business&utm\\_campaign=socialflow-organic&utm\\_source=twitter](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-11-29/airlines-face-mission-of-the-century-in-distributing-vaccines?ref=Yg3sQEZ2&cmpid=socialflow-twitter-business&utm_medium=social&utm_content=business&utm_campaign=socialflow-organic&utm_source=twitter)

### **'Limited number' of pharmacies to give 1000 COVID-19 vax a week**

A "limited number" of pharmacies in England will be asked to offer COVID-19 vaccinations from late December, provided they can deliver 1,000 doses a week, NHSE&I has said. NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) will commission a small number of pharmacy contractors to deliver the COVID-19 vaccination programme as a local enhanced service (LES), it said in a letter to contractors last week (November 27). The selected pharmacy-led sites will need to comply with a list of requirements, which NHSE&I said it does not "expect the majority of contractors sites will be able to meet". NHSE&I regional teams will select suitable pharmacy sites, following a designation process.

Those successful will be required to administer “a minimum of 1,000 doses of vaccine over a seven-day period from each designated site” from “late December or early January”, but the exact date will depend on vaccine availability. A final LES agreement will be published “as soon as details are clear”, NHSE&I said in the letter – which was signed by NHS chief commercial officer and senior responsible owner for the vaccine programme Emily Lawson, director of primary care Ed Waller and chief pharmaceutical officer for England Dr Keith Ridge.

<https://www.chemistanddruggist.co.uk/news/limited-number-pharmacies-give-1000-covid-19-vax-week>

### **Russian hospital says it began civilian coronavirus vaccinations last week**

Russia has delivered the first known batch of Sputnik V vaccines for civilian use to a hospital just south of Moscow, which said on Monday it began vaccinating the local population last week. Russia, which is rushing to keep up with Western drugmakers in the race for a coronavirus shot, has said interim trial results show its Sputnik V vaccine to be 92% effective at protecting people from COVID-19.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-russia-sputnik/russian-hospital-says-it-began-civilian-coronavirus-vaccinations-last-week-idUKL8N2IG43K>

### **Germany partial lockdown pushes more companies into short-time work: Ifo**

The share of companies in Germany using short-time work schemes rose in November compared to the previous month, economic institute Ifo said on Monday, as a partial lockdown hit employment in tourism and restaurant industries. Ifo said a survey of around 7,000 companies showed that the share of companies using the scheme rose to 28% in November from 24.8% in October. Short-time work, also known as Kurzarbeit, allows employers to switch employees to working fewer hours or even none during an economic downturn. It aims to stop immediate shocks from leading into mass unemployment.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-germany-employers/germany-partial-lockdown-pushes-more-companies-into-short-time-work-ifo-idUKKBN28A0H5>

### **Many retailers prepare to reopen for first time in six weeks**

Non-essential retailers around the country are finalising preparations ahead of reopening their doors for the first time in six weeks. Level 5 restrictions will begin to ease tomorrow, with restaurants and gastro pubs following suit on Friday. The Government expects to see new cases of Covid-19 increasing in two weeks' time, once restrictions are eased. But Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly has said there is no intention to reimpose tighter restrictions unless there is a huge rise in cases.

<https://www.rte.ie/news/2020/11/30/1181318-coronavirus-ireland/>

### **US braces for continued surge in COVID-19 cases, hospitalisations**

As newly reported cases of the coronavirus continued to spike across much of the United States, breaking records for hospitalisations, some local leaders are moving to enact more stringent restrictions. US officials had pleaded with Americans to avoid travel and limit social gatherings as the nation entered its winter holiday season. But many appear to have disregarded those pleas over the long Thanksgiving weekend as the Transportation Security Administration screened nearly 1.2 million airline passengers on Sunday, the highest since mid-March.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/11/30/us-braces-for-continued-surge-in-covid-19-cases-hospitalisations>

## **Healthcare Innovations**

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### **Moderna to seek FDA emergency authorization after COVID-19 vaccine shows 94% efficacy in final analysis**

Moderna announced Monday it will ask the Food and Drug Administration for emergency use authorization (EUA) for its COVID-19 vaccine, making it the second company, after Pfizer, to seek EUA for a COVID-19 vaccine in the United States. Pfizer's public FDA hearing -- a crucial step in the

authorization process -- is scheduled for Dec. 10, and the FDA could make its official authorization decision shortly thereafter. In an early morning press release, Moderna announced that its FDA hearing will be held a week later, on Dec. 17. Moderna also announced its coronavirus vaccine is more than 94% effective, according to the final analysis of its massive Phase 3 trial.

<https://abcnews.go.com/Health/moderna-seek-fda-emergency-authorization-covid-19-vaccine/story?id=74454936>

### **'No-swab' coronavirus test from OptiGene highly sensitive, UK says**

A type of COVID-19 test that can be taken without the need for a nose or throat swab has been found to be highly effective in identifying infectious cases, including for people not showing symptoms, the British government said on Tuesday. The RT-LAMP tests, made by privately-held British company OptiGene, have been studied in a pilot programme in the southern English city of Southampton, where they were used to test some health service staff as well as 55,000 people connected to the local university. "We've shown through carefully conducted studies that the OptiGene LAMP test is fast, reliable and easy to use, and dependent on testing format can work directly with saliva samples as well as with swabs," said Sue Hill, chief scientific officer for England in the National Health Service's Test and Trace programme.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/instant-article/idUKKBN28B3AA>

### **UEA study shows Chinese asymptomatic Covid-19 cases were not infectious**

Researchers from Norwich have found a mass screening programme of more than 10 million people in the Chinese city of Wuhan identified 300 asymptomatic Covid-19 cases - but none were infectious. But the University of East Anglia scientists stressed the findings do not show people who have coronavirus, but no symptoms, cannot pass on the virus. Mass testing took place over two weeks at the end of May - after the city's stringent lockdown was lifted in April. The study found no 'viable' virus in the asymptomatic cases and their close contacts did not test positive. Prof Fujian Song, from UEA's Norwich Medical School, said: "The virus cultures indicated no viable virus in the identified asymptomatic cases. This means that these people were not likely to infect anyone else."

<https://www.eveningnews24.co.uk/news/uea-study-hows-asymptomatic-covid-cases-in-wuhan-not-infectious-6569130>

### **Russia begins mass trials of second coronavirus vaccine**

Russia plans to begin mass trials of its second coronavirus vaccine, EpiVacCorona, on people aged over 18 on Monday, the RIA news agency cited the consumer health watchdog Rospotrebnadzor as saying. EpiVacCorona, which is being developed by Siberia's Vector Institute, was authorised this month to carry out trials on 150 volunteers over 60 and 3,000 volunteers over 18, the watchdog has said.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-russia-cases/russia-begins-mass-trials-of-second-coronavirus-vaccine-idUKKBN28A1FQ>

### **'Absolutely remarkable': No one who got Moderna's vaccine in trial developed severe COVID-19**

Continuing the spate of stunning news about COVID-19 vaccines, the biotech company Moderna announced the final results of the 30,000-person efficacy trial for its candidate in a press release today: Only 11 people who received two doses of the vaccine developed COVID-19 symptoms after being infected with the pandemic coronavirus, versus 185 symptomatic cases in a placebo group. That is an efficacy of 94.1%, the company says, far above what many vaccine scientists were expecting just a few weeks ago. More impressive still, Moderna's candidate had 100% efficacy against severe disease. There were zero such COVID-19 cases among those vaccinated, but 30 in the placebo group. The company today plans to file a request for emergency use authorization (EUA) for its vaccine with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and is also seeking a similar green light from the European Medicines Agency.

<https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/11/absolutely-remarkable-no-one-who-got-modernas-vaccine-trial-developed>

[-severe-covid-19](#)

### **Singapore studies COVID-19 pregnancy puzzle after baby born with antibodies**

Doctors are studying the impact of COVID-19 on pregnant women and their unborn babies in Singapore, where an infant delivered by an infected mother earlier this month had antibodies against the virus but did not carry the disease. The ongoing study among the city-state's public hospitals adds to international efforts to better understand whether the infection or antibodies can be transferred during pregnancy, and if the latter offers an effective shield against the virus. The World Health Organisation says while some pregnant women have an increased risk of developing severe COVID-19, it is not yet known whether an infected pregnant woman can pass the virus to her foetus or baby during pregnancy or delivery.

[https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-singapore-idUSKBN28A0HO?taid=5fc4a8de0de7dd00011e0746&utm\\_campaign=trueAnthem:+Trending+Content&utm\\_medium=trueAnthem&utm\\_source=twitter](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-singapore-idUSKBN28A0HO?taid=5fc4a8de0de7dd00011e0746&utm_campaign=trueAnthem:+Trending+Content&utm_medium=trueAnthem&utm_source=twitter)