

13 October 2021

## **Covid-19 - PCR Tests, Deaths, Vaccination Status and Red Flag Waiting Lists**

**How many cycles is the Belfast City Hospital area running as standard for their PCR Tests.**

All SARS CoV2 laboratory-based testing is currently carried out only in the Regional Virus Laboratory, Royal Victoria Hospital and nowhere else in Belfast Trust.

There are many assays and platforms in use in Belfast Trust for molecular testing of SARS CoV2. Manufacturers set the total number of PCR cycles for each of those assays and there is no deviation from that within Belfast Trust. Standard PCRs that mostly employ Taqman chemistry, including SARS CoV2 assays, are either 40 or 45 cycles of PCR.

**Could I please have information of people who have died within 28 days of a positive COVID test, number who have died within 28 days of a positive Covid test who have been vaccinated, and also deaths from Covid alone where Covid was the cause of death, not an underlying cause on the death certificate please.**

Information contained in this response relating to deaths was gathered from two combined data sources - Mortality Pathway data exported from the Northern Ireland Electronic Care Record (NIECR)\* and an export from the Public Health Agency (PHA) COVID-19 deaths reporting form database.

Deaths identified for the purpose of reporting:

*\*Any death identified with one or more of the following terminology included on any part of the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) and/or a COVID positive PCR test.*

Terms:

- Covid (pneumonia/pneumonitis)
- Covid19 (pneumonia/pneumonitis)
- Covid 19 (pneumonia/pneumonitis)
- Covid-19 (pneumonia/pneumonitis)
- SARS-Cov2 (pneumonia/pneumonitis)
- Coronavirus (pneumonia/pneumonitis)
  
- PHA reporting Criteria: Report all individuals who have died within 28 days of a first positive COVID-19 laboratory result (based on specimen date), whether or not COVID-19 was the cause of death.

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- *All other deaths in which COVID-19 is clinically suspected (i.e. without a positive laboratory test result) should be recorded on the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD).*

### **People who have died within 28 days of a positive COVID test**

From 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020 until 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2021 inclusive there were 495 inpatient cases reported to the PHA and/or the Department of Health using the reporting criterion above - 401 inpatients died within 28 days of a positive COVID-19 test result, 64 inpatients died after more than 28 days following a positive COVID-19 test result. Of the remaining 30 cases, 23 patients had negative test results but were deemed to be 'clinically suspected COVID-19' and for 7 cases there was no specimen date available to allow calculation of the time period to death.

### **Number who have died within 28 days of a positive Covid test who have been vaccinated receiving one or both of the COVID-19 vaccinations.**

Belfast Trust are unable to respond, as we do not hold this level of detail regarding individual patients' vaccination status. The vaccination status of individual patients is not documented consistently in patient records and is not recorded on a central system in the Trust. The vaccination status of individuals is recorded onto the Regional Vaccine Management System, to which Belfast Trust do not have full access. The Department of Health may be able to assist.

### **Deaths from Covid alone where Covid was the cause of death, not an underlying cause on the death certificate please (2019/2020 & so far in 2021)**

From 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020 until 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2021 inclusive, there were 12 inpatient cases reported that had one of the above terms recorded on Part 1a of the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) and nothing else recorded in Parts 1b, 1c or on Part 2.

From 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020 until 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2021 inclusive, there were a total of 495 inpatient cases identified who were reported to either the PHA and/or the Department of Health (DoH) – 483 (97.6%) had 1 or more conditions/causes other than COVID-19 also recorded on the MCCD. There were an additional <5 cases reported to the PHA and/or the DoH who did not have any of the above terms on any part of their MCCD but had a positive PCR test within the previous 28 days prior to death.

**Use of < 5 (less than five):** We are unable to provide an exact figure - exempt from release under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act - as this could make patients personally identifiable. Disclosure would constitute a breach of the principles of the General Data Protection Regulation 2018

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**How many deaths have been recorded of people under the age of 70 who have received one or both of the COVID-19 vaccinations?**

As above, Belfast Trust are unable to respond, as we do not hold this level of detail regarding individual patients' vaccination status.

**How many people are on the waiting list for red flagged treatment or operations for 2019, 2020 and so far in 2021?**

Number of Patients on Inpatient and Daycase Waiting List for Red Flag Related Procedure: Source – Inpatient Waiting Lists – (Expected Method of Adm SA, SC, SD, SO and Suspensions excluded)

Number of patients on waiting list is constantly changing and so we have provided the number of patients on waiting list as of Sept of Each Year

	Sep-19	Sep-20	Sep-21
Number of Pts on Inpatient & Daycase waiting list for red flag related Procedure	1117	1344	1516