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| **Coronavirus (Covid-19) – briefing** |

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Issued 22 April 2020

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| **Below is the latest briefing on the activity in managing the response to coronavirus (Covid-19).**  **Local updates, council service changes and links to trusted sources of health guidance are published at *www.inverclyde.gov.uk/coronavirus*** |

**Deaths involving coronavirus (COVID-19)**

Commenting on the release of covid-19 related deaths by council area, Inverclyde Council Leader, Councillor Stephen McCabe said: “We, like many areas across the country, have been seeing a growing disconnect between the national figures being reported and what is happening in our community. It is both welcome that these figures have been published and also heart-breaking to see in stark detail the effect this virus is having on our community”

The statistics on covid-19 deaths show how the virus is affecting each council area in Scotland. This is the first time these figures have been broken down this way by the National Records of Scotland and Scottish Government.

Across Scotland there have been 1,616 covid-19-related deaths while in Inverclyde there have been 76 which accounts for 4.7% of the Scottish total.  Inverclyde accounts for 1.5% of the Scottish population.

Deaths in Inverclyde are further listed by location with hospital still accounting for the largest number of deaths registered.  17 people in care homes in Inverclyde have died, nine people have died elsewhere and 50 have died in hospital.

“We must never forget that behind the figures are families, friends, neighbours and colleagues grieving at the loss of a loved one.  Families are showing extraordinary strength as they grieve at a time when the comfort they need is difficult to find because of the necessary social distancing rules in place and national limitations in funeral services.

“The national statistics released today will more closely reflect the reality communities like ours are experiencing and will start to show more closely the impact this awful virus is having on communities across Scotland.

“It is important that thorough analysis of this information takes places to give a clear indication of how covid-19 is affecting different parts of the country.

“Just last weekend the highly respected Dr Harry Burns was highlighting that people in areas of higher deprivation are likely to be disproportionately affected by covid-19.  These figures for our area and other parts of Scotland would appear to confirm that.

“A clear action for all agencies, national and local, is to support the parts of our country and sectors such as our care homes to cope with the worst this virus is throwing at our vulnerable residents.”

Below is the statement issued by NRS showing the national picture across Scotland:

As at 19th April, 1,616 deaths have been registered in Scotland where COVID-19 was mentioned in the death certificate, according to statistics published by National Records of Scotland (NRS) today.

Between 13th April to 19th April, 651 deaths relating to COVID-19 have been registered, up from 610 deaths in the previous week, 6th April to 12th April.

To place these statistics in context, the total number of deaths registered in Scotland from 13th April to 19th April was 1,911 – nearly 80% higher than the average number of deaths registered in the same week over the last five years (1,067). Of these 844 excess deaths, three quarters were deaths where COVID-19 was the underlying cause of death.

A third of all registered deaths involving COVID-19 occurred in care homes. 56% of registered deaths were in hospitals and 10% were at home or non-institutional settings.

Almost three quarters of all registered deaths involving COVID -19 to date were people aged 75 or over. Of all deaths to date involving COVID-19, 55% were male and 45% were female.

Pete Whitehouse, Director of Statistical Services, said:  “Every death from this virus is a tragedy. These statistics, alongside the other important evidence being made available by the Scottish Government and Health Protection Scotland (HPS), are valuable to the understanding of the progress and impact of the COVID-19 virus across Scotland.

 “This week we have carried out new analysis on the excess number of deaths registered in recent weeks when compared to the five year average for the same time of year. This analysis provides more context to the statistics and enables identification of potentially significant trends in other causes of deaths. We have also added a further breakdown of the location of death within health boards and council areas.

 “Our aim is to ensure that our statistical publication provides information that is as useful as possible and adds value to the understanding of how the virus is spreading throughout the country. We will continue to review and develop these statistics.”

Link to deaths related to covid-19, week 16 – 13 to 19 April statistics published by NRA Scotland: <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/news/2020/deaths-involving-covid-19-week-16-13-to-19-april>

**Short-term prisoners considered for early release**

The Scottish Government has announced that a number of short-term prisoners nearing the end of their time in custody are to be released early, under measures designed to help tackle the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

The plan will help prison and healthcare staff to continue to manage safely all those who remain in their care during the outbreak and follows measures taken across the world including elsewhere in the UK.

Regulations will be laid before Parliament so that release can start from 30 April. The scheme will be limited to those sentenced to 18 months or less and who on 30 April have 90 days or less left to serve.

The release of prisoners under the regulations will be subject to exclusions to ensure public protection, such as those who are imprisoned for life or with convictions for sexual offences, domestic abuse or terrorism offences.

It is estimated that around 300 to 450 prisoners who fall within this category will be considered for early release. Other administrations in the UK and internationally have taken the decision to release prisoners in the context of the current COVID-19 outbreak, including France and the Republic of Ireland.

Read [the Justice Secretary’s full Parliamentary statement](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-update-cabinet-secretary-humza-yousaf-statement-21-april-2020/)