

Havering Winter Infection report - October 2023

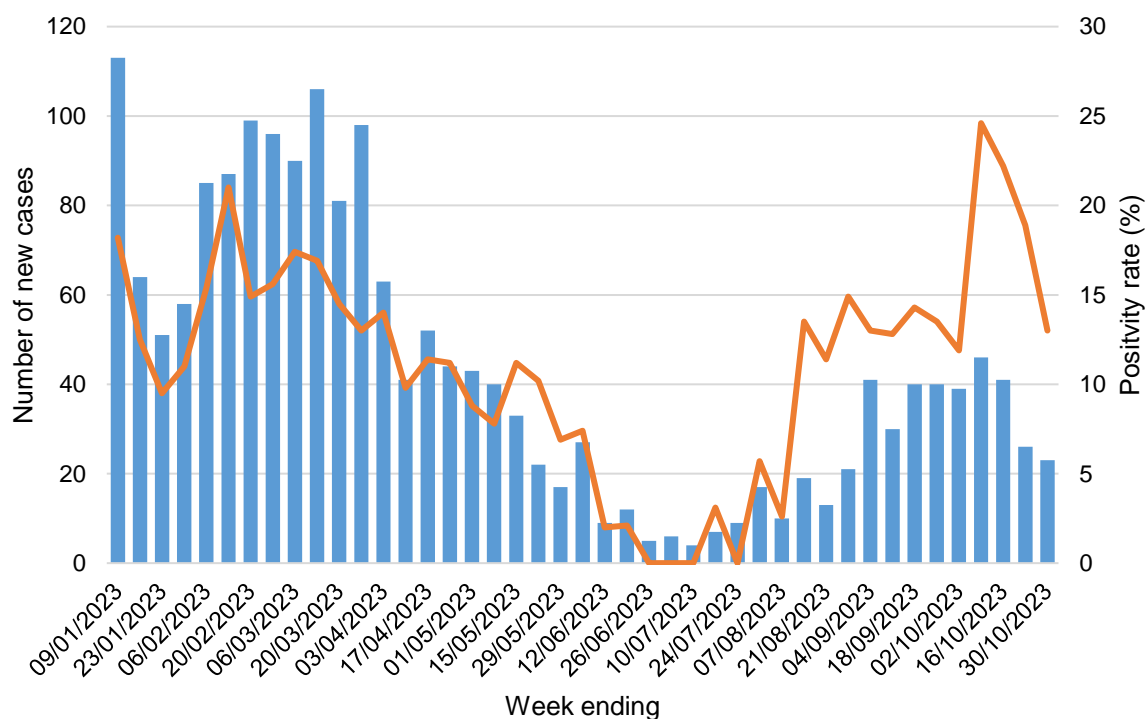
This is a summary report on those illnesses and infections that become more common in winter and place extra pressure healthcare services. It brings together various sources of data to give an overview and provides guidance on how to reduce the risks of infection. Further detailed data will be added to this report over the winter as it becomes available.

COVID-19

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) conducted the COVID-19 Infection Survey (CIS); collecting and analysing millions of swab samples and blood tests to estimate the levels of COVID-19 within the population. This winter the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has launched a new [Winter COVID-19 Infection Survey](#) (WCIS). Set to run from November 2023 to March 2024, the WCIS will provide key insight into levels of COVID-19 circulating across the wider community, and assess the potential for increased demand on health services due to changes in the way the virus is spreading, which could be driven by the arrival of any new variants. Once UKHSA publishes the outcomes of this survey, the results will be shared in a future version of this report.

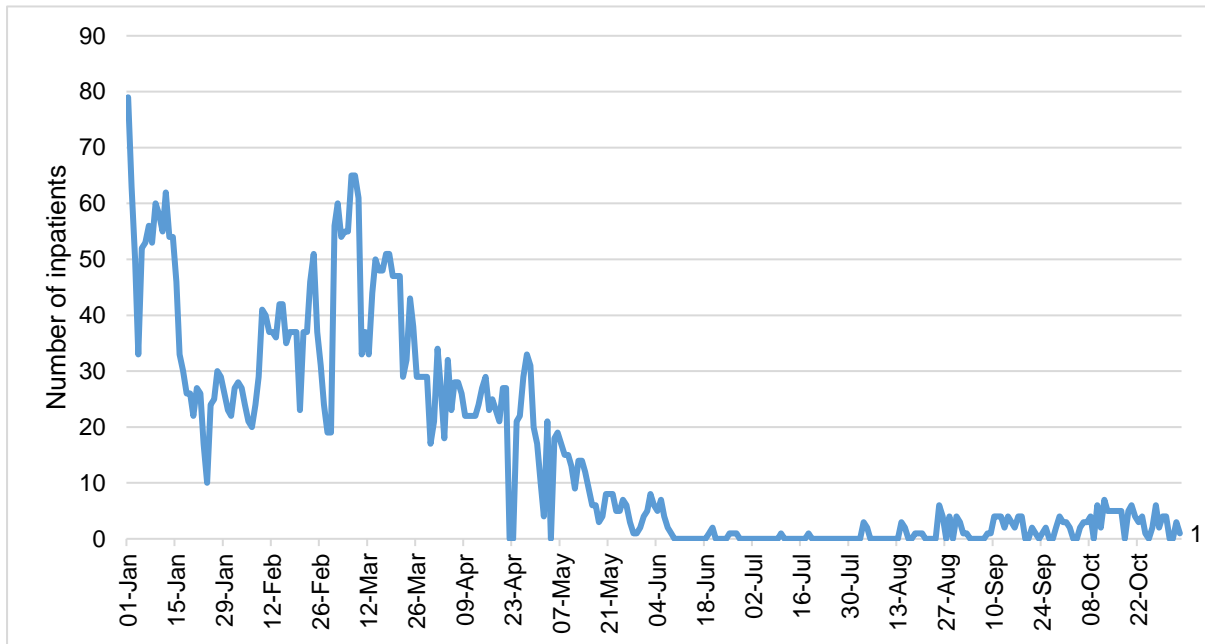
In March 2022, the Living with COVID strategy was introduced which removed the majority of pillar 2 testing (widespread drive/walk through testing and testing at home). Pillar 1 testing continued, with a focus on high risk settings, and staff working with patients who are at high risk from severe outcomes in NHS and hospice settings. There were 153 cases in Havering of COVID-19 throughout October, compared to 163 cases in September. The positivity rate (the percentage of people who have COVID-19) increased in September and the start of October to 24.6% before decreasing to 13%. More information can be found on [GOV.UK](#)

Weekly number of pillar 1 COVID-19 cases and the positivity rate in Havering 1 January to 30 October 2023



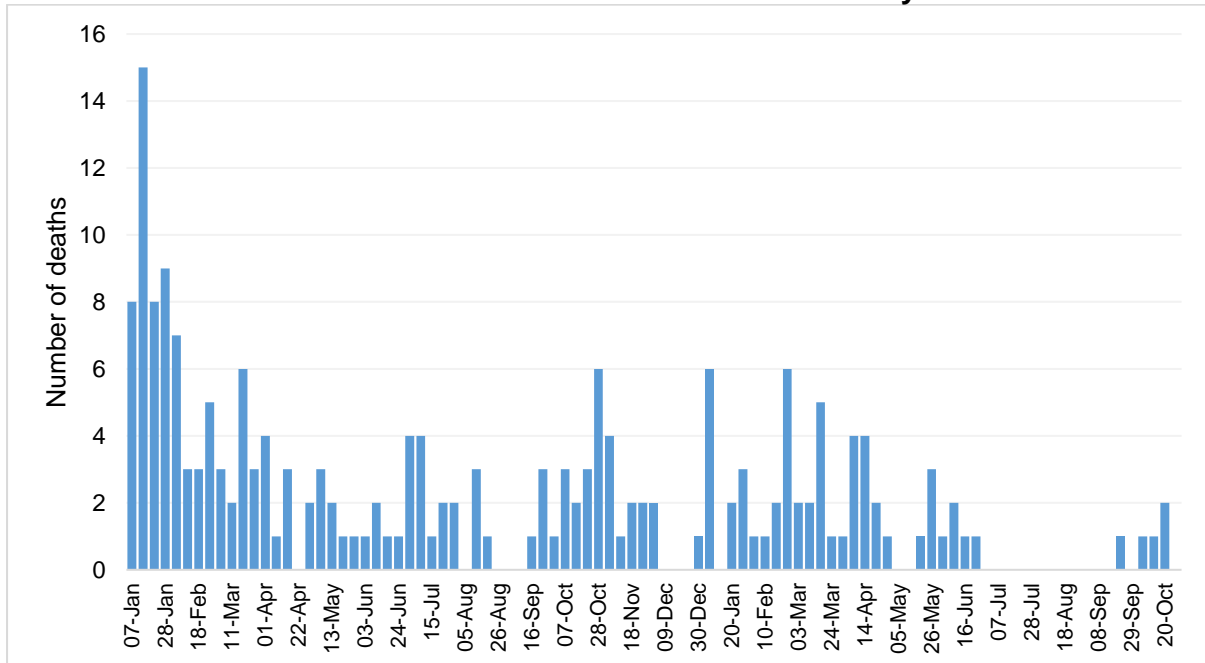
Latest data shows there was one COVID-19 inpatient at [BHRUT Hospitals](#) as of 3 November. The number of inpatients remained low throughout the last month (October).

Number of daily COVID-19 inpatients at BHRUT hospitals 1 January to 3 November 2023



[The Office for National Statistics](#) publishes information regarding the number of deaths with COVID-19. The latest data (for the week ending 27 October 2023) shows there were no COVID-19 related deaths in Havering in the preceding week. In total the number of deaths in Havering with COVID-19 so far is 1,187.

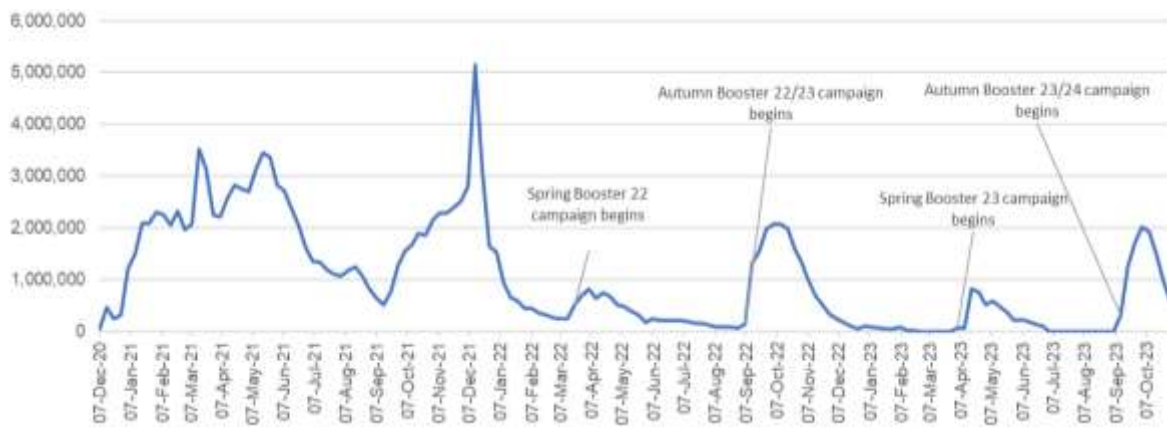
Number of COVID-19 related deaths each week from 1 January to 27 October 2023



COVID-19 vaccination remains the most effective action to take to protect against COVID-19. The [NHS is offering](#) a seasonal COVID-19 vaccine for those aged 65 years old or over, at increased risk of becoming seriously ill from COVID-19, living in a care home, a frontline health or social care worker, a carer or living with someone with a weakened immune system.

Nationally, in the week commencing 30 October 2023, 572,524 vaccinations were delivered, taking the total number of COVID-19 vaccinations delivered to 155,943,263. In London 854,654 autumn booster vaccinations have been given to date.

Weekly COVID-19 Vaccinations in England 7 December 2020 to 30 October 2023



Data for Havering Autumn 2022 and Spring 2023 boosters is available at [GOV.UK](#)

Influenza (Flu)

Influenza, commonly known as flu, is a contagious respiratory illness that typically peaks during the winter months. Monitoring flu infections during this time is important as it can be more serious for older people and those who are vulnerable, and lead to increased hospital admissions. Understanding and tracking flu patterns are vital for effective preparedness, enabling timely interventions and public health measures to mitigate the impact on both individuals and healthcare systems. Detailed weekly analysis at national and regional level can be found at [UKHSA](#). Data are currently not available at local authority level.

Nationally, for the week of 30 October to 5 November 2023 the number of cases of flu remained about the same (positivity rate of 1.4%) as the previous week (1.3%). The number of people visiting A&E for flu symptoms stayed steady across the country. The number of people needing intensive care for flu also stayed similar to last week. So far this flu season higher numbers of older people, pregnant women, and young children have received their flu vaccination compared to last year. To date 12,836,859 people in England have been vaccinated, of which 1,272,397 vaccinations have been administered in London.

Other winter viruses

In addition to COVID-19 and Influenza (flu), there are other viruses that are more common in winter. They can affect individuals of all ages, although they may cause more severe illness in children, the elderly, and those with compromised immune systems. A snapshot of the national situation in the last week (30 October to 5 November 2023) is outlined in the table below. UKHSA produces detailed information on [norovirus and rotavirus](#) as well as [influenza and other respiratory viruses](#).

Virus	Symptoms	Summary
Adenovirus	Adenovirus is a group of common viruses that can cause various illnesses, such as, the common cold, sore throat, fever, acute bronchitis (inflammation of the airways of the lungs, sometimes called a “chest cold”) and pink eye (conjunctivitis) amongst others.	Positivity remained low at 2.2% , with the highest positivity in children under 5 years old at 5.0%
Human metapneumovirus (hMPV)	hMPV is a respiratory virus, discovered in 2001, which typically induces symptoms akin to the common cold or flu and can result in more severe respiratory issues, particularly in vulnerable populations.	Positivity remained low at 1.4% , with the highest positivity in children under 5 years old at 3.8%.
Parainfluenza	Parainfluenza is a group of viruses causing respiratory infections, characterized by symptoms ranging from mild cold-like conditions to more severe respiratory issues such as croup or pneumonia.	Positivity remained low at 0.6% , with the highest positivity in children under 5 years old at 1.6%
Rhinovirus	Rhinovirus is a common cause of the common cold, leading to symptoms like runny or stuffy nose, sore throat, cough, and sometimes mild fever.	Positivity decreased to 13.3% overall, with the highest positivity in children under 5 years old at 20.2%.
Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)	RSV is a common respiratory virus that can lead to mild cold-like symptoms in adults and older children, but can cause more severe respiratory issues, especially bronchiolitis and pneumonia, in young children and infants.	Positivity increased to 10.7% , with the highest positivity in those aged under 5 years old at 39.4%
Norovirus	Norovirus also called the "winter vomiting bug" is a highly contagious stomach bug known for causing diarrhoea, feeling sick (nausea) and being sick	Norovirus has remained lower than the 5-season average in recent weeks and during the last fortnight (16 to 29 October 2023) were 12%

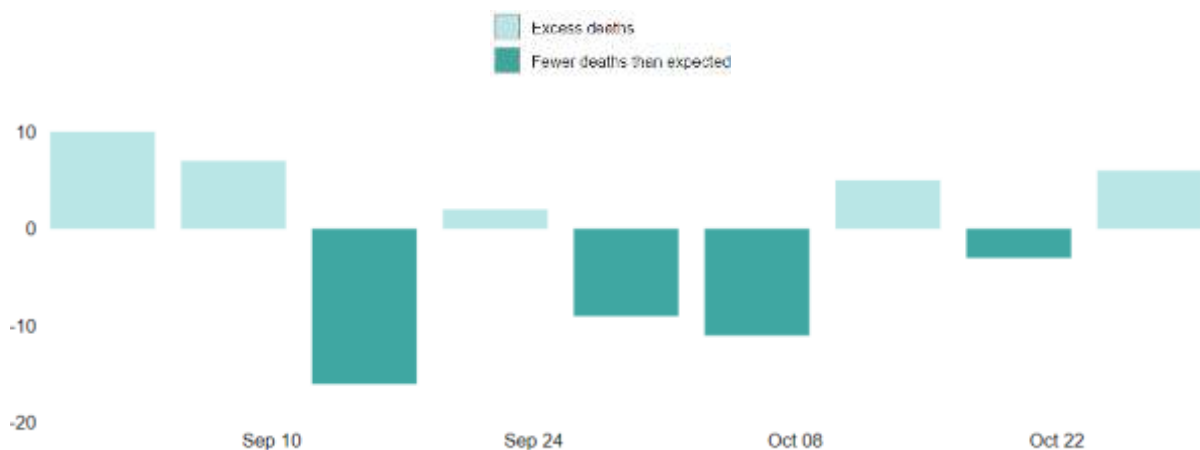
	(vomiting). It can be very unpleasant, but usually goes away in about 2 days.	less than the 5-season average of the same period.
Rotavirus	Rotavirus is a highly contagious virus that primarily affects the digestive system, causing severe diarrhea and vomiting, particularly in infants and young children, and it's one of the leading causes of severe diarrhea worldwide.	Rotavirus activity during the last fortnight (16 to 29 October 2023) is 16% higher than the 5-season average.

Excess Deaths

Monitoring excess deaths during seasonal changes, particularly in winter, helps in understanding the impact of illnesses like COVID-19 and flu on mortality rates.

[The Office for Health Improvement and Disparity \(OHID\)](#) calculates that in Havering from 1 September to 27 October 2023 there have been no excess deaths, with 370 registered deaths against 379 expected deaths (of which 6 deaths were related to COVID-19).

Weekly Excess Deaths in Havering 1 September to 27 October 2023



Key Messages

It is important to continue to protect yourself, your family, and those around you against winter infections, and to be particularly vigilant to protect those who are more vulnerable of more severe illness.

Some key protective actions

- If you are eligible, get vaccinated – vaccinations give the best protection against flu and COVID-19
- If you are unwell, protect people who are more vulnerable from severe illness and do not visit hospitals or care homes
- As far as possible, limit contact with others if you are unwell.
- Check the NHS website (<https://www.nhs.uk/>) for advice on how to manage symptoms from the
- Remember that antibiotics do not kill viruses
- Maintain good hand hygiene through regular and thorough hand washing
- If hand wash facilities are not available, then use hand sanitizer for more protection from respiratory viruses, but remember than hand sanitizer will not protect against norovirus.
- Face Coverings – consider wearing a face covering in enclosed or crowded spaces
- Let fresh air in if you are meeting up with friends and family indoors, or consider meeting up with family, friends outside
- Contact NHS 111 or your GP if symptoms worsen. If an emergency, dial 999.

For more support

Flu vaccine: <http://www.nhs.uk/book-a-flu-vaccination>

Covid-19 vaccine: <http://www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination>

Cost of living support

General information: <http://www.havering.gov.uk/costofliving>

Support with NHS costs: <http://www.northeastlondon.icb.nhs.uk/nhs-costs>

Warm hubs: <http://www.havering.gov.uk/warmspaces>

Food banks: <http://www.trusselltrust.org/get-help>

Please note:

The data presented here are as shown on the specified website on the date given. They may be subject to amendment by NHS, UKHSA or ONS at a later date.

Contact PHI@havering.gov.uk for further information and previous data.

Last Updated: 10 November 2023