

COVID-19 OPCE Report

Outbreak Prevention and Control Executive

Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan

Southwark Public Health Division

21st January 2021

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

Report title:	COVID-19: OPCE Report
Status:	Public
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Approved by:	J Lim
Suggested citation:	COVID-19: OPCE Report. Southwark Council: London. 2021.
Contact details:	publichealth@southwark.gov.uk
Date of publication:	21 st January 2021

This OPCE report gives a brief summary of key information on COVID-19 in Southwark

BACKGROUND

Coronaviruses are common globally and have been known to cause infection to humans. COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China.

- Typical symptoms include fever and cough, and may progress to severe pneumonia with breathing difficulties.
- Symptoms are mild in most people, but a number of groups are classed as 'extremely vulnerable' to coronavirus, including:
 - Solid organ transplant patients
 - Those with certain cancers
 - Those with severe respiratory conditions
 - Those on immunosuppression therapies
 - Those with rare health conditions that increase the risk of infection

This report gives key information on the COVID-19 impact in Southwark, and the local response.

Reference

1. DHSC and PHE (2020) Coronavirus: latest information and advice. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19

Southwark and London COVID-19 case rates fell by over one-fifth in the week to 12 Jan, but remain high

HEADLINE FIGURES

12,620

Pillar 2 community tests in the week to 15 January

23.0%

Individuals testing positive in week to 12 January

2,564

New COVID-19 cases in week to 12 January

18,076

Total COVID-19 cases as at 15 January

283

Total COVID-19 related deaths as at 8 January

Figure 1: Confirmed daily cases in Southwark

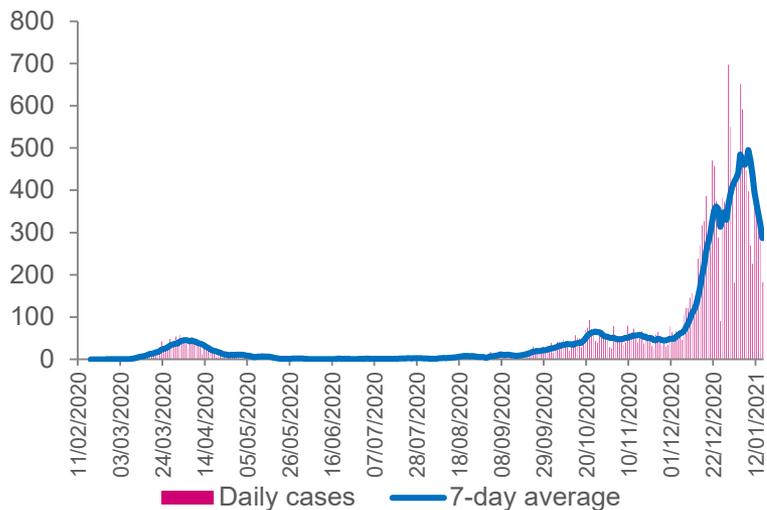
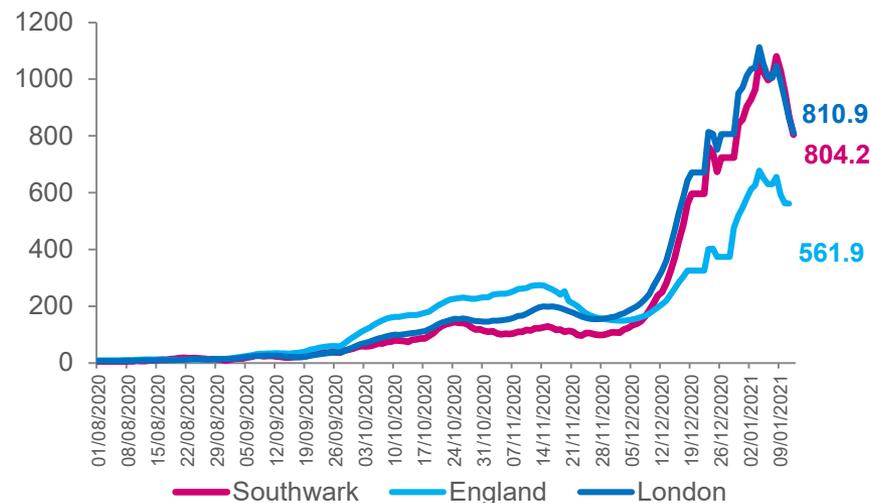


Figure 2: Weekly incidence rate per 100,000 population



References

1. PHE. London Situation Awareness Report. Data to 12 Jan.
2. PHE. London Daily Centre Report. Data to 15 Jan.
3. PHE. Power BI Covid-19 Situation Awareness Explorer. Data to 15 Jan.
4. ONS. Deaths registered in England and Wales, provisional: week ending 1 Jan plus week ending 8 Jan.

The OPCE Report is structured around the three key strands, and supporting workstreams, of the OPCP

OUTBREAK PREVENTION & CONTROL PLAN

The OPCP is structured around three main strands (Prevent, Identify and Control) and the three cross-cutting workstreams.

AIM: Mitigate the impact of novel coronavirus on Southwark's population and communities, focusing on those most at risk.

ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATIONS

PREVENT

Work with communities and settings to prevent transmission, focusing on those with greatest vulnerability

IDENTIFY

Collate and interpret data to ensure that cases, clusters and outbreaks of disease are promptly identified and those affected appropriately supported

CONTROL

Manage outbreaks by providing health protection advice and the institution of control measures (for individuals and communities) so as to prevent onward transmission

INTELLIGENCE , EVIDENCE & EPIDEMIOLOGY

TRAINING & CAPACITY BUILDING

References

1. Southwark's Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan (OPCP), ([link](#))



Summary of key developments and next steps in Prevent workstream over the last 7 days

PREVENT – GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS

Workstream Activities / Updates

General

- Focus on the mass testing and pushing messages through our regular channels, plus some paid for social media.
- Signed off some new banners for playgrounds to enforce the hands, face, space messaging and they should be out by next week.

Internally

- Staff have been updated on lockdown restrictions and we have continued to promote mental health and wellbeing support and webinars via the Source and Yammer.
- Healthy Lifestyle session due to be held on 19th Jan
- Staff have been told about mass testing available to all front-line workers

Looking ahead

- Working on a special edition of Southwark Life to cover all things COVID including vaccines, lockdown rules, how to stay healthy and the community support alliance. This should start hitting doorsteps at the end of the month.

Author(s): Ginette Hogan, Public Health; Kim Hooper, Comms



Summary of key developments and next steps in Prevent workstream over the last 7 days

PREVENT – TARGETED COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT

Workstream Activities / Updates

Businesses

- The Business FAQs and key messages have been published on the Council website.
- Weekly comms to over 6500 businesses on effective prevention and available business support.
- Ongoing grant support to businesses via LRSG and ARG

VCS Covid-19 Prevention Grants.

- 18 VCS COVID prevention small grants applications were reviewed and clarification has been provided by the 7 shortlisted organisations. Further clarification is needed in a few cases and we expect to be able to confirm the successful project in the next week.

Community Health Ambassadors

- 111 sign-ups to date.
- 64 Ambassadors have received Induction training with weekly further sessions scheduled in Jan and fortnightly in Feb.
- The second Ambassador's Zoom catch up meeting is scheduled for 20th Jan and will focus on the vaccination roll-out. The CCG are supporting
- Emails and Whatsapp messages continue to be sent to Ambassadors to respond to questions and update them on any new information, including mass testing.

Universities/Young people

- Continuing close partnership working with schools, HE and FE institutions.

Looking ahead

- Ambassador training scheduled in Jan and further recruitment drive planned
- Regular updating of messages to account for any changes in restrictions. whilst maintaining non-changing messages (mask, handwashing, etc.).

Author(s): Ginette Hogan, Public Health / Danny Edwards, Local Economy Team

Summary of key developments and next steps in Identify workstream since the last OPCE

IDENTIFY

Test and Trace Southwark (TTS)

In the fourteen days between 5 January and 18 January inclusive, 1286 cases were referred to Test and Trace Southwark for local contact tracing. Of these:

- 225 were contacted successfully;
- 560 were not reachable, due to maximum attempts being made (276), refusal to cooperate (29), not enough information to contact the cases (87). Over 100 cases were failed on 4/1/2021 due to the need to deprioritise older cases.
- 174 cases were flagged as inappropriate for the LSCT team to follow-up, because they were already contacted by the national system (64), did not consent prior to referral to TTS (58), the case was older than 10 days (20) or for another reason (32).
- 319 cases were sent back to NHS Test and Trace for follow-up due to limited local capacity.
- 8 remained open for further follow-up the next day.

Workstream Activities / Updates

- The high levels of transmission observed in early January 2021 has given rise to extreme capacity pressures on local contact tracing with as many as 200 cases referred to the local team on some days. With transmission numbers down over the last week, the volume of referrals is approaching more sustainable levels but capacity remains stretched.
- Home visiting for contact tracing purposes is temporarily paused as the risk-benefit is reviewed, however welfare checks continue with the identification of vulnerable persons.
- Work is underway to deploy the online form / questionnaire that will enable residents to self-complete contact tracing.
- TTS returned to seven day operation on Saturday 9 January 2021.

Looking ahead

- The implications of the new local testing system (using lateral flow / rapid tests) is being investigated as there is now an expectation that those testing positive (in the absence of a confirmatory laboratory test) will be traced.

Author(s): **Richard Pinder**, Consultant in Public Health. **Angela Burns**, Public Health Programme Officer

Summary of key developments and next steps in Identify workstream over the last 14 days

IDENTIFY

Rapid (LFT) testing

(1) MASS TESTING UPDATE

- www.southwark.gov.uk/covidtest
- National programme of local authority mass rapid testing – started in Tier 4 but across all LAs now.
- During national lockdown - aimed at all key workers / people who can't work from home (not reached by any other national schemes). Encouraging repeat testing.
- Southwark: Council programme team supported by PH. Contract aims for ambitious 117k tests over 6-7 weeks. Trojan awarded contract. Rapid mobilisation – On site / Bespoke bookings system / Comms - Big push to reach local employers with key workers using all our partnership connections.
- **Damilola Taylor Centre (DTC)** – First mass testing site in Southwark went live on Mon 18 Jan. Started small with 3 (of possible 20) booths in operation. Latest data will be available on day.

(2) HIGH STREET PHARMACIES

- Led by PH. Aiming to develop a network of 10 pharmacies to broaden the offer for key workers across the borough
- Starting with 2 pharmacies from w/c 18/1/21 + 4 pharmacies within 4 weeks later + full 10 network within 6-8 weeks

(3) SCHOOLS

- Led by DfE nationally & Schools Team in Southwark. Secondary school testing – Currently available for staff. Primary Schools are due to start testing shortly.
- Special (primary and secondary) schools: Staff testing in line with mainstream offer. Pan-London discussion re students with AGPs.

Workstream Activities / Updates

- Existing national schemes operating to varying levels: Universities, Schools (as above), Care home: Visitors + Tier 4 daily tests where a positive case to supplement twice weekly PCR tests / Domiciliary care

Looking ahead

- Decision on 2nd mass testing site at Southwark Park: Decision to be made by Wednesday 20th – for a 25th go-live
- New national schemes planned: 'Blue light' emergency workers / TfL / Large businesses (>250 employees) / Prisons



Summary of key developments and next steps in Control workstream over the last 7 days

CONTROL

Workstream Activities / Updates

Between the **12th January & 18th January**, there were **32 open outbreaks¹** being managed by the Acute Response Team:

- 3 in an Early Years Settings
- 2 in Schools
- 16 in Care Homes
- 8 in Workplaces
- 1 in a Primary Accommodation Provider
- 2 in Transport Hubs

In the same time period there were **8 clusters²** reported:

- 1 in an Early Years Setting
- 1 in School
- 1 in a Higher Education Setting
- 2 in Hostels / Supported Living Settings
- 1 in a Home Care setting
- 1 in a Student Halls of Residence
- 1 in a Workplace

There were also **42 single cases** reported.

All received support and advice from Southwark Council's Public Health Team. Where appropriate, situations were escalated to the LCRC.

Looking ahead

- Close monitoring of local incidence rates and location occurs daily to allow early action to be taken.

Author(s): **Kate Rawlings**, Public Health Programme Officer.

Reference

1. An outbreak is defined as two or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 at a named location with a proven epidemiological link.
2. A cluster is defined as two or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 at a named location where there is no evidence of an epidemiological link.

Summary of key developments and next steps in the Intelligence workstream

INTELLIGENCE, EVIDENCE & EPIDEMIOLOGY

Workstream Activities / Updates

- The daily monitoring report is now well established and is reviewed by the Public Health Acute hub each afternoon. Weekly updates are also provided to senior officers.
- Work is continuing to establish a framework for the monitoring and evaluation of the Outbreak Prevention & Control Plan and local contact tracing.
- A process has been established to review local confirmed cases against key high risk and vulnerable locations within the borough e.g. student halls of residents. This is monitored daily, and cases flagged with our Acute Response Team for follow up when they occur.
- The team are working with colleagues in Environmental Health regarding identifying sites of common exposure for confirmed cases. Updates are provided on a weekly basis.

Looking ahead

- The team will be reviewing the initial Rapid Impact Assessment in light of the evolving nature of the pandemic. Additional intelligence relevant to Southwark that may be useful to our local response will be incorporated as appropriate.
- Work is underway to establish data flows and monitoring for COVID-19 vaccination across South East London.

Author(s): Chris Williamson, Head of Public Health intelligence

Find out more at
southwark.gov.uk/publichealth

Southwark Public Health Division

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