

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

28th Sep 2021

One Minute Overview

Fourth national lockdown is likely to be imposed over the winter, half of Britons believe - Another national lockdown is likely to be imposed over the winter, half of Britons believe with most expecting a “significant rise” in Covid-19 infections in the coming months. [A poll for i by Redfield & Wilton Strategies suggests that three in five voters would back any decision to lock down the country for a fourth time - even though the Government has insisted it will go to any lengths to avoid doing so.](#) There is broad approval of the Government’s current handling of the pandemic, with 46 per cent saying they are happy with how things are going and 29 per cent disagreeing.

Vietnam COVID-19 epicentre may have 40% more unrecorded cases - report - Authorities in Vietnam's biggest city are urging the government to recognise positive rapid tests for COVID-19 to present a clearer picture of its outbreak, state media reported on Monday, [a move that could increase the city's case total by 40%. Ho Chi Minh City, home to about 9 million people, has borne the brunt of Vietnam's coronavirus crisis,](#) accounting for 80% of its more than 18,500 COVID-19 deaths and half of its 756,000 cases.

New York may tap National Guard to replace unvaccinated healthcare workers - New York Governor Kathy Hochul is considering employing the National Guard and out-of-state medical workers to fill hospital staffing shortages with tens of thousands of workers possibly losing their jobs for not meeting a Monday deadline for mandated COVID-19 vaccination. [The plan, outlined in a statement from Hochul on Saturday, would allow her to declare a state of emergency to increase the supply of healthcare workers to include licensed professionals](#) from other states and countries as well as retired nurses.

Chile Begins Vaccinating Young Children With Sinovac Vaccine - The Chilean government began vaccinating children ages 6 to 11 as it moves forward with one of the most advanced Covid-19 prevention campaigns in Latin America. Children will get shots made by Sinovac Biotech Ltd following Chile’s approval for emergency use earlier this month. [The government will begin giving shots in schools, and Health Undersecretary Paula Daza attended a ceremony in Santiago to mark the beginning of the vaccination campaign.](#)

How Much Covid Has Reduced Life Expectancy Around the World - American men lost 2.2 years of life expectancy last year because of Covid-19, the biggest decline among 29 nations [in a study of the pandemic’s impact on longevity.](#) [Deaths among working-age men contributed the most to declining lifespans in the U.S., according to research led by demographers at the U.K.’s University of Oxford.](#) Only Denmark and Norway, who have excelled at controlling their outbreaks, avoided drops in life expectancy across both sexes, the study published Sunday in the International Journal of Epidemiology found.

How France Overcame Covid-19 Vaccine Hesitancy - The French have long been wary of vaccines, [but a mixture of mandates and inducements encouraged millions to get the shot as the Delta variant spread.](#)

Venezuelan academy of medicine expresses concern over use of Cuban vaccine -

Venezuela's National Academy of Medicine on Monday expressed concern over the use of Cuba's Abdala coronavirus vaccine due to a lack of scientific research on its safety and efficacy. Cuba said on Saturday it had exported the three-shot vaccine for the first time, sending an initial shipment to Vietnam as part of a contract to supply five million doses to the Southeast Asian country. [The government of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro has so far been relying on the Russian Sputnik V and the Chinese Sinopharm vaccines, and in recent months](#) received its first shipment of doses via the global COVAX program.

New U.S. travel rules close door on those fully vaccinated with Russia's Sputnik V - The United States announced last week that it would soon open its doors to foreign travelers vaccinated against the coronavirus, loosening restrictions for broad swaths of global visitors for the first time since the pandemic began. [But the new rules, set to take effect in November, appear to also shut out many people who consider themselves to be fully immunized](#) — including millions who have received two doses of Russia's Sputnik V vaccine. Hundreds of thousands of Russians could be directly affected. Despite frosty diplomatic relations and limited demand for international travel, roughly 300,000 Russians visited the United States in 2019, the last year for which figures are available, according to the U.S. Travel Association.

'Covid hit us like a cyclone': An Aboriginal town in the Australian Outback is overwhelmed - In two weeks, more than one-tenth of the town of 600 people had been infected, making Wilcannia the hardest-hit place in Australia. Soon, the number of cases would approach 150, with about 90 percent of them Aboriginal people. [The remote community's crisis reflects not only the recent collapse of "covid zero" in Australia but also the country's historical failings.](#) For 18 months, state and federal leaders had been promising to protect Indigenous Australians, who have higher rates of chronic disease and shorter life expectancies. They were declared a priority for vaccination

New Zealand to begin letting people isolate at home as it looks to ease border curbs - New Zealand is to begin allowing small numbers of vaccinated travellers to isolate at home instead of in state-run quarantine facilities as part of a phased approach to re-opening its borders, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said on Monday. [The pilot project starting next month will be open to 150 people, who must be New Zealand citizens or residents and are fully vaccinated, Ardern said at a news conference.](#) 'While this is a pilot, it gives you a sense of where we intend to go on our borders,' Ardern said, adding that the government was working on a wide range of options for allowing people back in safely.

Covid-19 vaccine passports a 'no brainer', says Nichola Mallon - The introduction of vaccine passports in Northern Ireland is a 'no brainer', the infrastructure minister has said. SDLP MLA Nichola Mallon said she has raised the issue at Stormont executive meetings on 'a number of occasions'. [It comes after her party leader Colum Eastwood called for the introduction of vaccine passports earlier this week.](#) 'It's frustrating that we're still sitting having this discussion,' Ms Mallon told the BBC's Sunday Politics programme. Since July, the EU Digital Covid Certificate system has been in operation in the Republic of Ireland.

Party of Covid vaccine sceptics wins seats in Austria's regional parliament - A newly created party of Covid-19 vaccine sceptics has been elected to one of Austria's largest regional parliaments after a shock election result in which it swept up protest votes from across the political spectrum. Pollsters had expected Menschen-Freiheit-Grundrechte [People, Freedom, Rights] to fall short of the 4 per cent threshold needed to enter the Upper Austrian state parliament. [But on Sunday the party overtook the liberals, scooping up 6.4 per cent of the vote to win three seats in the Landtag.](#)

Japan approves GSK's Sotrovimab COVID-19 antibody treatment - Japan has approved

GlaxoSmithKline and Vir Biotechnology's Sotrovimab as an antibody treatment for coronavirus, Health Minister Norihisa Tamura said on Monday. [The antibody treatment is for mild to moderate COVID-19 cases which do not require oxygen supplementation, GSK said when it applied for fast-track approval this month.](#)

Lockdown Exit

How France Overcame Covid-19 Vaccine Hesitancy

The French have long been wary of vaccines, but a mixture of mandates and inducements encouraged millions to get the shot as the Delta variant spread.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/how-france-overcame-covid-19-vaccine-hesitancy-11632735002>

Crowdsourced Covid Antiviral Project Gets \$11 Million in Funding

A crowdsourced effort to design a Covid-19 pill won 8 million pounds (\$11 million) in funding from the Wellcome Trust, a significant boost for a project that aims to make a low-cost antiviral broadly available. The project, called Covid Moonshot, started with locked-down scientists around the world sharing data and ideas online in March 2020. Some 250 people eventually submitted more than 4,500 potential molecular designs intended to block the virus's main protease -- the key protein that helps it replicate. The Wellcome funding will help pay for the expensive last step of research needed to bring the project into human clinical trials.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-09-27/crowdsourced-covid-antiviral-project-gets-11-million-in-funding?srnd=markets-vp>

How Much Covid Has Reduced Life Expectancy Around the World

American men lost 2.2 years of life expectancy last year because of Covid-19, the biggest decline among 29 nations in a study of the pandemic's impact on longevity. Deaths among working-age men contributed the most to declining lifespans in the U.S., according to research led by demographers at the U.K.'s University of Oxford. Only Denmark and Norway, who have excelled at controlling their outbreaks, avoided drops in life expectancy across both sexes, the study published Sunday in the International Journal of Epidemiology found.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-09-27/u-s-men-posted-the-greatest-loss-in-life-expectancy-from-covid>

Chile Begins Vaccinating Young Children With Sinovac Vaccine

The Chilean government began vaccinating children ages 6 to 11 as it moves forward with one of the most advanced Covid-19 prevention campaigns in Latin America. Children will get shots made by Sinovac Biotech Ltd following Chile's approval for emergency use earlier this month. The government will begin giving shots in schools, and Health Undersecretary Paula Daza attended a ceremony in Santiago to mark the beginning of the vaccination campaign.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-09-27/chile-begins-vaccinating-young-children-with-sinovac-vaccine?srnd=premium-europe>

EU Commission proposes extending vaccine export-control scheme

The European Commission has proposed extending the period of its scheme for monitoring and potentially limiting exports of COVID-19 vaccines from the bloc, a European Commission spokesperson told Reuters on Monday. If not prolonged, the scheme would expire this week. It is unclear whether the 27 EU states will support the proposal, which requires a qualified majority to be adopted. "Discussions are ongoing with member states, so we cannot comment further," the spokesperson said. If extended, the scheme would remain in place until the end of the year.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/eu-commission-proposes-extending-vaccine-export-control-scheme-2021-09-27/>

Global vaccines project to revamp rules after Britain got more than Botswana

In March, as wealthy Britain led the world in vaccination rates and almost half its people had received a shot, the organisation meant to ensure fair global access to COVID-19 vaccines allotted the country over half a million doses from its supplies.

<https://www.msn.com/en-xl/lifestyle/coronavirus/global-vaccines-project-to-revamp-rules-after-britain-got-more-than-botswana/ar-AAORtCQ>

New York may tap National Guard to replace unvaccinated healthcare workers

New York Governor Kathy Hochul is considering employing the National Guard and out-of-state medical workers to fill hospital staffing shortages with tens of thousands of workers possibly losing their jobs for not meeting a Monday deadline for mandated COVID-19 vaccination. The plan, outlined in a statement from Hochul on Saturday, would allow her to declare a state of emergency to increase the supply of healthcare workers to include licensed professionals from other states and countries as well as retired nurses.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/new-york-may-tap-national-guard-replace-unvaccinated-healthcare-workers-2021-09-26/>

Biden to get COVID-19 booster on Monday as additional doses roll out

U.S. President Joe Biden rolled up his shirt sleeve and received a COVID-19 vaccine booster inoculation on Monday, hoping to provide a powerful example for Americans on the need to get the extra shot even as millions go without their first. "Boosters are important, but the most important thing we need to do is get more people vaccinated," he said, noting that about 23% of people in the United States have not received a shot.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/biden-get-covid-19-booster-shot-monday-white-house-2021-09-27/>

Thailand to reopen to more vaccinated visitors from November

Thailand will waive its mandatory quarantine requirement in Bangkok and nine regions from Nov. 1 to vaccinated arrivals, authorities said on Monday, as the country tries to boost its immunisation rate and revive its battered tourism sector. The regions include popular tourist areas Chiang Mai, Phangnga, Krabi, Hua Hin, Pattaya, and Cha-am, and follow the successful reopening of Phuket and Samui islands to vaccinated people in pilot schemes since July. The regions include popular tourist areas Chiang Mai, Phangnga, Krabi, Hua Hin, Pattaya, and Cha-am, and follow the successful reopening of Phuket and Samui islands to vaccinated people in pilot schemes since July.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/thailand-further-ease-coronavirus-restrictions-2021-09-27/>

Sydney's COVID-19 lockdown to end sooner for the vaccinated

Australian authorities announced plans on Monday to gradually reopen locked-down Sydney, unveiling a two-tiered system that will give citizens inoculated for COVID-19 more freedoms than their unvaccinated neighbours for several weeks. Movement restrictions across New South Wales, the country's most populous state and home to Sydney, will be lifted gradually between Oct. 11 and Dec. 1 as vaccination rates push through 70%, 80% and 90%. However, people who are not fully inoculated will be barred from joining the vaccinated to resume community sports, dining out, shopping and other activities until the final date.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/sydney-set-unveil-freedom-roadmap-more-covid-19-curbs-eased-2021-09-27/>

Venezuelan academy of medicine expresses concern over use of Cuban vaccine

Venezuela's National Academy of Medicine on Monday expressed concern over the use of Cuba's Abdala coronavirus vaccine due to a lack of scientific research on its safety and efficacy. Cuba said on Saturday it had exported the three-shot vaccine for the first time, sending an initial shipment to Vietnam as part of a contract to supply five million doses to the Southeast Asian country. The government of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro has so far been relying on the Russian Sputnik V and the Chinese Sinopharm vaccines, and in recent months received its first shipment of doses via

the global COVAX program.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/venezuelan-academy-medicine-expresses-concern-over-use-cuban-vaccine-2021-09-27/>

New U.S. travel rules close door on those fully vaccinated with Russia's Sputnik V

The United States announced last week that it would soon open its doors to foreign travelers vaccinated against the coronavirus, loosening restrictions for broad swaths of global visitors for the first time since the pandemic began. But the new rules, set to take effect in November, appear to also shut out many people who consider themselves to be fully immunized — including millions who have received two doses of Russia's Sputnik V vaccine. Hundreds of thousands of Russians could be directly affected. Despite frosty diplomatic relations and limited demand for international travel, roughly 300,000 Russians visited the United States in 2019, the last year for which figures are available, according to the U.S. Travel Association.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2021/09/27/us-travellers-sputnik-russia/>

'Covid hit us like a cyclone': An Aboriginal town in the Australian Outback is overwhelmed

In two weeks, more than one-tenth of the town of 600 people had been infected, making Wilcannia the hardest-hit place in Australia. Soon, the number of cases would approach 150, with about 90 percent of them Aboriginal people. The remote community's crisis reflects not only the recent collapse of "covid zero" in Australia but also the country's historical failings. For 18 months, state and federal leaders had been promising to protect Indigenous Australians, who have higher rates of chronic disease and shorter life expectancies. They were declared a priority for vaccination

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/interactive/2021/australia-covid-outback-indigenous/?itid=mr_world_4

Rowdy celebrations erupt in Norway as COVID restrictions end

Police in Norway on Sunday reported dozens of disturbances and violent clashes including mass brawls in the Nordic country's big cities after streets, bars, restaurants and nightclubs were filled with people celebrating the end of COVID-19 restrictions that lasted for more than a year. The Norwegian government abruptly announced Friday that most of the remaining coronavirus restrictions would be scrapped beginning Saturday and that life in the nation of 5.3 million would return to normal. The unexpected announcement by outgoing Prime Minister Erna Solberg to drop coronavirus restrictions the next day took many Norwegians by surprise and led to chaotic scenes in the capital, Oslo, and elsewhere in the country.

<https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-business-health-europe-norway-4d3b34ca4362afa87772df309881216d>

Exit Strategies

'Every Day Is Frightening': Working For Walmart Amid Covid

Sore, disoriented, he'd already grasped what his mother was now telling him: He'd had another seizure. But he also grasped a larger truth: He needed to pull it together and somehow go to work. A cashier and self-checkout host at the nearby Walmart, Mr. Naughton dreaded depleting his limited paid time off in the midst of a pandemic. His mother, for her part, insisted that her epileptic son, then 44, stay home and rest. The hours after a seizure were difficult enough. Toss in the stress of Covid-19 and a customer base that largely — and often angrily — rejected mask use, and a day at work seemed anything but recuperative.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/27/business/walmart-coronavirus-workers-safety.html>

Covid-19 vaccine passports a 'no brainer', says Nichola Mallon

The introduction of vaccine passports in Northern Ireland is a "no brainer", the infrastructure minister has said. SDLP MLA Nichola Mallon said she has raised the issue at Stormont executive

meetings on "a number of occasions". It comes after her party leader Colum Eastwood called for the introduction of vaccine passports earlier this week. "It's frustrating that we're still sitting having this discussion," Ms Mallon told the BBC's Sunday Politics programme. Since July, the EU Digital Covid Certificate system has been in operation in the Republic of Ireland.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-58697878>

Tanzania to receive 2 million doses of coronavirus vaccine from China

The government yesterday said two million doses of Sinopharm vaccine from China is expected to arrive in the country as the number of vaccinated Tanzanians reached 400,000 off from the million doses initially received. The government spokesperson, Mr Gerson Msigwa said yesterday that unlike the Johnson & Johnson doses that are injected once a year, Tanzanians will have to be inoculated twice a year with the Sinopharm doses.

<https://mobile.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/africa/Tanzania-to-receive-2-million-doses-of-coronavirus-vaccine-from-China-1366444>

Why Does Biden's Vaccine Mandate Have a Testing Loophole?

President Joe Biden's new vaccine mandate for large businesses is a strange one, in that it does not actually make vaccines mandatory for the roughly 80 million Americans it's aimed at. Tucked plainly into the rule is a singular and obvious opt-out: Unlike federal employees and contractors, those in the private sector can test for the coronavirus on an at-least-weekly basis, a no-jab alternative that makes the White House's decision quite a bit gentler than it could have been. "It's a stick, but it's sort of a soft stick," Julia Raifman, a health-policy researcher at Boston University, told me.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2021/09/biden-vaccine-mandate-testing-loophole/620204/>

Want to help prevent more variants down the road? Get vaccinated, CDC director says

Adequate rates of vaccination can help prevent the rise of new mutations that could force people to get booster after booster dose of Covid-19 vaccine, the head of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Sunday. The CDC and the US Food and Drug Administration recommended booster shots for many Americans last week to help preserve their immunity. But that doesn't necessarily mean people will need to keep getting boosters. CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky told CBS's "Face the Nation."

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/09/26/health/us-coronavirus-sunday/index.html>

US has enough COVID-19 vaccines for boosters, kids shots

With more than 40 million doses of coronavirus vaccines available, U.S. health authorities said they're confident there will be enough for both qualified older Americans seeking booster shots and the young children for whom initial vaccines are expected to be approved in the not-too-distant future.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/california-madison-pfizer-joe-biden-vaccines-b1927244.html>

New Zealand to begin letting people isolate at home as it looks to ease border curbs

New Zealand is to begin allowing small numbers of vaccinated travellers to isolate at home instead of in state-run quarantine facilities as part of a phased approach to re-opening its borders, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said on Monday. The pilot project starting next month will be open to 150 people, who must be New Zealand citizens or residents and are fully vaccinated, Ardern said at a news conference. "While this is a pilot, it gives you a sense of where we intend to go on our borders," Ardern said, adding that the government was working on a wide range of options for allowing people back in safely.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/new-zealand-begin-letting-people-isolate-home-it-looks-ease-border-curbs-2021-09-27/>

Recovered COVID patients will require vaccine dose to receive Green Pass

The Health Ministry announced on Sunday that, from October 3, when a number of new restrictions will be introduced, recovered COVID-19 patients will be required to get a single coronavirus vaccine dose in order to be eligible to receive a Green Pass. Under the current Green Pass rules, entry to certain businesses and events is limited to those with proof of vaccination, recovery from COVID-19, or a negative test result. The new rules mean that some 1.2 million Israelis who have been diagnosed with the virus since the start of the pandemic, along with those who have a positive serological test showing high antibodies, will need at least one vaccine shot to qualify for the Green Pass.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/recovered-covid-patients-will-require-vaccine-dose-to-receive-green-pass/>

UK counts on vaccines, 'common sense' to keep virus at bay

Britons are encouraged these days — though in most cases not required — to wear face coverings in crowded indoor spaces. But Prime Minister Boris Johnson regularly appears in the packed, poorly ventilated House of Commons cheek-by-jowl with other maskless Conservative lawmakers. For critics, that image encapsulates the flaw in the government's strategy, which has abandoned most pandemic restrictions and is banking on voluntary restraint and a high vaccination rate to curb the spread of the coronavirus. As winter approaches, bringing the threat of a new COVID-19 surge, Britain's light touch is setting it apart from more cautious nations.

<https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-business-europe-london-boris-johnson-a0a1d7d5563404e2ab993aa9d39f2040>

Federal judge delays vaccine mandate for NYC teachers

New York City schools have been temporarily blocked from enforcing a vaccine mandate for its teachers and other workers by a federal appeals judge just days before it was to take effect. Workers in the nation's largest school system were to be required to show vaccination proof starting Monday. But late Friday, a judge for the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals granted a temporary injunction sought by a group of teachers pending review by a three-judge panel, which will take up the motion Wednesday. Department of Education spokesperson Danielle Filson said officials were seeking a speedy resolution in court. "We're confident our vaccine mandate will continue to be upheld once all the facts have been presented, because that is the level of protection our students and staff deserve," Filson said in an email.

<https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-health-new-york-courts-education-c5dd62f249ff600cf034924be734d8f8>

Biden, Walensky boost COVID vaccine boosters

"If you got the Pfizer vaccine in January, February or March of this year, and are over 65, go get the booster, or if you are a frontline worker, go get a free booster now. I'll be getting my booster shot." That was President Joe Biden's message today, as he briefed the nation on COVID-19 vaccine booster doses. For Pfizer vaccine recipients, roughly 100 million Americans, a third dose of vaccine is now recommended by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for several groups, including those over 65, and those ages 40 to 54 who have underlying medical conditions that put them at risk for severe infection. Those ages 18 to 39 with underlying medical conditions may get a booster, as well.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/09/biden-walensky-boost-covid-vaccine-boosters>

Partisan Exits

Party of Covid vaccine sceptics wins seats in Austria's regional parliament

A newly created party of Covid-19 vaccine sceptics has been elected to one of Austria's largest regional parliaments after a shock election result in which it swept up protest votes from across the political spectrum. Pollsters had expected Menschen-Freiheit-Grundrechte [People, Freedom, Rights] to fall short of the 4 per cent threshold needed to enter the Upper Austrian state parliament. But on

Sunday the party overtook the liberals, scooping up 6.4 per cent of the vote to win three seats in the Landtag.

<https://www.ft.com/content/afbc2a99-8b90-4a31-a8c3-70965b25a6d8>

Jordan's crown prince contracts coronavirus

Jordan's Crown Prince Hussein has contracted coronavirus and his parents King Abdullah and Queen Rania, who tested negative, will protectively self-isolate for five days, the palace said on Monday. "His Highness Prince Hussein, who had received the vaccine against the coronavirus, showed mild symptoms and is in very good health," the Royal Court said in a statement. The 27-year-old prince has in the last year increased his public appearances and is seen regularly at most of the important meetings King Abdullah that attends with local and foreign dignitaries.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/jordans-crown-prince-contracts-coronavirus-2021-09-27/>

Violent street clashes break out as Norway lifts Covid restrictions after 561 days

A day after Norway lifted coronavirus lockdown restrictions, the police reported several violent clashes and mass brawls as people crowded streets, bars, nightclubs and restaurants in many cities in celebration. The restrictions had been in place for 561 days. Norwegian prime minister Erna Solberg had announced on Friday that all Covid-19 restrictions will end the next day at 4pm local time. "It is 561 days since we introduced the toughest measures in Norway in peacetime. Now the time has come to return to a normal daily life," she said. The announcement caught many Norwegians by surprise. But hours after the restrictions were lifted, the police reported several rowdy celebrations across some of the big cities in the Nordic nation. Celebrations by Norwegians, which started on Saturday afternoon and lasted until the early hours of Sunday, led to unrest in several places, including in the southern city of Bergen and the central city of Trondheim.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/norway-covid-restrictions-street-brawls-b1927533.html>

COVID-19 vaccine rollout for people living with disability 'seriously deficient', royal commission report finds

Australian states and territories should not ease COVID restrictions until all people with disability have been given the opportunity to be fully vaccinated, according to the disability royal commission. In its draft report, released on Monday, the inquiry described the vaccine rollout as "seriously deficient" and recommended the federal government use its best endeavours to "ensure people with disability and support workers are fully vaccinated before any easing of restrictions".

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-09-27/covid-vaccine-rollout-disability-australia/100493464>

Covid-19: Experts accuse Government of 'abandoning' ethnic minorities during pandemic

A number of experts and equality groups have accused the government of failing to protect high-risk ethnic minority groups during the Covid-19 pandemic while rates of vaccine hesitancy continue to grow among parts of these communities. The latest figure for hesitancy among Black or Black British adults is 21 per cent, according to the Office for National Statistics — an increase on previous figures — while among white adults it remains at four per cent. Hesitancy is also higher for adults identifying as Muslim (14 per cent) or "other" (14 per cent) for their religion, compared with adults who identify as Christian (4 per cent).

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/covid-government-ethnic-minorities-pandemic-b1915562.html>

Scientific Viewpoint

EU reviewing data on Moderna's COVID-19 booster shot

Pfizer Inc said on Monday it has started a large study testing its investigational oral antiviral drug for the prevention of COVID-19 infection among those who have been exposed to the virus. The drugmaker and its rivals, including U.S.-based Merck & Co Inc and Swiss pharmaceutical Roche Holding AG, have been racing to develop an easy-to-administer antiviral pill for COVID-19

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/eu-evaluating-data-modernas-covid-19-vaccine-booster-dose-2021-09-27/>

Pfizer begins study of oral drug for prevention of COVID-19

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<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/pfizer-begins-study-covid-19-antiviral-drug-2021-09-27/>

Covid: New Delta mutation found in Italy can be beaten by vaccines, study suggests

An outbreak of a new strain of coronavirus among card-playing pensioners in northern Italy suggests it may not threaten vaccines as much as scientists fear. Public health chiefs are monitoring the strain – a combination of the highly infectious Delta variant and the E484K mutation associated with vaccine evasion – which has been identified in 19 people in the UK and a further 99 around the world. The strain is not yet a variant of concern due to the small numbers, but scientists are concerned it could take off as more people are vaccinated, which creates conditions for strains that can dodge vaccines.

<https://inews.co.uk/news/health/covid-coronavirus-new-delta-e484k-mutation-vaccines-study-italy-pensioners-1220109>

Alberta's former chief medical officer of health calls for 'urgent' COVID-19 change

Alberta Premier Jason Kenney rejected calls for a "hard lockdown" during an appearance on a radio program Sunday, the same day that his province's former top doctor signed a letter calling for immediate "firebreak" measures to deal with surging cases of COVID-19. Kenney told radio host Roy Green that a lockdown would make "no sense for the 80 per cent of the population that is vaccinated," who he said are much less likely to transmit the disease and are far less likely to be hospitalized. He also said the roughly 20 per cent who aren't vaccinated and are behind the surge in cases are less likely to follow public health measures. Dr. James Talbot, Alberta's former chief medical officer of health, co-wrote a letter to the province's new health minister, Jason Copping, strongly recommending additional measures in the province, as the pandemic's fourth wave continues to strain hospital capacity.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/talbot-covid-alberta-letter-1.6190224>

Covid-19: Aussie doctors reveal why your next vaccination shot is going up your nose

Scientists are working on a nasal spray vaccine for Covid-19. 'You are 11 times more likely to die from Covid if you are unvaccinated.' The nose and mouth are the doorways to getting the virus. Getting vaccinated significantly reduces the risk of being infected

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10031505/Covid-19-Aussie-doctors-reveal-vaccination-shot-going-nose.html>

Japan approves GSK's Sotrovimab COVID-19 antibody treatment

Japan has approved GlaxoSmithKline and Vir Biotechnology's Sotrovimab as an antibody treatment for coronavirus, Health Minister Norihisa Tamura said on Monday. The antibody treatment is for mild to moderate COVID-19 cases which do not require oxygen supplementation, GSK said when it applied for fast-track approval this month.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/japan-approves-gsks-sotrovimab-covid-19-antibody-treatment-2021-09-27/>

Small study shows antibody growth from AstraZeneca, Sputnik Light COVID-19 vaccine mix

A small-scale clinical study of the combined use of the AstraZeneca and Sputnik Light vaccines against COVID-19 has shown strong antibody growth in a majority of the study's participants, the

Russian Direct Investment Fund said on Monday. The data was collected from 20 people who took part in a 100-person study in Azerbaijan that began in February. They first received the AstraZeneca shot followed by the one-dose Russian-made Sputnik Light shot 29 days later, RDIF said.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/small-study-shows-antibody-growth-astrazeneca-sputnik-light-covid-19-vaccine-mix-2021-09-27/>

Covid-19: England sees biggest fall in life expectancy since records began in wake of pandemic

The covid-19 pandemic led to the biggest year-on-year drop in life expectancy in England since statistics were first collected in 1981, Public Health England has said. In 2020, the agency said that “the very high level” of excess deaths because of the pandemic caused life expectancy in England to fall 1.3 years for men to 78.7 and 0.9 years for women to 82.7. This was the lowest life expectancy in England for both sexes since 2011. Not all countries have reported life expectancy data for 2020 yet. But of those that have, PHE noted that Italy, Poland, and Spain experienced similar decreases in life expectancy to England in 2020, while France had a smaller decrease. Germany had little or no relative excess mortality in men or women. The US and Poland had the highest relative excess mortality in 2020, in both men and women.

<https://www.bmj.com/content/374/bmj.n2291>

COVID-19: Llama nanobodies may offer new treatment

Although vaccines are highly effective in preventing COVID-19, scientists still need to identify better treatments for the disease. Some scientists are investigating whether llama-derived antibodies might be a useful treatment approach. A recent study has shown that so-called nanobodies that scientists harvested from a llama reduced SARS-CoV-2 viral load in Syrian hamsters.

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/llama-antibodies-show-significant-potential-as-covid-19-treatment>

Venezuelan academy of medicine expresses concern over use of Cuban vaccine

Venezuela’s National Academy of Medicine on Monday expressed concern over the use of Cuba’s Abdala coronavirus vaccine due to a lack of scientific research on its safety and efficacy. Cuba said on Saturday it had exported the three-shot vaccine for the first time, sending an initial shipment to Vietnam as part of a contract to supply five million doses to the Southeast Asian country. The government of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro has so far been relying on the Russian Sputnik V and the Chinese Sinopharm vaccines, and in recent months received its first shipment of doses via the global COVAX program.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/venezuelan-academy-medicine-expresses-concern-over-use-cuban-vaccine-2021-09-27/>

WHO backs Regeneron drug for COVID-19, urges action on price

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has added the Regeneron antibody drug cocktail – casirivimab and imdevimab – to its list of treatments for people with COVID-19, urging the manufacturer to reduce the price and ensure equitable distribution. Clinical studies showed the drug combination was effective in patients who were not severely ill but at high risk of being admitted to hospital with COVID-19, or those with severe cases of the disease and no existing antibodies, the WHO said in a statement on Friday.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/9/24/who-adds-regeneron-to-covid-19-treatments-urges-action-on-price>

WHO adds new recommendation for COVID-19 monoclonal antibody combo

The WHO's conditional recommendation for the monoclonal antibody cocktail, which consists of casirivimab and imdevimab, applies to patients with nonsevere COVID-19 who are at high risk for hospitalization and for people who have severe and critical infections who have no antibodies to SARS-COV-2. In November, the US Food and Drug Administration issued an emergency use authorization for the drug combination for adults and kids ages 12 and older who have mild- to

moderate COVID-19. The combination is administered through intravenous (IV) infusion or injection. It made headlines when it was used to treat former President Donald Trump's COVID-19 infection. Demand for the treatment has been skyrocketing in US hot spots such as Florida, where officials have opened state-run centers to deliver the treatment. As a result, the Biden administration recently took steps to address shortages by taking over distribution and buying 1.4 million more doses. In the United States, the drug costs about \$1,250 per dose and is covered by the federal government.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/09/who-adds-new-recommendation-covid-19-mono-clonal-antibody-combo>

Coronavirus Resurgence

UK records 37960 new COVID-19 cases, 40 more deaths

Britain reported 37,960 new COVID-19 cases on Monday and 40 more deaths within 28 days of a positive test, official data showed. The figures compared to 32,417 cases recorded on Sunday and 58 deaths.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-records-37960-new-covid-19-cases-40-more-deaths-2021-09-27/>

Fourth national lockdown is likely to be imposed over the winter, half of Britons believe

Another national lockdown is likely to be imposed over the winter, half of Britons believe with most expecting a "significant rise" in Covid-19 infections in the coming months. A poll for i by Redfield & Wilton Strategies suggests that three in five voters would back any decision to lock down the country for a fourth time - even though the Government has insisted it will go to any lengths to avoid doing so. There is broad approval of the Government's current handling of the pandemic, with 46 per cent saying they are happy with how things are going and 29 per cent disagreeing.

<https://inews.co.uk/news/politics/fourth-national-lockdown-is-likely-to-be-imposed-over-the-winter-half-of-britons-believe-1219496>

ACT records first COVID-related death in current outbreak, 19 new coronavirus cases

A Canberra man in his 90s has died with COVID-19, as Chief Minister Andrew Barr unveils his roadmap out of lockdown. Nineteen new COVID-19 cases were recorded in the ACT today, with at least eight of those infectious in the community. Seventeen can be linked to a known case or cluster, while two remain unlinked. There are currently eight people in hospital with the virus. Three of them are in ICU and require ventilation. There were 3,866 Canberrans tested at ACT clinics yesterday, following the announcement of 25 COVID-19 cases yesterday and 32 cases on Saturday.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-09-27/act-records-new-covid-cases-monday/100493630>

Victoria records 705 new Covid-19 cases and one death as Dan Andrews announces new freedoms

Victoria records 705 new cases of coronavirus with one death on Monday. Dan Andrews announced new targets to enhanced freedoms with job rates. Golf and tennis are back on the cards for Victorians as vaccinations increase. Leaked plans reveal the premier's plan to force every student to get vaccinated

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10031243/Victoria-records-750-new-Covid-19-cases-one-death-Dan-Andrews-announces-new-freedoms.html>

Vietnam COVID-19 epicentre may have 40% more unrecorded cases - report

Authorities in Vietnam's biggest city are urging the government to recognise positive rapid tests for COVID-19 to present a clearer picture of its outbreak, state media reported on Monday, a move that could increase the city's case total by 40%. Ho Chi Minh City, home to about 9 million people, has borne the brunt of Vietnam's coronavirus crisis, accounting for 80% of its more than 18,500 COVID-19 deaths and half of its 756,000 cases.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/vietnam-covid-19-epicentre-may-have-40-more-unrecorded-cases-report-2021-09-27/>

Australia's Victoria state records second-highest daily rise in virus cases

Australia's Victoria state reported 779 new COVID-19 infections and two deaths on Sunday, off the previous day's record high as the country's prime minister presses state leaders to be ready to reopen once they meet vaccination targets. The daily increase was still the state's second-highest, after the 847 cases logged on Saturday, as officials battle to contain a Delta variant outbreak that has taken root since mid-year.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/australias-victoria-state-records-second-highest-daily-rise-virus-cases-2021-09-25/>

UK's daily Covid cases rise 5% in a week to 37,960 as hospital admissions and deaths continue to fall - amid fears FOURTH wave may have already begun with cases starting to spill over from children to their parents

37,960 Covid cases were recorded across the UK, latest daily figures from the Department of Health show. The figure is 5.2% higher than the 36,100 cases recorded last Monday and comes amid fears of a fourth wave. Separate data shows rates have been rising for a fortnight, following the return of pupils to classrooms. Experts had always warned of a fresh wave after the return of schools, where the majority are not vaccinated. Meanwhile, hospitalisations and deaths, which lag behind infection rates by a few weeks, continued to fall. Some 40 people were added to the Covid death toll, bringing the UK total to 136,208 since last March

https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10032351/Covid-cases-begin-spill-children-rates-rising-35-50-year-olds.html?ito=social-twitter_dailymailUK

COVID-19: UK records another 58 coronavirus-related deaths - as infections rise by 15% in a week

The UK has recorded 32,417 further COVID-19 cases and 58 deaths within 28 days of a positive test, according to the latest government figures. There have been 239,342 cases over the past seven days - an increase of almost 31,974, equivalent to 15.4% - data published on the government's coronavirus website showed. A total of 965 deaths have been recorded over the past week, 38 less than last week, equating to a 3.8% reduction.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-uk-records-another-58-coronavirus-related-deaths-as-infections-rise-by-15-in-a-week-12418973>