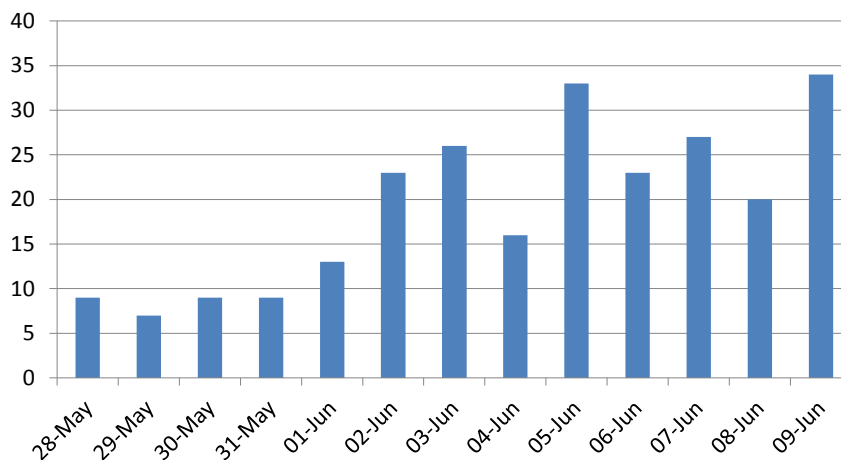


Briefing note for Elected Members, MSPs MPs and Community Councils

Perceptions of COVID-19 across Grampian: At the end of May the numbers of cases identified each day were around 8 or 9 each day, leading to a perception that COVID-19 had ceased to be a particular problem in Grampian. However, since then the number of cases has been steadily rising, with 34 cases reported for 9th June. Cases are now doubling approximately every 6-7 days

Daily Grampian Covid-19 cases

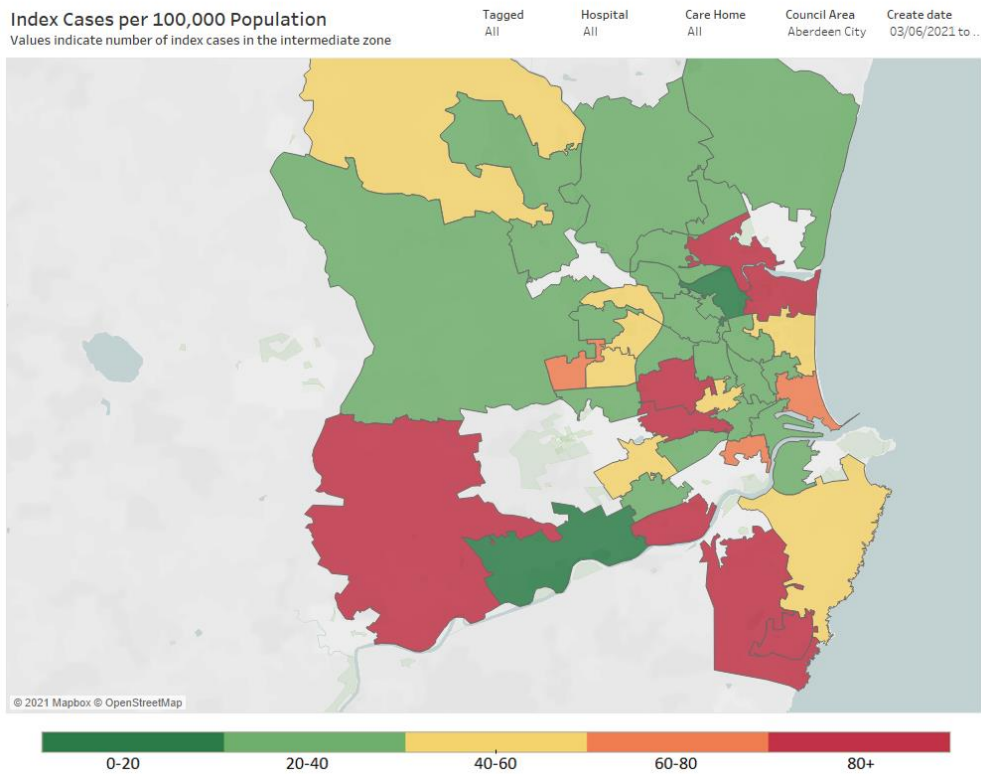


Context: These figures need to be set in the following context.

- Cases across Scotland are now exceeding 1000 per day. If cases were spread evenly across Scotland, Grampian would be seeing over 100 per day. With the easing of restrictions on both mixing and, in particular, travelling it seems only a matter of time before Grampian 'catches up' with board areas in the central belt and Tayside
- Over a very short period of time the dominant strain of the virus in Grampian has changed from the Alpha (Kent) variant to the Delta (Indian) variant, which now accounts for more than 80% of the cases in Grampian.
- The Delta variant is more than 60% more infectious than the Alpha variant.
- Vaccines do protect, but the second dose is very important against the Delta variant.
- Emerging evidence suggests that the Delta variant may be associated with higher rates of hospitalisation (perhaps up to double) than the Alpha variant, even taking account of vaccination.
- Long COVID affects at the very least a tenth of people who get the infection, and this includes young people, who are now the most likely people to catch it.

Local 'hot spots': There are particular increases in case numbers in Aberdeenshire West and South and in Aberdeen City West and South. The maps below also show the current situation in Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, and Grampian as a whole.

	26 th May to 2 nd June	3 rd June to 9 th June
Aberdeenshire West and South	10	40
Aberdeen City West and South	39	46



Index Cases per 100,000 Population

Values indicate number of index cases in the intermediate zone

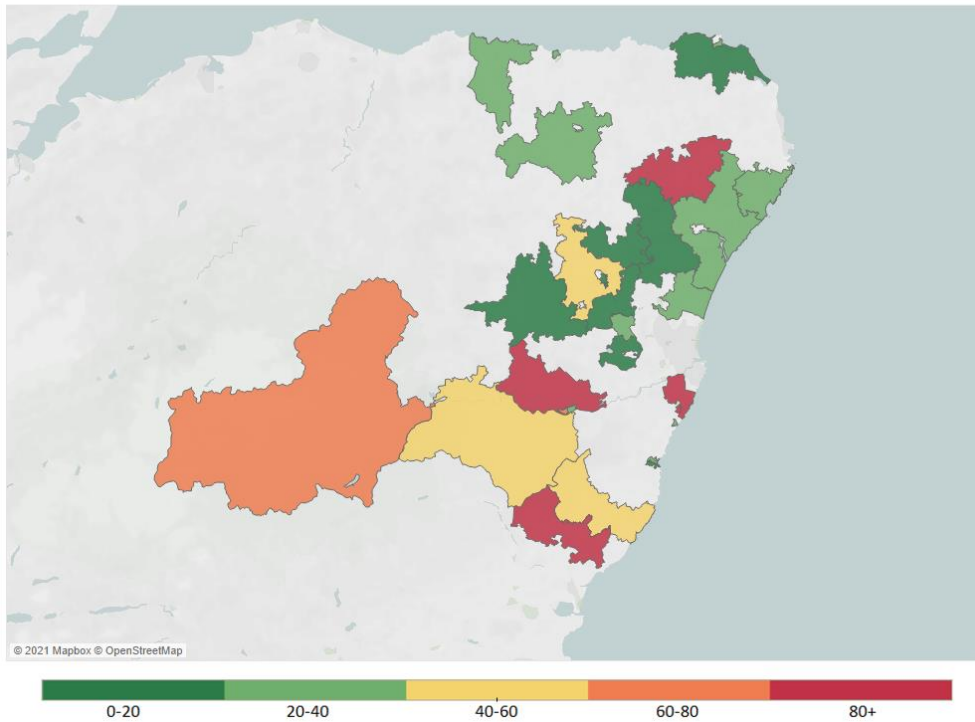
Tagged
All

Hospital
All

Care Home
All

Council Area
Aberdeenshire

Create date
03/06/2021 to ...



Index Cases per 100,000 Population

Values indicate number of index cases in the intermediate zone

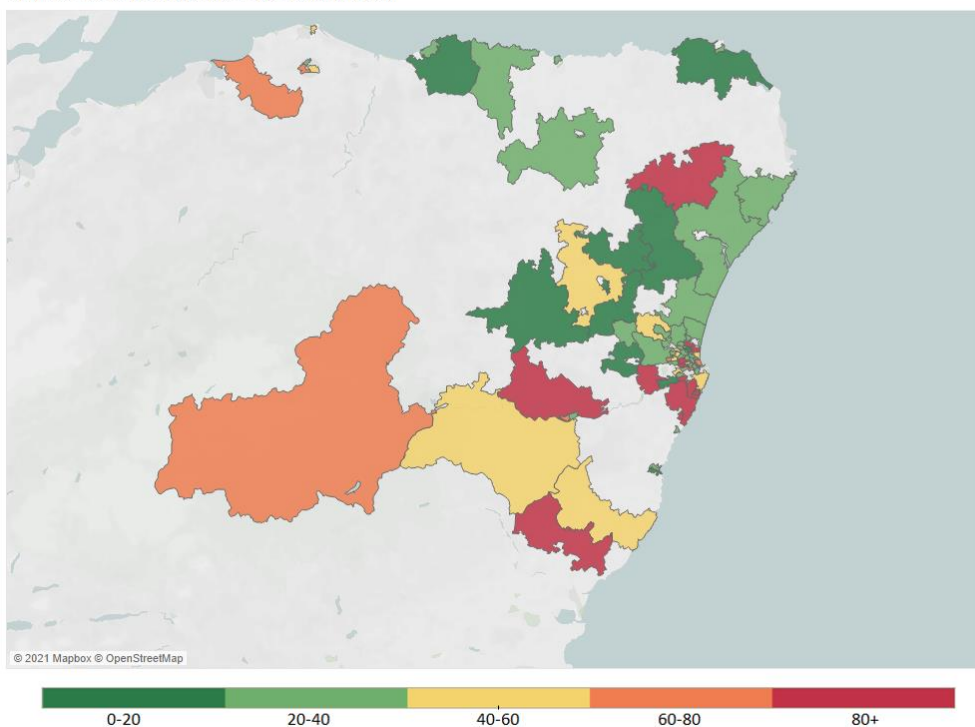
Tagged
All

Hospital
All

Care Home
All

Council Area
All

Create date
03/06/2021 to ...



Conclusion: Notwithstanding public perception, it is clear that the situation in Grampian is serious and worsening. The objective now must be to delay the speed of the rise of this third wave for as long as possible and to use this period of delay to get as many people as possible vaccinated, ideally with two doses of the vaccine.

What can be done? Our partnership response means we are able to take enhanced measures to help to contain the infection.

- Make testing as available as possible. Testing, particularly asymptomatic testing is key to interrupting the spread. In addition to the currently available testing centres a mobile testing centre is opening in Banchory and Stonehaven from 12th to 16th June, and a testing service is opening in Aboyne Area Office from 11th to 18th June. Details of how to arrange a test are at [Community Testing with no COVID-19 symptoms \(nhsgrampian.org\)](https://www.nhs.uk/healthcare/healthcare-services/community-testing-with-no-covid-19-symptoms)

Anyone who has symptoms should arrange a PCR test at a government testing centre or by ordering a test through the post. However, all members of the public who have no symptoms are strongly urged to get a supply of LFD tests and to do the test twice weekly. Advice about how to go about getting a test is available at NHS Inform or from the Grampian Testing web page above.

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19/test-and-protect/coronavirus-covid-19-get-a-test-if-you-do-not-have-symptoms>

LFD tests can also be picked up from participating community pharmacies. People can find their nearest pharmacy at

<https://maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk/findatestcenter.html>

- Carry out enhanced contact tracing to try to identify sources of infection
- Make more use of customer lists from hospitality settings to encourage testing if people may have been exposed
- Accelerate the vaccination programme. This is unfortunately constrained by the available doses of vaccine being supplied to Grampian

No one wants to go back into restrictions or even lockdown. We need to encourage individuals, workplaces, hospitality establishments and communities to do their utmost to keep the third wave at bay. So what can people do to help?

- When invited people should go for the vaccination. Now that we are vaccinating younger age groups there is a significant proportion of appointments that are not being taken up. Younger people are still at risk of hospitalisation and of developing Long COVID and should not assume that they don't need to get vaccinated.
- Just because people are allowed to do some things does not mean that they should do these things. So people should:
 - Avoid unnecessary travel outwith their own area, and especially to the Central Belt of Scotland and to England. If you do need to travel for

your work or indeed for a family celebration participate in regular testing in addition to usual precautions

- Avoid crowded indoor places. If it looks too crowded, it is too crowded
- Limit the numbers of people mixing at home
- Continue with the usual precautions of social distancing and use of face coverings. Apart from mixing in households these precautions still apply in shops, public transport, circulation areas in public buildings and workplaces.
- Hospitality venues should continue to comply with the COVID requirements. Good ventilation and physical distancing are still required even in phase 2
- Businesses should consider whether or not they wish to close voluntarily, particularly in 'hot spot' areas.

You may also find the graphic (below), from the World Health Organisation, useful:

Avoid the Three Cs

Be aware of different levels of risk in different settings.



There are certain places where COVID-19 spreads more easily:



Crowded places

with many people nearby



Close-contact settings

Especially where people have close-range conversations



Confined and enclosed spaces

with poor ventilation



The risk is higher in places where these factors overlap.

Even as restrictions are lifted, consider where you are going and #StaySafe by avoiding the Three Cs.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?



Avoid crowded places and limit time in enclosed spaces



Maintain at least 1m distance from others



When possible, open windows and doors for ventilation



Keep hands clean and cover coughs and sneezes



Wear a mask if requested or if physical distancing is not possible

If you are unwell, stay home unless to seek urgent medical care.