

Technical Advisory Cell: Summary Brief

2nd October 2020

Top-line summary

- Some data streams indicate potential slowing in the growth rate of the epidemic, but it remains likely that infection incidence is growing overall in Wales.
- The latest estimate of R_t from the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) for Wales is between 1.3 and 1.6. While there may still be high degrees of variability (for example, in a localised outbreak), there is now more confidence in the reliability of the R and growth rate estimates compared to two to three months ago.
- For the week 18 September to 24 September, an average of 0.21% of the community population in Wales had COVID-19, equating to approximately 1 person in every 500, or 6,400 people across Wales in total during this time. There is uncertainty in these results because the survey is still only picking up relatively few positive tests overall, the results are very sensitive to small changes.
- Mobility data for Wales and the UK mostly shows reductions in mobility compared to last week, with larger falls in Wales. Wales also shows increases in adherence to key mitigating behaviours including the use of face coverings and those making essential trips only.
- Unless measures bring R back below 1, it is possible that infection incidence and hospital admissions may exceed scenario planning levels.
- Ventilation is an important mitigation measure and should be considered alongside other control measures.
- Behavioural insights relevant to contact tracing and young people are important to consider and advice from the Technical Advisory Group is available here: <https://gov.wales/technical-advisory-group-behavioural-insights-contact-tracing-systems-and-young-people>
- Papers from SAGE considered by the Technical Advisory Cell and Group are published here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/scientificevidence-supporting-the-government-response-to-coronavirus-covid19#meeting-minutes-and-supporting-papers>

Growth rate and reproduction number

- The current daily growth rate is estimated by SAGE to be between 0.05 and 0.09 in Wales, indicating that infections could be increasing by up to 1% and 5% per day.