

## Executive summary

At the request of DHSC and SAGE subgroup, PHE was asked to investigate care homes that received COVID-19 positive patients discharged from hospital, and subsequently experienced an outbreaks (herein referred to as hospital associated seeding of care home outbreaks). The results of this investigation are to be submitted to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC).

The PHE Epidemiology Cell (Epi Cell) developed a process to derive residential property classifications of laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in collaboration with the PHE GIS Cell. This facilitated identification of cases residing in care homes. Hospital discharge records were linked to these records to identify care home residents who may have acquired their COVID-19 infection whilst in hospital and subsequent to their discharge, their care homes experienced an outbreak of COVID-19. In summary:

- from 30 January to 12 October 2020, there were a total of 43,398 care home residents identified with a laboratory confirmed positive COVID-19 test result
- of these, 35,740 (82.4%) were involved in an outbreak, equivalent to a total of 5,882 outbreaks
- 1.6% (n=97) of outbreaks were identified as potentially seeded from hospital associated COVID-19 infection, with a total of 804 (1.2%) care home residents with confirmed infection associated with these outbreaks
- the majority of these potentially hospital-seeded care home outbreaks were identified in March to mid-April 2020, with none identified from the end of July until September where a few recent cases have emerged

The findings of this report suggest hospital associated seeding accounted for a small proportion of all care home outbreaks. Policies on systematic testing prior to hospital discharge for patients discharged to care homes, and where a test result was still awaiting, the patient would be discharged and pending the result, isolated in the same way as a COVID-positive patient, were introduced on 15 April 2020. This may have supported the decline seen in these types of outbreaks, contributing to an overall reduction in care home cases.