

# Technical Advisory Cell: Summary Brief

4<sup>th</sup> December 2020

## Top-line summary

- As reported by SAGE (3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020), the  $R_t$  value in Wales is estimated to be between 0.8 and 1.1 (slightly increased since last week) and the epidemic is estimated to be either shrinking by -3% or growing by 1% per day. These consensus estimates show a range of values, however the changes observed in key indicators demonstrate that Wales is now in a period of growth.
- As of 3<sup>rd</sup> December, the number of new cases has increased in all age groups with the highest incidence seen in those aged 85 years and older. Test positivity for COVID-19 (the proportion of total tests that were returned positive) is above the red circuit breaker, at 15.1%.
- As of 4<sup>th</sup> December, the number of people with confirmed COVID-19 in hospital remains higher than the April peak and is above the red circuit breaker. Overall ICU occupancy (COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 patients) also remains above the red circuit breaker. Data indicates that a 1:1 staffing ratio for ICU patients is not possible across most health boards in Wales.
- For the week ending 27 November 2020, data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) shows signs that the number of deaths involving COVID-19 reduced slightly. This pattern aligns with data from Public Health Wales. Deaths from all causes remains above the five-year average in Wales.
- Data from the ONS Covid-19 Infection Study for the week 22 to 28 November indicates that positivity rate in the community population in Wales was shown to have levelled off, after falling from a peak at the end of October.
- The latest mobility data mostly shows little change in Wales compared to the previous week. Mobility associated with retail and supermarkets is showing an upward trend. Note that it is not possible to determine if mobility is higher than this time last year due to the data starting in February.
- [Evidence](#) highlights that the following can reduce risk of transmission through direct physical contact, viral droplets and aerosols from in the air and contaminated surfaces; limiting or avoiding interactions with other people before meeting for 7-10 days; creating smaller, exclusive bubbles with fewer households; handwashing, surface cleaning, 2m social distancing and mask wearing where needed; improved ventilation and outdoor meeting options; and planning ahead to decide how to reduce risk.