

# Newyddion sifil/trosedd: newid rhif ffon llinell gymorth Cymraeg

News story

Rhaid galwadau i'r llinell Gymraeg nawr gael eu gwneud i 0300 200 2020.



Mae ein llinell ffôn Cymraeg nawr wedi newid i 0300 200 2020.

Mae'r rhif hwn yn cysylltu ein galwyr i'r tîm gwasanaeth cwsmeriaid. Mae pob galwyr yn cael cynnig yr opsiwn Cymraeg neu Saesneg pan fydd yn cysylltu.

Byddent yn cael eu gofyn i bwys o'r goriad # am sgwrs yn Gymraeg.

Bydd galwyr sydd eisiau sgwrs yn Saesneg yn gorfod dal ar am fwy o opsiynau.

Bydd y rhif Cymraeg hen 0845 609 9989 yn cael eu diffodd yn gyfan gwbl ar y 1 Rhagfyr 2020.

Hyd at 1 Rhagfyr 2020, bydd galwadau i'r hen rif yn cael eu hailgyfeirio i'r rhif newydd 0300 200 2020.

Mae darpariaeth y gwasanaeth hwn yn elfen bwysig o'r Cynllun Iaith Gymraeg rydym yn gweithredu yng Nghymru.

## **Gwynodaeth pellach**

[Fersiwn Saesneg o'r erthygl hwn](#)

Published 12 November 2020

# People with learning disabilities had higher death rate from COVID-19

The report, [Deaths of people identified as having learning disabilities with COVID-19 in England in the Spring of 2020](#) examined data from The English Learning Disabilities Mortality Review (LeDeR) and NHS England's COVID-19 Patient Notification System (CPNS) which records deaths in hospital settings.

It found 451 per 100,000 people registered as having a learning disability died with COVID-19 between 21 March and 5 June, a death rate 4.1 times higher than the general population after adjusting for other factors such as age and sex.

But as not all deaths in people with learning difficulties are registered on these databases, researchers estimated the real rate may have been as high as 692 per 100,000, 6.3 times higher.

Deaths were also spread much more widely across the age spectrum among people with learning disabilities, with far greater mortality rates in younger adults, compared to the general population. The death rate for people aged 18 to 34 with learning disabilities was 30 times higher than the rate in the same age group without disabilities, researchers found.

Among people with learning disabilities, the rate of COVID-19 deaths for adults in residential care was higher than the rates of COVID-19 deaths of adults with learning disabilities generally. This difference is likely in part to reflect the greater age and disability in people in residential care.

People with learning disabilities are more likely to have other physical health problems such as obesity and diabetes, and certain kinds of learning disability, such as Down's syndrome, can make people more vulnerable to respiratory infections, which can increase their risk of dying from COVID-19.

Professor John Newton, Director of Health Improvement at Public Health England, said:

It is deeply troubling that one of the most vulnerable groups in our society suffered so much during the first wave of the pandemic. We must do everything possible to prevent this happening again.

There are now regular tests in care homes to make sure cases of coronavirus can be quickly identified and isolated, even if people do not recognise the symptoms themselves.

But with cases developing across the country, it is essential to practice rigorous infection control if you are in contact with someone with a learning disability, whether or not they live in a care home.

Wash your hands, wear a mask and keep a safe distance. The fewer people you meet, the more you'll stop the spread.

A learning disability is a significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information and learn new skills and a reduced ability to cope independently which started before adulthood, with a lasting effect on development. That means that people with learning disabilities often may find it harder to manage basic everyday skills, and rely upon support for many tasks, including communicating, managing money or looking after themselves.

People with learning disabilities are likely to have had difficulty recognising symptoms of COVID-19, or following government advice about getting tested, self-isolation, social distancing and infection prevention and control, the report says. It may also be more difficult for people caring for them to recognise the onset of symptoms if these cannot be communicated.

Helen Whately, Minister of State for Social Care, said:

Every death from COVID-19 has been a tragedy, and my deepest sympathies go out to everyone who has lost loved ones during the pandemic. I know how difficult this pandemic has been for people with a learning disability and those who care for them.

A third of those with learning disabilities who sadly died were living in residential care. There is now regular testing of staff and residents in care homes, and testing has also been rolled out to supported living settings in high risk areas. We're also offering free PPE, and the Joint committee on vaccines and immunisation has proposed those living and working in care homes should be top of the list for vaccination.

This report adds to our knowledge of COVID-19 and how those with learning disabilities are affected by this cruel disease. I am asking SAGE to review the findings and give advice on what more we can do to keep people safe.

## **Background information**

The report, Deaths of people identified as having learning disabilities with COVID-19 in England in the Spring of 2020, followed a formal commission from Department of Health and Social Care, with the support of the Chief Medical Officer, to conduct further analysis of available data related to the deaths of people with learning disabilities from COVID-19 to inform policy and practice.

Resources for people with learning disabilities and their carers can be found at [NHS – learning-disability and autism](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/learning-disability-and-autism/)

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# Crime news: Crown Court Digital Case System claims work boost

## News story

Our caseworkers will gain 'read-only' access to Crown Court Digital Case System files from 16 November 2020 to help improve decision-making on your claims.



Providers are set to benefit from a new approach to Crown Court assessments with our caseworkers being given 'read-only' access to digital case files.

Our need to have this access to help perform statutory duties has been recognised by HM Courts and Tribunals Service.

Similar access arrangements are being made for both the Attorney General's Office and the Criminal Cases Review Commission.

### **What are the benefits?**

Earlier access to online case material held in the Crown Court Digital Case System should improve the accuracy of decisions made by our caseworkers.

It should also reduce billing disputes and the amount of supporting information we ask providers to submit via the Galaxkey file exchange.

### **When would caseworkers ask for access?**

Access may be needed to validate the count of pages of prosecution evidence (PPE). This takes place mostly at the redetermination stage. However, this could be at the point of initial assessment for some claims, e.g. special preparation.

## **How can practitioners help?**

Upon request, providers will be able to use the 'People' function in the DCS to locate a caseworker's e-mail address and authorise access. All caseworkers will have a single 'read-only' role listed.

This approach mirrors the invitations-based mechanism already widely used in the DCS to manage access. Further guidance and resources on asking for and granting access can be found on GOV.UK where you can find training resources.

## **Is this secure?**

Yes, the role accorded to LAA caseworkers confers no editing rights and restricts what is visible to the user. None of the private sections in DCS can be seen, and only "widely shared" comments are viewable.

## **Further information**

[CrimeSupport@Justice.gov.uk](mailto:CrimeSupport@Justice.gov.uk) – to find out more about the changes

[Crown Court Digital Case System guidance](#) – information and support materials about DCS

[Crown Court Digital Case System training guides and videos](#) – see 'Give or ask for access to a case'

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## **Crime news: register for 'Common Platform' early adopter rollout**

News story

Defence practitioners need to register to use the HM Courts and Tribunal Service 'Common Platform' digital case management system in early adopter courts.



Common Platform has begun rolling out to a series of early adopter courts across England and Wales and providers need to register for accounts.

## **Why is it important to register?**

You need to register to access the new ways of working for defence solicitors and barristers in early adopter courts. Your account will allow you to:

- link yourself to a case/defendant so the Legal Aid Agency is informed for payment purposes
- self-serve case materials, including the 'initial details of the prosecution case' (IDPC) and the preparation for effective trial (PET) form in the magistrates' court
- serve documents on the court for common platform cases in the magistrates' court

## **Where are the early adopter courts?**

These are the courts which will test the system before it is gradually expanded across England and Wales:

1. Derby Magistrates' Court and Crown Court
2. Bristol Magistrates' Court and Crown Court
3. North Tyneside, Mid and South East Northumberland Magistrates' Courts, and Newcastle Crown Court
4. Warrington Magistrates' Court and Chester Crown Court
5. Guildford Magistrates' Court/Staines Magistrates' Court and Guildford Crown Court

6. Croydon Magistrates' Court and Crown Court

7. Llanelli Magistrates' Court and Swansea Crown Court

## **Why is this happening now?**

Rollout in early adopter courts is the latest phase in work on the Common Platform digital case management system owned by HMCTS.

The common platform allows users to access and share case information in a secure and user-friendly way.

Rollout will transform the handling of criminal cases for providers, the LAA and our justice partners. These include HMCTS, the Crown Prosecution Service, and the judiciary.

Once live, the system can be used in both magistrates' and Crown Court settings.

## **Further information**

[HMCTS Common Platform account registration for defence professionals](#)

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## **Highways England welcomes green light for major A303 upgrade past Stonehenge**

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps has given the formal green light by granting a Development Consent Order for work to start on the A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down (Stonehenge) scheme.

The transformational and sensitive upgrade will tackle congestion on the notorious, traffic-clogged single carriageway section of the A303 route, and the announcement is a significant step towards unlocking economic growth and improving journey times and reliability between the M3 and M5.

For Highways England, the announcement follows this year's completion of the major A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon upgrade – eight months ahead of schedule – and the unveiling of a preferred route for the £1 billion A66 Trans-Pennine upgrade.

Highways England Chief Executive Jim O'Sullivan said:

The A303 Stonehenge tunnel project is part of the biggest investment in our road network for a generation and we welcome the Secretary of State's decision. This transformational scheme will return the Stonehenge landscape towards its original setting and will improve journey times for everyone who travels to and from the south west.

The £1.7 billion A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down upgrade includes:

- eight miles of free-flowing, high-quality dual carriageway
- a tunnel at least two miles long underneath the World Heritage Site, closely following the existing A303 route, but a further 50 metres away from the Stonehenge monument, avoiding important archaeological sites, and avoiding intrusion on the view of the setting sun from the stones during the winter solstice
- a new bypass to the north of the village of Winterbourne Stoke
- junctions with the A345 and A360 either side of the World Heritage Site

Derek Parody, Highways England Project Director for the A303 Stonehenge scheme, added:

It is a scheme objective to conserve and enhance the World Heritage Site and this is being achieved through close collaborative working with heritage groups, including English Heritage, National Trust, Historic England and the independent A303 Scientific Committee.

The scheme will not only sustain the Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS, it will also have a beneficial effect, and extensive archaeological studies and assessments have been undertaken to provide evidence of the benefits that the scheme will deliver for the World Heritage Site.

The decision represents a major milestone, not only for us as the project team but for all those who have supported this project over a number of years; our stakeholders, the heritage bodies, local and regional businesses and indeed local communities.

The Transport Secretary's announcement follows a rigorous and detailed planning hearing in 2019, and there is now a six-week period in which the decisions may be challenged in the High Court.

In the meantime, Highways England has been progressing the procurement process for the main works contract for the A303 Stonehenge scheme, and is participating in dialogue with three bidders before they submit their final tenders. The preferred bidder is expected to be announced in 2021.

The company, responsible for the country's major A roads and motorways, has also recently awarded contracts for archaeological mitigation work (Wessex Archaeology Ltd) and preliminary works (Osborne Ltd) ahead of main construction.

Fieldwork is due to start in late spring next year, with the main five-year construction phase expected to start by 2023.

Cllr Bridget Wayman, Wiltshire Council Cabinet Member for Highways, said:

We're delighted that, after many years of planning and lobbying by our dedicated officers and members, consent has been granted for the A303 Stonehenge project.

It represents a significant investment in Wiltshire that will boost the south-west economy, unlocking jobs and investment throughout the entire region. We now can look forward to construction beginning, and unlocking all the benefits the scheme will bring to Wiltshire and the south west.

David Tucker, Federation of Small Businesses Transport Chair, said:

This is very welcome news. Upgrading the single carriageway sections of the A303 is key to supporting the south-west economy, particularly as the only alternative route via the M4 and M5 into the region is already heavily used. Investment in improving key links on the country's A roads is a positive and vital way to support our local regional economies.

Charles Routh Wiltshire Team Leader for Natural England added:

We've worked with Highways England to get some really great outcomes for wildlife from the A303 Stonehenge scheme. The verges and embankments will make for a flower-rich, six-mile long, butterfly highway and large areas of species-rich chalk grassland will be created.

Local communities will be able to find out more about the Stonehenge scheme during a series of virtual public information events in early 2021, including information around ongoing ground investigation and ecology surveys. The Sparkford to Ilchester scheme, a further proposed A303 upgrade, is also awaiting a DCO decision next week, following the Secretary of State's revised deadline deferral in the summer. The scheme, further west on the A303 in Somerset, will provide a high-quality three-mile dual carriageway link, including new and replacement slip roads, junctions and road bridges to replace existing junctions and direct access roads.

Galliford Try has been appointed as the contractor to design and build the scheme, and Highways England is currently assessing timescales to start the programme of work, should consent be granted.

A third corridor project, the A358 Taunton to Southfields dualling scheme, has had funding confirmed by HM Treasury for the next development stage and a tender process is progressing following last year's announcement of a preferred route.

Get further information on the [A303 Stonehenge upgrade](#)

Keep up to date via our Twitter feed @A303Stonehenge and the A303 Stonehenge Community Facebook page.

## **General enquiries**

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

## **Media enquiries**

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.