UK virus death toll rises by 449 to 16,509: ministry

April 20 2020

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A total of 16,509 people hospitalised with coronavirus in Britain have now died, health ministry figures showed Monday, up by 449—the lowest daily toll for a fortnight.

The figures—which do not include deaths in the community, including care homes—are always lower on a Monday due to reporting delays over the weekend.

But David Spiegelhalter, chairman of the Winton Centre for Risk and Evidence Communication at the University of Cambridge, said separate new data just for England showed a clear improvement.

Data showing the day people died, rather than when deaths were reported, "clearly shows we are in a steadily, but rather slowly, improving position since the peak of deaths 12 days ago on April 8", he said.

"But, judging from the experience in Italy, this could be a lengthy process."

Britain is currently one of the hardest hit countries in the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson was hospitalised for a week with the disease and is still recovering, having delegated day-to-day running of the government to his foreign minister, Dominic Raab.

Britain went into lockdown at the end of March—later than other European countries—with people told to stay indoors except for daily exercise and buying essentials.

The confinement measures were last week renewed for another three weeks, but there are growing concerns about the toll the tough rules are having on the economy.

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