

French nursing home sees 9 deaths in 1 week as virus returns

August 17 2020



A woman wears a face masks as she poses for a picture at the Louvre Museum in Paris, Saturday, Aug. 15, 2020. Paris extended the areas of the city where pedestrians will be obliged to wear masks starting Saturday morning after health officials said that the coronavirus is "active". The Champs-Elysees Avenue and the neighbourhood around the Louvre Museum are among zones where masks will be obligatory. (AP Photo/Kamil Zihnioglu)

Nine people with the virus died over the past week in a single nursing home in eastern France, and other French care homes are shutting their doors as the country battles a new rise in COVID-19 infections.

The Les Sablons home in the town of Pulnoy tested its 135 residents and staff after a first case was found Aug. 3, and 34 tested positive, the home's director Daniel Cilla told regional media.

By Sunday, nine residents with the virus had died, he said.

While more than 10,000 people with the virus died in French nursing homes in the first wave of the pandemic, the Les Sablons [home](#) hadn't registered a single case until this month, according to the regional health agency.

Pulnoy Mayor Marc Ogiez, speaking on BFM television, blamed the outbreak on waning vigilance by families amid the vacation season, and a sense among many in France this summer that the virus crisis was over.

The health agency issued an online appeal Monday for reinforced [medical staff](#) for hospitals and nursing homes in the Grand-Est region, which was the first in France to be badly hit by the virus in March.

Several other nursing homes around France have closed their doors anew after reporting virus cases in recent days, families told The Associated Press.



French police officers wearing protective face masks patrol on the Champs Elysee avenue in Paris, Saturday, Aug. 15, 2020. Paris extended the areas of the city where pedestrians will be obliged to wear masks starting Saturday morning after health officials said that the coronavirus is "active". The Champs-Elysees Avenue and the neighbourhood around the Louvre Museum are among zones where masks will be obligatory. (AP Photo/Kamil Zihnioglu)



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People with face masks visit the Louvre Museum in Paris, Saturday, Aug. 15, 2020. Paris extended the areas of the city where pedestrians will be obliged to wear masks starting Saturday morning after health officials said that the coronavirus is "active". The Champs-Elysees Avenue and the neighbourhood around the Louvre Museum are among zones where masks will be obligatory. (AP Photo/Kamil Zihnioglu)

Infections have been speeding up around France in recent days, with 3,015 new cases Sunday, one of the highest daily jumps since the country lifted as strict two-month lockdown in May. Some 263 virus clusters are currently under investigation, many linked to workplaces, family vacation gatherings or dance parties.

The government is sending riot police to the Marseille region to help enforce mask requirements, as more and more French towns and neighborhoods are imposing mask rules. France has seen scattered incidents of violence involving people refusing to wear masks.

More than 30,400 people with the [virus](#) have died in France, one of the highest death tolls in the world.

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