

Oslo tightens virus curbs after finding UK strain

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Coronavirus. Credit: European Centers for Disease Control

The Norwegian government announced Saturday a crackdown in the capital region with the strictest restrictions since last March after the discovery of the British coronavirus variant in a retirement home.

Only essential shops can remain open and municipalities will be allowed

to close [primary schools](#) and put secondaries on remote learning.

People are being asked to restrict movements and not to eat meals outside their family.

"We are putting in place the strictest measures since last March in 10 districts," said Health Minister Bent Hoie.

"In some places we are going even further than in March," he told a press conference, adding that it will make "[daily life](#) difficult for many".

All public events, indoors and outdoors, are cancelled apart from burials. Restaurants will be limited to takeaway services.

The measures will remain in force until at least January 31 following the detection of the British variant in a home at Nordre Follo, 30 kilometres (18 miles) from Oslo.

Two pensioners at the home, aged over 90, were found to have died with the variant, the public health institute said on Friday.

A total of 22 employees and 12 retirees have been found to have [coronavirus](#) at the home but it has yet to be established if they have the variant.

The authorities have so far been unable to trace the origin of the cluster or a link with Britain.

"We are doing what we can to stop this with strong measures in order to regain control quickly and lift the toughest measures," the minister said.

The virus strain that has swept Britain and beyond could be more deadly as well as more transmissible, Prime Minister Boris Johnson said Friday.

The strain has also spread to more than 60 nations—including China, where the pandemic began more than a year ago.

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