

# Doctors urge delay in next lockdown easing in England

June 12 2021, by Pan Pylas

---



A man waits outside a mobile COVID-19 vaccination centre outside Bolton Town Hall, in Bolton, England, Wednesday, June 9, 2021, where case numbers of the Delta variant first identified in India have been relatively high. Credit: Peter Byrne/PA via AP

Britain's main doctors' union has joined calls for the next planned

lockdown easing in England to be delayed, as figures Friday showed new COVID-19 cases across the U.K. running at their highest level since late February.

The rise in new infections comes as a result of the spread of the delta variant first identified in India.

Government figures showed that 8,125 new cases were recorded on Friday. That's the highest figure since Feb. 26 and means that the 7-day average, which smooths out daily fluctuations, has increased threefold over the past month.

The delta variant, which is considered to be at least 40% more transmissible than the previous dominant strain, now accounts for more than 90% of all new infections in the U.K.

The pick-up in cases has led a number of scientists to call on the British government to delay the next planned lockdown easing in England from June 21.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who is currently hosting the Group of Seven leaders summit in Cornwall, southwest England, is to announce on Monday whether he will sanction the next lockdown easing, which is intended to remove all [legal limits](#) on [social contact](#)—including the reopening of nightclubs for the first time since the pandemic struck in March 2020.

The pressure on him to authorize a delay, or at the very least to limit the scale of the changes, is rising.



Members of the Armed Forces speak to people, outside a mobile COVID-19 vaccination centre outside Bolton Town Hall, in Bolton, England, Wednesday, June 9, 2021, where case numbers of the Delta variant first identified in India have been relatively high. Credit: Peter Byrne/PA via AP





Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson and wife Carrie Johnson arrive for a G7 leaders reception at the Eden Project in Cornwall, England, Friday June 11, 2021, during the G7 summit. Credit: Jack Hill/Pool via AP

On Friday, the British Medical Association said a "sensible delay" would help keep a lid on infections as it would allow more people to be vaccinated with first and second doses, particularly [younger people](#) who are seeing the highest proportion of infections.

"With only 54.2% of the [adult population](#) currently fully vaccinated and many younger people not yet eligible, there is a huge risk that prematurely relaxing all restrictions will undo the excellent work of the vaccine program and lead to a surge of infections," said Dr. Chaand Nagpaul, council chair of the British Medical Association.

"It's not just about the number of hospitalizations, but also the risk to the health of large numbers of younger people, who can suffer long-term symptoms affecting their lives and ability to work," he added.

The U.K. has recorded nearly 128,000 coronavirus-related deaths, more than any other nation in Europe. After a devastating winter surge of infections, deaths have fallen sharply recently following a strict months-long lockdown and the rapid rollout of vaccines. The rollout, which has primarily been based on age, was earlier this week extended to 25- to 29-year-olds. The government has said it wants every adult to have received at least one dose of vaccine by the end of July.

The improved backdrop has allowed [lockdown](#) restrictions to be eased in the U.K. over the past couple of months. The four nations of the U.K.—England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland—have lifted restrictions at different paces but have been generally pursuing similar plans for the summer.

© 2021 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed without permission.

Citation: Doctors urge delay in next lockdown easing in England (2021, June 12) retrieved 10 April 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-06-doctors-urge-lockdown-easing-england.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--