

Coronavirus pandemic not over, German health minister warns

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German Health Minister Karl Lauterbach addresses the media during a press conference in Berlin, Germany, Friday, Feb. 25, 2022 on the current coronavirus pandemic in Germany. Credit: AP Photo/Michael Sohn

Germany's health minister warned Friday that the coronavirus pandemic isn't over yet, noting that the country is still seeing record infections and

high numbers of deaths.

The Robert Koch Institute, Germany's disease control agency, reported 210,743 newly confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 226 deaths in the past 24 hours. Officials say laboratory data suggests there may be a large number of undetected cases.

"We need to be careful not to think that the pandemic is over," Health Minister Karl Lauterbach told reporters in Berlin.

A subtype of the omicron variant, dubbed BA.2, could lead to a further rise in cases, he said.

Lauterbach urged Germany's 16 states not to [relax restrictions faster than recently agreed](#).

He rejected the idea of declaring a so-called Freedom Day as some other countries have done, saying it would give people a false sense of security. Unlike many comparable countries, Germany also has a higher rate of unvaccinated people over 60 who are particularly vulnerable to serious illness if they contract COVID-19, he said.

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