

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

16th Nov 2021

Lockdown Exit

No 10 plans booster jab requirement for people to obtain Covid pass

Ministers are set to require three vaccinations from those eligible for booster jabs in order to qualify as being fully vaccinated in areas where people must prove their status, such as travel or avoiding mandatory isolation. Downing Street sources said the intention was to end up in a place where three jabs, rather than two, was the requirement to obtain a Covid pass showing full vaccination – though currently only over-40s are eligible for the booster. If the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) continues to recommend boosters for all adults six months after their second jab, then the requirement could be in place in England by the early spring.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/nov/15/no-10-plans-booster-jab-requirement-for-people-to-obtain-covid-pass>

Europe Toughens Rules for Unvaccinated as Fourth Covid Wave Swells

As temperatures drop and coronavirus infections spike across Europe, some countries are introducing increasingly targeted restrictions against the unvaccinated who are driving another wave of contagion and putting economic recoveries, public health and an eventual return to prepandemic freedoms at risk. On Monday, Austria set a new bar for such measures in the West. Facing a 134 percent increase in cases in the last two weeks, the Austrian government cracked down on its unvaccinated population over the age of 12, restricting their movement to traveling for work, school, buying groceries and medical care.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/15/world/europe/europe-austria-covid-lockdown-unvaccinated-restrictions.html>

U.S. CDC raises COVID-19 travel warnings for Czech Republic, Hungary

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advised against travel to the Czech Republic, Hungary and Iceland because of a rising number of COVID-19 cases in those countries. The CDC raised its travel recommendation to "Level Four: Very High" for the three countries, telling Americans they should avoid travel there. The CDC separately lowered its COVID-19 travel advisory to "Level One: Low" for Japan, India, Pakistan, Liberia, Gambia and Mozambique.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-cdc-raises-covid-19-travel-warnings-czech-republic-hungary-2021-11-15/>

Boris Johnson Warns New U.K. Lockdown Is Possible With NHS Struggling

U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson left the door open to another coronavirus lockdown this winter, warning that people must get their Covid-19 vaccinations and booster doses to avoid fresh restrictions. A "new wave" of Covid-19 is spreading across Europe and forcing governments to reimpose tougher rules, Johnson said at a televised press conference on Monday. "History shows we cannot afford to be complacent." Asked directly about the possibility of another lockdown this Christmas, Johnson replied that there is nothing in the current data that signaled the need for restrictions, but warned: "clearly we cannot rule anything out."

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-11-15/johnson-warns-new-u-k-lockdown-not-ruled-out-as-nhs-struggles>

Racial disparities in kids' vaccinations are hard to track

The rollout of COVID-19 shots for elementary-age children has exposed another blind spot in the nation's efforts to address pandemic inequalities: Health systems have released little data on the racial breakdown of youth vaccinations, and community leaders fear that Black and Latino kids are

falling behind. Only a handful of states have made public data on COVID-19 vaccinations by race and age, and the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention does not compile racial breakdowns either. Despite the lack of hard data, public health officials and medical professionals are mindful of disparities and have been reaching out to communities of color to overcome vaccine hesitancy. That includes going into schools, messaging in other languages, deploying mobile vaccine units and emphasizing to skeptical parents that the shots are safe and powerfully effective.

<https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-race-and-ethnicity-pandemics-public-health-health-2c74b6c279d1e5bd505446c6c78176ac5>

COVID-19: Vaccine certificates now needed to visit theatres, cinemas and concert halls in Wales

People in Wales will now have to prove they are fully vaccinated or have had a negative lateral flow test to visit theatres, cinemas and concert halls after the existing NHS COVID Pass scheme was widened. Proof of full vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test in the previous 48 hours has been a requirement to enter nightclubs and similar venues in the nation since 11 October. But the Welsh Parliament has now extended the rules to cover cinemas, theatres and concert halls in response to a high level of COVID-19 cases across the country. The guidance on self-isolation had also changed and people are being encouraged to work from home to help bring the coronavirus under control.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-vaccine-certificates-now-needed-to-visit-theatres-cinemas-and-concert-halls-in-wales-12468983>

Philippines starts to reopen schools after 20-month coronavirus closure

Thousands of children in the Philippines returned to school on Monday for the first time in nearly two years, kicking off a pilot scheme to resume face-to-face learning after the pandemic disrupted the education of 27 million students. A hundred public schools in lower-risk areas are holding classes in person for a two-month pilot run, with the reopening of more dependent on vaccination rates and a sustained decline in COVID-19 cases. The Philippines, which had imposed some of the world's longest lockdowns, is among the last countries to reopen schools, in stark contrast to many western countries.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/philippines-starts-reopen-schools-after-20-month-coronavirus-closure-2021-11-15/>

India opens to fully vaccinated foreign tourists

India began allowing fully vaccinated foreign tourists to enter the country on regular commercial flights, in the latest easing of coronavirus restrictions as infections fall and vaccinations rise. Tourists entering India, starting on Monday, must be fully vaccinated, follow all COVID-19 protocols and test negative for the virus within 72 hours of their flight, according to the health ministry. Many will also need to undergo a post-arrival COVID-19 test at the airport.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2021/11/15/india-opens-to-fully-vaccinated-foreign-tourists>

Exit Strategies

Covid-19: Ireland to decide measures over rising case numbers

The Irish government is said to be moving towards a recommendation that digital Covid certificates will be required in gyms and hairdressers. A decision on the issue is likely at the cabinet's ongoing Covid-19 sub-committee meeting. If agreed, it would then go to Cabinet for approval on Tuesday. There is also set to be an antigen testing system introduced in schools and a subsidy provided to encourage people to use the tests generally. Mask wearing in both indoor and outdoor crowded areas is also likely to be recommended, according to RTÉ.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-59288449>

Many Logistics Firms Are Avoiding Covid-19 Vaccine Requirements Amid U.S. Mandate

Debate

Freight transportation companies are cautiously stepping around a Covid-19 vaccination requirement while trade groups fight the federal mandate in court. Companies including United Parcel Service Inc., Amazon.com Inc. and others that manage warehouse staffers, truck drivers and other employees across logistics networks in general aren't requiring employees outside of some office workers to get vaccinated against Covid-19. Many firms say they are encouraging staffers to get vaccinated while mandating protection measures in workplaces. The federal mandate, which is slated to go into effect Jan. 4, exempts workers who are exclusively outdoors and don't report to a workplace where they interact with others. So it may leave out many truck drivers but not the office and warehouse workers who help move goods from factories to stores and residences.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/many-logistics-firms-are-avoiding-covid-19-vaccine-requirements-amid-u-s-mandate-debate-11636583182>

Hong Kong panel recommends Sinovac Covid-19 jab for children aged 3 and above

Advisory panel on Covid-19 vaccines says three- to 17-year-olds can receive Sinovac shot. Local health authorities also suspect three Cathay Pacific pilots in 'Delta Plus' cluster were infected during their stay in a German hotel

<https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/health-environment/article/3156072/coronavirus-parents-should-have-biontech-option>

Israel delays entry of tourists vaccinated with Russia's Sputnik V

The Tourism Ministry announced Monday that it was holding off on allowing in tourists inoculated with Russia's Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine. Originally, Israel said that it would start allowing visitors who received the Russia-developed shot starting November 15, but that move will now be postponed until December 1. Those inoculated with Sputnik V will be required to take a serological test to show the presence of antibodies, as per the original decision. Israel began readmitting vaccinated tourists on November 1, but only those who had received vaccines approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration. They are not required to undergo a serological test.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-delays-entry-of-tourists-vaccinated-with-russias-sputnik-v/>

COVID-19: 'In our hands' whether or not coronavirus restrictions will return over winter, says Tory party co-chair

The possible introduction of further coronavirus restrictions this winter is in "our hands", Oliver Dowden has said. The Conservative Party co-chairman told Sky's Kay Burley that there are "no plans or anything else to stop Christmas happening" this year as the situation is different compared to 2020 because of the success of the vaccination rollout. But Mr Dowden warned that people must take up the offer of a booster jab when invited for one in order to keep the chances of further rules being introduced as low as possible.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-in-our-hands-whether-or-not-coronavirus-restrictions-will-return-over-winter-says-tory-party-co-chair-12469095>

Israel says children aged 5-11 can receive COVID-19 vaccine

Israel said on Sunday that children aged five to 11 would be eligible for vaccination against COVID-19, and that a starting date for the campaign would be made public within days. The decision, announced by the Health Ministry, followed approval by its expert panel on vaccinations last week, after the U.S. Food and Drug Administration granted emergency use of Pfizer's (PFE.N) and BioNTech's vaccine for the age group at a 10-microgram dose. The original shot given to those aged 12 and older is 30 micrograms. Pfizer and BioNTech have said their vaccine showed 90.7% efficacy against the coronavirus in a clinical trial of children aged five to 11.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israel-announces-5-11-year-olds-now-eligible-covid-19-vaccination-2021-11-14/>

Russians flock to Croatia in search of EU COVID shot

Already a favourite with summer holidaymakers, Croatia is now seeing a surge in visitors from Russia seeking COVID-19 shots. The number of flights from Russia has increased in recent weeks and it's not unusual to hear Russian spoken at vaccination centres in the capital Zagreb. Foreigners, like locals, can get vaccines for free in Croatia. "Just this month we've had about 1,000 Russians who received vaccines. So far we have had altogether 4,908 foreign citizens here, most of whom are Russians," said Neda Ferencic Vrban, who heads Zagreb's biggest vaccination centre.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/russians-flock-croatia-search-eu-covid-shot-2021-11-15/>

UK PM Johnson says no need to move to COVID "Plan B"

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said that he saw no need at the moment to move to a "Plan B" of mask mandates, vaccine passes and work from home orders, even though he was cautious of rising coronavirus cases in parts of Europe. read more. "We don't see anything in the data at the moment to suggest that we need to go to Plan B," Johnson said in a broadcast clip on Monday. "We're sticking with Plan A. But what we certainly have got to recognise is there is a storm of infection out there in parts of Europe."

<https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-pm-johnson-says-no-need-move-covid-plan-b-2021-11-15/>

Australia aims to vaccinate children under 12 against COVID-19 from January

Australia, quickly becoming one of most-vaccinated nations against COVID-19, will likely start administering the shots for children under the age of 12 in January, officials said on Sunday. Health Minister Greg Hunt said medical regulators are still reviewing the health and safety data for the vaccinations to be administered for children between the ages of five and 11 and are unlikely to decide this year. "The expectation that they have set is the first part of January, hopefully early January," Hunt told the Australian Broadcast Corp's Insiders programme. "But they're going as quickly as possible."

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/australia-aims-vaccinate-children-under-12-against-covid-19-january-2021-11-14/>

Britain to extend COVID booster rollout to over-40s

Britain's COVID-19 booster vaccine rollout is to be extended to people aged between 40 and 49, officials said on Monday, in a bid to boost waning immunity in the population ahead of the colder winter months. Currently all people aged 50 and above, those who are clinically vulnerable and frontline health workers are eligible for boosters, and the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) said that the rollout would be extended. The advice comes as the UK Health Security Agency released data from a real-world study which found the booster gave over 90% protection against symptomatic COVID-19 for people aged 50 and above.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/britain-extend-covid-booster-rollout-over-40s-2021-11-15/>

Norway plans third vaccine dose for all adults, "corona passes"

Norway will offer a third COVID-19 vaccine dose to everyone aged 18 and older and will give municipalities the option of using digital "corona passes" as a way to beat back a surge in COVID-19 infections, the government said on Friday. Norway has so far only given a third dose to those aged 65 and older. "Everyone aged 18 and older will be offered a third dose next year," Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Stoere told a news conference.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/norway-plans-third-covid-19-vaccine-dose-all-adults-2021-11-12/>

Partisan Exits

Maori Ask Anti-Vaccine Protesters to Stop Using Ceremonial Dance

Ngati Toa, an indigenous tribe in New Zealand, denounced a group of anti-vaccine protesters for performing a ceremonial Maori dance known as the Ka Mate haka during a demonstration in

Wellington on November 9th. “As the descendants of Te Rauparaha, we insist that protesters stop using our taonga immediately,” said senior member of Ngati Toa Taku Parai, in a statement on Radio Waatea this week. “We do not support their position.” Last week, thousands gathered across New Zealand to protest Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern’s vaccine mandate, which requires all healthcare and education workers be fully vaccinated. An estimated 3,000 marched to the Wellington parliament building last Tuesday demanding an end to vaccine mandates and Covid 19 lockdowns. During those demonstrations, some performed the Ka Mate haka, a dance used before some rugby games.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-11-15/new-zealand-s-maori-ask-anti-vaccine-protesters-to-stop-using-ceremonial-dance>

OSHA, South Dakota pork plant settle coronavirus complaint

Federal workplace safety regulators announced Monday that they have reached an agreement with Smithfield Foods to settle a contested citation of the company’s coronavirus safety measures during a massive outbreak last year at a South Dakota pork processing plant. Under the agreement, Virginia-based Smithfield Foods will develop a plan to prevent infectious diseases at meatpacking plants nationwide and pay a \$13,500 fine. Smithfield’s Sioux Falls plant was one the nation’s worst COVID-19 hotspots during the early days of the pandemic. By June 16, 2020, four workers were dead and nearly 1,300 had tested positive for the virus, according to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. After an investigation, the federal agency said Smithfield did not do enough to space workers out or provide other safety measures such as face coverings or physical barriers.

<https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-business-south-dakota-workplace-safety-sioux-falls-f89d2b552529fb9f97edc263d532257a>

Alaska doctors seek COVID-19 misinformation investigation

Alaska doctors plan to ask the State Medical Board to investigate concerns about the spread of misinformation about COVID-19 vaccines and treatments by other physicians. Merijeane Moore, a private practice psychiatrist, said she drafted the letter out of concern over an event about COVID-19 treatments that featured prominent vaccine skeptics in Anchorage last month, the Anchorage Daily News reported. Moore said Saturday that nearly 100 doctors had signed the letter and more could before she plans to submit the letter on Tuesday. “We are writing out of concern that medical misinformation about the COVID-19 vaccine and treatment is being spread in Alaska, including by physicians,” the letter stated.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/alaska-doctors-seek-covid-19-misinformation-investigation/ar-AAQJyJP>

Families fight over covid vaccines as Thanksgiving approaches

With Thanksgiving approaching, infections high or on the rise in many parts of the country and the vaccines now widely available to children, family breaches over immunization status are reaching new levels of rancor and intensity. Summer is over, and fall is ending — seasons when many gatherings could be held outdoors. Now American families must simultaneously confront the time of year when all respiratory viruses spread most easily and the challenge posed by loved ones who have rejected the best way to protect themselves — and others — from a respiratory virus that has claimed more than 750,000 lives in the United States.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2021/11/15/families-covid-vaccines-thanksgiving-fights/>

Māori tribe tells anti-Covid vaccine protesters to stop using its haka

Anti-vaccine protesters in New Zealand have been told to stop using the “ka mate” haka by the tribe who have ownership of it. The haka, a Māori war dance made internationally famous by its performance by the All Blacks at rugby matches, is considered a cultural treasure, or taonga, in New Zealand. It was performed last week by anti-vaccination and “freedom” protesters, who marched in their thousands to parliament. Ngāti Toa, the tribe that has legal guardianship of the ka mate haka,

said on Monday that it “condemns the use of the Ka Mate haka to push and promote anti-Covid-19-vaccination messages” and “request that anti-vaccination and anti-mandate protesters cease the use of Ka Mate at their protests immediately”.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/nov/15/maori-tribe-tells-anti-covid-vaccine-protesters-to-stop-using-its-haka>

‘Detox’ routines won’t undo Covid vaccine, experts tell anti-vaxxers

Medical experts are speaking out against Covid-19 vaccine “detoxes” that some inaccurately claim can remove the effects of vaccinations received under mandates and other public health rulings. In one TikTok video that has received hundreds of thousands of views, Carrie Madej, an osteopath based in Georgia, falsely claims a bath containing baking soda, epsom salts and the cleaning agent borax will “detox the vaxx” from anyone who has received a jab. Experts say such a bath could irritate the skin and eyes – but will not remove the effects of a Covid vaccine. In Kansas, Dana Hawkinson, medical director of infection prevention and control for the state university health system, told the Kansas City Star borax was “potentially caustic and harmful”.

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/nov/14/covid-vaccine-mandate-detox-borax-bath>

New Zealand's Māori ask anti-vaccine protesters to stop using haka

A Māori tribe that claims New Zealand's most famous haka as its heritage on Monday told anti-vaccine protesters to stop using the traditional performance to promote their message. Vaccine protesters have performed the "Ka Mate", a Māori haka composed in about 1820 by Te Rauparaha, war leader of the Ngāti Toa tribe, at their rallies over the past few weeks against vaccine mandates and pandemic restrictions. "We do not support their position and we do not want our tupuna or our iwi associated with their messages," the Ngati Toa tribe, or "iwi" in Māori, said in a statement, referring to the tribe's ancestry or "tupuna". "Our message to protesters who wish to use Ka Mate is to use a different haka. We do not endorse the use of Ka Mate for this purpose."

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/new-zealands-mori-ask-anti-vaccine-protesters-stop-using-haka-2021-11-15/>

Florida lawmakers to meet in special session over vaccine mandates

Florida lawmakers will meet in a special legislative session Monday, called by Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis with the goal of thwarting coronavirus vaccine mandates. In a week-long session, the lawmakers, largely dominated by the Republican party, are slated to consider four bills that would impose new penalties on businesses and local governments that require workers to get vaccinated against COVID-19, according to the agenda released last week by the governor's office.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/florida-lawmakers-meet-special-session-over-vaccine-mandates-2021-11-14/>

Australia vaccine-mandate protesters compare state govt to Nazis - media

Several thousand people rallied in Melbourne against new vaccination mandates on Saturday, with a few comparing the state government to Nazis and calling for violence against politicians, local media said. In Australia, where 83% of people aged 16 and above have been fully inoculated against the coronavirus, nationwide vaccinations are voluntary. But states and territories have mandated vaccinations for many occupations and barred the unvaccinated from activities such as dining out and concerts.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/australia-vaccine-mandate-protesters-compare-state-govt-nazis-media-2021-11-13/>

Scientific Viewpoint

U.K. Expands Covid-19 Booster Program to People in Their 40s

The U.K. is expanding its Covid-19 booster program to younger people as the country seeks to head off another wave of infections this winter. A third vaccine dose will be available to people aged 40 to 49 starting six months after their second shot, the government said Monday. Previously, only those

over 50 and other vulnerable groups were eligible. So far, more than 12 million people have received a booster. The government is also recommending a second shot of the Pfizer Inc.-BioNTech SE vaccine for 16 and 17-year-olds. That inoculation will be given at least 12 weeks after the initial dose or a Covid infection, whichever is later.

https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-11-15/u-k-expands-covid-19-booster-program-to-people-in-their-40s?utm_source=google&utm_medium=bd&cmpid=google

Novavax: SK Bioscience Submits BLA For COVID-19 Vaccine Candidate, NVX-CoV2373, To South Korea' MFDS

Novavax Inc. (NVAX) said that SK bioscience has submitted a biologics license application for NVX-CoV2373, the first protein-based COVID-19 vaccine candidate, to South Korea's Ministry of Food and Drug Safety. NVX-CoV2373 is Novavax' recombinant nanoparticle COVID-19 vaccine with Matrix-M adjuvant. In collaboration with Novavax, SK bioscience initiated the rolling submission process for NVX-CoV2373 to South Korea's Ministry of Food and Drug Safety in April of this year. The completion of a BLA submission to the agency marks the final review stage for authorization of NVX-CoV2373 in Korea.

<https://markets.businessinsider.com/news/stocks/novavax-sk-bioscience-submits-bla-for-covid-19-vaccine-candidate-nvx-cov2373-to-south-korea-mfds-1030976761>

Spain's Hipra gets green light for Phase II COVID vaccine trials

Spain's medicines agency has authorised Catalonia-based pharmaceutical group Hipra to test a COVID-19 vaccine it is developing on more than 1,000 volunteers, Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said on Monday. Hipra will carry out the so-called Phase II trial - the second stage of a three-round trial process - on volunteers at 10 hospitals around Spain, Sanchez said. Speaking at an event to present how European Union recovery funds will be channelled into health investments, Sanchez described the vaccine development as "extraordinary news".

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/spains-regulator-authorises-phase-ii-trial-spanish-covid-19-vaccine-2021-11-15/>

Why two emergency physicians' kids took part in the Pfizer vaccine trials

Cue the collective sigh of relief from many parents across the country. While the Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine has been available for children ages 12 and up since mid-September, as of now 28 million even younger school-age children between the ages of 5 and 11 are eligible to receive it. As an emergency medicine physician and a parent, that reassures me. As a member of the global community, it gives me hope we'll soon return to some level of normalcy. I acknowledge the personal decision of some parents who don't want their kids to be vaccinated. Yet as someone whose own children were part of the vaccine's clinical trials, I feel compelled to share the story of why my wife and I felt confident making that decision with them, and what vaccinating younger children will mean for the fate of the pandemic.

<https://www.statnews.com/2021/11/15/two-emergency-physicians-kids-took-part-in-pfizer-covid-vaccine-trials/>

8 lingering questions about the new Covid pills from Merck and Pfizer

The past two months have brought extremely good news in the fight against Covid-19. Two different oral treatments have proved effective at both preventing people newly diagnosed with Covid-19 from entering the hospital and from dying. "We're accelerating our path out of this pandemic," President Biden said after data on the second Covid pill became available. The wide availability of oral drugs could make Covid-19 less lethal, making it less risky for people to return to in-person work and to their normal lives. The first results, from Merck and Ridgeback Therapeutics, were released in October and will be considered by an advisory panel to the Food and Drug Administration in December. That could lead to an emergency use authorization in the U.S. by the end of the year. That drug, molnupiravir, reduced hospitalizations by 50% and prevented deaths entirely a large

randomized clinical trial when it was given within five days of when symptoms began. The pill is given as a five-day course during which patients take a total of 40 pills.

<https://www.statnews.com/2021/11/15/8-lingering-questions-about-the-new-covid-pills-from-merck-and-pfizer/>

Non-White race tied to higher risk for COVID infection, severity

A US meta-analysis and systematic review of data on 4.3 million patients analyzed in 68 cohort and cross-sectional studies shows that, relative to White people, Black, Hispanic, and Asian populations were at higher risk for COVID-19 infection and admission to an intensive care unit (ICU) but were less likely to die of the disease. The study, published yesterday in JAMA Network Open, was designed to uncover the link between socioeconomic determinants of health and racial disparities in COVID-19 outcomes. A team led by University of California at San Diego researchers searched for COVID-19 studies that included data on race and rates of infection, disease severity, and socioeconomic status published from Jan 1, 2020, to Jan 6, 2021, well before the more transmissible Delta (B.1617.2) variant was predominant in the United States.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/11/non-white-race-tied-higher-risk-covid-infection-severity>

GlaxoSmithKline, Vir target emergency authorization for intramuscular COVID-19 antibody drug with new trial win

GlaxoSmithKline and Vir Biotechnology's COVID-19 antibody drug sotrovimab already bears an FDA emergency use authorization (EUA) as an infusion. Now, the pair hopes to win the same status for an intramuscular formulation. The latest plan comes as a phase 3 trial showed sotrovimab, also known as Xevudy, delivered similar efficacy between intramuscular and intravenous administration routes in nonhospitalized mild to moderate COVID patients who are at high risk of disease progression. The IM administration group recorded a 2.7% rate of progression to hospitalization for over 24 hours or death through Day 29 of the trial versus 1.3% in the IV arm, the two companies reported Friday from the COMET-TAIL study. The adjusted difference of 1.07% falls within the noninferiority bar GSK and Vir previously set with the FDA.

<https://www.fiercepharma.com/drug-delivery/glaxosmithkline-vir-target-emergency-authorization-for-intramuscular-covid-19>

Late to the party: Europe on the verge of approving Roche and Celltrion antibodies for COVID

Nearly a full year after the U.S. gave Regeneron's antibody cocktail for COVID-19 patients emergency authorization, Europe is on the verge of approving the monoclonal antibody duo. The European Medicines Agency's (EMA's) committee for human medicines also has recommended another antibody treatment for approval, Celltrion's regdanvimab. The EMA's Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use has passed the recommendations to the European Commission for approval. The Regeneron cocktail of casirivimab and imdevimab, which is marketed outside of the U.S. by Roche and known commercially as Ronapreve, is recommended for COVID-19 patients who do not require supplemental oxygen and are at risk to progress to a severe form of the disease. It also is recommended for use as post-exposure prophylaxis. While the recommendations cover all adults, they also include adolescents 12 years or older weighing at least 40 kilograms, or roughly 88 pounds.

<https://www.fiercepharma.com/pharma/late-to-party-europe-finally-verge-approving-antibodies-for-covid-19>

Coronavirus Resurgence

Three snow leopards die of covid-19 at Lincoln Children's Zoo in Nebraska

The three big cats delighted visitors to the Nebraska zoo for years — pouncing on pumpkins during Halloween, preening for pictures and lounging on rocks in their enclosure. The Lincoln Children's Zoo has described the snow leopards as silly, bubbly and handsome. They were one of the zoo's main attractions, delivering a dose of mountain majesty to the Great Plains.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/science/2021/11/14/snow-leopard-death-covid/>

China fights biggest Delta outbreak as cases grow in city of Dalian

China is battling the spread of its biggest COVID-19 outbreak caused by the Delta variant, according to numbers announced on Monday, with travellers from a city where infections have grown faster than elsewhere in the country subject to tough quarantine rules in nearby areas. Chinese authorities said 32 new domestically transmitted infections with confirmed symptoms have been reported for Nov. 14, most of which were in northeastern Dalian city. That brings the tally of local cases since Oct. 17 to 1,308, Reuters calculations based on official data showed, surpassing the 1,280 local cases from a summer Delta outbreak.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/china-faces-biggest-delta-outbreak-infections-grow-northeastern-city-2021-11-15/>

Russia's daily COVID-19 deaths close to record high

Russia on Monday reported 1,211 deaths from COVID-19 in the last 24 hours, close to an all-time high of 1,241 reported last week, as well as 38,420 new coronavirus cases. Most of Russia's 80-plus regions lifted a week-long workplace shutdown at the beginning of last week that was designed to curb a surge in case numbers.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/russias-daily-covid-19-deaths-close-record-high-2021-11-15/>

Pressure on Dutch hospitals mounts as COVID cases break records

Dutch hospitals are feeling the strain from a surge in COVID-19 patients but the worst has yet to come, the head of the country's hospital association said on Monday. The number of COVID-19 patients in Dutch hospitals increased to around 2,000 on Monday, including almost 400 in intensive care, reaching the highest level since May. With almost 250 new admissions every day, the hospitals are set to pass last winter's peak of around 2,800 coronavirus patients in little over a week, the LNAZ association's head, Ernst Kuipers, told lawmakers.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/pressure-dutch-hospitals-mounts-covid-cases-break-records-2021-11-15/>

German coronavirus infections hit new high, tighter measures planned

Germany's coronavirus infection rate has risen to its highest level since the start of the pandemic, public health figures showed on Monday, as the three parties in talks to form a new government plan an expansion of measures to tackle the pandemic. The seven-day incidence rate - the number of people per 100,000 to be infected over the last week - rose to 303 from 289 the previous day, figures from the Robert Koch Institute showed on Monday.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/german-coronavirus-infections-hit-new-high-tighter-measures-planned-2021-11-15/>

Navajo Nation reports 89 new COVID-19 cases, one new death

The Navajo Nation has reported 89 more confirmed cases of COVID-19 and one additional death. The tribe released its latest coronavirus-related figures Sunday. Due to a technical issue, Navajo health officials did not have a new total for the number of cases. But at last count, there have been 38,479 new cases. The known death toll is now 1,514. Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez visited the Indian Health Service COVID-19 vaccination site in Chinle, Arizona, on Sunday. He thanked health care workers who administered vaccines and booster shots to adults and children. The tribe has maintained a mask mandate through most of the pandemic. Other vaccination opportunities are available at health care facilities on the reservation that covers 27,000 square miles (70,000 square kilometers) and also stretches into southern Utah.

<https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-arizona-health-fa6b9e9c2527baa9d1cab6f138378fd6>

New Lockdown

Back in lockdown: Streets in the Netherlands are deserted as curfew comes in after protests over new Covid restrictions

Streets of Rotterdam were quiet and empty tonight following introduction of rules closing nightlife by 8pm. Around 200 protestors clashed with riot police and were blasted with a water cannon in The Hague on Friday. It comes as Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte announced the return of a partial Covid lockdown in the country. Bars, restaurants, shops will close from 8pm and social distancing measures are set to be reimposed

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10199603/Streets-Netherlands-deserted-curfew-comes-in.html>

Austria locks down unvaccinated as COVID cases surge across Europe

Austria imposed a lockdown on people unvaccinated against the coronavirus on Monday as winter approaches and infections rise across Europe, with Germany considering tighter curbs and Britain expanding its booster programme to younger adults. Europe has again become the epicentre of the pandemic, prompting some countries to consider re-introducing restrictions in the run-up to Christmas and stirring debate over whether vaccines alone are enough to tame COVID-19. The disease spreads more easily in the winter months when people gather inside.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/austria-locks-down-unvaccinated-covid-cases-rise-across-europe-2021-11-15/>

Austrian unvaccinated lockdown starts amid COVID resurgence

Austria took what its leader called the “dramatic” step Monday of implementing a nationwide lockdown for unvaccinated people who haven’t recently had COVID-19, perhaps the most drastic of a string of measures being taken by European governments to get a massive regional resurgence of the virus under control. The move, which took effect at midnight, prohibits people 12 and older who haven’t been vaccinated or recently recovered from leaving their homes except for basic activities such as working, grocery shopping, going to school or university or for a walk — or getting vaccinated. The lockdown is initially being imposed until Nov. 24 in the Alpine country of 8.9 million. It doesn’t apply to children under 12 because they cannot yet officially get vaccinated — though the capital, Vienna, on Monday opened up vaccinations for under-12s as part of a pilot project and reported high demand.

<https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-europe-austria-health-328073e5652a6b639123db72e985a201>