

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

10th Oct 2022

Lockdown Exit

Illness, isolation and suicidal thoughts: Hong Kong's senior caregivers struggle through COVID-19

There's a short flight of steps leading to their house. But to 73-year-old Pun Sum Wing, it takes some effort getting his wife, a wheelchair user, around. So he built a wooden ramp, complete with rubber strips, to wheel her in and out of the house. It's a steep incline and his wife, Law Mui, needs assurance. Mr Pun gently comforts her and within a few moments, they're home. Mrs Pun has dementia and is unable to move on her own, so Mr Pun bathes and feeds her. It's a familiar routine; one that the couple has been following for most of the past decade. "It's my responsibility to take care of my wife. I don't want to bother my children as they're working and need to take care of their own families," he said.

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/asia/covid-19-mental-health-hong-kong-senior-caregivers-2968161>

Spike in COVID-19 cases across Europe could mean fast-spreading winter wave

With winter weather just around the corner, the first hints of another wave of COVID-19 have emerged in Europe, according to data released by the World Health Organization this week. Infections across Europe — the majority of them caused by omicron subvariants that dominated the summer months — have been steadily climbing in several nations, including in the United Kingdom, France and Italy. According to WHO data released Wednesday, cases across the European Union spiked to 1.5 million last week, up 8% from the week prior. Hospitalizations are also up across the 27-nation bloc, with Italy reporting a 32% jump in admissions and a 21% increase in intensive care admissions for the week ending on Oct. 4. Britain, meanwhile, reported a 45% increase in hospitalizations when compared with the week prior.

<https://www.timesleader.com/wire/coronavirus-wire/1578475/spike-in-covid-19-cases-across-europe-could-mean-fast-spreading-winter-wave-6>

What the COVID-19 pandemic revealed about intellectual property

An investigation into the development of the vaccines tells a different story. The work on mRNA vaccine technology dates back many decades and was almost entirely publicly funded. Even some of the critical elements of the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines, such as the lipid nanoparticle container⁵, were also publicly funded⁷. Both BioNTech and Moderna developed their own proprietary platforms — requiring considerable ingenuity, effort and cost — relying on both patents, trade secrets and regulatory exclusivity. Pfizer's development of Paxlovid was conducted in-house. During the 2003 severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreak, Pfizer developed an intravenous protease inhibitor to combat that coronavirus. Pfizer was able to do so as it had recently acquired Agouron Pharmaceuticals, a firm that had been working on a similar protease in rhinovirus.

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41587-022-01485-x>

New Zealand could face another COVID-19 wave before year-end: report

New Zealand could be hit by another COVID-19 wave before the end of the year, a COVID-19 modeler warned on Tuesday. Prof. Michael Plank of the University of Canterbury called on Kiwis to get boosted if they haven't been, according to a report in the New Zealand Herald. COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations have been increasing in European countries such as Germany, Denmark, Belgium and Britain, Plank said, citing this as an example of another imminent pandemic wave.

Factors such as waning immunity and new Omicron sub-variants BQ.1.1, a BA.5 descendant, and another sub-type, BA.2.75.2, have been combined to contribute to the forming of another wave in the future, he said.

<https://english.news.cn/20221005/7b8238377d104140b2f4970b420f5570/c.html>

Zero-Covid measures cause chaos as China prepares for Beijing summit

Lockdowns and travel restrictions are continuing to cause chaos across China in the run-up to a crucial political meeting next week as the government holds fast to hardline zero-Covid policies. As thousands of Communist party delegates prepare to descend on Beijing for the twice-a-decade congress meeting, where Xi Jinping is expected to start his third term as leader, local authorities are under pressure to control contain outbreaks. This week 2,883 cases were reported across more than 25 provinces, including 227 on Wednesday. The number is small compared with global cases but relatively high for China's zero-tolerance approach. China's government has remained committed to its zero-Covid policy, despite major damage to the economy and growing opposition from the general public to frequent sudden lockdowns that trap people inside their homes, shops and workplaces, and other overzealous reactions to handfuls of cases.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/oct/06/zero-covid-measures-cause-chaos-as-china-prepares-for-beijing-summit>

White House says COVID booster campaign going well, should pick up

The White House expects the rate of vaccination in its fall booster campaign to pick up over the coming weeks, and its COVID response coordinator Dr. Ashish Jha on Friday characterized the initial pace as "a really good start."

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/white-house-says-covid-booster-campaign-going-well-should-pick-up-2022-10-07/>

Covid wave looms in Europe as booster campaign makes slow start

A new Covid-19 wave appears to be brewing in Europe as cooler weather arrives, with public health experts warning that vaccine fatigue and confusion over types of shots available will likely limit booster uptake. Omicron subvariants BA.4/5 that dominated this summer are still behind the majority of infections, but newer Omicron subvariants are gaining ground. Hundreds of new forms of Omicron are being tracked by scientists, World Health Organization (WHO) officials said this week. WHO data released late on Wednesday showed that cases in the European Union reached 1.5 million last week, up 8% from the prior week, despite a dramatic fall in testing. Globally, case numbers continue to decline.

<https://www.egyptindependent.com/covid-wave-looms-in-europe-as-booster-campaign-makes-slow-start/>

Early signs a new U.S. COVID surge could be on its way

As the U.S. heads into a third pandemic winter, the first hints are emerging that another possible surge of COVID-19 infections could be on its way. So far, no national surge has started yet. The number of people getting infected, hospitalized and dying from COVID in the U.S. has been gently declining from a fairly high plateau. But as the weather cools and people start spending more time inside, where the virus spreads more easily, the risks of a resurgence increase. The first hint of what could be in store is what's happening in Europe. Infections have been rising in many European countries, including the U.K., France, and Italy.

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2022/10/07/1127017062/early-signs-a-new-u-s-covid-surge-could-be-on-its-way>

Pfizer COVID vaccine clears Japan panel for use with young children

A Japanese health ministry panel on Wednesday recommended approving Pfizer Inc's (PFE.N) COVID-19 vaccine for children as young as six months old. Japan in January expanded use of the vaccine to those as young as five years old. Last month, health authorities started to dispensing Pfizer and Moderna Inc (MRNA.O) booster shots that target the Omicron variant of the virus. The

panel also recommended approval of a version of the Pfizer vaccine that protects against the BA.4 and BA.5 subvariants of Omicron. Moderna said earlier on Wednesday it was seeking Japanese approval of its own subvariant shot.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/pfizer-covid-vaccine-clears-japan-panel-use-with-young-children-2022-10-05/>

Exit Strategies

Hong Kong on the alert for emerging Covid subvariants: top health official

Dr Tony Ko, head of the Hospital Authority, says limited research so far has shown that the response in patients to an infection from mutant strain is similar to that of BA.5. Hong Kong records 4,900 new coronavirus cases on Saturday, including 295 imported ones, as daily infections begin to steadily rise again

<https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/health-environment/article/3195278/coronavirus-hong-kong-alert-emerging-omicron>

As Australia scraps mandatory COVID isolation, a new book unpicks the red flags and failures of the pandemic

Last month, Professor Raina MacIntyre was awarded the Eureka Prize for Leadership in Science and Innovation, an award which particularly recognised her leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic. You would recognise Raina MacIntyre if you saw her because she has been one of the regular scientific and medical experts on our television screens — and elsewhere — in the last few years. Her authoritative and fearless observations about the nature of pandemics and how to deal with them always cut through, even in a time when we are all self-confessed and instant experts in epidemiology.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-10-08/australia-scraps-mandatory-covid-isolation-book-red-flags/101513372>

BioNTech plants research and production flag in Australia

The company's latest move? A strategic partnership in the Land Down Under. Friday, the German biotech unveiled a deal with the Australian state of Victoria to prop up a new mRNA research and innovation center to bolster investigation of new meds "from discovery to delivery." BioNTech will also throw in one of its "BioNTainer" mobile manufacturing facilities in Victoria's capital of Melbourne for end-to-end clinical production of mRNA products and candidates, the company said in a release. Housed in shipping containers, BioNTainer modular factories are kitted out to produce vaccines from start to finish. Beyond Australia, the company recently advanced plans to kick off a BioNTainer-focused mRNA vaccine manufacturing initiative in Africa.

<https://www.fiercepharma.com/pharma/africa-australia-and-beyond-biontechs-global-mrna-ambitions-take-shape>

Hong Kong's U-turn on quarantine is a sign Beijing still needs its gate to the West

As China doubles down on Covid lockdowns, restricting movement for tens of millions of people, a very different scene is unfolding in Hong Kong. The mood in the Chinese-controlled city is perhaps the lightest it has been in three years, after authorities scrapped mandatory hotel quarantine for incoming arrivals in September – prompting a mad rush to book flights out of the city among travel-starved residents. It was a significant U-turn, given how stubbornly city authorities had stuck to the quarantine requirement, despite a nosediving economy, a worsening international reputation, and an ongoing exodus of residents.

<https://www.cnn.com/2022/10/07/business/hong-kong-covid-quarantine-reopening-intl-hnk-mic/index.html>

Canada authorises Pfizer's Omicron retooled booster

Canada on Friday authorised updated COVID-19 booster shots from Pfizer Inc and its partner BioNTech SE (22UAY.DE) that target the Omicron BA.4 and BA.5 subvariants, according to the government's website. Pfizer and BioNTech said in a joint statement the companies will make

"significant volumes of the vaccine available in the coming days". The booster shot, which has been authorised for people 12 years and older, is the second to get clearance from Health Canada after Moderna Inc's (MRNA.O) modified booster last month.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/canada-authorises-pfizers-omicron-retooled-booster-2022-10-07/>

Analysis: As China party congress looms, signals sought on easing COVID policy

The mounting economic toll of China's zero-COVID policy is raising investor hopes that Beijing may finally begin laying the groundwork for the tricky epidemiological and political task of shifting course following this month's Communist Party congress. It is not clear whether the ruling party congress from Oct. 16 will shed any light on easing strict measures to extinguish all domestic COVID-19 outbreaks, rather than seek to live with the pandemic. Any change, economists and investors predict, would entail gradual steps for a reopening from the first half of 2023 at the earliest.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/china-party-congress-looms-signals-sought-easing-covid-policy-2022-10-06/>

Dr. Fauci: A new, more dangerous Covid variant could emerge this winter

Dr. Anthony Fauci has a sober warning for Americans: Don't be surprised if a new, more dangerous Covid variant emerges this upcoming winter. "We should anticipate that we very well may get another variant that would emerge, that would elude the immune response that we've gotten from infection and/or from vaccination," Fauci said at an event with the USC Annenberg Center for Health Journalism this week. Statistically, pandemic trends like hospitalizations and deaths are currently down nationwide: The seven-day moving average of new Covid deaths in the U.S. is 323 as of Wednesday, for example. That's far lower than the country's 1,000 to 2,500 in February and March, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<https://www.cnn.com/2022/10/07/dr-fauci-new-more-dangerous-covid-variant-could-emerge-this-winter.html>

Amid low vaccine demand, Novavax pulls out of Fujifilm manufacturing deal and inks \$185M settlement

Novavax has been suffering from lower-than-expected demand for its COVID-19 vaccine after an FDA authorization this summer. Now, the company is paying up to a manufacturing partner to terminate a supply agreement. In a securities filing, Novavax said it will pay Fujifilm Diosynth Biotechnologies up to \$185 million in a settlement tied to the "termination of manufacturing activity" at its CDMO partner. Novavax will pay the sum in four quarterly installments of \$34.3 million starting on March 31, 2023, the company said. But the settlement isn't guaranteed to reach that total. As part of the deal, Fujifilm's subsidiary will be required to "use commercially reasonable efforts" to find manufacturing business and offset the losses that it would incur from the vacant capacity.

https://www.fiercepharma.com/pharma/demand-its-covid-19-vaccine-trickles-halt-novavax-will-pay-out-fujifilm-tune-185-million-due?itm_source=parsely-api

The Long Covid Plan for Ireland: Is it too little, too late?

The Mater hospital, where I work, started to study Long Covid in May of 2020. Scientific research is critical to devising strategies to deal with Long Covid. Science should win the day. We anticipated Long Covid would linger, just as it did in China, just as it did with Sars and MERS, and monitored patients over the following 12 months. The first strain of Covid-19, the Delta variant, and indeed a few of the following variants, caused severe illness and heart and lung damage, but one of our first studies reported that about a third of acute Covid patients had persistent neurological involvement, suggesting brain inflammation.

<https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/2022/10/01/the-long-covid-plan-for-ireland-is-it-too-little-too-late/>

Partisan Exits

Singapore to ditch rules linked to Covid vaccination status from October 10

The health ministry said its vaccine-differentiated safe management measures will no longer be applied in eateries and nightlife venues. The government will also vaccinate children aged six months to four years and roll out bivalent jabs as boosters for those aged 50 and older

<https://www.scmp.com/news/asia/southeast-asia/article/3195261/singapore-ditch-rules-linked-covid-19-vaccination-status>

Hong Kong's U-turn on quarantine is a sign Beijing still needs its gate to the West

As China doubles down on Covid lockdowns, restricting movement for tens of millions of people, a very different scene is unfolding in Hong Kong. The mood in the Chinese-controlled city is perhaps the lightest it has been in three years, after authorities scrapped mandatory hotel quarantine for incoming arrivals in September – prompting a mad rush to book flights out of the city among travel-starved residents. It was a significant U-turn, given how stubbornly city authorities had stuck to the quarantine requirement, despite a nosediving economy, a worsening international reputation, and an ongoing exodus of residents.

<https://www.cnn.com/2022/10/07/business/hong-kong-covid-quarantine-reopening-intl-hnk-mic/index.html>

Zero-Covid: How Xi's flagship policy is spoiling his party

The idea was to have China in stable and tip-top shape when thousands of delegates gather in Beijing to usher in a historic third term in power for Xi Jinping. However, the coronavirus is not playing nicely. In recent weeks, tens of millions of people have again been confined to their homes in lockdowns across 60 towns and cities and this is bringing political pressure on the man who has become the most powerful Chinese figure since the first Communist-era leader Mao Zedong. The government's ongoing "Dynamic zero-Covid" strategy is inextricably linked to Mr Xi. Its success is his success. Its failure? Well, it would be a brave person who tried to pin it on him.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-63112996>

American Express to End Covid Vaccine Requirement for Offices in November

American Express Co. is ending a requirement that employees need to be vaccinated against Covid-19 to enter offices as virus cases decline globally. The decision, which takes effect Nov. 1, applies to offices across the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, according to an internal memo to staff seen by Bloomberg. Staffers also will no longer have to be vaccinated to attend company-sponsored in-person events.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-10-05/amex-to-eliminate-vaccine-requirement-for-offices-in-november>

Biden Vaccine Mandate for Health Workers Survives Supreme Court Appeal

The US Supreme Court turned away a renewed challenge by 10 states to the Biden administration's Covid-19 vaccine requirement for workers in facilities that receive federal health-care funds. The rebuff of the Missouri-led group follows the Supreme Court's 5-4 decision in January to let the requirement take effect. The rule, issued by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, requires shots for workers in nursing homes, hospitals and other facilities that receive federal dollars. The requirement took effect April 15, covering about 10 million people. In its Jan. 13 decision, the court said Congress had authorized the agency to protect the health and safety of Medicaid and Medicare recipients.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-10-03/biden-health-care-vaccine-mandate-survives-supreme-court-appeal>

Scientific Viewpoint

Scrapping Covid rules too early - Australian medical chief

National cabinet has agreed to dump the five-day isolation period for positive cases, with the changes to take effect on October 14. Australian Medical Association president Steve Robson told

AAP it was too early to ease the protections. "All the signs are that we're looking at another wave of Covid," he said. "We're coming out of one of the biggest waves of Covid yet and it has absolutely crushed hospital workforce and left us with a massive logjam and backlog in hospitals at the moment that has to be dealt with.

<https://www.1news.co.nz/2022/10/07/scrapping-covid-rules-too-early-top-australian-medical-chief/>

COVID wave looms in Europe as booster campaign makes slow start

A new COVID-19 wave appears to be brewing in Europe as cooler weather arrives, with public health experts warning that vaccine fatigue and confusion over types of available vaccines will likely limit booster uptake.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/covid-wave-looms-europe-booster-campaign-makes-slow-start-2022-10-06/>

Omicron BA.4.6 subvariant makes up nearly 14% of COVID variants in U.S. - CDC

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on Friday estimated that by Oct. 8 nearly 14% of the circulating coronavirus variants in the United States were of the BA.4.6 subvariant of Omicron. In the week ending Oct. 8, the BA.4.6 subvariant is expected to make up 13.6% of total COVID cases in the U.S., higher than the 12.7% prevalence last week. The subvariant has been slowly increasing in prevalence across the U.S., even as the BA.5 subvariant of Omicron remains the dominant strain with 79.2% of the cases.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/omicron-ba46-subvariant-makes-up-nearly-14-covid-variants-us-cdc-2022-10-07/>

COVID rebound after Pfizer treatment likely due to robust immune response, study finds

A rebound of COVID-19 symptoms in some patients after taking Pfizer's antiviral Paxlovid may be related to a robust immune response rather than a weak one, U.S. government researchers reported on Thursday. They concluded that taking a longer course of the drug - beyond the recommended five days - was not required to reduce the risk of a recurrence of symptoms as some have suggested, based on an intensive investigation of rebound in eight patients at the National Institutes of Health's Clinical Center.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/covid-rebound-after-pfizer-treatment-likely-due-robust-immune-response-study-2022-10-06/>

Europeans face big mental health issues despite COVID easing - survey

The number of Europeans reporting "bad" or "very bad" mental health soared during the COVID-19 pandemic, even beyond the end of lockdowns, new polling showed on Thursday. European Union agency Eurofound's surveys of 200,000 people found that those reporting "bad" or "very bad" mental health doubled from 6.4% in March 2020 at the onset of the crisis to 12.7% two years later even as restrictions were eased.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/europeans-face-big-mental-health-issues-despite-covid-easing-survey-2022-10-06/>

Seniors died from COVID-19 at a higher rate than any other age group this summer: analysis

More seniors than any other age group died from COVID-19 this past summer amid a disease surge fueled by new subvariants, according to a new analysis published Thursday from the Kaiser Family Foundation. The foundation analyzed COVID-19 data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and found that death rates rose much faster for Americans older than 65, despite widespread vaccine coverage within the group. Between April and July 2022, the number of coronavirus-related deaths among seniors grew at a faster rate for older adults, topping 11,000 in July and August. While deaths totals rose for those under 65 as well, the total was about five to six times smaller for younger Americans.

<https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/3677025-seniors-died-from-covid-19-at-a-high-rate-than-any-other-age-group-thi>

[s-summer-analysis/](#)

Immune reactions to severe Covid may trigger brain problems, study finds

Severe Covid infections can cause immune reactions that damage nerve cells in the brain, causing memory problems and confusion, and potentially raising the risk of long-term health issues, research suggests. Scientists at King's College London found that a wayward immune response to the virus increased the death rate of neurons and had a "profound" impact on regeneration in the hippocampus region of the brain, which is crucial for learning and memory. The findings are preliminary but suggest Covid can trigger neurological problems in patients without the virus having to infect the brain itself. The process is believed to underpin delirium in Covid patients, but may also contribute to brain fog and other problems experienced by people with long Covid.

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/oct/05/immune-reactions-to-severe-covid-may-trigger-brain-problems-study-finds?CMP=Share_AndroidApp_Other

Coronavirus Resurgence

Autumn COVID variants look shockingly similar and powerful for these 2 reasons

Earlier this year, fears of a new "super strain" of Omicron were real—and rising. A researcher in Cyprus identified a COVID-19 variant that had features of both the deadly Delta and the highly transmissible, immune-evasive Omicron variants. "Deltacron," as the new variant became known, was a bit of a "frankenvirus" that combined the two strains. Deltacron failed to take off, and it soon disappeared. A second Delta-Omicron hybrid later arose then also subsided. But the phenomenon that caused it is likely to come into play this fall. Scientists expect a sizable wave of COVID cases October through January, fueled by multiple Omicron spinoffs that look increasingly alike—both to each other and to older versions of the scourge.

<https://fortune.com/well/2022/10/08/autumn-covid-variants-similar-omicron-convergent-evolution-recombination-deltacron-frankenvirus-fall-winter-wave-coronavirus-pandemic-epidemic/>

Covid-19 Cases and Hospitalizations Climb Again in England

Covid-19 infections and hospitalizations are rising again in England, with officials warning of climbing case numbers in hospitals and care homes. The number of suspected outbreaks increased 61% last week, while the hospital admission rate climbed 45% to 10.83 per 100,000 population, the UK Health Security Agency said on Thursday. Hospital admission rates were highest in southwest England after soaring 250% since mid-September.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-10-06/covid-climbs-again-in-england-with-hospitalizations-rising>

No Covid restrictions mean flu is set for a big comeback

It's strongly advised that people in the UK get the flu vaccine and ensure they are up to date with their COVID vaccine boosters. Scientists aren't sure how these viruses will dovetail, but evidence suggests that being infected with both viruses simultaneously greatly increases the risk of severe disease and death. About 33 million people in the UK are eligible for a free flu vaccine, including those aged 50 or older, pregnant women, people in residential care, and frontline healthcare workers. There is also a nasal-spray vaccine for children aged two years and older, with many vaccine rollouts delivered in schools.

<https://www.belfastlive.co.uk/news/uk-world-news/no-covid-restrictions-means-flu-25210589>

COVID in California: Merck's antiviral no better than placebo in trials

After a precipitous drop over the past two months, California's COVID-19 trends have hit a plateau. Cases have fallen only 5% in the past week and the test positive rate inched down a tenth of a percentage point. In a worrisome sign, cases in Europe are starting to climb again as winter approaches. Even so, rules and tracking in the U.S. continue to be eased: The CDC said Thursday that it will stop reporting case and death data on a daily basis and has quietly dropped its masking

recommendation for school nurses' offices. On a brighter note, Moderna released safety data for its bivalent booster and a small NIH-backed study suggests that antiviral medication Paxlovid does not cause COVID-19 rebound.

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/health/article/COVID-in-California-live-updates-17492211.php>

Effectiveness and durability of BNT162b2 vaccine against hospital and emergency department admissions due to SARS-CoV-2 omicron sub-lineages BA.1 and BA.2 in a large health system in the USA: a test-negative, case-control study

Two doses of BNT162b2 provided only partial protection against BA.1-related and BA.2-related hospital and emergency department admission, which underscores the need for booster doses against omicron. Although three doses offered high levels of protection ($\geq 70\%$) against hospitalisation, variant-adapted vaccines are probably needed to improve protection against less severe endpoints, like emergency department admission, especially for BA.2.

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanres/article/PIIS2213-2600\(22\)00354-X/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanres/article/PIIS2213-2600(22)00354-X/fulltext)

South West sees Covid-19 surge as hospital admissions rocket to highest in country

There has been a surge in Covid-19 hospital admissions across the South West, latest figures show. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) said the region has seen a 250 per cent increase in admissions since the middle of September. Recent Government data shows that the South West has a current hospital admission rate for coronavirus of 16.67 per 100,000 people - the highest out of any region in the nation. This regional figure was 4.79 per 100,000 in September. The national average for hospital admissions is 10.83 per 100,000, according to data from the last seven days. This marks a 45 per cent increase from the previous week.

<https://www.bristolpost.co.uk/news/health/south-west-sees-covid-19-7673387>

UK 'blind' to new immune-evasive Covid variants creating 'perfect storm' for devastating wave

The UK is heading into a "devastating" Covid wave this autumn exacerbated by a drop in testing and inadequate surveillance of new immune-evasive subvariants, experts have warned. Covid-19 infections in the UK have risen 14 per cent, according to the latest figures.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/uk-covid-variant-omicron-new-wave-b2183934.html>

Australia's tough Covid quarantine rules finally end

Australia will finally end some of the world's toughest pandemic restrictions when it abandons mandatory five-day quarantine after testing positive. "We want a policy that promotes resilience and capacity-building and reduces a reliance on government intervention."

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/australias-tough-covid-quarantine-rules-finally-end-l8tm2rmdt>