

ABOUT THE PUBLIC HEALTH MADISON & DANE COUNTY COVID-19 DASHBOARD

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Landing Page

People who are hospitalized

“People who are hospitalized” refers to the current number of people who are hospitalized with COVID-19 in Dane County hospitals. This number is the sum of people reported by individual hospitals in Dane County to a system called EMResource. This number can include patients who are not Dane County residents. This data system does not provide identifiable data, so we are unable to discern what proportion of patients are Dane County versus non-Dane County residents, the vaccination status of the people who are hospitalized, or whether each individual is hospitalized *for* COVID or for something else but happened to test positive for COVID during their hospitalization. This data is also shown as a trend over time on the “Hospitalizations & Deaths: Trends” page of the dashboard, which also shows the number of inpatients who are in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU).

People who died

The total number of people who died is the number of deaths among people diagnosed with COVID-19 via a PCR test where the death certificate lists COVID-19 disease or SARS-CoV-2 as an underlying cause of death or a significant condition contributing to death. To be counted as a “COVID-19 death,” it must meet the vital records criteria set forth by the CDC and Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) case definition.

Change from last update

This is the change in the number of people who are hospitalized and total number of people who died since the dashboard was last updated. It often takes more than one day deaths to be reported, so the change may reflect deaths from the last several days.

Percent change in new cases and hospitalizations over the past two weeks

This is the percent change in the total number of people hospitalized with COVID-19 in the current week compared to the week before. We exclude the previous 3 days of data for people diagnosed with COVID-19 due to the preliminary nature of recent dates. Therefore, the “current week” would be ten days prior to today's date through four days prior to today's date, and the week before that would be 17 days prior to today's date through 11 days prior to today's date.

Hospital Admission Level

The CDC has updated the thresholds used in assessing a community's COVID-19 levels. The level is determined based on a single metric — the total number of new COVID-19 admissions of patients with a laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 test per 100,000 population in the past 7 days. This includes both adult and pediatric admissions. The COVID-19 Hospital Admission level for Dane County will be updated on our dashboard weekly, on Fridays. For more information visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html>

Two week trend

We utilize the Wisconsin Department of Health Services' methods for trajectory to determine whether the percent change in the number of inpatient hospitalizations from the previous to the current week is statistically significant. We categorize the trend as an increase, decrease, or stable trend with the definitions below:

Increase: the percent increase in the number of inpatient hospitalizations is > 10% and the p-value based on Poisson regression is <0.025.

Decrease: the percent decrease in the number of inpatient hospitalizations is > 10% and the p-value based on Poisson regression is <0.025.

Stable: Any other condition other than those described above.

Hospitalizations & Deaths: Trends

Hospitalizations and Intensive Care Unit (ICU) inpatients on this page are from the database EMResource, which is a different data source from the hospitalizations on the People Hospitalized & Deceased page. This number may include patients who are not Dane County residents. This data system does not provide identifiable data, so we are unable to discern what proportion of patients are Dane County versus non-Dane County residents, the vaccination status of the people who are hospitalized, and other demographic information. Inpatient counts on this trends page represent the daily COVID-19 census in Dane County hospitals as of 5 pm.

People Hospitalized & Deceased

The “total people ever hospitalized” and accompanying hospitalization demographic data is for Dane County residents who were reported as being hospitalized for COVID to WEDSS. This is different from the hospitalization data reported on the landing page and page 7 of the dashboard, which is not restricted to Dane County residents and for which we do not have identifiable data.

The “total people who died” and accompanying death demographic data is for deaths among people with a confirmed case of COVID-19 who died due to COVID-19.

Deaths associated with COVID-19 must be reported by health care providers or medical examiners/coroners, and recorded in WEDSS by local health departments in order to be counted as a COVID-19 death.

Deaths among people with COVID-19 that were the result of non-COVID reasons (e.g., accident, overdose, etc.) are not included as a COVID-19 death.

Deaths are confirmed via death certificate. A death does not appear on the dashboard until it is confirmed to be due to COVID-19 infection with a statistical death abstract; this can take days or even months.

Death data should be considered preliminary due to reporting delays and potential changes to death data, which are generally finalized several months after the end of the year.

Frequently Asked Questions

[Why did the “Cases Ever Hospitalized” number increase but the number of Current COVID-19 Inpatients stayed the same?](#)

The “Cases Ever Hospitalized” number is the cumulative number of Dane County residents who tested positive for COVID-19 that were reported as being hospitalized for COVID-19 to WEDSS. We learn about hospitalizations either at the time of interview by the case investigator, or when hospitals submit reports to WEDSS to report that someone is hospitalized. Case investigators review each hospitalization report to verify whether the hospitalization was due to COVID-19, and we only mark someone as hospitalized if COVID-19 was the reason for or a contributor to the hospitalization.

The “Current COVID-19 Inpatients” and “Current COVID-19 Patients in ICU” numbers are reported by hospitals in Dane County to a different system called EMResource; these numbers can include patients who are not Dane County residents. This data system does not provide identifiable data, so we are unable to discern what proportion of patients are Dane County versus non-Dane County residents.

If the cumulative number of hospitalizations increases but the current number of inpatients stays the same or decreases, there could have been more discharges than new patients admitted. Additionally, if the cumulative number of hospitalizations stays the same but the current number increases, a non-Dane County resident may have been hospitalized, or that patient may have not yet been reported to WEDSS.

[Where can I find the date of death for COVID-19 deaths among Dane County residents?](#)

This can be found on the Wisconsin Department of Health Services’ [website](#); scroll to “Number of reported COVID-19 deaths among confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 by date of death” and select “Dane County.” We report deaths by month on page 7 of our dashboard.

[When is a death added to the dashboard?](#)

When an individual who had COVID-19 dies, our practice is to wait for a death certificate to confirm whether COVID-19 was listed on the death certificate as an underlying or contributing cause of death. Often death certificates are available a few weeks after death. When an autopsy is performed, death certificates can take many months to be completed.