

Subject: Request for information on death statistics.

FOI reference: 202000028872

Date received: 15 April 2020

Date responded: 06 May 2020

Information requested:

1. The accurate official figures of deaths for March in relation to the same dates from the previous 10 years. No provisional deaths are to be included & data provided that shows that (Corona Virus) registration date & death dates are measured the same over the last 10 years. (To make sure deaths are not counted both provisionally & officially, ie twice).”
2. “Figures on the death rate of people only tested & found positive with Corona virus & that Corona Virus was the sole cause of death.”
3. On reading your web site it looks as if you have changed the way you count deaths, & the way the cause of death is documented. Please confirm why that is & who requested the action.

NRS Response:

Our responses to the questions are:

1. Some of the information requested is available from our website. Please see <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/vital-events/general-publications/weekly-and-monthly-data-on-births-and-deaths/monthly-data-on-births-and-deaths-registered-in-scotland>. Table 3 of the monthly births and deaths publication contains monthly death figures from January 1990 until March 2020. Data for 2019 and 2020 are provisional but are not double counted.

Weekly data on deaths involving coronavirus are also available on our website <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/covid19stats>

2. While our aim is to provide information whenever possible, in this instance National Records of Scotland does not have some of the information requested. We do not hold information on whether people were tested positive for coronavirus before they died as this is not recorded on the death certificate. However, you may wish to contact Health Protection Scotland at NSS.HPSenquiries@nhs.net who may be able to help you. This is a formal notice under section 17(1) of FOISA that NRS does not have the information you have requested.
3. We confirm there have been no changes made to the way deaths are counted and the way cause of death is documented.