

Reasonable forecasts suggest that we are facing a health...

Published: January 13, 2026, 12:21 am

The UK's chief medical officers increased their assessment of the threat from [Covid to level five yesterday](#). What that means is that they think that there is a risk of the NHS being overwhelmed by the number of new Covid cases.

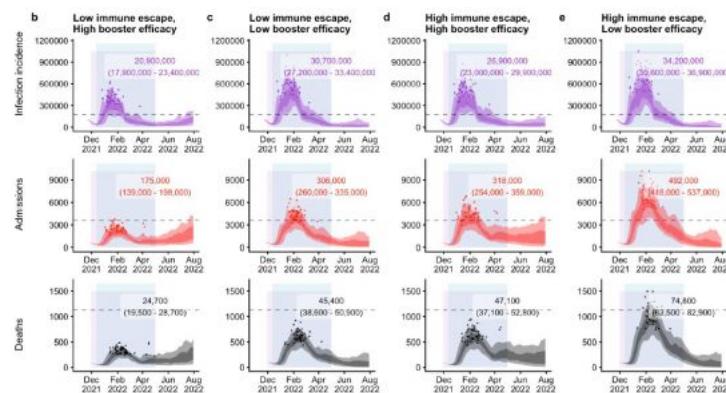
Also yesterday, the Health Secretary warned that there may already be 200,000 new Covid cases a day in the UK, which was a figure that took even scientists by surprise.

However, as Covid statistical expert Duncan Robinson noted on Twitter the maths of the model was simple to work out, whilst defending that use of a simple model at the time that we do not have absolute certainty as to the way in which this pandemic is growing. His version of the calculation looks like this:

https://twitter.com/dr_d_robertson/status/1470512277803737089?s=21

Note that this model suggests Covid being utterly out of control by Christmas.

I note too his forecasts for case numbers and admissions, with varying scenarios modelled:



Hospital admissions at most of the rates forecast are more than enough to completely crash the NHS. They simply could not be managed.

Of course, these are forecasts. I entirely accept that. I also hear all the claims that Omicron might be milder than previous variants, but see no reason to assume that is the case when there is no persuasive evidence as yet.

In that case there is no reason to assume that we are heading for anything but the most unprecedented crisis.

There are, of course, those who do not believe this. I will address that issue in another post. This post has one simple objective. It is to explain that quite reasonable people, using entirely reasonable assumptions based upon the observations of what is happening can project a health crisis of a scale none of us has previously experienced.

I stress, again, the things will not turn out as this modelling suggests. There are always other factors to take into account, including the possibility that the government might just act appropriately in the face of this crisis, which could dramatically reduce the number of cases, albeit without entirely eliminating the risk of the NHS being overwhelmed now because any action now may be too late to prevent that.

But without action, which has to include immediate lockdowns, we are facing a wholly unknown situation that many might not survive.