

UK struggles with second coronavirus wave

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London, December 31 (RHC)-- Simon Stevens, the head of Britain's national health service, says that more people are in the hospital with COVID-19 now than at the peak of the first wave earlier this year. "We're back in the eye of the storm," Stevens told reporters in London.

Authorities are blaming the soaring infection rates on a new, more transmissible variant of the virus, first identified in southeast England. Dr Katie Sanderson of the Doctor's Association has warned that the strain on hospitals is only going to get worse.

Ambulances with infected patients have been forced to wait outside hospitals as capacity is over-stretched and many more infected individuals are forced to wait at home as ambulances are unable to meet the demands on the system.

A growing number of National Health Service staff are also off work because they are self isolating or have become sick with the virus. British officials are now considering tightening coronavirus restrictions, with some suggesting a total nationwide lockdown to halt the spread of the new strain.

Britain has recorded more than 71,000 confirmed coronavirus deaths, although some question the accuracy of the numbers when compared to mortality rates from previous years before the pandemic.

According to the office of national statistics, the spike in fatalities for this year remains significantly higher than the government's official record of COVID fatalities.

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