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Sydney, July 11 (RHC)-- New South Wales' premier has warned residents to brace for a lockdown extension as the state struggles to contain a growing outbreak of COVID-19. A woman in her 90s died as the state recorded another daily record of 77 cases.

"Tragically, we've seen one older person die and I want to extend my deepest condolences to their families and loved ones," NSW State Premier Gladys Berejiklian told a daily press conference on Sunday.

The victim was a woman in her 90s who apparently contracted the disease in her household and died at Liverpool Hospital on Saturday. It is the first officially reported coronavirus-related death in Australia in 2021.

New South Wales recorded 77 new cases of the virus on Sunday, and Berejiklian said she "will be shocked" if they don't reach three-digit numbers tomorrow. The Greater Sydney area has been under a general stay-at-home order since June 26, with tighter restrictions introduced last week, and it is increasingly unlikely the lockdown will end any time soon

Given where we're at and given the lockdown was supposed to be lifted on Friday, everybody can tell it's highly unlikely at this stage, given where the numbers are.

Since the outbreak was first detected on June 16, there have been 566 locally acquired cases reported in NSW. Some 52 people are currently in a local hospital, with 15 of them in intensive care and five on ventilators. In total, since the beginning of the pandemic last year, Australia has recorded just over 31,000 infections nationwide and little over 900 deaths.

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