

UK may move patients into hotels to ease hospital strain

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A row of ambulances are parked outside the Royal London Hospital in London on Tuesday, Dec. 29, 2020. British officials are considering tougher coronavirus restrictions as the number of hospitalized COVID-19 patients surpasses the first peak of the outbreak in the spring. (Yui Mok/PA via AP)

England's health care system may move patients into hotels to ease

pressure on hospitals struggling to handle rising COVID-19 admissions.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said Wednesday that the National Health Service was looking at various ways to reduce the strain on hospitals, including moving patients to hotels when appropriate. Discussions about the issue were first reported by the Guardian newspaper.

"We would only ever do that if it was clinically the right thing for somebody," Hancock told Sky News. "In some cases, people need sit-down care, they don't actually need to be in a [hospital](#) bed."

Britain already has Europe's deadliest coronavirus outbreak, with over 83,000 deaths, and the number of hospital beds filled by COVID-19 patients is still rising. Hospitals in England are now treating 55% more COVID-19 cases than during the first peak of the pandemic in April.

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