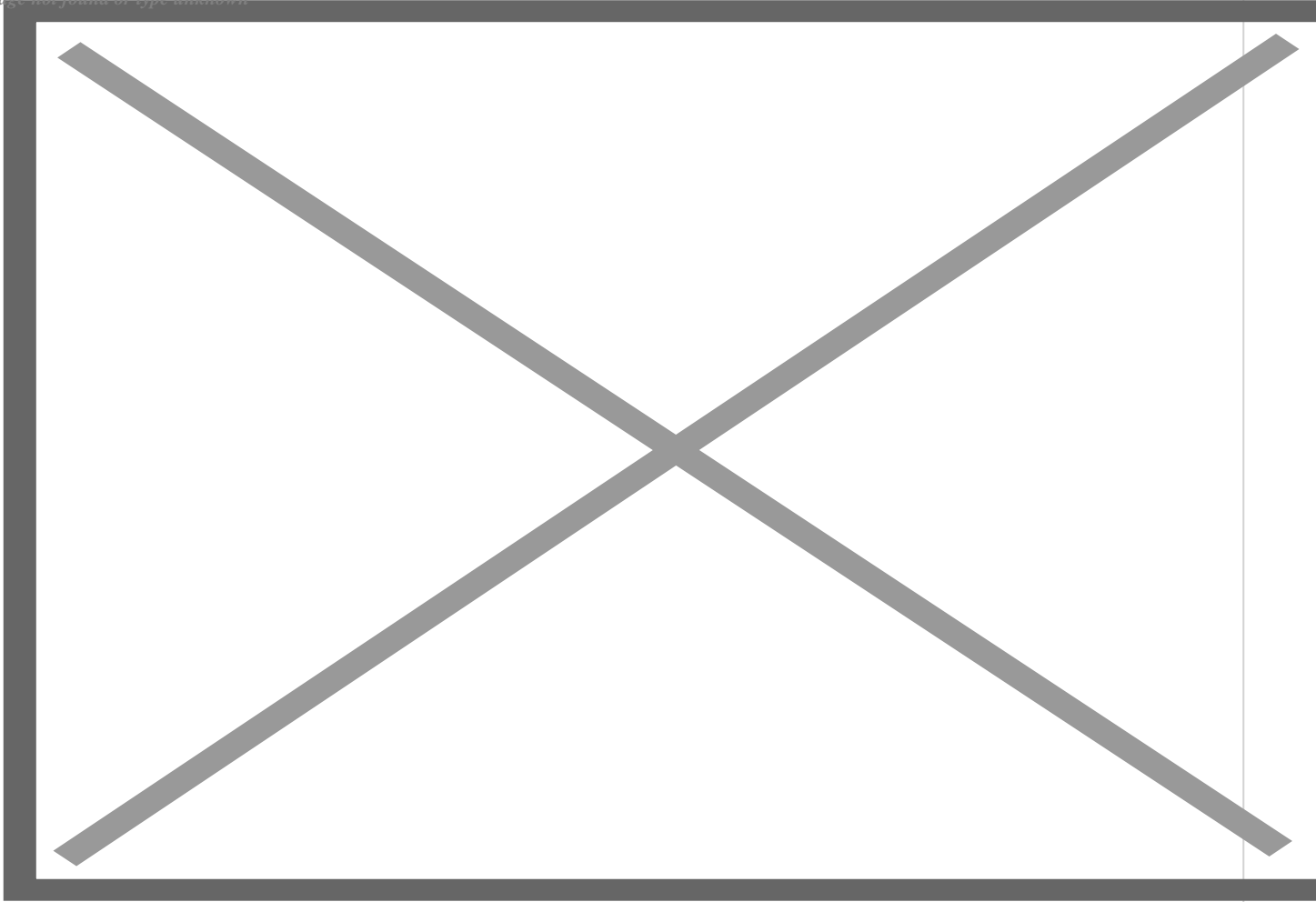


Florida breaks record for daily COVID hospitalizations

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Florida currently leads the US in per capita hospitalisation for COVID-19 [File: Lynne Sladky/AP Photo]

Miami, August 2 (RHC)-- The U.S. state of Florida has broken its previous daily record for the number of people hospitalized for COVID-19. The state had 10,207 people hospitalised with confirmed COVID-19 cases on Sunday, according to data reported to the US Department of Health and Human Services.

That passes the previous record – reached in the height of the pandemic and before vaccines were available – of 10,170 hospitalisations on July 23 last year, according to the Florida Hospital Association.

The current data underscores a new surge in infections across the US as large segments of the population remain unvaccinated – despite widespread access – and the highly infectious Delta variant continues to ravage the country. The latest wave has been dubbed by health officials as an “outbreak of the unvaccinated.”

According to data from Johns Hopkins University, the seven-day rolling average for daily new cases in the US rose from 30,887 on July 16 to 77,827 on July 30.

The seven-day rolling average for the country’s daily new deaths rose over the same period from 253 on July 16 to 358 on July 30, though death reports generally lag weeks after infections and even longer after hospitalisations.

Just over half of the U.S. population has been fully vaccinated since the first doses were administered in December.

On Sunday, the government’s top infectious disease expert Dr Anthony Fauci warned of “pain and suffering” in the future as cases rise. “Which is the reason why we keep saying over and over again, the solution to this is get vaccinated and this would not be happening,” he said on ABC’s This Week program.

Florida now leads the U.S. in per capita hospitalizations for COVID-19, as hospitals around the state report having to put emergency room visitors in beds in hallways and others document a noticeable drop in the age of patients.

In the past week, Florida has averaged 1,525 adult hospitalisations a day, and 35 daily paediatric hospitalisations. Both are the highest per capita rate in the nation, Jason Salemi, an associate professor of epidemiology at the University of South Florida, told the Associated Press.

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