

# [News story: Monkeypox case in England](#)

## Latest update

Public Health England (PHE) can confirm that there have been no further cases of monkeypox following the 3 individuals diagnosed in the UK between the 8 and 26 September 2018.

All known close contacts were followed up after their last contact with the individuals, and no one else went on to develop the disease themselves, so we can be confident that there has been no further onward transmission of the virus.

Dr Nick Phin, Deputy Director of the National Infection Service at PHE, said:

While this was an unusual event in the UK, we have tried and tested protocols and procedures in place to ensure that we can respond rapidly to such incidents.

Through this response, which was delivered with colleagues from across the NHS, we have been able to follow up with all those people who had close contact with the individuals involved. We are pleased that we have seen no further transmission of monkeypox in the UK linked to these cases.

We would like to thank all staff for their hard work supporting this incident and we will continue to remain vigilant to the threat of infectious disease.

## Previous updates

### 26 September 2018

PHE can confirm that a third individual has been diagnosed with [monkeypox](#) in England.

This person was involved in the care of the case in Blackpool Victoria Hospital before monkeypox was diagnosed.

This third case is now isolated to minimise the risk of onward transmission to others. They are being looked after in the specialist unit at Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle.

We are following up with close contacts of this new case to provide advice and monitor their health. We are adopting a highly precautionary approach to minimise the risk of additional cases and are tracing anyone who had contact with this individual 24 hours before they noticed a rash.

Dr Nick Phin, Deputy Director of the National Infection Service at PHE, said:

This healthcare worker cared for the patient before a diagnosis of monkeypox was made. We have been actively monitoring contacts for 21 days after exposure to detect anyone presenting with an illness so that they can be assessed quickly. It is therefore not wholly unexpected that a case has been identified.

This person has been isolated and we are taking a highly precautionary approach to ensure that all contacts are traced.

## **11 September 2018**

Public Health England (PHE) can confirm that a second individual has been diagnosed with monkeypox in England.

There is no UK link to the patient diagnosed last week in Cornwall who is currently receiving care at the Royal Free in London. This second patient had travelled to Nigeria where they are believed to have acquired the infection. The second case first presented at Blackpool Victoria Hospital and following a positive test result was transferred to Royal Liverpool University Hospital, an expert respiratory infectious disease centre, where they are receiving appropriate care.

Dr Nick Phin, Deputy Director, National Infection Service at PHE:

We know that in September 2017 Nigeria experienced a large sustained outbreak of monkeypox and since then sporadic cases have continued to be reported. It is likely that monkeypox continues to circulate in Nigeria and could, therefore, affect travellers who are returning from this part of the world.

However, it is very unusual to see 2 cases in such a relatively short space of time. We are working hard to contact individuals, including healthcare workers, that might have come into contact with the individual to provide information and health advice.

Dr Mike Beadsworth, Clinical Director of the Tropical and Infectious Diseases Unit said:

We are treating a patient who has tested positive for monkeypox. The patient is being cared for on our specialist infectious and tropical diseases unit, by highly trained staff who are experienced in dealing with a variety of infectious diseases.

All necessary precautions are being taken by specialist staff and there is currently no risk to other staff, patients or visitors.

We ask that people continue to use our services as normal and that people only come to our emergency department if their condition is serious and/or an emergency.

## 8 September 2018

PHE can confirm an individual has been diagnosed with [monkeypox](#) in England. This is the first time this infection has been diagnosed in the United Kingdom (UK).

Monkeypox is a rare viral infection that does not spread easily between people. It is usually a mild self-limiting illness and most people recover within a few weeks. However, severe illness can occur in some individuals.

The infection can be spread when someone is in close contact with an infected person; however, there is a very low risk of transmission to the general population.

The patient was staying at a naval base in Cornwall prior to transfer to the expert infectious disease unit at the Royal Free Hospital, London where they are now receiving appropriate care.

The patient is a resident of Nigeria, which is where they are believed to have contracted the infection, before travelling to the UK.

As a precautionary measure, PHE experts are working closely with NHS colleagues and will be contacting people who might have been in close contact with the individual to provide information and health advice.

This includes contacting a number of passengers who travelled in close proximity to the patient on the same flight to the UK. People without symptoms are not considered infectious but, as a precaution, those who have been in close proximity are being contacted to ensure that if they do become unwell they can be treated quickly. If passengers are not contacted then there is no action they should take.

Initial symptoms include fever, headache, muscle aches, backache, swollen lymph nodes, chills and exhaustion. A rash can develop, often beginning on the face, then spreading to other parts of the body. The rash changes and goes through different stages before finally forming a scab, which later falls off.

Dr Michael Jacobs, clinical director of infection at the Royal Free Hospital, said:

Monkeypox is, in most cases, a mild condition which will resolve on its own and have no long-term effects on a person's health. Most people recover within several weeks.

It is a rare disease caused by monkeypox virus and has been reported mainly in central and west African countries.

It does not spread easily between people and the risk of transmission to the wider public is very low. We are using strict isolation procedures in hospital to protect our staff and patients.

Dr Nick Phin, Deputy Director, National Infection Service at PHE, said:

It is important to emphasise that monkeypox does not spread easily between people and the overall risk to the general public is very low.

Public Health England is following up those who have had close contact with the patient to offer advice and to monitor them as necessary.

PHE and the NHS have well established and robust infection control procedures for dealing with cases of imported infectious disease and these will be strictly followed to minimise the risk of transmission.

---

## [News story: Tough new measures to end the blight of nuisance calls](#)

Rogue companies making unsolicited calls related to personal injury claims could now be fined up to £500,000

New powers coming into force today will see consumers given the choice to 'opt-in' to receive these calls. People being harassed by nuisance calls will be given new powers to stop them from today.

Cold calls offering to help claim compensation for mis-sold sell payment protection insurance (PPI) will be banned if the claimant has not chosen to 'opt-in' to receive them.

Previously people had to 'opt-out' of receiving such calls by registering with the free Telephone Preference Service or withdraw their consent while on the call.

However, the new powers will force the caller to make the necessary checks to make sure they have the recipient's consent before calling.

Those offering unwanted claims management services could be fined as much as half a million pounds by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) if they breach the rules.

The Financial Conduct Authority [highlighted](#) that in the last 12 months, approximately 2.7 billion unsolicited calls, texts and emails were made to the UK's adult population offering to help them make a claim. This includes calls about recent accidents or mis-sold PPI. This is equivalent to approximately 50 calls, texts or emails being made to every member of the adult population.

Minister for Digital Margot James said:

Today we are one step closer to ending the menace of nuisance calls. Our new laws mean people will now have to give consent to receive calls and have the power to choose where they seek compensation for personal injury claims or mis sold payment protection insurance. This is a big boost for the Information Commissioner's Office and will help them crack down on the cold call sharks.

Individuals will be able to opt-in to receiving these calls by consenting to be contacted by claims companies when enquiring about settling a claim, or when seeking claims advice.

These new measures together with the strengthened Data Protection Act, will curb the number of nuisance calls received by consumers.

If they receive nuisance calls they can [report](#) it to the ICO who will investigate and take action against those responsible.

Andy Curry, Enforcement Group Manager at the Information Commissioner's Office, said:

Millions of nuisance calls, texts and emails are made every year in the UK and can cause real distress to people.

This amendment to the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations will increase our ability to take action against those companies who deliberately flout the law and cause real upset and harm.

The government has already made it easier for regulators to fine those breaching direct marketing rules, forced companies to display their number when calling customers and increased fines for wrongdoers.

On top of this the government has also: \* Consulted on new measures to fine bosses of companies which plague people with unsolicited nuisance calls up to half a million pounds under new proposals to make them personally liable if their firm breaks the law;

- Introduced a measure in the Digital Economy Act 2017 to make it a

requirement for the Information Commissioner to issue a statutory code of practice on direct marketing;

- Amended the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations (PECR) to require all direct marketing callers to provide Caller Line Identification;
- Lowered the legal threshold at which the ICO may impose a monetary penalty on organisations breaching PECR (a previous requirement to prove that the call caused alarm or distress was removed);
- Made it easier for the ICO to more effectively share information with Ofcom in relation to nuisance calls through an amendment to the Communications Act 2003;
- Given the ICO the power to issue monetary penalty notices up to £500,000 for serious breaches of PECR;
- Introduced a ban on cold calling in relation to claims management services through the Financial Claims and Guidance Act 2018, except where the receiver has consented to such calls being made to them. The 2018 Act also includes powers to ban cold calls from pension providers; and
- Given £500,000 to Trading Standards to help install call blocking devices installed in the homes of vulnerable people.

## **Notes to editors**

For more information call the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport press office on 020 7211 2210.

---

## **[Press release: FCO Minister for Asia and the Pacific visits New Zealand](#)**

Britain and New Zealand are set to work together more closely and deeply than ever before as the UK government establishes a greater diplomatic presence in the Pacific region and opens diplomatic missions in Samoa, Tonga, and Vanuatu.

As well as enhancing existing joint-working on climate security which was the focus of the recent Pacific Islands Forum, Britain and New Zealand are working on tackling threats to international security and championing free trade. Preparatory work is also underway to lay the groundwork for a UK-NZ Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

Speaking while on his visit to New Zealand today, Minister for Asia and the Pacific Mark Field said:

New Zealand is an obvious partner of choice for us in our work with the Pacific islands to tackle climate change and marine plastic pollution. But our co-operation goes far beyond these issues as we share common values and both believe the international rules-based system affords the best opportunity for security, growth and sustainability.

Our posts in the Pacific region are a concrete demonstration of Britain's commitment to the region, and will allow us to engage with New Zealand in particular to tackle the effects of climate change, and bolster resilience in Pacific Island communities.

As well as opening posts in Tonga, Samoa and Vanuatu, the UK is also expanding its presence in Fiji.

The Department for International Trade (DIT) is currently consulting on Free Trade Agreements with New Zealand, as well as Australia, and the US, and also on accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), of which New Zealand is a member.

---

## **Speech: Secretary of State Speech to the British-Irish Association Annual Conference**

Since 1972 the BIA has played a key role in bringing together politicians, civil servants, academics, business people, faith leaders, journalist, commentators and many more to promote dialogue and understanding throughout these islands and to try and shape a better future together.

So thank you for everything you have done and I am sure will continue to do in the years to come.

This is of course my first BIA conference since the Prime Minister asked me to take on the role of Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in January,

something that I had absolutely no hesitation in accepting.

And as Secretary of State, I know what an amazing place Northern Ireland is and what it has to offer.

Indeed, it's not surprising that nearly all of my predecessors look back on their time with huge affection, with a number regarding it as the most rewarding and important job they ever had in government.

So as I've gone out and about over the past nine months, meeting as many people as I can, it's impossible not to be struck by the warmth of the place. Its beauty, its spirit and, yes, its history but also its massive potential.

I've made a point of visiting with my family some of the great attractions that Northern Ireland has to offer: the Fermanagh lakes, the Giant's Causeway, the Titanic Visitor attraction, to name but a few. And each time they can't wait to come back for more.

So Northern Ireland is a very special place, and I believe one with a great future.

And this year of course we have been marking the 20th anniversary of the Belfast or Good Friday Agreement, an historic landmark in the history not just of Northern Ireland but of these islands as a whole.

It was, as I said in April, a triumph of politics over the previous decades of violence, division and despair.

Twenty years on it is perhaps easy for some to lose sight of the magnitude of what was achieved in 1998.

So let me spell some them out.

The constitutional position of Northern Ireland settled on the principle of consent.

The Irish constitution amended to reflect that fact.

Political institutions to accommodate and give expression to both the main traditions in Northern Ireland.

Strong new bodies to foster greater North-South and East-West co-operation.

Powerful protections for people's rights, culture and identities.

Reforms to make policing and the criminal justice system more accountable and acceptable across the community.

And of course the consequences of all of this: a more peaceful, stable and prosperous Northern Ireland that is in so many ways unrecognisable since the dark days of the troubles, notwithstanding the severe threat we continue to face from dissident republicans.

All of these gains were hard fought, the result of years of painstaking



discussions and negotiations, and we should never forget just how precious they are or indeed shy away from making the case for the 1998 Agreement.

It is our duty to do whatever is necessary to protect and defend it, and that is what this Government will continue to do.

So let me reiterate for the avoidance of any doubt: the UK Government remains steadfast in its support for the Belfast Agreement, the bedrock on which the progress across the three interlocking relationships – within Northern Ireland, between Northern Ireland and Ireland and between the UK and Ireland – has been made over the past twenty years.

We will do nothing that undermines this, including as the UK leaves the EU next March.

And over recent years Northern Ireland has continued to take many great steps forward, not least on the economy.

Unemployment, which in 2010 stood at just over 7 per cent, is now 3.8 per cent, one of the lowest figures on record and significantly below the EU average.

Meanwhile employment, at just over 69 per cent, is at near record levels. In all, 63,000 more people are in work in Northern Ireland today than in 2010 ... with nearly 19,000 new jobs in the past year. That's more people with the security of a regular pay packet for them and their families.

Average weekly earnings have grown at a faster rate in Northern Ireland than in any other UK region.

There are over 12,000 more businesses than was the case 8 years ago.

Over 900 overseas companies have invested in Northern Ireland, making it the most popular location for FDI outside of London and the South East – the highest number of FDI jobs per head of any part of the UK.

Since 2011, exports are up by 11 per cent, and external sales, including to the rest of the UK, are up 18 per cent.

Tourism is booming, as anyone who has seen the cruise ships docked in Belfast this year will testify.

We have more people staying for longer than ever before, with impressive new hotels to accommodate them and more in the pipeline.

And of course next year the eyes of the world will once again be on Northern Ireland as the oldest and most famous golfing championship in the world, the Open, is played at Royal Portrush.

None of this has happened by accident. It has been the result of the hard work of the people of Northern Ireland, with productivity increasing in Northern Ireland at a faster rate than in any other UK region.

And, I might add, a fiscally responsible UK Government prepared to take the necessary measures and pursue policies at a national level to allow business and enterprise to thrive across the whole of the UK, with the result that we now have the lowest levels of unemployment across the country than at any time in over 40 years.

A UK Government that despite severe pressures on public expenditure continues to recognise Northern Ireland's special circumstances through generous support in the Block Grant.

We have maintained public spending in Northern Ireland at around 20 per cent per head higher than the UK average.

Over the current spending review period UK Government financial support to the Northern Ireland Executive has increased by 5 per cent in real terms.

The Prime Minister's recent pledge of an additional £20.5 billion to the NHS by 2024, which means an extra £760 million a year by 2023-24 for Northern Ireland under the Barnett formula.

We've helped hard working people: some 745,000 people in Northern Ireland will have gained by an average of £182 as a result of our increases to the personal allowance and higher rate tax threshold.

We've increased the National Living Wage to £7.83, delivering a £600 annual pay rise to full-time workers in Northern Ireland.

And we've committed substantial additional security funding to help the PSNI tackle the continuing terrorist threat: £160 million over this spending review period and £230 million in the last one.

These are just a few examples of how Northern Ireland has shared in our national economic recovery in recent years, and how Northern Ireland benefits from the strength and security of being part of the world's fifth largest economy.

Yet for all the successes there are significant challenges too.

Economic growth in the past year has been flat, lower than the UK as a whole and in Ireland.

Rates of economic inactivity remain higher than in other parts of the UK.

Hospital waiting lists are longer than in England and are getting worse.

There are other examples of where a current lack of ministerial decision making is holding Northern Ireland back.

Corporation tax has yet to be devolved, meaning that Northern Ireland remains at an economic disadvantage when it comes to competing for foreign direct investment with Ireland.

Construction projects worth up to £2bn are at risk due to the lack of key

planning decisions, including plans for a new £30m quay for cruise ships, a new £175m transport hub for Belfast, a £280m power plant, the North-South electricity interconnector worth around £200m and a £50m office block at Belfast Harbour.

Strategies for building a stronger society and a shared future, as well as tackling paramilitary activity, have lost momentum.

And of course while I continue to ensure that Northern Ireland's interests and needs are represented at the heart of Government, Northern Ireland would be better placed to meet the challenges and opportunities of Brexit with an Executive in place.

In the absence of a devolved Executive we have brought forward measures at Westminster to ensure good governance and stability.

In July the Government took a budget through Westminster to enable the continued delivery of public services

And before the summer recess I announced plans to bring forward legislation enabling me to make key public appointments, for example to a reconstituted Policing Board.

But none of this is any substitute for devolution – a locally elected Assembly and Executive taking decisions on behalf of all the people of Northern Ireland.

And while I am not saying that a devolved government would solve all the problems I've just mentioned overnight, I am convinced that it could make a real difference to people's lives and helping to unlock even further the undoubted and enormous potential that Northern Ireland has to offer.

The absolute priority, therefore, for this Government – as I know it is the Irish Government – is to see a restoration of the devolved power sharing institutions at Stormont, and all the other related bodies, at the earliest opportunity.

And yesterday in the House of Commons I set out a plan to try help bring that about.

I announced that I intend to bring forward legislation that will provide for a limited and prescribed period in which there will be no legal obligation to set a date for an election.

Importantly, during this time an Executive may be formed at any point without the requirement for further legislation. This will provide the opportunity to re-establish political talks aimed at restoring the Executive as soon as possible.

The legislation I intend to introduce after the party conference recess will also include provisions to give greater clarity and certainty to enable NI departments to continue to take decisions in Northern Ireland in the public interest and to ensure the continued delivery of public services.

I intend to consult parties in Northern Ireland over how this might best be done.

I also intend, therefore, to use the next few weeks to engage in further discussions with the parties and the Irish Government, in accordance with the well-established three stranded approach with the intention of establishing a basis for moving into more formal political dialogue that leads to a restoration of the institutions.

Finally, I also announced that I would be bringing forward a reduction in MLA pay.

I believe that the people of Northern Ireland want to see a restoration of their political institutions and that is what this Government is committed to achieving.

Stable and effective devolved government is the right thing for Northern Ireland.

And I am in no doubt that it is best for the Union.

Media queries should be directed to Bob Honey, NIO Communications Team, on 07956 579 286

---

## **[News story: Civil news: 2018 contract interim arrangements end 7 September](#)**

It is important for providers to accept their 2018 Standard Civil Contracts by 7 September 2018.

Providers may still execute their contracts later than 8 September but will not be able to open new matters until they do so.

We made interim arrangements, which were published on 31 August 2018, to allow providers to continue working without having accepted contracts.

These arrangements only applied to providers:

- advised by us that their contracts have been successfully verified but who have been unable to execute their contract in Contracted Work and Administration (CWA)
- who have successfully completed verification but are yet to be assigned account numbers for new offices Details of the interim or 'contingency' arrangements and a further update on 3 September can be downloaded on

the 2018 civil contracts tender page.

## **Civil contract work from 8 September 2018**

From 8 September 2018 all providers must have a 2018 Standard Civil Contract which they have accepted in CWA to be able to undertake work.

Almost 1,400 contracts have been uploaded into CWA with a small number of contracts being uploaded on 7 September where issues have been resolved. However, there are 100 still to be accepted, with some of these having been uploaded over two weeks ago.

## **Outstanding issues**

We are continuing to resolve outstanding issues and upload contracts for acceptance. Such outstanding issues include where organisations:

- have submitted information for verification after the initial deadline of 20 July and in some cases close to the final deadline of 31 August
- are yet to provide compliant AC1 forms to enable account numbers to be assigned

We will continue to contact organisations that still have outstanding issues. This will be done on a case by case basis.

## **Further information**

[Civil 2018 contracts tender page](#) – to download details of interim arrangements

[CWA detailed user guides](#) – for ‘contract acceptance user guide’