

News story: The WHO – why everyone should care

Health is one of the most precious things to us and our families. It is also something we can sometimes take for granted, until we no longer have it. That is why it is important to reflect on the achievements we've made as a global community to tackle big health threats and protect ourselves from killer diseases.

The work of World Health Organisation (WHO) impacts on the health and wellbeing of billions of people. When governments want to share their experience of responding to health challenges, they engage with WHO. WHO's Director-General is responsible for running the organization. It is a complex task. The WHO helps countries work out how best to organize health services for their people and helps countries respond to infectious disease outbreaks. It adapts its responses to the circumstances of each country: this is not an easy task, given that each country has very different needs. It also helps people in conflict and crises providing expertise and information to treat those in need.

The WHO's Governing Assembly is set to elect a new Director-General at the end of May this year. My name is Dr David Nabarro and I am one of three candidates in the running for this role. It feels to me as though I have been in training to become Director-General of WHO for my entire life. I have a burning ambition to help people in difficulty and to ensure they achieve their full potential. My motivation comes from every patient I've ever treated, and from every community that I have served. I want to be sure that whatever I do in life brings benefit to people most in need: this ambition to serve has stayed with me throughout my professional life.

I am a medical doctor with over 40 years experience – I know what it's like on the front line and at the top table of international health improvement. I have worked in more than 50 countries across the world – in places such as India, Nepal, Indonesia and Bangladesh. I understand the complexity of the UN and multilateral systems and I know how to make them work well. I've worked on the sustainable development goals, climate change and food security. I am the only Director-General candidate who has successfully managed complex global challenges and led the world in responding to crises including malaria, avian influenza and Ebola. If another disease outbreak hits I know I have the experience to lead WHO to respond.

I first came to Kazakhstan in 1991 and was involved in work between the UK and Kazakhstan on health improvements. It is a country I have stayed closely associated with over the last few decades, seeing how health services have developed and how public health in particular has advanced. Good progress has been made and the government should be commended. However, challenges remain. Cardiovascular disease is one of the most common causes of death, along with other non-communicable or "lifestyle" diseases. There is also still work to be done to rid the country of tuberculosis.

As Director-General of WHO I will lead an organization that catalyses reductions in widespread suffering caused by diseases such as cancer, obesity and diabetes. I will help member states dealing with these lifestyle illnesses through early intervention and prevention, something that can be achieved at low cost. I will also strive to ensure that the most vulnerable are not forgotten and that women and children get access to the health services they need.

Equally, it is vital that work continues to deal with the impending crisis of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) which has seen the emergence of so called “superbugs” that don’t respond to medicines in the way they used to. Tuberculosis in particular is a real source of concern in this regard.

As WHO Director-General I will want to work with Kazakhstan’s leaders, including Health Minister Elzhan Birtanov who I was pleased to meet with on my visit last week, to build on recent success. Whether it is focused on improving people’s health security in the face of infectious disease threats, managing the impacts of air pollution on people’s health, tackling cancer, cardiovascular disease and diabetes or driving forward work on AMR, WHO has much to offer. The WHO is a vital organization for a healthy world and I am passionate about ensuring it can deliver results for all.

Note for editors:

Dr David Nabarro is one of the three nominees for the post of Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO). He has worked as a doctor, educator and international public servant, focusing on global health, for over 40 years. He has worked across more than 50 countries. Find out more at www.davidnabarro.info

[News story: Tech of tomorrow offers more convenient, carbon-friendly living](#)

First-of-a-kind technology with the potential to come to market quickly is being trialled across the UK to improve the lives of citizens.

From schemes that promote cleaner, greener travel to online deliveries straight to your car boot – these are some of the innovative ideas being trialled in Innovate UK’s [first of a kind deployment competition](#).

With more than 70% of people estimated to be living in urban areas by 2040, city infrastructure and design requires a drastic change in order to support a high quality of life.

Each of the projects is designed to enable a step change in innovation that will make a real difference to the energy, transport and urban infrastructure of the future. In total, 12 projects will share £18 million to develop their ideas.

The ideas

Projects are exploring the potential to:

- take the flexibility of click and collect even further by delivering orders straight to the consumer's car boot. This project – by [Car Tap](#) – uses new reliable and secure keyless vehicle access technology. The trial will enable 100 customers of [Farmaround](#) to receive deliveries of organic boxes
- address the problem of disposing used batteries – one of the areas of the [Industrial Strategy](#) Challenge Fund – by exploring how old Nissan electric vehicle batteries can be used to store peak electricity from UK homes. There will be a 50 unit, 12-month trial led by [Powervault](#). Partners include Nissan, Aston University, Hyde Housing, Lyra Electronics, M&S Energy and Solarcentury
- ease congestion and problems with parking by operating a virtual loading bay. Commercial vehicle operators will be able to pay to reserve kerb space to load or unload. [Transport for London Road Network](#) (TLRN) is running the trial in Wandsworth, focusing on high-density loading 'hotspots'
- convert electricity into hydrogen at a mass scale to create affordable, green energy for the transport sector. The trial by [ITM Power](#) will provide energy balancing and refuelling for a fleet of 20 fuel cell buses in Birmingham
- encourage the adoption and use of electric vehicles by making charging even easier. [ZAPINAMO](#) is an easily deployable, rapid charging system. It is trialling 2 solutions:
 - rapid charging for up to 20 taxis at once at Heathrow Airport, making it easier to park and charge and improving air quality
 - a mobile charger to serve 4 Europcar E-Car Club electric vehicles, which comes directly to you as and when you need it

A full list of projects can be found in our list of [funding competition winners 2017](#).

Funding from Innovate UK

The projects are part of a £19 million investment by Innovate UK that invited businesses to test and evaluate new infrastructure technologies in the real world.

This is the second phase of the competition. All of the projects completed a finance and business case in the first phase. Those selected for phase 2 will now demonstrate their innovations in a commercial environment.

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Read about the [background to the competition](#).

Learn more about our work in [infrastructure systems](#).

Apply for an [innovation funding award](#).

[Press release: New fast-track immigration appeal rules proposed](#)

A new fast-track system to speed up immigration and asylum appeals for those in detention, saving millions of pounds every year, has been drawn up by Ministers.

The government today set out plans for a new process for detained foreign nationals appealing a Home Office decision to remove them from the country.

The new rules, which if accepted would apply to detained foreign criminals and failed asylum seekers, could speed up about 2,000 cases every year and save the taxpayer an estimated £2.7million.

The proposals would mean the time between an initial decision and conclusion of an appeal to the First-tier Tribunal would be capped at between 25 and 28 working days – shaving around a third off current average timeframes.

Justice Secretary Elizabeth Truss said:

It is vital that foreign nationals who have no right to remain in the country should be removed as quickly as possible.

We must ensure that foreign criminals and failed asylum seekers are not exploiting the justice system by attempting to stay in the UK after their claims have been rejected.

Our proposals are also better for detainees as it will see their detention time cut.

The new plans would replace the old detained fast track appeals system, which was brought to an end in 2015 after a Court of Appeal ruling.

Proposals laid out today by the Ministry of Justice would include new safeguards, including a case management review and giving judges strengthened powers to decide whether cases can be expedited.

It is now for the independent Tribunal Procedure Committee (TPC), which sets rules for tribunals, to consider whether and how the proposals should be implemented.

1. [The plans](#), published today (18 April) following a consultation, would apply to those detained and appealing an immigration or asylum decision through a tribunal.
2. A previous fast track appeal process was set aside by the Court of Appeal in 2015, but the Court did not disagree with the principle of an expedited appeals process. The Government's proposals have taken the Court's judgment on board, and added new safeguards including a case management stage for each detained appellant, and new powers for judges to decide whether cases should be expedited.
3. The proposals will cut the length of time in detention for foreign nationals by speeding up the appeals process.
4. They propose that the time between the Home Office's decision and determination of the appeal by the First-tier Tribunal should be set at between 25 and 28 working days.
5. The current average for an appeal determination is about 36 working days.

Statement to Parliament: Conduct guidance for elections, 4 May 2017: written ministerial statement

Minister for the Cabinet Office Ben Gummer laid a statement in Parliament on guidance for civil servants in the pre-election period.

On 4 May 2017, elections will take place to local authorities in England, Wales and Scotland, including for directly elected Mayors to 7 combined authorities, and 2 local district councils in England.

As is normal ahead of elections, guidance has now been issued for civil servants in UK government departments and those working in arm's length bodies on the principles that they should observe in relation to the conduct of government business in the run up to the forthcoming elections.

The guidance sets out the need to maintain the political impartiality of the Civil Service, and the need to ensure that public resources are not used for party political purposes during this period. The period of sensitivity preceding these elections began on 13 April.

The guidance was published on 10 April, and copies have been placed in the Libraries of the House and [on GOV.UK](#).