

G7 Presidency statement

Australia, India, the Republic of Korea and South Africa, which share the G7's open and democratic values, were invited by the Prime Minister to attend the G7 Summit as guests. UK Health Secretary Matt Hancock welcomed their involvement and support as he chaired a dedicated meeting on global health security, including helping low and middle-income countries in these areas. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that now, more than ever, it is essential we work together to improve health security for everyone.

This meeting comes as the G7 signs the Health Ministers' declaration which includes commitments on global health security, antimicrobial resistance (AMR), clinical trials and digital health.

The declaration sets out an ambitious vision for how we can work together to better prepare for and respond to future health threats, including AMR. It also sets out shared principles for delivering clinical trials in the future and collaboration between countries to implement international health data standards and bolster information-sharing. This will also help countries to access innovations in health technology, including artificial intelligence, regardless of where these innovations were developed.

The UK Presidency has welcomed input and support from like-minded partners. Today, the G7 and invited guests enjoyed a positive discussion on the importance of improving horizon scanning and surveillance, including embedding a new international approach to understand how human, animal, plant and environmental health all affect our daily lives, helping to eliminate potential dangers posed by animals and the environment to prevent future pandemics. The meeting highlighted that the world is more connected than ever before and so preparedness and investing ahead of time are crucial to ensure we are able to identify and cope with future health threats early.

UK Health and Social Care Secretary, Matt Hancock said:

The UK's Presidency of the G7 is an opportunity to bring together like-minded, democratic countries to improve global health security right across the world.

The extra support from our partners, including Australia, India, Korea and South Africa, will make sure we strengthen our defences against future pandemics to protect communities and save lives.

Attendees also heard from Dr Keith Sumption, Director of Joint Zoonosis and AMR Centre and CVO of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation, who set out the critical importance of considering animal health and the environment alongside human health surveillance and Dr John Nkengasong who provided insights from his experience in strengthening public health systems in his role as Director for the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.

The next key milestone will be the G7 Leaders' Summit next week in Cornwall on 11 to 13 June 2021, where many of these important health issues will be discussed further.