

Home Secretary delivers daily coronavirus update (25 April 2020)

Good afternoon, welcome back to Downing Street for the Government's daily press conference on Coronavirus.

Today I am joined by Lynne Owens, Director General of the National Crime Agency, and by Stephen Powis, National Medical Director of NHS England.

The Government's step-by-step plan has always been to slow the spread of this disease, increasing the capacity of our world-class hospitals so that they can cope.

And your hard work has helped us to do this.

Our instructions remain clear.

People should stay at home, protect the NHS and save lives.

Through our ongoing monitoring and testing programme, as of 9am today, I can report that:

- Six hundred and forty thousand, seven hundred and ninety-two tests for coronavirus have now been carried out in the UK, including twenty-eight thousand seven hundred and sixty tests yesterday
- One hundred and forty-eight thousand, three hundred and seventy-seven people have tested positive, that's an increase of four thousand nine hundred and thirteen cases since yesterday
- Sixteen thousand, four hundred and eleven people are currently in hospital with coronavirus in the UK, down from seventeen thousand and forty-nine yesterday
- And sadly, of those in hospital with the virus, twenty thousand three hundred and nineteen have died. That's an increase of eight hundred and thirteen fatalities since yesterday.

As the deaths caused by this terrible virus pass another tragic and terrible milestone, the entire nation is grieving.

My deepest sympathies and condolences go to those who have lost loved ones.

And, I would like to pay tribute to the selfless frontline workers who have been struck down by this virus.

Their exceptional public service and sacrifice will not be forgotten.

The last time I was here, I spoke about the impact of this national emergency on crime – and the tough but necessary measures to tackle it.

I announced enhanced support for victims of domestic abuse, many of whom are particularly vulnerable and exposed.

Our You Are Not Alone campaign – to signpost the help available and to make it clear to victims they can still leave home – has made an incredible impact, with 98 million online impressions.

Now, I refuse to ignore the amplified risk for the victims of hidden crime, and I – along with Lynne, and across our law enforcement agencies – refuse to allow criminals to take advantage of these unprecedented times.

Now, provisional data from police shows a fall in overall crime during this Coronavirus outbreak.

Car crime, burglary and shoplifting are all lower than in the same period from this time last year.

But we also know that the most sophisticated criminals continue to exploit and capitalise on this horrendous crisis.

So today, I have a message for them: our world-class law enforcement is also adapting, and they are onto you. And their efforts are paying off.

Last week, Border Force found one million pounds worth of cocaine set to be smuggled into the United Kingdom through the Channel Tunnel, hidden in boxes of face masks.

The NCA has taken down multiple websites running phishing scams and selling bogus PPE.

Last week they arrested two people suspected of trying to sell unregistered coronavirus testing kits.

The NCA have alerted the police to thirteen hundred potential child sexual abuse cases.

They have made arrests and safeguarded children.

This is a sickening reminder of the frightening activity that is targeted towards our children every single day.

International action to crush criminal gangs and to shut drug supply lines continues, and the National Crime Agency helped to seize 700 kilograms of heroin in Pakistan, potentially bound for the United Kingdom.

Reported losses for Coronavirus fraud now stands at £2.4 million, and I would like to thank the major banks and UK Finance who are working with us to protect vulnerable people from becoming victims of crime.

And, our outstanding frontline police officers and their staff continue to do an exceptional job in keeping our streets safe.

They are still responding to all types of crime.

That includes some extraordinary dangerous driving, with a minority of drivers using quieter roads as their own personal race track and endangering people's lives.

We have seen speeds of up to one hundred and fifty one miles per hour clocked on the M1, and one hundred and thirty four miles per hour in a 40 miles per hour zone in London.

Police and fire staff continue to put their arms around people and communities: by taking people shopping and taking prescriptions to the elderly, driving ambulances and supporting those in need throughout this difficult times.

I am immensely grateful to each and every one of our emergency service heroes.

And I would also like to take this particular opportunity to pay tribute to the South Yorkshire Police motorcyclist tragically killed as he responded to an emergency earlier this week.

My thoughts and prayers are with his family, friends and colleagues at this truly heart-breaking time.

His death shows how our exceptional police put their own lives at risk every day to protect the people that they serve.

Coronavirus merely highlights the extent of their courage, their compassion and their commitment.

Police officers and staff continue to put themselves at risk to ensure that people follow the life-saving instruction to stay at home.

Now, staying at home for almost five weeks has changed the way in which we are living our lives, and I know how tough this has been.

Huge sacrifices have been made: jobs have been lost; to people's futures have been put on hold, weddings have been cancelled, families have been unable to see one another.

Every single person across our United Kingdom has given up a great deal.

From the vulnerable, the elderly, those self-isolating alone, to the hundreds of thousands of small and medium sized businesses, to the children and young people whose education has been put on hold.

This extraordinary national effort has been quite remarkable and I am grateful to everybody for playing their part.

But we should not lose sight of the fact this country's efforts are working.

So my thanks go to the British people.

You have fostered a spirit of national unity that is helping us to get through this challenging time.

The action we are collectively taking is working, and your sacrifices are undoubtedly saving lives.

We know that people are frustrated, but we are not out of danger yet.

It is imperative that people continue to follow the rules designed to protect their families, their friends and their loved ones. This will continue to save lives.

We all want to return to living our lives as normally as possible, and, of course, as soon and as safely as we can – and that's what the entire Government is working towards.

But the five tests we have laid out must be met before we can ease these life-saving restrictions.

We must be sure that we can continue to protect the NHS.

That there is a sustained and consistent fall in the daily rates of death.

That the data shows the rate of infection decreases.

That the operational challenges are met.

And of course, that there is no risk of a second peak of infections.

Until then, we all have a role to play in pulling our country out of this crisis.

So, I urge you all to stay strong and embrace that spirit of national unity by continuing to follow the advice: to stay at home, to protect the NHS and save lives.