

New interim deputy chief medical officer for England announced

News story

The Department of Health and Social Care has confirmed that Dr Thomas Waite has been appointed as interim deputy chief medical officer for England.



Dr Thomas Waite will support Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Professor Chris Whitty, Deputy Chief Medical Officer (DCMO) Professor Jonathan Van Tam and the UK government on tackling coronavirus (COVID-19) related issues for the next year.

Dr Waite is a consultant epidemiologist. After his medical and public health training in Wales, he held posts in infectious disease and environmental health protection at Public Health England and more recently was Director of the UK Field Epidemiology Training Programme and worked in Global Public Health with the PHE National Infection Service.

During the pandemic, Dr Waite helped create the Joint Biosecurity Centre (JBC) – which provides evidence-based, objective analysis to inform local and national decision-making in response to COVID-19 outbreaks – and has been their Director of Health Analysis. He will take up the position in the coming weeks and will continue to support the JBC as needed.

Dr Thomas Waite said:

I am delighted to join the Chief Medical Officer's team. I look forward to supporting the national, regional and local response to COVID-19.

This has been an unprecedented period and I am hugely honoured to work with colleagues across the country to improve the health of the nation and keep people safe as we emerge from the pandemic.

Professor Chris Whitty, Chief Medical Officer said:

Dr Waite has done an excellent job helping create the Joint Biosecurity Centre and has an in-depth understanding on COVID-19 issues. His wealth of experience in epidemiology and emergency preparedness will benefit the government's ongoing public health response.

A substantive DCMO for Health Improvement, who will help lead the Office of Health Promotion, will be recruited in the coming weeks.

The CMO acts as the UK government's principal medical adviser, and the professional head of all directors of public health in local government and the medical profession in government.

The CMO is an independent position at permanent secretary level, supported by 3 DCMOs. The role provides public health and clinical advice to ministers in the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and across government.

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