

News story: New Deputy Chief Medical Officer appointed

The Department of Health has confirmed the appointment of Professor Jonathan Van-Tam as the new Deputy Chief Medical Officer for England.

Professor Van-Tam will take up the position on 2 October 2017. He replaces Professor John Watson who is retiring after 4 years in the role.

The Deputy Chief Medical Officers are senior public health leaders who support the Chief Medical Officer – the most senior adviser on health and medicine to the UK government.

Professor Van-Tam is an internationally recognised flu, vaccine and respiratory expert. During his 25-year career, he has advised the World Health Organization, the UK Government and The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control on influenza and other respiratory virus infections.

He graduated in medicine from the University of Nottingham in 1987, trained in public health medicine from 1991, and became a Senior Lecturer at the University of Nottingham in 1997.

In addition to publishing 150 scientific papers, Professor Van Tam has also held the following posts:

- 2004 to 2007: Head of the Pandemic Influenza Office at the UK Health Protection Agency
- 2005 to 2009: part of the UK national Scientific Pandemic Influenza Committee (SPI)
- 2007 to 2017: consultant to the World Health Organization on influenza
- 2007 to date: Professor of Health Protection at the University of Nottingham
- 2009 to 2010: part of the UK Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) during the influenza pandemic
- 2010 to 2017: leader of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Pandemic Influenza and Research
- 2013 to 2017: Editor-in-Chief of Influenza and Other Respiratory Viruses
- 2014 to date: Chair of the UK Government's New and Emerging Respiratory Virus Threat Advisory Group (NERVTAG).

Professor Van-Tam said:

It is a great honour to be given the opportunity to serve as the Deputy Chief Medical Officer for England. I am looking forward to the work ahead with enormous enthusiasm.

Professor Dame Sally Davies, Chief Medical Officer said:

I would like to congratulate Professor Van-Tam on his appointment. His track record speaks for itself; he will bring a wealth of experience and expertise to the role and I look forward to working closely with him.

Professor John Watson has been a fantastic Deputy Chief Medical Officer. I would like to thank him for his huge contribution to public health and for his expert support.