

Oxford to play host to crucial G7 health talks

- In-person events to provide springboard for global collaboration on key areas to stop future pandemics
- Discussions will inform Leaders' Summit the following week in Cornwall

The 2021 G7 Health Ministers' Meeting will be held in-person in Oxford on 3-4 June and will bring together health leaders from the world's leading democracies to agree life-saving action in critical areas of global health.

They will convene at Oxford University – a global centre of clinical, scientific and academic excellence – which has been at the heart of the global fight against COVID-19, with world-leading clinical trials and its not-for-profit partnership with AstraZeneca on COVID-19 vaccines already saving thousands of lives across globe.

The G7 health meetings represent a unique opportunity to demonstrate the commitment of the world's major economies to protect lives across the world from current and future global health threats. Attendees will come together to address the issues of global health security, antimicrobial resistance, clinical trials, and digital health.

Health and Social Care Secretary, Matt Hancock, said:

Oxford is the birthplace of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine and at the heart of British life sciences. Oxford is a perfect location to stage pivotal meetings on how the world readies itself to combat future health threats.

We should not underestimate how far dreadful viruses can reach and the devastating impact they can have. The UK has long recognised that global problems require global solutions and I look forward to hosting health leaders for discussions in June.

Collectively we can build back better from this virus and, as I gather with my Ministerial counterparts from the major democratic nations, we have an opportunity to learn from this pandemic and take measures that will develop global health security.

The announcement comes on the eve of International Clinical Trials Day (Thursday 20 May 2021), with Oxford University boasting the highly-beneficial RECOVERY trial, involving over 40,000 participants, and helping to discover dexamethasone – which cuts deaths by up to a third – as a crucial tool for tackling the virus.

The pandemic has demonstrated the need for, and value of, robust clinical trials and the ability to share data, methods and standards. G7 cooperation is critical to accelerating and expanding efforts and ensuring that in the future, we can better share and compare trial results on both therapeutics and vaccines, both during the pandemic and beyond.

Professor Louise Richardson, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford, said:

Oxford University is honoured to host the G7 Health Ministers. This past year has demonstrated just how much can be accomplished when universities, business and government work together to advance global health.

We hope that in the course of this meeting insights and information will be shared, ideas generated, and lasting partnerships forged. In particular, we hope that as a result of this meeting plans will be developed to ensure that we are never again caught unprepared for a pandemic.

G7 countries account for two thirds of the world's pharmaceutical markets and the three vaccines licensed for use in the UK were all developed in G7 nations – the UK, US and Germany. As host of this year's G7 Presidency, the UK is determined to work with its partners to build back better from coronavirus and strengthen global preparedness for potential future pandemics.

The events will take place over two days, and provide a valuable opportunity to discuss not only the four health track themes but also live issues and to engage virtually with the G7 Presidency's guest countries: Republic of India, Republic of Korea, Australia and Republic of South Africa.

Oxfordshire County Council Leader, Councillor Liz Leffman, said:

As a county with a world-class reputation for cutting-edge research and innovation in life sciences and healthcare, we look forward to welcoming our guests and hope that their time here contributes to strengthening partnerships and boosting collaboration in managing current and future global health threats.

Oxford City Council Leader, Councillor Susan Brown, said:

Oxford is proud to host this international gathering of ministers and life science leaders, to plan a global approach to ending the COVID-19 pandemic. Our city has rightly become synonymous with excellence in life science research and manufacturing. We are proud

that Oxford's name is carried by the vaccine used most widely across the world.

There is a real opportunity for those gathered to step up international support for the vaccination programmes still only in their early stages in many developing countries, particularly in Africa.

There will be a working Ministerial dinner on the evening of June 3 attended by senior representatives from the life sciences industry, who are planning to convene concurrently in Oxford to discuss the themes under the Prime Minister's Pandemic Preparedness Partnership between public and private sectors and key issues on the health agenda for the Summit.

- The Health Ministers' Meeting on 3-4 June will precede and inform health discussions at the Leaders' Summit, hosted by the Prime Minister on 11-13 June.
- As with all major events this year, extensive contingencies will be in place to minimise any risks and steps taken to ensure the events are COVID-secure.
- Every delegate arriving in the UK will be required to take a COVID-19 test up to three days before departure with a negative result and will subsequently undergo daily testing prior to attending any of the venues.