

# Prime Minister's statement on coronavirus (COVID-19): 3 February 2021

Good afternoon,

When Captain Sir Tom Moore decided to launch a national campaign in his own back garden

raising more money and achieving more in his one hundredth year than perhaps any Centenarian in our history

he knew instinctively which organisation he wanted to thank and support

it was – and is – the NHS. And he was right.

Because there are many people and groups responsible for the UK's vaccination programme

and we owe our thanks to our brilliant scientists,

to Kate Bingham and the Vaccine Task Force which has procured over 400 million doses of seven different types of vaccine,

to the manufacturers and the delivery drivers,

the pharmacists, the military medics, countless volunteers,

but to get this life-saving medicine into the arms of the nation at the kind of speed that we're seeing

we are relying on the doctors, nurses and all the staff of our NHS.

And it is thanks to their effort – the most colossal in the history of our National Health Service –

that we have today passed the milestone of 10 million vaccinations in the United Kingdom,

including almost 90 per cent of those aged 75 and over in England

and every eligible person in a care home.

And with every jab and every day, we have more evidence about the effectiveness of these vaccines.

New research from Oxford University suggests the protection provided by the first dose of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine kicks in after three weeks and lasts right the way through to the booster at three months.

And research also shows that the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine seems likely to reduce transmission to others.

And even if these vaccines cannot make us invulnerable,  
and no vaccine has ever given 100 per cent protection to everybody  
the evidence increasingly shows that our vaccines achieve this crucial  
objective:

to reduce death and serious illness from those major strains of Covid that  
have been subject to research.

And in the days leading up to our review point in the week of the 15th of  
February we will be accumulating even more data

helped by NHS Test and Trace –

so that we can begin to chart a way ahead

starting, if the data allow, with the re-opening of schools on March 8th.

And I will be setting out as much as we can about that roadmap forward on  
February 22nd

And though today there are some signs of hope

the numbers of Covid patients in hospital are beginning to fall for the first  
time since the onset of this new wave –

the level of infection is still alarmingly high.

And I am sorry to say that we have lost another 1,322 lives in the last 24  
hours alone

and our hearts again go out to every family that grieves.

And the wards of our NHS are under huge pressure with more than 32,000 Covid  
patients still in hospital.

And so tonight let's clap together for Captain Tom at 6pm and let's clap for  
the spirit of optimism that he stood for

but let's also clap for all those he campaigned for

our brilliant NHS staff and care workers

and let's do everything we can to carry on supporting them.

Because if we stay at home, protect our NHS and save lives,

then in the words of Captain Tom –

tomorrow will be a good day.