

Prime Minister's statement on coronavirus (COVID-19): 30 September 2020

When I spoke to you all last week I explained that the number of Covid patients going into hospital had doubled in a fortnight

and I explained that the rate of infections was climbing steeply.

I said that we faced the sad reality that on these figures we could expect many more daily deaths.

And so that's why we announced the package of restrictions and stronger enforcement last week.

At the same time we've been intensifying the local lockdowns in areas where the disease has been flaring up.

I want to say – I know how tough it is and has been for these communities and I want to pay a particular tribute to the students who are experiencing a first term back at university unlike anything they could have imagined.

I can assure you, assure everybody at university, that plans are being put in place to allow students home safely for Christmas.

I wish I could tell you tonight that the impact of this package has already begun to appear but it will take time to feed through.

And yesterday we saw the biggest rise in daily cases since the pandemic began, today a further 7,108.

We've also had a tragic increase in the number of daily deaths – with 71 yesterday and again today.

And these figures show why our plan is so essential

We now have to stick to it together – and we should stick to it with confidence,

because there are many ways in which we are far better prepared than we were in March.

We are on track to hit our target of being able to conduct 500,000 tests a day by the end of October,

We're already exceeding the number of tests per capita that are conducted in Germany, France and Spain.

We have over 2,000 beds that could be available across seven Nightingale

hospitals, and we will be able to go further if needed.

We've ordered 32 billion items of PPE, and we'll have a four month stockpile of masks, visors, gowns and other essentials for winter.

By December, by the way, we expect UK manufacturers will meet 70 per cent of the demand for PPE compared with just one per cent before the pandemic.

And in the last six months we have more than trebled the availability of mechanical ventilators to our NHS across the UK to 31,500.

But the best way forwards, to protect the NHS, save lives, to keep our children in school and the economy moving, is to follow the rules wherever we live.

So I want to thank everyone for the fantastic national effort that we are seeing, continuing to see

And no matter how impatient we may be, how fed up we may become there is only one way of doing this,

and that's by showing a collective forbearance, common sense and willingness to make sacrifices for the safety of others.

At this critical moment, when I know people will be wanting to know the details, I will be providing regular updates through these press conferences.

And I have to be clear, that if the evidence requires it, we will not hesitate to take further measures that would, I'm afraid, be more costly than the ones we have put into effect now

But if we put in the work together now, then we give ourselves the best possible chance of avoiding that outcome and avoiding further measures

I know some people will think we should give up and let the virus take its course, despite the huge loss of life that would potentially entail.

I have to say, I profoundly disagree.

And I don't think it's what the British people want, I don't think they want to throw in the sponge, they want to fight and defeat this virus and that is what we are going to do.

Even as we fight Covid, it is vital that people get all the treatment they need for other conditions.

But I must be clear, if the NHS were to be overwhelmed by covid, then no-one could get any such care.

That's why we must bear down on the virus now, so that we never reach that point,

and I am absolutely confident that with ever increased testing, with better treatments and of course with the prospect of a vaccine,

we will get through this.

So let's follow the rules,

wash our hands, cover our faces, observe social distancing,

download the app, as 14 million of you have already done,

and together we will fight back against this virus,

protect our NHS and save many more lives.