

Prime Minister's statement on coronavirus (COVID-19): 5 November 2020

Good evening everyone,

Across the whole United Kingdom, people are engaged in a huge joint effort to put the coronavirus back in its box. Throughout the pandemic, this government has done whatever it takes to protect lives and livelihoods – in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

We have put in place an unprecedented package of economic support, protecting the wages and jobs of millions of people.

We have built the largest testing capacity in Europe, with 32 million tests conducted so far and over half a million tests now available every day across the UK.

We have ensured that, as we head into winter, the NHS has at its disposal over 30,000 ventilators and billions of items of Personal Protective Equipment, most of it now manufactured here in the UK.

Across the whole of the UK, we have a shared goal – to suppress the virus, ensure the NHS is not overwhelmed, and in doing so to save lives.

The UK Government and the devolved administrations are working together on a joint approach to the Christmas period, because all of us want to ensure families can come together wherever they live.

The challenges we face are significant across the U.K.

The average number of new cases each day is now 22,398, that's up from 9,716 a month earlier.

There are now 12,320 patients in hospital, up from 2,602 a month earlier.

1,142 patients are now in mechanical ventilation beds, up from 369 a month earlier.

Sadly 492 deaths were reported yesterday. The weekly average number of deaths each day is now 295, up from 53 a month earlier.

That's why new restrictions are in place in each part of the UK.

In England, from today, we are once again asking you to stay at home.

As I explained on Saturday you can only leave home for specific reasons: for work if you can't work from home, for education, and for essential activities and emergencies.

The full rules, all of the details, are available at [gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus) and on the NHS Covid-19 app – please log on to see what you can and can't do.

I know how tough this is:

For staff in the NHS and care homes, who are facing a tough winter on the frontline.

For families, who can't meet in the way they would want to.

For businesses, forced to shut just as you are getting back on their feet.

I know many of you are anxious, weary and quite frankly fed up with the very mention of this virus

But I want to assure you this is not a repeat of the spring.

Schools, universities and nurseries are all staying open.

And these measures though they are tough are time-limited.

The advice I have received suggests that four weeks is enough for these measures to make a real impact.

So these rules will expire, and on 2 December we plan to move back to a tiered approach.

There is light at the end of the tunnel.

We have better treatments and techniques to take care of those in hospital, thanks largely to the ingenuity of British scientists.

Rapid testing is being rolled out on a massive scale – with city-wide testing starting tomorrow in Liverpool.

I am hugely grateful to the people of Liverpool for their participation in this pilot. I hope that by working together, we can get that great city on top of the virus.

More broadly, there is also the very real chance of safe and effective vaccines.

So taking those things together, these scientific advances can show us the way ahead.

And in the meantime, the government will continue to support people affected by these new restrictions.

As you know, we have protected almost 10 million jobs through furlough, and as the Chancellor announced earlier today, we are now extending the scheme through to March.

We are also extending our support for the self-employed, so that the next payment increases to 80 per cent of average profits.

We're providing cash grants for businesses who are closed, worth more than £1 billion every month.

We are giving £1.1 billion to Local Authorities in England to support businesses.

And a further £2 billion of funding is guaranteed for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

As we face these challenges together, we must look after those in most need.

As of September we have helped over 29,000 rough sleepers off the streets, two thirds of whom are now in settled accommodation.

Today we're announcing a further £15 million to help councils offer safe accommodation for people who are sleeping rough or at risk of becoming homeless. This programme will help areas that need additional support most during the restrictions and throughout the winter.

These are difficult times.

And while it pains me to have to ask once again for so many to give up so much, I know that, together, we can get through this.

So please, for the next four weeks, stay at home, protect the NHS and save lives.

I'll now hand over to the Head of NHS England Simon Stevens who's going to talk about the NHS's preparations for winter.