

# [Response to the Financial Times article on ventilators](#)

The 28/03/20 edition of FT Weekend contains a number of inaccurate claims about the UK's efforts to procure and manufacture ventilators in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

To date, there are more than 8,000 ventilators available to NHS patients, with another 8,000 expected from existing international manufacturers in the coming weeks. We have also been clear that the UK must step up production of ventilators even further to support the UK's response to the virus and save lives.

The government has partnered with a number of the UK's leading technology and engineering firms with smaller manufacturers to rapidly build existing, modified or newly designed ventilators at speed, with seven priority projects underway. They are working to improve the speed at which current UK ventilator manufacturers can produce their devices, with larger companies changing their existing operations to help provide the UK with the equipment and personnel it needs for this effort. Many other UK manufacturers are building, designing and developing new effective, safe and easy-to-build ventilators – all orders from the government will be subject to them passing stringent safety tests.

The government's overriding aim is to protect the NHS and save lives.

## **Claim:**

Several companies have complained that offers were not taken up to provide some of the additional machines needed to save the lives of people with acute respiratory difficulties caused by Covid-19.

## **Response:**

The response we've had from British industry has been nothing short of incredible, with an overwhelming response from companies offering help including designing and building new devices, manufacturing components or transporting them to NHS hospitals. To say we have ignored suppliers is wrong – we have responded to all companies that contacted us with offers of help. We are working with a number of firms to scale up production of existing UK ventilator manufacturers, as well as designing and manufacturing new products from scratch, and procuring thousands more machines from overseas.

## **Claim:**

The Government should have been in touch with companies sooner and has now missed out.

## **Response:**

We would expect suppliers of ventilator parts, like MEC Medical, to receive orders from companies for some of the components needed to scale up production of UK ventilator manufacturers.

## **Claim:**

The Government doesn't follow through with their promises that they'll buy any new ventilators.

## **Response:**

This is untrue. We have over 8,000 machines arriving in the coming weeks and we are working to procure more everyday. We are also working alongside industry to scale up existing UK manufacturing and, simultaneously, design and manufacture new products. Of course, any new orders are all dependent on machines passing regulatory tests. We are rapidly ramping up ventilator production in response to this crisis.

Anyone who has existing ventilator stock and can support should [email here](#) and if you want to offer wider support visit [this page](#).

## **Claim:**

The Government didn't get in touch quickly and now the lead in times for ventilators from abroad are months away.

## **Response:**

Many distributors are offering us plans for future supply from overseas, but unfortunately many of these simply did not stand up to due diligence, where safety of our citizens is of paramount importance. However, the government has been successful in recent days buying directly from factories. Indeed we took a delivery from a manufacturer in an EU member state just this week. Of course we have bought from agents where that is not possible.

We are doing whatever it takes to protect the NHS and save lives.