

## Second British-Turkmen webinar on COVID-19

On 30 September, as part of the ongoing British-Turkmen scientific dialogue and the UK Government's global COVID-19 response, British Embassy Ashgabat organised a second scientific-educational webinar on the effective treatment methods and further prevention of COVID-19 in Turkmenistan.

Senior scientists, doctors and professors from the UK shared their best knowledge and latest practical experience in effectively treating the COVID-19 patients with the colleagues at the Turkmen Ministry of Healthcare and Medical Industry, State Sanitary and Epidemiological Service and Centre of Public Health and Nutrition.

During the webinar, Professor Neil Squires, Director of Global Public Health at Public Health England (PHE), which is an executive agency of the UK's Department of Health and Social Care, summarised the UK strategies for combating COVID-19 and precautionary measures to prepare for the upcoming winter season.

Professor Paul Moss, professor of Haematology at the Institute of Immunology and Immunotherapy and Deputy Head of the College of Medical and Dental Sciences at the University of Birmingham, continued the discussion with updating the participants on the current immunology and immunity treatments in the UK. Professor Moss also covered the broad clinical overview and steroid treatment as well as immunotherapy and antibody treatments derived from plasma from recovering patients during his presentation.

Dr Peter Forster, Fellow at McDonald Institute at the University of Cambridge and UK Director of Research at the Institute for Forensic Genetics, briefed the audience on the global spread and mutation of the coronavirus.

Dr Shiu-Wan Chan, Lecturer at the Division of Infection, Immunity & Respiratory Medicine at the University of Manchester presented the outcomes of her most recent research on anti-viral treatments. Dr Chan also updated the audience on the current state of play of the most promising vaccine research and trials in the world.

Finally, Dr Brijesh V Patel, Clinical Senior Lecturer in Cardiothoracic Critical Care at the Imperial College London, presented a latest overview of the intensive care unit (ICU) protocols and management of COVID-19 in the UK (including best use of oxygen and ventilators).

Dr Patel also explained in detail to the Turkmen counterparts the work of Extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO), which is an extracorporeal technique of providing prolonged cardiac and respiratory support to persons whose heart and lungs are unable to provide an adequate amount of gas exchange or perfusion to sustain life.

The virtual event concluded with an interactive Q&A session.

The coronavirus outbreak is the biggest public health emergency in a generation. It calls for decisive and coordinated action, guided by the WHO and based on science and evidence. The UK stands with the world to tackle this crisis, as international cooperation is the only cure for COVID-19.