

# Secretary of State Co-Chairs Joint Ministerial Covid-19 Conference Call

News story

A Joint statement following a COVID-19 virtual meeting chaired by Secretary of State and Tanaiste.



Today the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Rt Hon Brandon Lewis, and the Tánaiste, Simon Coveney, jointly chaired a fourth conference call, with the First Minister, the Rt Hon Arlene Foster, deputy First Minister Michelle O'Neill, Health Minister Robin Swann and Minister for Health Simon Harris to discuss the ongoing response to COVID-19.

They reviewed the latest developments in the collective effort to combat COVID-19 and the ongoing cooperation between the Ministers of Health and Chief Medical Officers through the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding.

They discussed respective plans for the gradual and controlled easing of restrictions given the importance of implementing consistent approaches wherever possible and strong collaborative arrangements.

They welcomed the shared commitment to a phased approach to easing restrictions and roadmaps – recognising that these measures will need to be implemented with flexibility based on the constant monitoring of the transmission rate of the virus in communities and strong data-sharing arrangements North/South.

It was agreed that our approaches will be aimed at avoiding a second wave of the virus and that the cooperation of the public everywhere will be crucial to this in the long-term in implementing social distancing, carrying out good hand hygiene, and following self-isolation guidance for those experiencing symptoms.

They agreed to continue to meet regularly in this format, in addition to the ongoing regular engagement between Health Ministers, Chief Medical Officers

and between relevant Ministers on specific issues.

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