

[Contacting the Patient Safety Commissioner for England](#)

News story

Dr Henrietta Hughes began her role as the Patient Safety Commissioner for England on 12 September 2022.



Dr Henrietta Hughes was appointed as the [first ever Patient Safety Commissioner for England](#) in July. She began her role on 12 September.

Dr Hughes is an independent point of contact for patients so that patients' voices are heard and acted upon. She will use patients' insight to help the government and the healthcare system in England listen and respond to patients' views and promote patient safety, specifically with regard to medicines and medical devices.

For more information on the role of the Patient Safety Commissioner see the [fact sheet](#) and the [government's response to a consultation regarding the post](#).

The [privacy notice](#) sets out how the Patient Safety Commissioner collects and uses personal data to fulfil the role.

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[Over 30 million people urged to take up 'vital' flu and COVID-19 vaccines](#)

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) is urging everyone [eligible](#) for a free

flu vaccine and a COVID-19 booster to take up the offer as soon as possible ahead of what could be a difficult winter with respiratory viruses circulating widely.

International surveillance shows that H3N2 – a subtype of influenza type A – is currently the most-commonly detected flu virus worldwide. H3N2 has recently caused waves of infection in southern hemisphere countries such as Australia, which has also experienced flu circulating earlier than usual in their winter season.

This H3N2 strain circulated in the UK last winter but was held largely in check by COVID-19 restrictions when people mixed a lot less and worked from home. This helped to protect people from catching flu but has also led to lower levels of natural immunity to this strain building up within the population.

There was record uptake of the flu jab in people aged 65 and over in 2021 and 2022 (82%), though there was lower uptake among people in clinical risk groups and pregnant women and these groups are particularly encouraged to come forward this year.

All primary school children and some secondary school children are eligible for the flu nasal spray this year, which is usually given at school. GP surgeries are also inviting children aged 2 and 3 years old (age on 31 August) for this nasal spray vaccination at their practices.

Most young children will not have encountered flu yet. This means they will not have built up any natural immunity to this virus, so it is particularly important for them to take up the flu vaccine this year.

In addition to the predicted flu wave, we have early indications that COVID-19 rates are beginning to rise ahead of winter, increasing the threat to people's health.

[Study results](#) from early in the pandemic show individuals who catch both flu and COVID-19 at the same time, known as co-infection, are around twice as likely to suffer death compared to those who only have COVID-19.

For all those who are eligible, taking up both the COVID-19 booster and the flu jab is an essential form of protection against the most severe respiratory viruses in circulation this winter.

As well as taking up the vaccines, everyone is encouraged to help stop the spread of respiratory viruses this winter by practising good hand hygiene, wearing masks in crowded or enclosed public spaces and covering your nose and mouth when you cough and sneeze.

Dr Susan Hopkins, Chief Medical Advisor at UKHSA, said:

Flu and COVID-19 are unpredictable but there are strong indications we could be facing the threat of widely circulating flu, lower levels of natural immunity due to less exposure over the last three

winters and an increase in COVID-19 circulating with lots of variants that can evade the immune response. This combination poses a serious risk to our health, particularly those in high-risk groups.

The H3N2 flu strain can cause particularly severe illness. If you are elderly or vulnerable because of other conditions you are at greater risk, so getting the flu jab is a sensible, potentially life-saving thing to do.

We are extremely fortunate to have vaccines against these two diseases. Most eligible groups have been selected because they are at higher risk of severe illness.

Younger children are unlikely to have built up any natural immunity to flu and therefore it is particularly important they take the nasal spray vaccine this year. So, if you are offered a jab, please come forward to protect yourself and help reduce the burden on our health services.

Deputy Chief Medical Officer Dr Thomas Waite said:

Vaccines have saved many lives over the years for both flu and more recently COVID-19. But we must not be complacent – infections will rise once again this winter, so it's really important people get both their COVID-19 and flu vaccines if eligible.

Vaccines are the best way to protect yourself from serious illness and will help reduce pressure on the healthcare system.

NHS director for vaccinations and screening Steve Russell said:

This winter could be the first time we see the effects of the so called 'twindemic' with both COVID-19 and flu in full circulation, so it is vital that those most susceptible to serious illness from these viruses come forward for vaccines in order to protect themselves and those around them.

If you have been offered a flu vaccination or COVID-19 booster you should book in as soon as possible and with more vaccination centres than ever before this year, they are quick, convenient and will provide vital protection this winter.

HMT response to Bank of England financial stability intervention

Government response

HM Treasury responds to the Bank of England's intervention to support financial stability



The Bank of England, in line with its financial stability objective, carefully monitors financial markets and any potential risk to the flow of credit to the real economy, and subsequent effects on UK households and businesses.

Global financial markets have seen significant volatility in recent days.

The Bank has identified a risk from recent dysfunction in gilt markets, so the Bank will temporarily carry out purchases of long-dated UK government bonds from today (28 September) in order to restore orderly market conditions. These purchases will be strictly time limited, and completed in the next two weeks. To enable the Bank to conduct this financial stability intervention, this operation has been fully indemnified by HM Treasury.

The Chancellor is committed to the Bank of England's independence. The Government will continue to work closely with the Bank in support of its financial stability and inflation objectives.

Further information

- There has been significant repricing of UK and global financial assets, which has become more significant in the past days such that it is now affecting the functioning of core financial markets.
- This is particularly true of long-dated UK government debt.
- This intervention has been undertaken by the Bank Executive, having carried out engagement with the Financial Policy Committee and Monetary Policy Committee, in line with their respective Concordats regarding the Sterling Monetary Framework.
- The Chancellor authorised the Governor's request for an indemnity for

the operation, which will in turn ensure that financial conditions remain accessible for households and businesses.

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[New OPSS call for data](#)

Interested parties are invited to submit any scientific information relevant to the safety assessment of cosmetic ingredients in the list below:

- Propylparaben (CAS 94-13-3)
- Resorcinol (CAS 108-46-3)
- Benzophenone (CAS 119-61-9)
- Benzyl salicylate (CAS 118-58-1)
- Genistein (CAS 446-72-0)
- Daidzein (CAS 486-66-8)

OPSS would like to evaluate the safety of these ingredients in cosmetic products due to their suspected endocrine disrupting properties.

Data on each individual ingredient must be provided as a separate submission.

[Respond to this call for data online](#) – Citizen Space website

Please note that the deadline for the submitting of data has been extended until 30 November 2022. If you have already submitted files, you do not need to re-submit them.

Deadline for submission: 30 November 2022

[Engineer your way to a successful career with Dstl](#)

As part of the government's [ongoing investment in defence and security science and technology](#), the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory is currently recruiting engineers from a wide range of specialisms, to do work that can't be done anywhere else.

[Dstl](#) is an executive agency of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) providing world class expertise and delivering cutting-edge science and technology for the

benefit of the nation and allies.

Working at Dstl offers a unique chance to work on complex and sometimes sensitive projects that have a real-world impact, as research is put into action by the MOD and wider government.

In addition to this important work, you also receive significant [benefits](#) including a generous pension scheme and flexible working, while also having the opportunity to grow your career through investment in training and professional development.

Dstl is a place where everyone can thrive, succeed and achieve their ambitions, regardless of background, different circumstances, experiences or characteristics. We [celebrate and support diversity](#), for example through our active employee support networks.

As part of National Inclusion Week 2022, one of our senior engineers, Roger/Becky, shared their experience of inclusivity at Dstl. Roger/Becky identifies as genderfluid; that is someone who doesn't identify as having a fixed gender. For Roger/Becky, some days he presents as male and some days she presents as female. Watch Becky talk about her experience of the inclusive culture at Dstl and the [MOD engineering profession](#):

[Defence Engineers – Give it all you are – Becky-Roger](#)

Our current engineering job vacancies include:

Browse [all Dstl jobs at Civil Service Jobs](#) where you can also sign up for new job alerts.

You can also read or watch the [career stories of some of our world-class people](#) and find out what it's like to work at the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory – like [Louise](#), who did a degree in artist blacksmithing and then became a full time electronics engineering apprentice at Dstl.