

# HRT Taskforce presents recommendations to support future supply

- Recommendations are to be taken forward by Department of Health and Social Care to help ensure continued HRT supply meets demand
- Forms part of wider work to support menopausal women access the health and care they need and tackle the gender health gap

Action will be taken to make supplies of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) more resilient as Head of the HRT Taskforce Madelaine McTernan presents her key recommendations to support future management of the supply chain.

The recommendations will inform the work of the department and the UK wide menopause taskforce as Ms McTernan has returned to working full time as the Director General of the Vaccine Taskforce as preparation for the autumn booster campaign ramps up.

Improving access to HRT forms part of the government's wider commitment to tackle the gender health gap, including support for menopausal women. The Women's Health Strategy, published earlier this year, includes the menopause as a key area.

Access to HRT has improved following decisive actions to increase supply and manage demand including issuing Serious Shortage Protocols on HRT products to limit dispensing to three months' supply and allow specified alternative products to be supplied if necessary.

Following positive engagement across the supply chain, suppliers have also moved to secure additional stock and expedite deliveries of HRT products experiencing supply issues. Suppliers are building future capacity to support continued growth in demand.

These combined actions have resulted in improvement in supply of products including Oestrogel gel. The number of packs of Oestrogel delivered to the UK in July was double the monthly average for the first quarter this year demonstrating a very substantial increase.

Health and Social Care Secretary Steve Barclay said:

Women's health is a priority for this government, and we are ensuring everyone who needs HRT is able to access it.

Madelaine's work and that of her taskforce and the department has been vital, and her recommendations will ensure progress in HRT supply continues.

Core recommendations from the HRT taskforce include:

- Continued dialogue with industry both via continuing the successful model of regular industry roundtables as well as individual engagement
- Continued use of Serious Shortage Protocols when appropriate to manage shortages as steps are taken by suppliers to increase production
- Continued assessment whether NHS formularies may be impacting access to HRT

Taking steps to action these recommendations 12 of the 13 Serious Shortage Protocols (SSPs) in place for HRT have been extended to help provide ongoing stability as HRT products that have experienced supply issues increase stock levels. The department has also established quarterly industry roundtables with key suppliers to ensure continued dialogue and help industry to plan for the future.

Outgoing Head of the HRT Taskforce Madelaine McTernan said:

I am pleased to see the situation with HRT supply is improving across the country. I want to thank suppliers and manufacturers for their engagement and positive action to tackle this serious issue.

I have presented my key learnings on how the department can continue to manage HRT supply and work with the industry as it continues efforts to meet rising demand.

Further recommendations to help ensure continued HRT supply to meet rising demand:

- Improved access to data on prescriptions to more easily see where there are shortfalls between HRT packs prescribed and HRT packs supplied by manufacturers; and
- Taking lessons from the HRT supply chain work to inform broader medicine supply work

Minister for Women's Health Maria Caulfield said:

We are taking steps across the board to tackle the gender health gap and ensure women can access the health and care services they need – including access to HRT.

I thank Madelaine and her team and I look forward to taking forward her recommendations as part of the ongoing work of the department.

The taskforce has held two roundtables and has ongoing discussions with key suppliers to understand issues and engage on plans to meet demand.

It has issued Serious Shortage Protocols (SSPs) to restrict dispensing of certain products to three months and allow pharmacists to substitute certain products for alternatives.

Following a return to good availability, Premique Low Dose is no longer subject to an SSP. The MHRA, have delivered workshops to ensure manufacturers and pharmacists are aware of guidance to help them manage stock levels and worked with the NHS to understand and communicate the role of formularies (a list of recommended medicines) in terms of access to HRT.

Government has also taken action to reduce costs of HRT. The creation of a prepayment certificate will mean women can access HRT on a month-by-month basis if needed, easing pressure on supply, paying a one-off charge equivalent to two single prescription charges (currently £18.70) for all their HRT prescriptions for a year. This system will be implemented by April 2023.

The Menopause Taskforce, which meets every two months, will continue to tackle issues surrounding the menopause including increasing access to treatment, and ending the taboos and stigmas that still surround conversations about the menopause, including in the workplace.

Dame Lesley Regan has also been appointed the first ever Women's Health Ambassador for England to support in the implementation of the Women's Health Strategy and improve women's experiences of the health and care system in England.

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## [East Midlands local economy to be levelled up with historic billion pound devolution deal](#)

- Historic devolution deal agreed with Derbyshire and Derby, Nottinghamshire and Nottingham with directly elected mayor
- Powers and budgets will be devolved from central government to the East Midlands through a new Mayoral Combined County Authority
- More than £1 billion investment fund over 30 years to help boost employment, families, and schools in the area

Local leaders in large parts of the East Midlands will be given new powers to improve transport, boost skills training and build more attractive and affordable homes through a historic, first of a kind [county devolution deal](#) signed with the government today.

Levelling Up Secretary Greg Clark will sign the deal with Derbyshire and Derby, Nottinghamshire and Nottingham, which will see the area appoint a directly elected mayor, responsible for delivering local priorities, backed by a new £38 million per year investment fund, totalling £1.14 billion over 30 years.

The deal delivers on a commitment made in the government's Levelling Up white paper published early this year to shift in powers and resources away from Whitehall to local communities.

In addition to the agreed funding being under local control rather than control from Whitehall, a new Mayoral Combined County Authority will be created, with control over the core adult education budget, to boost skills in the region, as well as the ability to increase control over transport infrastructure.

The new mayor will also be granted powers to drive regeneration, with compulsory purchase powers and the ability to designate Mayoral development areas and establish Mayoral Development Corporations to promote growth and build new homes.

**Levelling up Secretary Greg Clark said:**

The East Midlands is renowned for its economic dynamism and it has the potential to lead the Britain's economy of the future. For a long time I have believed that the East Midlands should have the powers and devolved budgets that other areas in Britain have been benefitting from and I am thrilled to be able to bring that about in Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

I am impressed by the way councils in the region have come together to agree the first deal of this kind in the country, which will benefit residents in all of the great cities, towns and villages across the area of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire.

Taking decisions out of Whitehall and putting them back in the hands of local people is foundational to levelling up and this deal does that.

The new East Midlands Combined County Authority will also be granted control of over £17 million of additional funding for the building of new homes on brownfield land in 2024/25, subject to sufficient eligible projects for funding being identified, and a further £18 million has been agreed to support housing priorities and drive Net Zero Ambitions into the area.

**In a joint statement, Ben Bradley MP, Leader of Nottinghamshire County Council, Barry Lewis, Leader of Derbyshire County Council, Chris Poulter, Leader of Derby City Council, and David Mellen, Leader of Nottingham City Council, said:**

We welcome the £1.14 billion devolution deal from the government on offer for our region. It's fantastic news.

We want to make the most of every penny so this can be used to make a real difference to people's lives.

As Leaders, we have all fought for a fairer share for our cities and counties, and a bigger voice for our area, to give us the clout and the influence we deserve, and to help us live up to our full potential.

This deal would help make that a reality, creating more and better jobs through greater investment in our area, with increased economic growth, better transport, housing, skills training, and an enhanced greener environment, as we move towards being carbon neutral. These are what we all want to see, and we will work together for the common good of the East Midlands.

We haven't always had the same level of funding or influence as other areas, which has held us back. This is a golden opportunity to change that and put the power to do so in our own hands.

There is a lot still to be agreed, and this is the beginning of the journey, not the end. We're determined to build on this deal over time, as other areas have done.

This will be the first ever Mayoral Combined County Authority, a new model of devolution provided for in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. Implementation of this deal is dependent on Parliamentary approval of the Bill and necessary secondary legislation, as well as a public consultation.

This marks another important milestone in the government's commitment to ensure that every area in England that wants a devolution deal can get one by 2030, as promised in the Levelling Up white paper published earlier this year.

New powers will help to improve local skills which will meet the specific needs of the local economy, helping to boost the region financially. In addition, there will be greater powers to drive regeneration creating more affordable housing for local people, making the area a more desirable place to live, work and visit.

This will be the first ever Mayoral Combined County Authority, a new model of devolution that includes upper tier local authorities only. Both the government and the upper tier councils place high importance on working with the 15 district and borough councils across the region to ensure their voices are represented.

This new institutional model is subject to Royal Assent of the provisions within the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill – the model was first introduced in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill which is currently progressing through Parliament.

There is a statutory process which includes consultation by the councils of their detailed proposals, ratification by the councils and Parliamentary approval to secondary legislation establishing a combined county authority with the powers outlined. It is hoped that, subject to Parliamentary agreement the first mayoral election could take place in May 2024.

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# [Pauline Wallace appointed as permanent UK Endorsement Board Chair](#)

News story

Pauline Wallace appointed as permanent Chair of the UK Endorsement Board.



Pauline Wallace has been appointed as the first permanent Chair of the UK Endorsement Board (UKEB).

The UK Endorsement Board was set up to endorse and adopt new or amended international accounting standards on behalf of the UK.

Pauline has held the role of Chair on an interim basis since September 2020 and has led the establishment of the Board and its early work. This has included the UKEB's adoption of International Financial Reporting Standard 17 Insurance Contracts, a major new international accounting standard relating to insurance contract accounting which was adopted for use in the UK on 16 May 2022.

Pauline's 3-year term as Chair will officially commence on 11 September 2022.

**Lord Callanan, Minister for Corporate Responsibility, said:**

I am delighted that Pauline Wallace will continue in her role as Chair of the UK Endorsement Board. Pauline has demonstrated strong leadership during her interim appointment, including overseeing the UKEB's endorsement and adoption of IFRS 17 Insurance Contracts, a transformative standard for the insurance industry. I look forward to the next 3 years of the UKEB's work with Pauline at the helm.

**Pauline Wallace, UK Endorsement Board Chair, said:**

It has been my privilege to serve as the UKEB's interim Chair and to lead it through a successful inaugural year. As permanent Chair I look forward to working with the Board and all of our stakeholders to continue to build upon the solid foundations that we put in place in 2021 to 2022. I am proud of what we achieved in our first year and confident that the UKEB will continue to maintain the UK's position as a thought leader and key influencer of international financial reporting.

## **About Pauline Wallace**

Pauline has over 30 years' experience in accounting standards, both as a practitioner and as a national standard setter in the UK and Hong Kong. Prior to her work with the UKEB, Pauline was a partner in PwC where she established and led the global financial instruments team during the transition of EU listed companies to IFRS and throughout the global financial crisis. She was PwC's UK head of public policy and regulatory affairs until her retirement in 2013. Since retiring from PwC, Pauline served 2 terms as a member of the FCA's Regulatory Decisions Committee and is currently a member of the Determinations Panel of the Pensions Regulator. Pauline was a member of the UK Accounting Standards Board from 2010 to 2016 and a member of the ICAEW's Regulatory Board from 2015 to 2019.

## **About the UK Endorsement Board**

- The UKEB is responsible for the adoption of international accounting standards (IAS) for use in the UK following the delegation of functions relating to IAS under the International Accounting Standards (Delegation of Functions) (EU Exit) Regulations 2021
- the UKEB currently consists of 11 Board members, including Pauline Wallace as its Chair
- UK-adopted international accounting standards are mandatory in the UK for listed companies when preparing their consolidated financial statements
- further information on the UKEB and UK-adopted international accounting standards is available on the UKEB's website

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## **[Tim Smith appointed industry chair of Food and Drink Sector Council](#)**

News story

Tim Smith takes on the role from outgoing co-chairs Terry Jones and Ian Wright



Tim Smith was appointed as the new industry chair of the Food and Drink Sector Council today (Tuesday 30 August).

He will take up the role immediately and will share the chair with the Government chair, Food Minister Victoria Prentis.

The Food and Drink Sector Council is a formal industry partnership with the Government which works to address challenges faced by the sector and build a more productive and sustainable food and drink system. The Council will also take on the role of delivering some of the measures outlined in the recent Food Strategy for industry and the Government. The co-chair's role is primarily to lead and challenge the Council in order to inspire and create change from within the sector, as well as looking for opportunities for cooperation in the wider Government agenda.

Mr Smith takes on the role from outgoing co-chairs Terry Jones and Ian Wright and will be joined by the Food Minister.

Food Minister Victoria Prentis said:

Tim brings an unrivalled experience of the food and drink sector from his time across a number of different organisations and a fantastic enthusiasm to drive forward the council's agenda of meeting the challenges currently faced by the industry at large.

I want to thank out-going co-chairs Ian Wright and Terry Jones for their expert direction – taking the council through the difficulties of the Covid pandemic and our ongoing recovery.

Tim Smith said:

The food and drink sector is facing challenges which are unprecedented in my time. It is imperative that industry and the Government continue to work in partnership to ensure we have a food system fit for the future.



The Food and Drink Sector Council must help provide the strategic oversight to create that system and I'm delighted to take on the role of industry co-chair. I look forward to working with the Ministerial co-chair to identify the key issues facing the sector and to find practical actions to address them.

## **Biography**

Tim is the Chairman of Cranswick plc. For over three decades Tim had leading roles as CEO with manufacturers in the food sector including Northern Foods, Sara Lee, Express Dairies and latterly Arla Foods where he was plc CEO. In 2008 Tim became Chief Executive of the Food Standards Agency (FSA).

From 2012 until 2017, Tim was Group Quality Director at Tesco. He then acted as a senior adviser to retailers and manufacturers until joining Cranswick.

He has served as a Non-Executive Director at Cranswick plc for three years and since May 2019 has been a Non-Executive Director at Pret A Manager. He sits on the Boards of the University of Leeds, Farm Africa and other charities. Recently he has been the Chairman of the Government's Trade and Agriculture Commission. He was awarded the CBE in January 2022 for services to food and agriculture.

The tenure of the chair is two years and follows an open recruitment process.

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## **Tough new rules confirmed to protect UK telecoms networks against cyber attacks**

The new telecoms security regulations will be among the strongest in the world and will provide much tougher protections for the UK from cyber threats which could cause network failure or the theft of sensitive data.

The [Telecommunications \(Security\) Act](#), which became law in November, gives the government powers to boost the security standards of the UK's mobile and broadband networks, including the electronic equipment and software at phone mast sites and in telephone exchanges which handle internet traffic and telephone calls.

Currently, telecoms providers are responsible for setting their own security standards in their networks. However, the government's [Telecoms Supply Chain Review](#) found providers often have little incentive to adopt the best security

practices.

The new regulations and code of practice, developed with the National Cyber Security Centre and Ofcom, set out specific actions for UK public telecoms providers to fulfil their legal duties in the Act. They will improve the UK's cyber resilience by embedding good security practices in providers' long term investment decisions and the day-to-day running of their networks and services.

The substance of the final regulations has been confirmed by the government following a [response to a public consultation](#) on them published today. The regulations are to make sure providers:

- protect data processed by their networks and services, and secure the critical functions which allow them to be operated and managed
- protect software and equipment which monitor and analyse their networks and services
- have a deep understanding of their security risks and the ability to identify when anomalous activity is taking place with regular reporting to internal boards
- take account of supply chain risks, and understand and control who has the ability to access and make changes to the operation of their networks and services to enhance security

Digital Infrastructure Minister Matt Warman said:

We know how damaging cyber attacks on critical infrastructure can be, and our broadband and mobile networks are central to our way of life.

We are ramping up protections for these vital networks by introducing one of the world's toughest telecoms security regimes which secure our communications against current and future threats.

NCSC Technical Director Dr Ian Levy said:

We increasingly rely on our telecoms networks for our daily lives, our economy and the essential services we all use.

These new regulations will ensure that the security and resilience of those networks, and the equipment that underpins them, is appropriate for the future.

The regulations will be laid as secondary legislation in Parliament shortly, alongside a draft code of practice providing guidance on how providers can comply with them.

Ofcom will oversee, monitor and enforce the new legal duties and have the power to carry out inspections of telecoms firms' premises and systems to

ensure they're meeting their obligations. If companies fail to meet their duties, the regulator will be able to issue fines of up to 10 per cent of turnover or, in the case of a continuing contravention, £100,000 per day.

From October, providers will be subject to the new rules and Ofcom will be able to use its new powers to ensure providers are taking appropriate and proportionate measures to meet their security duties and follow the guidance within the code of practice. This includes:

- identifying and assessing the risk to any 'edge' equipment that is directly exposed to potential attackers. This includes radio masts and internet equipment supplied to customers such as Wi-Fi routers and modems which act as entry points to the network
- keeping tight control of who can make network-wide changes
- protecting against certain malicious signalling coming into the network which could cause outages;
- having a good understanding of risks facing their networks
- making sure business processes are supporting security (e.g. proper board accountability)

Providers will be expected to have achieved these outcomes by March 2024. The code of practice will set out further timeframes for completion of other measures. The code will be updated periodically to ensure it keeps pace with any evolving cyber threats.

## **ENDS**

### Notes to editors

The government received responses to the consultation from public telecoms providers, suppliers and trade bodies. The government's response sets out the ways in which those responses have been considered and reflected in the final Regulations and draft Code of Practice.

Technical changes following the consultation include:

- clarification to ensure security measures are targeted at the parts of networks most in need of protection, like new software tools that power 5G networks
- inclusion of further guidance on national resilience, security patching and legacy network protections, to help providers understand actions that need to be taken

The Electronic Communications (Security Measures) Regulations will be laid in Parliament through a statutory instrument under the negative procedure.

The draft code of practice will be laid in Parliament under the requirement in section 105F of the Communications Act 2003 (as amended by the Telecommunications (Security) Act 2021). It will remain in draft for Parliamentary scrutiny for forty sitting days, after which the code of practice will be issued and published.