

# UKHSA calls for a renewed effort to tackle TB

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) is calling on the public and healthcare professionals to help reverse an upward trend in tuberculosis (TB) cases.

The incidence of TB in England had been falling significantly since 2011, when it was among the highest in western Europe with a total of 8,280 cases recorded. However, in 2019 the rate of decline reversed, with cases increasing by 2.4% (from 4,615 in 2018 to 4,725 in 2019).

While TB incidence appeared to fall in 2020 (to 4,125), this most likely reflected healthcare access and provisions during the pandemic and provisional data indicates that cases of the infection rose by 7.4% in 2021 compared to 2020.

Anyone with a cough, particularly those in groups that are at high risk for TB, are being urged not to dismiss their persistent cough and fever as COVID-19 as it could be caused by a range of other issues, including TB.

Tuberculosis is a serious infectious disease and symptoms include a persistent cough (longer than 3 weeks) and fever. While it can be life threatening without appropriate treatment, in the vast majority of cases it can be successfully treated with antibiotics.

The risk factors for TB include close contact with a person with infectious TB disease, migration from countries with high rates of TB, homelessness, substance misuse, a weakened immune system and imprisonment.

Dr Jenny Harries, the CEO of UKHSA, said:

TB is curable and preventable and now is the time to get our elimination efforts back on track. Despite significant progress towards elimination in recent years, tuberculosis remains a serious public health issue in the UK.

With treatment, most people will make a full recovery, but delayed diagnosis and treatment, particularly during the pandemic, will have increased the number of undetected TB cases in the country.

It is important to remember that not every persistent cough, along with a fever, is COVID-19. A cough that usually has mucus and lasts longer than 3 weeks can be caused by a range of other issues, including TB.

Tuberculosis develops slowly, and it may take several weeks, months or even years after you were infected before you notice you're unwell. Contact your GP if you think you could be at risk so you can get tested and treated.

Numbers and rates of cases with drug resistance increased in both 2019 and 2020. There were more cases of drug-resistant TB in 2020 than any year since enhanced surveillance began. 11.6% of cases were resistant to any drug and 2.4% were multidrug resistant (compared to 1.8% in 2019).

TB disproportionately impacts under-served populations such as those who have been homeless, spent time in prison or misused drugs and other substances. Ensuring that everyone has access to a timely diagnosis and effective treatment is critical.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

Despite significant progress made in the last decade towards eliminating tuberculosis in England, it is very concerning to see an upward trend in cases. TB is a serious infectious disease, and without treatment it can be life-threatening.

TB disproportionately affects people in deprived and underserved groups, so it is vital everyone has access to effective treatment so we can continue to level up health across the nation.

If you have a persistent cough that lasts more than 3 weeks along with a fever, please contact your GP as soon as possible to get tested.

Symptoms of TB include:

- a persistent cough that lasts more than 3 weeks and usually brings up phlegm, which may be bloody
- breathlessness that gradually gets worse
- lack of appetite and weight loss
- a high temperature
- night sweats
- extreme tiredness or fatigue

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## [UK and Fiji seal new deal on Maritime Security](#)

Fiji's commitment towards securing and policing its maritime borders is recognised through the signing of a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Fijian Government.

The MOU was officially signed by the Permanent Secretary (PS) of the Office of the Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs, Mr. Yogesh Karan and the British

High Commissioner to Fiji, His Excellency Dr. Brian Jones, on Saturday 19 March, 2022 on board the Royal Navy's Ship HMS Spey. His Excellency The President of Fiji was also at the signing.

In welcoming the new partnership, PS Karan on behalf of the Honourable Prime Minister, Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama, thanked the Government of the United Kingdom of the Great Britain for the exemplary partnership in further advancing our shared commitment on oceans conservation, climate change and tackling maritime security challenges.

He acknowledged the British High Commissioner Dr. Brian Jones for his unwavering support towards the new initiative, which further strengthens the diplomatic ties between Fiji-UK.

This collaboration, he said illustrates Fiji and UK's strong historical ties and solidarity in areas of climate change, oceans, trade, defence and security. PS Karan said the partnership aligns with Fiji-UK's commitment on oceans and implementation of the SDG Agenda 2030 vision of a sustainable ocean or SDG 14.

It also complements Fiji's existing capabilities in maritime management and further elevates the bilateral relations between Fiji and UK, which has continued to deepen in mutual interests and priorities.

PS Karan conveyed the Fijian Government's appreciation to HMS Spey's Executive Officer, Lieutenant Commander Macnae and her crew for their remarkable commitment and service that reaches Fiji, Pacific and beyond.

The British High Commissioner to Fiji, Dr. Brian Jones, said:

The signing of this agreement means Fijian sailors will be able to board Royal Navy vessels and vice versa. This will allow us to work more closely together to combat illegal maritime activity in the Pacific. HMS Spey, currently here with us in Suva, is expected to be in the Pacific for five years or more. Learning from partners like Fiji on the challenges faced and working together on solutions is key for us.

Rear Admiral Simon Asquith OBE, Commander of Operations for the Royal Navy, said:

This MOU enables the Royal Navy and several Fijian civil and military maritime authorities to exchange personnel between them for the purpose of "shipriding". Such activity provides invaluable training and experience to the embarked "shiprider", improving co-operation, co-ordination and interoperability.

The Royal Navy's greenest ship HMS Spey is currently in Fiji to engage with the local communities and the Republic of Fiji Navy to work together on

security and climate change challenges. Earlier this year, HMS Spey visited Tonga following the Hunga-Tonga volcanic eruption and tsunami, delivering humanitarian supplies and supporting repair work to communications infrastructure. HMS Spey is expected to depart Fiji later this month.

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## [Change of Her Majesty's Ambassador to Viet Nam, March 2022](#)

Press release

Mr Iain Frew has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam in succession to Mr Gareth Ward.



Mr Iain Frew has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam in succession to Mr Gareth Ward. Mr Frew will take up his appointment in August 2022.

### **Curriculum vitae**

Full name: Iain Grant Frew

Married to: Sergio Manuel Dias Figueiredo

**2018 to 2021** Brasilia, Prosperity Counsellor

**2016 to 2017** FCO, Head of EU Exit Strategy Department

**2015 to 2016** FCO, Deputy Head of Europe-Internal Department

**2014 to 2015** Riga, Head of Mission

**2012 to 2014** Brussels, First Secretary (Antici)

**2011 to 2012** Brussels, First Secretary (EU Budget)

**2007 to 2011** Moscow, Second later First Secretary (Political)

**2005 to 2007** FCO, Desk Officer, Russia Team

**2005** Joined FCO

## [PM announces major new military support package for Ukraine: 24 March 2022](#)

- Prime Minister will urge Allies to ensure Ukrainians have the means to continue to protect themselves at NATO and G7 summits today
- UK will provide 6,000 new defensive missiles and £25m for Ukraine's armed forces
- Leaders meeting in Brussels are expected to discuss longer-term military, diplomatic and humanitarian support for Ukraine and strengthening measures against Russia

The Prime Minister will announce a major new package of support for Ukraine today at the NATO and G7 leaders' meetings, as he calls on the international community to stay the course on Ukraine and stand against tyranny.

The measures announced today include 6,000 missiles, consisting of anti-tank and high explosive weapons, and £25 million in financial backing for the Ukrainian military. This more than doubles the defensive lethal aid provided to date to more than 10,000 missiles, and comes on top of the £400 million the UK has committed in humanitarian and economic aid for the crisis. The Prime Minister will set out the UK's intention to work with partners to bolster Ukraine's defence capabilities, including longer-range targeting and intelligence, as the Ukrainian people face down an unprovoked invasion.

The UK will also provide an additional £4.1 million for the BBC World Service as part of a cross-government effort to tackle disinformation in Russia and Ukraine, as well as new financial and policing support for the International Criminal Court's investigation into war crimes.

One month into the conflict, the Prime Minister will welcome NATO and the G7's unified stance on Ukraine and collective action on economic, military and diplomatic measures. He will urge Allies and partners to step up a gear in response to Russia's use of increasingly brutal tactics, including by providing enhanced defensive support to Ukraine and doubling down on economic sanctions against the Kremlin.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

Vladimir Putin is already failing in Ukraine. The Ukrainian people have shown themselves to be extraordinarily brave and tenacious in defending their homeland, in the face of an unprovoked onslaught.

But we cannot and will not stand by while Russia grinds Ukraine's towns and cities into dust. The United Kingdom will work with our allies to step up military and economic support to Ukraine, strengthening their defences as they turn the tide in this fight.

One month into this crisis, the international community faces a choice. We can keep the flame of freedom alive in Ukraine, or risk it being snuffed out across Europe and the world.

The UK has already provided over 4,000 anti-tank weapons to Ukraine's armed forces, including Next-Generation Light Anti-Tank Weapons Systems, or NLAWs, and Javelin missiles. The Government is also supplying Starstreak high-velocity anti-air missiles to help Ukrainians defend themselves against aerial bombings, as well as body armour, helmets and combat boots.

The £25 million in new non-ODA funding from the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund will help to pay the salaries of Ukrainian soldiers, pilots and police and ensure the armed forces are well equipped with high-quality equipment. The UK has committed £400 million in humanitarian and economic support to date, complementing the huge generosity of the British public, and donated more than 4 million items of medical equipment and 500 mobile generators.

In further support announced today, the BBC World Service will receive an additional £4.1 million in emergency funding to support its Ukrainian and Russian language services in the region, and to help it create content to counter disinformation about the war in Ukraine. The funding has been provided by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and FCDO.

The Justice Secretary, Dominic Raab, will also chair a meeting of justice and foreign ministers in the Hague today to coordinate support for the International Criminal Court's war crimes investigations. The Deputy Prime Minister is expected to announce an additional £1 million in funding for the court, as well as new support from UK soldiers with expertise in intelligence gathering and the Met Police's War Crimes Team.

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## [Cooperation between the UN and the Arab League: UK at the Security Council](#)

Thank you, Mr President. I thank the Secretary-General, the Arab League Secretary-General and Ms Alaqil for their briefings.

Regional cooperation has a vital role to play in conflict prevention. We

therefore welcome cooperation between the UN and Arab League, and thank today's briefers and the UAE for convening this session. We also welcome adoption of the Arab League's PRST.

Sadly, war and conflict continue to scar the region. The Syrian conflict, for example, has left 14 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. Assad's regime bears responsibility for this tragedy, as it continues to obstruct peace efforts. We therefore welcome the League's continued suspension of Syria's membership and urge against normalisation with Assad.

In Yemen, seven million Yemenis are now on the brink of famine. We therefore call for generous humanitarian funding and welcome the UN Special Envoy's consultations. We also condemn the ongoing Houthi terrorist cross-border attacks on Saudi Arabia and the UAE, including the reprehensible attacks on Saudi civilian infrastructure last week.

We must also remain steadfast in our commitment to a two-state solution based on 1967 lines. To end the conflict, we need to both address the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people, and safeguard Israel's security.

In Libya, there is a real risk of escalation that could unravel the hard-won ceasefire and threaten stability. We urge both sides of the current impasse to accept the offer from Special Adviser Stephanie Williams to facilitate a dialogue. For, as Libya lurches between political crises, it is the Libyan people who suffer most. It is therefore incumbent on all of us to facilitate a path to the elections the Libyan people are waiting for.

Mr President, I would also like to highlight our collective role in tackling catastrophic climate change – which we know is a driver of conflict – and in particular, the role of Egypt and the UAE as they take on the presidencies for COP27 and COP28. During our 'Presidency year' we will work closely with them to ensure commitments made at COP26 are delivered.

Mr President, Russia's invasion of Ukraine has contributed to a bleak humanitarian picture. As the Secretary-General has said, in "Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Sudan and Yemen, their bread basket is being bombed. Ukraine alone provides more than half of the World Food Programme's wheat supply."

So we hope Arab League leaders will continue to support all efforts, including in the General Assembly, to bring an end to this war.

I thank you, Mr President.