

UK pledges £160 million to boost global vaccine development

The UK will pledge £160 million to the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) to speed up vaccine development, as the Foreign Secretary and Health and Social Care Secretary urge international partners to step up and support this vital work.

COVID-19 has shown vaccines are the way out of pandemics, saving millions of lives and restoring cherished freedoms. The funding announced by the UK will support CEPI's drive to accelerate the development of vaccines for the deadliest infectious diseases, like COVID-19, and enable equitable access to these vaccines globally.

The announcement comes ahead of the UK government hosting the Global Pandemic Preparedness Summit on 7 to 8 March in London. The event aims to raise funds for CEPI's goal, backed by the UK during our G7 presidency last year, to cut the time it takes to develop new vaccines to 100 days, including 'variant-proof' vaccines that will work against multiple future COVID-19 variants.

The UK has supported CEPI since its inception and has provided £276 million for the organisation's life-saving work since 2018.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

UK scientists and researchers have led the way in developing vaccines to tackle COVID-19, which have saved millions of lives around the world and are key to restoring our freedoms.

The UK is hosting this important summit, providing £160 million in funding to CEPI, which will cut vaccine development times and boost vaccine manufacturing in low- and middle-income countries. I urge other potential donors to step up and fund this vital work to help us avoid future pandemics, save millions of lives and prevent trillions in economic damage.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

This pandemic is a global challenge and it has shown the best way to chart a course back to freedom is by standing side by side with our international partners.

The UK's ground-breaking science and research has led the way on vaccines and treatments, it is helping us learn to live with COVID-19. Our £160 million pledge will support CEPI's vital work to cut vaccine development to 100 days and protect us all against future health threats.

The UK, as a global leader, is helping other countries most in need because no one is safe until everyone is safe.

Dr Richard Hatchett, CEO of CEPI, said:

This funding comes at a critical moment, allowing CEPI to pursue our ambitious programme to develop 'variant proof' vaccines against COVID-19 and other betacoronaviruses as well as pursue our life saving work developing vaccines against the next Disease X and known viral threats such as Lassa Fever, Nipah and Chikungunya.

Contemplating future pandemics is difficult, especially as we continue to battle the current one, but the threat is real and we must seize this rare convergence of political will, practical experience, and scientific progress to build a world that is better prepared.

We are delighted to partner with the UK in hosting next month's Global Pandemic Preparedness Summit which will bring the global community together to focus on future threats and to explore what it will take for the world to be better prepared and, in particular, prepared to develop, and enable access to, safe and effective vaccines against new pathogens in 100 days.

We thank the UK government for elevating the 100 Day Mission to a G7 priority through its Presidency of the G7 in 2021 and for extending its support today. CEPI is proud to continue our collaboration with the UK government and its world-leading life-sciences sector to build a better, safer, more equitable future for all.

The Global Pandemic Preparedness Summit will bring together influential leaders from the world of science and health. The event will host a range of speakers in-person and virtually, including Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General, Dr Anthony Fauci, Chief Medical Advisor to the President of the United States, and Dame Sarah Gilbert who developed the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine.

The UK government invested more than £88 million to support the development of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine. To date, the UK has also donated 32.2 million COVID-19 vaccine doses, of which 25.3 million have gone to COVAX, a global scheme to get more vaccines to developing countries.

The UK has been at the forefront of the global response to COVID-19 from the start of the pandemic. Today's announcement builds on up to £1.3 billion in UK aid committed to the international health response early in the pandemic, supporting vaccines, health systems and economic recovery in developing countries.

- CEPI's ambitions for the next 5 years include reducing the time for vaccine development to 100 days, producing vaccines against whole virus families and supporting the development of national and regional manufacturing capacity in low- and middle-income countries
- CEPI's \$3.5 billion investment case is available at endpandemics.cepi.net and their 100 Days Mission site at 100days.cepi.net