

Animal medicine improvement notice: Swinfen Veterinary Centre, Staffordshire

This notice was served to Swinfen Veterinary Centre, Lichfield, Staffordshire by a VMD inspector during a routine inspection.

The following contravened the Veterinary Medicines Regulation (VMR) 2013:

- Failure to respond to repeated requests to comply with Regulation 23 (Records of the receipt or supply of prescription products) and Schedule 3 paragraph 15 (Annual Audit) of the VMR through multiple inspections.

The improvements required are:

- All Prescription Only Medicines (POM-V and POM-VPS) in stock must be recorded in accordance with Regulation 23
- All products supplied or administered must be recorded in accordance with Regulation 23
- The minimum requirements for Audit must be met

Rosalind Franklin laboratory processes 5 million PCR tests

News story

The lab opened in Royal Leamington Spa in June 2021 and is the biggest of its kind in the UK, playing a vital role in efforts to combat the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).



With around 700 staff members, the lab processes polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests and carries out genomic sequencing. It has also recently started using new reflex assay technology. These services are helping to rapidly detect COVID-19 mutations and support the assessment of variants of concern.

Chief Executive of the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), Dame Jenny Harries, said:

This milestone highlights the ongoing hard work and dedication of those who work at the Rosalind Franklin laboratory. Their contribution has been vital to helping ongoing efforts to combat COVID-19.

Every member of the lab's team has played a crucial role in the COVID-19 pandemic; every test they've processed has supported the reduction of transmission of the virus in our communities and helped to understand our progress in controlling the pandemic.

Minister for Vaccines and Public Health, Maggie Throup, who visited the laboratory today for a tour of the facilities, said:

I am delighted to have visited the Rosalind Franklin lab and to have seen first-hand the scale of our world-leading testing programme. My thanks to the whole team for their continuing hard work in supporting the nation as we learn to live with COVID-19.

Testing remains a crucial measure in managing this virus and detecting variants – everyone here should be incredibly proud of the role they have played.

The lab is helping with the response to the ongoing pandemic. At its peak, in December 2021, the lab was processing 400,000 PCR tests a week.

The laboratory also aims to help create the next generation of scientists. Four PhD students from University of Warwick successfully completed their placements last year and 11 undergrad students from the University of Warwick and Birmingham City University are currently carrying out placements – spending time with various departments, including logistics and quality assurance.

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Boosters prevented over 105,000 hospitalisations, UKHSA analysis estimates

Press release

Booster vaccinations are estimated to have prevented 105,600 people from being admitted to hospital with coronavirus (COVID-19) since mid-December.



The study found that since 13 December 2021, when Omicron infections started to become more dominant, an estimated 105,600 hospitalisations have been prevented in those aged 25 and over in England.

The results – up to 6 February – were gathered by comparing vaccine effectiveness against hospitalisation from boosters with effectiveness from just 2 doses. The data was combined with vaccine coverage across the population and observed hospitalisations during the period.

Broken down by age group, it is estimated the boosters directly prevented:

- 87,300 hospitalisations in those aged 65 and over
- 14,300 hospitalisations in those aged 45 to 64, and
- 4,000 hospitalisations in those aged 25 to 44

For those aged 25 to 64, both healthy and at-risk individuals were included in the analysis.

Dr Mary Ramsay, Head of Immunisation at the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), said:

This analysis provides further strong evidence of the vital protection being provided by the booster vaccine during this Omicron wave.

Its introduction has and continues to prevent thousands of people from becoming seriously unwell, alleviating pressure on the NHS.

The boosters remain vitally important as we continue to experience high levels of COVID-19, so I would encourage anyone who has not yet come forward to do so as soon as possible.

The full analysis is published in UKHSA's latest weekly [vaccine surveillance report](#).

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[PM meeting with Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki: 10 February 2022](#)

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson met the Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki.



The Prime Minister met Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki in Warsaw this afternoon.

Both leaders discussed the importance of a united front in the face of Russian aggression, and Prime Minister Morawiecki thanked the Prime Minister for the UK's support to Poland's security.

The Prime Minister said the UK's commitment to Poland was unwavering and underpinned by the deployment of an extra 350 British troops, who arrived in

the country this morning.

The leaders also agreed that European security was vital for wider global stability and called on Russia to de-escalate tensions on the Ukrainian border.

Both leaders agreed on the importance of pursuing diplomatic dialogue with Russia and ensuring a wide coalition of countries had a coordinated package of sanctions ready to go.

The pair also discussed the Northern Ireland Protocol. The Prime Minister stressed the need for the UK and EU to work together to urgently find solutions to address the significant issues Northern Ireland is currently facing.

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[Lifting the lid on the dismantling of Dounreay's Material Test Reactor](#)

News story

Original internal steelwork is being stripped out of the Dounreay Material Test Reactor (DMTR) as it continues preparations for a major skyline change.



DMTR became Scotland's first operating reactor when it achieved criticality in 1958. It was used for irradiation tests on materials until its shutdown in 1969. In 2018 a contract was awarded to Cavendish Nuclear Limited to dismantle and demolish the reactor. The fuel, heavy-water coolant and some redundant plant have been removed, leaving the reactor vessel, supports and containment shell ready for final demolition.

Work is currently focused on the fuel element storage block (FESB), where irradiated fuel was stored after its removal from the reactor. The 8.9 tonne

lid, known as the top plate, mezzanine floor and steel beams surrounding the top of the 5m tall FESB have now all been removed.

DSRL Project Manager, Fiona Forbes, said:

When DMTR was constructed in the late 1950s, it was technologically advanced and innovative. Sixty years on, its demolition will be a major milestone for the site. This is the first time that the top plate has been lifted since the early 1970s.

The work is being carried out by a team of up to 50 personnel including local firms, Cavendish and DSRL staff, who are working together to move the project on in a safe and secure way.

Whilst all deconstruction activities are currently inside, demolition of the reactor will be the biggest change to the Dounreay skyline since decommissioning began, and a major strategic achievement.

Using the waste hierarchy, efforts are being made to maximise materials for recycling and identify options for sentencing the metal as low level waste.

The next phase of work, to surround the FESB with an atmosphere-controlled containment structure, is underway and will enable operators to demolish the reinforced concrete block. This is expected to be carried out using a remotely-operated demolition machine in the coming months.

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