

Government launches landmark reviews to tackle health disparities

- Government announces leads for two separate independent reviews to tackle health disparities
- Professor Dame Margaret Whitehead to lead review into ethnic inequalities for medical devices and Javed Khan OBE to lead review into tobacco control
- Findings will form part of wider plans to level up the country and reduce existing inequalities through the Health Disparities White Paper

Plans to enable people across the country to live longer, healthier lives are moving forward with the government's announcement of leads for two significant independent reviews to tackle health disparities.

A review into potential ethnic bias in the design and use of medical devices will be led by Professor Dame Margaret Whitehead, professor of public health at the University of Liverpool. The way medical devices and technologies are designed and used has raised concerns about the impact of ethnic background on a patient's diagnosis and treatment, exacerbating existing inequalities in healthcare.

Separately, Javed Khan OBE, former CEO of children's charity Barnardo's, will lead an independent review of the government's bold ambition to make England smoke free by 2030. Whilst the government has made good long-term progress in reducing smoking rates to their lowest ever level, there are an estimated 6 million smokers in England and smoking is still one of the largest drivers of health disparities.

Both independent reviews will form part of the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities' agenda to tackle inequalities in health and care, which will include the publication of a Health Disparities White Paper in spring and a Tobacco Control Plan later in the year.

Health and Social Care Secretary, Sajid Javid, said:

The pandemic has shown the resilience of the British public and brought communities together to look after each other in the most challenging times. But it has also exposed chasms in our society – particularly in health.

Where someone is born, their background, their gender, or the colour of their skin should not impact their health outcomes.

Professor Dame Margaret Whitehead and Javed Khan OBE both have vast experience in tackling health inequalities, and I look forward to the outcome of their reviews so we can continue to level up across society and make sure everyone – no matter where they live or come from – can live a long, healthy life.

The far-reaching Independent Review into potential ethnic bias in the design and use of medical devices in the UK will:

- Identify systematic inequalities in registered medical devices
- Make recommendations on how these inequalities should be tackled
- Consider what systems need to be in place to ensure emerging technologies are developed without ethnic inequalities
- Improve global standards to better healthcare and tackle disparities

The NHS is an expert in providing the best possible care with the devices currently available, and this review will improve the quality and availability of devices to diverse communities.

The independent review into smoking will provide independent, evidence-based advice that will inform the government's approach to tackling the stark health disparities associated with tobacco use. It will also help the government decide on the most impactful interventions to reduce the uptake of smoking and to support smoking cessation. It will assess the options to be taken forward in the new Tobacco Control Plan, which will be published later this year.

This comes as the Health and Social Care Secretary today set out his vision to make England a world-leader in cancer care as we learn to live COVID-19 – with renewed attention paid to innovative treatment and early diagnosis to radically improve outcomes for cancer patients.

Tobacco is still the single largest cause of preventable mortality and 64,000 smokers died from smoking in 2019. Smoking causes a disproportionate burden on the most disadvantaged families and communities – rates vary dramatically across the country and remain very high in areas such as Manchester (20.8%) and Blackpool (19.8%), compared to Wokingham (5.5%) and Richmond upon Thames (6%). Rates are also persistently high amongst certain groups, including routine and manual workers (21.4%), and people with long-term mental health problems (25.8%). And although maternal smoking rates have recently fallen from 10.4% in 2019/20 to 9.6% in 2020/21, there is still work to do as nearly 1 in 10 women are smoking at the time of delivery.

Professor Dame Margaret Whitehead said:

There are growing concerns about the potential for racial bias in the design and use of some medical devices commonly used in the NHS, and that the treatment of patients from some ethnic groups may be less effective as a result. It is important that this review establishes the extent and impact of such potential racial bias and what can be done to remedy it.

Javed Khan OBE said:

I am very pleased to be leading this review into such an important

area of public health. My independent findings will help highlight key interventions which can help the government achieve its ambitions to be smoke free by 2030 and tackle health disparities.

Dame Margaret brings with her extensive experience in tackling inequalities in health, and for many years has led the work of the World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre for Policy Research on the Determinants of Health Equity.

As a leading figure in the UK public and voluntary sectors, Javed Khan has led Barnardo's for the past seven years. He is currently chair designate of the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board. Javed was also a key member of the Independent Grenfell Recovery Taskforce and specialist adviser to the Justice Select Committee's Inquiry into prison reform.

Public Health Minister Maggie Throup said:

Tackling issues such as smoking and ethnic inequalities is a priority for OHID and a key part of the government's levelling up agenda.

These reviews will help determine what more can be done to reduce any ethnic bias in health diagnosis and treatment and drive down smoking rates, particularly in deprived areas, to support our bold ambition to be smoke free by 2030.

I look forward to working with both Dame Margaret and Javed to ultimately help people live longer, healthier and happier lives.

The pandemic has shone a light on the inequalities that exist across the country. As part of breaking the link between people's background and their prospect for a healthy life, the Health Disparities White Paper will look at the factors affecting people's health across the country, including risk factors, service access and experience and the biggest preventable killers such as cancer and heart disease, as well as the wider causes of ill health.

Background

- The potential ethnic bias in the design and use of medical devices review will be published within the next 18 months.
 - The independent review into the government's tobacco policies will report back in April 2022.
 - The 'SmokeFree 2030' target is defined as 5% smoking prevalence or less in England
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Organisations awarded £1.4 million for domestic abuse research

Reconnect Services Ltd £52,251.65 This study aims to improve understanding of what works for preventing re-offending by measuring associations between the working alliance that facilitators form with Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme group members, and the motivational interviewing skills of those facilitators. SafeLives £57,481.00 This research seeks to explore why and how young people begin to use abusive behaviours in their relationships. To better understand what it means to be on the 'verge of harming' and to explore what support for young people who harm should look like. Liverpool John Moores £50,908.95 This research will examine the profiles of DA perpetrators with the aim of understanding what predicts increased severity and repeat DA offending. University of Essex £52,991.00 A study to understand domestic abuse perpetrators using quantitative analysis to develop perpetrator profiles and exploring their implications for targeted intervention and risk assessment. Opcit Research (trading name of KM Research and Consultancy Ltd. £62,200.00 The study will create evidence-informed, young person-centred operating principles for intervention with young people affected by gangs and other high-risk extrafamilial contexts, to support them to end and avoid violent and abusive behaviour towards intimate partners. Reconnect Services £53,487.70 This study explores the relationship between poor mentalisation (capacity to think about thoughts and feelings) across different forms of abusive behaviour. Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse £64,631.72 The project will gather and comprehensively analyse the commissioning, contexts and finding of Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) in cases of domestic abuse-related suicide. University of Gloucestershire £56,869.43 This study will gather data on perpetrators of domestic abuse and practitioner interventions, from what are called 'near-miss' cases. National Centre for Social Research £56,935.00 A study focusing on how social workers identify perpetrators, how they assess risk, and how they respond to this risk. UCL Consultants £76,166.67 The research will seek to improve understanding of the causes, drivers, and aggravating factors of domestic abuse by establishing a rigorous and scientific evidence base for risk and protective factors for domestic abuse perpetration. University of Central Lancashire £51,970.00 This project will explore temporality of typology membership, individual offender risk and trajectory, and offending behaviour in terms of Child to Parent Domestic Abuse, as well as wider violence towards intimate partners and non-family victims. Centre for Justice Innovation £52,310.00 A study that explores the co-occurrence of substance misuse and perpetration of domestic abuse, and/or the co-occurrence of experience of trauma and perpetration of domestic abuse. Crest Advisory £143,263.00 Research to improve the understanding of how to identify perpetrators of domestic abuse, and the relationship between domestic abuse-related offending and general offending. University of West London £58,134.76 Research into identifying factors predictive of domestic violence and abuse (DVA) perpetration: secondary analysis of national data from perpetrator programmes in England and Wales. ESRO Ltd £63,165.00 Research exploring the drivers and perceptions of early abusive behaviour, including how these behaviours

develop. The Police and Crime Commissioner West Midlands £60,178.00 Research exploring whether the perpetration of certain forms of abuse are more likely to lead to suicide and consider the relationship between suicide and Forced Marriage/Honour Based Violence. South London and Maudsley NHS £52,344.35 This research aims to improve the standards and outcomes of risk assessment for domestic abuse cases through exploring the links with mental health risk assessments. University of Durham £85,600.92 This study will provide evidence on the profiles and characteristics of perpetrators of domestic abuse (DA) against older adults (aged 60 and over); causes of domestic abuse against older adults; and professional responses, including how risk of abuse/abusers are identified and how risk is assessed and managed. University of Durham £80,861.77 Research focusing on perpetrators coming from minoritized communities of race and/or targeting minoritized victim/survivors because of their sexuality and/or (trans) gender identity. London Southbank University £115,046.00 A feasibility study to test the viability of Natural Language Processing and Machine Learning techniques as tools to identify and risk assess alleged perpetrators of Technology Facilitated Coercive Control, including those in adolescent relationships. Cordis Bright £124,406.00 Research exploring whether certain data can be used to demonstrate the impact of Domestic Abuse perpetrator programmes, and support the early identification of DA perpetrators based on demographic and criminal histories.

Busted – the 9 big myths on energy in the UK

1. Isn't the Energy Price Cap causing these problems?

No, rising energy prices are the result of a global spike in gas prices, which has a number of causes including rebounding global demand as COVID-19 lockdowns ease and a greater liquified natural gas demand in Asia.

In fact the Energy Price Cap continues to protect millions of customers and ensures they pay a fair price for their energy, despite the sudden rise of wholesale energy costs.

But in light of continued cost of living pressures, the government has announced a package of support to help households with rising energy bills, worth £9.1 billion in 2022 to 2023.

This includes:

- a £200 discount on their energy bill this Autumn for domestic electricity customers in Great Britain. This will be paid back automatically over the next 5 years
- a £150 non-repayable rebate in Council Tax bills for all households in Bands A-D in England

- £144 million of discretionary funding for local authorities to support households who need support but are not eligible for the Council Tax rebate

The devolved administrations are also receiving around £715 million funding through the Barnett formula as usual where UK government support doesn't cover Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.

2. Will the new schemes not just encourage higher prices, rather than more supply?

No, because the Energy Price Cap remains in place to protect consumers. Energy supply companies will not benefit financially from the new schemes announced today and all the money will be passed through to domestic energy consumers.

3. Isn't this all just a chance for oil and gas companies to make massive profits at our expense?

Neither oil or gas companies or energy supply companies will benefit financially from [the new schemes announced today](#) by the Chancellor and all the money will be passed through to domestic energy consumers.

While we are working hard to drive down demand for fossil fuels, we cannot turn off our domestic source of gas overnight and there will continue to be ongoing demand for oil and gas over the coming years as we transition to lower carbon, more secure forms of energy generated in this country.

4. Why are we still exporting gas to other countries rather than boosting our own supply?

As an internationally traded commodity, gas is exported and imported in line with price signals. Broadly, the UK imports more than it exports.

The UK continues to benefit from strong security of gas supply, benefitting from highly diverse sources, including through one of the largest liquified natural gas import infrastructures in Europe.

5. Why do we keep closing down coal power stations? Wouldn't this help with keeping energy prices down?

Closing coal plants is not increasing energy prices. In line with our net zero target, the government has committed to phasing out unabated coal-fired power generation by 2024. Closure of coal units ahead of this date is a commercial decision for the companies involved.

Through the Capacity Market we have already secured capacity to offset the retirement of our remaining coal-fired power stations.

6. Why haven't we simply upped our domestic gas production in the North Sea or granted new drilling licences?

Roughly around half the UK's gas supply comes from domestic sources, and the

UK's gas sector has been maximising production where possible through this winter.

Most imports come from reliable suppliers such as Norway. We also have one of the largest liquefied natural gas (LNG) infrastructures in Europe.

We have also been working with oil and gas operators in the UK to develop additional fields. Three new gas streams came online at the end of last year, with more upcoming. However, the biggest factors influencing gas prices are attributable to international activity extending beyond Great Britain's domestic production.

Less than 3% of our gas was sourced from Russia in 2020.

7. Aren't other countries doing more than the UK?

It is important to note that higher wholesale gas prices are being faced internationally due to multiple factors in supply and demand – with some countries in Europe in particular facing much more severe security of energy supply challenges than the UK.

The package of measures announced by the Chancellor today will mean millions of households receiving up to £350 to help with the cost of living. That is broadly in line with the support offered by most of our European neighbours, and in many cases is more generous.

8. Have oil companies been doing share buybacks, rather than investing?

Decisions on the scale of capital investment in production and the way returns are made to investors are commercial decisions for companies. The UK remains an attractive destination for companies to invest in oil and gas production.

9. Has the UK not gone fast enough on green energy?

The government is doubling its efforts to generate more clean, affordable power in this country to meet the target of decarbonising Britain's electricity system by 2035. Since 2010 we have increased the percentage of power from renewables from 7% to 43% as of 2020, and our latest allocation round of the successful Contracts for Difference scheme is seeking up to 12 GW of additional renewable capacity. This would be more than the previous 3 rounds combined.

[**Update on recruitment of FCA Chair and**](#)

interim arrangements

- Recruitment campaign to appoint next Financial Conduct Authority Chair launched
- Richard Lloyd announced as interim FCA Chair
- Aidene Walsh announced as interim Chair of the Payment Systems Regulator (PSR)

Richard Lloyd, the FCA's Senior Independent Director, has been announced as interim Chair of the FCA from 1 June 2022 until the next permanent Chair takes up their post. This follows his recent reappointment for a second three-year term on the FCA Board, commencing on 1 April 2022

Richard is an experienced Board member; his previous roles include Executive Director at Which? and Chief Executive of Consumers International. He is also a founding trustee of the Money and Mental Health Policy Institute. He was awarded an OBE in 2019 for services to the economy and consumer rights.

The FCA has also appointed Aidene Walsh as interim Chair of the Payment Systems Regulator (PSR) from 1 April 2022 until the next permanent PSR Chair takes up their post.

Aidene has been a Non-Executive Director on the PSR Board since June 2020 and is an Executive Director at Banking Competition Remedies Ltd (BCR). She has previously served as Chief Executive Officer of The Fairbanking Foundation, and has held senior roles at Lloyds Banking Group, RBS, ABN Amro and Citigroup.

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury, John Glen, said:

I would like to thank Charles Randell for his leadership of the FCA and PSR during an important and challenging period.

I am grateful to Richard Lloyd and Aidene Walsh for agreeing to serve as interim Chairs of the FCA and PSR respectively. These interim arrangements will ensure a smooth transition following Charles' departure, and will provide strong leadership whilst the process of appointing permanent successors is completed.

It is now a pivotal time for the FCA. The next Chair will contribute significantly to the success of the UK's financial services sector and the government looks forward to appointing them in due course.

The Treasury has today published the job advert for the appointment of the next FCA Chair. The Advisory Assessment Panel will comprise Charles Roxburgh (HMT Second Permanent Secretary, Panel Chair), Gwyneth Nurse (HMT Director General, Financial Services), Alison Brittain (CEO, Whitbread, Senior Independent Panel Member), Ron Kalifa (Chair, Network International,

Independent Panel Member) and Richard Lloyd (FCA Senior Independent Director).

The Treasury has a strong commitment to diversity and equality of opportunity, and welcomes applications from candidates irrespective of their background, gender, race, sexual orientation, disability, religion, or age, providing they meet the required criteria.

A separate campaign for the appointment of the next PSR Chair will be launched in due course.

Further information:

- You can find the [FCA Chair job advert](#) on the Government's Public Appointments website. The executive search firm Korn Ferry is supporting the appointment process.
- The Financial Conduct Authority is the conduct regulator for around 51,000 financial services firms and financial markets in the UK.
- The current FCA Board members are:
 - Alice Maynard – Non-Executive FCA Board Member
 - Bernadette Conroy – Non-Executive FCA Board Member
 - Charles Randell – Chair of the FCA
 - Jeannette Lichner – Non-Executive FCA Board Member
 - Liam Coleman – Non-Executive FCA Board Member
 - Nikhil Rathi – Executive FCA Board member and Chief Executive
 - Richard Lloyd – Non-Executive FCA Board Member
 - Sam Woods – Non-Executive FCA Board Member
 - Tommaso Valletti – Non-Executive FCA Board Member
- Under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000, the Treasury is responsible for appointing the members of the FCA Board.
- The Financial Conduct Authority is an independent body, accountable to HM Treasury and to Parliament. The Chair of the Financial Conduct Authority is appointed by HM Treasury.
- The PSR is the UK's economic regulator for payment systems. The Chair of the Payment Systems Regulator is appointed by the FCA with the approval of HM Treasury.
- Charles Randell was appointed Chair of both bodies in April 2018.
- Two of the Non-Executive Members of the FCA Board are appointed jointly by the Treasury and the Secretary of State for the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. Richard Lloyd is one of those members. His appointment as interim FCA Chair and his reappointment to the FCA Board are regulated by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.
- All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, in accordance with the original Nolan recommendations, there is a requirement for appointees' political activity (if any is declared) to be made public. Mr Lloyd has not engaged in any political activity in the past five years.
- The FCA Chair interim appointment was made by exception without competition under paragraph 3.3 of the Governance Code on Public Appointments, following consultation with the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

[TRA initiates review to adjust steel tariff rate quotas](#)

News story

The Trade Remedies Authority has initiated a Tariff Rate Quota (TRQ) review into quotas on some categories of steel products which are imported into the UK.



Following changes to UK government trade statistics, the [Trade Remedies Authority \(TRA\)](#) has today initiated a [Tariff Rate Quota \(TRQ\) review](#) into quotas on some categories of steel products which are imported into the UK and are subject to a safeguard trade remedy measure. This review follows from HMRC revising the underlying trade figures on which the TRA based its original calculations. TRQs specify how much of a product a company can import before they need to pay higher tariffs on the imports.

The steel products affected by the review are metallic coated sheets, organic coated sheets and rail materials. You can find out more about this review on the TRA's [public file](#).

HMRC data correction

The tariff rate quota which the TRA recommended for trade remedy measures on imports of these products was based on incorrect statistics published by HMRC. HMRC has now issued corrected figures for the data on which the TRA based its calculations. The TRA is therefore reviewing the quotas in order to adjust the quotas as soon as is practicable.

The public notice will give the proposed revised TRQs. Businesses that may be affected will have seven days from publication of the Notice of Initiation to register their interest on the [TRA's online case platform](#) and can comment within 14 days.

Background information

The TRA has been reviewing a safeguard trade remedy measure on imports of steel, one of a number of measures inherited when the UK left the European Union. On 3 June 2021, the TRA made a recommendation to the Secretary of State recommending which categories of steel product should still be covered by the measures and which should not and providing new TRQs.

A number of parties to the case subsequently applied to the TRA to reconsider its original decision. Some of the applications were made due to the incorrect HMRC figures and this is being addressed via this TRQ review.

The main reconsideration is currently under way and the TRA will announce its conclusions separately.

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