

Health and Social Care Secretary NHS Providers conference speech

It's a real pleasure to be closing this year's Annual Conference.

We're meeting at an important juncture in the history of the NHS, and our nation. As we strive to start a new chapter, restoring and renewing our health service while keeping this deadly virus at bay. The NHS is an organisation that has its roots in adversity. It was created after our shared experience of the strife and suffering of the Second World War with a noble mission to transform the nation's health. Just over seven decades later during one of the greatest emergencies this nation has ever faced in peacetime we've fought another adversary and the NHS has been there for us all, helping our nation to stand strong.

I'm so grateful to every single person in this wonderful institution for the heroics you've performed at this tough time. And now, just as we reflect on the hardship and suffering that this virus has brought us, we must also take what we've learnt from this time of national emergency and think with ambition and determination about the kind of health service that we want to see in the future.

Being able to work so closely with the NHS and the brilliant people who work there is a real privilege for me. I try and get on the ground as often as I can to listen and learn. My most valuable visit was just in the last few weeks when I had the chance to don scrubs for myself and spend a shift in a busy A&E and ICU.

I was blown away by the dedication and care shown by NHS colleagues and the wonderful team effort that sits behind health and care in this country. I feel this responsibility very deeply. And I will do everything in my power to make sure our health system is well equipped not just for this pandemic but for the other threats to our nation's health and happiness. So, I want to use this opportunity today to talk about my priorities for this role and the central part the NHS has to play in delivering them.

The first of these three priorities is – of course – the Covid pandemic. Because although we've made so much progress this virus is still with us and it is still a threat to us all. Last winter, the NHS was placed under the most acute pressure of the pandemic so far. The closest we've come to seeing the NHS being overwhelmed. But the British people came together to stop that from happening and in turn you did your utmost to protect them, through the acute trusts expanding critical care, community trusts that we are putting in place, enhanced discharge schemes and mental health trusts setting up wellbeing hubs for NHS colleagues.

And now a year later we're in a stronger position thanks to almost 110 million jabs that our vaccination programme has put in arms. And I'd like to take a moment to thank you all for the part you've played in this life-saving

programme. Especially the work that you've done to intensify our booster programme over the past few weeks with a million boosters given in the last 3 days. And it's fantastic that next week we'll be expanding the programme to people that are aged 40 to 49, and although I'm not quite 40 to 49 anymore, this morning I joined the over 13 million people who've had their top-up jab.

Every time I go to a vaccination centre, I'm always moved by the hope and the optimism that our vaccination programme has given to people in this country. Because of your work, we've been able to bring back cherished experiences to so many people and we can now approach this winter with the best chance of living alongside the virus. But as you know as well as anyone, this is not a time for complacency. Winter has always been a tough time of year for the NHS. In the past, we've seen flu seasons that have put the NHS under incredible strain and we now know that flu and Covid together can be formidable foes. So, we must of course tread carefully.

Every day, I look at the Covid-19 figures closely and I discuss this with my expert team of clinicians, along with leaders from across our health service. And although the vaccination programme is clearly having an impact, we've seen in the past how quickly things can change. So, as we approach this critical winter, we're throwing everything at our mission to keep the NHS standing strong. And we've given an extra £5.4 billion of funding for the autumn and winter, to boost our Covid-19 response.

This includes an extra £1 billion towards the treatment backlog, £2.8 billion towards Covid costs like infection control costs and almost half a billion pounds to free up beds through an enhanced hospital discharge programme.

And not only will patients be able to benefit from this investment, but they'll benefit from the world's most promising Covid-19 treatments too. Ronapreve, which has been specifically designed to treat Covid-19, is now being administered by the NHS. And earlier this month, we became the first country in the world to approve an antiviral for Covid-19 that can be taken at home, so we can do even more to protect the most vulnerable people in our country.

Because our fight against Covid-19 is not yet over.

It won't be a war where we can vanquish the enemy in one fell swoop but instead it's more of an ongoing counter-insurgency where we need to be ready to respond whenever we're called upon. And we can't do that without you. You've shown time and time again that you can rise to the most formidable challenges when the nation looks to you. And I'm determined to give you what you need to do your jobs and to stay strong this winter, and beyond.

But we must fight on many fronts. Not just fighting the pandemic, but what the pandemic has brought with it too. Because the almost 600,000 patients who've been admitted to hospital with Covid-19 in the UK aren't the only ones who've felt the impact. You've seen on the frontline how Covid-19 has brought with it less visible costs. Like, for example, the impact on our mental health. The proportion of adults experiencing some form of depression has nearly doubled since before the pandemic. And as well as the impact on mental

health services, there's also a striking backlog of elective care that has built up too.

In September this year, this reached almost 6 million and without taking action it risked going as high as 13 million. You all went into health and care because you want to help people. And I'm sure you find it as dispiriting as me to think about 13 million people having to endure lengthy waits to get the care they need. The first value of the NHS Constitution is how the "NHS provides a comprehensive service, that's available to all".

And now we have the defensive shield of our vaccination programme, we must be ambitious about restoring services and not let anything stand in our way. So, we're embarking on the biggest catch-up plan in the history of the NHS.

We've given £2 billion through our Elective Recovery Fund this year and £8 billion for the next three years, on 9 million more checks, scans and procedures. This means that the NHS in England can deliver significantly more elective activity by 2024/25 than it could even before the pandemic.

And just a few weeks ago, we announced another £5.9 billion of capital investment. A large part of that funding will go towards the creation of a network of community diagnostic centres which can provide a one stop shop for checks, scans and tests in the heart of local communities, bringing services closer to those who need them most. I think it's a brilliant example of some of the creative thinking that we've been using to get this backlog down and what we can achieve when different parts of the system work together. And I'm also really grateful for the way that you've embraced this hugely important work.

So that's Covid, and our recovery from Covid. My final priority is reform. Because we face a choice. Do we use this moment to put the NHS on the strongest possible footing for the future? Or simply return to what was there before the pandemic? Now, I know that different people hear different things when they hear the word reform.

So, let me set out where I'm coming from who I am and what I want to achieve.

I'm a child of public services. As a boy, I went to Dr. Gandhi's clinic on Bristol's Stapleton Road to translate for my mum. I studied in the local library because there wasn't enough space at home and I spent some of my uni days volunteering at a care home. My Dad drove a bus, my brother became a police officer and I went into public life. My family. My upbringing. It's all about public service. And the NHS is probably the best and greatest example of public service we have. So for me, this is not simply a "department that needs to be managed" – it's a lifeline for so many people in our country.

I believe in what the NHS stands for – the idea that we all share a responsibility for the health of one another and it's because I believe in the NHS that I want it to thrive. That means locking in the lessons of the pandemic. Like the incredible feats of innovation and integration that work behind our vaccination programme. But it also means applying what we've

learnt to some of the massive challenges ahead and make the lasting reforms that we know are needed.

The mental health reforms that will put it on a par with physical health at last, the public health reforms that will help us all to live healthier lives and the reforms to tackle the disparities in this nation's health. This would be an ambitious reform agenda even in normal times. But to do this while we are still fighting a pandemic and recovering from its impact, is of course a monumental feat. So, we'll need to make sure we're set up to succeed. This means a strong sense of direction, clear lines of accountability and looking at whether the NHS has what it needs to deliver this vital change.

Let's take digital leadership for example. Although we've seen phenomenal work on digital transformation during this pandemic from so many people it does strike me as odd that digital leadership is currently split across NHSE, NHSX and NHS Digital. And this is something that Laura Wade-Gery is looking at in her review.

I'm very interested in seeing how we can bring together critical decision makers, whether it's at a local or national level. Our Health and Care Bill is an example of that kind of shift. Bringing the right people and organisations to improve the health and wellbeing of their areas through Integrated Care Systems and giving them the funds and support they need to do just that.

Our White Paper on Integration which we'll be bringing forward shortly will go even further. It will set out our proposals for how health and care can work better as one. How we can stop patients from being bounced around different parts of the system, provide the right care, in the right place, at the right time and make it easier for all of you to do your jobs. I also want to see us planning more effectively for the long-term with shared strategies and clear accountability for delivery. And far-reaching plans that shun short-termism and look at what fundamental changes we need, looking far beyond the life-cycle of a single Parliament.

So, for example, I've already set in train a 15-year strategic framework for the health and social care workforce. But I want to look at what more we can do to equip the NHS for what lies ahead. So, we need the best possible leadership in place too.

The coronavirus pandemic has been a test of leadership in so many ways and so many leaders in the NHS have risen to the occasion.

We set up the Leadership Review led by General Sir Gordon Messenger and Dame Linda Pollard to take the very best of what we've seen and apply it to the new challenges that lie ahead.

To meet these challenges, we'll also need senior leaders with a whole multitude of skills. Not just managerial and clinical, but digital, and all of the attributes that will put us in strong position for the future. So, we can forge and drive this new era of recovery and reform, and give the best possible care now and for future generations.

And this is now more important than ever. We're at a pivotal moment in the history of the NHS. We've come so far in fighting this pandemic and we must never forget the part that the NHS played when our country called. Now, we have a chance to write a new chapter building on the new ideas and the momentum that we've seen, and I can't wait to work with you to write it.

Thank you very much.

[Foreign Secretary speech on preventing sexual violence in conflict](#)

Thank you so much to Sarah Sands for chairing the Gender and Equality Advisory Council in what has been a tricky year, we've been in a lot of Zoom meetings, a lot of hard work, but what I think has enabled us to do is really bring in fantastic women and men from across the world to contribute to the recommendations, which really are fantastic. And I'd just want to thank all of the GEAC members who are here today for their hard work that they put in and the expertise that they put in.

We are determined as a UK government to take forward these recommendations, to embed them, and make sure that we are following up and monitoring the progress we make, because what gets measured gets done and we're determined to make that happen.

Supporting women and girls is at the heart of UK foreign policy. We want women to have agency over their own lives and to be free to succeed. We want them to have access to education. Our core agenda of promoting freedom and democracy cannot happen without freedom for women. But regrettably, in too many places across the world, women are treated as second class citizens. They are beaten and killed. They're trapped in servitude. They're deprived of education and opportunities. And the United Kingdom wants to work with our friends and allies across the world to change this.

Today, we're announcing £20 million to prevent violence against women. We're also holding the Preventing Sexual Violence Against Women Summit next year, ten years since this cause was championed by our government and that is taking place under the leadership of Lord Ahmad.

In the spending review a few weeks ago, we announced that we're restoring the development budget for women and girls straight away, and the work is being led by my colleague Vicky Ford on making that happen. We're going to focus on 12 years of quality education for all girls across the world, a cause championed by our Prime Minister. We're going to focus on the appalling practise of female genital mutilation across the world.

We're going to tackle the abhorrent practise of the use of sexual violence in

war. It is grotesque that sexual violence and rape is used as a weapon of war and it's used to exercise power over women. It's wrong that it's treated less seriously than chemical warfare or landmines, and that's why we want to build a new consensus with friends and allies across the world to condemn it as a red line.

All options are on the table, including a new international convention. I'm grateful for our many friends in this room, like Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Lithuania, Indonesia, Hungary, Latvia and Liberia have already signed up. And I know more countries are joining us in our promotion of this cause. I also want to thank the Lord Hague and his team for his leadership on this issue and the many people in this room who championed this issue for years. We are determined to end the culture of impunity around the use of sexual violence. We want a world where women have agency over their own bodies and their own lives. And together we can make this happen. Thank you.

National Cyber Security Centre Annual Review 2021 Launch

As the Government's lead minister for cyber, I'm delighted to be here for the launch of the NCSC's Annual Review.

Its pages tell the story we have come to expect from an organisation whose impact on the nation's cyber security – in just five years – has been profound.

As the Review shows, the NCSC responded with speed and strength to keep our country safe in cyberspace.

Our cybersecurity colleagues followed the risk wherever it took them:

whether it was to defend UK consumers from internet scams,

or to defend our COVID research, our stocks of vaccines, or our vaccine rollout from threats.

It is a story of protection and of innovation –

of decisive action against the criminals who attack government networks and citizens –

and of delivering for the United Kingdom and our partners across the globe.

The pandemic pivot

As has been the case for all of us, the pandemic has continued to dominate the NCSC's recent activities.

At a time of great national uncertainty, the technology in which the NCSC specialises has allowed millions of people to work and learn remotely

for MPs like me to take part in virtual House of Commons debates and to vote online; and concerned citizens to seek out information about the COVID-19 virus itself.

But this dramatic shift online has also tempted criminals – who use cyber technology for black arts – to try to scam millions of individuals and businesses.

In particular, they have preyed on peoples' worries about the virus, at a time when they felt most vulnerable.

Countless attempts have been made to lure people into handing over bank details by charging for fake vaccine appointments; or for sought-after items that were at the time in short supply, such as personal protective equipment or essential household goods.

And we see all this reflected in the Annual Review.

The NCSC's Active Cyber Defence programme has the clear aim of keeping the public and organisations safe at scale, underpinned by its vow to 'Protect the majority of people in the UK, from the majority of the harm caused by the majority of the cyber attacks, the majority of the time' .

This year, it has taken down no fewer than 2.3 million cyber-enabled 'commodity campaigns' – that's the unsophisticated, but effective, off-the-shelf 'spoofing' scams that are easy for low-level criminals to post on the internet.

These included 442 phishing campaigns that used NHS branding; and 80 illegitimate NHS apps that were available to download outside official app stores.

The worried public has also played its part in keeping itself safe.

People have been inundating the innovative Suspicious Email Reporting Service, or 'SERS', which NCSC established in April 2020.

In total, SERS has received more than eight million reports, of which nearly six million have come in this year alone. As a result, more than 67,000 scam operations have been taken down.

Fighting cyber crime together

And I am truly heartened by the heightened awareness that this shows of the fraudsters operating in our midst.

While the NCSC never stops in its efforts to protect citizens and businesses – and has consistently pioneered new ways to make the UK the safest place to live and work online – there are ways that we can, as a united team, defend ourselves against the scammers and fraudsters.

The success of the NCSC in pushing the potential of technology and the Digital Age has been recognised by industry and governments around the world. It is firmly established in the UK, and is of course a vital part of our cyber defences.

Yet cyber security is, and always will be, a team sport.

Across government, a range of departments play their part: including Cabinet Office, the Treasury, the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, the Home Office, and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

Cyber was also prominent in the recently-published Integrated Review, at the heart of our national and international strategy: with the Government determined to ensure that the UK is a leading, responsible, democratic, cyber power.

Even so, the UK's cyber security team is – must be – much bigger than government alone.

From business and law enforcement to academia and the cyber security industry – and of course individual members of the public – there are many links in the strong chains that keep us safe.

And what I have already learned about cyber security is that there is never a 'one and done' moment. The NCSC is always improving and learning; strengthening and reinforcing those chains.

The next five years and beyond

And for the NCSC and for all cyber stakeholders, 2021 is a landmark moment because it is the end of the UK's ground-breaking five-year cyber security strategy. At such time, we should evaluate some extraordinary progress, and look ahead to the new National Cyber Strategy that we will be publishing in the near future.

This will broaden our approach beyond cybersecurity alone, setting out how the UK will expand as a leading international cyber power by considering the full range of capabilities, including the newly established National Cyber Force.

It will highlight how we will protect and promote our interests in and through cyberspace, staying ahead of our adversaries and detecting, disrupting and deterring their malign activities.

It will show how we will influence and unlock tomorrow's technologies and opportunities, so they are safe, secure and open.

And it will set out how we will deepen our support for the public to be safe and secure online.

At its core, the new strategy will take a 'whole of society' approach to cyber: government working in partnership with industry and the public; a cyber sector growing within our economy; and critical national infrastructure

more able to withstand threats from hostile states.

The Budget last month and the Spending Review reflect the Government's commitment to this critical area. The National Cyber Security Programme budget was increased by £114 million and we are investing £2.6 billion in cyber and legacy IT over the next spending review period.

In the coming years, we must of course be alive to the risks posed by cyberspace, but we must also be poised to take advantage of the fantastic opportunities the digital age presents.

Cyber and levelling up

And as a Lancastrian, I am delighted that the newly launched National Cyber Force will be located in Samlesbury near Preston – delivering investment and driving economic growth across the North West. This is just one example of how we can use cyber to drive positive change and link to our levelling up agenda.

Another positive change driven by cyber is in delivering our ambition for the UK to be a Science and Tech superpower, building on the increase in R&D spend from £15 billion to £20 billion this Parliament.

With technology continuing to develop at a rapid pace, the UK must be at the forefront of research and development – as well as play an important role in global regulation on technology, cyber, digital and data. This will help bolster the UK's status as a global services, digital and data hub, maximising the commercial and employment opportunities for the British people.

Five years in, the NCSC has come a long way – but there is always so much more to do, to keep a step ahead of the cyber criminals. Over the coming years, we must build on our successes, without ever being complacent about the challenges that we face.

And I look forward to working with you, Lindy, and colleagues in and outside government as we seek to confront these challenges.

Thank you very much.

[Nadhim Zahawi addresses Association of Colleges conference](#)

Good morning. It really is wonderful to be here in person after what seems like an eternity of Zoom calls.

I would just like to say that I'm honoured to be among so many distinguished speakers, who hail from so many different professions and backgrounds.

Like your students, I am living proof that there is no such thing as a linear education journey. I started school in Iraq and if it hadn't been for Saddam Hussein I would no doubt have happily stayed there. But under Saddam, I would have either ended up in one of his prisons or fighting in the war with Iran.

So instead, I came to this country with my family at the age of 11 without knowing a word of English... And look where I am now... in Her Majesty's Government.

The point I am making is that there is no one, single route to a great career or a dream job. And I can say, hand on heart, that to stand here as Education Secretary is most definitely my dream job...

What you do, what your members continually do... with such success is to open doors for those like me who may have taken a path less travelled.

And so before I go any further, I would like to say thank you. The past 18 months have made life very difficult for all of you and I know that many of these challenges are still with us. But I have seen with my own eyes, on many of the visits I have been on, how brilliantly you rise above these...

For instance, I have met many young people who have one year of T Levels under their belts and I can tell you, you would never know they had been blazing a trail through a pandemic.

So I want to congratulate you for continuing to offer thousands of young people such a dynamic learning experience.

I know we are only just coming out of the dark age of Covid but I hope you will agree with me that it's a really exciting time for further education.

We are about to enter a new era... it is the age of the skills economy.

Our Plan for Jobs is working – with the peak of unemployment forecast to be two million less than previously predicted. And wages are growing. We are transforming the way people progress into the workforce after the age of 16 and we will feel the benefit.

To my way of thinking – education and the economy are inseparable. We are in the business of dealing with the most valuable asset in the country – our people. Our economic recovery will depend on getting people with the right skills into jobs and this in turn will depend on employers telling us what those skills needs are, so that we can tailor education to meet them.

So how are we going to achieve this seamless link?

And when I say we, I do not just mean government. I mean you too because I regard this as a team effort. We are all in this together.

You will already be aware that there is a Skills Bill currently going through

parliament. In fact, it had its second reading on Monday.

This sets out our vision of how we are going to strengthen local economies and level up every inch of the country, boosting productivity and making this country stronger, more competitive and ultimately more prosperous.

And at the heart of this is a network of world-class colleges.

Our apprenticeship reforms have already put employers at the heart of the skills system, and colleges and training providers have responded.

I would like to thank the hundred or so colleges that have already embraced T Levels. The really exciting news is that all colleges that signed up to T Levels from 2023.

T Levels are the future. We are going to deliver the skills economy and I want you all to be recognised as the team that delivered.

We need to build further and ensure far closer alignment between colleges and employers right across our skills system.

Local Skills Improvement Plans will be seeing more creative partnerships between employers and colleges to deliver the skills local economies need. The number of Institutes of Technology will expand further, improving technical education at levels 4 and 5 and we are rolling out more Skills Bootcamps.

And I would love to see even more colleges involved in delivering apprenticeships. Currently around 30% of apprenticeships are carried out in colleges, but if we really want to transform supply we will have to grow that number. I know colleges are more than capable of it.

I just want to spend a few minutes talking about how I see this new era unfolding.

One of things I made sure of in my last job as vaccines minister, was that when we knew something for a fact, we acted on it. But we did not rush in until we were sure. I think the fact that we managed to achieve the biggest, fastest vaccination programme the world has ever seen showed that this was a pretty effective approach.

It is one that I am determined to continue. We must act on evidence. We cannot charge in making changes without knowing whether those changes are going to work.

And the flipside of that is that when we know they don't, we must stop.

Acting on evidence is one of the reasons why I have decided to take a more nuanced approach to BTECs.

It is right that we are simplifying the qualifications system. Students entering higher education with some BTECs are more than three times as likely to drop-out of their course than those entering with just A levels. And there

are over 12,000 qualifications at Level 3 and below, and in comparison, our competitors have 500 hundred or fewer.

I'm sure you would agree with me that the current qualifications landscape is tricky to navigate. Students deserve to know that every course they take is one that employers value and that leads to a good, skilled job.

Our reforms to the qualifications landscape are rightly ambitious, but we know that we would be wrong to push too hard and risk compromising quality.

That is why we have decided to allow an extra year before putting our reform timetable into action.

I have also listened to colleges, and removed the requirement that to get a T Level you had to have passed English and Maths GCSE – an unfair requirement that we don't apply to A levels, and that could have barred some young people from, good, rewarding technical careers.

We have listened, and we have adjusted our approach accordingly.

One of the best ways of finding out whether something works is by giving it a thorough try out, which is why we are running pilots in numerous areas.

For example, we are funding 18 skills pilots in a number of areas including Teesside, Cumbria and Milton Keynes all of which target local needs. In Milton Keynes, for instance, there will be a focus on digital technologies, and how advancements in AI and automation are going to affect local businesses.

Another pilot in Cornwall and the Scilly Isles is looking to develop technologies and skills for a greener economy.

The pilot hopes to introduce businesses to the potential of green tech, as well as identifying what green skills needs exist in order for businesses to grow in a more sustainable and environmentally friendly way.

The £65 million fund will run to March 2022 and will see pilots working with local businesses to find out exactly what skills are needed in key sectors. In this way colleges can help learners and employers.

When these pilots tell us that something works and will increase and enhance the life prospects for young people, we'll act on it. But not before.

Another way I intend to make sure we will give our national recovery a solid foundation is by using tactical interventions for shorter term needs for the economy, for example accelerating recruitment for HGV drivers to cope with the national shortage.

These short-term solutions will be harnessed to strategic – or long-term – reforms that are designed to change the culture and future-proof further education for decades to come.

We see T Levels, apprenticeships and the Lifelong Learning Entitlement as

cornerstones for this approach.

Another reason for us to be optimistic about this new age is the latest spending review and I would like to spend the last part of my time with you today talking through what this year's money means.

I am very grateful to my predecessor that we have secured such a great confidence boost in such a tight fiscal climate.

Overall the settlement is worth more than £86 billion. This funding will help more young people and adults gain skills that lead to good jobs, as well as delivering more per-pupil funding for schools and better starting salaries for teachers.

Out of the total pot, over the parliament there will be £3.8 billion more for further education and skills by 2024-25 to ensure people can access the kind of high-quality training and education that will not only lead to better jobs but that will also help the economy recover and flourish.

There is a £1.6 billion boost for 16-19 year olds by 2024-25.

When you take into account the uplifts in the two preceding spending reviews, this means an 26% real terms increase. That includes an additional hour a week for all 16-19 year olds to help learning recovery. It means more time for T Levels, more support for learning and ultimately more skilled young people entering the workforce.

We are putting £1.6 billion over three years towards making sure adults can upskill at any point in their lives, as part of the National Skills Fund commitment.

This will build on the Free Courses for Jobs offer we launched in April giving any adult access to their first Level 3 qualification for free. In a trial from next April any adult in England who earns a yearly salary below the National Living Wage will also have the chance to take these high value Level 3 qualifications for free.

This investment also sees the expansion of Skills Bootcamps training thousands more adults across the country in subjects like cyber security, coding and green technologies.

We will be spending more on T Levels to make even more places available. And with funding for apprenticeships rising to £2.7bn in 2024-25, more employers – and more small businesses – will be able to hire new apprentices and boost their productivity.

This means that wherever people live, and whatever stage they're at in life, they'll be able to get the training and education that gives them the skills that employers want and that can lead to a worthwhile and satisfying job.

In our Skills for Jobs White Paper we promised to deliver a multi-year funding regime for adults and the spending review has given us the settlement to put this into practice. So we look forward to working with you over the

coming months to finalise the details and give you as a sector the certainty we know that you need.

What we have here is a great deal to build on for the future and I'm not just talking about recovering from a pandemic.

What we have is nothing less than the fuel that's going to help turbocharge skills development in this country, and that means opening up opportunities for far more people and far more areas.

What we have, ladies and gentlemen, is nothing short of a social revolution driven by skills.

When I look at what you have achieved, especially over the course of the past 18 months, I am incredibly proud to be your Education Secretary. You have in me the most committed champion. I am looking forward to working with you to get this great country moving and to get our young people out into the world, full of promise and confidence and skills because of the start you have given them.

Thank you all.

Call for evidence: An inspection of the Home Office's processing of applications for indefinite leave to remain in the UK as a partner of a person or parent of a child already settled in the UK (SET (M))



The Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration (ICIBI) has begun an inspection of the Home Office's processing of family visas and invites anyone with relevant knowledge or experience to submit their evidence to

familyvisas@icibi.gov.uk.

This inspection will focus on the Home Office's processing of applications for indefinite leave to remain in the UK as a partner of a person or parent of a child already settled in the UK (SET (M)). It will examine:

- the efficiency of the process and the quality of decisions made on applications for indefinite leave to remain, as the partner or spouse of a British or settled person (SET (M))
- the accessibility of the application process for applicants
- the impact on an applicant (and their family) when an application for settlement is not successful, but they are placed on a 10-year route, and whether it is proportionate
- what assurance is in place to ensure that recommendations from the ['Windrush Lessons Learned Review'](#) are being considered, and that discretion is being exercised in decision making where appropriate, putting the applicant at the forefront of the process

The Chief Inspector would welcome evidence in relation to any of the above points. He would be particularly interested to hear from those with first-hand experience of the family route to settlement, regarding:

- their experience of submitting an application for indefinite leave to remain in the UK as a partner of a person or parent of a child already settled in the UK (SET (M))
- whether the eligibility requirements were easy to understand and the application process was simple to follow
- whether decisions were received within the service standard
- whether decisions were easy to understand

Please note: The ICIBI's statutory remit does not extend to investigating or making decisions about individual cases. This remains a Home Office responsibility. However, inspectors are keen to hear about individual cases, insofar as they serve to illustrate particular points, issues or trends.

The call for evidence will close on 23 November 2021.

How to respond

Please [email your submission](#) to the Independent Chief Inspector by 23 November 2021.

Please note: In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) we need your permission to process and retain the information you submit in your submission. By clicking [here](#) a consent statement will automatically be added to your email.

However, if you are using a non-compatible email client then please send your submission to familyvisas@icibi.gov.uk with 'Family Visas – Call for Evidence' in the subject line and include the following consent statement in the body of your email:

'I consent to the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration

retaining and processing the information and data in this email.'

Please do not include this statement if you do not wish to give your consent. The information you submit may be quoted in the final inspection report, but it is the ICIBI's practice not to name sources and to anonymise as much as possible any examples or case studies.

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Call for evidence deadline has been extended to 23 November 2021

2. 3 November 2021

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