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COVID-19

တရားဝင်အသိပေးကြေညာချက်များကို အောက်ဖော်ပြပါအတိုင်း အသိပေးကြေညာပါမည်။

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“တရားဝင်အသိပေးကြေညာချက်များကို အောက်ဖော်ပြပါအတိုင်း အသိပေးကြေညာပါမည်။

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၇ နှစ်ပြည့်အထိ အသိပေးကြေညာပါမည်။ 7 နှစ်ပြည့်အထိ အသိပေးကြေညာပါမည်။ 7 နှစ်ပြည့်အထိ အသိပေးကြေညာပါမည်။ 1,300 နှစ်ပြည့်အထိ

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Final Euros games at Wembley to host larger crowds in extension of Events Research Programme

- Wimbledon also to have increasing capacities throughout the Championships, with the Men's and Women's Finals on 10th and 11th July being played in front of a full Centre Court
- More sports and cultural events also to be included in next stage of the Events Research Programme
- NHS App and Lateral Flow Tests to be used to deliver safe events

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden has today announced that some of the biggest events in the summer's sporting calendar including the final four UEFA EURO 2020 matches at Wembley and the Wimbledon Tennis Championships will go ahead with greater capacities, as part of the latest phase of the Government's world-leading Events Research Programme.

The next phase of the ERP will also include more sports and cultural pilots as the government plans up to 20 events that will allow audience numbers to return close to full capacity. The pilots will continue to trial the use of covid status certification at mass participation events ahead of the outcome of the Cabinet Office's ongoing Covid status certification review.

The third phase of the programme will see the UEFA EURO 2020 Round of 16 match at Wembley Stadium on June 29 staged at 50% capacity as well as the semi-finals and final in July. Under this arrangement around 40,000 fans will be present for these matches, the largest crowd in the UK in over 15 months.

The Wimbledon Tennis Championships which begin on June 28, will also commence with 50 percent ground capacity, rising to 100 percent on Centre Court for the finals. Full details of capacity limits for each specific event will be set out in due course.

These pilots will involve a significant increase in trialling the use of the NHS App and Lateral Flow Testing, to be used as proof of Covid status. Trials of the NHS App will be run to assess whether it can also be used to display a user's natural immunity status.

The next phase of the ERP will also include a number of trials of indoor events across the cultural sector. The pilots will continue to develop additional scientific research and evidence, as well as implementation considerations, for government, event organisers, and consumers in reopening events safely with a greater number of attendees.

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

We want to gather further evidence on how we can open up all big events safely, and for good. The expansion of trials of the NHS App and Lateral Flow Testing will mean that bigger crowds will be able to attend a limited number of major sporting and cultural events early this summer as part of our Events Research Programme. In the next few weeks this means more fans enjoying the Euros and Wimbledon, and some of our biggest cultural and sports events.

The use of at-home Lateral Flow Tests will continue to feature as part of the latest phase of the Events Research Programme.

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport will continue to work closely with the Department for Health and Social Care, Public Health England, the Joint Biosecurity Centre and local leaders and directors of public health to consider whether events can safely go ahead. Throughout the ERP public safety has always been the primary concern and will continue to be so.

The local Director of Public Health for the relevant area will be supported and consulted at all stages of the planning process and they will make the final decision on how, or whether, events can proceed safely in light of local public health circumstances.

Full details of the third phase of the Events Research Programme's events and capacities will be set out in due course.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

EURO 2020

The following UEFA EURO 2020 matches will be held at minimum 50 percent capacity

- Tuesday 29 June – Round of 16 Match
- Tuesday 6 July / Wednesday 7 July – Semi-Finals
- Sunday 11 July – Final

Tennis

- The Wimbledon Tennis Championships will run from Monday 28 June at minimum 50 percent capacity
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Oral statement on easing of coronavirus restrictions

Mr Speaker, this past six months we've all been involved in a race between the vaccine and the virus.

Our vaccination programme has been delivered at an incredible pace.

We've delivered 71 million doses into 41 million arms.

Over 93 per cent of people aged 40 and over have now received at least one dose of the vaccine.

And because of this pace, we are able to open up vaccinations to those aged 23 and 24 tomorrow.

It's this protection that's allowed us to take the first three steps of our roadmap, meaning right now we have one of the most open economies and societies in Europe.

We've been able to remove the most burdensome of the restrictions, and restore so many of the freedoms that we hold dear.

Delta variant and vaccines

At every stage, we've looked at the data, set against the four tests the Prime Minister set out to this House in February.

The fourth of those tests is that our assessment of the risks is not fundamentally changed by new variants of concern.

The Delta variant now accounts for over 90 per cent of cases across the country.

We know the Delta variant spreads more easily, and there's evidence that the risk of hospitalisation is higher than for the previously dominant Alpha variant.

Mr Speaker, case numbers are rising, up 64 per cent on last week in England, but the whole purpose of vaccination is to break the link between cases, and hospitalisations and deaths.

That link is clearly weaker than it once was.

However, over the last week we've seen hospitalisations start to rise, up 50 per cent.

Thankfully, the number of deaths has not risen and remains very low.

Sadly, before the vaccine, we saw a rise in hospitalisations inevitably lead

to a rise in deaths a couple of weeks later.

The vaccine is changing that, but it's simply too early to know how effectively the link to deaths has been broken.

We do know that after a single dose of vaccine the effectiveness is lower against this new Delta variant, at around a 33 per cent reduction in symptomatic disease.

However, the good news, confirmed with new data published today, is that two doses of the vaccine are just as effective against hospital admission with the Delta variant, compared to the Alpha variant.

In fact, once you've had two doses the vaccines may be even slightly more effective against hospitalisation if you've caught the new Delta variant.

This gives me confidence that while the protection comes more from the second dose, and so takes longer to reach, the protection we will get after the second jab is highly effective, and if anything slightly better against the Delta variant.

So, for the purpose of the restrictions, while it will take us a little longer to build the full protection we need through the vaccine, all the science is telling us that we will get there.

And of course, all this says it's so important that everyone gets both doses when the call comes.

Even today, I've had messages from people who've had their jab and I'm so grateful to each and every person for making our country safer.

At every stage of the roadmap, we have taken the time to check it's safe to take the next step.

Our task is to make sure the vaccine can get ahead in the race between the vaccine and the virus.

Step 4 and vaccine target

Mr Speaker, I know so many people have been working so hard, making sacrifices, being cautious and careful, doing their bit, to help this country down the roadmap.

I know that people have been planning and arranging important moments, and that businesses have been gearing up to reopen.

So it is with a heavy heart, and faced with this reality, that we've made the difficult decision not to move ahead with Step 4 next week. Instead, we will pause for up to four weeks, until 19th July, with a review of the data after two weeks.

During this crucial time, we'll be drawing on everything we know works when fighting this virus and we'll use the extra time to deliver the extra

protection we need.

Despite the incredible uptake we've seen in this country, there are still people we need to protect.

1.3 million people who are over 50s, and 4.5 million over 40s, have had a first jab but not yet a second.

This pause will save thousands of lives, by allowing us to get the majority of these second jabs done before restrictions are eased further.

We're today reducing the time from first to second jab for all people aged 40 and over from 12 weeks to 8 weeks, to accelerate the programme.

If, like me, you're in your 40s, and you have a jab booked 12 weeks after your first, the NHS will be in touch to bring it forward, or you can rebook on the National Booking Service.

Our aim is that around two thirds of all adults will have had both doses by the 19th of July.

And I can tell the House that we have been able to deliver the vaccine programme faster than planned.

So we can bring forward the moment when we will have offered every adult a first dose of the vaccine to the 19th of July too.

In this race between the vaccine and the virus, we're giving the vaccine all the support we can.

Further easements

Mr Speaker, we've always said that we'd ease restrictions as soon as we were able safely to do so.

And even though we can't take Step 4 on Monday, I'm pleased that we are able, carefully, to ease restrictions in some areas.

We're removing the 30 person gathering limit for weddings, receptions and commemorative events, subject of course to social distancing guidelines.

And I'm very grateful to the work of the Weddings Taskforce on this relaxation.

We'll be running another phase of our pilots for large events at higher capacities, including some at full capacity like the Wimbledon finals.

We're easing rules in care homes, including removing the requirement for residents to isolate for 14 days after visits out.

And we're allowing out-of-school settings to organise residential visits in bubbles of up to 30 children, in line with the current position for schools. And I thank my Rt Hon friend, member for Trafford, for his work in this area.

Even though we haven't been able to take the full step as we wanted, I know that these cautious changes will mean a lot to many people and move us a little bit closer to normal life.

Mr Speaker, as we do this, we'll keep giving people the support they need.

We're extending our asymptomatic testing offer until the end of July.

We have put in place one of the most extensive financial support packages in the world.

And we will continue to deliver enhanced support for the worst affected areas.

We've seen how well this approach can work, for example in Bolton.

Cases in Bolton have fallen by almost a third over the past three weeks and even as hospitalisations have risen across the North West, in Bolton they've fallen by more than half.

Last week, we introduced enhanced support in Greater Manchester and Lancashire and now I can tell the House that we're extending these extra measures – surge testing, cautious guidance, and extra resources for vaccination – to Birmingham, Blackpool, Cheshire, including Warrington, and the Liverpool City Region.

We know from experience that this approach can work, but we need everyone to play their part.

So I'd urge everyone in these areas to get tested, and to come forward for the support that's on offer, and when you get the call, get the jab and help keep us on the road to recovery.

Vaccines Taskforce chair

Finally, Mr Speaker, none of this would be possible without our vaccine programme.

Without the vaccine, faced with these rising cases and hospitalisations, the clinical recommendation would have been to go back towards lockdown.

The Vaccines Taskforce is critical to this work to deliver supplies, work on booster jabs, and ensure we're protected for the future.

Dame Kate Bingham did a formidable job in melding the best possible team and I'd like to congratulate her – and everyone else who was recognised in Her Majesty's Birthday Honours this weekend.

I am delighted to be able to tell the House that Sir Richard Sykes, one of Britain's most acknowledged biochemists and industry leaders, has agreed to take up the position of Chair of the VTF.

Sir Richard brings to bear experience from leadership positions in both the

public and private sector and I'm delighted to have him on board to lead the team in the next stage of its mission.

Conclusion

Mr Speaker, the race between the vaccine and the virus isn't over yet.

These difficult restrictions challenge our lives in so many ways.

But they play a vital role in holding the virus back, protecting people while we get those jabs done.

Let's all play our part to keep us safe from this dreadful disease.

I commend this statement to the House.

Sir Richard Sykes appointed chair of Vaccine Taskforce

Sir Richard will use his extensive experience in biotechnology and pharmaceuticals to lead the significant programme of work to find, procure and deliver vaccines to support the largest vaccination programme in British history.

He has previously held senior positions in a number of internationally recognised scientific, pharmaceutical and medical organisations, within both public and private sectors – including as chairman of organisations including the Royal Institution of Great Britain, King Edward VII's Hospital, UK Stem Cell Foundation and Singapore Biomedical Sciences International Advisory Council.

Sir Richard also conducted an independent review of the strategy and goals of the Vaccine Taskforce in December 2020.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

The Vaccine Taskforce has done a tremendous job of securing the world's first clinically-proven vaccines for COVID-19 and it's fantastic that Sir Richard will be joining our renowned team with his extensive expertise.

I look forward to working closely with him going forward to ensure the COVID-19 vaccination programme continues to save lives and the country is well prepared for any health threats for years to come.

Sir Richard Sykes said:

I'm delighted to be joining a brilliant team to continue its incredibly important work on the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

I am determined to make sure the UK remains in the best possible position to beat this virus and has the tools it needs to respond to future public health threats.

Sir Richard will be overseeing the Vaccine Taskforce's work as the UK's vaccination programme continues at unprecedented pace. This includes helping with preparations for any potential booster programmes and working to make the UK a global centre of excellence for the next generation of vaccines.

The government established the taskforce in March 2020, and it reports directly to the Health and Social Care Secretary.

Over 41 million people in total across the UK have now been vaccinated with a first dose (79.2%), while more than 29 million people have had both doses (56.9%).

Sir Richard is a non-executive director of PDS Biotechnology. He is the president of the Research and Development Society and the Chancellor of Brunel University.

He was the chairman of NHS London, chairman of Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, chairman and CEO of GlaxoSmithKline, vice-chairman of Lonza Group, NetScientific plc, senior non-executive director of Eurasian National Resources Corp, director of Economic Development Board International (EDBI) Pte Ltd and a senior independent director of Rio Tinto plc.

He was the rector of Imperial College London. He is also a mentor at the Chairman Mentors international (CMi), who are global leaders in mentoring.

Care home residents can stay overnight as visiting restrictions ease

- Residents will be able to spend time away from their care home with family and friends
- Every resident can nominate an 'Essential Care Giver' to provide additional support during visits
- This is the latest cautious step taken to restore care home visits to as close to normality as possible

Care home residents will be able to spend more time with family and friends,

including overnight stays as part of an easing of visiting restrictions announced today.

Currently residents can only leave the care home for a visit if outdoors or for high-priority reasons, such as a dental or GP appointment, but will now be able to leave the home for more social reasons without having to isolate.

From 21 June, people admitted to a care home from the community will no longer have to self-isolate for 14 days on arrival, so residents will have a less disruptive introduction to their new home.

To ensure this happens safely, residents will undergo an enhanced testing regime – a PCR test before admission, a PCR test on the day of admission and a further PCR test 7 days later.

Minister for Care, Helen Whately said:

I have heard first-hand from those living and working in care homes how difficult the restrictions around visiting have been and I'm incredibly grateful to everyone working in the sector who has helped reunite families safely.

Thanks to the continued success of the vaccine rollout, I am pleased we can now take another step towards normality, helping more people enjoy visits out of the care home while protecting them from the continued risk of COVID-19.

The government has also strengthened the role of the 'Essential Care Giver', which means every resident should be able to nominate a friend or family member to provide extra care on their visits. Essential Care Givers can continue to visit during outbreaks.

The Essential Care Giver role is intended to provide additional support from someone with a unique personal relationship with the resident.

They have access to the same PPE and testing supply as care home workers and should be allowed to continue to visit during periods of isolation or where there is an outbreak.

Care home residents would still need to isolate for 14 days following a visit out that would be deemed high risk through a risk assessment or after an overnight stay at hospital.

If a person is admitted from a hospital or another care home they must also self-isolate.

The government has worked to do everything it can to make sure staff are kept as safe as possible while they support others, including prioritising them for the COVID-19 vaccine, increased testing and a constant supply of free PPE.

Almost £1.8 billion has been made available for adult social care including infection prevention and control measures to support providers to pay staff who are self-isolating and limit the movement of staff where possible.

Notes to editors:

- Updated guidance will be published in due course.
- Care homes will need to conduct individual risk assessments to ensure visits out are not high risk. This will take into account the number of nights the resident plans to stay out of the home.
- When a resident is admitted to a care home from the community they are given an enhanced testing regime consisting of a PCR test before admission, a PCR test on the day of admission and a further PCR test 7 days later.
- Decisions about an individual resident's visits outside of a care home should be taken with the resident's assessed needs and circumstances considered. The care home should balance the benefits of visits out of the care home against a consideration of the risks to others in the home, where necessary.
- Individual risk assessments should take into account: the vaccination status of residents, visitors and staff, levels of infection in the community, variants of concern in the community, where the resident is going on a visit and what activities they will take part in whilst on the visit and, the mode of transport residents intend to use.