

# Safeguarding system needs to tackle “stubborn challenges”

The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel has published its Annual Report for 2020. The independent expert panel reviews serious child safeguarding cases – when a child dies or suffers serious harm, and abuse or neglect is known or suspected. New figures show the panel received 482 serious incident notifications which occurred in 2020, with 206 of these incidents involving children who tragically died.

In this exceptional year, local safeguarding partners have shown resilience, creativity and adaptability to maintain support for vulnerable children and families during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the analysis shows that all agencies need to address the stubborn challenges, such as weak information sharing and risk assessment, that have too often, over decades, persistently beset child protection practice.

Examples include initial risk assessments not being updated in response to new information about parental mental health concerns and alcohol and substance misuse, or information of previous convictions for sexual offences not being shared due to a lack of understanding about GDPR and data protection regulations.

Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel Chair, Annie Hudson said:

During 2020 professionals working to safeguard vulnerable children showed extraordinary ability and resourcefulness in the way that they adapted and innovated in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The national Panel focusses on the most serious cases of child abuse and neglect; through this specific lens, we have been able to highlight the urgent need for everyone involved in safeguarding children to address some of the stubborn challenges which have bedevilled much child protection practice.

Issues related to effective information sharing, risk assessment and decision making have assumed even greater significance over the past year. It is vital therefore that government departments work together, and with the Panel and local safeguarding partners, to tackle these challenges in what is always very challenging and difficult but potentially lifesaving work.

The report identifies 6 cross-cutting practice themes for safeguarding partners to make a difference in reducing serious harm and preventing child deaths in the context of abuse or neglect. These themes are supported by a bank of case studies that encapsulate key learning from case reviews.

- Understanding what the child’s daily life is like

- Working with families where their engagement is reluctant and sporadic
- Critical thinking and challenge
- Responding to changing risk and need
- Sharing information in a timely and appropriate way
- Organisational leadership and culture for good outcomes

In order to help tackle these issues, the panel is prioritising risk assessment and decision making in its 2021 work programme. It is also working with the independent review of children's social care to ensure any recommendations take account of the patterns and trends from serious incidents to better protect all vulnerable children. Also published today is a report into implementing the multi-agency safeguarding reforms by Sir Alan Wood. The panel will have regard to this report and work to implement any recommendations to improve the safeguarding system.

## Notes to editors

The [Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel](#) is an independent body that was set up in July 2018 to identify, commission and oversee reviews of serious child safeguarding cases. It brings together experts from social care, policing and health to provide a multi-agency view on cases which they believe raise issues that are complex, or of national importance.

The Panel received notification of 482 incidents occurring between 1 January and 31 December 2020, relating to 514 children. Of those 482 notifications, 206 were in relation to child deaths and 267 related to serious harm. Nine notifications were for other issues, such as where the young person was a perpetrator of harm.

Also published today are supplementary reports, which underpin the data and analysis highlighted in the [Panel's Annual Report 2020](#). These include:

Panel Chair Annie Hudson is available for interview on behalf of the Panel. Contact Amina Makele on 07889133791.

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## [COP26 President-Designate Alok Sharma: "Pick the planet"](#)

- COP26 is our "best chance" of limiting rising global temperatures to 1.5C
- Mr Sharma to stress the need to end coal power to tackle climate change
- Speech details UK's efforts as hosts of COP26 between now and Glasgow

This year's major climate summit COP26 will be the world's best chance of building a cleaner, greener future, COP26 President-Designate Alok Sharma will say today (Friday 14 May).

In a major speech outside of Glasgow where, in six months' time COP26 will have wrapped up, Mr Sharma will outline how the UK is striving to make sure these two weeks are the moment that every country and every part of society embraces their responsibility to protect our planet.

He will be supported by government ministers who will be taking part in climate-related visits throughout Friday to show how the UK is greening all parts of society – from hospitals and prisons, to jobs and transport.

The COP26 President-Designate's speech will explain how the UK is working towards success in Glasgow. This centres around working with all countries to make a consistent and concerted effort in four areas: Limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees, enabling communities and natural habitats to adapt to the impacts of climate change, mobilising climate finance, and working together to deliver action.

COP26 will bring together climate negotiators from 196 countries, the EU, as well as businesses, organisations, experts and world leaders at the SEC in Glasgow from 1-12 November.

Six years on from COP21, when the Paris Agreement was reached and the world agreed to limit global warming to 1.5C, this year's summit will be where all countries commit to the action needed to keep this target alive.

COP26 President-Designate Alok Sharma is expected to say:

This is our last hope of keeping 1.5 degrees alive. Our best chance of building a brighter future. A future of green jobs and cleaner air. I have faith that world leaders will rise to the occasion and not be found wanting in their tryst with destiny. That, in six months time, when we are packing up and going home, we will be able to say that at this critical juncture, each of us took responsibility. That we chose to act. And that we kept 1.5 degrees alive.

In preparing for this speech I asked my daughters what message I should give to world leaders about their priorities. Their response was simple: "please, tell them to pick the planet." And that's the message I want to leave you with today. A message from my daughters. A message from future generations. This is our moment. There are no second chances. Let's pick the planet.

The speech will have a particular focus on the importance of ending the world's reliance on coal, and embracing the opportunities of renewable power.

On this, Mr Sharma is expected to say:

Because if we are serious about 1.5 degrees, Glasgow must be the COP that consigns coal to history... we are working directly with governments, and through international organisations. To end

international coal financing. This is a personal priority. And to urge countries to abandon coal power, with the G7 leading the way.

Whilst working with developing countries to support their transition to clean energy...

...The days of coal providing the cheapest form of power are in the past. And in the past they must remain... The coal business is, as the UN Secretary General has said, going up in smoke. It's old technology. So let's make COP26 the moment we leave it in the past where it belongs, while supporting workers and communities to make the transition. Creating good green jobs to fill the gap.

The UK is leading the way in climate action. In 2012, 40% of our electricity came from coal. That figure is now less than 2%. Which shows that change is possible. The UK was the first country to pledge to reduce carbon emissions by 78% by 2035, we will completely phase out coal power by 2024 and will end the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles by 2030.

Indeed going green and boosting prosperity are not mutually exclusive, over the last 30 years British governments have grown our economy by 78% while cutting emissions by 44%.

Michelle Scrimgeour, Chief Executive Officer, Legal & General Investment Management and Co-Chair, COP26 Business Leaders Group said:

To create a better future we need to harness collective agreement to focus on net zero commitments. Our purpose is unequivocal in protecting both society and future generations from the consequences of climate change.

This is also the investment opportunity of our lifetime. Coming together as business leaders, in the countdown to the COP26 Summit, we can align our influence and financial might to the net zero ambition and so produce positive sustainable economic and environmental returns. This is inclusive capitalism in action – inaction is not an option.

Bella Lack, UK youth climate leader said:

Right now our species is undermining and destabilising the very foundations that are necessary for life on earth to thrive. We know that things are changing, and COP 26 is one of our last and most crucial opportunities to make sure it is humanity that has to change, and not the planet.

Belinda Gordon, Strategy director, Green Alliance said:

As the impacts of climate change are felt throughout the world, COP26 will be a vital coming together for nations to pave a way to a greener and more prosperous world. Only through a step change in the pace and scale of ambition at COP26 will we have a fighting chance of keeping the most dangerous impacts of climate change at bay.

For the UK, as COP26 hosts, we must inspire leadership globally through action at home and play a strong role in steering negotiations to keep global temperatures well below 1.5 degrees.

- Alok Sharma will be speaking at 0945 on 14/05/2021 and [can be viewed here](#).
- COP26 is regarded widely as the most significant climate event since COP21, the 2015 United Nations climate conference which resulted in the Paris Agreement. At Paris, for the first time, the world set the goal to limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels (1850-1900).
- COP26 is the agreed five-yearly stocktake point where countries will agree action to reach this 1.5C target.

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## [New prisons go green](#)

- New jails to be 'net zero' in future
- Designs will stop 280,000 tonnes of CO2 and cut energy demand by half
- £100m expected cut in energy costs

As the Government works towards net-zero by 2050, the [four new prisons](#) being built in England will use heat pumps, efficient lighting systems and thousands of solar panels, to reduce energy demand by half and cut carbon emissions by at least 85% compared to prisons already under construction.

This is expected to reduce CO2 emissions by 280,000 tonnes, cut £100 million in energy costs over the next 60 years. Future prison expansions will also be built to similar standards.

The new designs will learn from the construction of HMP Five Wells in [Wellingborough, Northamptonshire](#), and the new jail in [Glen Parva, Leicestershire](#), which are being constructed more sustainably than existing prisons using recycled materials and incorporating green energy.

Lord Chancellor Robert Buckland said:

Our ambitious approach offers a unique opportunity to build back a safer and greener prison system.

New jails will use new green technologies and modern methods of construction to ensure our prisons cut carbon emissions as well as reoffending.

The four new prisons will use an all-electric design that eliminates the need for gas boilers, meaning they will produce net-zero emissions when the National Grid decarbonises. During construction, 40,000 tonnes of carbon will be prevented by using recycled concrete and steel.

Existing prisons are also benefiting from a £15 million investment to cut their emissions. Solar panels are being installed at a further 16 sites to meet 20% of their power demand – bringing the total number of solar panels across the estate to over 20,000. More than 200 electric vehicle charging points are also being installed across 40 prisons.

Habitats for wildlife will be cultivated at each prison to promote biodiversity and ensure the local ecology is stronger than before construction began.

The developments are part of the Government's £4 billion programme to create 18,000 additional modern prison places that boost rehabilitation and cut reoffending.

The environmentally friendly drive accompanies wider government action to build back greener with more than £12 billion in green investment to help achieve its commitment to reach net zero by 2050. This will include hydrogen and carbon capture technology, greener homes, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, walking and cycling infrastructure, flood defences and backing offshore wind to power every UK home by 2030.

## Notes to editors

- The first of the [four new prisons](#) will be built next to HMP Full Sutton in East Yorkshire and work is underway to investigate locations for a further prison in the North-West of England and two in the South-East.
- The MoJ is seeking to achieve the gold-standard 'outstanding' rating in Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) for its four new prisons. BREEAM is an independent scheme which assesses the sustainability of infrastructure projects.
- The UK is a global leader on tackling climate change which is why we've committed to reach net zero by 2050.
- The Prime Minister recently set out a Ten Point Plan help make the transition to a greener future.
- The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution sets out £12

billion in green investment, including for hydrogen and carbon capture technology, greener homes, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, walking and cycling infrastructure, flood defences and backing offshore wind to power every UK home by 2030.

- The UK was the first major economy to legislate to end our contribution to climate change by 2050, and we have committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 68% compared to 1990 levels by 2030 – the highest reduction target by a major economy to date.
- Great Britain has made incredible progress to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels, including going over 5,000 hours without using coal for electricity during 2020. Over the last three decades, the UK has achieved record clean growth. Between 1990 and 2019, our economy has grown by 78% while our emissions have decreased by 44%, this is faster than any other G7 nation.

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## [COVID-19 vaccines: 11,700 deaths prevented](#)

New Public Health England (PHE) [analysis indicates](#) that the COVID-19 vaccination programme prevented 11,700 deaths in those aged 60 and older in England up to the end of April – an additional 1,300 since the previous update.

For the first time, analysis also suggests that at least 33,000 hospitalisations were prevented in those aged 65 and older in England, in the same time period.

The work compared the observed number of deaths with the number of deaths that would have been expected if the vaccine hadn't been given during this time period.

Using this method, PHE estimates that around 11,700 deaths were prevented by the end of April – 9,900 in those aged 80 and over, 1,500 in those aged 70 to 79 and 300 in those aged 60 to 69.

Expected deaths with COVID-19 were estimated using real-world data on how effective the vaccines are at preventing death and vaccine uptake.

New analysis also shows further evidence that the vaccine is highly effective in preventing hospitalisations, especially in older age.

Up to the end of April, approximately 3,900 hospital admissions were prevented in those aged 65 to 74, 13,100 in those aged 75 to 84 and 16,000 in those aged 85 and older.

The number of hospitalisations prevented can be estimated by considering

vaccine effectiveness against hospitalisation, vaccine coverage and observed hospitalisations, as well as through modelling.

The work takes into account the direct effects of vaccines. There is now clear and increasing evidence that vaccines help to reduce transmission, therefore it is likely that an even higher number of deaths and hospitalisations have been prevented by the vaccination programme.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

In only a few short months, our COVID-19 vaccines have saved the lives of over 11,700 people and stopped over 33,000 from being hospitalised. After a heart-breaking and difficult year, that is remarkable.

That's tens of thousands of parents, children, siblings, friends and loved ones saved – and millions more who haven't had to feel the impact of that horrible loss too.

This is further proof that getting a vaccine is one of the most important things you will be asked to do in your lifetime – when offered the jab, don't hesitate in securing this protection for yourself and others.

Dr Mary Ramsay, Head of Immunisation at PHE, said:

The vaccine has already saved so many lives and we can now see the huge impact it has had on preventing people becoming seriously ill and therefore also protecting our hospitals.

As these figures highlight, getting your vaccine could save your life or stop you becoming seriously ill from COVID-19. It will also significantly reduce your chances of getting infected and infecting others. It is vital to get both doses of your vaccine when you are offered it.

Minister for COVID-19 Vaccine Deployment Nadhim Zahawi said:

The COVID-19 vaccination programme continues at its record-breaking pace and it's fantastic to see the incredible impact it's having on the country already.

Wherever you come from, whatever your religion, ethnicity or background, make sure to book in your vaccine when the time comes. It's an easy way in which you can play a part in our journey out of the pandemic once and for all.

The data presented is as a result of people receiving their first dose of the



vaccine.

Separate analysis indicates that the protection against hospitalisation and death from COVID-19 increases further following the second dose.

As more individuals are vaccinated and develop an immune response to the second dose, future analyses will include the impact of the second dose.

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## [Employers unite to encourage over a million staff to get the COVID-19 vaccine](#)

- Many businesses have pledged their flexibility to help staff get the vaccine during work hours
- Government is calling on all businesses, organisations and industry bodies to make a similar commitment to drive vaccine uptake across the UK

Leading businesses, employers and industry bodies across the UK have come together to support the COVID-19 vaccination programme and encourage their staff to get a jab when eligible.

So far, 9 of the UK's biggest national employers have pledged their support in promoting positive vaccination messages and encouraging their 240,000 employees to get the vaccine – including during working hours – to ensure workplaces are safe and staff can play their part in the UK's biggest ever vaccination programme.

IKEA, Asda, Slimming World, Metro Bank, Procter & Gamble UK, Santander, Nationwide, Severn Trent and Merlin Entertainments are among the many businesses that have maintained extensive safety measures to protect staff throughout the pandemic. Now, to help encourage and maintain high vaccine uptake among their employees, they have pledged to promote positive safety messages and signpost staff to NHS-verified advice on vaccines.

Industry bodies, such as the British Beer and Pub Association and Builders Merchants Federation – whose members supply the UK's vital construction industry – have also thrown their weight behind the coalition in a bid to encourage their partners to get involved, totalling over a million people.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

Our vaccination programme has so far saved thousands of lives, protecting our loved ones and bringing down infection rates to a point where we can see normality on the horizon.

It's fantastic that employers are prioritising the safety of their staff and doing all they can to encourage people to get vaccinated.

I urge everyone to get their vaccines when they get the call so we can beat this pandemic together.

With more than 54 million vaccines administered so far, people aged 38 and over are now eligible to get their COVID-19 vaccine.

Organisations have pledged to be as flexible as possible when it comes to staff getting the vaccine. Many companies, including IKEA, have also committed to giving paid time off work for employees, in addition to providing sick pay as standard for the minority who experience minor side effects like fever or a headache.

Employers will also use resources from the new national government campaign to run an internal awareness campaign consisting of key messages, vaccine fact sheets, informative question and answer videos, posters and many more resources to ensure their employees get access to reliable and accurate information about the COVID-19 vaccine.

The government is calling on all UK organisations to join the campaign by introducing similar internal awareness campaigns to promote the benefits of vaccination.

Vaccine Deployment Minister Nadhim Zahawi said:

Vaccines save lives, they protect you and your loved ones from this terrible virus and they are the best way out of this pandemic.

Thank you to all of the organisations which have joined this incredibly important campaign to promote vaccine uptake.

I call on every business in the UK, no matter how big or small, to join the national charge and help your employees to access life-saving jobs when they are eligible.

Faisal Tuddy, Superintendent Pharmacist at Asda, said:

We have been extremely proud to play our part in the vaccine roll-out by hosting NHS vaccination centres in 3 of our stores. Asda was the first supermarket to offer this service and so far our pharmacy colleagues have now administered over 36,000 doses.

We are also encouraging our colleagues to get the jab as soon as they are eligible to, and are supporting them by giving them the time off to attend both appointments to receive the vaccine as well as the time they need to recover if they feel unwell.

Vaccinated people are far less likely to get COVID-19 with symptoms. Vaccinated people are even more unlikely to get serious COVID-19, to be admitted to hospital or to die from it. There is also growing evidence that vaccinated people are less likely to pass the virus to others.

The government has already hit its target of offering everybody in cohorts 1 to 9 – those aged 50 and over, the clinically vulnerable and health and social care workers – a first dose of the vaccine by 15 April and is on track to offer a jab to all adults in the UK by the end of July.

[Find out more about the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccine](#)

[Download the COVID-19 Employer Toolkit](#)

## **Supporting businesses**

- Asda
- IKEA
- Merlin Entertainments
- Metro Bank
- Nationwide
- Procter & Gamble
- Santander
- Severn Trent
- Slimming World

## **Supporting industry bodies**

### **British Beer and Pub Association:**

- 600,000 employees in pub sector – 900,000 when you expand it to brewing
- 43% of pub staff are aged 25 or below

### **Builders Merchants Federation (BMF):**

- 760 members have a combined turnover of £38 billion, within the £156 billion total construction industry in the UK
- members employ over 190,000 people in the industry
- BMF merchant members operate from over 5,700 branches throughout the UK and Ireland

## **Quotes from employers**

### **IKEA**

IKEA, which employs more than 11,000 people across its 21 UK stores, has continued to support staff throughout the pandemic, with an extensive set of safe working procedures in place and ensuring that all workers were paid 100% of their contracted hours, regardless of the restrictions in place. IKEA supports the vaccine roll-out and ensure co-workers receive paid time off to attend vaccination appointments and makes sure the most up-to-date information is shared and available.

Peter Jelkeby, Country Retail Manager and Chief Sustainability Officer, IKEA UK and Ireland said:

The vaccine roll-out is an exciting milestone, enabling an eventual return to the togetherness we need and crave. In supporting our co-workers to get vaccinated, our return to normality, to our customers, and most importantly to our loved ones, is a step closer. And for that opportunity we're incredibly grateful.

### **Merlin Entertainments**

Dominic Wigley, Merlin's Group Safety, Engineering and Security Director, said:

'We Care' is one of Merlin's core values, and as part of our role as a supportive employer we want to care for and support our employees, their families and the communities in which we have our attractions throughout this global pandemic.

As our fight against COVID-19 continues, we are encouraging employees to do all they can to keep safe including maintain social distancing, wearing face coverings in appropriate areas (unless medically exempt), and applying high standards of personal hygiene, as well as encouraging all employees to give careful consideration to having the COVID-19 vaccine when invited to do so.

By being vaccinated, employees are taking positive action to help protect their own health, and in doing so benefiting the communities in which they live, work and deliver memorable moments, and we will do everything we can to help support them in that.

### **Metro Bank**

Carol Frost, Chief People Officer at Metro Bank, said:

The vaccine roll-out is crucial to the health and wellbeing both of the nation and the economy, bringing with it hope for a return to normality. We are fully behind the vaccination programme and have encouraged colleagues to get vaccinated in line with government advice, giving them time off, if needed, to get their jobs.

### **Nationwide**

Jane Hanson, Chief People Officer, Nationwide, said:

The safety and well-being of our colleagues and members has been our number one priority throughout the pandemic and will continue

to be so as lockdown continues to ease. The vaccine programme is one of the most ambitious and vital ever undertaken in this country and it is important for employers like ours to support in whatever way we can.

That includes offering complete flexibility to all colleagues getting the vaccine. They can take paid time off during work hours to do so, as is the case for any medical appointment. This is an incredibly important time for the nation and we need to be as flexible as we can.

### **Procter & Gamble UK**

Chris Young, Vice President, Human Resources, Procter & Gamble UK, said:

We are fully supportive of the UK government's vaccination programme and see it as an important element in our journey towards a return to normality. The health and well-being of our employees is our number one priority and we continue to support them with flexibility to enable them to book their vaccinations to help protect themselves, their family members, friends and colleagues.

### **Santander**

Elaine Thomas, Chief HR Officer at Santander, said:

We are proud to be playing our part in this essential vaccination campaign to ensure our colleagues can elect to receive their jab during working time. There has been a tremendous effort over the last year to keep each other and our customers as safe as possible, and we would like to pay tribute to the countless volunteers – including our own staff – who are supporting the vaccination programme across communities.

### **Severn Trent**

Neil Morrison, Severn Trent HR Director, said:

Throughout the pandemic and beyond, we'll continue to provide an essential service for our customers and communities, so being able to welcome more and more of our colleagues back into our work places is really important to us. We know that we work best when we're together, and that the vaccination programme is providing hope – not just for more of those great collaboration opportunities, but for a brighter summer for us all.

That's why at Severn Trent we're absolutely supportive of anyone deciding to get vaccinated, and while it's not mandatory for anyone

to have their vaccine, for those that do, we're committed in making sure we give them the time needed for it, as we know how important it is when it comes to keeping our colleagues and frontline staff protected.

## **Slimming World**

Jenny Caven, Director of External Affairs, said:

Throughout the pandemic Slimming World has done all that we can to protect our people – our staff, our self-employed consultants, and most importantly our members. We've adapted our service to be able to continue to offer essential weight-loss support virtually. But we know from our members and consultants that the accountability of stepping on the scales and being in a real-life group and seeing each other face to face is the most effective way to achieve weight loss success.

So we're all extremely keen to get back to being back together again. Having the vaccine is the best way we have of reassuring everyone and having confidence that we are safe when we are together. We've encouraged our teams at Slimming World's head office, most of whom have been working remotely for the past year, that having the vaccine is the best protection. And we've also encouraged consultants to be vaccinated so that members feel safe and protected when returning to our 10,000 real-life community groups.

## **Quotes from industry bodies**

### **British Beer and Pub Association**

Emma McClarkin, Chief Executive of the British Beer and Pub Association, said:

The vaccination programme is key to bringing down infection rates and enabling us to return to normality once more – including at the pub.

The safety of our staff is paramount and I implore everyone working in pubs to get their vaccine as soon as they are asked to do so. I also call on all employers to play their part by giving staff the flexibility they need in order to attend their vaccination.

The sooner we are all vaccinated the sooner we can get back to life as normal.

## **Builders Merchants Federation**

John Newcomb, Chief Executive of the Builders Merchants Federation, said:

Since the beginning of the pandemic, builders merchants and materials manufacturers have done everything possible to protect colleagues and customers whilst maintaining the continuous supply of building products to construction sites throughout the UK.

The vaccination programme is helping us return to normality but its ultimate success depends on everyone participating. We are actively supporting the vaccine programme and urging employers throughout the building supply chain to do everything possible to ensure colleagues can get their job.

## **Case study**

Megan Jacob, aged 28, Guest Experience Team Leader at the National SEA LIFE Centre Birmingham, said:

I am proud to work for an employer that champions our health and safety as employees, especially during this time. The industry and our employers being flexible, supportive and encouraging has a huge impact – we are able to feel empowered to book and get the vaccine when it's our turn, even if that means doing so in office hours.