

# PM statement at the coronavirus press conference: 16 June 2020

Good evening,

I am delighted to be joined today by the Chief Scientific Adviser, Sir Patrick Vallance, and by Professor Peter Horby, from the University of Oxford's Centre for Tropical Medicine and Global Health.

Today I'm actually going to let them do most of the talking as they have some news to share on a new treatment for coronavirus.

But I'll start by updating you briefly on the latest data.

Can I have the first slide please?

- 6,981,493 tests for coronavirus carried out or posted out in the UK. This includes 113,107 carried out or posted out yesterday.
- 298,136 have tested positive, an increase of 1,279 cases since yesterday.

The second slide shows the latest data from hospitals:

- 410 people were admitted to hospital with coronavirus in England, Wales and Northern Ireland on 13 June, that's down from 438 a week earlier, and down from a peak of 3,432 on 1 April.
- 385 coronavirus patients are currently in mechanical ventilation beds in the UK, down from 513 a week ago, and down from a peak of 3,301 on 12 April.

The third slide shows what is happening in hospitals across the country:

- There are now 5,254 people in hospital with coronavirus in the UK, down 16% from 6,282 a week ago and down from a peak of 20,698 on 12 April.

The fourth slide shows the daily figures for those who have sadly lost their lives after testing positive for coronavirus:

- And across all settings, the total number of deaths now stands at 41,969. That's an increase of 233 fatalities since yesterday.

Although those figures are very sad, they do show that we are making good progress in controlling the spread of the virus.

Tests are up and cases are down.

Hospital admissions are down.

The numbers of patients in hospital overall – and specifically those on mechanical ventilation beds – are both down.

And of course while each death is one too many, deaths are coming down too.

That progress of course has only been possible thanks to the dedication of the British people as we work together to beat this virus.

By observing the lockdown, and sacrificing contact with friends and families, everybody has played their part in bringing the virus under control.

It is critical now that we hold our nerve – and we don't throw away the progress we have made.

On the 11 May I set out our plan to help our country recover and we are working through it, carefully and deliberately.

At each stage we have only proceeded when the evidence suggests it is safe to do so, ensuring our five tests for adjusting the lockdown continue to be met.

And yesterday it was great to see our shops open their doors again. Our retail sector has done a fantastic job to make sure they are Covid Secure, meaning they can open in a safe way for staff and for customers.

It is great to see so many people out shopping whilst observing social distancing – and that is so important to limiting the spread of the virus.

It has also been very good to see more, and more children back at school this week, with some secondary pupils returning for face-to-face contact with their teachers ahead of the exams next year.

And I want to say to all parents whose children are eligible to return to school, I want to assure you it is safe – and there is no need for your kids to miss out on their education, I hope they will go to school.

I know that people want us to go further – with our changes to social distancing measures and I am all too aware the 2 metre rule has big implications for schools and many other sectors, and I absolutely hear those concerns and will do everything in my power to get us back to normal as soon possible.

But we must proceed carefully, and according to our plan. I am still committed to the central goal to get back to life as close to normal as possible, for as many people as possible, as fast and fairly as possible... and in a way that minimises the risk of a new epidemic, minimises the risk to life and maximises our chances of a strong economic and social recovery.

Our plan sets out that the next step of adjusting lockdown – for personal care, for the hospitality and leisure sector, for gatherings in places of

worship and other public places – a lot more to come and that as you know will happen no sooner than 4 July.

I remain committed to that plan, and will say more soon about how we intend to take it forward.

Today, the global efforts to find a long-term solution to the pandemic continue, through a vaccine or effective treatment.

And I am delighted that the biggest breakthrough yet has been made by a fantastic team of scientists right here in the UK.

I am not really qualified to announce on this drug and its effects but I will ask Sir Patrick and Professor Horby to say more in a moment.

But I am so proud of these British scientists, backed by UK Government funding, who have led the first robust clinical trial anywhere in the world to find a coronavirus treatment proven to reduce the risk of death.

And I am very grateful to the thousands of patients in this country who volunteered for the trials – thank you.

This drug – dexamethasone – can now be made available across the NHS. And we have taken steps to ensure we have enough supplies, even in the event of a second peak.

Of course, while the chances of dying from Covid-19 have been significantly reduced by this treatment, they are still far too high. So we must redouble our research efforts and we certainly will.

But today, there is genuine cause to celebrate a great, British achievement and the benefits it will bring not just in this country but around the world.

I'll now hand over to Sir Patrick.

---

## World first coronavirus treatment approved for NHS use by government

- Ground-breaking coronavirus treatment approved for use across the NHS from today
- Government-funded UK trial showed drug saved lives by significantly reducing risk of death in hospitalised patients who require oxygen
- Government ensures drug is available across all NHS healthcare settings and across the whole of the UK with immediate effect

Thousands of lives will be saved in the UK with the government immediately authorising the NHS to use the world's first coronavirus treatment proven to

reduce the risk of death.

Dexamethasone, an anti-inflammatory drug, has been immediately approved to treat all UK hospitalised COVID-19 patients requiring oxygen, including those on ventilators, from today.

The drug has been proven to reduce the risk of death significantly in COVID-19 patients on ventilation by as much as 35% and patients on oxygen by 20%, reducing the total 28-day mortality rate by 17%.

Funded by the UK government, via the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), the Oxford University UK RECOVERY trial is the first clinical trial anywhere in the world to show a treatment provides significant impact in reducing patient mortality.

The government has taken action to secure supplies of dexamethasone in the UK, buying additional stocks ahead of time in the event of a positive trial outcome. This means there is already enough treatment for over 200,000 people from stockpiles alone.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said:

I'm absolutely delighted that today we can announce the world's first successful clinical trial for a treatment for COVID-19. This astounding breakthrough is testament to the incredible work being done by our scientists behind the scenes.

From today the standard treatment for COVID-19 will include dexamethasone, helping save thousands of lives while we deal with this terrible virus.

Guided by the science, the UK is leading the way in the global fight against coronavirus – with the best clinical trials, the best vaccine development and the best immunology research in the world.

I want to thank the brilliant scientists at Oxford University, the thousands of patients who took part in the study, and my own team, led by Professor Jonathan Van-Tam, who has done such a brilliant job driving this work.

The drug has also been added to the government's [parallel export list](#), which bans companies from buying medicines meant for UK patients and selling them on for a higher price in another country. This will protect supply for UK patients by enforcing regulatory action on those who flout the restrictions.

Throughout the pandemic, the government has supported British research with millions of pounds of funding for clinical trials into the most promising and innovative medicines in our fight against this new virus, including £2.1 million for the RECOVERY trial.

This clinical trial is testament to the success we see when government,

scientists and the NHS – including 175 NHS trusts across the whole of the UK – work together. With over 177,000 patients enrolled, it's the largest randomised clinical trial anywhere in the world and will continue to trial other medicines, such as azithromycin and lopinavir-ritonavir.

Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Professor Jonathan Van-Tam, said:

The RECOVERY trial is an outstanding example of the UK leading the world with an impressive study capable of delivering robust answers to critical questions. Although these data have not yet been peer-reviewed.

The positive findings on dexamethasone follow the disappointing findings on hydroxychloroquine. Together these 2 results illustrate the power of properly conducted clinical trials and the inherent danger of assuming things work without robust data.

Whilst tempting to do otherwise, it is always better to wait for the evidence. On the dexamethasone findings, this is very encouraging because the signal on reduced mortality applies to many of the patients admitted to hospitals and the drug is comparatively low priced and available worldwide.

The UK is a world leader in global science and medicine industries. This British trial will now affect the global response to this pandemic.

This breakthrough has only been made possible through the rigour of world-class and world-leading British life-sciences. The government backed British science from the very beginning of this pandemic and today has proven that this was the right call.

The vital information collected by UK researchers will also be used by other countries to reduce mortality rates worldwide.

The type of drug was initially suggested by the government's expert advisory committee, the New and Emerging Respiratory Virus Threats Advisory Group (NERVTAG). It was then trialled successfully by RECOVERY.

Support from the NIHR Clinical Research Network (CRN) and letters from the UK Chief Medical Officers and NHS England Medical Director Professor Stephen Powis helped to drive recruitment.

Dexamethasone has been demonstrated to have a clear place in the management of hospitalised patients with COVID-19 who are receiving oxygen.

The RECOVERY trial reported the findings of 2,104 patients randomised to dexamethasone in comparison with 4,321 patients randomised allocated to usual standard of care alone. The trial has reported at a dose of 6 mg dexamethasone once a day for up to 10 days or discharge if sooner. No benefit is seen for patients hospitalised and not on oxygen.

There is a 20% risk reduction of mortality for those on oxygen and 35% risk reduction of mortality for ventilated patients.

---

## London woman imprisoned for longer after firearms found at her flat

News story

Kelly Smith has had her sentence increased at the Court of Appeal following intervention by the Solicitor General, the Rt Hon Michael Ellis QC MP



A woman from Wood Green found in possession of firearms and live ammunition will be jailed for longer after the Solicitor General, Rt Hon Michael Ellis QC MP, referred her sentence for being too low.

On 4 February, the police attended the flat of Kelly Smith, 45, in Wood Green, North London. During the search, police officers found a suitcase on the balcony of the flat. It contained a sawn-off shotgun, pocket revolver, unfired cartridges and multiple rounds of ammunition. A blue stab-proof vest was also found in her kitchen cupboard.

The offender was arrested a short time later and interviewed by police. Smith admitted possession of the suitcase, but said she was unaware that it contained the weapons and that she had been pressured into accepting custody of it. However, she accepted that she had received it in circumstances where, the prosecution said, it was obvious that the purpose was serious criminality.

On 21 April 2020 Smith was sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment at Wood Green Crown Court. After the Solicitor General's intervention, the Court of Appeal today increased her sentence to 4 years' imprisonment.

Speaking after the hearing the Solicitor General said:

Possessing weapons of this nature creates a danger for the general public. I hope this revised sentence sends a clear message to anyone harbouring illegal weapons, that when you are caught you will spend many years in jail.

Published 16 June 2020

---

## **E3 Statement on verification and monitoring in Iran (JCPoA) at the IAEA Board of Governors, June 2020**

France, Germany, and the United Kingdom would like to thank the Director General for his latest report (GOV/2020/26) and the Deputy Director General for the Technical Briefing.

We commend the IAEA for fulfilling its mandate to verify and monitor the implementation of the JCPoA by Iran with impartiality and professionalism. We greatly value the approach the IAEA has taken in conducting its work, and welcome the Agency's regular and objective reporting.

As participants to the JCPoA, we reiterate our continued support for the agreement, and our commitment to working towards its preservation and full implementation. We are extremely concerned by Iran's violation of its nuclear commitments, which have grave and irreversible proliferation consequences.

Iran continues to enrich uranium above the 3.67% JCPoA limit and is stockpiling lowenriched uranium far beyond the authorised limit of 300kg UF<sub>6</sub>. Since the March Board, Iran has significantly increased this stockpile, which is now almost eight times higher than the limit Iran has agreed to in the JCPoA. This is despite the Board sending a strong message to Iran in March.

Iran is also continuing research and development on numerous models of advanced centrifuges several times more powerful than Iran's standard machines, no longer respecting the relevant restrictions in the JCPoA. In contravention of the JCPoA, Iran is accumulating low-enriched uranium through its R&D activities, including, inter alia, by feeding UF<sub>6</sub> into cascades of 164 IR-2m, 164 IR-4 and 135 IR-6 centrifuges.

Through this R&D Iran is irreversibly improving its enrichment capabilities. This is a matter of significant concern.

Iran's enrichment activities at Fordow, which were resumed in November 2019, raise grave proliferation concerns. There is no plausible civilian

justification for enriching uranium at this underground facility.

In view of Iran's measures contrary to the JCPoA, the E3 initiated the JCPoA's Dispute Resolution Mechanism on 14 January. We did so in good faith and in hope of finding a diplomatic way forward, while preserving the agreement. We have been clear that our overall goal is a diplomatic solution to bring Iran back to compliance, and that this decision did not mean taking an automatic path to the UN Security Council. We encourage Iran to engage constructively in substantial discussions with us and the other remaining JCPoA participants in this regard.

On 26 February 2020 the JCPoA Joint Commission met and had a constructive exchange of views. We have continued discussions. However, for these conversations to bear fruit Iran needs to come back into full compliance with all of its nuclear commitments under the JCPoA without further delay.

We have been consistently clear in stating our regret and concern regarding the US withdrawal from the JCPoA including by not extending sanction waivers for nuclear non-proliferation projects, which are key to the JCPoA and have been endorsed by UN Security Council resolution 2231. We will continue to contribute to the Arak Modernisation Project and support EU-led civil nuclear cooperation projects as part of the implementation of Annex 3.

As E3, we have continued to lift sanctions as foreseen by the JCPoA and have made additional efforts to facilitate legitimate trade with Iran by making INSTEX fully operational.

In order to support the Agency's verification and monitoring in Iran and to cover extra costs related to the Covid-19 pandemic, France, Germany and the United Kingdom are providing voluntary extra-budgetary contributions amounting to a total 750,000 Euros. We take this opportunity to call on Iran to resume facilitating special flights, as needed, chartered by the IAEA to compensate for the reduction in regular commercial flights due to the global health crisis.

We once again thank the IAEA for its latest quarterly report on Iran and welcome the rigorous and impartial implementation of its mandate by the Agency. We call on the Agency to continue to provide further detailed technical updates, as appropriate, and to make its latest quarterly report public.

---

## **UN Human Rights Council 43: Item 9** **General Debate**

Madam President,

The tragic death of George Floyd at the hands of the police, and others before him, has forced us to confront an uncomfortable truth. No country is immune from racism. The protests we have witnessed around the world have prompted a long-overdue reflection on the fact that we need to work harder to eliminate racism.

It is right that we allow citizens to express their strong and legitimate feelings on this issue. As a democratic society, the UK is committed to listening and engaging in conversations about racism and equality.

The UK has undoubtedly made progress in creating a more equal society. But the work is far from over. As our Prime Minister recently acknowledged, we know that black and minority ethnic groups still face discrimination when it comes to education, employment, healthcare and criminal justice. This has to change.

Today, we reaffirm the UK's unwavering commitment to stamping out racism – at home and abroad. And we will continue to be one of the strongest advocates for the work done by the United Nations and those mechanisms helping to combat racism across the world.

Now is the time for governments to reflect on progress but also to strive to do better.