

World-leading experts commit to building vaccine confidence at UK hosted Global Vaccine Confidence Summit

- The Global Vaccine Confidence Summit convened world leading experts to commit to greater international collaboration to build vaccine confidence globally.
- Speakers at the Summit included: Matt Hancock MP, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, UK Government, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General at World Health Organization (WHO), Helle Thorning-Schmidt, former Prime Minister of Denmark and former CEO of Save the Children International, and Co-Chair of Facebook's Oversight Board.

LONDON: As part of its G7 Presidency, the UK Government convened the Global Vaccine Confidence Summit today, a first-of-its-kind event, bringing together global experts from across the public and private sector to build and maintain confidence in vaccines.

Recent data published by YouGov shows the UK continues to top the list of nations where people are willing to have a COVID-19 vaccine or have already been vaccinated.

During the Summit, world-leading experts at the forefront of efforts to build vaccine confidence and tackle misinformation about vaccines offered their perspectives on the critical global actions that governments and partners from across sectors can take to address the issue.

It was acknowledged that increased levels of vaccine confidence, accessibility and availability are needed globally in order to end the pandemic. One of the biggest threats to confidence in vaccines is misinformation, which can damage public perceptions of vaccine safety and efficacy.

Speaking at the Summit Matt Hancock MP, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, UK Government:

Vaccine confidence is an international challenge and one that needs international action. At the G7 Health Ministers meeting this week, we'll be talking about how to beat this pandemic worldwide and also how to beat the worldwide pandemic of misinformation and mistrust that can hamper the responses.

We're launching, leading and championing a Global Vaccine Confidence Campaign led by the G7 Global Vaccine Confidence Working Group with a mission to promote confidence and trust in vaccines

globally.

Delivering a keynote speech at the Summit Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General at World Health Organization (WHO), showed his support stating:

A key driver of vaccination is public trust. Trust must be earned. To succeed in vaccinating the whole world, governments will have to deploy a range of strategies and tailor them to each country.

Helle Thorning-Schmidt, former Prime Minister of Denmark and former CEO of Save the Children International, and Co-Chair of Facebook's Oversight Board, who spoke at the Summit said:

We know a lot about vaccine hesitancy which means we should know what to do and do it fast. A debate in one country impacts trust and hesitancy in others. The world is a small place. As a global community we have to understand that no one is safe until everyone is safe.

Will Cathcart, Head of WhatsApp, said:

If we are to reach billions of people with vaccines – down to the last person – we need to meet people where they already are. I believe that private messaging services can play an important role in helping to bring this pandemic to an end globally, and I am proud of WhatsApp's partnerships with over 150 health organizations to connect people to official sources of information and to schedule their vaccine appointments.

Other speakers at the Summit included Dr Anthony S. Fauci, Director of the U.S National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and Chief Medical Advisor to The President, and Dr John Nkengasong, First Director, Africa CDC who debated the relative success and challenges of building vaccine confidence in the US and Africa respectively, and what lessons are relevant for other regions.

Dr Anthony Fauci, Director of the US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said:

Science evolves with the epidemic and there was a feeling that there were mixed messages as the pandemic evolved. However, science is self-correcting. New evidence and new data will require us to modify our approach to a pandemic, the recommendations and the guidelines.

Wendy Morton MP, the UK's Minister for European Neighbourhood and the Americas, expressed the UK and its G7 partner's on-going commitment to support efforts to ensure vaccines are accessible, available and trusted globally.

Caroline Dinenage MP, the UK's Minister for Digital and Culture, called for greater international and cross-sector collaboration to tackle the threat of misinformation.

At the Summit, the UK Government announced ambitions for its G7 vaccine confidence activity designed to support global cooperation and more effective responses on vaccine confidence and addressing misinformation globally.

- An innovative digital insight platform, which will provide global and local insight, as well as trends on vaccine confidence and the harmful misinformation that is seeking to undermine it. More details will be announced soon.
- A coalition of some of the world's best academic organisations to understand 'infodemics' and promote healthy information ecosystems. The coalition called IRIS is a collaborative project between the Vaccine Confidence Project (London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine), University of Cambridge, Sapienza University of Rome, Ca' Foscari University of Venice, City University of London (and the Alan Turing Institute) and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

An interactive photo mosaic created in partnership with the UK Government and the People's Picture, titled 'The Luminaries', was also unveiled today. Using video and images it showcases the many global 'Vaccine Luminaries' who are taking to social media to build confidence in vaccines, including health care professionals on the front line. The platform is available on a [dedicated website](#) with plans to feature more 'Vaccine Luminaries' from around the world over the next year.

The Global Vaccine Confidence Summit forms part of the UK's wider work as G7 President this year to bring an end to the pandemic, with vaccine uptake, access and confidence a key component.