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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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[I] indicates that the member concerned has a relevant registered interest. The full register of interests can be found at <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-interests/register-of-lords-interests/>

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Ministers and others who make Statements or answer Questions are referred to only by name, not their ministerial or other title. The current list of ministerial and other responsibilities is as follows.

<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Baroness Evans of Bowes Park	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Earl Howe	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Agnew of Oulton	Minister of State, Cabinet Office and Treasury
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Department for International Development
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Chief Whip
Baroness Barran	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
Baroness Berridge	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education and Department for International Trade
Lord Bethell	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care and Whip
Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist	Whip
Lord Callanan	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Earl of Courtown	Deputy Chief Whip
Lord Gardiner of Kimble	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Goldie	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park	Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Department for International Development
Lord Greenhalgh	Minister of State, Home Office and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Lord Grimstone of Boscobel	Minister of State, Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Department for International Trade
Lord Keen of Elie	Advocate-General for Scotland and Ministry of Justice Spokesperson
Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay	Whip
Baroness Penn	Whip
Baroness Scott of Byfleet	Whip
Baroness Stedman-Scott	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Baroness Sugg	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Department for International Development
Lord True	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

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Written Statements

Thursday, 4 June 2020

Trade Credit Reinsurance Scheme: Contingent Liability

[HLWS264]

Lord Callanan: My Right Honourable friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Alok Sharma) has today made the following statement:

I am tabling this statement for the benefit of Honourable and Right Honourable Members to bring to their attention details of the support provided to businesses and supply chains through the Trade Credit Reinsurance Scheme.

Trade Credit Insurance provides cover to hundreds of thousands of business-to-business-transactions, particularly in non-service sectors, such as manufacturing and construction. It insures suppliers selling goods against the company they are selling to defaulting on payment, giving businesses the confidence to trade with one another. Due to Coronavirus and businesses struggling to pay bills, they risk having credit insurance withdrawn, or premiums increasing to unaffordable levels.

The Trade Credit Reinsurance Scheme, led by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, will temporarily reinsure the credit risks of business-to-business transactions covered by Trade Credit Insurance in the UK. This will ensure that the vast majority of insurance coverage is maintained across the market. This will support supply chains and help businesses to trade with confidence as they can trust that they will be protected if a customer defaults or delays on payment.

The scheme is available on a temporary basis for nine months backdated to 1 April 2020 and running until 31 December 2020 with the potential for extension if required. The key parameters of the scheme are:

- The scheme is delivered through a temporary reinsurance agreement with insurers currently operating in the UK market, covering both domestic and overseas trade with payment terms of up to 2 years.
- The Government will reinsure 90% of insurance claims up to a cap of £3bn and 100% of claims between £3bn and £10bn.
- The Government will receive 90% of gross policy premiums and return 35% of these premiums to insurers to cover their costs.
- The scheme rules will require participating insurers to comply with certain undertakings regarding the conduct of their business during the period of the scheme. This includes conditions that they will forgo profits and not pay dividends or bonuses for senior staff for their guaranteed Trade Credit Insurance business.

- The scheme will be followed by a joint BEIS & HMT-led review of the Trade Credit Insurance market to ensure it can continue to support businesses in future.

- Implementation of the scheme is subject to State aid approval, agreement of full form documentation with insurers and acceptance of applications from insurers for participation.

The new scheme is launched today, 4 June. The Government will be subject to a new contingent liability, and I will be laying a Departmental Minute containing a description of the liability undertaken.

For more information on this and other support for business, please go to <https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/>

Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan 2018-22: Annual Report 2019

[HLWS265]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: My Right Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Dominic Raab), has made the following written Ministerial statement:

I wish to inform the House that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, together with the Department for International Development and the Ministry of Defence, are publishing the 2019 annual report on progress against the UK's fourth National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2018-2022.

Published on 18 January 2018, the National Action Plan (NAP) sets out the Government's objectives on the Women, Peace and Security agenda for the period 2018-2022. This is the UK Government strategy for how we will meet our Women, Peace and Security commitments under UN Security Council Resolution 1325 to reduce the impact of conflict on women and girls and to promote their inclusion in conflict resolution and in building peace and security.

The report that will be published today outlines our progress against the National Action Plan during 2019, including our work in our nine focus countries of Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Libya, Myanmar, Nigeria, South Sudan, Somalia and Syria. It is centred around seven strategic outcomes where we expect to see progress over the five year duration of the NAP.

October 2020 also marks the 20th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. In the lead up to this anniversary, the UK has committed to raising ambition and strengthening the implementation of resolution 1325 through promoting women's meaningful inclusion in peace processes, in particular in Afghanistan, South Sudan and Yemen, and increasing support to women resolving conflict, countering violent extremism and building peace at the grassroots level.

Electronic copies of the annual report will be placed in the libraries of both Houses and it will be available on gov.uk.

Written Answers

Thursday, 4 June 2020

Air Pollution: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the short- and long-term improvements to health resultant from the reduction in air pollution during the COVID-19 pandemic; and what plans they have to prevent levels of traffic and air pollution returning to pre-COVID-19 levels, particularly in cities, towns and other urban areas, and along major transport routes. [\[HL4828\]](#)

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Nitrogen dioxide pollution at the roadside has almost halved during the lockdown period as a result of reduced emissions from traffic, with much smaller reductions observed for particulate matter in urban areas. Emissions of greenhouse gases and air pollutants from energy use and transport are likely to be much lower than in normal times, on account of reduced energy demand and much lower road traffic. The Government recently launched a rapid call for evidence to ensure we can fully understand any changes that may have occurred in terms of pollution emissions, concentrations and human exposure over the current period. Defra's Air Quality Expert Group is analysing those responses.

Our ambitious aims to decarbonise transport, improve air quality and support more active forms of travel have not changed. The Transport Secretary set out our plan to encourage new travel habits and support zero emission forms of travel - a clear signal of our commitment to delivering on these aims. As we rebuild our economy in response to the coronavirus pandemic, we must continue to shape an economy and society that are cleaner, greener and more resilient.

Aviation: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government why passengers coming to the UK by (1) boat, and (2) the Eurostar, will not need to quarantine themselves for two weeks while those arriving by air will. [\[HL4451\]](#)

Baroness Williams of Trafford: From 8 June, all passengers arriving in the UK without having travelled through another part of the Common Travel Area will be required to self-isolate for 14 days, apart from those on a short list of exemptions.

This requirement applies to arrivals by all modes of transport including Eurostar and boat crossings.

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 5 May (HL

Deb, cols 369–72), what steps they are taking to ensure that British Airways and other airlines process and deliver refunds that have been promised to customers as soon as reasonably possible. [\[HL4797\]](#)

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Department for Transport is in regular conversation with UK airlines and wider membership bodies. We are working closely with the sector, the regulator and consumer groups to help ensure airlines deliver on their commitments.

Airlines are working hard to answer the high call volumes and to process large volumes of refunds. However, the Government appreciates the frustration consumers may be experiencing. We have been clear that where a consumer has asked for a refund, that refund must be paid.

Beavers

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government when a national beaver strategy for England is expected to be delivered; and what plans they have to increase beaver numbers in the UK. [\[HL4743\]](#)

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Biodiversity, including species reintroductions, is a devolved issue and this answer relates to England only. The Government remains committed to providing opportunities for the reintroduction of formerly native species, such as beaver, as set out in our 25 Year Environment Plan.

At the Government's request and with the agreement of the Devon Wildlife Trust, Natural England has extended the River Otter Beaver Trial until 31 August 2020, and is analysing the results of this trial and a range of experience with beavers across the UK and in other countries.

This analysis will inform decisions on the future of River Otter beavers and the status of beaver in England, including our approach for future reintroductions, management and licensing.

Bees: Conservation

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, following World Bee Day on 20 May, to raise awareness of the (1) importance of bees in the survival of ecosystems, and (2) role they play in the process of pollination; and what impact the COVID-19 pandemic is having on the beekeeping sector. [\[HL4847\]](#)

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: *Awareness raising:* This is a devolved matter and the information provided relates to England only. Protecting pollinators is a priority for the Government. Pollinators are an essential part of our environment and play a crucial role in food production through pollination. The Government supports two major events to raise awareness of the importance of bees and other pollinators and to encourage people to take action.

Firstly, there is our 'Bees' Needs' campaign, which we run with our many partners to raise awareness of the steps we can all take to protect pollinators. Under current circumstances, we shall celebrate Bees' Needs Week online this year, from 13 to 19 July. We encourage everyone across the country to get involved, to share their own stories and to find out more about the importance of pollinators and how they can support them.

Defra also organises, in partnership with the Green Flag Awards, Championing the Farmed Environment and the Bee Farmers' Association, an annual Bees' Needs Champions Awards to recognise and celebrate examples of exemplary initiatives undertaken by schools, local authorities, community groups, farmers and businesses to support pollinators.

Our awareness-raising work is a key objective of the National Pollinator Strategy, a ten-year plan which sets out how the Government, conservation groups, farmers, beekeepers and researchers can work together to improve the status of pollinating insects in England.

Beekeeping sector: Honey bee hives in the UK are managed by hobbyist beekeepers and bee farmers. Guidance with respect to beekeeping in relation to COVID-19 was published on the National Bee Unit's BeeBase website in March. The guidance highlighted the importance of beekeepers acting responsibly and ensuring that they continued good beekeeping practices, effective stock management and health checks while respecting Government guidance on social distancing. Some beekeepers rely on being able to import queens and current indications are that COVID-19 does not appear to have had a significant impact on imports.

Training courses and beekeeping events provided by the Government and beekeeping groups have been cancelled. It is difficult to mitigate the effects of this but we are making efforts to develop additional online resources available to beekeepers. Our inspectors are able to continue their vital work of inspecting apiaries to target bee pests and diseases. Social distancing can be maintained as inspectors work outdoors and do not have to be in close proximity to the beekeeper.

Business: Insurance

Asked by Lord Browne of Ladyton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they are having with businesses, including banks and risk insurance companies, about business disruption insurance. [[HL4757](#)]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Government is in continual dialogue with the insurance sector to understand and influence its response to this unprecedented situation and is encouraging insurers to do all they can to support customers during this difficult period.

The Government is working closely with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) to ensure that the rules are being upheld during this crisis and fully supports the

regulator in its role. The FCA rules require insurers to handle claims fairly and promptly; provide reasonable guidance to help a policyholder make a claim; not reject a claim unreasonably; and settle claims promptly once settlement terms are agreed. In addition, the FCA has said that, in light of COVID-19, insurers must consider very carefully the needs of their customers and show flexibility in their treatment of them.

On 1 May the FCA outlined its intention to seek a court declaration, on an agreed and urgent basis, and for a selected number of key issues, to resolve uncertainty for many customers making business interruption claims. Additionally, the FCA stated its expectation for insurers to assess the value of their insurance products to customers during this period and to consider appropriate action. This might include changing how benefits are delivered, refunding some premiums or suspending monthly payments for a certain period of time.

Subsequently on 1 June, the FCA announced the policy wordings that would be tested in the court action and insurers it had invited to participate directly, along with an initial list of policy wordings and insurers that will potentially be impacted by the Court's decision on the representative sample. The FCA expects to publish a final list of all the relevant insurers and policies that may have impacted wordings in early July, and expects a court hearing to take place in late July.

However, it is important to note that most businesses have not purchased insurance that covers losses from non-property damage. Additionally, while some policies cover losses arising from any disease classed as notifiable by the government, or a denial of access to a building, most of these policies only cover a specific list of notifiable diseases or an incident specifically on the premises of the business. Insurance policies differ significantly, so businesses are encouraged to check the terms and conditions of their specific policy and contact their providers. The terms of a policy cannot be changed retrospectively.

The Government encourages businesses to seek assistance through the wider support package if they are in financial difficulty. Businesses should explore the full package of support set out by the Chancellor in the Budget, on 17 March, and on 20 March, which includes measures such as business rates holidays, the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, and wage support.

Business: Procurement

Asked by Lord Touthig

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the relative environmental impact of awarding procurement contracts to British businesses compared to foreign businesses. [[HL4878](#)]

Lord Callanan: As part of the Greening Government Commitments, Departments are required to report on the systems they have in place and the actions they take to buy sustainably.

The 2017/2018 Greening Government Commitments Annual Report found that:

- The majority of departments have a specific sustainable procurement policy or wider sustainability policy in place, or include sustainability within overarching procurement policy;
- Most departments have undertaken or are planning to undertake supply chain scrutiny.

Carbon Emissions and Renewable Energy

Asked by Lord Foster of Bath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what statutory targets have been set for (1) renewable energy, and (2) carbon dioxide reduction; and why any such targets were set. [HL4822]

Lord Callanan: Climate change is a threat that requires an urgent global response. The Government is clear, we must act now.

The Climate Change Act 2008 was the first of its kind in the world and made the UK the first country to introduce a legally binding, long-term emissions reduction target.

The Act set a legally binding target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% by 2050 relative to 1990 levels. In June 2019, the Government passed legislation to increase that target to a reduction of at least 100% (net zero).

It also introduced our innovative framework of carbon budgets to ensure continued progress towards that target, capping emissions in successive five-year blocks. The carbon budgets currently set in legislation (carbon budgets 1 to 5 covering the period between 2008 to 2032) are amongst the most stringent in the world, requiring the equivalent of a 57% cut in emissions by 2030 from a 1990 baseline.

We have committed to end the use of unabated coal by 2025. Meeting our net zero target will require us to build on this progress by transforming our economy – our homes, our transport, our industries, how we generate and use energy, and how we use our land.

Care Homes: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Andrews

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of COVID-19 cases going undetected in (1) care homes, and (2) other community settings; and whether this is a result of a lack of testing capacity. [HL3980]

Lord Bethell: Understanding the number of cases of COVID-19 in care homes and other community settings requires access to testing in symptomatic and asymptomatic people. Public Health England (PHE) uses a variety of real-time data on results of testing in care homes and other community settings at both local and national level to detect and manage outbreaks and

understand the number of infected individuals, both symptomatic and asymptomatic. This data is published in the weekly PHE surveillance report. The latest *Weekly Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Surveillance Report* is attached.

Regarding testing in care homes, the Minister of State for Care (Helen Whately MP) wrote to local health systems on 14 May to advise of the key messages from emerging evidence in the United Kingdom and internationally in relation to transmission of COVID-19 in care homes, as well as the steps being taken to mitigate this as part of the Government's care homes support package. A copy of the letter is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

MSC_letter_-_support_for_care_homes [14_May_2020_-_MSC_letter_-_support_for_care_homes_1.pdf]

Weekly_National_COVID19_Surveillance_w21_FINAL [Weekly_National_COVID19_Surveillance_w21_FINAL.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-05-05/HL3980>

Asked by Baroness Greengross

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to ensure that all workers in community retirement settings are provided with adequate personal protection equipment and have access to COVID-19 testing. [HL4001]

Lord Bethell: We have made arrangements to help ensure that settings providing adult social care services can access personal protection equipment (PPE) where they have a clinical need, in line with published guidance. This includes community retirement settings that have care provision.

We have released millions of items of PPE to wholesalers for onward sale to the adult social care sector for providers to access if they cannot obtain PPE through their business as usual routes. We have also released millions of items of PPE to Local Resilience Forums to help them respond to urgent local spikes in need across the adult social care sector and some other front-line services, where they are unable to access PPE through their business as usual and designated wholesaler routes. We have also mobilised a National Supply Disruption Response system to respond to emergency PPE requests, including for the adult social care sector if they cannot obtain PPE through other routes.

On access to COVID-19 testing, staff that are experiencing symptoms can be referred for testing by their employer, use the self-referral portal to order a home test kit or visit a regional testing site.

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of COVID-19 outbreaks in care homes on the level of COVID-19 cases in the wider community; what plans they have to prevent

carers from visiting multiple care facilities; and what steps they are taking to ensure the adequate care of care home residents while ensuring that infected staff are properly isolated. [HL4327]

Lord Bethell: There is little evidence to suggest a substantial transmission of infection from care homes into the wider community, but our work to reduce transmission within care homes will reduce any risk further. On 13 May we announced an additional £600 million to support providers through a new Adult Social Care Infection Control Fund. The Fund sets out the measures providers can take to support the workforce to minimise the spread of infection, including ensuring staff can self-isolate, reduce their hours, or reduce the number of establishments they work at, without experiencing any loss of income. Expanding and retaining the social care workforce is also key to enabling care providers to continue to provide care and support to their residents, and we have launched a national recruitment campaign for England to support this.

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the Equality and Human Rights Commission about whether human rights laws have been breached by hospitals that discharged older patients that were potentially infected with COVID-19 into care homes. [HL4624]

Lord Bethell: The Department has not had discussions with the Equality and Human Rights Commission on discharge policy. Providers of care homes in England are required to register with the Care Quality Commission and adhere to the 'fundamental standards', such as the duty to provide care in a safe way and treat residents with dignity and respect, as set out in the Health and Social Care Act 2008.

Health and care settings must always seek to fully protect the rights of their residents. The safety of residents and staff is always a priority and patients should not be discharged from hospital unless it is clinically safe to do so. On 15 April, in our Adult Social Care Action Plan, we introduced a policy of testing all residents prior to discharge to a care home.

Asked by Lord Warner

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many care homes have reported a suspected outbreak of symptomatic or confirmed COVID-19 since 15 March; and whether those outbreaks were reported to the Care Quality Commission. [HL4727]

Lord Bethell: Data on outbreaks are published weekly on *COVID-19: number of outbreaks in care homes – management information data set*. The latest published analysis from 21 May provides data on outbreaks between 2 March until 17 May 2020 and shows that 5,876 care homes in England have reported an outbreak of suspected or confirmed COVID-19. The latest weekly update and summary report are attached.

Public Health England has shared a care home situation report which provides data on outbreaks with the Care Quality Commission on a daily basis since 1 April 2020.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

COVID19_Care_Homes_17_May_SUMMARY
[COVID19_Care_Homes_17_May_SUMMARY.pdf]

Care home data weekly update 21 May [Care home data weekly update 21 May (1).xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-05-19/HL4727>

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the deaths of 20 residents at the Paisley Care Home in Liverpool from suspected COVID-19; and what measures are in place (1) to prevent the spread of that virus, and (2) to ensure the safety of residents and staff, in care homes. [HL4740]

Lord Bethell: The safety of residents and staff is a priority. It is the responsibility of the local authority, supported by Public Health England and NHS England to manage outbreaks in the first instance. Every death from this virus is a tragedy and we are working around the clock to give the social care sector the equipment and support they need to tackle this outbreak.

We have published a range of guidance for care homes on how to continue giving care during the COVID-19 outbreak.

This includes the *Admission and Care of Residents during COVID-19 Incident in a Care Home* guidance. This guidance sets out infection control and cohorting advice to care homes, which providers should follow to ensure that they have the confidence to receive and support residents. A copy of the guidance is attached.

On 15 May 2020 we published a care home support package which outlines the next phase of our response for care homes, including measures on infection prevention control, comprehensive testing and clinical support.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Admission_and_Care_of_Residents_guidance
[Admission_and_care_of_residents_during_covid19_incident_in_a_care_home.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-05-20/HL4740>

Children: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of children returning to school before the NHSX contact tracing application is released in England on the spread of COVID-19. [HL4806]

Baroness Berridge: As a result of the huge efforts everyone has made to adhere to strict social distancing measures, the transmission rate of COVID-19 has decreased and the government's five tests have been met. Based on all the evidence, the department asked primary schools to welcome back children in nursery, Reception, year 1 and year 6, alongside priority groups (vulnerable children and children of critical workers), from 1 June. From 15 June, secondary schools can invite year 10 and 12 pupils (years 10 and 11 for alternative provision schools) back into school for some face-to-face support with their teachers, to supplement their remote education, which will remain the predominant mode of education for these pupils this term. Priority groups can continue to attend full-time.

The new NHS Test and Trace service was launched on 28 May across England. Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace and will need to share information about their recent interactions. The government has recruited 25,000 contact tracers to deliver this programme. Staff and pupils in nurseries and schools will be eligible for testing if they display COVID-19 symptoms, as will members of their households.

We have published guidance for schools to help prepare for wider opening, including how any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 should be handled: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>.

Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to update their public guidance on COVID-19 to widen the ranges of symptoms that are indicative of COVID-19. [T] [HL4585]

Lord Bethell: COVID-19 is a new virus and the Government guidance is regularly updated as scientific advice and Government policy evolves. All relevant pieces of guidance were updated to include anosmia (loss or change in sense of smell or taste) when this policy change was announced on 18 May 2020.

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government how confident they are that the transmission of COVID-19 occurs only through droplets spread by people (1) coughing, (2) sneezing, or (3) exhaling, and not through other bodily fluids. [HL4595]

Lord Bethell: Precautions to prevent respiratory virus transmission are based on long-established infection prevention and control principles and the scientific studies that inform them.

In addition, the Government continues to review evidence about COVID-19 transmission as the pandemic evolves. To date, there is no new evidence to suggest that the route of transmission has changed, or that the methods required to prevent transmission need to change.

Coronavirus: Death

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to publish data on the number of deaths per 100,000 of the population from COVID-19 on a regular basis for each (1) region, and (2) nation, in (a) the UK, and (b) other countries. [HL3498]

Lord Bethell: Statistics on deaths involving COVID-19 are available from a range of sources. The Department publishes a daily count, covering the whole of the United Kingdom, and showing how many people have died following a positive test. That source does not provide a breakdown by region or other factors, but it is sourced directly from data published separately by Public Health organisations in each of the four nations of the UK, and each of those provides a detailed count by region, local authority or health board. Data from Public Health England, for example, provides both a trend series and a breakdown by local authority.

Separately, the Office for National Statistics now publishes very detailed data each week, drawing on data from death registration systems. Those statistics include a breakdown by region, age and gender for England and Wales and also provides direct links to equivalent sources for Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Our current best source of international comparisons is the daily tracker published by Johns Hopkins University in the United States, and that is the source used to inform the daily Downing Street press briefings.

Coronavirus: Humanitarian Aid

Asked by Baroness Sheehan

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to contribute to the UN's COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan appeal; and when they intend to announce their contribution. [HL4799]

Baroness Sugg: The UK strongly supports the UN's Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP) to tackle COVID-19. So far, we have pledged up to £764 million of UK aid to support the global effort to combat COVID-19. From this, £220 million has gone to UN agencies in the GHRP, such as the World Food Programme and UN Refugee Agency, as well as humanitarian organisations such as the Red Cross and international NGOs.

DFID is also adapting its programmes across its country network to respond to COVID-19 and address the needs of the most vulnerable, as outlined in the GHRP.

As a leading donor to the COVID 19 global response and one of the biggest humanitarian donors globally, we

are ensuring that our support goes to those who need it the most, including refugees and other forcibly displaced populations. The UK has lobbied successfully at the UN to ensure that vulnerable groups such as refugees are taken into consideration and prioritised in the UN Global Humanitarian Response Plan.

Coronavirus: Older People

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the increased risk of COVID-19 to those over (1) 70, and (2) 50, years old who live with children who are due to return to school. [HL4804]

Baroness Berridge: As a result of the huge efforts everyone has made to adhere to strict social distancing measures, the transmission rate of COVID-19 has decreased and the government's five tests have been met. Based on all the evidence, the department has asked primary schools to welcome back children in nursery, Reception, year 1 and year 6, alongside priority groups (vulnerable children and children of critical workers), from 1 June. From 15 June, secondary schools can invite year 10 and 12 pupils (years 10 and 11 for alternative provision schools) back into school for some face-to-face support with their teachers, to supplement their remote education, which will remain the predominant mode of education for these pupils this term. Priority groups can continue to attend full-time.

Relating to COVID-19, people who are aged 70 or older, regardless of medical conditions, are considered clinically vulnerable.

If a child in the year groups identified for return lives with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) they can attend their school.

We have provided guidance to schools on GOV.UK on implementing protective measures to lower the risk of transmission. These include protective measures such as ensuring that anyone with symptoms does not attend their nursery, school or college, promoting high standards of hand and respiratory hygiene, regular cleaning of touched surfaces, and minimising contact and mixing. This guidance is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>.

It sets out that if a child or young person lives in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable it is advised they only attend their nursery, school or college if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and they are able to understand and follow those instructions. This may not be possible for very young children and older children without the capacity to adhere to the instructions on social distancing. If stringent

social distancing cannot be adhered to, we do not expect those individuals to attend. They should instead be supported to learn at home.

Coronavirus: Screening

Asked by Lord Pendry

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to the risk of people intentionally seeking to buy fake coronavirus test results within the black market if employers allow workers to return on the basis of a positive antibody test. [HL4150]

Lord Bethell: The Chief Medical Officer discourages in the strongest terms organisations from buying their own unvalidated antibody tests. Professor John Newton has also warned that unapproved tests could be misleading, by providing inaccurate or inconsistent results, potentially putting those tested and those around them at risk. He has therefore advised organisations both in the public and private sector against the use of antibody tests that have not been verified in a laboratory setting.

Customs: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what sanctions they will apply to persons who breach customs regulations at border control posts in Northern Ireland after 1 January 2021. [HL4766]

Lord True: The New Decade, New Approach agreement recognised the need to implement the Northern Ireland Protocol in a way that works for the restored Executive and Northern Ireland's businesses. The Protocol text itself is explicit that its implementation "should impact as little as possible on the everyday life of communities".

We are committed to implementing the Protocol in a manner that best serves the needs of the people and businesses in Northern Ireland. This includes continuing to tackle serious and organised crime, including in respect of breaches of applicable customs rules, from January 2021 as we are today.

We also note, as underlined in 'The UK's Approach to implementing the NI Protocol', that we are committed to using the latest technology, risk and compliance techniques as part of our efforts. The Government will work closely with the Northern Ireland Executive and businesses on this.

Cycling and Walking: North West

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government (1) how much money, and (2) what proportion of COVID-19 related funding for local transport schemes to promote cycling and walking, has been allocated to (a) the North West, and (b) Lancashire, Blackburn and Blackpool; and for which schemes. [HL4770]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: On the 9 May the Government announced a £2 billion package of funding for cycling and walking over the next five years. This includes £225 million in the current financial year for the provision of pop-up bike lanes with protected space for cycling, wider pavements, safer junctions and cycle and bus-only corridors.

The first tranche of this funding will be released as soon as possible provided local authorities submit suitably ambitious plans to the Department, and the second tranche will be released later in the summer.

The total indicative allocation for the North West is £33,543,000. Lancashire has been indicatively allocated £700,000 for tranche one and £2,801,000 for tranche two; Blackburn has been indicatively allocated £77,000 for tranche one and £308,000 for tranche two and Blackpool has been indicatively allocated £104,000 for tranche one and £416,000 for tranche two.

Final allocations will depend on the quality of the plans local authorities submit to the Department.

Dental Services

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the ability for patients to access urgent dental services which do not meet the current criteria for treatment. [\[HL4237\]](#)

Lord Bethell: National Health Service dentistry was reorganised in late March along with other NHS primary care services to minimise face to face care to contain the spread of COVID-19 during the peak of the pandemic. Dentists were asked to suspend all routine treatment and instead to offer urgent advice and, where required, prescriptions for antibiotics by telephone. Urgent treatment was made available through urgent dental centres (UDCs) set up in each NHS region.

As of 25 May, there are currently over 550 UDCs open. Patients are triaged into UDCs by their own dentistry or through NHS 111. The UDCs are expected to provide, where urgently needed, the full range of dental treatment normally available on the NHS.

The NHS England and NHS Improvement guidance issued from the Chief Dental Officer on 25 March applied directly only to NHS dental care. When providing private care dentists should consider any advice or guidance issued by regulators, the relevant professional body, Chief Professional Officers, or the NHS, as appropriate. All official guidance should be considered in delivery of private or NHS treatment but guidance issued to the NHS is only binding for NHS care.

NHS England and NHS Improvement announced on 28 May that NHS dentistry outside urgent care centres will begin to restart from 8 June with the aim of increasing levels of service as fast as is compatible with maximising safety.

Dental Services: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the planned timescale for non-NHS dentists to return to work with increased personal protection equipment. [\[HL4371\]](#)

Lord Bethell: National Health Service dentistry was reorganised in late March along with other NHS primary care services to minimise face to face care to contain the spread of COVID-19 during the peak of the pandemic. Dentists were asked to suspend all routine treatment and instead to offer urgent advice and, where required, prescriptions for antibiotics by telephone. Urgent treatment was made available through urgent dental centres (UDCs) set up in each NHS region.

As of 25 May, there are currently over 550 UDCs open across England. Patients are triaged into UDCs by their own dentistry or through NHS 111. The UDCs are expected to provide, where urgently needed, the full range of dental treatment normally available on the NHS.

Information is not yet available on the number of patients receiving NHS dental treatment, the number of patients treated so far in UDCs or the number of FP17s submitted.

The NHS England and NHS Improvement guidance issued from the Chief Dental Officer on 25 March applied directly only to NHS dental care. When providing private care dentists should consider any advice or guidance issued by regulators, the relevant professional body, Chief Professional Officers, or the NHS, as appropriate. All official guidance should be considered in delivery of private or NHS treatment but guidance issued to the NHS is only binding for NHS care.

NHS England and NHS Improvement announced on 28 May that NHS dentistry outside urgent care centres will begin to restart from 8 June with the aim of increasing levels of service as fast as is compatible with maximising safety.

Disadvantaged: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide support (1) now, and (2) in the future, to those most financially affected by the COVID-19 pandemic [\[HL4602\]](#)

Baroness Stedman-Scott: Households receiving Universal Credit and tax credits will benefit straight away from the increase of £20 a week in the standard allowances which was announced on 20 March, meaning claimants will be up to £1040 better off. New claimants who have either become unemployed, or whose earnings or work hours have decreased because of the outbreak, will benefit too; subject to their eligibility.

We have also made a number of changes to legacy and other working age benefits in response to the COVID-19

outbreak, including increasing certain entitlements, such as Local Housing Allowance, lifting rates to the 30th percentile from April 2020 which will increase the housing support available and reduce shortfalls for those renting in the private rented sector. Up-to-date information about the employment and benefits support available, including Universal Credit, Statutory Sick Pay, New style Jobseeker's Allowance, and Employment and Support Allowance, can be found here: <https://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/employment-and-benefits-support/>.

Employment: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what continuous financial support they plan to provide to vulnerable people who are unable to return to work during the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL4807]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: Employers are able to access the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS), which will help them to continue paying part of their employees' wages if they would otherwise have been laid off during this crisis. The Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) scheme has also been extended to strengthen the safety net for vulnerable people where employers have chosen not to make use of CJRS. SSP is now payable from the first day of sickness absence, rather than the fourth, to those required to self-isolate because they, or someone in their household, has symptoms of COVID-19. SSP is now also payable to individuals identified as clinically extremely vulnerable who have been advised to stay at home (known as shielding) and to anyone who has had close contact with someone who has tested positive and are being asked to self-isolate.

Any worker not eligible for SSP may be able to claim Universal Credit or New Style Employment and Support Allowance.

Employment: Mental Health

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce regulations to amend the Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981 to include provision for mental health first aid. [HL4747]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: Under the Health and Safety (First Aid) at Work Regulations 1981 employers have a responsibility to consider the physical and mental health needs of their staff regardless of whether the cause is work-related or not as part of their first aid needs assessment, and decide what support is necessary. HSE provides guidance to employers on what type of factors to consider, see link for more information. (<https://www.hse.gov.uk/firstaid/needs-assessment.htm>).

Erasmus+ Programme: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to develop a replacement for the Erasmus+ student exchange programme; and whether this has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL4742]

Baroness Berridge: The government remains open to participation in some elements of the next Erasmus+ programme. This will be subject to our ongoing negotiations with the EU.

We are, in parallel with the negotiations, developing a domestic alternative to Erasmus+, to ensure we are prepared for every eventuality as the government remains committed to international exchanges in education, both with the EU and beyond.

We are working closely with the devolved administrations as we develop the alternative scheme, as our intention is that this will be UK-wide, and are consulting with a range of stakeholders.

The development of the scheme has not been affected by COVID-19.

Exercise Cygnus: Sick Leave

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they took following the conclusion of Exercise Cygnus to ensure that the potential for staff absences to reach 50 per cent was built into business continuity planning in the event of a pandemic. [HL4779]

Lord True: I refer the noble Lord to published documents, including for example the modelling of the [Scientific Pandemic Influenza Group on Modelling](#) from November 2018, which detailed a reasonable worst case scenario that up to 50% of the population could be ill - not that staff absences could reach 50%.

Food: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the nutritional standards for the food parcels that they are delivering to those in priority health categories; and what oversight is in place to ensure that the standards are maintained. [HL3610]

Lord Bethell: The food parcels delivered to those at highest risk from COVID-19 contain a basic selection of food and other essential items. They are a standardised package designed to be suitable for the majority of people and deliver the nutritional requirements for one person for one week, as reviewed by nutritionists and key industry groups.

Substitutions of various items can be made to provide variety from one week to the next. Those receiving the boxes are advised, via a letter in the box, to contact their local authority if they have any particular dietary requirements, including cultural and religious needs that are not met through the contents of the box.

Free Movement of People

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the assistance provided for workers from outside the UK with horticultural duties during the COVID-19 pandemic, what consideration they have given to reversing their advice on restrictions of the freedom of movement. [HL4061]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: We welcome the contribution which seasonal workers from outside the UK are making to the UK agricultural sector. Such workers will not have to enter into quarantine on arrival in the UK but we will expect them, and their employers, to take sensible measures to prevent any spread of disease and for the migrants to remain on the farms where they are working.

Health and Social Services: Protective Clothing

Asked by Baroness Smith of Basildon

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bethell on 14 May (HL3356), on what date in 2020 ministers ordered a reassessment of personal protective equipment requirements across the NHS and the care services sector; and when the results of that reassessment were communicated to ministers. [HL4710]

Lord Bethell: While the United Kingdom entered the current situation with a stockpile designed to respond to a pandemic influenza and a no-deal exit from the European Union, the supply chain for personal protective equipment (PPE) was designed to accommodate delivering to 226 National Health Service trusts.

We published the 'Coronavirus (COVID-19): personal protective equipment (PPE) plan' on 10 April, and since that week, we have massively scaled this up, providing essential PPE supplies to 58,000 different providers including care homes, general practitioner surgeries, hospices and community care organisations.

Health Services: Immigrants

Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the current expected annual revenue from the immigration health surcharge; of that, how much is collected from (1) NHS workers, and (2) care workers; and in each case what proportion of the total NHS budget this represents. [T] [HL4846]

Lord Bethell: This information is not available in the format requested.

High Rise Flats: Insulation

Asked by Baroness Kennedy of Cradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the progress made by the private sector to remediate the use of unsafe aluminium composite materials on high rise buildings. [HL4834]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Department publishes data on the number of high-rise residential and publicly owned buildings in England with ACM cladding systems unlikely to meet building regulations. The latest data is available (attached) at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/884990/Building_Safety_Data_Release_April_2020.pdf.

The publication shows that as of the end of April 2020, the number of private residential high-rise buildings in England identified with ACM cladding systems unlikely to meet building regulations in England was 208. Of those: 28 had completed remediation, 14 had started remediation and the ACM cladding had been removed, 35 had started remediation (ACM cladding not yet removed), 90 had a remediation plan in place, 40 had an intent to remediate and one building had an unclear remediation plan.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Building Safety Data [200603]

Building_Safety_Data_Release_April_2020 - HL4834.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-05-21/HL4834>

Hong Kong: Politics and Government

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to publish the next edition of the six-monthly report on Hong Kong relating to the implementation of the Sino-British Joint Declaration on Hong Kong; and why that edition has not yet been published. [HL4739]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The change in the Parliamentary timetable has delayed our original publishing date for the six-monthly report on Hong Kong covering the period July- December 2019. The report will be published soon.

Hospitals: Admissions

Asked by Baroness Thornton

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to publish finer-resolution data on hospital admissions statistics, to assist with understanding the optimal admission, treatment, and resource allocation strategies. [HL4870]

Lord Bethell: Data on Hospital Episodes Statistics is published by NHS Digital and the latest available data is for 2018/19. Annual data for 2019/20 is due to be published in October 2020.

House of Lords: Membership

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to ensure that future appointments of members to the House of Lords help to improve representation (1) of the four nations of the UK, and (2) of each of the regions of England, in the membership of the House. [HL4771]

Lord True: The House of Lords has a key role in scrutinising the executive and as a revising chamber. It is important that the way it is constituted reflects that role and the primacy of the House of Commons as the elected chamber. The Government has an aspiration that all parts of the United Kingdom should feel connected to politics and indeed to politicians.

Immigrants: Health Services

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the cost of exempting (1) NHS and care workers, and (2) all workers, from overseas and their families from the immigration health surcharge; and what plans they have to review their policy on that surcharge. [HL4833]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: As announced by the Prime Minister on 21 May, the Home Office and the Department of Health and Social Care are working through the detail of an exemption for NHS workers and health and social care staff from the Immigration Health Surcharge.

Immigration Controls: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government where they intend to establish border control posts in Northern Ireland. [HL4764]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The Northern Ireland Protocol was designed as a practical solution to avoiding a hard border on the island of Ireland, whilst ensuring that the UK, including Northern Ireland, could leave the EU as a whole. In implementing the Protocol, the Government's top priority remains protecting Northern Ireland's place in our United Kingdom, and preserving the huge gains from the peace process and the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement.

Whilst the Protocol is in force, both the UK and EU must respect and abide by the legal obligations it contains, as well as our other international law obligations.

The Protocol will require changes to provide for agrifood checks and assurance as goods move into Northern Ireland, building on the provisions that already exist to support the Single Epidemiological Unit on the island of Ireland. This will include a need for agrifood goods from Great Britain to enter Northern Ireland via a Border Control Post (BCP), designated for the type of goods it will handle.

As set out in the Command Paper on *The UK's Approach to the Northern Ireland Protocol* published on 20 May, the Government is taking forward this work with the Northern Ireland Executive. We have already confirmed that existing BCP designations at Belfast Port, Belfast International Airport, Belfast City Airport and Warrenpoint Port will be maintained.

At a minimum we expect to expand the categories of commodities that can be handled at Belfast Port, and to designate Larne Port for live animal imports. Checks are already currently carried out at Larne on all livestock entering Northern Ireland from Great Britain, but the existing facility does not currently have formal EU approval. Subject to further work with the Northern Ireland Executive and delivery partners, further designations may also be required at other existing sites. There will be no construction at points of entry where no plant or animal health checks are currently carried out.

Kashmir: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Sheehan

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of COVID-19 on the human rights situation in Jammu and Kashmir. [HL4866]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We recognise that there are human rights concerns in India-administered Kashmir and we have raised these with the Government of India. We remain concerned at ongoing detentions and some restrictions on internet services and call for these to be lifted as soon as possible. We encourage all states to ensure domestic laws are in line with international standards. Any allegations of human rights abuses or violations are deeply concerning and must be investigated thoroughly, promptly and transparently.

Kashmir: Internet

Asked by Baroness Sheehan

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether the role of the UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan should be strengthened in response to the suspension of 2G mobile internet in Jammu and Kashmir on 6 May. [HL4867]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan is mandated to observe ceasefire violations across the Line of Control between India and Pakistan and report these to the UN

Secretary General. We remain concerned by some ongoing restrictions on mobile internet access in India-administered Kashmir and call on the Government of India to lift these restrictions as soon as possible.

Leeds-Bradford Airport

*Asked by **Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the proposed expansion of Leeds–Bradford airport in the light of the reduction in air travel caused by (1) the COVID-19 pandemic, and (2) changes in consumer behaviour due to environmental concerns. [[HL4745](#)]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Government supports airports making best of their existing runways. Potential airport growth applications should be considered under the appropriate planning regime and should take careful account of all relevant considerations, particularly economic and environmental impacts and proposed mitigations.

Applications to increase existing planning caps by fewer than 10 million passengers per annum (mppa) as in the case of Leeds-Bradford, should be taken forward through local planning authorities under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Ministry of Defence: Carbon Emissions

*Asked by **Lord Touhig***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that low or zero carbon technologies are included in the (1) commissioning, and (2) construction, of Ministry of Defence buildings. [[HL4876](#)]

Baroness Goldie: All new Ministry of Defence Buildings are commissioned and constructed in accordance with the Department's Building Performance Standards Policy, as set out in the Joint Services Publication 315.

The policy contains an Energy and Performance standard that directs that "all new and major refurbishments should be designed to be 'nearly zero-energy buildings'".

We intend to strengthen these standards and they are currently under review.

NHS and Social Services: Recruitment

*Asked by **Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they are seeking to encourage people to pursue a career in the National Health Service or the social care sector. [[HL3857](#)]

Lord Bethell: In December 2019, the Government announced that from September 2020, pre-registration nursing, midwifery and most allied health profession

students studying at English universities would benefit from a new, non-repayable, training grant of at least £5,000 per academic year in addition to the funding available already through the Learning Support Fund.

The 'We are the NHS' campaign' returned in September 2019 with a new televised advert and campaign to inspire the next generation of National Health Service nurses in England. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased interest in healthcare careers and the Department is working to make the most of this, for instance, looking to maximise the number of new nursing students starting degrees this autumn.

The Government's Action Plan for Adult Social Care published last month sets out our aim to increase the social care workforce. This includes a national recruitment campaign in England, launched on 23 April, highlighting the vital role of the social care workforce during this pandemic and the longer-term opportunities for working in care.

We are also developing a new online recruitment platform which will give people wanting to work in social care the opportunity to be considered for multiple job opportunities and help employers to recruit people quickly. This includes access to free online induction training with training providers endorsed by Skills for Care and a fast-tracked Disclosure and Barring Service check to help accelerate the recruitment process.

NHS: Ethnic Groups

*Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to offer NHS front-line BAME staff alternative roles during the COVID-19 pandemic. [[HL4808](#)]

Lord Bethell: NHS Employers has recently published guidance to employers on risk assessments, advising them to consider issues such as pregnancy, ethnicity, age and disability. Since 30 April, numerous extensive expert publications have been produced by organisations such as the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

As a result, many National Health Service trusts are updating their risk assessment procedures. Human resources directors are considering a range of mitigating actions, including redeploying staff into alternative roles, and measures such as additional hygiene measures, stringent fit testing procedures, equity of personal protective equipment provision and training, and improved occupational health support.

NHS Employers will publish updated guidance shortly to reflect the range of approaches being taken by trusts.

NHS: Negligence

*Asked by **Lord Blencathra***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many (1) clinical negligence claims, and (2) compensation

claims, have been brought against the NHS since 28 February; how many claimants there are; and what was the amount of damages sought in each case. [HL4486]

Lord Bethell: NHS Resolution manages clinical negligence and other claims against the National Health Service in England.

NHS Resolution has provided the following information:

Since 28 February 2020 NHS Resolution has received:

- 1,528 clinical negligence claims against NHS bodies across all its clinical schemes; and

- 508 claims against NHS bodies across all non-clinical schemes, assuming this is what is meant by compensation claims.

The total number of claimants across both groups is 2,036.

NHS Resolution is unable to give an amount of damages sought in each case because these are recently reported claims and it is highly unlikely this information would be available so early in the life of the claim.

NHS: Oxygen

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what supplies of oxygen are currently held by the NHS in England; what is the optimum level of oxygen supplies the NHS in England should hold; if supplies are currently below the optimum level, what is their plan to increase supplies to the optimum level; and what is the timescale for this plan. [HL4600]

Lord Bethell: Based on data provided by those companies as of 19 May 2020, the suppliers have provided the following details of oxygen levels across hospitals in England.

<i>Supplier</i>	<i>Estimated fill level (metric tonnes)</i>	<i>Tank capacity (metric tonnes)</i>	<i>Percentage of capacity</i>
BOC Healthcare	4,740	6,196	76%
Air Products	1,024	1,390	74%

In addition to bulk oxygen supplies, there are also hundreds of thousands of medical oxygen cylinders in circulation from several different suppliers, the vast majority of which will be held by NHS trusts. These are available in a wide range of sizes and capacities to meet different uses. Optimum levels for cylinder oxygen would be determined locally by each hospital and trust. This information is not collected centrally. However, we are unaware of any instances where cylinder oxygen has not been available to treat patients.

North Africa: Conflict, Stability and Security Fund

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 15 May (HL3800), whether they will set out the practical and financial assistance given by the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund in the current year to (1) Tunisia, (2) Algeria, and (3) Morocco; and whether they expect this to decrease or increase in the coming year for each of those countries. [HL4786]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Final Conflict, Security and Stability Fund (CSSF) allocations for the current year (2020-21) are being reviewed in light of Covid-19. CSSF teams are taking steps to ensure existing programmes consider the implications of Covid-19 and they are also working on some new programming to support Covid-19 response, including in the Maghreb region. The UK continues to support the North Africa region through the CSSF, supporting the delivery of greater security and resilience; promoting a more inclusive political dialogue; and boosting economic development. In Tunisia the CSSF is supporting projects that include counter-terrorism capacity building, countering violent extremism, border security, economic and public sector reform, education and transparency and anti-corruption. In Algeria the CSSF is tackling areas including economic development and education reform and in Morocco the focus of the CSSF includes strengthening governance, education, and economic development.

Peru: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Coussins

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the compliance of British mining companies operating in Peru with the health and safety regulations set up by the government of Peru to prevent the further spread of COVID-19 to their workers, families and the wider community. [HL4763]

Baroness Sugg: The UK Government does not specifically undertake work with UK mining companies operating in Peru to assess their compliance with local health and safety regulations. We expect them to comply fully with all measures put in place by the Government of Peru to limit the spread of COVID-19.

Poverty: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of calls from a coalition of charities for a coronavirus emergency income support scheme to be developed in collaboration with charities in the anti-poverty sector. [HL3873]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The Government has been clear in its commitment to support those affected in these

difficulties times and we have made a number of changes to the welfare system to ensure people are receiving the support they need. These changes include:

- making it easier to access benefits. Those applying for Contributory Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) who may have coronavirus, are self-isolating, or caring for a child (or qualifying young person) who falls into either of those categories, or individuals who have been advised to 'shield' because they are at high risk of severe illness, will be entitled from day 1 of their claim – as opposed to day 8 - and we have removed the need for face-to-face assessment. Both Universal Credit (UC) and ESA can now be claimed by phone or online;
- increasing the standard allowance of UC and working tax credit for this year by around £1000 per year;
- temporarily relaxing the application of the Minimum Income Floor for all self-employed claimants affected by COVID-19 to ensure that the self-employed can access UC at a more generous rate;
- making Statutory Sick Pay available from day 1 – as opposed to day 4 - where an eligible individual is sick or self-isolating; and
- increasing in the Local Housing Allowance rates for UC and Housing Benefit claimants so that it covers the cheapest 30% of local market rents – which is on average £600 in people's pockets.
- To allow staff to be re-deployed to the front line, we have suspended recovery of some Government debts such as Tax Credits, benefit overpayments and Social Fund Loans.
- The Department has also made Regulations which remove restrictions preventing prisoners on temporary release due to the COVID-19 measures from claiming means-tested benefits, including UC, during the period of that release.

Taken together, these measures represent an injection of over £6.5 billion into the welfare system and, along with the other job and business support programmes announced by the Chancellor, including the Business Retention Scheme and the Self Employed Income Support Scheme, represent one of the most comprehensive packages of support introduced by an advanced economy in response to the coronavirus outbreak.

The Government remains committed to supporting the essential work the Voluntary, and Community and Social Enterprise Sector do in our communities which is why the Chancellor recently announced a £750 million package of support to ensure they can continue their vital work during the coronavirus outbreak. Following the Chancellor's announcement last month, the bidding process for direct cash grants through the National Lottery Community Fund has now launched for those in England.

The Coronavirus Community Support Fund aims to support the tens of thousands of charities and organisations at the heart of local communities that are making a big difference during the COVID-19 outbreak, including delivering food, essential medicines and providing financial advice, which includes welfare

support and advice. The funding is to help organisations ensure they can meet increased demand as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, as well as continuing their day to day activities supporting vulnerable people in need.

Prisoners' Release

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many prisoners have been refused (1) a Home Detention Curfew, and (2) an End of Custody Temporary Release, because they do not have suitable accommodation to be released to. [[HL4752](#)]

Lord Keen of Elie: Data on refusals to release under the Home Detention Curfew (HDC) and End of Custody Temporary Release (ECTR) schemes are not collated centrally and it would exceed cost limits to establish the number of prisoners who are not released under each scheme because they do not have suitable accommodation to go to.

Where low-risk offenders are assessed as eligible for release under HDC or ECTR but do not have suitable accommodation to return to, HMPPS will work with the offender and with other agencies, including the Bail Accommodation Support Service (BASS) run by Nacro, in order to identify a suitable address if possible.

Prisons: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their projection for the prison population for the next 12 months for (1) men, and (2) women, in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic. [[HL4753](#)]

Lord Keen of Elie: Prison population projections bulletins are released annually by the Ministry of Justice. The next projections are due in August this year.

The most recent bulletin, from 29 August 2019, forecasts that the adult male population will be 76,900 in June 2021, and the female adult population will be 3,700 in June 2021.

As they were published in August last year, these projections do not factor in the impact of measures to contain COVID-19, although we do not expect COVID-19 to significantly affect the underlying drivers of the longer-term population.

In order to ensure we have sufficient space for those sentenced to custody, we are investing up to £2.5 billion to provide 10,000 additional prison places over the next 6 years. Further construction already taking place, for example at Wellingborough and Glen Parva, will deliver another 3,500 places by 2023.

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the level of certified normal

accommodation required within the prison estate over the next 12 months as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL4754]

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic, what assessment they have made of the number of people within the prison estate that they expect to be held in double accommodation over the next 12 months. [HL4755]

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of inter-prison transfers in the next 12 months as a result of COVID-19. [HL4756]

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the implications of COVID-19 for operational capacity within the (1) male, and (2) female, prison estates. [HL4819]

Lord Keen of Elie: We will always have enough capacity to accommodate those committed to custody by the courts. As of 29 May, we have reduced useable operational capacity by around 2,600 places in order to ensure prisons can implement a compartmentalisation strategy to isolate the symptomatic, shield the vulnerable and quarantine new arrivals to reduce risk. Further reductions in useable capacity will depend on further population reductions and we will continue to monitor the situation closely.

In March, temporary restrictions were put in place to minimise movements between jails and reduce face-to-face probation meetings to avoid thousands of prisoners and staff becoming infected with COVID-19. Since then, strong further measures have been implemented, including the early release of low-risk offenders, temporary expansion of the prison estate, and work to reduce the number of those held on remand. These measures have helped to contain the spread of the virus so far and limit deaths.

This action has helped to reduce the prison population, allowing jails to implement 'compartmentalisation'.

Inter-prison transfers are currently limited, however, as normal measures return across the estate, we will be able to undertake routine inter-prison transfers safely.

The baseline certified normal accommodation (CNA) of the prison estate will not change over the next 12 months (as there are no plans to open new prison places or permanently close any prisons). However, in-use CNA and operational capacity will fluctuate over the next 12 months as places come in and out of use for a range of reasons at selected prisons (mainly as a result of large-scale maintenance projects and/or as part of our response to managing the Covid-19 pandemic).

The number of prisoners held in shared accommodation over the next 12 months will be based on the size of the

current and the projected prison population. As at 1 May, 36% of the prison population are sharing cells holding two or more people.

To mitigate the spread of infection in the existing estate, we have been creating space in prisons to remove and reduce cell sharing, provide access to in-cell sanitation, and protect the sick and shield the vulnerable.

Over 850 temporary cells have already been delivered to 25 prisons and 217 are in use. We continue to deliver and install these units to provide single occupancy cells at priority sites to support the successful compartmentalisation of prisoners to prevent the spread of COVID-19. We have also opened an Annex at HMP/YOI Rochester to hold up to 70 men.

Extra headroom is being created as a result of population falls and our support for early release schemes and expediting of remand cases.

Refugees: Finance

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to (1) maintain the extension of housing provision for newly recognised refugees to three months, introduced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, as a permanent measure, and (2) ensure financial support for such refugees whilst they wait for receipt of Universal Credit payments. [HL4813]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: As part of the Government's response to the pandemic, newly recognised refugees are not currently being asked to leave asylum accommodation. We will be reviewing the policy before the end of June, but there are no plans to make the arrangement permanent. When normal arrangements resume, the refugees will receive notice that they are no longer eligible to receive asylum support after a 28 days "grace period" and assisted to transition to mainstream benefits and housing services if they wish to apply for them.

Sex and Relationship Education

Asked by Lord Cashman

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether all schools in England will begin to teach compulsory relationships education or relationships and sex education from September 2020. [HL4758]

Asked by Lord Cashman

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action will be taken against schools in England that do not begin to teach compulsory relationships education or relationships and sex education from September 2020. [HL4759]

Asked by Lord Cashman

To ask Her Majesty's Government what resources and support they are providing to schools in England to help

them (1) consult parents about the provision of, and (2) teach, compulsory relationships education and relationships and sex education. [HL4760]

Asked by Lord Cashman

To ask Her Majesty's Government how far in advance parents of pupils in schools in England must be consulted before the teaching of relationships education or relationships and sex education starts. [HL4761]

Asked by Lord Cashman

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the preparedness of schools in England to begin teaching compulsory relationships education or relationships and sex education from September. [HL4762]

Baroness Berridge: We want to support all young people to be happy, healthy and safe. We also want to equip them for adult life and to make a positive contribution to society. That is why we are making Relationships Education (RE) compulsory for primary school-age pupils, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for secondary school-age pupils and Health Education compulsory for pupils in all state-funded schools, from September 2020.

Ofsted's school inspection handbook sets out that inspectors will consider the provision for RE and RSE and Health Education, as part of a wider judgment of pupils' personal development.

To support schools in their preparations, the department is investing in a central support package to help all schools to increase the confidence and quality of their teaching practice. This includes developing a new online service featuring innovative training materials, case studies and support to access resources. This will cover all of the teaching and consultation requirements in the statutory guidance and will be available in the summer term, with additional content added in the following months.

The department has been working to assess the impact of COVID-19 on a school's ability to discharge their duty relating to the implementation of these subjects. The department will provide an update in due course. Schools will be required to consult with parents when developing and reviewing their policies for RE (primary) and RSE (secondary), which will inform schools' decisions on when and how certain content is covered. The statutory guidance sets out effective practice on parental engagement and we have published further advice for primary schools on engaging parents positively in the development of their RE policy, which you can find here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/engaging-parents-with-relationships-education-policy>. In addition we have published leaflets for schools to provide to parents, which summarise the key changes: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationship-s-sex-and-health-education-guides-for-schools>.

Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether schools have a duty to respect the wishes of parents who want to raise their children in accordance with their own religious and philosophical convictions. [HL4788]

Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Baroness Berridge on 12 May (HL Deb, cols 566–9), and to their publication, Relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education: FAQs, what options will be available to parents who do not want their primary school-aged children to be taught about LGBT relationships if their child's school decides to teach them. [HL4789]

Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to give schools discretion over what they teach under relationships education, relationships and sex education; and if so, what safeguards there will be to ensure that such teaching will be age-appropriate and have regard for the religious background of pupils. [HL4790]

Baroness Berridge: We are making Relationships Education compulsory for primary school-aged pupils, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for secondary school-aged pupils and Health Education compulsory for pupils in all state-funded schools, from September 2020.

These subjects are designed to give pupils the knowledge they need to lead happy, safe and healthy lives and to foster respect for other people and for difference. Through these subjects, children will be taught about the importance of respectful relationships and the different types of relationships that exist. This can be done in a way that respects everyone's views.

The statutory guidance states that all pupils should receive teaching on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) relationships during their school years, and that secondary schools should include LGBT content in their teaching. Primary schools are encouraged and enabled, when teaching about different types of family, to include families with same sex parents.

In all schools, the religious background of all pupils must be taken into account when planning teaching, so that topics included in the statutory guidance are handled appropriately. Schools must ensure they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010. The statutory guidance is attached and can be accessed via the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/805781/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education.pdf.

Schools are also required to consult with parents when developing and reviewing their policies for Relationships Education (primary) and RSE (secondary), which will inform schools' decisions on when and how certain content is covered. Schools should ensure that parents know what will be taught and when, and clearly communicate the fact that parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

HL4788_HL4789_HL4790_PDF
[HL4788_HL4789_HL4790_RSE_guidance.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-05-20/HL4788>

Sites of Special Scientific Interest: Wildlife

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to restore the condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest to ensure that all such sites are favourable to wildlife. [HL4744]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The 25 Year Environment Plan commits us to restoring 75% of our 1 million hectares of terrestrial and freshwater protected sites to favourable condition by 2042. Defra and Natural England are working with land owners and managers and others to improve the condition of our protected sites as a core component of a Nature Recovery Network.

Social Services: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Wheeler

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact that the temporary closure, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, of day care facilities for people with disabilities has had on the health and mental wellbeing of (1) the service users and (2) their carers. [HL3973]

Asked by Baroness Wheeler

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of reduced care packages, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, for disabled and elderly people living in the community on the health and mental wellbeing of (1) the service users and (2) their carers. [HL3974]

Lord Bethell: We continue to provide guidance, funding, and support to individuals and groups affected by local service disruption. This includes an ethical framework to support local prioritisation decisions, guidance for unpaid carers, and guidance for the public on the mental health and wellbeing aspects of COVID-19. We are also working with national learning disability and autism charities to identify how, with Government funding, they can boost their online and helpline capacity

to support people with learning disabilities, autistic people and those with the most complex needs.

The Department is also working with the Care Quality Commission and Think Local, Act Personal (TLAP) to understand the impact on individuals, including disabled people and their carers, of the changes to Care Act 2014 duties. TLAP hopes to speak to local authorities which are operating under easements to understand what this means for adults with care and support needs. A TLAP Insight Group will be meeting regularly to coordinate intelligence of TLAP partners on the impact and views of people accessing care and support and unpaid carers.

Students: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Lexden

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to allow boarding houses at residential schools to provide accommodation for students to self-isolate to comply with COVID-19 public health advice; and whether, and if so, when they will issue guidance about this to residential schools. [HL4785]

Baroness Berridge: Our latest guidance on isolation for residential educational settings is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-isolation-for-residential-educational-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-isolation-for-residential-educational-settings>.

It contains advice on managing isolation for individuals or groups in the event that a child, young person or staff member in a residential setting either shows symptoms of COVID-19 or is confirmed as having the disease.

This guidance applies to mainstream boarding schools as well as to all other residential educational settings.

Taitusi Ratucaucau

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to waive the medical fees for Taitusi Ratucaucau. [HL4689]

Lord Bethell: NHS England and NHS Improvement are working with the provider concerned and the Department to ensure the veteran continues to receive the best possible treatment and care from the National Health Service whilst the issue of his eligibility for free NHS care is resolved.

Tunisia: Armed Forces

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are currently providing any security assistance and advice to the military in Tunisia. [HL4852]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK works closely with the Government of Tunisia on security and related issues, including counter-terrorism capacity building,

border security and countering violent extremism. The UK also supports work to address drivers of instability in Tunisia, including in the areas of economic and public sector reform, transparency and anti-corruption.

UK City of Culture: Coventry

*Asked by **Baroness Doocey***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they are putting in place to support Coventry, as it prepares to become UK City of Culture 2021, to compensate for the downturn in tourism revenue due to COVID-19. [HL4254]

Baroness Barran: We recognise that COVID-19 has significantly impacted tourism revenue in regions across the country. We continue to engage with stakeholders to monitor the situation and to assess how we can most effectively support the sector's recovery when tourism activity restarts.

Tourism businesses and workers in Coventry can access the Government's comprehensive support package, including the recently extended Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the Bounce Back Loan scheme. The Government has invested over £15 million to support Coventry's year as UK City of Culture, and the Department for Digital, Culture and Media and Sport is working closely with Coventry City of Culture Trust and partners to continue to ensure Coventry's success as host city.

UK Relations with EU

*Asked by **Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the progress of negotiations on the UK's future relationship with the EU following the most recent round of negotiations between 11 May and 15 May. [HL4796]

Lord True: The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster made a Written Ministerial Statement on 19 May, which I repeated in this House ([HLWS239](#)), to update Parliament on the third round of negotiations, which took place between 11 and 15 May.

UK Relations with EU: Coronavirus

*Asked by **Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effect of the COVID-19 outbreak on their ability to implement a future relationship agreement with the EU by 31 December. [HL4795]

Lord True: Negotiations on the future UK and EU relationship have continued despite the COVID-19 outbreak.

The UK and EU engaged in a full and constructive round of negotiations between 11 - 15 May. A Written Ministerial Statement was made by the Chancellor of the

Duchy of Lancaster on 19 May updated the progress of negotiations, which I repeated in this House ([HLWS239](#)).

Future relationship discussions are ongoing, and the next round of negotiations began on 1 June.

Universal Credit

*Asked by **Baroness Lister of Burtersett***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that any new claimants of Universal Credit who are also claiming an 'exempt benefit' are not subject to the benefit cap because of the current three month pause in the assessment of entitlement to some exempt benefits. [HL4841]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: Review and reassessment activity on related benefits is currently suspended meaning payment of those benefits will continue. As such, those claimants will also continue to be exempt from the benefit cap.

*Asked by **Baroness Lister of Burtersett***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Universal Credit claimants have been subject to increased repayments from their weekly benefit following the increase in the Universal Credit standard allowance announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and what proportion of all claimants making repayments that represents. [HL4843]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The data for deductions from March 2020 is not yet available. From 3 April 2020, deductions from Universal Credit for benefit overpayments were suspended for three months. This was done to ease the financial pressure of debt recovery on benefit claimants and to also allow Debt Management staff to be re-deployed to focus on the unprecedented volume of new claims received during the covid-19 outbreak.

Vitamin D: Health Education

*Asked by **Baroness Lister of Burtersett***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that Public Health England's advice on year-round Vitamin D supplementation for care home residents and people from BAME communities is promoted widely during the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL4844]

Lord Bethell: Public Health England (PHE) re-issued existing Government advice on vitamin D supplementation in April 2020. This advice was published online on NHS.UK. PHE's Change4Life and Start4Life online resources were also updated to reflect the vitamin D advice.

Industry representative groups were also advised of the reissuing of advice to allow them to prepare for potential uptake and maintain supplies in retail, chemists and health shops.

There is existing National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance on increasing supplement use to prevent vitamin D deficiency among specific population groups for commissioners, managers and other professionals with public health as part of their remit, working within the National Health Service, local authorities and the wider public, private, voluntary and community sectors. A copy of the NICE guidance,

Vitamin D: supplement use in specific population groups, is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Vitamin-d-supplement-use [vitamin-d-supplement-use-in-specific-population-groups-pdf-1996421765317.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-05-21/HL4844>

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