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**Wednesday
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**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

Written Statements1

Written Answers.....2

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<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, Treasury and Cabinet Office
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
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
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 and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
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 Parkinson of Whitley Bay	Whip
Baroness Penn	Whip
Baroness Scott of Bybrook	Whip
Baroness Stedman-Scott	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Stewart of Direleton	Advocate-General for Scotland
Lord True	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Minister of State, Home Office
Lord Wolfson of Tredegar	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Justice
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

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Written Statements

Wednesday, 13 January 2021

Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Contingencies Fund Advance

[HLWS699]

Lord Callanan: My Honourable friend the Minister for London and Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Labour Markets) (Paul Scully) has today made the following statement:

I hereby give notice that the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy will draw an advance from the contingencies fund totalling £5,023,479,000 to enable expenditure on Covid-19 support packages for business to be spent ahead of the passage of the Supply and Appropriation Act in March 2021. The funding will go towards the following schemes:

- Local Restrictions Support Grant (LRSNG) (closed) – grants of up to £3,000 per four weeks for closed businesses.
- The Closed Businesses Lockdown Payment - one-off grants worth up to £9,000 per business property.
- a £500m top up to the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) scheme in England.

	<i>Local Restrictions Support Grant (closed) scheme</i>	<i>Closed Businesses Lockdown Payment</i>	<i>Additional Restrictions Grant scheme</i>	<i>Total £m</i>
RDEL	1,508.1	3,015.4	500.0	5,023.5

Parliamentary approval for additional resources of £5,023,479,000 will be sought in a Supplementary Estimate for the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £5,023,479,000 will be met by repayable cash advances from the Contingencies Fund.

The cash advance will be repaid upon receiving Royal Assent on the Supply and Appropriation Bill.

Council of Europe: UK Delegation

[HLWS701]

Baroness Evans of Bowes Park: My Rt Hon Friend the Prime Minister has made the following statement:

The Hon. Member for Truro and Falmouth (Cherilyn Mackrory) has been appointed as a substitute member of the United Kingdom Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. The Hon. Member for Cleethorpes (Martin Vickers) has been appointed as a full member in place of the Rt. Hon. Member for North Thanet (Sir Roger Gale). The Hon. Member for Henley

(John Howell) has been appointed as Leader of the UK Delegation.

Gibraltar: Future Relationship with the EU

[HLWS700]

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

In the UK Approach to Negotiations on the Future Relationship with the EU as published in February 2020, the Government stated that it would act in these negotiations on behalf of all the territories for whose international relations the UK is responsible, which includes Gibraltar.

We have worked side by side with the Government of Gibraltar to honour this commitment. As a consequence of the EU's negotiating mandate which it adopted in February 2020, Gibraltar was not within scope of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA). The Commission made a declaration alongside the TCA stating that this would 'not preclude the possibility to have separate agreements between the Union and the United Kingdom in respect of Gibraltar', and that it stood ready 'to examine any request from Spain, in agreement with the United Kingdom, to initiate the procedure for the negotiation of such separate agreements should they be compatible with Union law and Union interests'.

To that end, the UK, working side by side with the Governments of Gibraltar and Spain, reached agreement on 31 December over a political framework to form the basis of a separate treaty between the UK and the EU regarding Gibraltar. We have sent this framework to the European Commission in order to initiate negotiations on the treaty.

The political framework covers issues of key importance to Gibraltar and the surrounding region, including on border fluidity. It creates the basis for a bespoke model for Gibraltar's future relationship with the EU that will permit an absence of physical checks at the land border with Spain, and therefore ensure fluidity of movement of people and goods between Gibraltar and the EU. The Governments of both the UK and Gibraltar judge that this framework provides a firm basis to safeguard Gibraltar's interests.

The UK and Gibraltar are committed to ensuring that cross-border arrangements can continue in the interim, until a new treaty enters into force. Arrangements have been agreed with Spain that include provisions for the border (goods and people), road transport, healthcare, waste disposal, and data. In addition, the UK Government provided financial and other support to ensure that Gibraltar was fully prepared for the end of the Transition Period.

We remain steadfast in our support for Gibraltar, and its sovereignty is safeguarded.

Written Answers

Wednesday, 13 January 2021

Accident and Emergency Departments

Asked by *Lord Jones*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Accident and Emergency units there were in England in (1) 2010, and (2) 2018. [HL11749]

Lord Bethell: This information is not collected centrally.

Air Pollution: Coronavirus

Asked by *Lord Truscott*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of any link between poor air quality in city centres and any increase in (1) COVID-19, and (2) respiratory diseases, in urban areas. [HL11707]

Lord Bethell: There is currently no clear evidence to suggest that air pollution has a direct link to the spread or severity of COVID-19. Public Health England (PHE) and Government departments are continuously reviewing whether air pollution may influence the health impact of COVID-19.

PHE has made no specific estimation of the impact of air pollution on respiratory disease in urban areas in the United Kingdom.

Army: Motor Vehicles

Asked by *Earl Attlee*

To ask Her Majesty's Government why they are offering for sale at least seven ex-Ministry of Defence MAN HX18.330 SV6T flat-bed trucks in Germany, advertised as unused. [HL11719]

Baroness Goldie: Due to a change in threat assessments, a surplus of MAN SV6T flatbed trucks has been identified. To economise storage and support costs, a number have been identified for sale.

Asthma

Asked by *The Earl of Dundee*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Respiratory Health Improving asthma outcomes in the UK, published on 23 November, what steps they taking to improve the clarity of guidelines relating to asthma. [HL11647]

Lord Bethell: The British Thoracic Society, the Scottish Intercollegiate Guideline Network and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence are due to start work this year to develop a joint guideline relating to asthma care.

Asylum: Barton Stacey

Asked by *Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether any dispensation of relevant planning regulations has been (1) required, or (2) sought, for the proposed establishment of temporary accommodation to house asylum seekers near Barton Stacey. [HL11693]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: During these unprecedented times we have worked with local authorities and other partners to provide asylum seekers, who would otherwise be destitute, with suitable accommodation – as we are required to do by law.

As part of this work we are looking at using a site on Ministry of Defence land in Barton Stacey to accommodate those awaiting a decision on their claim.

If the plans go ahead, we will be using emergency planning powers. This is lawful because the area is Crown land.

Asylum: Penally

Asked by *Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that security guards confiscated a Christmas meal donated by volunteers to the Penally asylum camp in Pembrokeshire. [HL11695]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: As required by law, we provide asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute with accommodation. In Penally, we also provide asylum seekers with free meals. This support is paid for by the taxpayer.

We are in regular contact with accommodation providers and the meals provided are high quality and in line with NHS Eatwell guidelines.

We are aware of an incident on Sunday, 20 December 2020, where a group attempted to share items on site. Whilst food is not permitted due to safety reasons, any other item must also comply with our safety and coronavirus measures before being distributed. All items that did not meet these guidelines were returned.

Child Gambling: Children

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many children with gambling addictions have received treatment from the NHS since the opening of the first child gambling clinic. [HL9945]

Lord Bethell: The data requested is not available.

Children: Coronavirus

Asked by *Lord Porter of Spalding*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Berridge on 7 December

(HL10633), what assessment they have made of the impact of school exclusion on those children who are prevented from attending school due to COVID-19 infection in their support bubble. [HL11683]

Baroness Berridge: We have commissioned an independent research and assessment agency to provide a baseline assessment of catch-up needs for pupils in schools in England and monitor progress over the course of the year to help us target support across the system, which is currently ongoing.

A new national lockdown came into effect on 6 January and schools should only allow vulnerable children and the children of critical workers to attend face-to-face education. All other pupils will learn remotely. Our get help with remote education portal provides information, guidance and support on educating pupils and students during the COVID-19 outbreak. The portal is accessible here: <https://get-help-with-remote-education.education.gov.uk/>.

We know that receiving face-to-face education is best for children's mental health and for their educational achievement and we will review the restrictions on schools to ensure that children and young people return to face-to-face education as soon as the pressures are easing on the NHS. Limiting attendance at this time is about reducing the number of contacts that people have with other households given the rapidly rising numbers of cases across the country and the intense pressure on the NHS.

For those pupils and staff still attending school, the system of protective measures that we have asked schools to implement continues to mean that any risks are well managed and controlled.

Climate Change Convention

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made towards preparing for COP26. [HL11690]

Lord Callanan: Planning for COP26 is ongoing and we are continuing to work closely with the venues and our delivery partners to ensure that we deliver the facilities and logistics needed for the event, in line with the requirements outlined by the UNFCCC.

Alongside summit preparations, the COP26 President, Ministers and senior officials have been engaging with a wide range of UK and international partners.

On 12th December, the fifth anniversary of the landmark Paris Agreement, the UK, UN and France co-hosted a Climate Ambition Summit alongside our partners Italy and Chile. Over 90 countries, businesses, sectors, cities, including 75 world leaders, attended and set out their ambitious plans and new commitments. This was a clear signal that climate change remains at the top of the global agenda despite the challenges of COVID-19. This marked a major milestone on the road to COP26, and we will build on this momentum to drive forward climate action and ambition in 2021.

Climate Change Convention: Travel

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 23 December (HL13338), whether the draft of their multifaceted travel plan will be available for public consultation. [HL11638]

Lord Callanan: The COP26 Unit is developing the Transport Plan alongside transport operators with the interests of user groups in consideration throughout. As with other large events, a public consultation on transport is not planned. The Transport Plan will include a comprehensive communications strategy that will engage with delegates and the public on transport options available and the potential impact of COP26 on the existing transport system.

Contact Tracing: Computer Software

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many times the NHS COVID-19 application has notified people that they need to self-isolate. [HL11550]

Lord Bethell: We plan to publish further information about app usage and its role in the COVID-19 response in due course. This will include information about the number of users notified to self-isolate by the application as a result of potential exposure to a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the percentage of smartphone users in the UK who have downloaded the NHS COVID-19 Application. [HL9979]

Lord Bethell: Since it was launched on 24 September, the app has been downloaded over 21 million times. It is estimated that 62% of those with a compatible smartphone aged 16 years old and over in England and Wales have downloaded the app and 56% of smartphone users overall aged over 16 years old.

Coronavirus: Italy

Asked by Lord Campbell-Savours

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether there is any evidence of variants of COVID-19 which can be traced to specific countries of origin; and if so, what proportion of reported COVID-19 cases have been linked to the variant of COVID-19 from Italy. [HL11576]

Lord Bethell: It is common for viruses to mutate - over 4,000 variants of SARS-CoV-2 have been identified worldwide. The United Kingdom has a world leading surveillance system that supports the detection, analysis

and identification of any variants circulating globally which may be of concern.

COVID-19 Genomics UK will continue to lead on monitoring virus samples for new variants. The Department and Public Health England will continue to study the virus closely to understand how it is behaving, where it might have originated from and the spread of the new variant across the UK.

Coronavirus: Protective Clothing

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure compliance with legal requirements to wear masks to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. [HL11865]

Lord Bethell: We are running a proactive communications campaign on face coverings to alert the public to the places where they now are required to wear a face covering, how to wear one correctly, and who is exempt from wearing one - exemptions for children under the age of 11 and those unable to wear a face covering, due to health, age, equality or disability reasons apply.

While the Government expects the vast majority of people will comply with the rules, as they have done throughout the pandemic, police and Transport for London officers have been given the powers they need to ensure the public comply with the regulations.

The police have been clear that they will follow the four-step escalation principles of engaging, explaining, encouraging, and enforcing, only issuing a fine as a last resort.

Coronavirus: Screening

Asked by Lord Campbell-Savours

To Her Majesty's Government what evidence they have from the UK of COVID-19 appearing in blood samples. [HL11574]

Lord Bethell: Diagnosis of COVID-19 infection has largely been based on reverse transcriptase polymerase chain reaction amplification of viral nucleic acid (RNA) from upper respiratory tract swabs. However, detection of viral RNA has also been reported in blood, serum and plasma from small clinical case series.

The frequency and quantification of RNA in blood fractions and the significance of blood as a transmission route remains unknown.

Coronavirus: Sports Competitors

Asked by Lord Moynihan

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to offer COVID-19 vaccines for (1) professional sportspeople, and (2) members of the British Olympic and Paralympic Teams for the Games in Tokyo 2021. [HL11604]

Lord Bethell: The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) consists of independent experts who advise the Government on which vaccine/s the United Kingdom should use, including prioritisation at a population level. The JCVI has stated that phase one of a COVID-19 vaccine programme will have the prevention of mortality at the forefront of its objectives, as well as the support of the National Health Service and social care system.

For the first phase, the JCVI has advised that the vaccine should be given to care home residents and staff, as well as frontline health and social care workers and the rest of the population in order of age and clinical risk factors. Included are those with underlying health conditions, which put them at higher risk of serious disease and mortality.

Coronavirus: Vaccination

Asked by Lord Walney

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of immunocompromised people in England who will not be able to benefit from a COVID-19 vaccine; and what discussions they have had with the (1) Scottish, (2) Welsh, and (3) Northern Irish, Governments about the numbers of those people in those countries. [HL10554]

Asked by Lord Walney

To ask Her Majesty's Government which health conditions or treatments they categorised as resulting in a patient being immunocompromised when making their estimate of the total number of immunocompromised people who will not be able to benefit from a COVID-19 vaccine. [HL10555]

Asked by Lord Walney

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide a breakdown (1) by health condition or treatment, and (2) by age group, of any estimate of the number of immunocompromised people who will not be able to benefit from a COVID-19 vaccine. [HL10556]

Lord Bethell: The Department has worked closely at Ministerial and official level with our partners in the devolved administrations since the beginning of the outbreak, discussing a broad range of issues, in order to formulate an effective response.

Both primary immunodeficiency, the result of an inherited genetic defect, and secondary immunodeficiency, the result of disease or treatment and which may be temporary, have a variety of causes. Incidence, diagnosis or overall collective prevalence data that capture all possible types of immune deficiency, are not routinely collected or recorded centrally.

The Green Book lists the immunocompromised as part of the clinical risk groups over the age of 18 years old who should receive COVID-19 immunisation, as recommended by the latest advice from the Joint

Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), but notes that some immunocompromised patients may have a suboptimal immunological response to the vaccine. The JCVI has considered vaccination of household contacts of immunosuppressed individuals. However, at this time there is no data on the size of the effect of COVID-19 vaccines on transmission. Once enough evidence becomes available, the JCVI will consider options for a cocooning strategy for immunosuppressed individuals, including whether any specific vaccine is preferred for this population.

Asked by Baroness Eaton

To ask Her Majesty's Government how COVID-19 vaccines will be distributed to communal living facilities, including almshouses; and whether such vaccines will be delivered on site at these facilities. [HL11116]

Lord Bethell: The National Health Service has a tried and tested track record for delivering vaccination programmes. The NHS will work with existing health and social care partners across the system to ensure that COVID-19 vaccines can be deployed safely and effectively. Following the advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation's, vaccines are currently being given to care home residents and staff, those over 80 years old, and health and social care workers, then amongst the rest of the population in order of age and risk.

The NHS has developed three different models of delivery to allow the vaccine to be available to a wider population through hospital hubs, vaccination centres, and local vaccination services. As the vaccination programme builds, it will gradually be able to extend to more practices/community settings, as well as mass vaccination centres in the coming months. More than 730 vaccination sites have already been established across the United Kingdom and hundreds more are opening to take the current total to over 1,000.

Asked by Lord Lamont of Lerwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that people (1) who only have a private GP, and (2) who are not registered with an NHS GP, are able to access COVID-19 vaccinations. [HL11144]

Lord Bethell: In planning for the COVID-19 vaccine programme, NHS England and NHS Improvement have sought to ensure that vaccinations are accessible to those who are not registered with a National Health Service general practitioner. The contractual agreement under which general practices will deliver COVID-19 vaccinations - The General Practice COVID-19 vaccination programme 2020/21 Enhanced Service Specification - enables practices, working within their Primary Care Network groupings, to vaccinate unregistered patients provided they are eligible for a vaccination. Individuals who are not registered with a general practice will therefore be able to access the vaccine.

Doctors: Registration

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bethell on 4 May 2020 (HL3062), what steps are now being taken to expedite the registration of those doctors who are awaiting final registration by the General Medical Council so that they may assist with the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL11773]

Lord Bethell: The General Medical Council (GMC) has taken a number of steps to ensure that doctors' registration is not delayed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The GMC has prioritised applications from people who are able to provide the required evidence, which can be assessed more quickly, and will expedite the application of those who already have a job offer subject to the evidence requirements around safe practice.

Requirements for registration ensure that anyone joining the medical register has the necessary medical knowledge and skills to practise safely in the United Kingdom.

Driving Licences: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Truscott

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the restrictions in place to address the COVID-19 pandemic, what plans they have to extend the renewal date for driving licences that expire in January 2021. [HL11904]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The quickest and easiest way to renew a driving a licence is by using the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency's online service which has worked as normal throughout the pandemic.

The Government keeps the ongoing impacts of the Covid 19 pandemic and any changes that may be needed to existing arrangements under review.

Eurostar: Finance

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what financial support they have provided to ensure the continued operation of Eurostar services; and whether they have provided any such support to assist with the cost of UK track access charges. [HL11895]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Government has made available an unprecedented package of financial support to all sectors of the economy. The Government has been engaging closely with Eurostar since the outbreak of Covid-19 to monitor its ongoing impact, as well as supporting the company to access available support to address Eurostar's needs, such as the coronavirus job retention scheme. It will continue to do so.

With respect to track access charges specifically, the Government does not have the ability to adjust Eurostar's UK track access charges, as these are set by HS1 Ltd in accordance with the HS1 regulatory framework. It has also not provided specific financial support to Eurostar to address the costs of track access. However, the Government continues to work closely with both Eurostar and HS1 to support the sustainability of the HS1 system.

Gambling: Rehabilitation

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of St Albans***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to widen gambling treatment services; and what targets are in place for (1) the percentage of gamblers to be treated, and (2) the date by which that treatment should take place. [[HL9947](#)]

Lord Bethell: Whilst there are no specific targets in place, the NHS Long Term Plan committed to expanding the geographical coverage of treatment services by opening up to 15 specialist problem gambling clinics 2023/24. Work continues on phased expansion of these services, enabling the National Health Service to explore how best to use existing treatment models to reach those most in need of support.

Gender Recognition: Children

*Asked by **Lord Moonie***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the practice of supplying puberty blockers to those aged under 16; and what plans they have, if any, to prevent this practice in England and Wales. [[HL11678](#)]

Lord Bethell: On 1 December 2020, the High Court ruled that hormone blockers were “innovative and experimental” and there would be “enormous difficulties in a child under 16 understanding and weighing up... information and deciding whether to consent to the use of puberty blocking medication”.

Following this judgment, NHS England immediately suspended referrals of new patients under 16 years old to endocrinology services.

Hospital Beds

*Asked by **Lord Jones***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many hospital beds there were in England in (1) 2010, and (2) 2018. [[HL11750](#)]

Lord Bethell: Information is not available in the format requested as data is not collected on the total number of hospital beds by year.

Hospitals: Coronavirus

*Asked by **Lord Porter of Spalding***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of COVID-19 patients in hospitals are diagnosed with the virus (1) before being admitted, or on (2) day 1, (3) day 2, (4) day 3, (5) day 4, (6) day 5, (7) day 6, (8) day 7, (9) day 8, (10) day 9, (11) day 10, (12) day 11, (13) day 12, (14) day 13, (15) day 14, (16) day 15, of being admitted. [[HL11682](#)]

Lord Bethell: The data is not collected in the format requested.

Trusts are advised to follow guidance on testing patients on admission and repeat testing at the advised intervals.

*Asked by **Lord Mendelsohn***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether any hospitals have had to change their admission criteria for COVID-19 to reduce in-hospital patient numbers; and if so, which such hospitals have done so. [[HL11761](#)]

Lord Bethell: NHS England are unaware of any hospital that has changed its criteria for admission for COVID-19 patients to reduce in-hospital patient numbers. There have, however, been vast improvements in patient monitoring in the community with the development of virtual wards and roll out of pulse oximeters to patients who have been identified by an appropriate clinician as benefiting from additional monitoring. This has allowed the National Health Service as a whole to respond to the pressures that COVID-19 is currently placing on the health system.

Hospitals: Transport

*Asked by **Lord Stunell***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to issue guidance to NHS England on the rapid deployment and financing of integrated transport plans for District General Hospitals, including Stepping Hill in Stockport. [[HL10914](#)]

*Asked by **Lord Stunell***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what proportion of the additional £3 billion funding for the NHS announced in the Spending Review will be earmarked for implementing integrated transport plans for District General Hospitals, including Stepping Hill Hospital, to mitigate the effect of street parking on the wellbeing of adjacent residential neighbourhoods. [[HL10915](#)]

Lord Bethell: In England, National Health Service organisations are locally responsible for planning their transport requirements for patients, visitors and staff. This includes working with their local authorities to promote sustainable transport and provide a safe and integrated transport network via identified initiatives.

Guidance on transport planning is provided to the NHS in Health Technical Memorandum 07-03 NHS car-parking management: environment and sustainability 2015 edition. A copy is attached. There are currently no plans to update this with regards to sustainability transport plans.

The additional £3 billion funding for the NHS next year, on top of the long-term settlement, will be used to support the NHS recovery from the impact of COVID-19. There are currently no plans to use this funding to support trusts with implementation of integrated transport plans.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Health Technical Memorandum [Car parking - Health Technical Memorandum 07-03 published March 2015.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-11-30/HL10914>

Human Papillomavirus: Vaccination

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of delays to HPV vaccinations arising from the COVID-19 pandemic; and when they expect to have rectified any such delays. [HL10786]

Lord Bethell: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all educational settings were closed from 23 March 2020, pausing the delivery of the 2019/20 school immunisation programmes.

In June 2020, NHS England and NHS Improvement commissioned school-aged immunisation providers were able to implement their restoration and recovery plans to commence partially delivered or incomplete programmes during the summer period. This included the delivery of programmes in school and community settings following a robust risk assessment in line with United Kingdom COVID-19 guidance. As such, by the end of July 2020, 91% of all NHS England and NHS Improvement commissioned providers were delivering school aged immunisation programmes, ensuring those eligible for the human papillomavirus vaccine had been offered at least one dose of the vaccine. The school-aged immunisation providers have continued to operationalise their restoration and recovery plans, with delivery that continued throughout August and September 2020 in line with the Government's guidelines.

Immigrants: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide financial relief to those in the UK who have no recourse to public funds but cannot return to their countries of origin during the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL11666]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Many of the wide-ranging COVID-19 measures the Government has put in place have been made available to migrants with no recourse to public funds (NRPF).

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the Self-employed Income Support Scheme, which have been extended into Spring 2021, are not classed as public funds so can be accessed by those with NRPF. Statutory sick pay and some other contribution-based benefits, such as contributory employment support allowance, are also not classed as public funds and are available to all who are eligible and unable to work during this difficult time, including those with NRPF status.

The Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme in England provides a £500 payment to people on low incomes who cannot work from home and have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace. Support is also available for those who are not in receipt of one of the seven means-tested benefits that are part of the eligibility criteria for the main scheme, but who will still face hardship if they have to self-isolate, in the form of a £500 discretionary payment, paid by local authorities. This payment is available to those with NRPF, provided they meet the criteria set by the local authority for discretionary payments in their area. Further information on this scheme can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/test-and-trace-support-payment-scheme-claiming-financial-support/claiming-financial-support-under-the-test-and-trace-support-payment-scheme>.

Local authorities may also provide basic safety net support, regardless of immigration status, if it is established that there is a genuine care need that does not arise solely from destitution, for example, where there are community care needs, migrants with serious health problems or family cases where the wellbeing of a child is in question. The Government has provided an unprecedented package of support to councils to help their communities through this pandemic.

We have also temporarily extended the eligibility criteria for free school meals in England to support some families with NRPF, in recognition of the difficulties they may be facing during these unique times.

Migrants with leave under the Family and Human Rights routes can apply to have their NRPF condition lifted to enable them to access public funds. They do this by making a 'change of conditions' application if they are destitute or at risk of destitution, if the welfare of their child is at risk due to their low income, or where there are other exceptional financial circumstances.

Further guidance and support for migrants affected by COVID-19 can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-get-support-if-youre-a-migrant-living-in-the-uk>.

Migrants may also be able to seek help from their embassy.

Immigration: EU Nationals

Asked by *Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to provide pre-settled status for EU citizens who can demonstrate their intention to settle in the UK before 31 December but were prevented from doing so by restrictions imposed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, including (1) those who are currently resident in Australia and New Zealand, and (2) those who can demonstrate a previous tie with the UK including (a) a National Insurance number, and (b) an earlier period of residence. [[HL11635](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The end of the transition period at 11 pm on 31 December 2020 remains the point by which EU citizens need to have been resident in the UK to be eligible for pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS). There are no plans to extend this deadline for those who wished to travel to the UK for the first time in order to apply to the EUSS, but did not do so.

EU citizens and their family members who were resident in the UK before 31 December and are outside the UK on that date are eligible to apply to the EUSS, including from overseas, by the deadline of 30 June 2021.

Published guidance for EUSS applicants on the impact of COVID-19 is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-eu-settlement-scheme-guidance-for-applicants>.

Mental Health Services: Children and Young People

Asked by *Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the steps taken by Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust in response to the report by the Care Quality Commission following its inspection on 25 to 29 January 2016 Specialist community mental health services for children and young people Quality Report, published on 27 May 2016, in particular its finding that not all patient risk assessments and records "contained accurate, up-to-date and complete information". [[HL11823](#)]

Lord Bethell: Following the most recent published inspection of Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust between August and September 2018, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) rated specialist community mental health services for children and young people as good overall, but found that there was still some room for improvement to ensure that each young person had an up-to-date recorded risk assessment.

The CQC also highlighted in their inspection report that some staff also needed to complete mandatory training on clinical risk assessment. These risks were included in the action plan issued to the trust by the CQC, which highlighted where improvement was required.

Older People: Health Services

Asked by *Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bethell on 5 November (HL9501), what assessment they have made of The Sunday Times insight investigation, published on 25 October, that alleged that elderly people were denied treatment to stop the NHS being overrun. [[HL10033](#)]

Lord Bethell: Claims that frail and elderly patients were denied care are categorically untrue.

Over two thirds of inpatients were aged over 65 years old. The National Health Service repeatedly instructed staff that no patient who could benefit from treatment should be denied it and even at the height of the pandemic there was no shortage of ventilators and intensive care.

Thanks to the hard work of NHS staff and care workers and the response of the public to public health measures we have protected our most vulnerable patients throughout the pandemic. For example, from the start of the pandemic we have done everything we can to ensure care home residents and staff are protected, including testing all residents and staff, ring-fencing £1.1 billion for infection control and making a further £4.6 billion available to councils to address pressures caused by the pandemic, including in adult social care.

Pectus Excavatum: Surgery

Asked by *Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the potential inclusion of pectus deformity surgery in the Commissioning through Evaluation programme. [[HL10764](#)]

Lord Bethell: Any decision to fund surgery and make commissioning decisions by assessing needs, planning and prioritising is a matter for NHS England and NHS Improvement. It would therefore not be appropriate for the Government to influence their 'Commissioning through Evaluation' programme, which enables new clinical patient data to be collected for treatments that show significant promise.

NHS England and NHS Improvement advise that if new evidence on the surgical treatment for pectus deformity is presented, their current policy can be reviewed.

Peers: Attendance

Asked by *Lord Mann*

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker how many members of the House of Lords did not attend any proceedings between 12 December 2019 and 20 December 2020. [[HL11753](#)]

Lord McFall of Alcluith: 29. The answer is based on the total number of members who were members on 6 January 2021 (817). The figure of 29 includes 10 members on leave of absence, 2 disqualified as members

of the judiciary and 6 members who were yet to be introduced including two who joined the House after 20 December 2020.

Protective Clothing: Contracts

Asked by Lord Strasburger

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have a list of so-called 'VIP' companies, for whom the awarding of contracts to supply personal protective equipment may be accelerated; and if so, what plans they have to publish that list. [HL10129]

Lord Bethell: The Government issued a public call to action to support the increased requirements of personal protective equipment (PPE). This resulted in over 15,000 suppliers offering their help and support.

The cross-Government PPE team considered that leads referred by Government officials, ministers' offices, Parliamentarians, senior NHS staff and other health professionals were likely to be the more credible and needed to be initially reviewed with more urgency. This was commonly referred to as a 'priority' or 'VIP' channel.

At the point of being prioritised these offers went into exactly the same due diligence, technical assurance, closing or contract negotiation and contract award process as all the other offers. About one in ten suppliers processed through this channel - 47 out of 493 - obtained contracts. We do not intend to publish the list of these suppliers as there may be associated commercial implications.

Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that they awarded personal protective equipment (PPE) contracts to companies with records of human rights abuses; what steps they are taking in response to any such assessment; whether their requests for tenders for the supply of PPE stipulate that (1) the International Labour Organization minimum standards, (2) human rights legislation, or (3) their equivalent requirements, must be met; and what checks they undertake to ensure that those requirements are met before awarding any contract. [HL11739]

Lord Bethell: The Government's guidance advises public sector contracting authorities on how to assess suppliers in terms of mitigating the risk of modern slavery. Contracts are normally placed in line with Departmental terms and conditions which include clauses requiring Good Industry Practice to ensure that there is no slavery or human trafficking in supply chains. Suppliers appointed to our NHS Supply Chain frameworks must comply with the Labour Standards Assurance System or they can be removed from consideration for future opportunities.

Protective Clothing: Standards

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent assessment they have made of the effectiveness of their standards for personal protective equipment; and what plans they have, if any, to change those standards. [HL11760]

Lord Bethell: Personal protective equipment (PPE) must be fit for purpose, meeting the necessary essential health and safety requirements of the Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 2018.

Through their on-going work on COVID PPE and market surveillance, the Health and Safety Executive are keeping the relevant PPE standards under review and are in frequent contact with end users, trade associations and economic operators to ensure that the standards remain effective.

Railways

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 23 December (HL11338), what suggestions the International Union of Railways have made "to enhance the take up of rail travel to Glasgow from Europe". [HL11637]

Lord Callanan: The International Union of Railways is one of a number of organisations and transport operators that are engaged as the COP26 Unit develops the transport plan. In order to enhance the take up of rail travel from Europe to Glasgow, a robust communications campaign that encourages those who can, to travel by rail to the UK, will be put in place.

Roads: Repairs and Maintenance

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to conduct additional road maintenance while there are restrictions in place to address the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL11909]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Responsibility for managing the highway network in England, including maintenance decisions, rests with the relevant highway authority. For the Strategic Road Network, motorways and major A roads, that is Highways England. The rest of the network is managed by local highway authorities. It is for local highway authorities to decide whether to carry out additional maintenance, based on local needs and priorities.

In April 2020 I wrote to the local highways maintenance sector, with advice on continuing with their highways maintenance works and thanking them for their

efforts. The Government's current policy is that construction activity should continue where it can be undertaken safely, in accordance with the Public Health England and industry guidance.

Special Educational Needs

Asked by Lord Field of Birkenhead

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many children have been registered as having special educational needs each year since 1991; and what assessment they have made of those numbers. [HL11658]

Baroness Berridge: Data is available on the number of children with special educational needs in schools in England since 1992.

All the publications since 2010 can be found via the following website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-special-educational-needs-sen>.

Earlier publications can be found in the national archives at:

<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130103143954/https://education.gov.uk/researchandstatistics/statistics-by-topic/schoolpupilscharacteristics/sen?page=1>.

The attached table gives the available time series compiled from the figures in these publications. The notes below the table explain points where policy changes have affected the continuity of the time series.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

HL11658 Table

[HL11658_table_showing_number_and_percentage_of_pupils_with_special_educational_needs_from_1992_to_2020.xls]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-12-30/HL11658>

Suicide: Risk Assessment

Asked by Lord Foster of Bath

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the Royal College of Psychiatrists Self Harm and Suicide in Adults, published in July, what steps they are taking to address any shortcomings in the way suicide risk assessments are conducted. [HL11659]

Lord Bethell: The National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Safety in Mental Health has issued extensive guidance on the correct use of risk assessment tools. This guidance makes it clear to trusts that patient management plans should be based on a wider assessment of the individual and their circumstances.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence is currently reviewing its guidance on the management of self-harm with the intention to publish updated guidance in May 2022. This will ensure that guidance for trusts on

risk assessment and safety planning is based on the most up-to-date evidence.

Funding has also been provided through the NHS Long-Term Plan specifically to support suicide prevention planning and ensure that every local authority has in place a multi-agency suicide prevention plan.

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

Asked by Baroness Hamwee

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to their agreement with the government of France to address migrant activity in the English Channel, agreed on 28 November, how many French officers will be patrolling the relevant beaches; how many prosecutions there were for people smuggling in 2020; of such prosecutions, how many were for people using small boats; and what is the financial contribution by (1) the UK, and (2) France, for the implementation of that agreement. [HL11664]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK recently agreed a figure of £28.1m with the French Government on 28 November 2020, to address migrant activity in the English Channel. We are unable to comment on French financial contributions for the implementation of this agreement.

This funding supports a range of activity, including the continued deployment of French reservists from the Gendarmerie, which has doubled from December 1 2020, and Police Nationale. As this resource directly impacts sensitive, live, operational activity, we cannot disclose the precise number of French officers from either agency, or the locations that they patrol.

In 2020, 57 individuals were prosecuted for people smuggling offenses; 8 of which were related to small boat crossings of the English Channel.

Vaccination: Older People

Asked by Baroness Goudie

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to optimise vaccination protocols for older adults. [HL10810]

Lord Bethell: The Government's 'Coronavirus: action plan: A guide to what you can expect across the UK' has stated that everyone should ensure themselves and their families vaccinations are up to date, as this will help to reduce any pressure on the National Health Service from vaccine preventable diseases.

In the interest of optimising vaccination protocols, Public Health England recently worked with NHS England and NHS Improvement to generate national news coverage to inform people that the NHS immunisations are still available. Resources such as posters have been circulated across the health system to help disseminate this message.

Index to Statements and Answers

Written Statements.....1	
Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy:	
Contingencies Fund Advance.....1	
Council of Europe: UK Delegation.....1	
Gibraltar: Future Relationship with the EU.....1	
Written Answers.....2	
Accident and Emergency Departments2	Pectus Excavatum: Surgery 8
Air Pollution: Coronavirus2	Peers: Attendance 8
Army: Motor Vehicles.....2	Protective Clothing: Contracts..... 9
Asthma.....2	Protective Clothing: Standards 9
Asylum: Barton Stacey.....2	Railways 9
Asylum: Penally2	Roads: Repairs and Maintenance..... 9
Child Gambling: Children2	Special Educational Needs 10
Children: Coronavirus2	Suicide: Risk Assessment 10
Climate Change Convention.....3	Undocumented Migrants: English Channel..... 10
Climate Change Convention: Travel.....3	Vaccination: Older People..... 10
Contact Tracing: Computer Software.....3	
Coronavirus: Italy.....3	
Coronavirus: Protective Clothing4	
Coronavirus: Screening4	
Coronavirus: Sports Competitors4	
Coronavirus: Vaccination.....4	
Doctors: Registration.....5	
Driving Licences: Coronavirus.....5	
Eurostar: Finance.....5	
Gambling: Rehabilitation6	
Gender Recognition: Children.....6	
Hospital Beds6	
Hospitals: Coronavirus6	
Hospitals: Transport6	
Human Papillomavirus: Vaccination.....7	
Immigrants: Coronavirus.....7	
Immigration: EU Nationals8	
Mental Health Services: Children and Young People8	
Older People: Health Services.....8	