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HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Chief Whip
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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
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Written Statements

Wednesday, 14 April 2021

Building Safety: Monthly Update

[HLWS907]

Lord Greenhalgh: My Rt Hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (Robert Jenrick) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

I have undertaken to provide the House with a monthly building safety update.

On 10 February I announced my five-point plan to bring an end to unsafe cladding and my officials are working at pace to develop and deliver the products, systems and legislation associated with these:

- 1) Government will pay for the removal of unsafe cladding for leaseholders in all residential buildings 18 metres and over in England.
- 2) A generous finance scheme to provide reassurance for leaseholders in buildings between 11 and 18 metres, ensuring they never pay more than £50 a month for cladding removal.
- 3) An industry levy and tax to ensure developers play their part.
- 4) A world-class new safety regime to ensure a tragedy like Grenfell never happens again.
- 5) Providing confidence to this part of the housing market including lenders and surveyors.

We have now committed an unprecedented £5 billion investment in building safety. This will ensure taxpayer funding is targeted at the highest risk buildings in line with longstanding independent expert advice.

Remediation statistics

We continue to make good progress on the remediation of unsafe cladding, with around 95% of all high-rise residential buildings with unsafe ACM cladding identified by the beginning of last year now either remediated or started on site.

Our expectation is that unsafe ACM remediation should be completed as soon as possible and by the end of 2021 at the latest.

Full details of our progress with ACM cladding remediation can be found in the Department's monthly Building Safety Data Release, which will next be published on 15 April on the Government's website.

Previous monthly Building Safety Data Releases can be accessed here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/aluminium-composite-material-cladding#acm-remediation-data>.

As at 31 March 2021, the Building Safety Fund Registration Statistics show that 1,075 decisions have been made on the basis that sufficient supporting information has now been received. Of these, 668 registered buildings are proceeding with a full application

and 407 have been shown to be ineligible, mostly on grounds of not meeting the published criteria or because they do not have unsafe cladding systems in place. The total amount of funding allocated is £319.2 million (including social sector) correct at 31/03/2021. Full details can be accessed here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/remediation-of-non-acm-buildings#building-safety-fund-registration-statistics>.

Covid-19 Local Support Measures: Extension

[HLWS908]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: My Right Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Dr Thérèse Coffey MP) has made the following Written Statement:

The Covid Winter Grant Scheme has enabled Local Authorities in England to provide targeted support to families and individuals, keeping them warm and well fed over the winter period, with the principal focus being on disadvantaged children.

The initial scheme was issued at £170 million and was due to conclude at the end of March 2021. In the first two months of the scheme, covering December 2020 and January 2021, Local Authorities spent over £86 million, with 94% awarded to support families with children and 96% used on the provision of food and support with utility bills. In the same period, nearly 2.4 million awards had been made to vulnerable households through the scheme. The scheme was subsequently extended with an additional £59.1 million of support and was due to conclude this Friday 16th April.

Recognising that some restrictions on the economy continue, we are extending the scheme until the 20th June 2021 with funding of £40 million and re-naming it the Covid Local Support Grant. This brings the scheme in line with the Prime Minister's roadmap out of lockdown as on the 21 June, provided we continue to pass the four steps needed to progress through the roadmap, most of the remaining restrictions will be lifted.

All conditions of the grant continue, as does the allocation methodology.

Covid-19 Vaccination Update

[HLWS910]

Lord Bethell: My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (Matt Hancock) has made the following written statement:

I wish to inform the House of actions we are taking to improve uptake of vaccines across the adult social care sector.

In February 2021, we published the UK COVID-19 Vaccines Delivery Plan setting out the significant programme of work underway to drive vaccine uptake, including actions to improve access and to address the concerns of those who may be hesitant to receive the vaccine.

We have been working to make the vaccination accessible to people living and working in care homes. Vaccination teams have visited all older age care homes in England and are running a minimum four-visit schedule for each. For those workers who may not have been present when the vaccination team visited the home, access via other vaccination services has been available. We also opened the National Booking Service for seven weeks so that frontline social care workers could book their own appointments, and care home workers can now arrange vaccination directly through their GP.

We have worked hard to address concerns among the adult social care workforce by delivering an extensive communications programme, running targeted advertisements and issuing a stakeholder toolkit containing regularly updated Q&As, guidance and communications materials. Positive messaging using influencers, leaders and care home workers who have already been vaccinated has boosted confidence and tackled misinformation, as have briefings with different faith groups who have become ambassadors for getting a vaccine.

We continue to do everything we can to increase vaccine uptake. We have targeted support at older adult care homes where vaccine uptake is low, such as in London. As of 4 April 2021, vaccine uptake among eligible workers in older adult care homes in London is 68%, compared to 82% in the South West. Local efforts, by employers, local authorities, public health teams and others, supplement this government's support.

Despite efforts, vaccine uptake amongst care home workers is not consistently at the level we know from SAGE advice is needed to minimise the risk of outbreak, which is a minimum vaccination rate of 80% staff, and 90% of residents within each home and this level must be maintained. Only 53% of older adult homes in England are currently meeting this recommendation.

It is imperative that together we now take every step necessary to reduce the risk of spreading the virus to those most at risk from COVID-19 and those who care for them. We must protect people living in care homes, and we must protect the workforce who perform such a vital role.

Vaccination is a safe, effective way of preventing the spread of COVID-19. It is therefore right that the Government acts now to ensure that those working and assisting in older adult care homes are vaccinated to protect everyone in these settings.

From today, we are consulting on taking steps to require care providers to deploy only staff who have been vaccinated within older adult care homes. This measure would be intended to protect the people most at risk in our society - around 90% of those who died from COVID-19 were people over 70.

Making vaccination a condition of deployment in older adult care home provider in this way, would help to further protect older people living in care homes, who are

among the most vulnerable to Covid-19, and ultimately save lives. A five-week consultation launches today to help inform decision-making around how the change could be implemented and whether respondents think it will be beneficial. This will include areas such as potential impact on staff, safety and who could be exempt. Staff, providers, stakeholders, residents and their families are being urged to take part to have their views heard with an outcome expected by this summer.

I will provide an update to the House, following the completion of the consultation.

Events Research Programme: Cancellation Compensation

[HLWS909]

Baroness Barran: My Right Honourable Friend the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, The Rt Hon Oliver Dowden CBE MP, has made the following Statement:

I am tabling this statement for the benefit of all members of this House to bring to their attention the Departmental Minute issued today that provides the House with notice of a series of small contingent liabilities created by my Department. This is in relation to a policy to compensate event organisers participating in phase one of the Events Research Programme in the event of their cancellation if public health concerns were to give rise.

The Events Research Programme is running its first phase of 10-15 pilots in April and May to inform decisions around the safe removal of social distancing at Step 4 of the Roadmap. The pilots will be run across a range of settings, venues, and activities so that findings will support the full reopening of similar settings across multiple sectors.

The government will provide compensation on a discretionary basis to event organisers should a pilot event be cancelled due to public health reasons.

This compensation will be capped at £300,000 per event and will cover costs incurred in relation to participation in the programme only (e.g. admission of spectators), recognising the fact that these events would have taken place in line with roadmap restrictions should the programme not exist. In the case of the Liverpool events, as these have been put on specifically as part of the programme, the government will compensate organisers in full should an event be cancelled, but this will be capped at £300,000 in total across the Liverpool events.

The government does not intend to cancel any event in the programme, however public safety comes first and therefore it is prudent to provide this assurance to the organisers assisting the government in reopening the economy.

A copy of the Departmental Minute is being placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Mortgage Guarantee Scheme: Notification of Contingent Liability

[HLWS911]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: My honourable friend the Economic Secretary to the Treasury (John Glen) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

It is normal practice when a government department proposes to undertake a contingent liability in excess of £300,000 and for which there is no statutory authority, for the Minister concerned:

- to present a departmental Minute to parliament, giving particulars of the liability created and explaining the circumstances; and
- to refrain from incurring the liability until fourteen parliamentary sitting days after the issue of the Minute, except in cases of special urgency.

I am writing to notify Parliament of a contingent liability that has been created by the government from the introduction of the new mortgage guarantee scheme. The scheme will be open to new mortgages submitted by participating lenders from 19 April 2021, but the liability will not be incurred until lenders start to submit

mortgages to the scheme, which is not expected until May at the earliest.

By way of background, the mortgage guarantee scheme was announced at the Budget on 3 March 2021. The scheme will provide a guarantee to lenders across the UK who offer mortgages to people with a deposit of 5% on homes with a value of up to £600,000. Under the scheme all buyers will have the opportunity to fix their initial mortgage rate for at least five years should they wish to. The scheme, which will be available for new mortgages up to 31 December 2022, will increase the availability of mortgages on new or existing properties for those with small deposits. The guarantee will be valid for up to seven years after the mortgage is originated.

Exposure against this contingent liability would take place in the event that the sum of commercial fees paid by lenders would not be sufficient to cover calls on the guarantee. There will be a cap on the size of the government's contingent liability under the scheme of £3.9 billion.

Authority for any expenditure required under this liability will be sought through the normal procedure. HM Treasury have approved this proposal.

I will also lay a minute today on this matter.

Written Answers

Wednesday, 14 April 2021

Coronavirus: Fraud

Asked by *The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking to stop the distribution of messages that purport to offer people access to a COVID-19 vaccine in an attempt to steal personal and financial information. [HL11890]

Lord Bethell: NHS England and NHS Improvement are working with Google, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook to help the public access to accurate National Health Service information and avoid myths and misinformation. This includes ensuring Google provides easy access to verified NHS guidance when someone searches for COVID-19; working to verify or 'blue tick' over 800 social media accounts belonging to NHS organisations including hospital trusts and local commissioning groups; and working with Twitter to suspend false accounts posing as trusted institutions.

The National Cyber Security Centre is also asking the public to report suspect emails to its Suspicious Email Reporting Service. All emails forwarded to the service are analysed and if they are found to link to malicious content, they will be taken down or blocked, helping prevent future victims of crime. In addition, the Advertising Standards Authority taking action to ban fraudulent adverts.

NHS England, the Head of Action Fraud, the National Crime Agency and the National Cyber Security Centre have issued joint advice that the COVID-19 vaccine is only available for free on the NHS and health service staff will never ask for payment for it.

Coronavirus: Vaccination

Asked by *Baroness Sheehan*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to publish daily data on the number of people vaccinated by (1) the Pfizer/BioNTech, and (2) the Oxford/Astrazeneca, vaccine. [HL11777]

Lord Bethell: The Government has no plans to publish daily data on the number of people vaccinated by the Pfizer/BioNTech and Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine. Daily data on the number of people vaccinated is published in an online only format.

Asked by *Lord Campbell-Savours*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the duration of protection from COVID-19 provided by (1) the Oxford/AstraZeneca, and (2) the Pfizer/BioNTech, vaccine; and what estimate they have made of the length of time a person who receives (a) only a first dose, and (b) two doses, of (i) the

Oxford/AstraZeneca and (ii) the Pfizer/BioNTech, vaccine is protected from COVID-19. [HL11803]

Lord Bethell: The total length of protection from vaccines against COVID-19 is not yet fully understood. Vaccine developers and manufacturers continue to collect data on the performance of their vaccines. Through their surveillance strategy Public Health England (PHE) continues to assess the effectiveness of vaccines, including duration of protection. A copy of PHE's *COVID-19 vaccine surveillance Strategy* is attached.

On 26 January the Joint Committee on Vaccine and Immunisation (JCVI) published an online report, *Optimising the COVID-19 vaccination programme for maximum short-term impact*. The report found that short-term vaccine efficacy from the first dose of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine is calculated at around 90% and from the first dose of the Oxford/ AstraZeneca vaccine is calculated at around 70%, with high protection against severe disease.

Given the high level of protection afforded by the first dose, models suggest that initially vaccinating a greater number of people with a single dose will prevent more deaths and hospitalisations than vaccinating a smaller number of people with two doses. The second dose is important to provide longer lasting protection and is expected to be as or more effective when delivered at an interval of 12 weeks from the first dose. The JCVI has based their advice on the assumption that protection from a first dose of either vaccination will wane in the medium term and that a second dose will offer more long term protection.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

COVID-19 Vaccine Surveillance Strategy [COVID-19_vaccine_surveillance_strategy_March21 (1).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-01-06/HL11803>

Asked by *Lord Campbell-Savours*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the requirements of the contract they awarded to Wockhardt Ltd, to help in the production of COVID-19 vaccines, are currently being fulfilled. [HL11868]

Lord Bethell: The Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine is currently being filled and finished at the Wockhardt site.

The Government has recently extended Wockhardt's contract from 18 to 24 months to ensure that we have uninterrupted capability into 2022. Specific details of contract fulfillment are commercially sensitive.

Asked by *Baroness Deech*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Lord Bethell on 12 January (HL Deb, col 596), what data they have used to determine that delaying a second dose of the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine beyond 42 days from the first dose

is effective and free of risk; and where, if anywhere, this data has been published. [HL12093]

Lord Bethell: The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) considered data on the efficacy of a single dose of the Pfizer vaccine. It concluded that a single dose of the Pfizer vaccine would remain highly effective in the weeks following administration. The JCVI's statement *Optimising the COVID-19 vaccination programme for maximum short-term impact: Short statement from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI)* is attached.

Public Health England publishes a monthly report on vaccine effectiveness. The most recent study, published on 17 March, shows that vaccines provide high protection against COVID-19 infections after a single dose, beyond 56 days of having been vaccinated. A copy of *Public Health England vaccine effectiveness report* is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Public Health England Report
[SP_PH_VE_report_20210317_CC_JLB (1).pdf]

Statement from the JCVI
[CEM_CMO_2020_044_JCVI_Statement.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-01-13/HL12093>

Asked by Lord Pendry

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that elderly recipients of the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine do not have to travel excessive distances to receive such a vaccine. [HL12233]

Lord Bethell: In England, more than 98% of the population are currently within 10 miles of a vaccine service. In a small number of highly rural areas, the vaccination centre will be a mobile unit. Local vaccination services can also coordinate and deliver vaccination to people who are unable to attend a vaccination site, including visiting care homes, residential facilities for people with learning disabilities or autism, prisons, the homes of housebound individuals, and to reach vulnerable groups such as those who are experiencing homelessness. In England, the latest data from 2 April shows that a total of 1,791 vaccination sites have now been established.

Asked by Baroness Goudie

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to establish regional telephone hotlines for the public to use to ask questions related to COVID-19 vaccines. [HL12950]

Lord Bethell: There are no plans to establish regional telephone hotlines.

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government on what date the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (1) circulated, and (2) discussed, the published Sepsis Occurrence in Acutely Ill Patients (SOAP) study on the efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines on cancer patients. [HL14516]

Lord Bethell: The pre-print article containing the published Sepsis Occurrence in Acutely Ill Patients study was circulated to the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation on 15 March 2021 and was discussed at its meeting on 16 March 2021.

Doctors: Conditions of Employment

Asked by Lord Balfe

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Statement by the Minister of State for Care on 24 March (HCWS877), what functions are covered by the term "speciality and associate specialist doctors"; which of these functions had vacancies to improve the (1) recruitment, and (2) percentage of doctors in these posts; what are the "contractual changes" that will deliver improvements to NHS services; and what is the expected percentage increase of the cost of the Speciality and Associate Doctors' Contract Agreement from its implementation to the end of its first full year in operation. [HL14615]

Lord Bethell: The term 'specialty and associate specialist' refers to doctors employed on a number of different medical contracts. They generally require at least four years full time post-graduate training at least two of which must be in a specialty training programme. This group of staff are employed across all specialties and routinely carry out a range of medical functions appropriate to their level of expertise.

We do not collect data on vacancies for doctors by grade. The pay and contract reform agreement delivers a number of changes which will contribute to the improvement of NHS services - for example, reducing the hours paid at enhanced rates will improve flexible service provision and introducing a new senior grade will enable employers to achieve the best skill mix for multi-disciplinary teams. The total cost of the agreement will depend on the number of doctors opting to transfer to the new contracts. In the first year of operation we expect an average cost of 3% per full time equivalent for those who transfer to the new terms and conditions.

Food: Sugar

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to control the amount of sugar in food. [HL14623]

Lord Bethell: Public Health England (PHE) oversees the voluntary sugar reduction programme on behalf of the Government. The programme challenges retailers, manufacturers and the eating out, takeaway and delivery sector to reduce the amount of sugar in foods that contribute the most to children's intake by 20% by 2020.

PHE supports industry to achieve sugar reduction through a continued programme of engagement and provides regular reports on its progress. PHE will publish the fourth report on industry's progress on sugar reduction later in 2021 and will provide further expert advice on measures to address excess sugar consumption to the Government so it can consider next steps.

Teachers: Training

Asked by Baroness Garden of Frognal

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to collect evidence to inform their review of the initial teacher training market; and if so, (1) in what format, (2) from whom, and (3) where that evidence will be published. [[HL14631](#)]

Asked by Baroness Garden of Frognal

To ask Her Majesty's Government how the timescale for their review of the initial teacher training market will allow for evidence from the first round of OFSTED inspections under its new inspection framework to be taken into account. [[HL14632](#)]

Asked by Baroness Garden of Frognal

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether evidence relating to the delivery of the core content framework by initial teacher education providers will be used to inform their review on the initial teacher training market; and if so, how. [[HL14633](#)]

Baroness Berridge: The government is committed to driving up and levelling up education standards so that

children and young people in every part of the country acquire the knowledge, skills, and qualifications they need to progress.

Central to this is making sure that we have great teachers in every classroom. We are making England the best place in the world to become a great teacher through giving every teacher, particularly those in the most disadvantaged areas, access to world-class training and professional development opportunities throughout their career. Reforms to teacher training and early career support are key to the government's plans to improve school standards for all.

The Review will focus on how the Initial Teacher Training (ITT) sector can provide consistently high-quality training, in line with the Core Content Framework (CCF), in a more efficient and effective market. We are reviewing the available evidence on ITT, which includes published research commissioned by the department, as well as wider evidence from the sector. Department analysts, including social researchers, are feeding into the Review to ensure that the evidence is interpreted accurately and will be used to inform any recommendations. As we did with the CCF and Early Career Framework, the Review is considering international evidence alongside evidence from UK ITT markets.

Ofsted inspections for ITT were paused whilst schools and the ITT sector responded to the COVID-19 outbreak. On 26 March, Ofsted confirmed that they would recommence ITT inspection in the summer term 2021, which means a relatively small number of ITT inspections will take place this academic year.

The Chair of the review will deliver his recommendations this summer, after which the department will consider whether to accept these and plans for implementation.

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