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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
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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, 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 Education
Lord Benyon	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist	Whip
Lord Caine	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office
Lord Callanan	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen	Whip
Earl of Courtown	Deputy Chief Whip
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 Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Lord Grimstone of Boscobel	Minister of State, Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Department for International Trade
Lord Kamall	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
Lord Offord of Garvel	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scotland Office
Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
Baroness Penn	Whip
Baroness Scott of Bybrook	Whip
Lord Sharpe of Epsom	Whip
Baroness Stedman-Scott	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Stewart of Dirleton	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, Ministry of Justice
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

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Written Statements

Wednesday, 12 January 2022

Covid-19: PANORAMIC National Study

[HLWS520]

Lord Kamall: My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (Sajid Javid) has made the following written statement:

On 20 October 2021, the Government announced the procurement of two ground-breaking novel oral antivirals to treat UK COVID-19 patients, supplemented by the announcement of additional volumes of these drugs on 22 December. I am writing to inform the House of the progress made on the Platform Adaptive trial of Novel antivirals for early treatment of COVID-19 in the Community (PANORAMIC) national study and issue a call to action.

On 8 December, the PANORAMIC national study was launched by the University of Oxford. This study was set up so that comprehensive data can be collected on how well these antiviral treatments work in a highly vaccinated population before making these treatments more widely available in the NHS to patients in the most effective way possible.

This will ensure that both patients and clinicians have clear evidence and full confidence in taking and prescribing these treatments respectively across the UK. This has become even more important since the emergence of the Omicron variant, as all research previously has been completed with non-Omicron variants.

The first antiviral being studied is molnupiravir, which was granted conditional Marketing Authorisation by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency on 4 November 2021. The study has recruited 3,176 participants as of noon on 12 January 2022. This is excellent progress for a community-based trial in its first month, but it is crucial that recruitment ramps up significantly to generate results as quickly as possible.

We are encouraging people who receive a positive test for COVID-19, are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms beginning in the last five days, and are aged over 50, or are over 18 with certain underlying health conditions, to sign up to the study straight away.

The study is available to people in this cohort across the UK and it is possible to sign up from anywhere, with the treatment delivered to a participant's house directly. To ensure eligibility for the study, those who wish to participate must sign up as soon as possible after getting a positive COVID-19 test result as antivirals are expected to be most effective when taken at the earliest stages of disease.

Members of both Houses are requested to encourage constituents and others who may contact them to consider

enrolling in the study online at www.panoramictrial.org or by calling the freephone number 0808 156 0017.

The Antivirals Taskforce is working across the health and care system in the UK, including NHS England and NHS Improvement, UK Health Security Agency, and our partners in the Devolved Administrations, to plan the wider deployment of antiviral treatments as data from the national study becomes available.

The Department of Health and Social Care will publish a further update in due course.

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

[HLWS518]

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

The Rt Hon. Member for Maldon (John Whittingdale) has been appointed as a full representative of the United Kingdom Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe in place of the Hon. Member for Dartford (Gareth Johnson).

The Hon. Member for The Wrekin (Mark Pritchard) has been appointed as a full representative in place of the Hon. Member for Dudley South (Mike Wood).

Lord Smith of Hindhead has been appointed as a full representative in place of Lord Bowness.

John Whittingdale has been appointed as Leader of the Delegation.

Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe: UK Delegation

[HLWS519]

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

The Hon. Member for Broadland (Jerome Mayhew) has been appointed as a full member of the United Kingdom Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

The Hon. Member for Sedgefield (Paul Howell) has been appointed as a full member in place of the Hon. Member for Cleethorpes (Martin Vickers).

The Rt. Hon Lord Keen of Elie QC has been appointed as a full member in place of Baroness Eccles of Moulton.

The Hon. Member for Jarrow (Kate Osborne) 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 Wolverhampton North East (Jane Stevenson) has been appointed as a substitute member in place of the Hon. Member for Kensington (Felicity Buchan).

The Hon. Member for North West Durham (Richard Holden) has been appointed as a substitute member in

place of the Hon. Member for St. Austell and Newquay (Steve Double).

Baroness Foster of Oxton has been appointed as a substitute member in place of Lord Balfe.

Prime Minister's Trade Envoy Programme

[HLWS517]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: My Honourable Friend the Minister for Exports (Mike Freer MP) has today made the following statement:

The Prime Minister has made two new appointments to his Trade Envoy programme.

The new appointments will extend the total number of Trade Envoys to 34 parliamentarians, covering 72 markets. The Prime Minister's Trade Envoy Programme is an unpaid and voluntary role with cross-party membership from both Houses. The role supports the UK's ambitious trade and investment agenda by championing Global Britain and promoting the UK as a destination of choice for inward investment. Trade Envoys will help to make the most of our new trade deals and support the UK's economic recovery through the levelling up agenda, by helping business take advantage of the opportunities arising in export markets.

The new appointments are:

The Honourable Member for Beverley and Holderness, Graham Stuart MP, has been appointed as the Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to Vietnam, Cambodia & Laos.

Lord Sarfraz of Kensington has been appointed as the Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to Singapore.

Smart Motorways

[HLWS516]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: My Right Honourable friend, the Secretary of State for Transport (Grant Shapps), has made the following Ministerial Statement:

Since becoming Transport Secretary, I have worked consistently to raise the bar on motorway safety and I am determined to make sure people using our motorways continue to benefit from one of the safest and best performing road networks in the world.

To this end, one of my first actions as Transport Secretary was to order a stocktake of smart motorways. I also welcome the Transport Committee's report published on 2 November 2021, following their inquiry into the roll-out and safety of smart motorways.

The Stocktake and Action Plan which I published in March 2020, focused efforts on further upgrading the safety of smart motorways. I am pleased that these efforts have been recognised by the Committee which agreed that the Government was right to focus on upgrading the safety of All Lane Running (ALR) smart motorways, rather than reinstating the hard shoulder – which the Committee recognised could cause more deaths or serious injuries on our roads.

Having carefully considered the Committee's report, I will be taking forward all of its recommendations. This includes the recommendation to pause the roll out of future ALR smart motorway schemes until a full 5 years' worth of safety data is available.

During the pause, we will continue to make sure all existing ALR smart motorways are equipped with best-in-class technology and resources and are as safe as they can possibly be.

I will also follow the recommendations to pause the conversion of Dynamic Hard Shoulder smart motorways to ALR until the next Road Investment Strategy; retrofit more Emergency Areas across existing ALR schemes; conduct an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of stopped vehicle detection technology; explore the introduction of the emergency corridor manoeuvre into the Highway Code, and; investigate the benefits of health and safety assessments being undertaken by the Office of Rail and Road.

Taken together and building on my initial stocktake these measures will ensure that our roads continue to be among the safest in the world – helping drivers not just to be safe, but crucially, to feel safe and confident when driving.

I am grateful for the Transport Committee's scrutiny and to all those that provided evidence for their work. I will be instructing National Highways to take immediate steps to implement the actions as set out in the response and will update the Committee on progress over the coming year.

Written Answers

Wednesday, 12 January 2022

Australia: Nuclear Submarines

Asked by **Lord West of Spithead**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether there is a senior UK official attached to the US Submarine Advisory Committee; and what relationship the Advisory Committee has to US Defence's Nuclear-Powered Submarine Task Force currently working with UK to identify the best way for Australia to acquire a nuclear submarine fleet. [[HL5158](#)]

Baroness Goldie: We are unaware of a US Submarine Advisory Committee and therefore cannot offer further information in response.

Cycleways: Finance

Asked by **Lord Grocott**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 20 December 2021 (HL5014), whether they will now (1) answer the questions put, and (2) publish the level of funding they have provided for cycle lanes to each local authority in each of the last five years. [[HL5118](#)]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The next Cycling and Walking report to Parliament, due to be published in spring 2022, will contain details of all of the funding that the Government has provided for active travel schemes, including cycle lanes, to each local authority in each year. This is complex as the funding comes from several different funding streams, making a short summary difficult. Some of the information, such as a breakdown of how much capital funding was provided to each local authority for active travel schemes in 2020/21 under the Active Travel Fund, is already available on gov.uk. Copies of the previous report to Parliament and funding breakdowns by local authority covering the years up to 2018/19 are available in the House libraries as well as on gov.uk.

Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Qualifications

Asked by **Earl Attlee**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Category (1) C, and (2) C+E, HGV drivers held a Driver's Certificate of Professional Competence during the week commencing 3 January; and what was the equivalent figure for each of the last five years. [[HL5160](#)]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The information requested is not currently available for the week commencing 3 January. On 27 November 2021, the most recent date for which data is available, the number of drivers with Category C and C+E driving entitlement who

held a Certificate of Professional Competence is shown in the table below. The historic information requested is not held. Officials will write to The Noble Lord with the information from week commencing 3 January when it becomes available.

Category	Volume
1. C	194,261
2. C and CE	420,562
Total C and CE	614,823

National Flagship

Asked by **Lord West of Spithead**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the new national flagship (1) will be crewed by Royal Naval personnel, and (2) will fly the White Ensign. [[HL5157](#)]

Baroness Goldie: The National Flagship will be crewed by the Royal Navy and is expected to fly the White Ensign.

Nigeria: Overseas Aid

Asked by **Baroness Cox**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 22 March 2021 (HL13954), what plans they have (1) to allocate Official Development Assistance (ODA) to the Middle Belt in Nigeria, and (2) to target any such ODA to those displaced by farmer-herder conflict. [[HL5100](#)]

Asked by **Baroness Cox**

To ask Her Majesty's Government which humanitarian organisations currently benefit from UK assistance in Nigeria's Middle Belt. [[HL5101](#)]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: We continue to encourage the Nigerian Government to take urgent action to protect those at risk of intercommunal violence across the Middle Belt and implement long-term solutions that address root causes of such violence. We are increasing our engagement with state governments in affected areas, including Plateau, Kaduna and Benue States. We are also working with the Federal Government to respond to the challenge of resource competition, one of the drivers of intercommunal violence in this region, and welcome the National Livestock Transformation Plan, implemented in eight Middle Belt states. The plan aims to promote cattle-rearing in one place, rather than the traditional nomadic practice, to limit competition over land and resources leading to violence. A number of other states have expressed interest in this plan and we are encouraging their adoption of it.

The UK Government focuses its aid investment and expertise on the highest priority issues where the UK can make the most difference and achieve maximum impact, including in some Middle Belt states in Nigeria. For example, we have supported more than 15,000 displaced

people in Kaduna State with cash grants for food, water, sanitation, and other non-food items. FCDO provides support to humanitarian organisations operating throughout Nigeria, including the World Food Programme (WFP), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Health Organization (WHO), Action Against Hunger, and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). FCDO publishes information on current funding on the Development Tracker website.

Pupil Exclusions: Alternative Education

Asked by Lord Watson of Invergowrie

To ask Her Majesty's Government what instructions they have given to Regional Schools Commissioners to ensure that all schools within multi-academy trusts track the outcomes of their permanently excluded children by working with alternative education settings. [HL5072]

Baroness Barran: The government is clear that all schools should be working in partnership with alternative provision (AP), to provide early support to individuals in mainstream education. AP also supports, where appropriate, re-integration back into mainstream schools, or successful transition to post-16 education or training.

The department is continuing to develop proposals to improve the availability of good AP as part of the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) Review. These reforms will deliver significantly improved outcomes for children and young people in AP, so that permanently excluded children and children at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion receive a full-time education and support suited to their individual needs.

The department knows that certain groups of children are more likely to be permanently excluded, although local context means there will be different patterns across the country. It is therefore vital that schools, local authorities and local partners work together to understand what lies behind local trends and, therefore, be able to effectively plan and target additional action according to local needs.

At its best, the academy trust model can be a powerful vehicle for improving schools. It can also allow high performing schools to consolidate success and spread that excellence across their local area. While other types of school partnerships can be effective, the key difference with academy trusts is that there is shared accountability for standards across the trust. All schools within the trust support each other and the trust is accountable for them all. Academies, including free schools, as well as academy trusts, are held to account (where necessary) by their Regional Schools Commissioner. Academies are also held to high levels of accountability by my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, through their Funding Agreement.

Russia: Nuclear Weapons

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Russia to lessen the risk of miscalculation leading to use of nuclear weapons. [HL5159]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK takes its responsibilities as a nuclear weapon state seriously and will continue to encourage other states to do likewise.

We consider the avoidance of war between Nuclear-Weapon States and the reduction of strategic risks as our foremost responsibilities. The joint statement by the leaders of the five Nuclear-Weapon States - including Russia - issued on 3 January underscores our collective commitment to work together to reduce the risk of nuclear conflict and enhance mutual trust and security. This is the first time the leaders of the five Nuclear Weapon States have made such a high-level political declaration. It shows our resolve to work together, despite differences, to increase mutual trust and understanding and work together towards nuclear disarmament.

The UK is committed to taking steps to reduce the likelihood of nuclear war, including resolving issues peacefully and diplomatically wherever possible. With our partners, we will continue to make use of a number of international mechanisms that allow us to engage with Russia to support risk reduction and military transparency, including the NATO-Russia Council (which will next meet on 12 January 2022) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

Schools: Air Conditioning

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the (1) efficacy, and (2) urgency, of installing air filters in schools over the Christmas period while school pupils are on holiday. [HL4931]

Baroness Barran: During the autumn term, the department provided CO2 monitors to all state-funded education providers, including early years, schools and further education colleges, backed by £25 million in government funding. Feedback suggests that schools are finding the monitors helpful to manage ventilation and, in the majority of providers, existing ventilation measures are sufficient.

Where an area of poor ventilation has been identified that cannot be resolved through simple measures such as opening doors and windows, schools are advised to explore what remedial works may be required to improve ventilation. Where it is not possible to maintain adequate ventilation, it may be appropriate to consider the use of an air cleaning unit while the underlying ventilation issue is addressed.

When used properly, air cleaning units can help reduce airborne contaminants in a poorly ventilated space, including viruses like COVID-19. Air cleaning units are not a substitute for ventilation and should never be used as a reason to reduce ventilation. They are not necessary in spaces that are adequately ventilated.

The department's decision to make air cleaning units available for poorly ventilated spaces in education and care settings has been formed by advice from the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) and external consultation with specialists. We will continue to develop our policy and guidance on ventilation in line with the latest scientific advice and in consultation with industry wide experts.

Deliveries of air cleaning units will start from this week to special educational needs and disabilities and alternative provision providers. These were allocated in the first application round announced in November for special and alternative provision providers.

The second round of applications is open until 9am on 17 January. All state funded schools (primary and secondary), further education colleges and nurseries can apply. Special and alternative provision providers that were not successful or did not apply in the first round are also eligible to apply in this round. Once applications have closed, all applications will be assessed against strict criteria and allocated to providers based on need. Providers with successful applications will be contacted individually to arrange delivery, with deliveries expected from February 2022.

For those providers that are not eligible for funded units, the online marketplace provides a route to purchasing air cleaning units directly from suppliers at a suitable specification and competitive price. The marketplace can be accessed here: <https://s107t01-webapp-v2-01.azurewebsites.net/list/air-cleaning>.

Terrorism: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government which legacy-related matters were discussed at the meeting of the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference on 2 December 2021. [HL5167]

Lord Caine: As stated in the joint communiqué published following the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference (BIIGC) on 2 December 2021, the UK and Irish Governments discussed a range of legacy-related matters, including a review of the multi-party legacy engagement process that was initiated following the BIIGC in June 2021, as well as issues of concern in respect to a number of individual legacy cases.

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to set out a timetable to address legacy issues in relation to the Troubles in Northern Ireland. [HL5168]

Lord Caine: As outlined in the Command Paper of July 2021, the Government remains committed to addressing the legacy of Northern Ireland's past by bringing forward legislation that focuses on information recovery and reconciliation.

The Government was clear when we published the Command Paper that we would engage with a wide range of stakeholders on our proposals before introducing any legislation, and that is what we are doing. This is a complex and sensitive issue and it is important that we take the time to get this right.

The Government continues to engage and reflect on what we have heard, and we are considering our next steps carefully.

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