

COVID-19 – Weekly Round-up

Friday 4 June 2021

Heart of London Business Alliance is committed to ensuring our members receive the support they need while the situation in relation to COVID-19 is fast-changing. Our Daily Bulletin provides you with an update on the important announcements and guidance from the Government. In addition, it is recommended that our members monitor the [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) website for guidance regarding COVID-19.

Together with our local Member of Parliament, Nickie Aiken, Heart of London will continue to lobby Government for support for our members and your employees during this difficult time.

UK records zero Covid deaths for first time in over a year

1st June: On Tuesday 1st June, the UK Government formally [announced](#) zero daily deaths from Covid-19 within 28 days of a positive test for the first time since March 2020. Health Secretary Matt Hancock [tweeted](#): “The whole country will be so glad there were no covid related deaths recorded yesterday. The vaccines are clearly working - protecting you, those around you and your loved ones”. Urging caution, Mr Hancock added: “But despite this undoubtedly good news we know we haven’t beaten this virus yet”.

Pressure mounting on 21st June easing of restrictions

1st June: Pressure is mounting on the UK Government to postpone the relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions on the 21st June, amid [fears](#) the UK may be in the early stages of a [third wave](#) of infections. Ministers have refused to rule out a delay to the planned easing of restrictions, though the Prime Minister [told reporters](#) “I can see nothing in the data at the moment that means we can’t go ahead with step four, or the opening up on June 21, but we’ve got to be so cautious”. Sir John Bell, a member of the Vaccine Taskforce, [told](#) the BBC that the UK’s “numbers don’t look too intimidating” and that he was “encouraged” by what he saw, but that the government was taking “a wise approach” by being cautious about not ruling out an extension to the timetable.

Changes to the international travel list

3rd June: It was announced that Portugal is to be removed from the UK Government’s green [travel list](#) and seven countries are to join the red list with the strictest restrictions on travel. From 04:00 BST on Tuesday 8th June, travellers arriving in the UK from Portugal will be required to isolate for 10 days. People arriving in the UK from Afghanistan, Bahrain, Costa Rica, Egypt, Sri Lanka, Sudan, and Trinidad and Tobago will be required to stay in a

quarantine hotel for 10 days. Transport Secretary Grant Shapps [described](#) the changes as a “safety-first approach” and said decision to move Portugal from the green list to the amber list was taken due to rising Covid-19 cases in Portugal and concern over what he described as a “Nepal mutation of the so-called Indian variant”.

Over half of UK adults vaccinated with second doses

3rd June: Over half of UK adults have now had two doses of a Covid-19 vaccine, with three quarters of UK adults having had their first jab. The Prime Minister welcomed the “amazing achievement” in a [video](#) posted on twitter. Health Secretary Matt Hancock also [tweeted](#) about the news, thanking “everyone working together in our huge national effort”. 50.7% of adults in England have had two doses of a Covid-19 vaccine, along with 48.2% in Scotland, 47.1% in Northern Ireland, and 45.9% in Wales. The UK is among the countries with the highest vaccination rates in the world, with an average of 350,000 doses being administered daily.

Vaccine approvals

4th June: The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) [approved](#) the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine for 12- to 15-year-olds. Dr June Raine, MHRA Chief Executive said the “vaccine is safe and effective in this age group and that the benefits of this vaccine outweigh any risk”. Raine added that it will “now be for the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) to advise on whether this age group will be vaccinated as part of the deployment programme”.

28th May: The UK Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) [announced](#) that the single-dose Janssen Covid-19 vaccine had successfully met the expected standards of safety, quality, and effectiveness. The single-dose vaccine has been [shown](#) to be 67% effective overall in preventing Covid-19 infection and 85% effective in preventing severe disease or hospitalisation. The vaccine can be stored at fridge temperatures making it ideal for distribution to care homes and other locations across the UK. The UK Vaccine Taskforce originally secured 30 million doses of the Janssen vaccine last year but has now reduced the order to 20 million doses due to the success of the UK vaccination programme.

Restrictions to be eased in parts of Scotland

1st June: First Minister Nicola Sturgeon [confirmed](#) on Tuesday that restrictions in parts of Scotland are to be eased sooner than had previously been expected. From 00:01 BST on Monday 5th June, Glasgow will move to Level 2, while Fife, Angus and Perth & Kinross, and Falkirk will move to Level 1. All islands currently in Level 1 will move to Level 0 at the same time due to sustained low numbers of cases. The [decision](#) on Glasgow follows recommendations from the National Incident Management Team (NIMT), and a statement from the First Minister

which indicated that there are signs that the situation is stabilising in the postcodes at the heart of the initial outbreak and across the city generally.

Other news

2nd June: Secretary of State for Health and Social Care Matt Hancock gave a [speech](#) at the Jenner Institute Laboratories, University of Oxford about the lessons learnt from the vaccine rollout. He highlighted four key parts of the strategy: starting early in vaccine development and building trust; drawing on our strengths such as the NHS, the UK's scientific strength, first rate regulators and strength of the Union; ability to take and manage risks and backing the delivery team. In conclusion Hancock said that we must take these lessons forward to "finish our fight against this virus".

3rd June: G7 health ministers [pledge](#) to combat future health threats by working together to identify early warning signs from animals and the environment as the UK hosts G7 health meetings in Oxford to agree actions on improving global health and tackling COVID-19 around the world. The announcement comes as a new [report](#) on G7 progress to improve global health in developing countries is published.

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