

COVID-19 – Weekly Round-up

Friday 9 July 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.

Covid-19 restrictions in England still set to end in July

5th July: The Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, announced that Covid-19 restrictions in England are set to end on the 19th July, in line with stage 4 of the Roadmap. The Prime Minister outlined the plans during a live press conference, saying that opening up will be done in “*a balanced and careful way*”, with personal judgement now taking a key place in learning to live with the virus. Subject to a final review of the data next week, legal restrictions will end on Monday 19th July. The UK Government believe that the vaccination programme has broken the link between cases and deaths, with the doubling time for hospitalisations now much lower than the doubling time for cases.

Health Secretary announces end to self-isolation for the fully vaccinated

6th July: The Health Secretary, Sajid Javid, confirmed that fully vaccinated people in England will no longer be required to self-isolate if a close contact tests positive for Covid-19, effective from the 16th August. The same policy will also apply to under-18s from the same date. Javid told the House of Commons on Tuesday: “*From 16 August when even more people will have the protection of both doses, and when modelling suggests the risks from the virus will be even lower, anyone who is a close contact of a positive case will no longer have to self-isolate if they have been fully vaccinated... If someone gets their second dose just before or just after 16 August, they'll need to wait two weeks, after which their second jab can take effect and give them these new freedoms.*”

“Mass infection is not an option”, warn academics

7th July: More than 100 scientists and doctors signed an open letter criticising the decision to end restrictions on the 19th July, published in weekly medical journal The Lancet. In the letter, the signatories state that “*We believe the government is embarking on a dangerous and unethical experiment, and we call on it to pause plans to abandon mitigations on July 19, 2021*”. As an alternative to easing restrictions on the 19th July, the letter suggests delaying complete-reopening until “*everyone, including adolescents, have been offered vaccination and uptake is high, and until mitigation measures, especially adequate ventilation (through investment in CO2 monitors and air filtration devices) and spacing (eg, by reducing class sizes), are in place in schools*”.

Amber list quarantine to end for the fully vaccinated

8th July: The Transport Secretary, Grant Shapps, confirmed that fully vaccinated UK residents will no longer have to quarantine when they return from an amber travel list country, effective from the 19th July. This will include travellers under the age of 18. Those returning from amber list countries will still have to pay for Covid-19 tests three days before and two days after travel, and self-isolate if they test positive. Shapps said a full vaccination means “*14 days have passed since your final dose of the vaccine*” and that only vaccines administered by the NHS would count. He also confirmed that the guidance that people should avoid travel to amber list countries would be removed on the 19th July, but warned that “*an amber list country could still turn red*”, which would mean a return to hotel quarantine.

Other news

- **7th July:** The chair of the British Medical Association in Scotland, Lewis Morrison, warned that the Scottish Government has only days to respond to “*very high pressure*” on NHS Scotland, following a surge in cases. Morrison warned that Raigmore hospital, which took the decision to cancel all non-urgent surgery and outpatient activity on Tuesday after it reached full capacity, was “*a weather vane rather than an isolated example*”.
- **5th July:** The Welsh Government Minister for Health and Social Services, Baroness Morgan, refused to rule out further lockdowns in Wales, saying that the country is in a “*very difficult situation*” with rising cases. At a news conference in Cardiff, Morgan said that she would not “*give any assurances that that this is the end of the road*”, despite restrictions easing in England on the 19th July. Ministers in Cardiff Bay have so far refused to follow the UK and Scottish governments in setting a date for the easing of restrictions.

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