



15 April 2020

The Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP
Chair
Health and Social Care Committee
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

By email: hsccom@parliament.uk

Dear Jeremy

Oral evidence: Preparations for coronavirus

In addition to my letter on 27 March, I write to provide further clarity on points raised during the panel discussion.

Does personal protective equipment (PPE) include eye protection – could you please confirm whether this would be the case (Q262)?

Staff should have eye protection available for them to wear as required. Healthcare workers are advised to use eye protection whenever they are performing or assisting with an aerosol generating procedure (AGP). In areas where there are no AGPs being performed, healthcare workers are asked to risk-assess for the need to use eye protection; this means they need to assess whether there is a risk of splashes or body fluids/excretions hitting one's eyes. Public Health England's (PHE's) guidance on PPE for COVID-19 is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>

Clarity on the differences between the advice from the WHO and the testing strategy of the UK government (Q214).

The strategy to scale up the Government's testing programme has been published by the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) and can be accessed here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/878121/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-strategy.pdf

This strategy aligns with that of the World Health Organization and sets out the Government's ambition to ensure that anyone who needs a test has access to one. It recognises that this should be done in a phased approach, starting with patients who need the test, expanding to NHS workers and other critical key workers, with the goal of wider community testing over time. PHE is playing its part in this strategy under pillar 1, supporting the NHS labs to deliver tests for the most vulnerable, and under pillar 4 on serological surveillance.

Update on the delay in approval of a point of care test (Q230).

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is responsible for point of care tests. I have spoken to Graeme Tunbridge, Director of Devices at the MHRA, cc'd into this letter, who would be happy to address this specific question.

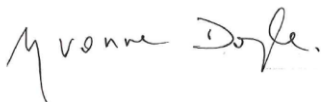
Give an assurance on rapid testing for all NHS staff (Q236).

The government published its coronavirus testing strategy on 4 April which can be accessed via the above link and this sets out plans for reaching 100,000 tests a day by the end of April, with NHS workers as a key priority. I have spoken to Kathy Hall, Director of COVID-19 Testing Strategy at DHSC, who is happy for you to contact her on this point.

Finally, I understand that there was an additional question relating to why Atlético Madrid supporters, who were banned from going to their own stadium, were allowed to travel to Liverpool. Public Health England does not have any powers to prevent people from entering the country and therefore it is the responsibility of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to advise on any such travel restrictions.

I hope you find these clarifications helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Yvonne Doyle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Yvonne Doyle CB MD

Medical Director and Director of Health Protection