



Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
Tel 020 7219 6188 website www.parliament.uk/cms

Rt Hon Nadine Dorries MP
Secretary of State
Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

By email

22 September 2021

Dear Secretary of State,

Inflicting harm online

My Committee heard, last Tuesday, from influencers about influencer culture and the attacks they receive from both anonymous and identifiable users through online platforms.

We were shocked to hear the language that is used by those who may otherwise be respectable family people. It was even more shocking to hear that death threats, even from minors, are what influencers expect to see in the conduct of their profession. We also discussed the fact that people send videos designed to trigger epileptic fits that have the potential to be fatal.

This kind of online harm is, in our view, completely unacceptable. Professional people should not be subject to this kind of mental, and potentially physical, harm. We are particularly concerned about the triggering of epileptic seizures and should not need to wait for the passage of the Online Safety Bill to address this issue. We ask you to commit to talking, immediately, to the main platforms about finding a technical way to ensure that those with epilepsy do not risk their health when simply opening a message on an online platform.

Yours sincerely

Julian Knight MP
Chair, DCMS Committee