

News story: Update on medicines and medical products supply as we exit the EU

Leaving the EU with a deal remains the government's top priority and would give businesses the stability and certainty to prepare for our new relationship after EU Exit. However, the government must plan for every possible outcome, including no deal.

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) is working closely with trade bodies, product suppliers, the health and care system in England, the devolved administrations and crown dependencies (the Isle of Man, Jersey and Guernsey) to make detailed plans to ensure the continued supply of medical products to the UK in the event of a no-deal EU Exit.

Together with industry and the health and care system, DHSC has analysed:

- the supply chains of 12,300 medicines
- almost half a million product lines of medical devices and clinical consumables
- vaccines used in national and local programmes
- essential non-clinical goods on which the health and care system relies, such as linen, scrubs and food

Around three-quarters of the medicines and over half of the clinical consumables we use come from or via the EU. The main risk to supply is reduced traffic flow between the ports of Calais and Dover or Folkestone.

DHSC also has responsibility to ensure medicines supply on behalf of the devolved administrations and crown dependencies, and they have accepted the department's offer to manage the supply on their behalf. All supply arrangements therefore take into account the requirements for the whole of the UK. There has been excellent engagement from all parties, and preparation plans are well advanced as a result.

Following this analysis, DHSC has put in place a multi-layered approach to minimise any supply disruption, including:

- securing, via the Department for Transport, additional roll-on, roll-off freight capacity away from Dover and Folkestone for goods to continue to come into the UK from 29 March
- buffer stocks and stockpiling, where this is practical, or asking industry or NHS Supply Chain to build up buffer stocks in the UK before 29 March
- buying extra warehouse space to hold additional stock
- booking space on aeroplanes for products that require an immediate shipment due to short shelf-life or specific storage conditions
- making changes to, or clarifications of, regulatory requirements so

companies can continue to sell their products in the UK even if we have no deal

- strengthening the processes and resources used to deal with shortages in the event that they do occur despite everyone's efforts

A combination of securing freight, buffer stocks, stockpiling and warehousing, and regulatory flexibility will be required help to ensure the continuation of medical supplies.

By securing additional freight capacity to ensure a continued flow of products, stockpiling and providing warehouse storage capacity as a further contingency, and removing regulatory barriers, medicines and medical products should continue to be available for the NHS, other healthcare providers and the public in the event of a no-deal EU exit.

Local stockpiling is unnecessary and could cause shortages in other areas, which could put patient care at risk. It is important that patients order their repeat prescriptions as normal and keep taking their medicines as normal.

While we never give guarantees, we are confident that, if everyone – including suppliers, freight companies, our international partners, and the health and care system – does what they need to do, the supply of medicines and medical products should be uninterrupted in the event of exiting the EU without a deal.

More information can be found in the [written ministerial statement to the House of Commons on Monday 25 February](#).

Press release: Foreign Secretary calls with Indian and Pakistan Foreign Ministers



During his calls with the Indian Minister of External Affairs, Sushma Swaraj, and the Pakistan Minister of Foreign Affairs, Shah Mehmood Qureshi, Foreign

Secretary Jeremy Hunt strongly condemned the terrorist attack in Pulwama on 14 February.

He offered his condolences to all those affected. The Foreign Secretary highlighted the UK's concern about the enduring threat to regional stability from terrorism. He encouraged Pakistan and India to improve cooperation and find diplomatic solutions that will create greater stability and trust in the region.

An FCO spokesman said:

The Foreign Secretary reiterated the UK's commitment to working with both India and Pakistan, as well as international partners at the UN, to ensure that those responsible for the attack are held to account.

The UK has been, and continues to be, in close contact at senior levels in both countries and will be promoting international efforts to tackle the threats of terrorism and improve regional stability.

Further information

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[Press release: Foreign Secretary calls with Indian and Pakistan Foreign Ministers](#)

The Foreign Secretary had calls today (25 February) with the Indian Minister of External Affairs, Sushma Swaraj, and the Pakistani Minister of Foreign Affairs, Shah Mehmood Qureshi.

Press release: Trade remedies measures to protect UK businesses and cut prices

British businesses will continue to be protected from unfair trading practices and dozens of unnecessary taxes on everyday products will be axed after we leave the European Union.

The government has today published the trade remedies measures that will be continued as the UK takes control of its independent trade policy for the first time in more than 40 years.

Importantly, these measures will continue to apply at the end of the implementation period or from 29 March if we leave the EU without an agreement.

In total, 43 trade remedies measures that currently apply to imports from outside the EU will be transitioned into UK law after we leave.

This will see the UK continuing to apply higher tariffs to imports that have been deemed to be traded unfairly and risk disadvantaging British businesses.

The measures will protect important industries and safeguard jobs from the risk of low-cost imports at below fair market rates, including in the steel and ceramics industries.

British businesses will continue to be protected from cheap imports that are deemed to have been traded unfairly such as:

- tyres and aluminium wheels from China;
- ceramic tiles, tableware and kitchenware from China
- A range of steel and iron products from countries including Belarus, Brazil, China, Iran, Russia and the USA.

A further 66 EU measures will not apply to the UK after we leave the EU. These measures were originally designed to protect EU producers from unfair competition, but they do not significantly benefit British industries and only increase costs for consumers.

Consumers can expect to benefit from cheaper imports on the following tariffs:

- 10% tariff on sweetcorn from Thailand;
- A 42p per kilogram tariff on tinned mandarins from China;
- 34% on imports of solar glass, which is used to produce solar panels, from China

The decision follows an open and transparent review on whether specific measures should be applied to the UK. This included a public consultation to

gather views from UK businesses and members of the public.

EU trade remedies measures are only being continued in cases where UK business supported the measure and where British businesses produce more than a 1% market share of those particular products sold in the UK.

This is in line with our obligations as a member of the World Trade Organization and is in the national economic interest of the whole of the UK. It will ensure that major British industries that have a large market can continue to thrive.

International Trade Secretary and President of the Board of Trade, the Rt Hon Dr Liam Fox MP said:

We have previously set out in our Trade White paper the government's commitment to maintain all relevant EU trade remedy measures, helping to protect UK businesses from unfair trading practices while cutting unnecessary import taxes.

Today's announcement will allow British industries to compete on a level playing field with their international competitors after we leave the EU. This is an important part of our new independent trade policy and it underlines our commitment to free trade and to ensuring the integrity of the global rules-based trading system.

The decision on whether to maintain measures was based on whether those measures mattered to the UK. We are scrapping measures that don't significantly benefit British businesses and this will see savings for people throughout the country.

All transitioned measures will be maintained at their existing level until the UK Trade Remedies Authority completes a full review. This review process will ensure any future measures fully reflect the UK market.

The [final findings of the call for evidence](#), which sets out which existing EU measures will be maintained when the UK begins to operate an independent trade remedies framework, have been published today. (Monday 25 February)

[Press release: Trade remedies measures](#)

to protect UK businesses and cut prices

The International Trade Secretary has today set out which current EU trade remedy measures the UK will transition when we leave the European Union.