

# UK Emergency Medical Team deployed to Papua New Guinea

A small team of specialist medics from the UK's Emergency Medical Team has arrived in Papua New Guinea on 24 October in response to an urgent appeal for international assistance.

Papua New Guinea's health services are under severe pressure from the rapid spread of the Delta variant of COVID-19.

The team of 10 experts will provide direct clinical care and mentorship to support local health care workers who are battling a sharp surge in cases.

The team members, including 4 NHS doctors and nurses, will be deployed for up to 6 weeks and will work closely with the country's National Control Centre for COVID-19, National Department for Health, World Health Organisation and other partners.

Minister for the Pacific, Lord Goldsmith said:

I am pleased that the UK has been able to respond quickly to Papua New Guinea's urgent appeal for medical assistance.

The deployment of a UK Emergency Medical Team brings British expertise to where it is most needed. It will help save lives and build healthcare capacity in PNG for the future and demonstrates the vital role the UK is playing in the region.

Team Leader of the Emergency Medical Team, Pete Sykes said:

UK-Med are proud to represent the UK Emergency Medical Team in Papua New Guinea. Our expert team will be providing critical medical care to patients suffering with COVID-19 and support to health staff, at a time when their national health service has been overwhelmed by the rapid spread of a third wave of the virus.

The UK Government-funded deployment includes experts in emergency medicine, critical care and logistics and is managed by the British NGO UK Med.

The team arrived in the capital Port Moresby, following a direct request for assistance from the country's National Pandemic Controller and will focus on capacity building as well as helping to tackle the current surge in cases.

The UK is committed to working in the Indo-Pacific to address global challenges. This deployment builds on the millions of vaccines the UK has already donated to the region and supports our close Commonwealth partner,

Papua New Guinea.

It is also in addition to the UK's donation of over £400,000 for vital medical equipment for Papua New Guinea and work through COVAX to provide hundreds of thousands of COVID-19 vaccines to the country.

### **Notes to Editors**

- The UK Government's Emergency Medical Team (UK EMT), which has World Health Organization (WHO) classification, is a rapid medical response capability funded by the Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO).
- Since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, the UK EMT has supported the WHO and health ministries in deployments of over 100 medical experts to Armenia, Bangladesh, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Chad, Eswatini, Ghana, Lesotho, Lebanon, Namibia, South Africa, Tunisia and Zambia.