

# Health and Social Care Secretary takes reform agenda on the road

- Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid to tour England this week
- From Somerset to Stockton-on-Tees, visits will focus on COVID-19 recovery, NHS and social care reform, tackling disparities and levelling up the health of the nation
- He will visit a range of health and care settings to hear from staff and patients to inform future policy

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid will be on the 'Road to Recovery' this week on a tour spanning the country where he will visit hospitals, care homes, cancer centres and cutting edge research facilities to engage those most integral to his ambitious reform and recovery agenda.

Kicking off on Monday 14 February, his first stop will be the East of England. His tour will take him to the North West and West Midlands, the North East, South West and South East and London.

Along the way, he will visit care homes, community diagnostic centres, vaccination centres and GP surgeries. He'll meet with urgent community response teams and visit a number of hospital sites to see and hear first-hand the life-saving treatments being delivered and the cutting-edge technology within the NHS.

The tour is an opportunity for the Health and Social Care Secretary to hear from the dedicated health and care staff across the country that have worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic. As the country learns to live with COVID-19, it is a chance to discuss the government's plans for a health and care service that not only meets the needs of people today, but also future needs. Each day he will host Q&A sessions with members of the public to listen to and better understand their experiences of the NHS, public health, and social care services.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

As we learn to live with COVID, my mission is clear. We must tackle the backlog of people waiting for treatment, bring NHS and social care services closer together and deal with the stark inequalities and level up the health of the nation.

Nurses, doctors, GPs, vaccinators, porters and so many others have put everything on the line to care for patients and families throughout this pandemic, and that's why I wanted to thank them personally.

This week I want to hear directly from staff, patients, residents and local people about their experiences of the health and care systems and discuss my plans for NHS and social care recovery and

reform.

Building on the phenomenal work of the NHS in the vaccine rollout, which has been crucial in allowing the UK to open up and begin to learn to live with COVID-19, last week the NHS and government set out a blueprint to tackle backlogs of operations and long waits for care built up during the pandemic. This involves a massive expansion of tests, checks and treatments.

The COVID Backlog Recovery Plan will help the NHS reduce waiting times, give patients more control over their care, and harness innovative technology to free up staff time so people across the country can get the treatment they need. Data such as age, ethnicity and deprivation will be analysed to understand how they impact access to treatment to identify ways to level up healthcare and tackle disparities.

The government has also published a new Integration White Paper setting out a vision for a more joined-up NHS and adult social care sector to transform services so they not only deliver more personalised care and treatment for patients, they will improve systems and processes to allow staff to focus more on patient care.

Plans to enable people across the country to live longer, healthier lives are moving forward thanks to two significant independent reviews to tackle health disparities which the government recently announced.

A review into potential ethnic bias in the design and use of medical devices will be led by Professor Dame Margaret Whitehead, professor of public health at the University of Liverpool. Separately, Javed Khan OBE, former CEO of children's charity Barnardo's, will lead an independent review of the government's bold ambition to make England smoke free by 2030.

Both independent reviews will form part of the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities' agenda to tackle inequalities in health and care, which will include the publication of the Health Disparities White Paper in the spring.

---

## **New national cervical screening campaign launches – as nearly 1 in 3 don't take up screening offer**

- A new survey released today shows embarrassment was the most common reason for not booking a screening appointment (42%) and almost two-thirds (63%) said they were nervous when they did attend
- Celebrities including Linda Robson, Scarlett Moffatt, Louise Minchin, Victoria Scone and Sharon Gaffka are starring in a new campaign film

which addresses concerns around screening and encourages those eligible to attend

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), with the support of the NHS, has today launched a major new national campaign to increase the number of those eligible attending their cervical screening in England.

The new Help Us Help You – Cervical Screening Saves Lives campaign urges women and those who may be eligible not to ignore their cervical screening invite, and if they missed their last one, to book an appointment with their GP practice or sexual health clinic now.

Latest figures from March 2021 show that nearly a third (30%) of eligible individuals – women and people with a cervix aged between 25 and 64 – were not screened.[1]

Around 2,700 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer in England each year and approximately 690 women die from the disease – around two deaths every day.[2] Previous estimates suggest screening prevents 70% of cervical cancer deaths, but 83% of deaths could be prevented if everyone attended regularly.[3]

As part of the campaign, a new survey of 3,000 women and people with a cervix commissioned by DHSC today reveals a number of concerns which prevent cervical screening.

Embarrassment was the most common reason for never having attended or missing an appointment (stated by 42% of respondents), followed by those who “kept putting it off” (34%) and “being worried it would be painful” (28%). 15% of lesbian or bisexual women over 25 had never had a smear test, compared to 7% of women over 25 in general.[4]

To tackle these barriers and help drive uptake, a new film has been released featuring Loose Women panellist Linda Robson, TV personality Scarlett Moffatt, broadcaster Louise Minchin, Drag Queen Victoria Scone and female rights activist Sharon Gaffka, alongside GP and media medic, Dr Zoe Williams.

Through life saving conversations, they tackle the barriers to attending cervical screening and encourage those eligible to book their appointment when invited.

Maria Caulfield, Minister for Patient Safety and Primary Care, said:

Around two women die every day from cervical cancer, but screening takes just a few minutes and can stop the disease before it starts.

Through our new campaign we’re calling on all women and people with a cervix to get screened to help save hundreds of lives. Even if you’re feeling embarrassed or nervous, please don’t ignore your invitation.

The full findings from the new survey reveal:

- When asked about what their experience was like at their most recent test, over three in five (63%) said they were nervous and more than two out of five (43%) said they were embarrassed
- The majority of women and people with a cervix (81%) said the nurse or doctor put them at ease during a cervical screening
- Positively, over half of respondents (58%) were surprised about how quick the test was, and 89% would encourage others who are worried to go for a test
- Around one in 10 (12%) don't feel comfortable discussing a cervical screening with anyone, but just under half would talk to their friend (48%) or their partner (46%) and two in five would talk to their mother (39%)
- The majority (89%) said they were glad they attended a cervical screening

Dr Nikki Kanani, GP and Medical Director for Primary Care at NHS England, said:

There is no doubt about it – cervical screening saves lives. By screening for risk signs at an early stage, it means that any abnormal cells can be treated quickly before they potentially develop into cancer.

We know that it can feel embarrassing or feel like something that you can easily put off, but accepting your invite and getting checked could save your life.

And please do speak to your GP practice about any concerns you might have – we are here to help you.

In England, NHS cervical screening is offered to women and people with a cervix between the ages of 24.5 and 49 every three years. For those between the ages of 50 and 64, screening is offered every five years.

The campaign will emphasise that screening, which only takes a few minutes, can help stop cervical cancer before it starts, and is being supported by charities, including Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust.

Cervical screening checks for high-risk types of the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), a common virus that most people will get at some point.

While for people with high-risk HPV the risk of getting cancer is low, any abnormal changes can be identified early. Cell changes are easily treated, and this prevents cervical cancer. That is why attending screening appointments is so important.

Running throughout England from 14th February to 14th March, the campaign will include TV advertising, video on demand and social media, partnerships, together with national and regional PR activity.

It also includes activity targeted to ethnic minority (Black and South Asian) and LGBTQ+ communities, as data shows these groups can experience specific barriers to taking up screening.

GP Dr Zoe Williams, who features in the campaign, said:

The symptoms of cervical cancer are not always obvious, and there may not be any symptoms at all until the cancer has reached an advanced stage.

That's why it's important that you attend all your cervical screening appointments.

If you are feeling nervous or embarrassed, then I cannot encourage you enough to talk to your nurse during the test and remember you are in control and can stop the test whenever you want to. If you're worried about feeling exposed, I would suggest wearing a skirt, dress or long jumper when you go for your screening.

Screening can stop cancer before it starts and saves thousands of lives every year. If you missed your last cervical screening, book an appointment with your GP practice or sexual health clinic now.

Scarlett Moffatt said:

A few years ago, my cervical screening may have saved my life.

The screening detected HPV and abnormal cells linked to the development of cervical cancer, and I underwent treatment to have the cells removed.

If I hadn't been to that appointment, I don't know what situation I would have been in now. That's why I'm so passionate about and proud to be supporting the new Cervical Screening campaign from the Department for Health & Social Care.

To understand more about the role of screening and discuss why people may be reluctant to attend their appointment, I had an informative conversation with Dr. Zoe Williams.

I cannot urge people enough to talk to their doctor or nurse about cervical screening if they're feeling embarrassed or nervous. Please attend your appointment when you are invited – it's a few minutes that could save your life.

Sharon Gaffka, female rights activist, 25, said:

You're always a bit worried because you hear misconceptions from other people about cervical screening so you can think it's going

to be really embarrassing or you wonder if it's going to hurt.

Being part of these life saving conversations can really help put your mind at ease, and I find being open with my friends and family, just talking about the topic, can make a huge difference.

Victoria Scone, RuPaul's Drag Race UK contestant and TV Personality, commented:

Initially I was uncertain as to whether a cervical screening was imperative for me as a queer woman.

However, this new campaign has clarified that all women and people with a cervix, including those in the LGBTQ+ community like myself are eligible for a screening, so I booked myself in. I think it's so important to openly talk about cervical screenings and encourage each other to attend theirs.

Louise Minchin, broadcaster and journalist, 53, who usually feels nervous when she attends her cervical screening, said:

Next time I get invited to my screening, I'm going to remember that it's going to be ok and over in a few minutes.

From my discussion with Dr Zoe Williams, there are many barriers which deter some women and people with a cervix from taking up the offer of a screening – from the worry it might hurt or embarrassment.

I want to help break down these barriers and empower women to be confident to go to their cervical screening, and ask their doctor or nurse any questions on their mind.

TV Personality and Loose Women Panellist, Linda Robson, 63, said:

I think it's so important to talk about cervical screening – I talk to my daughters about it regularly, and always encourage them to book if they are due.

I want to do the same for everyone, as it's a test that can save your life. Don't put off your cervical screenings and if you have any worries, don't sit there in silence, please talk to your friends or family.

The screening itself is so quick, and doctors and nurses can talk to you about the process and what it entails.

## Background information:

About the campaign:

- Opinium conducted an online survey of 3,003 women and people with a cervix, aged 25-64, between 7th-17th January 2021, link to results here
- For more information, any interview requests, copies of the advertising or questions, please contact the Cervical Screening team at freuds: [cervicalscreening@freuds.com](mailto:cervicalscreening@freuds.com) or call 07734 785 472.

## About Cervical Screening & HPV

High-risk Human Papilloma virus (HPV) DNA is found in over 99% of all cervical cancers.[5] Cervical screening now primarily tests for the presence of this high-risk HPV infection, which is a common virus that most people will get at some point. HPV primary screening is a more sensitive and accurate test than the previous method (cytology alone) and is the best way to find out who is at higher risk of developing the cervical cell changes that over time could potentially lead to cervical cancer.

While the risk for people with high-risk HPV of getting cervical cancer is low, any abnormal changes can be identified early. If HPV is detected, the sample is then checked for any changes in the cells of the cervix. Cell changes are easily treated if caught early, so they don't get a chance to turn into cervical cancer.

For further information about cervical screening, please [visit the NHS website](#)

## References

[1] [Cervical Screening Programme England 2020- 2021](#)

[2] [Cancer Registration Statistics, England 2019](#). Data obtained from NCRAS, PHE. On average 2687 women were diagnosed with cervical cancer (ICD-10 C53) each year from 2017 – 2019 and 689 women died from the disease. The latest annual data is for 2019

[3] Landy, R., Pesola F., et al., Impact of cervical screening on cervical cancer mortality: estimation using stage-specific results from a nested case-control study. [British Journal of Cancer volume115, pages1140–1146 25 October 2016.](#)

[4] Opinium conducted an online survey with a nationally representative sample of 3,003 women (and people with a cervix) aged 25-64. The online survey ran from 7th – 17th January 2021. Results available from here

[5] 99.8% of cervical cancer cases in the UK are caused by [HPV infection](#)

---

# Prime Minister: “Levelling Up is our mission and we’re getting on with the job of delivering it”

Next week the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, will get out of Westminster to see how the government is delivering on the people’s priorities across the country.

Taking the message directly to people on the ground, he will emphasise that under his new No10 operation there will be a laser-focus on levelling up, clearing the covid backlogs and improving living standards across the UK.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

I’m getting out of London this week and taking a simple message with me – this government is getting on with the job of uniting and levelling up the country.

Access to good healthcare, a good education, skilled work, reliable transport – none of this should depend on where you live. We’re changing the rules of the game to put fairness back at the heart of the system and focusing on the priorities that really matter to people. This is our mission and we’re getting on with delivering it.

Starting the week in Scotland, he will visit a manufacturing site to meet with some of their 800 highly skilled workers and discuss how they’re using advanced technology to revolutionise their manufacturing processes.

He will also see some of the projects contributing to the UK’s world leading research and development sector, which were funded under the UK and Scottish Government’s 2018 Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Deal. As part of the Levelling Up White Paper, the government committed to increase domestic public investment in R&D by at least 40% outside of the Greater South East.

Recognising the importance of supporting young people into the workplace and delivering his vision of a high skill, high wage, high productivity economy, the Prime Minister will also use the trip to meet with apprentices who are developing a range of skills from Cyber to mechanical and electrical engineering.

Following the publication of the electives recovery plan earlier this week, the Prime Minister will travel to the North West to see how an oncology centre is tackling the covid backlogs by using technology and developing new ways of working.

The recovery plan sets out how the NHS will address unprecedented waiting lists caused by the pandemic, while redesigning how services are delivered to improve care for the long term. It includes more community diagnostic centres, surgical hubs and ways to give patients greater control over their own health and care, rapidly increasing capacity while reducing wait times.

---

## **We in No 10 know that cutting back the size of the state must be a priority**

The Prime Minister promised change – and change has come. The UK is moving forward, the Prime Minister is leading the charge and I am proud to be at his side as the new Chief of Staff in Downing Street.

We are making sure that together we have the right team in place to pursue our core priorities: uniting and levelling up the country, getting thousands more people into jobs, and rebuilding after two difficult years of the pandemic. We are making sure that we have settled structures in No 10 – the historic heart of government – so that Ministers are empowered to take rapid action. And we are making sure that we focus on listening keenly to those who are in touch with communities across the country, work so hard on their behalf, and know what changes people need most in their day-to-day lives – our MPs.

This is a Prime Minister who won an 80-seat majority, delivered Brexit and then steered the country through the pandemic – which, with the exception of armed conflict, has been the greatest test of national resilience in most people's living memory. Now he's making the changes in government that will see us adjust to living with COVID-19, clear the backlogs, get the economy back up to full speed – and, crucially, he is taking a close look at where he can cut the size of the state.

As a nation, we have spent £400 billion fighting the pandemic. The furlough schemes alone supported a total of 11.7 million jobs and livelihoods at a cost of £70 billion. We invested in the vaccines that have saved lives and led us out of lockdowns, as well as the testing programmes and the free lateral flow tests that have been so crucial. These were the right decisions, and it's because of them that we were able to bounce back to become the G7's fastest growing economy in 2021.

Now, it is a priority to restore a smaller state – both financially and in taking a step back from people's lives. It's time to return to a more enabling approach. To trust the people, return power to communities, and free up business to deliver.

I know how frustrating the recent weeks of speculation about the workings of government have been – for the people of this country, and for political

colleagues. But the Prime Minister has apologised for the things we simply did not get right, and for the way that some matters have been handled. And knowing the Prime Minister as I do, he is the best person to deliver the mission of renewal and recovery.

For my part, as both a Cabinet Minister and Chief of Staff, I will have a unique opportunity as both counsellor and driver. To liaise and listen; to advise but also to act, whether that's in strengthening data analysis and understanding of issues across Whitehall or ironing out inefficiencies in delivery across government in order to make the centre of government work like the best-run companies.

Already, work is underway. With the Cabinet Secretary, Simon Case, and Samantha Jones, who has been brought in as acting No10 chief operating officer and permanent secretary with a wealth of public and private sector experience, I will be tackling the job of integrating the new Office of the Prime Minister more effectively with the Cabinet Office.

Over the years, as No 10 has grown bigger, a department for the Prime Minister has been recommended by a number of think tanks. As well as supporting the head of the government, a dedicated department would streamline communication.

After this week's Parliamentary recess, the Prime Minister will be bringing forward a plan for everyone to live with COVID-19. Last Friday's move to relax travel restrictions further will encourage both business and leisure bookings and help kickstart the aviation sector. And in a fortnight – provided the data continues its encouraging trend – all COVID-19 regulations in England are due to be abolished. That the Prime Minister can consider bringing this forward is thanks in part to the hard work of the British people, which has also contributed to our economic recovery.

We know that families are facing a rise in the cost of living, which is why the Prime Minister and Chancellor brought forward a support package earlier this month to help households with energy bills. The Prime Minister is raring to get the economy fully firing and determined to build more efficient and more responsive public services. He is the leader to capitalise on the benefits of Brexit – changing our laws to better reflect Britain's needs. And, through the levelling up white paper, he aims to balance the UK more fairly. These are the core values of the Conservative Party.

The week ahead will see the Prime Minister getting out of Westminster and visiting Scotland, the North East, and other parts of the UK to focus on the people's priorities and see how we are improving their communities. He'll be championing important domestic policies – like the apprenticeships that spread opportunity to people who earn as they learn and gain experience on the job. And he will carry on working with our allies to maintain peace in Europe, as he did last week in Brussels with our NATO partners, and in Poland with our armed forces.

From local to global, this is a Prime Minister who gets the job done. The whole government is ready to help him deliver.

---

## 800 families facing tough times to be offered holidays

- 'England for Everyone' fund will provide holidays and trips for more than 800 families facing difficult times
- Family Holiday Charity will use the funding to arrange trips for families this year
- Will help those struggling financially, with illness, or facing isolation or bereavement

Families struggling financially, or facing illness, isolation or bereavement, will have an opportunity for a weekend break thanks to a new government fund.

More than 800 holidays and trips for families over the next few months will be funded by the £600,000 'England for Everyone' fund.

The fund will support parents, carers, and young people experiencing difficult times to get away, relax and enjoy themselves on a weekend break in England.

Families who may never have had a holiday can be referred to the charity for a weekend trip and will have a choice of where they will visit. From campsites to chalets and caravans to lodges across the country, children could discover new creatures in rock pools, fly kites for the first time or build sandcastles on the beach.

Referees could include people such as social workers and teachers, and holiday vouchers would be provided to help cover transport, accommodation and food. VisitEngland is also working closely with holiday parks to include free onsite activities.

Tourism Minister Nigel Huddleston said:

Holidays provide a vital opportunity for people to reset, spend quality time together and improve their mental wellbeing. But for many families taking a break can be impossible.

Following the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, we are helping families facing particularly tough times to have a much-needed break while supporting our brilliant tourism and hospitality sector.

Research by Family Holiday Charity has shown that short breaks can have huge benefits, with 85 percent of families finding children who had a break were going to school more regularly and 84 percent saying children were less isolated and getting more involved in their community since returning home.

The charity, which has helped more than 48,000 families since launching in 1975, has also found benefits for the tourism sector included extending the season and supporting jobs.

VisitEngland Director Andrew Stokes said:

This partnership is a first for VisitEngland and will reach sectors of society who don't have access to domestic holidays. We are delighted to be working with the Family Holiday Charity and delivering the 'England for Everyone' fund will support families facing tough times to enjoy our wonderful destinations and experiences and have a memorable holiday in England. We want everyone to be able to take a short family break and benefit from spending time together, reconnecting and recovering from the pandemic.

Kat Lee, Chief Executive, Family Holiday Charity said:

We are delighted to be partnering with DCMS and VisitEngland on this social tourism project that will see more than 800 families able to access a holiday. Access to a holiday is simply out of reach for many UK families, but this scheme will see children, mums, dads and carers able to take a holiday, some for the first time ever!

Holidays bring wellbeing and mental health benefits, and the opportunity to try new things and think differently. On holiday families make memories that help when times get tough. And families who have experienced a Family Holiday Charity break are more confident, better able to engage with learning and play a more active part in their communities.

The fund has been created by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in association with Family Holiday Charity and VisitEngland.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

- The 'England for Everyone' fund is run in partnership with VisitEngland and the Family Holiday Charity and funded by DCMS.
- The fund will provide short breaks to families from Monday to Friday or over a weekend from Friday to Monday, who have not holidayed in four years or more. Each trip, worth up to £450, includes accommodation, with allowances towards travel and food.
- Holidays may be taken at any time for families with preschool age children or during school holidays before 5 June encompassing either the February half-term, the Easter holidays or the jubilee bank holiday and summer half-term for those with at least one child under 18.

- The Family Holiday Charity will work with registered referrers to select families most in need of a holiday as part of this activity.
- The Family Holiday Charity helps families get time away together, often for the first time ever. The charity provides UK short breaks and holidays to families facing tough times. Eligibility criteria include low income and other factors such as long-term illness, bereavement, disability, domestic abuse or additional caring responsibilities. \*As well as the immediate benefits of a holiday on mental health and wellbeing, holidays have [longer term benefits](#) in how families live, learn and work together in our communities.
- VisitEngland will work with the Family Holiday Charity to evaluate the impact of the funding.