

5 May 2020

Government press conference - Monday 4 May

The [press conference](#) was chaired by the Health and Social Care Secretary, Matt Hancock.

The Government confirmed that the rollout of the NHS COVID-19 mobile phone app on the Isle of Wight will start with NHS and council staff on 5 May at 4pm. It was confirmed that thousands of contact-tracers have been recruited so far and that necessary training is underway. The requirement for 18,000 contact-tracers remains the initial goal but could be modified.

The slides and datasets from the conference are available to [view online](#).

As of 5pm Monday 4 May, the total number of lab-confirmed cases was **190,584**. The daily number of lab-confirmed cases was **3,985**. The total number of COVID-19 associated deaths was **28,734**, with **288** new deaths reported on the day. The data is available to [view online](#).

National context

Local government guidance

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has [updated](#) the guidance for local councils to include links to information on the rough sleeping taskforce, local business grant fund scheme, testing for council workers and the funding boost for Business Improvement Districts.

Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee

The Secretary of State, Robert Jenrick, [gave evidence](#) to the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee yesterday afternoon (4 May). He praised the work of councils in dealing with the crisis on the ground and stressed that the Government would ensure councils are fully compensated for the Covid-19 duties they are asked to undertake.

Support for local government

The House of Commons Library has [issued](#) an insight on Covid-19 and the support for local government. It outlines the sources of financial support available from the Government, suggests how local authorities are currently losing revenue, and highlights concerns for the future.

Coronavirus grant funding

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has [updated](#) the data on local authority payments to small and medium businesses as of 3 May.

Household waste recycling centres (HWRCs)

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has [published](#) non-statutory guidance to help local authorities reopen, or keep open, HWRCs. The guidance highlights that the Government is not setting a date by which they should be open as they recognise that this will depend on local circumstances and resource availability.

Local Government Ombudsman

The Local Government Ombudsman has [issued](#) guidance for local authorities and care providers about good administrative practice and handling complaints during the Covid-19 crisis.

Childcare offers

The Government has [announced](#) that any working parent usually eligible for 30 hours free childcare or Tax-Free Childcare will remain eligible if they fall below the minimum income requirement due to Covid-19.

GCSE and A level grading

Ofqual has [published](#) initial decisions on GCSE and A level grading proposals for 2020 following their consultation on the exceptional arrangements they have put in place for [awarding GCSEs, AS and A levels](#) this summer which closed on 29 April.

Higher Education (HE)

The Department for Education has [issued](#) guidance for HE providers on the Government support package available for universities and students, the process for clearing and student numbers during the pandemic.

Vulnerable children

The NSPCC has [launched](#) a new campaign to raise awareness of the support available for vulnerable children. Anyone who is worried about a child or young person can talk to the [NSPCC helpline](#) team who offer free support and guidance (telephone 0808 800 5000, email help@nspcc.org.uk or the [reporting page on the NSPCC's website](#).)

Scientific evidence

The Government Office for Science has [updated](#) the list of evidence provided to the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE).

The list of participants of SAGE and related sub-groups has been [published](#).

Leaving lockdown in unison

The Scottish Secretary, Alister Jack, has [outlined](#) the importance of leaving lockdown as one United Kingdom when the data shows that it is possible to start easing the restrictions.

Medicines

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency has launched a new [Yellow Card COVID-19 reporting site](#) for healthcare professionals, patients and carers to report side-effects or incidents from medicines relating to Covid-19 treatment.

Legal advice

The Ministry of Justice has [announced](#) £5.4 million new funding to support the legal advice sector during the Covid-19 pandemic. The funding will be distributed to those most in need through not for profit organisations and Law Centres.

Department for Work and Pensions

The Secretary of State for the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) yesterday (4 May) made an [oral statement](#) to Parliament about the DWP's response to Covid-19.

Farmers

The Rural Payments Agency has [updated](#) the guidance for farmers, landowners and rural businesses to include information on RLE1.

Testing

The Department of Health and Social Care has [updated](#) the guidance on coronavirus testing, by adding unpaid carers to the list of essential workers and those prioritised for testing.

Social distancing in the workplace

The Government has [updated](#) the guidance on social distancing in the workplace for those working in people's homes as a tradesperson, cleaner or nanny.

Supplier offers

The Crown Commercial Service (CCS) has launched a [searchable online catalogue](#) which contains thousands of offers, ranging from cleaning services and food to videoconferencing and transport. The catalogue does not contain offers of PPE.

Job retention scheme

Figures [released](#) by HMRC on the Government's job retention scheme show that 6.3 million jobs have been furloughed. 800,000 employers have taken part in the scheme and the total value of claims is currently £8 billion.

London Nightingale hospital

The CEO of Nightingale London has [announced](#) that the hospital is to be placed "on standby" rather than active service when the current cohort of patients leaves. The other Nightingale hospitals in Birmingham, Manchester, Bristol and Harrogate remain open.

Local context

Isle of Wight contact-tracing app

The Government has [published](#) a press release outlining further details of the NHS COVID-19 app which is being trialled on the Isle of Wight.

NHS and council staff will be emailed a download link on Tuesday afternoon.

From Thursday the app will then open for all residents on the Isle of Wight. All households will receive a leaflet with instructions on how to download and use the app and a targeted marketing campaign will begin on Friday.

The Department of Health and Social Care and NHSX have created digital assets to support media coverage of the app including a [video](#) and [screenshots of the app](#).

Supporting Hampshire's economy

Hampshire County Council's Economic Development team continues to work with partners to engage with and support Hampshire businesses throughout the pandemic. Businesses are able to find support and advice on the [Business Hampshire website](#), about a range of issues including government schemes, VAT and tax payments and the extension of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) arrangements.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Regular supplies of PPE continue to be received from national Government. There has been one delivery per day for the last ten days. The County Council is proactively distributing this as required.

Additional links

- Hampshire County Council webpages on coronavirus (including links to press releases): <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/coronavirus>
- Latest information on coronavirus: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
- NHS information on coronavirus: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- Q&A from Public Health England on coronavirus: <https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/01/23/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-what-you-need-to-know/>
- Guidance for local government: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-local-government>
- County Councils Network (CCN) coronavirus information pages: <https://www.countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk/coronavirus-information-for-local-authorities/>
- Local Government Association (LGA) councillor guidance: <https://www.local.gov.uk/covid-19-outbreak-councillor-guidance>

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