

Annex B – Updates and National Headlines from Government

- This document details main the announcements and key headlines from Government, Public Health England and the NHS.
- It covers the period from the last meeting of the Executive Board on 21 April, up until the publishing date of June’s report.
- Each announcement includes links with further details.

Recommendation: Members of Executive Board note this record.

Snapshot of key headlines & links:

The PM confirmed that Step 4 of [the roadmap will be paused by four weeks](#), in response to the widespread transmission of the Delta variant and to allow more people to get a vaccine.

14 June

PHE data shows that two doses of the vaccine are [highly effective against hospitalisation](#) from the Delta variant.

14 June

[70 million doses of the vaccine have now been administered.](#)

11 June

Delta variant (originally identified in India), [has overtaken the Alpha variant](#) (Kent variant).

3 June

[£1 billion](#) for national tutoring for children and young people.

2 June

Pfizer [vaccine approved](#) for 12 to 15 year olds.

4 June

The [Janssen vaccine](#) is approved for use in the UK.

28 May

An [independent public inquiry](#) into the Government’s handling of Covid to begin in spring 2022.

12 May

[PHE analysis](#) shows a single dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine lowers the risk of death from Covid by approximately 80%

10 May

[UK Covid alert level is moved down to level 3](#) (an epidemic is in general circulation).

10 May

The Queen [set out the Government’s legislative priorities](#) at the State Opening of Parliament.

11 May

The [JCVI has advised](#) that under 40’s are offered an alternative to the AstraZeneca vaccine where available.

11 May

Delta variant, first detected in India, [classified as a Variant of Concern \(VOC\)](#) following a rise in cases.

7 May

April's headlines & links
(from the meeting of Executive Board onwards)

19 April	<p>The JCVI confirmed no specific safety concerns identified with any vaccine in relation to pregnancy, and that it's preferable for pregnant women to be offered Pfizer or Moderna vaccines where available. There is no evidence to suggest that other vaccines are unsafe for pregnant women, but more research is needed.</p> <p>9 in 10 pharmacies across England are distributing free rapid lateral flow tests for home use.</p>
22 April	<p>2021 BRIT Awards ceremony announced as confirmed with a live audience, as the latest addition to the Government's Events Research Programme.</p>
23 April	<p>India added to England's red list of international countries.</p>
28 April	<p>UK secures an extra 60 million Pfizer vaccinations.</p> <p>PHE publishes data that shows one dose of a vaccine reduces household transmission by up to half.</p>
29 April	<p>MHCLG wrote to councils following the High Court judgement that remote council meetings can no longer take place after 6 May.</p>

1 May	<p>From 4 May, care home residents will be able to visit someone's garden or take a walk, accompanied by a care worker or nominated visitor, without having to self-isolate on their return, as data shows cases are falling amongst care home residents.</p>
2 May	<p>PHE and NHS Test & Trace will test an alternative to self-isolation for people who come into contact with a positive Covid-19 case. Up to 40,000 people will be provided with lateral flow tests for self-testing every morning for seven days. Those who test negative and have no symptoms will not be required to self-isolate for that day.</p>
7 May	<p>The JCVI has advised that people under 40 are offered an alternative to the AstraZeneca vaccine where available and where this does not cause substantial delay, after a review of the latest evidence on the extremely rare risk of blood clotting following vaccination.</p> <p>PHE has reclassified a Covid variant first detected in India as a Variant of Concern (VOC) following a rise in cases in the UK and evidence of community transmission.</p>
	<p>International travel resumed from 17 May (Step 3 of the recovery roadmap) with a traffic light system in place and border control measures remaining. The list will be reviewed every three weeks.</p>
10 May	<p>The UK Chief Medical Officers and NHSE National Medical Director agree that the UK Covid alert level is moved down from level 4 (a Covid-19 epidemic is in general circulation; transmission is high or rising exponentially) to level 3 (a Covid-19 epidemic is in general circulation) in response to reducing cases, deaths and hospital pressure.</p> <p>The Prime Minister confirmed that Step 3 of easing restrictions would go ahead on 17 May as hospital admissions and infection rates continue to decrease.</p> <p>PHE published new analysis showing that individuals who receive a single dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine have an approximately 80% lower risk of death from COVID-19 compared with unvaccinated individuals.</p>
11 May	<p>The government has launched a new scheme for businesses across the UK offering workplace testing for staff through NHS Test and Trace.</p> <p>The Queen set out the government's legislative priorities at the State Opening of Parliament. In the speech, it was announced that the government would support the national recovery from the COVID-19 outbreak by supporting jobs, businesses and economic growth and addressing the impact of the outbreak on public services.</p>
12 May	<p>An independent public inquiry will be established to investigate the Government's handling of the Covid-19 pandemic, beginning in spring 2022.</p>
14 May	<p>Further to a rapid rise in cases of the Variant of Concern B.1.617.2 first identified in India, and in response to JCVI advice, second vaccine doses are to be brought forward from 12 weeks to 8 weeks for the most vulnerable people in cohorts 1-9 who haven't yet had their second dose.</p>

The Prime Minister warned that increasing cases of the Covid variant first identified in [India may delay Step 4 from taking place](#) until later than 21 June, and urged people to exercise great caution as Step 3 goes ahead on 17 May.

22 May New study by PHE shows for the first time that 2 doses of the vaccine are [highly effective against the B.1.617.2](#) Delta variant first identified in India.

24 May The government has announced that it is to [launch nine pilots](#) in England to test new ways to ensure people follow self-isolation rules.

25 May In response to rising cases of the new variant first identified in India, people in [eight areas of the country, including Kirklees](#) advised to minimise travel in and out of their area, meet outside rather than inside where possible, and maintain social distancing from people outside their household/support bubble.

27 May The Health Secretary delivered a briefing to explain that [cases are now rising nationally](#), driven by the B.1.617.2 Delta variant first identified in India, which is thought to account for as much as three-quarters of all new cases.

28 May The [Janssen vaccine](#), which is a single-dose vaccine, is approved for use in the UK by the Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency (MHRA).

June's headlines and links

2 June	<p>Four Leeds charities have received the Queens Award for Voluntary Service, the highest award given to charitable organisations. A total of 241 organisations across the UK received the award. The charities awarded are: Dance Action Zone Leeds (DAZL), The Growing Zone, CATCH Leeds (Community Action To Create Hope), and Freedom4Girls.</p> <p>£1 billion for national tutoring revolution which will see up to 100 million tutoring hours for children and young people across England.</p>
3 June	<p>50% of all adults in the UK have had both doses of a vaccine.</p> <p>The DfT announced the latest update to the Government's traffic light list for international travel, which includes adding Portugal to the amber list.</p> <p>PHE data shows that cases of the Delta variant (originally identified in India), has overtaken the Alpha variant (originally identified in Kent), following a rise of 5,472 new cases.</p>
4 June	<p>The MHRA approves the Pfizer vaccine for 12 to 15 year olds.</p>
5 June	<p>Working with the local authority, NHS Test and Trace is providing additional testing in areas across Bradford.</p>
7 June	<p>Working with the local authority, NHS Test and Trace is providing additional testing in areas across Calderdale.</p> <p>Leading Apps to provide bonuses, stickers, and profile badges for vaccinated users.</p>
10 June	<p>Weekly national flu and Covid-19 surveillance reports published. The reports indicate that the virus' activity has increased on a national level. Rates have increased in most age groups; the biggest seen in those aged 20-29, the lowest increases were seen in the over 80's. Small increase also seen in the over 60's.</p> <p>Covid-19 vaccine efficacy weekly surveillance report from PHE. Analysis suggests that at least 42,000 hospitalisations were prevented in the over 65; estimates that around 14,000 deaths were prevented up to 30 May – around 11,800 in those aged 79 & 80, and around 400 in those aged 60 – 69.</p>
11 June	<p>UK will donate 100 million surplus coronavirus vaccines to the world within the next year, announced ahead of the G7 summit.</p> <p>70 million doses of the vaccine have now been administered in the UK, with 78% of adults having received a first dose.</p>
13 June	<p>The PM's statement at the G7 summit. The PM confirmed leaders have pledged over 1 billion doses of Covid vaccines to countries most in-need.</p>

14 June	<p>The PM confirmed that Step 4 of the roadmap will be paused by four weeks, in response to the widespread transmission of the Delta variant and to allow more people to get a vaccine. The variant is the leading determinant of increasing infection rates in England, alongside small increases of hospitalisations and deaths. The earliest date for Step 4 is no sooner than 19 July.</p> <p>PHE data shows that two doses of the vaccine are highly effective against hospitalisation from the Delta variant; the Pfizer vaccine offers 96% protection; the Oxford-AstraZeneca offers 92% protection.</p> <p>Care home residents will be able to spend more time with family and friends.</p> <p>The vaccination programme is accelerated as Step 4 is paused; second doses for over 40's will be brought forward by eight weeks (from 12).</p> <p>Final four Euro's 2020 games at Wembley to host larger crowds in extension of Events Research Programme.</p> <p>Guidance for weddings, receptions, funerals, wakes and commemorative ceremonies will change from 21 June as there will no longer be a cap for attendees set out in law.</p>
15 June	<p>People aged 23 and over (or those who turn 23 before July 1), are now eligible for a vaccine.</p> <p>More than 30 million people have been vaccinated with a second dose.</p> <p>An ambitious new programme for government reform, to ensure the country builds back better from Covid launched.</p>
16 June	<p>People working in CQC-registered care homes will need to be fully vaccinated with both doses.</p> <p>£36 million via 38 new pioneering AI projects announced to revolutionise NHS care and diagnosis, including detecting cancers and providing mental health support.</p>
17 June	<p>UK Infrastructure Bank opens for business, with its HQ in Leeds. The bank will support local growth and tackle climate change.</p> <p>Imperial College London and Ipsos MORI's REACT-1 study published, showing infections was rising rapidly in late May and early June, coinciding with the Delta variant becoming dominant throughout the UK.</p> <p>MHRA extends authorisation of NHS Test and Trace lateral flow devices.</p> <p>New data published by PHE suggests a low risk of reinfection.</p>
18 June	<p>Confirmed cases of variants of concern in the UK, published by PHE.</p> <p>A short film has been produced by the Department of Health, encouraging vaccine uptake by boxing legends.</p>