



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy



Department
of Health &
Social Care

Nadhim Zahawi MP
Minister for Business and Industry
Minister for COVID Vaccine
Deployment

Department for Business, Energy &
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By email to: george.howarth.mp@parliament.uk

12 April 2021

Dear Sir George,

Thank you for your correspondence of 29 January to Matt Hancock on behalf of one of your constituents about COVID-19 vaccination prioritisation. Please accept my sincere apologies for the delay in replying to you.

I was sorry to read that your constituent tested positive for COVID-19, and I hope he has now made a full recovery. I understand your constituent's concerns regarding the prioritisation of the police for the vaccine and I am grateful to you for taking the time to raise them with me.

From the beginning of the outbreak, our policies have been guided by the advice of the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies, which is led by the Chief Scientific Adviser and Chief Medical Officer for England, and our response is kept under constant review. We follow advice from the independent experts on the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) about which groups of people to prioritise for COVID-19 vaccines.

The JCVI has published its interim advice for phase two of the COVID-19 vaccination programme, setting out that the most effective way to minimise hospitalisations and deaths is to continue to prioritise people by age. It has concluded that targeted vaccination to reduce transmission or give priority to occupational groups at higher risk of exposure would not be as effective in reducing deaths and hospitalisations as direct protection of those at higher risk of serious disease.

Delivery of a programme targeting occupations would be operationally very complex and therefore would risk slowing down the pace of the vaccination programme. An age-based programme will still protect individuals working in jobs with a potentially higher risk of exposure to the virus, with the most vulnerable in those occupations vaccinated first.

We are making excellent progress with over 32 million first doses given to the most vulnerable and those who care for them, and we are on track to meet our target of offering a vaccine to all adults by the end of July.

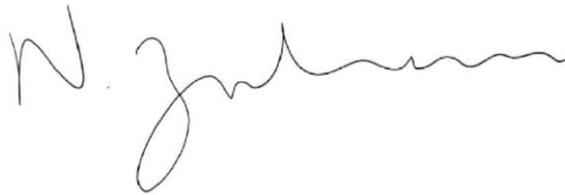
We thank all key workers for the incredible work that they have been doing throughout the pandemic. I give my assurances that we are working hard to ensure that everyone who has

been clinically prioritised to receive a vaccine will have access to a vaccine as soon as possible.

Lastly, I would like to emphasise that the vaccine is a great step forward in tackling this awful disease. We have made incredible progress with the rollout of a COVID-19 vaccine, but there is still a long way to go. I would like to offer my assurance that the Government's continued focus is on ensuring that as many people as possible, especially those at high risk, will be offered the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible.

Thank you again for taking the time to write and I hope this reply is helpful to your constituent.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Zahawi', written in a cursive style.

NADHIM ZAHAWI MP
Minister for COVID Vaccine Deployment
Minister for Business and Industry