

£1 billion invested in health protection as new Pandemic Strategy published

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- It demonstrates UK Government's ambition to rebuild pandemic readiness and capabilities, with concrete actions backed by around £1bn of investment in health protection.
- Security Minister Dan Jarvis says reforms mark a "major improvement" in UK's approach to pandemic preparedness.

The UK's readiness for future pandemics is being overhauled through the publication of a new Pandemic Preparedness Strategy, backed by around £1 billion of investment in health protection measures including enhancing our access to essential vaccines and therapeutics, improving our pandemic surveillance systems and expanding our ability to roll out testing to the whole population.

Published by the Department for Health and Social Care today, the strategy outlines concrete action already taken across government to embed lessons from Covid-19:

- PPE stockpiles will continue to be replenished with a variety of products and sizes.
- Departmental pandemic response plans will be reviewed to ensure government services and critical national infrastructure can be maintained effectively in a pandemic.
- An 'All Pandemic Hazards Bill' will be drafted to ensure the government has legislative options ready to review and introduce as necessary in response to a range of pathogens. This will sit alongside a suite of prepared options for community protection measures to support swift decision-making and prioritisation to keep people safe.
- UKHSA will build a new set of services to manage large scale testing, contact tracing and other scaled public health response measures'.
- Chemicals and equipment stockpiles needed for testing will be built up further to protect against supply risks that could develop in the early stages of a pandemic.
- Data requirements to support decision-making will be reviewed to ensure information needed in a pandemic response is available, transparent, and can be shared quickly between organisations and with the public.

The new strategy replaces a previous strategy for Pandemic Influenza published in 2011 and builds on wider reforms taking place through the 10 Year Health Plan.

It has been directly informed by early findings from the largest ever pandemic exercise in UK history which took place in Autumn 2025. Exercise Pegasus saw every government department, the devolved governments, arms-length bodies, local resilience forums, and external stakeholders respond to the spread of a simulated pathogen over a number of weeks.

This work sits alongside other action the government has already taken to build resilience in the vaccine supply chain since the last pandemic, including signing a ten year partnership with Moderna. The world leading pharmaceutical company has built a state of the art innovation and technology lab in Oxfordshire that is producing British-made vaccines to protect people across the

country.

Minister of Health for Public Health and Prevention, Minister Sharon Hodgson said:

This strategy represents a serious, long-term commitment to protecting the public from future health threats. We learnt hard lessons from Covid-19, and it is our responsibility to act on them.

Informed by Exercise Pegasus — the largest pandemic exercise in UK history — this strategy strengthens our capabilities, allowing us to respond faster and more effectively when the next health threat emerges. The public deserves nothing less.

Minister of State for Security, Dan Jarvis, said:

It's right we learn the lessons from the devastating impact Covid-19 had on our health service and society. Our new pandemic strategy marks a major improvement in the government's preparedness for future pandemics.

Whether increasing the supply of British-made vaccines, or stockpiling PPE for key workers, we're working with partners across the public and private sector to take action to keep the country safe.

Susan Hopkins, Chief Executive at the UK Health Security Agency, said:

The Covid-19 pandemic has taught us the vital importance of being prepared for future health threats and this strategy underlines a shared commitment across Government to continue building our resilience capabilities.

Our experience of responding to large-scale incidents and pandemics enables us to ensure that future responses are more effective, efficient and equitable, and we continue to play our part in developing our capabilities for diagnostics, surveillance, vaccine development and testing, to keep our country's health secure."

Publication of the strategy comes as the UK Government also publishes its response to the UK's Covid-19 Inquiry Module 2 report today, explaining how departments have strengthened decision-making processes, protections for vulnerable groups, and cooperation with devolved governments since the pandemic.

This includes enhancements to the standards and selection process for SAGE, the government's team of scientific advisors, and a top-to-bottom review of the UK's crisis response framework. Further changes, which put vulnerable groups at the centre of emergency planning and provide devolved administrations with access to relevant emergency briefings, will enable a fairer, faster, and more coordinated crisis response across all four governments.

Notes to editors:

- You can find the Pandemic Preparedness Strategy online.
- You can find the UK Government's response to the Covid-19 Inquiry Module 2 report online.

- You can find the Chief Secretary to the Prime Minister's statement on the UK Government response to Covid-19 Inquiry Module 2 Report online.
- You can find the Minister of Health for Public Health and Prevention's statement on the Pandemic Preparedness Strategy online.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/1-billion-invested-in-health-protection-as-new-pandemic-strategy-published>