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THE UK GOVERNMENT'S

# AUTUMN/ WINTER COVID-19 PLAN

BRIEFING PAPER

14/9/2021

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Black Country  
Chamber of  
Commerce

## Autumn/ Winter COVID-19 Plan: Background

Health Secretary Sajid Javid announced on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2021 what has been described as the "five pillars" of the government's Covid autumn and winter plan. To support this announcement a detailed document has been produced.

The Health Secretary also announced that if the data shows the NHS is likely to come under "unsustainable pressure" from the COVID-19 pandemic again, the government has prepared a 'plan B' for England.

## What are the "five pillars"?

### Vaccines

- The government wants to maximise vaccine uptake among those that are eligible but have not yet been vaccinated.
- They will offer booster doses over the autumn/winter, starting with priority groups 1-9 from the first rollout.
- They will offer a first dose of vaccine to 12 to 15-year-olds.

### Test, Trace and Isolate

- PCR testing will continue to be available free of charge, as will symptom-free lateral flow tests.
- Contact tracing will continue through the NHS test and trace system.
- Practical and financial help will be given to all those still required to self-isolate.

### Supporting the NHS and social care

- The government will give the NHS £5.4bn towards its Covid response over the next six months, including £1bn to tackle the backlog.
- There's a consultation going on but the health secretary says it is "highly likely" that front-line NHS staff and those working in wider social care settings will also have to be vaccinated.

### Guidance and communication

- People will be encouraged to meet outdoors where possible and try to let in fresh air when meeting indoors and face masks should be worn in crowded areas.

### International approach

- The UK will play its part to lead the global effort to accelerate access to vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics.
- The UK will maintain strong defences at the border to identify and respond to variants of concern.

## What is proposed under the Government's 'Plan B'?

Although no specific threshold has been set out for the activation 'Plan B' in terms of NHS figures the measures will include:

- Making face coverings legally mandatory again in certain settings.
- Asking people to work from home, if they can, for a limited period.
- Introducing mandatory vaccine certificates or 'passports' for nightclubs.
- Potential closures of; indoor settings with 500+ attendees, outdoor settings with 4,000+ people, and any setting with 10,000+ attendees such as sports and music stadia.

## Get in touch

If you or your business would like to learn more about the contents in this document or how it may impact you or your business, get in touch with our Policy team or explore our website to see how you can get involved with our campaign and lobbying work.

A membership with the Black Country Chamber of Commerce will give you access to a wide range of business guidance, savings, and support on everything from policy to international trade.

To learn more about our membership, visit our webpage [here](#) or book an appointment with one of our advisors.

Contact: External Affairs Team

Email: [policy@blackcountrychamber.co.uk](mailto:policy@blackcountrychamber.co.uk)

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*The information in this paper is correct as of 14/9/21.*