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Covid-19 Member Update

Wednesday 29 April

Summary

Yesterday marked an important day for post-lockdown preparations, as the Government's scientific advisers met to discuss ways of easing lockdown restrictions in the UK. The Government is expected to make an announcement about its action plan for a post-lockdown future this week, ahead of its 7 May deadline. Other European countries such as Spain, Italy, France and Switzerland have already disclosed their strategies, choosing slow, phased approaches to easing lockdown measures.

In the meantime, Government efforts will focus on ramping up the UK's testing capacity, with a target of 100,000 tests conducted a day by Thursday. During yesterday's Downing Street press conference, Health Secretary Matt Hancock revealed that testing capacity was currently at 73,400 and would be rolled out to asymptomatic residents and staff in care homes and the NHS.

Below, please find a summary of yesterday's major announcements and events, as well as the steps ukactive is taking to support the physical activity sector.

Government confirms allocations of £1.6 billion funding boost for councils

Local Government Secretary Robert Jenrick yesterday announced that councils in England will receive £1.6 billion in additional funding, resulting in a total support package of £3.2 billion for local authorities. The funding will be distributed to councils across England based on their population and the latest assessment on the challenges they are facing.

The Government also confirmed that the Review of Relative Needs and Resource and 75% business rates retention will no longer be implemented in 2021-22, to allow councils to focus on meeting the immediate public health challenge posed by the pandemic.

Full details can be found [here](#).

Downing Street press conference



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Yesterday's Downing Street press conference was led by Health Secretary Matt Hancock, accompanied by Deputy Chief Scientific Advisor Professor Angela McLean and Director of Health Improvement Professor John Newton. Key moments included:

- Mr Hancock announced the Government will start publishing daily figures for the number of coronavirus deaths in care homes and other non-hospital settings to help inform the Government's judgement on keeping people safe.
- He also announced that residents and staff in care homes, and patients and staff in NHS hospitals who did not display symptoms would be eligible for free coronavirus tests. People over 65 with symptoms or people needing to travel for work and displaying symptoms would be eligible too.
- Professor Angela McLean reiterated that five milestones must be met before the UK can start easing lockdown restrictions. These include (1) sufficient capacity within the NHS to provide critical care across the country; (2) a sustained and constant fall in deaths from Covid-19; (3) reliable data to show that the infection rate is decreasing; (4) ensuring that operational challenges such as testing and PPE are dealt with to cope with any future demand; (5) no risk of a second wave that would overwhelm the NHS.

Sport England's Join the Movement Campaign

Sport England's *Join the Movement* campaign – launched in March to keep the nation active during the Coronavirus pandemic – has revealed a new TV advert, online advertising and a radio slot to help encourage people to #StayInWorkOut using online resources which include services from ukactive members.

The advert was made entirely with self-shot videos from members of the public, and has been backed by triathletes Alistair and Jonny Brownlee, ex-England footballer Kelly Smith and former European 10,000m champion Jo Pavey.

Find out more [here](#).

If you would like to know more about the Sport England campaign and how to get involved please contact your account manager or the ukactive public affairs team at publicaffairs@ukactive.org.uk.

Expected announcements



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Today marks Keir Starmer's second round of Prime Minister's questions, with Downing Street still unable to confirm whether Boris Johnson will join him at the dispatch box. Expect questions to focus on the Government's action plan for easing lockdown restrictions, given Mr Starmer's outspoken frustration with the Government's inability to give an indication of what might happen with schools or across business sectors.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson will sit before the Commons Education Committee this morning, which may shed some light on plans around reopening schools. He is likely to be pressed for a detailed action plan, and faced with questions from MPs around how reopening schools could mitigate the growing opportunity gap between young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, which has been exacerbated by coronavirus.

Elsewhere in parliament, Home Secretary Priti Patel will sit before the Home Affairs Committee, and the Foreign Office is due to make a statement on its efforts to repatriate British nationals stranded abroad.

ukactive engagement with Government

ukactive is in constant dialogue with multiple government departments on additional support available for our members. This includes continued engagement with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and discussions with the Department for Education on continued support for children's activity providers. Discussions with Treasury over its latest announcements continue.

All insights gained from this engagement will be fed back to members through the daily briefing. Please contact a member of the ukactive team if you have any specific questions: publicaffairs@ukactive.org.uk

ukactive is also on hand to answer questions arising from the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

You can find all the latest information on what Covid-19 means for the sector, as well as guidance and support for your organisation in our ukactive [Covid-19 hub](#).