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Covid-19 Member Update

Friday 1 May

Summary

Boris Johnson returned to the Downing Street press conference yesterday, confirming for the first time that the UK is past the peak of the virus. While that is welcome news, the announcement of an additional 674 deaths (all settings) shows there is still a long way to go. It will also be a concern to the Government and the public that the UK's death rate seems to be getting worse in comparison to other European countries.

Today will see the Government unveil whether it has met its target of 100,000 tests a day by the end of the month. Justice Secretary Robert Buckland was sent out yesterday to suggest the Government might not make it quite in time, but the real question remains when the country will be in a position to implement the 'test, track, and trace' strategy of South Korea.

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.

DCMS support for health and fitness sector

Sports Minister Nigel Huddleston has spoken about the work his department is doing to support the health and fitness industry during the pandemic. In response to a Parliamentary Question from Luke Evans, Conservative MP for Bosworth, Mr Huddleston said physical activity was "crucial to the health and wellbeing of the nation". He then outlined the details of Sport England's *Join the Movement* campaign, and how the physical activity sector has supported people across the country to remain physically active during lockdown.

Read more on this [here](#).

Children exercising plummets as schools urged to open facilities during summer to get kids fit again

Speaking on behalf of ukactive, Nike athlete John McAvoy said it was crucial for children to get better access to outdoor space for exercise. Sport England research shows that 38 per cent of children are currently doing less physical activity due to lockdown. Children from lower socio-economic backgrounds are disproportionately affected.



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In England, 39 per cent sports facilities sit behind school gates. John McAvoy is one of the ambassadors who in the past has joined ukactive in calling on the Government to open these facilities during the summer to provide children and young people with better access to safe spaces for physical activity and exercise. He highlighted the activity interventions necessary for those disadvantaged children who need it most this year following the Covid-19 lockdown.

Read more [here](#).

Downing Street Press Conference

Yesterday's press conference was led by the Prime Minister, accompanied by Chief Scientific Adviser Sir Patrick Vallance and Chief Medical Officer for England Professor Chris Whitty. Key moments included:

- The Prime Minister announced the Government will be releasing a comprehensive plan on easing lockdown restrictions next week. The plan will include measures to “get the economy moving”, get children back to school, and make travelling to work safer. He highlighted that the plan would also be accompanied by a roadmap for different business sectors.
- Boris Johnson emphasised that any relaxation could only happen once the UK meets the criteria set out in the Government's five tests to ease lockdown. The Prime Minister also highlighted that the current restrictions would be unlocked gradually so as to prevent a potential second peak in the virus.
- Sir Patrick Vallance said that there were positive indications that the current infection rate is going down. This is an important precursor to easing any lockdown restrictions.
- Professor Chris Whitty commented once again that comparisons with other countries were of negligible use, commenting that the true measure of the virus' effect on the UK will come when we can analyse the increase in all causes of excess mortality.

Expected announcements

Matt Hancock is expected to lead tonight's Downing Street press conference to address whether his testing target has been achieved. There are no other major announcements expected to come from the Government today.

ukactive engagement with Government



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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](#).