

The Rt. Hon Boris Johnson MP  
Prime Minister

14 July 2021

Dear Prime Minister,

**Protecting the public and healthcare staff**

Health and care staff have shown enormous dedication to patient care over the past 18-months. The Government must ensure they receive the support and protection they deserve as it begins to loosen COVID-19 rules.

With continued pressures on staff and rising case rates, the use of face masks, social distancing and regular handwashing by the public must stay in place. The use of respiratory protection for staff in health and care settings must continue, alongside improvements in ventilation wherever possible.

The need to recognise health and care settings as unique environments for the care and safety of the most vulnerable is paramount. While you state that you would expect the public to continue wearing face coverings in healthcare settings, we ask that this is translated into action.

We cannot accept knowingly allowing patients and staff to become infected by the virus and becoming ill in a setting that is meant to look after peoples' health. We would be failing in our duty to patients by putting them at risk of avoidable harm.


As the rules change, this must be backed by clear Government communications for the public, so that health and care staff are not caught in the middle and placed at increased risk of abuse.

Health and care staff must also be supplied with appropriate levels of respiratory PPE and a number of professional bodies continue to call for the use of FFP3 masks for staff in all settings of care, who may come in to close contact with known or suspected COVID-19 patients.

As our understanding of COVID-19 evolves, national guidance and support must keep pace.

Keeping some sensible, practical measures for the public means we can keep looking after patients and each other.

Yours sincerely,



Thorrund Govind  
Chair, English Pharmacy Board  
Royal Pharmaceutical Society




Dr Chaand Nagpaul CBE  
Chair of Council  
British Medical Association



Pat Cullen  
Acting General Secretary and Chief Executive  
Royal College of Nursing



Eddie Crouch  
Chair  
British Dental Association



Colin Davidson  
President  
College of Optometrists

Cc Secretary of State for Health and Social Care