



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

23<sup>rd</sup> January 2021

*Dear Conifer,*

**RE: 'MEDICAL FREEDOM BILL' CAMPAIGN**

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of the vaccine roll-out and the 'Medical Freedom Bill' campaign; your comments upon which I have read with great interest.

Like you, I have read reports about the development of so-called 'Immunity Passports' which could be used to enable people to safely access certain venues. The Government has stated that the priority at the moment is establishing a safe and effective way to roll-out the vaccine to those who need it. While I understand that a range of options are being considered to encourage people to receive the vaccine, the Government does not plan to make the COVID-19 vaccination mandatory.

Once you are in receipt of a vaccine, you will be issued with a card by the NHS, stating the name of the vaccine, as well as the batch number and the date of each dose, which you must keep with you. However, this should not be considered an immunity passport, and the Government has no plans for the card to be used in this way.

The ongoing national response to the COVID-19 emergency is a testament to the hard work of our NHS staff, care workers, key workers, scientific researchers and all members of the public following Government guidance to keep each other safe. It has also highlighted that UK based scientific research is at the forefront of global development. The approval of the Oxford Vaccine is a massive step forward in our fight against Coronavirus and is a tribute to the incredible UK scientists at Oxford University and AstraZeneca, whose breakthrough will help to save lives around the world.

I can assure you that I take the issue of vaccine take-up incredibly seriously and I welcome the Government's commitment to move the UK's vaccine programme forward with pace. I am afraid that we share different views on this, because I firmly believe that when offered a vaccine, everyone should take this up and get vaccinated.

I also believe it is right and good news that the Government is running a vaccine confidence campaign which includes briefing sessions with community and faith leaders. These sessions include expert panels of speakers taking questions and countering misinformation. This is a key part of an integrated campaign across channels to improve public knowledge. It is also the case that the campaign includes translations to ensure language barriers do not become barriers to vaccinations.



I welcome the fact that the Government has undertaken work to engage and hold meetings with various stakeholders. You may be interested to hear that Ministers recently met with the National Pharmacy Association where options to tackle vaccine hesitancy among minority communities were discussed.


Social media platforms also have a key role to play and the Government is helping to identify and take action against incorrect information about the vaccines and Coronavirus more widely. As the vaccine roll-out continues, I hope we might agree that work must continue to ensure take-up is high and disinformation is tackled head on.

The clinical risk priority order for deployment of the vaccines remains unchanged and applies to both vaccines. Both are very effective vaccines, giving very high protection against severe disease, with good safety profiles. It will not be possible for individuals to choose which of the vaccines they receive at the time they are invited for immunisation. Furthermore, I welcome the Secretary of State for Health & Social Care's announcement that vaccination clinics will open seven days a week, in addition to an extra £150 million for GPs to support this work. Vaccines are undoubtedly the exit route from this pandemic. Millions of vulnerable people have already been vaccinated and the Oxford jab is allowing the UK to accelerate its vaccination plan further, allowing us all to return to normality as soon as possible.

I am confident that my ministerial colleagues will continue to act in response to the latest research. The roll-out of the vaccine is most welcome, but we are not yet at the end of the road, and people must continue to comply with the restrictions in place in their area, including when they have received their vaccination.

Finally, I would like to reiterate to you again that the Government has no plans to make the COVID-19 vaccination mandatory.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

*With best wishes,*  


**TOM PURSGLOVE MP  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT  
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**