

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

18th February 2021

Dear Constance,

RE: CORONAVIRUS VACCINE FOR FOSTER CARERS

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of your concerns regarding prioritising vaccines for foster carers. I have read your comments with interest and as per your request, have relayed your views directly to the Vaccines Minister, Nadhim Zahawi MP.

As you will know, the Joint Committee on Vaccination & Immunisation (JCVI) has set out a strategy that prioritises protecting those most at risk of death and serious disease. In line with the recommendations of the JCVI, the vaccine is initially being rolled out to the priority groups including care home residents and staff, people over 80 years old and health and care workers, then to the rest of the population in order of age and risk, including those who are clinically extremely vulnerable and all individuals aged 16-64 years old with underlying health conditions.

Those who are in receipt of a carer's allowance, or those who are the main carer of an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if the carer falls ill, should also be offered vaccination in priority group six.

I am incredibly proud of the progress that the UK is making in vaccinating the population, which is very favourable when considered internationally. I am delighted that the Government reached the goal of offering a vaccine to priority groups 1-4, over 15 million people, by the 15th February. While supply continues to be the rate limiting factor and the roll-out is not without its challenges, the Government's target is to vaccinate all priority groups in phase one (groups 1-9) by the end of April, and then to expand the programme so all adults can be vaccinated by September.

Once those most at risk have been protected, phase two of the programme will commence. This may include targeted vaccination of those at high risk of exposure and/or those delivering key public services, such as teachers and foster carers. As with the first phase of the programme, these decisions will be guided by expert advice from the JCVI. However, as I say, I have let my ministerial colleagues know about the case being made for prioritising foster carers and will certainly continue to follow this closely.

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