



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

2nd February 2021

Dear Conifer,

RE: VACCINES FOR HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS OF THOSE WITH BLOOD CANCER

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of vaccines for the family members of those with blood cancer.

The Joint Committee on Vaccination & Immunisation (JCVI) advises that the first priorities for the current COVID-19 vaccination programme should be the prevention of COVID-19 mortality and the protection of health and social care staff and systems.

I understand that the JCVI has given consideration to vaccination of household contacts of those who are immunocompromised, including blood cancer patients. However, at this time there is no meaningful data on the size of the effect of COVID-19 vaccines on transmission. Evidence is of course expected to accrue as the roll-out of the vaccines continues – however, I am told that until that time the committee is not in a position to advise vaccination solely on the basis of indirect protection. Once sufficient evidence becomes available I am assured that the committee will consider options for a cocooning strategy for immunocompromised people, like those with blood cancer, but in the meantime, I will happily make representations to my ministerial colleagues on the points you have raised with me.

Separately, I understand that 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 be offered a vaccine alongside those in priority 'group 6', which is individuals aged 16-64 with underlying medical conditions.

More broadly, I am sure you will recognise that the UK has shown significant early success with its COVID-19 vaccination programme so far, approving the first vaccine several weeks before the EU and our roll-out performance is very favourable when considered internationally. Three vaccines have now been approved, with two more progressing very favourably with encouraging results, and over 8 million vaccines have been administered in the UK so far. My clear understanding is that the supply of vaccines is the constraint – essentially, to a large extent we can administer what is produced and I've no doubt that every effort is being made by the manufacturers to scale-up safely and meet the enormous demand that exists globally. I am also confident that Ministers are working around the clock, along with public health leaders and their teams around the country, to sustain the momentum of this early progress and get the country vaccinated as quickly as possible, including second doses within the timetable set down by the JCVI and the regulator.



Of course, all of this work will take time, so for now we must all play our part by staying at home and abiding by the restrictions to suppress the virus, protect the NHS and save lives.

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

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