



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

23rd August 2021

Dear Contribute,

RE: MANDATORY VACCINES FOR CARE HOME STAFF

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations for adult social care staff. I have read your comments on this with great interest and consideration.

I know that the Government has been encouraging frontline workers in health and social care settings to be vaccinated. I am told that the Department of Health & Social Care has been working to make the vaccination accessible to people living and working in care homes. Vaccination teams have visited all older age care homes in England. As of the 10th June 2021, nearly 84 percent of staff working in older adult care homes in England had received their first vaccination. Although this is an impressive figure, there remains significant variation at a regional, local and individual care home level. The Social Care Working Group of SAGE has advised uptake rates of 80 percent in staff and 90 percent in residents in care home settings are needed to provide a minimum level of protection against further outbreaks. As of the 13th June, only 65 percent of care homes in England, with residents aged over 65, were currently meeting this dual threshold for the first dose.

That is why the Government is now taking steps to require care providers to deploy only staff who have been vaccinated within older adult care homes. This measure will protect the people most at risk in our society: around 90 percent of those who have died from COVID-19 were people aged over 70. The decision follows extensive consultation with care home staff, providers, residents and families.

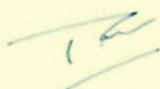
The new legislation means that anyone working in a CQC-registered care home in England for residents requiring nursing or personal care, must have two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine unless they have a medical exemption. It applies to all workers employed directly by the care home, or care home provider (on a full-time or part-time basis); those employed by an agency and deployed by the care home; and volunteers deployed in the care home. Those coming into care homes to do other work, for example healthcare workers, tradespeople, hairdressers and beauticians, and CQC inspectors, also have to follow the new regulations, unless they have a medical exemption.

These measures have been approved by Parliament and are subject to a 16-week grace period. I can assure you that this was debated thoroughly, and Members scrutinised the proposals closely.



The introduction of this policy has not been taken lightly. The Government has consulted extensively, including with a wide range of valued stakeholders, and used their feedback to inform the legislation. My ministerial colleagues recognise that some people feel that workers should have freedom of choice about vaccination - yourself included - however, we must continue to protect some of the most vulnerable members of our society. I should also add for context here in closing that social care settings in our community have been in contact with me during the past few weeks expressing their support for the measure and stating their firm belief that this is a necessary step to best ensure they can protect their residents.

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