



UK Health  
Security  
Agency

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# UKHSA 'Living with Covid' Strategy

## International Forum

03 March 2022

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## Agenda – 3 March 2022

### Agenda Item

Living with Covid Announcement and Roadmap

Summary of key COVID-19 policies

Discussion

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## On 21 February 2022, the UK Government announced their 'Living with Covid' strategy

The UK Government have set out how they will **move away from deploying regulations** and requirements in England **and replace specific interventions for COVID-19 with public health measures and guidance.**

The Government's objective in the next phase of the COVID-19 response is to enable the country to **manage COVID-19 like other respiratory illnesses, while minimising mortality and retaining the ability to respond if a new variant emerges.**

The Government is able to take this step now because of the **success of the vaccination programme, and the suite of pharmaceutical tools** to treat people who are most vulnerable to COVID-19 and the most severely ill. **The Government can only take these steps because it will retain contingency capabilities and will respond as necessary to further resurgences or worse variants of the virus.**

*To meet this objective, the Government will structure its ongoing response around four principles:*



**Living with COVID-19**  
Removing domestic restrictions while encouraging safer behaviours



**Protecting the most vulnerable**  
Vaccinations guided by JCVI & deploying targeted testing to enable test to treat



**Maintaining resilience**  
Ongoing surveillance, contingency planning including testing and mass vaccination capabilities



**Innovation & Opportunities**  
Securing innovations and opportunities from the COVID-19 response, including investment in life sciences

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## The UK Government recently announced its strategy and 3-step roadmap to the next phase of its response to 'living with Covid'

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Step 1</b><br>w/c 21<br>February | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Begin reducing the physical symptomatic testing network capacity</li><li>• End universal testing in most education and childcare settings (21<sup>st</sup>)</li><li>• Remove the self-isolation regulations</li><li>• Discontinue the venue check-in and venue alert systems</li><li>• Routine contact tracing and advisory daily testing for Covid contacts would stop</li><li>• Guidance for people who test positive for COVID to 'stay at home'</li><li>• Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme and Medicines Delivery Service and local authority funding for practical support discontinued</li></ul> |
| <b>Step 2</b><br>24 March           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• End free universal asymptomatic testing for the general population</li><li>• COVID-19 provisions within Statutory Sick Pay and Employment and Support Allowance regulations will end</li></ul>  |
| <b>Step 3</b><br>1 April            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stop recommending day 5/6 tests</li><li>• Private Market expected to stand up - likely to be in pharmacies initially</li><li>• Limited symptomatic testing including AV cohorts and those with a clinical need for testing using LFDs and a follow up PCR</li></ul>   |

[COVID-19 Response - Living with COVID-19.docx \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

## Summary of policy changes

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|---|--|
|  <b>Testing</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Government will <b>continue to provide free tests to the general public until the end of March</b></li> <li>From 1 April, Government will stop providing free tests in England. Limited symptomatic testing will continue to be available for some groups</li> <li>People at highest risk of developing severe COVID-19 can <b>order tests to access antivirals</b> should they test positive for COVID-19</li> <li>Public will be asked to <b>purchase tests from private providers</b></li> <li>Government will <b>prepare and maintain the capabilities to ramp up testing</b> as a line of defence against a new variant</li> </ul> |
|  <b>Self-Isolation</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English Government <b>removed the legal requirement to self-isolate</b> following a positive test (24 Feb), and switched to a guidance based approach</li> <li>Test and Trace Support Payment have ceased. Individuals <b>access financial support via statutory sick pay</b> which applies from day 4+</li> </ul>  |
|  <b>Surveillance</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An acceptable level of <b>SARS-CoV-2 surveillance will be maintained</b> to support government policy making. This will include <b>continuing the ONS The COVID-19 Infection Survey (CIS)</b>.</li> </ul>   |
|  <b>Labs &amp; Genomics</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Government will <b>continue to monitor cases using genomic sequencing</b>, which will provide insights into the evolution of the virus</li> <li>Prepare and maintain laboratory infrastructure to be used as a line of defence against new variants</li> </ul>  |
|  <b>Borders</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In January, the Government announced its new system for international travel, whereby there are <b>no requirements on eligible vaccinated travellers</b> apart from the need to complete a simplified Passenger Locator Form</li> <li><b>Hotel quarantine will be fully stood down from the end of March</b> and the Government is developing options to increase compliance with home isolation in its place should quarantine measures need to be reintroduced</li> </ul>   |
|  <b>COVID-status Certification</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From 1 April, the Government <b>will remove the current guidance on domestic voluntary COVID-status certification</b> and will no longer recommend that certain venues use the NHS COVID Pass</li> </ul>  |

## Round Table discussion

1

What is your long term plan to 'live with Covid'? Are you continuing to use legislation, or are you moving to a guidance based approach?

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How developed are your plans? Have these been announced to the public?

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What are your COVID-19 priorities? Is it booster vaccinations? Is it antivirals? Is it preparing for winter surges?

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What are your lessons learnt from Covid which will help with future pandemic preparedness?

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