

Subject: Re: Papers for Meeting with the Prime Minister - Sunday 20 September, 5:30pm BST
Date: Monday, 21 September 2020 at 12:27:51 British Summer Time
From: Sunetra Gupta <sunetra.gupta@[REDACTED] I&S>
To: Julian Fletcher1 <julian.fletcher1@cabinetoffice.gov.uk>, C-19 Taskforce Science and Projects <c-19taskforce.scienceprojects@cabinetoffice.gov.uk>, Whitty, Chris <chris.whitty@dhsc.gov.uk>, Government Chief Scientific Adviser (GO-Science) <GCSA@go-science.gov.uk>, [REDACTED] Name Redacted [REDACTED] @no10.gov.uk>, CSA-Private Office (MULTIUSER) <CSA-PrivateOffice@mod.gov.uk>, [REDACTED] NR [REDACTED] @dhsc.gov.uk [REDACTED] NR [REDACTED] @dhsc.gov.uk, [REDACTED] NR [REDACTED] @dhsc.gov.uk [REDACTED] NR [REDACTED] @dhsc.gov.uk
CC: Carl Heneghan <carl.heneghan@[REDACTED] I&S>

We thank you for the opportunity to present our views at the meeting yesterday.

We are however concerned that the order of presentations and format of the meeting did not allow us to respond to by Profs. Edmunds and McLean, and the various arguments in favour of further exceptional measures to tackle Covid-19, including Lockdown. We believe that it is important that the arguments, assumptions and data that have been informing policy are challenged properly, and thoughtfully.

Two simple illustrations -

- (i) Edmunds presented FT data that suggested countries that locked down earlier did better and that there was a linear relationship. However, what was not mentioned is that this graph was published in May, and since then both Peru (948 deaths per million) and Chile (641 per M) have gone on to have the higher death rate per million population than the UK (615 per M). Peru with the world's strictest lockdown is now the worst for excess deaths.
- (ii) McLean posited that a seroprevalence of 70% (as observed in certain communities) as evidence of a high herd immunity threshold: the simplest epidemiological principles would tell you that this is fundamentally incorrect.

These data, the models they are fed into and the interpretation of the progress of the pandemic that follows, are offered up with conviction, but do not stand careful scrutiny. Given how much is at stake, we believe that it would be unfortunate if policy decisions were to be formulated on the basis of the conclusions drawn.

We would be happy to return to discuss these issues in more detail with the Cabinet, and would welcome the opportunity to ensure a robust and open debate.

Yours,

Prof. Sunetra Gupta
Prof. Carl Heneghan

From: Julian Fletcher1 <julian.fletcher1@cabinetoffice.gov.uk>
Date: Saturday, 19 September 2020 at 18:39
To: "McLean, Angela SCS (CSA-Personal)" <Angela.Mclean113@mod.gov.uk>, Anders Tegnell <[REDACTED] Personal Data [REDACTED] I&S>, "John.Edmunds@[REDACTED] I&S", Sunetra Gupta <sunetra.gupta@[REDACTED] I&S>, Carl Heneghan <carl.heneghan@[REDACTED] I&S>

[See recipients listed above]

[See recipients listed above]

Subject: Papers for Meeting with the Prime Minister - Sunday 20 September, 5:30pm BST

Dear all,

Thank you very much for confirming your availability for the meeting with the Prime Minister on Sunday afternoon at 5:30pm and for submitting your one-pagers ahead of that discussion.

I have attached all five documents to this email so that you can read the other participants' views ahead of time. Also joining the discussion will be the Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Civil Service Simon Case, the Government's Chief Scientific Adviser Sir Patrick Vallance and the Chief Medical Officer Professor Chris Whitty.

As the Prime Minister's Diary Secretary said in her invitation email, as this invitation is on a confidential basis we would ask you please to continue to refrain from any public reference to this discussion.

Thank you again.

Best wishes,
Julian Fletcher

--



Julian Fletcher
Deputy Director, Science & Projects Team
Strategic Coordination Directorate, COVID-19 Taskforce
E: julian.fletcher1@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

I&S