

care. This was to enable us to continue to build an integrated supply chain for PPE which embedded lessons learned from COVID-19 and where our approach could be informed by the needs of those on the frontline.

18. Furthermore, in June 2022, the Department worked together with the NHS Electronic Staff Record team to build in recording of FFP3 respirator mask fit testing and outcomes for NHS staff allowing that information to be centrally collected. This information can be used to inform procurement and supply decisions as well as following staff members should they move between NHS organisations (CW11/9 - INQ000339334).

### Long COVID

19. The Inquiry have referred me to various questions in the transcript regarding long COVID that they would like further clarification on. The first of these is in relation to an email sent on 17 July 2020, where it was believed that the Department had planned to raise public awareness about the long-term effects of COVID-19 and the subsequent delay in publishing the video on long COVID in October 2020.

20. In the Department's view this email is confirmation that the question of what plans the Department had to raise public awareness about the long-term effects of COVID-19 had been *unanswered* rather than *answered* as assumed in the question from the typo in the email (CW11/10 - INQ000070127). The email referred to confirms this question could not be answered at this stage because we did not yet know the long term-health effects of COVID-19 (CW11/10 - INQ000070127). This is further illustrated by an email sent by a DHSC official in response to the question confirming the Department did not yet have a communications plan at this stage as the long-term effects were not yet known (CW11/11 - INQ000274098).

21. At this time the Department was still working on identifying what research was required to investigate and mitigate the long-term impacts of COVID-19 on survivors, and the Secretary of State held a roundtable on 31 July 2020 to work through this topic (CW11/12 - INQ000274101 CW11/13 - INQ000274102 CW11/14 - INQ000274100 CW11/15 - INQ000274099). The Department did not yet have all of the information required to raise public awareness of long COVID and there were no plans to raise this in July 2020, therefore there was no delay in publishing the awareness-raising video in October 2020.