



The health, wellbeing, and employment arrangements for people with Long Covid remain unaddressed

September 23, 2020

Layla Moran, MP and chair of the APPG on coronavirus, says that awareness of Long Covid, and its seriousness, is too low

The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on coronavirus exists to help the government learn vital lessons ahead of a potential second wave of the pandemic this winter, and beyond, through a rapid cross-party inquiry.

Our aim is to save lives. That's an aim that has brought together MPs and Peers from across the political spectrum, working hard with a common goal in mind.

In August, we heard from people living with Long Covid, and hundreds more sufferers submitted written evidence to our inquiry. One of the MPs asking the questions that day was APPG member Andrew Gwynne, who himself is living with Long Covid.

Their testimonials were incredibly moving and concerning. What was clear was that we needed to make some urgent recommendations to the prime minister; the health, wellbeing and employment arrangements for those living with Long Covid remain unaddressed.

And as the number of people with Long Covid grows, the situation gets more and more urgent.

So, on 24 August 2020, I wrote to the prime minister with the APPG's recommendations. With schools about to reopen, we called on the government to formally recognise Long Covid, commit resource to a rapid, comprehensive study of the condition, and provide the necessary support as a matter of urgency.

Although some research into the condition, and its long term effects on people's health, is ongoing, it needs to be expanded to include those who were never hospitalised or tested.

Furthermore, the government must support the needs of people living with Long Covid, and develop guidelines for employers and GPs. It is



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condition, as well as for our NHS and employers, that we are able to better understand what's needed to enable sufferers to access the help they need, and return to the world of work when they're ready.

There's more we can do to understand what's really going on. That's why we also called on the government to start collecting and publishing regular figures on the number of people living with Long Covid and those who have received support under the NHS England Covid Recovery Service. We must collect as much information as we can.

It all has to start with formal recognition, and we're not even there yet. At the time of writing, I have not received any response from the prime minister to our recommendations.

If we can't even respect those suffering with this condition by formally acknowledging their situation, how are we supposed to put the support in place that is clearly needed?

What's clear is that general awareness of Long Covid, and its seriousness, is too low in Westminster. That's why as an APPG we will continue to work hard in the coming weeks to raise awareness of it in both Houses of Parliament.

More submissions on this subject are more than welcome—we don't pretend to be the experts in this field, and expert or first hand accounts will only strengthen our inquiry as we continue in the weeks ahead.

After all, we're doing this to save lives. That's what matters.

So, I hope readers of *The BMJ* will join me in challenging the prime minister to take our recommendations seriously (as he promised to me he would in PMQs in July), respond to us, and take action now.

Layla Moran is the MP for Oxford West and Abingdon and chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on coronavirus.

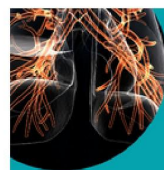
Competing interests: None further declared.

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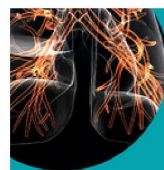


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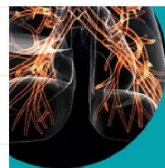
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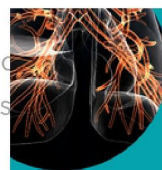
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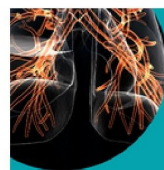


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