



**Department
of Health &
Social Care**

*From the Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
And the Lord Bethell
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Innovation*

39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

I&S

Sir John Bell
By email to: regius@medsci.ox.ac.uk

26 March 2020

Dear John,

Thank you for your very generous offer of voluntary support during this time of national emergency. Ensuring the UK has access to sensitive and accurate testing is crucial to our management of COVID-19. It will provide certainty to key workers thereby allowing them to return work as soon as possible, as well as reassuring the public that the Government is doing everything within its power to beat the virus.

As you are aware, given rapidly growing global demand for testing, it is vital that we assess new testing solutions as quickly as we can. This will allow us to confidently purchase preferred solutions and ensure that the NHS can continue to deliver world leading care.

This work must be guided by expert advice and, to this end, we see the committee's role as being to review and identify promising new testing solutions and also new suppliers of existing testing kits, all based on the initial triage conducted by Sam Robert's team. Where products are assessed as high priority, the committee will have the authority to authorise procurement of the tests before they have been evaluated by Public Health England, or by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency.

Attached are the draft terms of reference. We would be grateful for your confirmation that you are happy to proceed on this basis.

Yours ever,

Personal Data

MATT HANCOCK

Personal Data

LORD BETHELL

Cc Duncan Selbie
Aidan Fowler
Name Redacted

Terms of Reference – COVID Testing Scientific Advisory Panel

The COVID Testing Scientific Advisory Panel (CTSAP) is a voluntary group which has been set up, under the leadership of John Bell, to support the UK Government programme to increase the UK's COVID testing capacity. Testing is an integral part of the UK's response to this global health emergency to help protect patients and keyworkers, and to ensure the NHS can continue to provide world-leading care.

Role of the panel

CTSAP will support the testing triage process being led by **Name Redacted** in NHSE. The Triage Team has been set up as a single point of contact to review and evaluate offers to supply test kits, consumables and other testing equipment, as well as new and complete testing solutions.

Once an initial triage of submissions has been completed by NHSE's Triage Team, the CTSAP will:

- i. Conduct an initial review of new and complete testing solutions, as well as new specifications/designs for supplies to support existing testing capacity for both antigen and antibody testing; where necessary provide experimental data to support decisions.
- ii. Provide a recommendation on whether solutions should be a) approved as a high priority, b) approved, or c) rejected;
- iii. Recommendations from the Panel will then be submitted to NHSE's Triage Team who will send to PHE (for lab-based tests) or MHRA (for home-based antibody tests), where a decision will be taken on whether the new tests are procured. However, the CTSAP's recommendation will determine the order in which suggestions will be reviewed and should be considered when making a final assessment.
- iv. Where products are assessed as high priority, the Panel will have the authority to authorise procurement of tests/materials they deem effective, prior to PHE/MHRA evaluation being undertaken. In these instances, PHE and MHRA will conduct a longer term evaluation of high priority products in parallel to the procurement process.

Membership

Members will provide their services on a voluntary basis and will serve on the Panel for a minimum of 6 months or until the services of the Panel is no longer required.

Members will be expected to sign and adhere to the Department of Health and Social Care's Clinical Expert Volunteer Agreement, which requires participants to observe the Civil Service Code, including Civil Service Values, the Official Secrets Acts, and all DHSC rules, policies and procedures relating to conduct and standards, including confidentiality and security.