

meeting tmr at 9am...but I expect we will need to kick HMT

[25/03/2020, 20:21:24] Matt Hancock: Ok. Let me know

[25/03/2020, 20:23:06] Helen Whately: Will do. I have been told that - despite many care homes not accepting patients from hospital - the discharges are going well. Though you probably have more visibility of that than me.

[27/03/2020, 10:14:24] Helen Whately: To flag - Munira is messaging me a lot about abortion, v concerned about backlash, Grazia etc primed to cover lack of access to abortion during pandemic. I've been in regular contact with Emma about it but mindful we haven't had a chance to discuss situ.

[27/03/2020, 10:33:09] Matt Hancock: We need to ensure there is exactly the normal access to abortion during the crisis

[27/03/2020, 10:37:12] Helen Whately: That's a very clear steer, thank you. Providers are telling me that's not possible - however, I will revert to see how we can make it so.

[27/03/2020, 10:37:21] Matt Hancock: thank you

[27/03/2020, 13:09:49] Helen Whately: I am going to have another session with policy team ASAP on ways to maintain abortion access - though they seem to think it will be v hard to do so, just so you are aware.

[27/03/2020, 13:23:22] Helen Whately: Just saw you tested positive...are you ok?

[27/03/2020, 13:24:05] Matt Hancock: Thank you! Thankfully mild symptoms - still working away from home. No rest for the wicked!

[27/03/2020, 13:24:51] Helen Whately: I know you're super human but can you please look after yourself a bit!

[27/03/2020, 14:05:28] Helen Whately: FYI Worcestershire care sector have nearly run out of PPE and being told by suppliers they cannot provide more. I have messaged Steve Oldfield and Jo C direct.

[27/03/2020, 14:07:16] Matt Hancock: Pls ask Jonathan Marron - he's got to hold the ring on the policy wise

[27/03/2020, 14:11:36] Helen Whately: 👍

[27/03/2020, 14:17:09] Helen Whately: Jonathan is on it

[27/03/2020, 19:48:23] Helen Whately: I'm told the hospices funding decision is with David Williams

[27/03/2020, 19:48:35] Helen Whately: Would be very good to get it sorted

[27/03/2020, 19:54:48] Helen Whately: Sorry to bother you again on Abortion...I'm told it's likely to be a broadsheet front page this weekend, lots of problems with access (25 of 71 clinics closed, over 1,000 appts cancelled).

[27/03/2020, 20:01:48] Matt Hancock: Oh no. Why?

[27/03/2020, 20:02:52] Helen Whately: Clinics are closed due to staff sickness/isolating or because "the health centres they are located in aren't operating as normal"

[27/03/2020, 20:03:29] Matt Hancock: Aargh!

[27/03/2020, 20:06:17] Helen Whately: I have policy guys working on ways to maintain services without allowing both pills at home eg could we use local GP combined with a telemedicine option to abortion specialist...though it's clear they don't favour this

[27/03/2020, 20:07:36] Helen Whately: I am also waiting for home office view on domestic abuse/coercion risk of both pills at home (my original concern about the proposal)

[27/03/2020, 20:08:09] Matt Hancock: Yes. But at least if we do move now it's because there's a real problem.

[27/03/2020, 20:08:38] Helen Whately: Indeed, rather than a worry about it.

[28/03/2020, 09:26:31] Matt Hancock: Shd we start a recruitment campaign to get those who have been infected working in care homes? Might this diminish chances of these awful scenes of 1/3 dying as it sweeps through? Im v worried re care homes in general -- lots of scope for fear on the ground leadign to v vulnerable left neglected?

[28/03/2020, 09:26:51] Matt Hancock: Just got this from Dom Cummings. Are we doing anything like this for now?

[28/03/2020, 09:34:32] Helen Whately: The team is working on a central recruitment campaign - and I'm told separately by care agencies that recruitment is going well. CST confirmed yesterday furloughed staff can top up pay eg working in care, which is helpful and needs to be more widely communicated. We definitely need to test care staff as soon as testing capacity allows: I'm expecting them to be in the prioritisation matrix James Bethell is overseeing. I am also wary of the NHS trying to force care homes to accept patients with Covid symptoms - and expecting to review discharge guidance this weekend.

[28/03/2020, 09:36:14] Helen Whately: The 2 big care sector risks we are working to reduce are 1. Covid

sweeping through a Care home and 2. Vulnerable elderly abandoned because care staff are sick/isolating (as in Spain)

[28/03/2020, 09:37:19] Matt Hancock: Yes. Shouldn't the recruitment campaign specifically target those who've had it and so are now immune?

[28/03/2020, 09:39:31] Helen Whately: It's a good idea - but until we have testing at scale, only a small number of people know if they've had. Loads of people are speculating that they have, but don't know for sure (I include myself!) Do you know when we'll have antibody testing?

[28/03/2020, 09:40:14] Matt Hancock: Couple of weeks. First large delivery arrives by 10 April

[28/03/2020, 09:42:36] Helen Whately: V helpful. Will factor that in. Would be v grateful for your help making sure social care gets a sensible share of capacity. NHS voice is so much louder, and people in the testing team have started out with the assumption that the majority should go to the NHS, even though more people work in care.

[28/03/2020, 09:43:25] Helen Whately: Good that Dom/no 10 is thinking about Care sector.

[28/03/2020, 09:52:21] Matt Hancock: Yes

[28/03/2020, 12:38:11] Helen Whately: I'm hearing hospices £ still not signed off and urgent. Can you help?

[28/03/2020, 12:44:16] Matt Hancock: Yes I've chased this morning

[28/03/2020, 13:18:38] Helen Whately: Excellent, thank you

[28/03/2020, 18:24:21] Helen Whately: Do you have sight of the methodology for allocating testing capacity? I am nervous the rationale for testing in social care will be overlooked, because it's being driven by NHS demand. Have asked to see it but nothing has come my way.

[28/03/2020, 18:34:45] Matt Hancock: - Any abortion will require a telephone or e-consultation with a doctor.

- This change will be made on a temporary basis only, and is time limited for two years, or until the crisis is over, on the same timetable as the emergency legislation. It is not permanent.

- This applies for medical abortions up to ten weeks, as it is currently.

[28/03/2020, 18:36:11] Helen Whately: Thx

[28/03/2020, 19:27:55] Helen Whately: I've spoken to Therese. She seems ok about it if not best pleased.

[28/03/2020, 19:46:15] Matt Hancock: Thank you

[30/03/2020, 12:10:09] Helen Whately: Hi. I'm told you're attending Michael's 1.30pm call today. Would you like me to join as usual vs v happy to leave you to do it. I find it is usually 5 mins useful for 55 mins listening each time.

[30/03/2020, 12:28:45] Matt Hancock: Your call!

[30/03/2020, 12:29:02] Matt Hancock: I'm going to stop him screwing things up on testing

[31/03/2020, 09:54:06] Matt Hancock: Hi **NR**

I've worked at Martin House for nearly 14 years and aware you worked here.

We have a current situation where a family want to be admitted for end of life care but their child has a temperature.

We are currently not taking children with covid 19 symptoms so therefore this child has to die at home.

If the child had a swab and was negative they could come to the hospice.

The swabs currently are not being used for this purpose and **I&S** have said they will not test the child and it's out of our hands.

If there is anything you can do to help it would be very much appreciated.

Kind regards

I&S

[31/03/2020, 09:54:28] Matt Hancock: From Stuart Andrew - can you call him? Do hospices need testing?

[08/04/2020, 11:26:25] Helen Whately: So no surprises (1) investigating reported serious covid breakout in a **I&S** nursing home (Jack Brereton believes 11 dead and staff refusing to work).

[08/04/2020, 11:28:33] Helen Whately: (2) lessons learned internationally suggest we should be testing all care home residents and staff who have had covid contact irrespective of symptoms. Have asked for guidance on action we should take based on this research (by LSE)

[08/04/2020, 12:46:24] Matt Hancock: I'm up for this and the capacity to do this is growing fast

[08/04/2020, 12:46:37] Helen Whately: Great

[09/04/2020, 20:53:58] Helen Whately: The team has made a start on the social care strategy. There will be a first cut with intro/objectives and structure (headings, main content points) for our call tmr.

[09/04/2020, 21:09:23] Matt Hancock: Brilliant. Key thing is the getting the policy right too

[09/04/2020, 21:18:06] Helen Whately: Noted

[09/04/2020, 21:18:44] Matt Hancock: You handled the interruption today brilliant btw

[09/04/2020, 21:19:53] Helen Whately: Thank you. Her timing was spectacular. Children 🧒

[09/04/2020, 21:20:31] Helen Whately: I'm afraid been sent first proper data on care home deaths just now and it's not good. Speaking to PHE, CQC and Ros tmr morning about it.

[09/04/2020, 21:23:35] Matt Hancock: Ok

[10/04/2020, 15:34:00] Helen Whately: Understood you're doing 5pm press conference...Care home deaths data may come up...we expect official ONS data on Tuesday will show a big jump in deaths. Also we now have data on deaths of residents in care homes but there is some double counting (includes some who have died in hospital) and non-Covid. It's not that we're not counting, it's that it's complicated. Changes to notifications will give us better data soon.

[10/04/2020, 15:36:14] Helen Whately: We are also investigating how Covid outbreaks are occurring in care homes - how covid is getting in & getting passed on. PHE has launched research.

[10/04/2020, 15:36:47] Matt Hancock: Thanks. Do you have briefing on the deaths data?

[10/04/2020, 15:36:54] Matt Hancock: Great

[10/04/2020, 15:39:46] Helen Whately: I've seen it and discussed it with Ros - no formal briefing. Comms are working on approach - with aim of transparency - but recognising bad headlines likely

[10/04/2020, 19:02:44] Matt Hancock: Amazing that social care didn't come up at all - but I got the announcement about testing out

[10/04/2020, 19:20:10] Helen Whately: Amazing - most journalists still don't know what it is?? Thanks for the social care testing announcement. Great job.

[10/04/2020, 19:47:27] Matt Hancock: You are doing amazing work on what is probably our hardest policy area

[10/04/2020, 19:48:38] Helen Whately: Thank you. Really grateful for your support. The extra focus last couple of days is already making a difference too.

[10/04/2020, 19:52:39] Matt Hancock: Let me know what you need and you will get it

[10/04/2020, 20:31:16] Helen Whately: Thank you. Will do.

[12/04/2020, 18:15:30] Helen Whately: My PO tell me you're discussing the social care strategy with Dominic Raab tmr. Do let me know if there's anything else you need from me. Discharge process, testing & PPE still top priorities, then workforce (with parity vs what we do for NHS workforce as a guiding principle) and getting funding to providers (do we need a way of clawing back...). Still lacking transparency on what £ is actually reaching them. And want to see more focus on social care in govt comms. Hope you've had a little bit of family time...and just say any way I can help. H

[12/04/2020, 18:17:37] Matt Hancock: Yes. You should join the meeting

[12/04/2020, 18:17:51] Matt Hancock: Have you managed to progress the key policy decisions?

[12/04/2020, 18:23:11] Helen Whately: Thank you. Would like to.

[12/04/2020, 18:25:13] Helen Whately: I have given my view on them (& also asked for further work on a some) - but not sure I've quite understood the Q, have you got a couple of minutes to speak?

[12/04/2020, 18:28:53] Matt Hancock: I've asked for you to be invited

[13/04/2020, 09:12:18] Matt Hancock: Just in case you didn't get them: 9.45: **Irrelevant & Sensitive**

Irrelevant & Sensitive

[13/04/2020, 09:17:00] Helen Whately: Thank you!

[13/04/2020, 09:27:02] Matt Hancock: It's starting early - now I think

[13/04/2020, 09:37:44] Helen Whately: I am waiting to be let in.

[13/04/2020, 10:03:58] Matt Hancock: you happy with where this has got to?

[13/04/2020, 10:16:07] Helen Whately: The discharge policy my biggest concern

[07/07/2020, 17:41:50] Matt Hancock: it rings a bell so she may already know. But we've had trouble with different parts of govt sending people in in a malcoordinated way...

[07/07/2020, 17:42:36] Helen Whately: Indeed!

[07/07/2020, 17:44:20] Matt Hancock: This message was deleted.

[09/07/2020, 09:47:11] Matt Hancock: I've emailed the slides to Flower Magnolia

[09/07/2020, 10:16:49] Matt Hancock: <https://www.carehomeprofessional.com/european-survey-reveals-england-has-lowest-rate-of-covid-19-care-home-deaths/>

[09/07/2020, 10:17:33] Helen Whately: Thx

[09/07/2020, 14:36:03] Matt Hancock: When are we going to reallocate visiting in care homes?

[09/07/2020, 14:50:23] Helen Whately: Do you mean - when will we publish the new visiting policy?

[09/07/2020, 15:25:26] Matt Hancock: Yes. I've just announced it

[09/07/2020, 16:21:24] Helen Whately: Great. We really do need to get it out ASAP.

[09/07/2020, 16:32:04] Matt Hancock: I've said we will publish "in the next few days". When can it go?

[09/07/2020, 17:01:19] Helen Whately: They have told me 1 August! I have said NO that is far too late. Your public commitment to next few days is v helpful

[09/07/2020, 17:11:15] Matt Hancock: When do we publish?

[09/07/2020, 21:59:25] Helen Whately: I'm due a new draft tomorrow. But I'm told we need no 10 sign off and they are apparently nervous and may delay.

[09/07/2020, 22:01:06] Matt Hancock: Fine

[10/07/2020, 11:26:44] Helen Whately: I have flagged to Chris W than I think we urgently need to address the Ros situ. She is brilliant but she just hasn't been present for the last 2 weeks. We appointed a DG for social care because it needs one. That's still the case!

[10/07/2020, 11:59:18] Matt Hancock: Ok

[13/07/2020, 18:20:23] Helen Whately: We have received a PHE update on the new care home outbreaks - some were not reported before, some are from blanket testing and some are 'suspected but not confirmed'. I find their report frustratingly vague and dismissive about new outbreaks. I have asked for a proper breakdown of how many fit into each of the categories above, going down to named individual care homes, and want to adopt a 'zero tolerance' approach to covid in care homes. Every single outbreak should be treated as a problem requiring immediate action and investigation.

[13/07/2020, 20:08:13] Matt Hancock: Totally agree. We should have zero tolerance for both covid and crap data. Remember: PHE described Leicester to me as "progressing positively" 4 days before lockdown. It was only because I blew up at that imprecision that they acted

[13/07/2020, 20:48:12] Helen Whately: I remember that!

[14/07/2020, 16:42:20] Helen Whately: Just to flag - I'm feeling uncomfortable that apparently DHSC staff have had a £100 covid bonus but NHS and social care staff at the frontline have not. Surely that's going to give us a backlash.

[14/07/2020, 16:47:52] Matt Hancock: First I've heard of it

[14/07/2020, 16:53:39] Helen Whately: Apparently it's going to be vouchers rather than cash but struck me as potentially tricky.

[14/07/2020, 18:51:27] Helen Whately: I'm due to get an update on the care homes outbreaks data from phe imminently

[14/07/2020, 20:27:21] Helen Whately: PHE have revised down the figures. On the one hand this is good because it indicates we don't have a sudden increase in outbreaks. On the other, it gives me even less confidence in PHE. I have asked for an explanation for the revision of each data point. I have also asked to be given info about each and every outbreak - care home name, location, nature of outbreak, number of cases etc, given that we should be down to zero new outbreaks now

[14/07/2020, 20:48:45] Matt Hancock: Yes thanks. Totally agree

[15/07/2020, 20:31:42] Helen Whately: Latest outbreak reporting includes PHE statement that 'some incursion of infection [in care homes] is inevitable...' They are so much part of the problem! But I am working on it.

[17/07/2020, 12:03:34] Matt Hancock: What do we need to get out of the social care meeting later?

[17/07/2020, 12:11:25] Helen Whately: Insight into the ongoing new outbreaks - what's the cause, what action is being taken [plus a clear process on what happens when a care home has a suspected case - including reporting to us]; a commitment from PHE on providing 'live cases' data; agree direction of travel on infection control fund rollover; ensure the team has a proper process to develop ASC winter plan eg clear objectives, engagement with providers & LAs & NHS on their roles, challenge sessions