



Department of Health & Social Care

- David Paine (SOLACE): we have concerns for safety and staff.
 - o Anna: one of the key risks we have been looking at is whether limiting movement impacts on staff levels.
- Is there a potential to use lateral flow testing?
 - o Anna: we still don't have the clinical advice to rely on lateral flow testing here. It will enhance and reduce the risk, but it doesn't eliminate risk altogether.
- Martin Green (Care England): will this cover things like hospitals? What are "care settings"? Where are the boundaries?
 - o Anna: this policy is about care home providers, about restriction movement of people who work in these settings providing close care to residents. They may work in other settings (i.e. hospitals) so they may be affected this way.
- Caroline Abrahams (Age UK): this strikes me as another example of risk balancing, between reducing transmission amongst staff and making sure settings are properly staffed. Why are we pressing ahead with this when we have such promising news about a vaccine?
 - o MSC: absolutely take those points on board and we are looking at the responses to the consultation.
 - o We will weigh up the options in lights of new developments, i.e. the vaccine.
 - o However, the level of concern around this consultation is striking and makes me wonder how many staff are moving between settings. The guidance has been to not to this (except where unavoidable) for a long time.
 - o David Pearson (DHSC): Vivaldi research shows that you're three times more likely to have outbreaks amongst staff if there is movement, so we need to deal with this.
 - o I am confident about staff levels considering the exceptions in the guidance.
 - o The vaccine hasn't been rolled out yet, we're optimistic but we're not there yet. Until then, we need to do everything we can to secure the safety of staff and residents.

Care Homes visiting pilot

- Jane gave an update on the care homes testing pilot.
- Overall the pilots are going well and staff are reporting that the impacts of allowing visiting are positive and significant.
- We have had some feedback around the communications and guidance, which has been super helpful
- We have had some feedback that it is very time consuming and quite complex, e.g. monitoring the 30 minutes before you get a result
- We've asked for more detail on what additional capacity it would take to roll it out more widely
- Care homes must manage the logistics, i.e. how many come in to be tested, where do they wait, etc. We also need to be clear with relatives that they can't go in all the time as well, balanced with allowing as many as possible safely.