

Message

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Sent: 28/12/2020 14:50:11
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Subject: RE: 9.45am - Plan for the Week call [OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE]

Emma,

Thanks for this. A few of us spoke to the PM after the schools meeting just now. Alex will read out separately on that.

On the overall strategy, the PM is extremely keen to see an overall timeline for the coming months, and our best understanding of what the forward projections look like across the range of factors that he needs to consider in balancing the judgements. This should include:

- A good granular assessment of the spread of the virus now, and a range (with appropriate confidence intervals given uncertainty of the new variant) how this could develop over the next two months in terms of cases and deaths. In particular, how quickly could a low part of the country become a high part of the country given what we know about how much the virus has been seeded (e.g. if it were to follow the path that Kent took during the national lockdown in November). Where quantitative assessment is not feasible at this stage, can we find a way of giving the best judgement possible from CMO/CSA in a way that Ministers understand the potential scenarios here. Can we include the latest best thinking from SPI-M and others on this too. [This obviously plays into decisions about different regions, including the option for a regional approach on schools.]
- What is the current situation on NHS capacity, how is this going to evolve in the coming weeks, including standing up the Nightingales
- Assuming AZ sign-off this week, what proportion of the vulnerable list will have been i) vaccinated and ii) have some immunity (i.e. vaccinated + time lag) by mid Jan, end Jan, mid Feb and end Feb. We should cover some of this in the vaccines meeting tomorrow but it'll be crucial in terms of substantiating CMO's point that we are looking at an end-Feb timeline here for a v significant proportion being protected.

Imran has shared a spreadsheet model that brings together some of these variables. Not necessarily for tomorrow, but can we develop our own version of this asap this week so that we can illustrate the scenarios (and uncertainties) to the PM, and how they evolve.

We also need to develop two lead options on schools specifically: the DfE proposal and the best alternative which is a sharper articulation of what the Health Sec / CDL were pushing for [e.g. (a) primary in; (b) exam years in from 18th but must all be tested once a week; (c) others delayed to after half term; with a variant option of doing (c) only in Tier 4). DfE also need to stack up their delivery plans as discussed in the meeting earlier today.