



27.04.2020

KEY ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Health Secretary, Matt Hancock, led tonight's government announcement.

Mr Hancock was joined by Professor Chris Witty, England's chief medical officer, and Stephen Powis, the Medical Director of NHS England. The focus of the government's announcements and journalists' questions was on when lockdown may be lifted and the support for NHS staff.

The main announcements this evening were:

- Mr Hancock announced that the Government is setting up a life assurance scheme for NHS and social care frontline staff. Families of staff who die from coronavirus will receive a £60,000 payment.
- UK is on track to hit its target of 100,000 tests by the end of the month.
- Starting tomorrow, NHS services will be restored for cancer care and mental health support.
- The total number of hospital deaths in the UK has reached 21,092.
- Mr Hancock states that it is too early to discuss re-opening of schools.

Elsewhere in Covid-19 news....

Earlier today, the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, gave his first statement since leaving hospital. Mr Johnson stated that it was too early to consider re-opening the country and the economy. Concerns remained that a second wave of the spread of the virus could be more deadly than the first.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

BUSINESS/CYBER

1. Lord Neuberger calls for 'breathing space' for companies facing claims arising out of coronavirus

The suggestion is that the UK should consider offering temporary relief to specified businesses and individuals unable to fulfil their contractual obligations because of COVID-19. This would have the benefit of reducing heavy litigation and substantial backlogs in the court system, but it raises concerns that companies may avoid fulfilling their obligations under contracts even when they are able to comply. The common law has existing principles, such as force majeure, which offer some protection to companies unable to fulfil their contractual obligations.

2. Government issue fresh advice on how businesses can protect themselves against fraud and cyber crime

Cybercrime continues to be a threat to businesses, especially as more work is carried out virtually and data is stored and transferred electronically. Businesses are reminded to remain vigilant and report any concerns to Action Fraud.

DISCLAIMER

The above is not intended to be legal advice. Specialist advice should be sought for individual cases where necessary.

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