

Five tests that will determine UK Covid response

The Government has outlined five tests that remain key when determining the strategy to manage the UK's Covid response and any exit from the current 'lockdown'. They state that we must:

1. continue to boost NHS capacity, preventing it from being overwhelmed.
2. see a sustained and consistent fall in the number of deaths.
3. see further reductions in the rate of infection to manageable levels, across all the relevant areas and settings.
4. be confident that the NHS will be able to cope with future demands, including as a result of any changes to existing measures or new measures we need to take.
5. be confident that any adjustments to the current measures will not risk a second peak of infections that could overwhelm the NHS.

Delivering yesterday's daily coronavirus press conference, Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said: "A second spike would be harmful to public health, resulting in many more deaths from Covid-19. That itself would lead to a second lockdown, inflicting further prolonged economic pain on the country."

Government ramps up on Covid-19 testing

The Government has announced a major [new programme of home testing for coronavirus](#) to track the progress of the infection across England.

In the first part of the Real-time Assessment of Community Transmission (REACT-1) programme, 100,000 randomly selected people from 315 local authorities across England will be invited to provide nose and throat swabs, which will be tested for antigens indicating the presence of the virus. This kind of test looks for evidence that someone is currently infected with the coronavirus.

In the second part of the programme (REACT-2), a number of different antibody tests will be assessed for their accuracy and ease of use at home.

The programme forms part of the government's [COVID-19 testing strategy](#)

CBI Survey highlights car dealers as having a tough time

April's monthly health check of high street and online sales from the CBI reported that two-thirds of businesses had been adversely affected by the pandemic and almost all said they were experiencing cashflow problems.

Wholesalers and car dealers – also covered by the survey – had an even tougher start to the lockdown than retailers.

The CBI said 79% of retailers were suffering from an annual fall in business against 11% reporting an increase, but every one of the 24 motor traders surveyed said activity was down.

According to the survey, which was carried out between 27 March and 15 April:
67% of retailers said the Covid-19 outbreak was having a significant negative impact on their sales.
39% of retailers reported a total shutdown of UK activity due to the outbreak.
44% of retailers reported furloughing staff, while 8% reported permanent staff layoffs.
96% of retailers reported cashflow difficulties, with 40% facing difficulties meeting tax liabilities. A further 31% of retailers also faced constraints on the availability of external finance.

Private sector will carry deep scars following lockdown

The National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR) says that Britain's economy is likely to lose out on £800bn of income over the next 10 years as the lockdown and a spike in unemployment leave deep scars on the private sector.

The thinktank expects the economy to bounce back next year, but not to its previous level and with the unemployment rate still above 5% after hitting 10.5% this year.

A second peak in the coronavirus outbreak or a prolonged shutdown into the summer would add between a third and a half more to the loss of income this year, NIESR added.

NIESR estimates that the global economy will shrink by 3.5% compared with just 0.5% following the financial crash in 2008, before bouncing back by 7% next year.

The BVRLA website is updated daily with Covid-19 Business advice and information

As well as receiving these Covid-19 Bulletin emails, members are also reminded that the BVRLA website contains a dedicated [Covid-19 Business Advice section](#) hosting all the latest information as well as the previous Covid-19 Bulletins that have been issued since they launched on 17 March.