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The Independent Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE)

The Independent SAGE Report 14

Measures to avoid a national lockdown

An emergency ten point plan

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Submitted to The UK Government and the People of Great Britain
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MEASURES TO AVOID A NATIONAL LOCKDOWN AN EMERGENCY TEN POINT PLAN

We are in a crisis. Infections and hospital admissions are rapidly increasing. The testing system has broken down and it will be weeks before it is sorted. If nothing changes, there will come a point soon when the situation is so far out of control that the only possible response will be a second national lockdown and our lives will be completely disrupted once again. No one wants this to happen. But we can only avoid it if we take urgent action.

We must take action immediately to regain control of the pandemic and drive down infections now. The virus will continue to pose a threat for months, if not years, but for now we need a comprehensive plan that includes measures that we can take immediately and a strategy to rebuild our broken test and trace system. And we must all - government, employers and public alike – take responsibility for our own part in making this plan work.

The Government has abdicated its responsibility to provide such a plan. Independent SAGE is therefore providing its own guidance on what we recommend as effective measures.

IMMEDIATE MEASURES (to be reviewed, as appropriate, when a functional testing system is in place and infections are back under control)

1. Pubs and restaurants limited to outdoor service.
2. Work at home if possible. No return to workplaces until certified COVID safe. Provide financial support to employees in the interim.
3. Fund schools to allow smaller, socially distanced classes. Provide digital resources for all students and teachers for study/work at home.
4. No in-person teaching at Colleges and Universities
5. Limit indoor social interaction to a bubble of three households
6. Create an emergency fund in each local authority area and provide wrap around support for all those needing to shield or self-isolate (including those unable to get tested)
7. Re-establish the 2 metre distance rule.

A STRATEGY FOR BUILDING A FUNCTIONAL TESTING SYSTEM

8. Rebuild the testing system based on tried and trusted local authority, NHS and public health structures, including recruiting and deploying contact tracers locally
9. Provide clear consistent messaging about testing and other protective measures that is culturally competent and accessible to all sections of the community
10. Establish a clear strategy and set of priorities for symptomatic and asymptomatic testing

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Following the science