



DR DAN POULTER MP

Member of Parliament for Central Suffolk and North Ipswich

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At the time of my writing, the Prime Minister has addressed the nation once more and we find ourselves living under further restrictions, with the current advice being to stay at home to stop the spread of coronavirus.

Whilst there is no doubt that in fighting the old variant of the virus, our collective efforts were working, but we now face the added challenge of the new strain of the virus, which is between 50% and 70% more transmissible. This new strain has led to a rapid surge in infections, hospital admissions and increased case rates across the country, including here in Suffolk.

If we are to protect our NHS and in turn, ourselves and our loved ones, we must all play our part and follow the guidance so that our NHS can focus on the herculean task of delivering the critical vaccination programme. It is the vaccination that will finally free us from this virus and the restrictions it brings to all our daily lives

Vaccinations have already begun here in Suffolk and I have been lobbying Ministers and Public Health colleagues to ensure that we have adequate site provision here in Central Suffolk and North Ipswich. Our public health team and NHS colleagues here in Suffolk are working tirelessly to deliver the vaccines as quickly and efficiently as possible, to those most in need and I would echo their plea to ask residents not to block phone lines to GP surgeries or hospitals enquiring about when the vaccine might be available – residents will be contacted directly, in turn, and invited to attend their nearest site for vaccination.

Whilst I and indeed, our Prime Minister, understand just how frustrating this latest lockdown is, it is vital that we all continue to take the necessary precautions to protect ourselves and those most vulnerable in our communities and to slow the spread of the virus. Again, I would like to thank each and every one of you who are continuing to play your part and following the rules – we're all in this together and the sooner we stick with it, the sooner we can start to return to normal.

It is vital that throughout lockdown, we continue to protect jobs and our local economy, and the Chancellor has unveiled further financial support for businesses and individuals. Locally, the **Suffolk Support and Advice Line** can help with financial and employment advice - **0800 068 3131**. In addition, the **Home But Not Alone** free phonenumber, supporting the most vulnerable in our communities is available via **0800 876 6926**. Both lines are staffed from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

As your MP, I shall always work hard for the people of Central Suffolk and North Ipswich and if there is anything I can help with, please get in touch via www.drdanielpoulter.co.uk