

Nadhim Zahawi MP  
Minister for COVID Vaccine Deployment

*By email*

22 July 2021

Dear Minister,

**State-backed indemnity to support COVID-19 vaccinations**

I was surprised and concerned to learn that community pharmacists providing COVID-19 vaccinations will no longer be covered by state-backed indemnity insurance as part of the Phase 3 roll-out and will be asked to bear this additional cost themselves.<sup>1</sup>

Pharmacists across the country have been integral to making the vaccination programme a success, and have helped build the foundation for loosening COVID-19 restrictions and allowing the country to return to a sense of freedom.

Just as the Government is looking to widen uptake of vaccinations, expecting community pharmacists to now start paying for their own indemnity insurance is an extraordinary position. This creates an unnecessary and avoidable barrier to boosting the number of vaccinators and is inequitable with other health professions.

The entire pharmacy profession was appalled when community pharmacists were left out from the COVID-19 death in service benefits announced in April last year.<sup>2</sup> It is incredibly disappointing to be revisiting this kind of issue now.

We welcomed the state-backed indemnity scheme for community pharmacists during the previous phases of COVID-19 vaccine rollout and this should continue.

Pharmacists have been on the frontline of COVID-19 from the outset, delivering patient care in the most challenging of circumstances. They should not now be asked to pay personally out of their own pocket to help deliver this national ambition on vaccinations.

I'd urge you to look into this as soon as possible to treat pharmacists fairly, maximise their role in delivering COVID-19 vaccinations, and help the country build back better.

Yours sincerely,



Thorrun Govind  
Chair, English Pharmacy Board  
Royal Pharmaceutical Society

<sup>1</sup> [www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/publication/community-pharmacy-local-enhanced-service-specification-phase-3-coronavirus-vaccination/](https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/publication/community-pharmacy-local-enhanced-service-specification-phase-3-coronavirus-vaccination/)

<sup>2</sup> [www.rpharms.com/about-us/news/details/RPS-calls-on-governments-to-provide-death-in-service-benefits-to-pharmacists](https://www.rpharms.com/about-us/news/details/RPS-calls-on-governments-to-provide-death-in-service-benefits-to-pharmacists)



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