



Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster
and Minister for the Cabinet Office
Cabinet Office 70 Whitehall London
SW1A 2AS

Rachel Reeves MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Our reference: MC2020/04274

22 April 2020

Dear Rachel,

I would like to welcome you to your new role and to thank you for your letters of 18 and 22 April.

Like you, I recognise the enormous contribution which frontline workers across our NHS and the social care sector are making in the national effort to tackle the virus. I would also highlight the tremendous efforts made by other healthcare professionals - beyond the doctors and nurses you name - including cleaners, pharmacists, hospital porters, ambulance drivers, paramedics and so many more. This Government applauds all of them.

You ask specifically about Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Since the start of this crisis, officials have been working tirelessly to ensure that those in the NHS, social care and other public services have access to the equipment and support they need to deal with the effects of COVID-19. The Government has established and expanded teams, working literally day and night, in the UK but also in key markets for PPE procurement, above all China.

Supplying PPE at this time of unprecedented crisis is inevitably a significant challenge. It is a global problem which affects all our neighbours, across Europe.

I am grateful, like you, that so many British companies have come forward offering to contribute to our national effort. So far over 28,000 offers have been received from businesses of all kinds of medical and non-medical support for Government and the NHS, from help procuring and making PPE, through to logistics, and accommodation for workers.

I am sure you agree that it is crucial that officials are able to prioritise their work effectively by triaging offers of support. They must focus on those companies that can helpfully contribute to the national effort. So far over a billion pieces of PPE have now been delivered to the frontline and - while no one is under any illusion that there is not far more to do - I am glad that you join me in paying tribute to the outstanding work of officials, the NHS, and the UK military, which has resulted in this.

It is the Department for Health and Social Care which leads on the overall question of PPE supply. But as you would expect, the Cabinet Office are closely involved in many aspects of this work, including by providing a mailbox and web portal for business offering support, and by assisting DHSC and NHS officials carrying out procurement.

There are other questions in your letter to which I will make sure you receive a specific reply as soon as practicable. Once again, thank you for taking the time to get in touch.

With every good wish,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Gove". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" and the last name "Gove" clearly distinguishable.

**Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster
and Minister for the Cabinet Office**