

**Rt Hon Alok Sharma**  
Secretary of State  
Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy  
1 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0ET

03 April 2020

Dear Secretary of State,

You will of course be aware of the incredible efforts that healthcare workers across the country are going to in order to treat their patients and help our country lead the fight against COVID-19. These efforts, however, are being made in the face of an unacceptable shortage of supply and availability of personal protective equipment (PPE). We have sadly seen the impact of this across the world where doctors left exposed whilst caring for patients without adequate PPE, have succumbed to the virus. Tragically we are now seeing this at home with the deaths of our own doctors.

While the government has stated it currently has an adequate stockpile of supplies, given the likelihood of a prolonged duration of the COVID pandemic, we believe this will not be sufficient and could result in serious risk to our frontline workforce being unprotected in the weeks and months to come. Given the global shortage of PPE, we believe it is vital that we dramatically scale up production of protective equipment from within the UK immediately to prevent a catastrophic depletion of supplies in the near future.

That is why, today, the BMA has joined with fellow trade unions Unite, Unison and the Royal College of Nursing and industry federations ADS Group and the British Printing Industries Federation, to call on the government to take the necessary action for current furloughed or underutilised manufacturing capacity across the UK to be repurposed to produce desperately needed PPE. This equipment will be vital for the NHS, social care and other frontline workers across UK industry.

Industry stands ready and willing to play their part, using skills and expertise from across sectors to increased domestic production and assist existing manufacturers that are unable to cope with current levels of demand or secure essential supplies, materials and components. Doctors and other healthcare workers are risking their lives to battle against this virus. The government must take every possible measure it can to provide them with the protection they require.

I hope the government will heed this call to protect NHS staff when they need it most.



Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the name 'Chaand Nagpaul' written in a cursive style. The first name 'Chaand' is written in a larger, more prominent script, and the last name 'Nagpaul' is written below it.

**Dr Chaand Nagpaul CBE**

BMA council chair

cc. Rt Hon Matt Hancock, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care