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Sent: Via e-mail

Matthew Rycroft
Permanent Secretary
Home Office

8 April 2020

Dear Matthew

Many members have contacted PCS outraged over comments made by the HMPO Chief Operating Officer and the Home Office deputy chief scientific advisor at a HMPO dial-in yesterday.

PCS strongly encourage you to listen to the full recording of the meeting to hear what was said. In brief the line that was put to staff was:

- Covid 19 is something we can't avoid, we are all going to get it at some point. It's about having a strong NHS when you do get it.
- There has been no distinction between critical and non-critical work, it's perfectly okay to continue with your business, it is vital that you do for the supply chain and economy.
- The risk to staff is no greater whilst going to work than remaining at home.
- Staff working in London are at no increased risk than anywhere else in the country. The probability of encountering Covid-19 is uniform throughout the country.
- We are in for the long haul, there could be numerous peaks over months and years. Life is never going to be normal again!
- Covid-19 is something that humanity is going to have to live with and manage, not something we can squash or eliminate.
- We need to slow down the spread, not stop it, the anxiety this causes shouldn't be shielded away from
- You are not putting yourself in harm's way by going to work

PCS fervently disagree with the position put forward by the HMPO COO and scientific advisor at this meeting. Many members have rightly expressed anger with the assertion that our members are at the forefront of the government's next stage of virus control. That is, the deliberate infection of them. We find this shocking as it amounts to next stage herd immunity! This is an absolutely outrageous position to be putting staff in.

We call for an immediate suspension of the HMPO work plans and a halt bringing staff back into HMPO offices. This is to allow discussions at the highest level with PCS on an agreement that puts the safety of staff at the forefront of HMPO plans.

We request you set out in writing to PCS the official Home Office position in relation to containing the spread of covid-19 and the protection of staff from contracting the virus. We

also call on the Home Office to publically distance themselves from the comments made by the deputy chief scientific advisor.

We look forward to your swift response on this serious matter.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MJ', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mike Jones
PCS Home Office Group Secretary