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# Covid-19: Government must reduce social mixing after lockdown, says BMA

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The UK government must learn from the first wave of covid-19 and discourage social mixing after lockdown ends to prevent another surge in infections, the BMA has said.

The association warned that lifting lockdown without new measures in place risked leaving hospitals and GP practices overwhelmed.

In a report published on 18 November,<sup>1</sup> the BMA called for new measures to bridge the time between the planned end of lockdown in England, on 2 December, and an effective vaccine programme getting underway.

These included replacing the “rule of six,” which allowed no more than six people to meet up, with a “two households” rule to reduce social mixing, and banning travel between or across different local tiers of restrictions.

There should be no return to encouraging people to “go back to the office” when it’s possible to work from home, the report said, and targeted support should also be provided for clinically extremely vulnerable people and communities hit hardest by the pandemic.

The BMA also called for a range of measures before lockdown ends, including wide scale reform to the testing and contact tracing programme.

The BMA chair of council, Chaand Nagpaul, said, “When the first lockdown ended, there was no coherent plan for keeping covid-19 at bay, no clear and simple public messaging; this was followed by spiralling infection rates, more businesses failing, new ‘local’ lockdowns, and now we have a death toll at more than 52,000.

“As England prepares to exit its second lockdown, it is unthinkable that we make the same mistakes again because this time, the impact will be far worse.”

<sup>1</sup> BMA. Exiting the lockdown: a strategy for sustainably controlling the transmission of covid-19 in England. 2020. [www.bma.org.uk/media/3536/bma-exiting-covid-lockdown-3-phase-strategy-nov-2020.pdf](http://www.bma.org.uk/media/3536/bma-exiting-covid-lockdown-3-phase-strategy-nov-2020.pdf).

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