

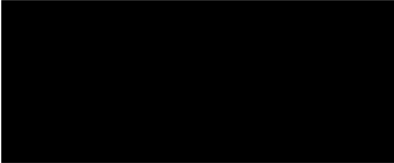


Rehman Chishti MP  
*Member of Parliament for Gillingham and Rainham*

House of Commons  
London SW1A 0AA

Tel: 020 7219 7075  
Email: rehman.chishti.mp@parliament.uk

Anne Eden  
Regional Director (South East)



28 January 2021

Dear Anne,

**Re: Request for a mass Covid-19 vaccination centre in Medway & Gillingham Football Club offer to host site**

We are writing to you as the local Members of Parliament in the Medway Unitary Authority regarding our request for a mass Covid-19 vaccination centre in Medway, further to our representations we have previously made on this matter.

You will recall on the NHS England and NHS Improvement briefing call on the Covid-19 vaccination programme in the South East, on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> January, that we raised this matter with you.

As you put it on that call, Medway has been one of the hardest hit areas by Covid-19 in the country. Kent is also where the mutant variant of Covid-19 was first discovered, and our local area is one of the most densely populated areas outside of London. Furthermore, North Kent has some of the highest health inequalities in the country.

In line with the factors above and the demographics of the area, it is vital that there is a mass vaccination centre in Medway so that our constituents can receive the vaccine as easily and quickly as possible.

Yesterday, Rehman raised this point with the Prime Minister in the House of Commons. Please find his question and the Prime Minister's answer copied below for your information:

**Rehman Chishti MP:** *"I thank the Prime Minister and the Government for all their hard work in these difficult and challenging times with regard to the delivery of the covid-19 vaccination. However, my constituents in Gillingham and Rainham and the wider-Medway towns would like me, as their Member of Parliament, to raise their concerns with regard to the availability of the vaccine in our local towns. I have constituents who are in their 80s and 90s who have not yet had the vaccination. Medway was one of the hardest-hit areas in the country, the mutant variant was discovered in Kent, and North Kent has some of the highest health inequalities in the country. Will the Prime Minister please ensure that we have a mass vaccination centre in Medway?"*



**The Prime Minister:** *“I share my hon. Friend’s sense of frustration about the pace of the vaccine roll-out. In spite of the fact that we have the fastest roll-out anywhere in Europe, it is entirely right that a constituency MP should want to see more done as fast as possible. I can tell my hon. Friend that we have vaccinated more than 80% of those over 80 across the country, and we are certainly looking at establishing a large-scale vaccination centre near him. In his immediate vicinity, we have done 127,000 vaccines already, providing the hope of long-term immunity for the people of Medway and Gillingham and Rainham.”*

Rehman has spoken with Paul Scally, the Chairman of Gillingham Football Club, which is at the heart of the local community and has previously assisted with Covid-19 testing last year. Mr Scally has offered Gillingham Football Club’s stadium, Priestfield Stadium, as a site for a mass vaccination centre.

We ask that you please consider Mr Scally’s offer of a site for a mass vaccination centre. If this site isn’t suitable, we would be supportive of other suitable sites provided they are in Medway and are easily accessible to the needs of our local community. With regards to identifying other sites in Medway, we would welcome your constructive engagement with Medway Council.

We are also copying into this letter the offices of the Prime Minister, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Wilf Williams from Kent & Medway CCG, Neil Davies from Medway Council and Gillingham Football Club.

We look forward to hearing from you on this important matter.

Kind regards,

Rehman Chishti MP

Member of Parliament for  
Gillingham & Rainham

Kelly Tolhurst MP

Member of Parliament for  
Rochester & Strood

Tracey Crouch MP

Member of Parliament for  
Chatham & Aylesford