



Rt Hon Steven Barclay MP
Secretary of State for Health & Social Care

2 November 2022

Dear Secretary of State,

The health professional organisations and experts who constitute CAPA would like to congratulate you on your appointment as Secretary of State for Health and Social Care.

There can be few times in living memory when a Minister took up an appointment in health where decisive leadership was more needed and we are confident that you will be motivated to provide this.

To this end, we invite you to make one commitment which will relieve pressure on the workforces in health and social care, improve staff retention and reduce sickness levels so that increased demand from patients and the capacity to deliver priorities for the overstretched NHS and social care can be met as we approach winter and beyond.

At present, there is no clear statement of obligation that effective respiratory protection equipment to the level of FFP3 or equivalent must be provided to those workers in contact with patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19. This has resulted in confusion and inconsistency.

We are therefore asking you to confirm that you will ensure that all health and social care employers and regulatory authorities are required to give this level of protection to all those at risk. Only the UK's Secretary of State can settle this matter and end the postcode lottery of protection for our workers.

Whilst we welcome the ongoing roll out of the vaccination programme for COVID-19, risks still remain.

The ability to adequately control COVID-19 (and other seasonal respiratory illnesses) on health and social care capacity rests on the ability of staff to protect themselves and their patients against infection in all health and care settings, and in particular, airborne transmission. Evidence shows that only FFP3 level protection, for which there is no current shortage, can have this definitive impact without more stringent social restrictions.

We look forward to a positive response.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Barry Jones MD FRCP, Chair of CAPA -Covid Airborne Protection Alliance

*CAPA

- ARTP - Association for Respiratory Technology & Physiology
- BAPEN – British Association for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition
- BIASP – British and Irish Association of Stroke Physicians
- BDA – British Dietetic Association
- BOHS - British Occupational Health Society
- BSG - British Society of Gastroenterology
- College of Paramedics
- CSP – Chartered Society of Physiotherapy
- FreshAir NHS
- GMB Union
- HCSA - Hospital Consultants and Specialists Association
- MSDUK Med Supply Drive UK
- NNNG - National Nurses Nutrition Group
- QNI - Queen’s Nursing Institute
- RCSLT – Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists
- Unite the Union
- Doctors Association UK
- Trident H&S