

The Rt Hon George Osborne  
Chancellor of the Exchequer  
HM Treasury  
1 Horse Guards Road, SW1A 2HQ

23<sup>rd</sup> September 2015

Dear Chancellor

**RE: Preserving the UK's immunisation programme in the 2015 Spending Review**

In 1796 Edward Jenner developed vaccination in its modern form. Since then, the UK's commitment to vaccination has saved more lives and prevented disease to a greater degree than any other modern medical advance.

Our national immunisation programme is considered to be one of the best in the world. However, as immunologists we are extremely concerned that cuts to the public health budget in the forthcoming Spending Review may jeopardise this status. NHS spending is of course protected, but public health forms a critical role in supporting the planning and implementation of immunisation programmes (including procurement) and the roll out of new vaccines.

**Although we understand that savings must be made in the national budget, failure to safeguard and build upon the current platform is counter-productive and would seriously compromise our ability to protect communities from infectious disease.**

The UK has a strong record of investing in immunological research and the roll-out of new treatments as novel or improved vaccines become available. Many lives have been saved from inoculation against diseases which were once major killers. Today's new vaccines against pneumococcal disease, meningococcal disease, shingles, and HPV have set new standards in the way we protect vulnerable groups against illness, disability, and at times death.

Moreover, the recent example of Ebola demonstrates the need for commitment to advance and sustain development of vaccine technologies against emerging and re-emerging infections of epidemic potential. We recognise the £20m pledge by the Government to tackle this issue but believe further investment is critical in supporting UK science against these threats.

The Spending Review is an opportunity for the Government to underline its commitment to science, public health and immunisation. The public health budget is a vital pillar in supporting the implementation of these programmes by the NHS. So too is the public funding which supports cross-disciplinary research, an essential investment for the UK and for the patients of today and tomorrow. We strongly urge the Government to protect this spending to sustain the successful delivery and development of these and future programmes.

Yours sincerely,



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