

DHSC is consulting on extending the provision of free, COVID-19 PPE beyond March 2022

The Department of Health and Social Care has launched a public consultation on extending free PPE to the health and care sector beyond 31st March 2022. The consultation will close on the 31st October 2021.

The Department is committed to providing free, COVID-19 PPE until 31st March 2022. It is considering whether to extend the provision of free PPE beyond its current end date.

DHSC welcomes the views of health and care providers



Reasons for the consultation

In response to COVID-19, DHSC is **committed to providing this central, free provision of COVID-19 PPE** until 31st March 2022.

Given current case numbers and guidance, we **expect PPE usage to remain at COVID-19 levels beyond March 2022** putting significant upward pressure on health and care costs in the next financial year. We have sufficient stock centrally to continue to support providers to meet their COVID-19 PPE needs. The Department is therefore considering whether to extend the provision of free PPE beyond its current end date of 31st March 2022. **This consultation will inform the Department's decision.**

Supporting our front-line health and care staff is our priority. However, the Department recognises that continuing to intervene in the PPE market in the UK could have a negative impact on the businesses who operate in this market. We therefore **welcome views from a broad range of stakeholders** on extending the current free provision to ensure we make a well-balanced and considered decision.

Scope of the consultation



The consultation covers **all health and care settings**. This includes NHS Trusts/Foundation trusts, community health and care services, dentists and orthodontists, general practice, pharmacists, optometrists, mental health services, palliative and end of life care (including hospices), and adult social care.

There are non-health and care settings who currently receive the free, central provision but these are out of scope of this consultation.

What will happen with the outcomes of the consultation?



The consultation responses will be a key factor when making our decision. However, whilst the popularity of an option will be considered, it will not determine the decision. **Consultation responses will also be considered against other factors** such as value for money, the impact to the PPE market, the safety of health and care staff and available funding.

Evidence provided during the consultation will provide further insight into these other factors.

Respondent information provided as part of the consultation response will provide insight into how views differ across sectors and organisation types. These differences will also inform our decision.

Key dates

The consultation will open on 1st October and close at 23:45 on 31st October.

1 October
2021 – 31
October
2021

Where to find the consultation

The consultation is available on GOV.UK: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/extending-free-ppe-to-the-health-and-care-sector> Alternatively, you can send your responses and any supporting evidence to PPE.strategy@dhsc.gov.uk

[Click here](#)

