ZER0 COVID

Why the UK should have a strategy to eliminate covid-19 as soon as possible

- Stop unnecessary deaths
- Stop Long Covid
- Stop cancelled operations and treatment
- Stop job losses and economic damage
- Stop loneliness and mental health crises
- Reopen entertainment, the arts and sport
- End the cycle of surge and lockdown

We can do all this by

- Eliminating the virus locally by all of these measures
  - Vaccination
  - Making isolation affordable for all
  - Safe workplaces
  - Public test and trace
- Quarantine for incoming travellers, not connected to border enforcement
- Stamping out any new outbreaks

Other countries have done this.

What's stopping the UK?

The best countries

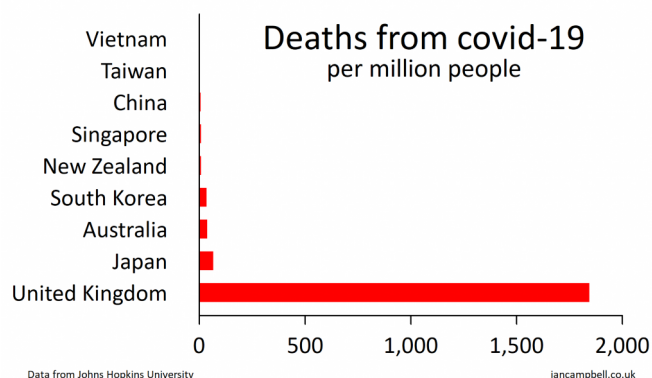The countries with the best policies have been much less affected by the pandemic than the UK.

Deaths per capita have been less than 5% of the UK's in Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, China, Taiwan & Vietnam.

Economic damage has been slight in many of these countries e.g. Taiwan and China had economic growth in 2020.

These countries have achieved this by containing and eliminating the virus, by:

- Learning from the outbreaks of the SARS coronavirus in 2002 & 2003 - which were contained and then eliminated
- Learning from other countries
- Acting speedily and vigorously
- Setting up a rapid, effective test and trace system
- Supporting isolation
- Effective quarantine of incoming travellers
- Local lockdowns when necessary
- Stamping out outbreaks from cases that have escaped border controls by prompt vigorous measures

They did all this without vaccines.

Deaths from covid-19
per million people

Country	
Vietnam	
Taiwan	
China	
Singapore	
New Zealand	
South Korea	
Australia	
Japan	
United Kingdom	

(bar chart: x-axis 0, 500, 1,000, 1,500, 2,000; United Kingdom bar reaches approximately 1,850)

Data from Johns Hopkins University   iancampbell.co.uk

The UK: one of the worst

The UK has had one of the worst total death rates in the world, and one of the worst economic effects, due to:

Government errors:

- lack of planning
- not learning from the successes of other countries
- instead of a local NHS test and trace we have a privatised/outsourced system that works badly e.g. long delays between test and result
- allowing inessential and unsafe workplaces to open
- completely inadequate support for those who are supposed to self-isolate
- restrictions too little and too late, and relaxed too soon

Government deceit: its insistence that

- a large outbreak was inevitable
- no errors have been made
- testing delays are not affecting case numbers
- elimination from the UK is impossible.

Other Government abuse of power:

- awarding of contracts without a proper process

The Government's errors and abuses of power have led to over 120,000 avoidable deaths and enormous economic damage.

There's now a risk that the same behaviour will be repeated.

How to eliminate

The science

There are no long term carriers of the virus and there's no animal reservoir. So if we ensure that on average, each case passes on the virus to less than 1 new case, i.e. the R number is less than 1, then the number of new cases dwindles to a level where they can all be easily traced.

The logistics

We need to identify international best practice, and then implement it competently. We don't need to "reinvent the wheel".

The key features are

- Local, publicly run find-test-trace system
- Proper support for those asked to isolate
- Opening workplaces only when safe
- Proper PPE for front-line workers

Vaccines should be used to aid elimination, but relying entirely on vaccines is too risky due to

- less than 100% effectiveness
- some people choose not be to vaccinated
- immunity wanes over time
- new variants can develop that may escape the vaccines

The politics

Politicians should serve the population - not themselves or their financial backers. They should follow the science competently and with honesty and transparency. Those unable to do this should step aside and make way for those who can.

Global contribution

Elimination contributes to the global effort and avoids the UK exporting problem new variants.

Mythbuster

All sorts of objections are made to elimination, but none are valid.

"Cases are too high"

If cases are high, they need to be brought down anyway. Once they are low, we just keep them going down. In August 2020, Australia had less cases per capita than the UK - Australia went ahead and eliminated the virus, whereas the UK allowed cases to rise, leading to another 80,000 avoidable deaths.

"We've had it for too long"

How long the virus has been in a location is irrelevant.

"Viruses cannot be eliminated"

Outbreaks of the SARS coronavirus and of Ebola have been eliminated by public health measures. Other viruses have been eliminated by a combination of public health measures and vaccines.

"Elimination is only possible for East Asian nations"

The virus has been eliminated from Iceland, the Isle of Man, and the Atlantic provinces of Canada.

"Elimination would cost too much"

No - it's the other way around. Countries with the fewest cases have generally had the least economic damage.

More Q & A's on the website.

Endemic infection is wrong

Boris Johnson claims that we should learn to live with the virus, and allow it to become endemic. But the constantly circulating virus would mean more deaths and more complications from Long Covid, and more new variants. Existing inequalities would be exacerbated further as women, Black and minority ethnic communities, disabled and older people have already been hit hardest during the pandemic and this will continue if it does.

And the costs of supplying vaccines and developing new ones for resistant variants would be astronomical.

Why choose this strategy when it's not inevitable.

We've got rid of measles and we've got rid of smallpox - why not covid-19?

Who supports Zero Covid

- The Independent Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (IndieSAGE)
- Many other independent public health experts
- Many individuals and trade unionists
- Local trade unions and campaigns
- Early Day Motion 1450 in the House of Commons has been signed by 45 MPs
- The Scottish Parliament Covid-19 Citizen Panel

Get involved

Zerocovid.uk   @zerocovid_uk

www.facebook.com/zerocoviduk

Participate in online and actual events

Ask your MP to sign the Early Day Motion 1450

Tell your friends, neighbours and work colleagues

Mar 2021