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**NORTH DURHAM**



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The Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP  
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care  
Department of Health and Social Care  
Ministerial Correspondence and Public Enquiries Unit  
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Dear Secretary of State

### **Impact of New Restrictions in the North East**

Since the Government formally announced the new restrictions for the North East yesterday, I have been inundated with constituents who are concerned about the impact this will have upon their childcare arrangements.

Many families rely on relatives to provide childcare so that they can go to work and the new arrangements make this impossible for anyone other than single-parent families who are able to join a support bubble.

The Government have had six months to address these problems, and local councils in the North East have collectively asked for the powers and the funding to manage lockdown restrictions locally. Instead these restrictions have been imposed on the North East with no thought about the impact that this will have upon families.

North East councils requested that informal childcare arrangements be excluded from the restrictions in the North East as they have been in Scotland, but this has been ignored by the Government.

The Government's Test and Trace System is unfit for purpose. As I raised with you in the House, we need to empower local Directors of Public Health to ramp up local testing and to ensure that they have the funding and the powers to tailor local lockdown measures based on the situation on the ground.

I urge you to look again at the situation in the North East to ensure that my constituents who develop symptoms can get tested and also that childcare problems do not prevent my constituents from being able to go to work.

Yours faithfully,

Rt Hon Kevan Jones  
Member of Parliament for North Durham