UK Workforce Strategy Overlooks Long Covid, Ignoring Serious Public Health and Economic Risks

Wednesday 5 November, 2025

The government's *Keep Britain Working* review, led by Sir Charlie Mayfield, fails to address the ongoing impact of Long Covid and the need for workplace infection control - putting workers and productivity at risk.

Long Covid Advocacy is raising urgent concerns about the UK government's newly published *Keep Britain Working: Final Report* (November 2025), chaired by Sir Charlie Mayfield. The review, designed to address workforce health and disability, does **not** mention Long Covid or the pandemic as drivers of rising ill?health–related work absence.

The report highlights that **800,000 more people are out of work due to ill health than in 2019**, yet provides no context for why this increase has occurred. Experts warn that ignoring Long Covid - a condition affecting hundreds of thousands of working?age people - constitutes a major oversight.

> "Failing to recognise Long Covid and the ongoing risk of reinfection, while ignoring basic workplace protections like clean air and infection control, is a recipe for disaster," said a spokesperson for Long Covid Advocacy.

Evidence and Impact

- ONS data (2022)**:** People of working age who report Long Covid are significantly more likely to be economically inactive.
- The Lancet (2024)**:** "Long COVID … can affect multiple organ systems and lead to severe and protracted impairment of function."
- Institute for Fiscal Studies: Long Covid is reshaping the labour market and contributing to long?term sickness absence.

Why This Matters

- The omission of Long Covid and pandemic?related health impacts risks misdiagnosis of the causes of workforce inactivity.
- Policy guidance ignores workplace infection control and clean?air measures, which are crucial for preventing relapses and protecting all employees.
- Existing research clearly demonstrates Long Covid's impact on labour participation - yet the review treats workforce ill?health as if the pandemic never happened.

LCA Recommendations

1. Explicitly recognise Long Covid in national workforce strategy and planning.
2. Introduce safe, flexible return?to?work pathways for those with fluctuating capacity.
3. Implement infection control measures and improved ventilation standards in workplaces.
4. Collect and publish data on post?infection workforce impacts to inform evidence?based interventions.

"We cannot 'keep Britain working' by ignoring the pandemic's ongoing impact. Workers need protection, support, and policies based on evidence," added Claire Every from Long Covid Advocacy

Related Sectors:

Business & Finance :: Coronavirus (COVID-19) :: Government :: Health ::

Related Keywords:

Long Covid :: Government :: UK Workforce :: Keep Britain Working :: Sir Charlie Mayfield :: Workforce Health :: Occupational Health :: Economic Inactivity ::

Scan Me:

Company Contact:

Long Covid Advocacy

T. 07708836858
E. hello@longcovidadvoc.com
W. https://www.longcovidadvoc.com/

Additional Contact(s):
Rupert Higham: 07752247386
ruperthigham@gmail.com

View Online

Newsroom: Visit our Newsroom for all the latest stories:
https://www.longcovidadvocacy.pressat.co.uk