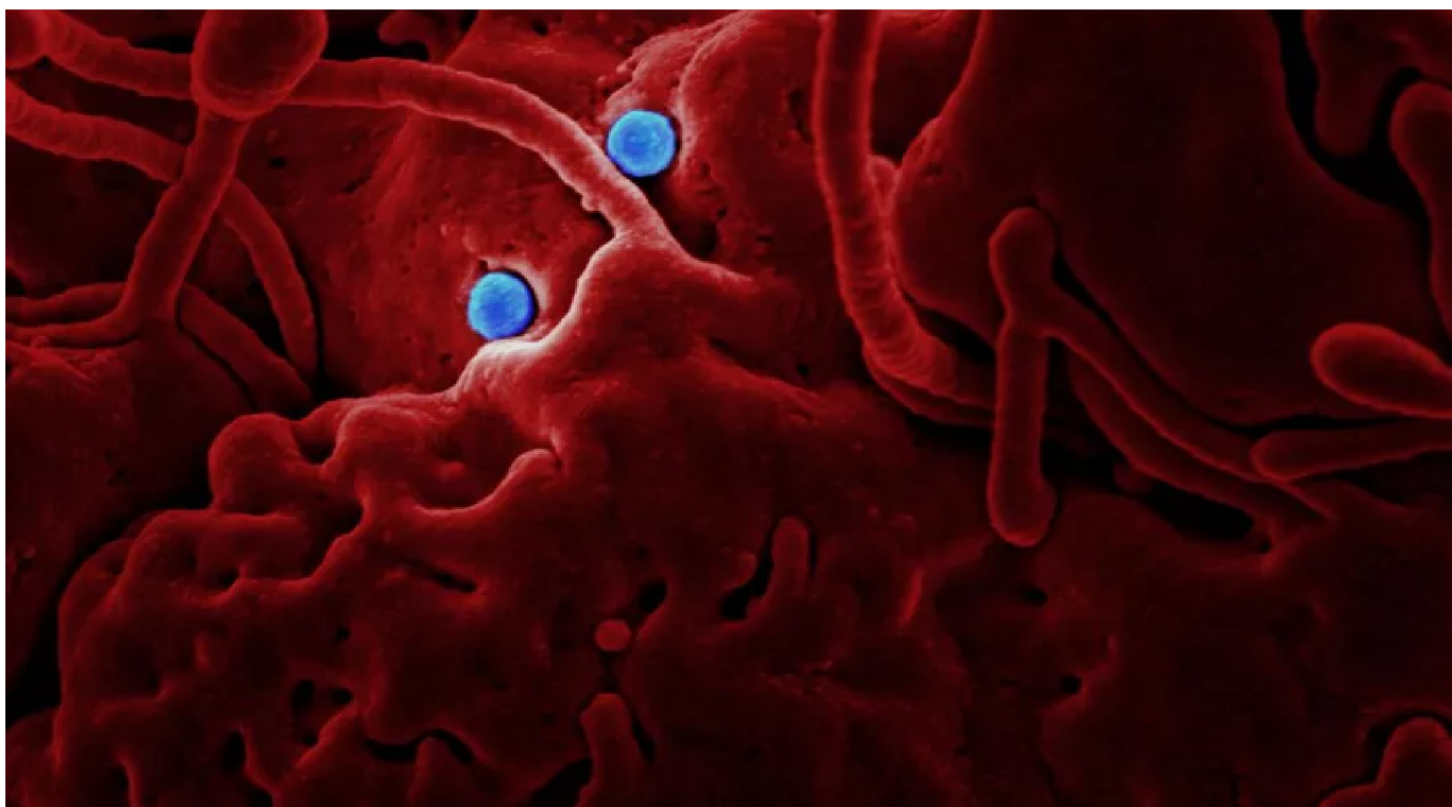# Coronavirus: Government must use existing powers to ensure full sick pay for all workers

Aviation workers who come into contact with those from high risk areas feel forced to come into work even if they develop symptoms

GMB, Britain's general union, has said the Government must use existing powers to make sure all workers get full sick pay to try and halt the spread of COVID-19.

Woeful sick pay arrangements for front-line staff mean they don't get paid for the first three days of sickness – and then just £94 a week after that.

GMB's airport staff members regularly come into contact with passengers returning from high risk areas such as Iran and Italy.

But if they develop any symptoms they are left with the devastating choice; put food on the table or come to work even if they believe they should self-quarantine.

The Government already has the powers to solve this public health crisis and could introduce a statutory right to normal pay during any period of self-isolation recommended by PHE under the Employment Rights Act 1996.

Nadine Houghton, GMB National Officer, said:

"Leaving low paid workers with the choice of either losing their wages or coming into work despite suspected COVID-19 infections is a serious public health crisis.

"The Government could solve this today by forcing employers to pay full sick pay from day one – and offering financial assistance to smaller companies where required.

"As it stands, workers in the aviation industry who come into contact with passengers from high risk areas feel forced to come into work even if they develop symptoms – otherwise they will lose their pay.

"If the Government is serious about the health of the British public, this cannot be allowed to continue only option.

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