



## Lack of strategy ‘abundantly clear’ – time for a public inquiry

27 May 2021

GMB, the union for health and social care staff have called for an ‘immediate public inquiry’ over the government’s handling of Covid 19, after big questions emerged over the government’s handling of the crisis.

In a revealing seven-hour testimony yesterday, the government’s ex chief SPAD, Dominic Cummings raised questions over the UK Government’s response to the pandemic.

“ ‘Cummings’ allegations are either true, or the PM brought a fantasist and liar into the heart of Downing Street.’

Jonathan Ashworth asks Matt Hancock if he is “ashamed” for failing to deliver his “promise” of a protective shield around care homes.

<https://t.co/SAj7fmrdb1> [pic.twitter.com/HCRYYLupHt](https://pic.twitter.com/HCRYYLupHt)

— Sky News (@SkyNews) May 27, 2021

He also publicly questioned the Health Secretary, Matt Hancock’s handling of the crisis, accusing him of lying 15 to 20 times and blaming others for PPE failings that he had overseen.

And this morning in Parliament, whilst the Health Secretary refuted claims that he was unfit for the job, he failed to give answers on urgent questions surrounding the discharge of covid patients into care homes

“Quite frankly, we don’t believe either of them.

“It’s abundantly clear that there was a lack of strategy and direction, hence why we are now getting so many differing accounts.

**Rehana Azam, GMB National Secretary**

It’s now abundantly clear that there was no direction or strategy at the heart of the government’s response to the pandemic last year and questions need to be answered surrounding the Health Secretary’s role in protecting Health and Social Care workers from the deadly virus.

Yesterday, GMB raised concerns about Secretary of State for Health’s capacity to handle the job, after we have repeatedly raised concerns about PPE for health and social care workers over the past year.

“4 crucial Covid questions Matt Hancock failed to answer over Dominic Cummings’ evidence <https://t.co/QZJuDStDvm> [pic.twitter.com/iEreprFnla](https://pic.twitter.com/iEreprFnla)

— **Mirror Politics (@MirrorPolitics) May 27, 2021**

Care and NHS staff and the public need answers and it’s clear the only way to get truthful answers is an independent inquiry free of Conservative interference and squabbles.

**Rehana Azam, GMB National Secretary, said:**

“Over the last two days we have had diametrically opposed accounts of what happened this past year as the government scrambled to get a grip on the crisis.

“Quite frankly, we don’t believe either of them.

“It’s abundantly clear that there was a lack of strategy and direction, hence why we are now getting so many differing accounts.

“Last year during a PPE shortage, thousands of Care workers and NHS staff were put in the line of fire whilst the government squabbled and lied to each other.

“They even hid thousands of covid deaths, with just the HSE reporting 111 people have died at work whilst their own statistics, showed more than 5,000 people had died from covid.

“We warned last year that Matt Hancock failed to get a



**“ grip on the crisis.**

**What’s clear now is that it's not only us that felt this way.**

**We have big questions about his capacity to handle the job - and they need answering.<https://t.co/8QIW9cCdBb>**

**— GMB Union (@GMB\_union) May 26, 2021**

"It's a disgrace and they deserve so much better.

"It's time for an immediate public inquiry as needless lives have been lost. We need answers and urgent safeguards put in place to protect workers still putting themselves in harm's way."

