



Women's Equality Party Conference

26 November 2022

Title: **Making Antiviral Drugs Available to COVID-vulnerable People**

Proposed by: **Kirstein Rummery, on behalf of the Disability Caucus**

Proposer: **Kirstein Rummery**

Seconder: Rosie Loker

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Magda Devas

Ruth Wilkinson

Patricia June

Jemma Brown

Hannah Barham-Brown

Kelly Allbutt

Inma Alvarez

Sarah Mills

Helen Webb

Victoria Claire

Type of motion: **Emergency policy motion**

Motion text:

- 1 Noting the UK Government's decision not to fund Evusheld on the NHS, Conference calls upon the
2 UK and devolved governments to:
- 3 Recognise the ongoing risk to health faced by people who are clinically vulnerable to COVID (most
4 of whom are disabled), and their carers, families, and supporters;
- 5 Recognise the social cost of failing to protect clinically vulnerable disabled people, their carers,
6 families, and supporters, including particularly the inability to take part in paid work and/or continue
7 to provide care if they or their families fall sick;
- 8 Mitigate against the gendered impact of COVID19 on clinically vulnerable disabled people, their
9 carers, and supporters, by following the clinical lead set by other countries¹ (who have found that it
10 is a cost effective preventative measure) by providing anti-viral drugs (such as EVUSHELD2) to
11 clinically vulnerable people before they catch COVID19.

¹ [Evusheld long-acting antibody combination approved in the EU for the treatment of COVID-19 \(astrazeneca.com\)](https://www.astrazeneca.com/evusheld)

² [Evusheld approved to prevent COVID-19 in people whose immune response is poor - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/evusheld-approved-to-prevent-covid-19-in-people-whose-immune-response-is-poor)

Motion rationale:

22% of the population (approximately 14.6 million people) is disabled³ but 59.5% of COVID19-related deaths were of disabled people.⁴ Mortality rates in disabled women were 2.4 times higher than in non-disabled women, whilst in men they were 2.0 times higher.⁵ Serious illness related to COVID19 also has had a gendered impact in the following ways:

Disabled women have suffered loss of access to healthcare, social care and work, which has had a particular impact on households where disabled women are lone parents or sole earners⁶.

The withdrawal of social care services due to COVID-related staff shortages meant 32% of people needed help from an unpaid carer who hadn't previously needed it⁷.

Women are 60% of the caring population providing full time care⁸. 72% of those receiving Carers Allowance (which is lower than work-replacement benefits) are women⁸.

Women are more than twice as likely as men to provide emergency care for a disabled relative, and to give up work to provide care, leading to a much higher risk of poverty for women and their families:⁹ the average weekly income for families with disabled people and carers is £100 less than those without¹⁰, but the average weekly costs of living with a disability are £134.¹¹

Despite it being UK Government approved and used in 32 countries¹² EVUSHELD is not currently available on the NHS to prevent COVID19 infection for clinically vulnerable people. The National Institute for Clinical Excellence announced **on the 17th October 2022** that they would not review this decision until 2023¹³.

It is available privately for over £1000 per dose, every 6 months¹⁴. 28% of families with a disabled member are in living poverty, compared to 17% of non-disabled families¹⁵ - they clearly cannot afford to access this treatment privately.

³ [UK disability statistics: Prevalence and life experiences - House of Commons Library \(parliament.uk\)](https://www.parliament.uk/library/research-and-briefing/papers/2020/uk-disability-statistics-prevalence-and-life-experiences)

⁴ [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) related deaths by disability status, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/articles/coronaviruscovid19relateddeathsbydisabilitystatusenglandandwales/2020-12-01)

⁵ [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) related deaths by disability status, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/articles/coronaviruscovid19relateddeathsbydisabilitystatusenglandandwales/2020-12-01)

⁶ [Direct and Indirect Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Women and Girls - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/direct-and-indirect-impacts-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-women-and-girls)

⁷ [Coronavirus and the impact on caring - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/articles/coronavirusandtheimpactoncaringservices/2020-12-01)

⁸ [10 facts about women and caring in the UK on International Women's Day - Carers UK](https://www.carersuk.org/10-facts-about-women-and-caring-in-the-uk-on-international-womens-day)

⁹ [Census 2021 results - Census 2021](https://www.census.gov/data/releases/releases/about/c2021-brief-c2021.html)

¹⁰ [Poverty rates for informal carers | JRF](https://www.jrf.org.uk/poverty-rates-for-informal-carers)

¹¹ [UK Poverty 2022: The essential guide to understanding poverty in the UK | JRF](https://www.jrf.org.uk/uk-poverty-2022-the-essential-guide-to-understanding-poverty-in-the-uk)

¹² [Evusheld vigil announcement for Covid-19 patient campaign - Kidney Research UK](https://www.kidneyresearchuk.org/evusheld-vigil-announcement-for-covid-19-patient-campaign)

¹³ [Lymphoma Action | Evusheld - update on 17 October 2022 \(lymphoma-action.org.uk\)](https://www.lymphoma-action.org.uk/evusheld-update-on-17-october-2022)

¹⁴ [Evusheld available in the UK to buy privately | Blood Cancer UK](https://www.bloodcanceruk.org/evusheld-available-in-the-uk-to-buy-privately)

¹⁵ [UK Poverty 2022: The essential guide to understanding poverty in the UK | JRF](https://www.jrf.org.uk/uk-poverty-2022-the-essential-guide-to-understanding-poverty-in-the-uk)

34 In order to save lives and reduce the disproportionate impact of COVID19 on women and disabled
35 people, EVUSHELD needs to be available to clinically vulnerable people on the NHS. This is in line
36 with our policy on care.

37 This is an emergency motion because the decision not to provide EVUSHELD, although made on
38 6th October, was not announced to the general public until 17th October, ten days after the deadline
39 for motions.
