

Workers and youth in Britain speak on “How to end the pandemic” webinar

Our reporters

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On Sunday, the *World Socialist Web Site* and the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC) co-hosted a webinar, “How to end the pandemic.” It featured a panel of workers and distinguished scientists who have fought for policies to stop the spread of COVID-19 and save lives. The event provided a comprehensive overview of the science of the pandemic, including how COVID-19 spreads, its impact on humans, and what measures must be taken to cut off the chain of viral transmission and eliminate new cases worldwide.

The WSWs spoke with workers and youth from Britain about what they learned from the event.

Retired coal miner **Malcolm Bray**, who fought the Thatcher Conservative government in the year-long 1984-85 miners’ strike, said, “I thought all the speakers gave very good and concerning contributions. The one that struck me most was the contribution by Dr Deepti Gurdasani. It was a very worrying and deeply concerning presentation. I also liked the presentation by Dr Gasperowicz, which in my opinion showed how this deadly virus can be stopped. The meeting showed very clearly that it was the working class that was mostly hit by this terrible disease. In the workplaces, on a bus and with the Delta variant infecting our children in schools.

“Capitalism is in the dock here, with its murderous policies of herd immunity which has resulted in the re-opening of the ‘economy’, a perspective of death.

“The working class is clearly suffering the most and therefore must intervene to defend its own interests. The government and its media talking heads are playing down the seriousness of the pandemic and holding workers to ransom, in the interest of finance capital, which puts profits first over the lives of millions.”

Marian Gladstone, a retired civil servant said, “The

webinar of 24 October organised by WSWs leadership of the international working class was an international event. A panel of distinguished scientists, doctors, epidemiologists, and working class spokespersons on the front line in the fight against the global pandemic spoke the scientific truth about Covid, how it is deliberately spread by the governing class and for what aim, and what needs to be done to end it.

“The webinar opens at a cracking pace, setting the tone immediately with contributions from parents speaking of their concerns about being forced to send their children into unsafe schools, David O’Sullivan, the London bus driver, sacked for fighting for health and safety of bus drivers, speaks of the deaths of drivers due to companies and unions flagrantly ignoring safety.

“[WSWS chairperson] David North opened up the lectures from each of his distinguished guests with graphs and scientific data, covering the need to end root causes. This includes the need for changed industrial farming, intrusive deforestation, climate change. The vital need for vaccination, its limitation from fluctuating viral mutation and need for supportive efficient test, track and trace.

“But there is no living with this virus. It must be eliminated. This calls for temporary closure of ALL non-essential services and schools to attain zero transmission.

“With infections, hospitalisation and deaths rising from COVID, even in so-called advanced countries, it is vital to keep up to speed with the political and scientific truths confronting the working class and the imperative to end the pandemic. Oppose corporate finance and its mealy-mouthed class lackeys in the form of bankrupt Labour and unions, with an implacable political leadership and programme for

socialism of an organised international conscious working class. Visit this important site wsws.org, today.”

Amy, a parent, said, “I think the ‘How to End the Pandemic’ event should be shared as widely as possible in the UK and everywhere in the world. It showcased a range of excellent contributions from leading scientists, epidemiologists, and public health professionals, as well as amplifying the voices of those who are usually silenced, parents and teachers.

“Taken together, the presentations made a strong case for the necessity of eliminating COVID, and eventually its eradication as the only way out of the pandemic. The UK has got some of the highest per capita COVID cases, deaths, and hospitalisations in Europe and in the world. We have become emblematic of the failure to manage the pandemic, the example other countries do not want to follow!

“After hearing Dr Gurdasani’s presentation about the impact of COVID on multiple organs, of the numbers linked not only to hospitalisations and deaths, but also to Long COVID, I fail to understand how the government’s obsession with herd immunity can be sustained. As we have heard from all the experts in the event, vaccines alone will not get us out of the pandemic, it is the combination of measures that matters!

“Our children are getting deliberately infected because of the government’s refusal to implement a multi-layered system of mitigations in schools as well as in the community. The policy of inaction, of waiting until it is too late—and there is no other choice but full lockdown—is leading to tragic outcomes. Such a policy is particularly unforgivable for the way it affects our children, the future of the country.

“Instead of following scientific research, they have provided school guidance which is inadequate for the control, let alone, suppression, of an airborne virus, and which goes against basic Health and Safety regulations. Getting out of the pandemic is possible, it is the political will that is lacking in the UK. I endorse the WSWs call for collaborative action from the working classes, and from grassroots groups who have the wellbeing of the people at heart. I hope each and every person considers collaborative action seriously from now on, because if there is one thing that COVID has shown us is that we are all interconnected, and nobody

is safe until we are all safe!”

Mother of three, **Sharon** said, “Every speaker was extremely informative but the person that stood out to me was the Canadian speaker Dr Joe Vipond, as I am following some of the scientists on twitter but found the info on Long COVID extremely interesting.

“I thought that the ‘What we can do’ ideas with campaigns, including gatherings on social media, etc., and using people with many diverse backgrounds was important. Try getting the message out to the media as many individuals are trying to, but at the moment are being bullied by the media. There could be more power in numbers.

“I feel that is what the UK is missing. The [anti-lockdown] lobbying groups like UsForThem and Hart are extremely organised. I feel that many different groups with the same ideas should form together as the message will be more powerful.”

WSWS reader **Ben Hughes** said, “Dr. Jose-Luis Jimenez emphasised that COVID-19 is an overwhelmingly airborne indoor virus. Masks and powerful active ventilation systems in essential workplaces would stop the pandemic in its tracks. These and vaccines must be used to end the suffering.

“All schools must close immediately. The mainstream media is peddling the proposition that cases will drop before Christmas because of mass infection of children now. The consequence will be hundreds of thousands with Long COVID.”



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