

A guide to the Government for BIA members

September 2022



This is a briefing for BIA members on the Government led by Prime Minister Liz Truss, including key ministerial appointments for our sector. At the time of publishing, junior ministers were still being announced. A more complete guide will be published once all relevant government appointments have been made.

The Government currently holds a working majority of 71 seats in the House of Commons, which Truss takes on from the previous incumbent, Boris Johnson. Truss has expressed her commitment to the manifesto upon which this majority was won in 2019.

Key Ministers and policymaker profiles

The responsibilities for the life sciences sector continue to be split between health and business department ministers. This is centrally coordinated by the Office for Life Sciences (OLS). There are also some other departments and ministers that will have a key impact on the sector.

Rt Hon Liz Truss MP – Prime Minister



Liz Truss became Prime Minister following her victory in the 2022 Conservative Party leadership contest. She campaigned on the basis of wanting a low-tax, high-growth economy and spoke of business-led growth and investment during her first speech as Prime Minister on 6 September. Truss also spoke of the importance of putting the NHS on a ‘firm footing’.

Truss’s stance on the life sciences is, as yet, unclear, although she did speak favourably of the sector during her campaign. In a [Tweet on 10 August](#) during her visit to Alderley Park, Truss said that ‘life sciences are at the heart of my vision to build a country fit for the future’ and echoed the importance of making Britain a ‘science and technology superpower’. This suggests that her government will remain committed to the [Life Sciences Vision](#) published last year, which set out how the sector can continue to grow, building upon the momentum developed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Truss first entered Parliament in 2010 as the MP for South West Norfolk. Her first ministerial post came at the Department for Education under David Cameron. She has since served as Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2014-16), Chief Secretary to the Treasury (2017-19), and Minister for Women and Equalities (2019-22). She became Secretary of State for International Trade in 2019, before moving to the Foreign Office as Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs in 2021.

Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng MP – Chancellor of the Exchequer



Kwasi Kwarteng was made Chancellor of the Exchequer in Liz Truss's new Government in September 2022, replacing Nadhim Zahawi who had been in Number 11 since July. Kwarteng is a close ally of Liz Truss, having co-authored [Britannia Unchained](#) with her in 2012. He has been MP for Spelthorne since 2010. He [has said](#) Truss' government would be "unashamedly pro-growth".

During his tenure at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), July 2019-September 2022, Kwarteng oversaw the publication of the Life Sciences Vision and the UK Innovation Strategy. He is a strong supporter of the life sciences and understands the need to support growing companies in the sector, having worked with the BIA on the establishment of the Life Sciences Scale-Up Taskforce in 2021, which he also Chaired. While giving [evidence](#) to the Lords Science and Technology Committee in his capacity as Business Secretary in May, Kwarteng mentioned the taskforce's recommendation of unlocking pension funds to provide investment based on the model of the French TIBI scheme.

Before entering politics, Kwarteng worked as a columnist for the Daily Telegraph and as a financial analyst at JP Morgan Chase and other investment banks. Kwarteng holds an MA in classics and history and a PhD in British history from the University of Cambridge.

Rt Hon Dr Thérèse Coffey MP – Secretary of State for Health and Social Care



Thérèse Coffey was appointed Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and Deputy Prime Minister by Liz Truss upon her becoming Prime Minister in September 2022. She has been the MP for Suffolk Coastal since 2010. Coffey was promoted from her previous post as Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (2019-22), during the time the department was working to liberalise pension fund regulation to increase investment in venture capital.

Coffey holds a PhD in chemistry from University College London, but she has not held any ministerial roles relating to science or healthcare bar a stint at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (2013-14). In her new brief, she has vowed to focus on patients via an '[ABCD](#)' approach – ambulances, backlogs, care, doctors and dentists. With putting the NHS on a 'firm footing' part of Truss's inaugural speech as PM and clearing backlogs from the COVID-19 pandemic a target of the Johnson administration, this focus on stabilising the NHS and reducing waiting times looks set to remain.

Coffey's career was spent in finance; she worked as an accountant and later Finance Director for Mars Drinks UK.

Rt Hon Jacob Rees-Mogg MP – Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy



Jacob Rees-Mogg was appointed to Truss's new Government as Business Secretary in September 2022. He was previously Minister of State for Brexit Opportunities and Government Efficiency and has been the MP for North East Somerset since 2010.

Rees-Mogg entered the Cabinet for the first time in 2019 as Leader of the House of Commons. From this position, he praised the work of the Vaccines Taskforce, [referencing](#) the 350 million vaccine doses ordered. He also [attributes](#) the success of the UK's vaccine rollout to Brexit and the agility of the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). He has [pledged](#) to make BEIS the 'department for growth', playing into the emphasis placed upon creating a high-growth economy by Truss and Kwarteng. Rees-Mogg has previously [described](#) UK SMEs as

world-leading and will look to assure this continues in his new role.

Rees-Mogg began his career at the *Daily Telegraph*, later working in the City of London with Lloyd George Management until 2007. He holds a BA in History from Trinity College Oxford.

Rt Hon Nadhim Zahawi MP – Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster



Zahawi was appointed Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster by Liz Truss in September 2022. In this role, his responsibilities include oversight of the delivery of cross-cutting domestic and economic priorities, cross-government delivery of the policy and operational response to COVID-19, and oversight of Cabinet Office work on science, technology, and innovation.

Zahawi was previously Chancellor of the Exchequer since Rishi Sunak resigned in the summer of 2022. He has been the MP for Stratford-upon-Avon since 2010.

Zahawi's profile was significantly raised during his tenure as Minister for COVID-19 Vaccine Deployment between November 2020 and September 2021. This new ministerial post put Zahawi at the heart of the UK's vaccine rollout, for which he gained plaudits for the speed with which vaccines were manufactured and administered compared to other countries. Zahawi worked closely with the BIA while in this post and is well aware of the nature and complexities of the UK's life science sector. In August 2022, as Chancellor, Zahawi invited the BIA for a meeting at Number 11, in which he praised the sector and expressed his willingness to continue to support it in future roles.

Prior to taking on the vaccine portfolio, Zahawi became a minister under Theresa May in January 2018, when he was appointed Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families. He subsequently served as Under-Secretary of State for Business and Industry within the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and then as Education Secretary during Boris Johnson's premiership.

Born in Baghdad, Zahawi fled Iraq at age nine and later completed a BSc in chemical engineering at UCL.

About the BIA

The BioIndustry Association (BIA) is the trade association for innovative life sciences and biotech industry in the UK, counting over 500 companies including start-ups, biotechnology, universities, research centres, investors and lawyers among its members. Our mission is to be the voice of the industry, enabling and connecting the UK ecosystem so that businesses can start, grow and deliver world-changing innovation.

BIA represents the interests of its members to a broad section of stakeholders, from Government and regulators to patient groups and the media. We also work with organisations at an international level to ensure that UK biotech is represented on the global stage including EuropaBio, the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA) and the International Council of Biotechnology Associations (ICBA).

BIA is the key thought leader for the sector, operating across a wide range of areas such as policy, finance, science, regulatory, legal, skills and talent as well as genomics, engineering biology and techbio.

For further information, please visit www.bioindustry.org

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