

Majorca Daily Bulletin

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Spain extends AstraZeneca dose gap to 16 weeks

London.—Spain is extending the gap between the first and second doses of AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine to 16 weeks for people aged under 60, the government said yesterday, going beyond the 12-week maximum interval approved by European authorities.

Spain is the first country to diverge from the European Medicines Agency's authorisation and promote "off label use", which would not be approved by the regulator and would leave individual nations responsible for any possible side-effects.

The extension gives authorities more breathing space to determine the safest way to administer the vaccine, the health minis-

try said. Spain initially gave AstraZeneca shots to essential workers aged 18-65 before allowing only people aged over 60 to receive the vaccine due to concerns about blood clots in younger people. The EMA's approval for the vaccine is based on the second dose being administered between four and 12 weeks after the first. A 16-week interval has not been tested in any human trials. AstraZeneca and the EMA did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Spain's move to restrict use of the shot caused widespread uncertainty and meant some younger people who had already received a first dose have been excluded from getting a second.



British ambassador Hugh Elliott held talks with the Majorcan Hoteliers Federation and also the Calvia council yesterday during his official visit to the Balearics.

TALKING TOURISM

● British ambassador to Spain, Hugh Elliott, held talks with the local authorities and the Majorcan tourist industry yesterday and he even had time to host a lunch for the *Bulletin* at a Palma hotel.

Palma.—It was another marathon day for the British ambassador to Spain, Hugh Elliott, during his official visit to the Balearics. Over the last three days he has met the leading local authorities on Majorca, Ibiza and Minorca and also the local tourist industry. Yesterday morning he held talks with the Mayor of Calvia,

Alfonso Rodriguez and in the afternoon he met with the Majorcan Hoteliers Federation. Obviously the big topic was when will British tourists start arriving on the island.

Hugh Elliott said that vaccination could save the summer season with the British government expected to decide within

days when British tourists would be allowed to start travelling again.

The ambassador even found time for lunch with the *Bulletin* at the Hotel Sant Francesc in Palma. Attending the event was our President, Carmen Serra and editor Jason Moore.

His three day visit to the islands has been a huge

success and he has thanked the local authorities for the support they have offered to the British community on the islands.

During his talks with the local authorities he was accompanied by British Vice Consul to the Balearics Lucy Gorman.

Elliott said he would like to return soon.



British ambassador Hugh Elliott hosted a lunch for the *Bulletin*.