

Former British Medical Chief Takes Job at Moderna. Big Pharma's Revolving Door for Ex-Government Officials is Always Open



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There seems to be a revolving door between the government and Big Pharma. One prominent, recent example is the move by [Dr. Scott Gottlieb](#), the [former commissioner](#) for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) joined the board of Pfizer while the pandemic was still ongoing. He made the move to help Pfizer fully monetize the crisis. After joining Pfizer, Gottlieb reportedly pressed Twitter (now X) to remove or [downgrade users' tweets](#) which were skeptical or critical of the Covid vaccine. This despite the fact that there are valid scientific reasons for criticism. Of course, the revolving door is not a new concept in the relationship between government and Big Pharma. [There is a list](#) of many ex-commissioners of the FDA who have left the agency and moved onto lucrative jobs in the pharmaceutical industry. And now it seems the opportunity for ex government commissioners to

get high paying jobs in drug manufacturing industry isn't limited to the United States.

Ex Medical Chief takes job at Moderna

In England, the former face of the government's Covid pandemic response [has taken a job](#) as a senior medical consultant with Moderna. [Jonathan Van-Tam](#) is a British healthcare professional specializing in influenza which includes the disease's epidemiology, transmission, vaccinology, antiviral drugs and pandemic preparedness. Van-Tam was the [former chief medical officer of the UK](#) and gained celebrity status because of his communication skills during the Covid pandemic. JVT, as he was known, was so effective he was awarded a knighthood for his service to the public in the UK. Now it appears he'll get paid.

The British government bought 77 million doses of the Moderna vaccine during the pandemic, fewer than Pfizer and Oxford AstraZeneca. Van-Tam left his government role in March of last year. The Moderna vaccine was approved for use by the British government in January of 2021, and last year, the two parties inked a deal for a [10-year partnership](#) to boost research and development of the mRNA vaccine in the UK including building a factory in the country.



Jonathan Van-Tam

According to analysts, Moderna has been “spending aggressively” in the hope that the market for Covid-19 vaccine rebounds. During the pandemic, [Pfizer had a lock](#) on the European vaccine market. In many countries, including Britain, the vaccine market is largely driven by government sales.

Revolving door

Van-Tam’s move to Moderna follows a pattern of high-ranking British government officials taking high paying jobs in the private sector with companies related to their time in office. In Britain, nearly a third of all new jobs taken by officials and former ministers had a “significant overlap” with their government role. This practice has drawn criticism from [Transparency International](#), UK which says the government should prohibit ex senior civil servants and ministers from taking jobs where they have had responsibility for government policy.

The [chief medical officer](#) of Moderna, [Paul Burton](#), justified the company’s hiring of Van-Tam saying, “Professor Van-Tam’s significant experience and expertise as a specialist in influenza, including its epidemiology, transmission, vaccinology and pandemic

preparedness, as well as a globally renowned academic and educator, will be a vital asset to Moderna as we work to improve population health security.”

Moderna didn’t disclose the consulting fee Van-Tam will receive, however, the British government did stipulate the former medical chief cannot lobby the government nor can he use privileged information to

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