

Interim Guidance for health and social care employers on staff from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Backgrounds

Introduction

We are aware that there is emerging evidence that people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds may be disproportionately affected by COVID-19. Further research and reviews are still underway and we await the results of these.

In the meantime, the health and wellbeing of our health and social care staff is a key priority and we are aware that many BAME staff may be feeling anxious and wish to discuss how best to protect themselves and their families at this difficult time. This interim guidance is to help staff and employers by setting out best practice that should be adopted to support BAME staff.

Once the results of further research and review on ethnicity and COVID-19 are published, we will consider any changes that need to be made to this guidance, based on any new clinical evidence.

Risk assessments and support

Employers should ensure line managers have sensitive, supportive conversations with all BAME staff, that also consider their psychological wellbeing and personal views/concerns about risk. Employers may be able to provide occupational health services and any advice from occupational health should always be followed. Wellbeing support services should be promoted to BAME staff. For more information on wellbeing support for staff visit our national hub:

<https://www.promis.scot/>

All BAME staff with underlying health conditions and disabilities, who are over 70, or who are pregnant should have been individually risk assessed, and appropriate reasonable or workplace adjustments should be made following risk assessment. Depending on the outcome of the risk assessment, this could include placing staff in green rather than red zones, into non-patient facing roles, or asking them to work for home, where this is possible.

Health and social care employers should ensure individual assessments and practical support are offered to BAME staff, particularly where they are anxious about protecting themselves and their families.

Ethnicity data

Improved data collection on ethnicity and any related protected characteristics is critical in allowing employers to better know and support their diverse workforces. Health and social care employers are urged to encourage staff to disclose this

information by setting out why collecting and monitoring this data is important, and also by providing assurances on how they use and safeguard that data.

Infection and protection control measures

For the latest information on infection and protection and control measures including PPE usage visit:

<https://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19>

COVID -19 in the workplace, safe practice and protecting yourself and others posters.

<https://www.staffgovernance.scot.nhs.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/other/>

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