

Covid Control Plan - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Introduction

The COVID Outbreak Control Plan provides a framework for the multi-agency response to localised outbreaks of COVID-19 in Doncaster and an outline of the interdependencies with regional and national systems and guidance. As part of an emergency response it is not a requirement for this document to be assessed for its equality impact. However, there is evidence of disparity in outcomes of COVID-19 and the COVID19 Oversight Board has been asked to consider these issues by Doncaster citizens. We also recognise that it is important to consider how we can ensure that any actions taken to control the spread of COVID19 do not exacerbate existing inequalities. We also want to consider how we how actions can promote inclusion and reduce inequality. It is also important to recognise as we learn more about this infectious disease we will need to return to these issues.

Vision

1. We consider the impact of our Outbreak Control Plan on our diverse populations, especially those prioritised by evidence related to COVID impact (e.g. older people, BAME communities), and respond appropriately to mitigate this.
2. We embed equality, diversity, and inclusion (ED&I) awareness and key principles into our own ways of working to implement and comply with the COVID Outbreak Control Plan, including review of equality impacts and opportunities in regular meetings of outbreak control bodies (IMT, etc.).
3. We identify opportunities for our response to controlling COVID outbreaks to foster improved diversity and inclusion and provide tools to support this way of working e.g. toolkit.

Approach

The overarching approach has been to agree design principles and work methodically through the COVID Outbreak Plan considering implications in terms of inequality and recommending mitigations.

The initial step was to form a task and finish group. This group identified members to invite to form an MDT. This MDT then met to agree the scope of this work given the wide-ranging nature of COVID outbreak response and how this EQIA differs from that common the local authorities, for example in commissioning a service. This has meant agreeing the groups most likely to be impacted using local and national intelligence. The team have also identified the areas of the plan itself and implementation or management thereof that require ED&I consideration. In addition, the team have widened our initial focus on public-facing elements of the plan to include our internal structures. This will embed ED&I in the locus of power and decision-making.

The MDT has agreed to review the Outbreak Control Plan to identify potential equalities implications as well taking an ambitious approach that includes consideration of opportunities to build positive diversity and inclusion elements into decision-making, outbreak management, and community response.

The team will identify further work required to gather additional data and intelligence, both through formal data collection and through conversation with citizens and communities of interest. This will include a detailed review of the control plans and available data.

One of our key design principles is that the EQIA itself will be a living document. This means that the assessment will continue to be reviewed and – where required – amended to account for developments in intelligence, context, legislation, feedback, and so forth. By doing so we will ensure the assessment continues to respond to the equality, diversity, and inclusion needs of Doncaster people in relation to COVID outbreak control.

Specific Outputs and timescales

1. Identify MDT meeting membership, agree planned approach – 9 September 2020
2. Presentation on our approach – Late September 2020
3. EQIA report and recommendations – by November 2020
4. Easy-read version of public-facing document – by November 2020
5. Design principles and toolkit to influence Team Doncaster’s approach - early 2021

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September 2020