



**Doncaster
Council**

**The Annual Report on Ethnic Minority Health in
Doncaster**

Doncaster Minority Partnership Board

April 2023

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INTRODUCTION

This report evaluates the work undertaken under the Doncaster Minority Partnership Board during the COVID-19 pandemic, which drew upon the recommendations of the Public Health England Report on disparities in health outcomes from COVID. The report has also incorporated the implementation of ongoing recommendations from BME Health Needs Assessment carried out in 2017/18.

The Minority Partnership Board (MPB) at its meeting in February 2023 reviewed its activities in the previous year, giving a qualitative assessment of performance so far. Overall, members of the MPB felt that the Board has made positive progress in the past year. These feelings were described by Board members in the following terms:

Reflections from members of MPB highlighted the following key points:

Positives

1. Supporting Doncaster's ethnic communities through the pandemic and increasing vaccine uptake within these communities.

"The MPB initial focus was around supporting Doncaster's ethnic communities through the pandemic and increasing vaccine uptake within these communities."

Participant

2. The MPB is a place that can offer expertise and contributions to the strategic areas of developments in Doncaster e.g. contributions to Borough Strategy, BaBi D [Born and Bred in Doncaster research programme], developed assessment tools and delivered race equality training to all councillors.

"What we've got here is potentially invaluable, and what my sense is, certainly with the work that I'm doing with health inequalities, I'm talking about the Minorities Partnership quite a lot, which means that the maternity came here. You know, these various people are gonna come here. ...everybody that comes really values it and it definitely makes a difference to communities." **Participant**

3. Doncaster MPB is a unique platform in Doncaster, and members valued it. "No other alternative to the MPB and has seen the changes in Doncaster in the last 20+ years and is proud to be a member of the MPB due to the unique work it does."

"...there isn't an alternative to this group. I've been 22 years in Doncaster and I'm really, really proud to be part of this group".

Wants to see the situation with the minority exerting this board should exist. In fact we should be bigger or it should be given more powers to do things. I mean I know

the great job you guys do. I think they're very unique in Doncaster. So I would really like you to continue in the current stands or even bigger with more powers as we move forward." **Participant**

Challenges

1. Broadening the outreach of MPB forum and work with the Inclusion and Fairness Forum, the Fairness Commission, and Voluntary Action Doncaster (VAD) to create a more collaborative way of working

"I think there's more definitely that we could do as a forum and I feel like that lies partly in our partnership. Working with entities such as the inclusion of fairness forum and potentially the Fairness Commission, which of course we have got links into. But it definitely feels like we could do something together to be a little bit more joined up now. I know that time constraints are a thing." **Participant**

2. The need for more diversity with wider partners linking in

"It seems like the membership used to be wider and we used to have RDASH and DBTH. So there's something about those wider partners..."

3. Post-Covid focus on inclusion and working with ethnic communities

4. Racism and discrimination still exists in Doncaster.

"Yeah, the unconscious bias is something that I see all the time and ... I find it a struggle to challenge. Although I will do it, I will challenge every single time."

"I'm sorry I've experienced racism without knowing why. Now understand why, but I do see this throughout not just the local authorities and the health authorities, but right across society. ...cultural discrimination is definitely there in Doncaster. Disability discrimination is definitely there." **Participant**

5. Revisiting the pre-COVID agenda on minority health in Doncaster

"There is something for me about revisiting some of that to say, well, where are we now then? Because actually, that was a brilliant list of all of those things. You think, Wow, that's amazing. Some of our work stream might be to revisit that and to just make sure that we're continuing to improve." **Participant**

The sections below address each recommendations based on a simple frame consisting of (1) Achievement and progress made (2) Challenges and (3) Actions to do.

B.A.M.E Health Action Plan update February 2023

PHE1: Ethnicity data collection and recording

Achievements and Progress

- The Public Health Team had been routinely receiving ethnicity data from the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) during the pandemic, The DMBC Policy Insight and Change (PiC) Team; and NHS in terms of Covid infection rates, vaccination uptake and hospital admission data.
- The Public Health Team were routinely receiving ethnicity data from the local NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) in terms of Covid vaccination rates.
- For the first time, 2021 Census has got more ethnicity data: Roma group was added under White ethnic group; and a write-in response was added for the 'Black African' ethnic group. This data is now available for local use.
- A refresh focus group discussion is being undertaken among the ethnic minority communities in Doncaster. For the first time, this has included the Roma/Romanian communities.
- The data team in Doncaster is looking at a comprehensive set of data related to health profile of ethnic minorities in Doncaster. The team brings together local data experts from Doncaster Council and the NHS.

Challenges

- There are still data quality issues around categorisation and incomplete or inaccurate entries around ethnicity. An approach to mandatory reporting or a 'push' on front line workers requesting this information may be needed. However, it is recognised that some people make conscious choice not to self-identify.
- The need for routine reporting of available ethnicity data as part of outcome measures (indicators) related to ethnicity by all relevant partner agencies (hospital, primary care, social care, schools data, etc).
- The importance of cultural competency training among health (Primary Care Network), social care, and voluntary staff related to ethnicity.

Actions

1. Explore available data from different partner agency that could form part of health profile of ethnic minority health in Doncaster (Data Team);
2. Provide and roll out cultural competency training, which includes the recording and reporting of data on ethnicity (NHS – Primary Care and Secondary Care; Council, and Voluntary Sector).

PHE 2: Community participatory research

Note:

- Doncaster Council's Ethnic Minorities Health Needs Assessment (previously the BAME Health Needs Assessment, 2017) is currently being refreshed. Changes in the local demographic mean that health needs among ethnic groups may have altered. Focus group discussions have been undertaken with a number of ethnic minority groups including: South Asian women, Roma/Romanian women, Chinese community, a mixture refugees and asylum seekers from a variety of different countries, Polish community. There is a plan to consult with West Indian Communities, African Communities and other migrant groups.
- The MPB will remain open to any new and emerging issues that requires input from minority groups

Actions

Focus groups with Doncaster's ethnic minority communities are taking place between March and June 2023. Results will be themed and documented in the Ethnic Minorities Health Needs Assessment refresh. This data will also be used to form new/additional recommendations for the refreshed Ethnic Minorities Action Plan.

The Health Needs Assessment refresh will be ratified by the Health and Wellbeing Board.

PHE 3: Improve access to health services, experiences and outcomes

Achievements and Progress

- Focus groups subsequently took place with a number of primary and secondary Schools in Doncaster to understand barriers to mental health support for children and young people. Feedback will be provided to the Children and Young Peoples Mental Health Strategy Group in 2023.
- The Health Protection team have worked closely with a local Mosque to arrange a session around women's mental health. This was delivered by the Improving Access to Psychological Therapy (IAPT) Team in a culturally sensitive way. This has open the door for further sessions around health and wellbeing to be provided.
- Eleven Targeted Covid vaccination pop up clinics were delivered in underserved communities during the Autumn/Winter 2023 campaign (**Appendix A**).
- A Gypsy/Roma/Travellers (GRT) Link Worker within the Health Protection Team developed a Covid specific 'myth busting' video, spoken in Romanian which was shared widely among the Roma / Romanian community.

- ‘Myth busting’ information leaflet was reviewed and amended to address new myths and concerns among minority groups.
- Ten cultural competency awareness sessions have been delivered to GP Practice and Primary Care Networks around barriers to Gypsy Roma and Traveller communities accessing health services. Cultural competency sessions have also been delivered to Doncaster’s Reproductive Health Service, **(Appendix B – Case Study)** specifically around Roma communities and barriers to accessing health services.
- The Health Protection team are currently working with a central GP Practice with the most ethnically diverse patient list in Doncaster. A pilot is currently in progress which includes Cancer screening letters being sent out in a patient’s first language. An evaluation around whether the pilot has improved screening uptake is due to take place in June 2023.
- A GRT Worker within the Health Protection Team supported a variety of Roma families and individuals to access and navigate their way through service pathways related to Schools, Housing, the Citizens Advice Bureau and children and young people’s mental health services. Support has often included acting as a conduit between individuals and services whilst providing or arranging translation support.
- While working with Doncaster Council’s Equalities Portfolio Holder, the Health Protection team arranged and supported the delivery of Race Equality Training to Doncaster Council’s Cabinet members.
- Five Gypsy Roma and Traveller Health Fairs have been held since January 2022 with a variety of health and social care services and GRT communities in attendance.

Challenges

- Stigma and shame associated with accessing mental health services is still a barrier for many ethnic communities.
- Health outcomes for people from ethnic minorities remain lower than those from White British backgrounds.
- Covid outcomes for individuals from certain ethnic minority groups remain worse than those from White British backgrounds
- Online registration with GP practices is challenging for Refugees/Asylum Seekers who have poor IT skills
- Not all service Providers have received cultural competency training to better understand the varied ethnic groups that reside in Doncaster.
- In terms of health and social care service providers, translation support is not consistently offered to individual’s that don’t speak English as a first language often meaning that people are signposted to a service but unable to progress beyond this point. There is a gap in commissioning the translation service.

Actions

1. Further targeted Covid vaccination clinics to be arranged in line with Spring vaccination programme and based on uptake data **(NHS ICB Doncaster)**

2. Culturally competency training to be rolled out to other health and social care Providers in Doncaster (NHS **ICB**)
3. Further Gypsy Roma and Traveller Health Fairs to be arranged in areas where GRT communities reside (**Action for GRT Link Workers, ICB**)

PHE 4: Culturally competent occupational risk assessment tools related to Covid

- Each organisation undertook an occupational risk assessment of their employees via individual managers.

Action

1. No further action. Currently no government restrictions in place related to Covid.

PHE 5: Culturally competent COVID-19 education and prevention campaigns

Achievements and Progress

- The Health Protection Engagement Coordinator attended IMT meetings, feeding back to Doncaster Council's Central Bronze group around Covid rates and any other emerging Public Health issues
- The Health Protection Engagement Coordinator attended the ICB Inequalities meetings, acting as a conduit between the Central Bronze meeting to coordinate vaccination clinics in under-served communities
- Support provided to targeted Covid vaccination clinics in underserved areas
- The Health Protection Engagement Coordinator shared key regional messages and information in a variety of languages with the Minorities Partnership Board and partners

Challenges

- Certain areas throughout the borough remain low in terms of vaccination uptake, despite the execution of the communications plan and the specific targeting of under-served groups.

Actions

1. The Public Health directorate and GRT Link Workers will continue to work closely with partners and to be innovative and responsive in relation to key messages linked to behaviour change (**Action for Public Health directorate and GRT Link Workers**)

PHE 6: target culturally competent health promotion and disease prevention programmes

Action

1. The MPB will continue to advocate for addressing health inequalities as part of system wide interventions in Doncaster aimed at improving health.
2. Public Health staff with an ethnic minorities/health inequalities focus will continue to provide this function

HNA 1: Gypsy and traveller health

Achievements and Progress

- Two individuals from the Traveller community and two individuals from the Roma community commenced in post in April 2021. All have been valuable assets within their respective communities in relation to Covid education and 'myth busting'.
- The Health Protection Engagement Coordinator Chaired monthly Gypsy Roma and Traveller meetings, which are attended by key partners and stakeholders. This acts as an information and intelligence-sharing forum.
- GRT Link Workers have held Focus Groups with GRT community members in relation to Mental Health and Early Years services. Focus Group findings have been fed back to relevant departments to shape future service delivery.
- A number of GRT Health Fairs have taken place since January 2022. Health Fairs have been well attended by health and social care service Providers and Commissioners with GRT community members attending for information, advice and guidance, support or signposting. **(Full report – Appendix C)**
- GRT Link Workers developed Cervical Screening resources **(Appendix D)** in collaboration with South Yorkshire Cancer Alliance using behaviour change methodology. This is routinely shared with GRT communities.

Challenges

- Doncaster has the largest Romani Gypsy settlement in England with over 70 sites, many of which are privately owned. The GRT workers have had some resistance to engagement when visiting some sites.
- Requests for support to navigate through health and social care systems has increased, particularly over the last year and where language has been a barrier (Roma community)
- The quality of primary and secondary care data has been problematic in terms of categorisations, stigma around self-identification and the partial completion of patient records. This has made establishing a baseline for things such as non-elective admissions challenging
- The Roma community within the borough are particularly underserved and engagement with the Local Authority has been limited, historically. There is also a lack of data around health outcomes for the Roma community although the data that is available would suggest that health outcomes are lower than the majority population

Actions

1. All Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) workers will continue to gather information and facilitate engagement with the GRT communities with a view to routinely providing (or signposting to) information, advice and guidance around health improvement. This can be captured as a qualitative Needs Assessment and it will provide intelligence for multi-agencies in Doncaster aimed at addressing health and social care challenges among the communities (**Action for GRT Link Workers, ICB**).
2. All GRT workers will work to identify 'leaders' within the GRT communities in a bid to utilise their influence and ensure initiatives and practices are co-produced (**Action for GRT Link Workers**).
3. GRT meeting to continue with alternative Chair (**Action for the ICB**)

HNA 2: Primary and secondary care- access to services, training etc. (See PHE 3)

Achievements and Progress

- Ten cultural competency awareness sessions have been delivered to GP Practice and Primary Care Networks around barriers to Gypsy Roma and Traveller communities accessing health services. Cultural competency sessions have also been delivered to Doncaster's Reproductive Health Service, (**Appendix B – Case Study**) specifically around Roma communities and barriers to accessing health services.
- Race Equality training procured and delivered to secondary care colleagues (and partners)

Challenges

- Cultural competency awareness and Race Equality training still to be rolled out to Team Doncaster system partners

Actions

1. GRT cultural competency training to be rolled out to other Doncaster health and social care organisations (**Action for GRT Link Workers, ICB**)
2. Identify and commission, if necessary, appropriate training package (covering all ethnicities) that can be used by partners in Doncaster (**Action for Team Doncaster and system partners**).

HNA3: Communication and engagement with BAME communities

Achievements and Progress

- The MPB acts as a 'sounding board' for engagement with different ethnic minority communities with consultation taking place around policies, procedures and service delivery.

- MPB Chair updated group members on Covid data, information and guidance including vaccinations
- The Health Protection Engagement Coordinator routinely shares information, advice and guidance (in a variety of formats) with the Minorities Partnership Board for wider dissemination

Challenges

- The idea that some communities are 'hard to reach' continues to be a sticking point
- Building trust with ethnic communities will take time. Historic inconsistencies around engagement with ethnic minority communities continues to be problematic
- Funding streams related to fixed term roles
- Still lack of knowledge and access around written and verbal translation routes available to Doncaster Council staff. Potential gap around service Providers and the procurement of translation services. Potential gap around awareness of Doncaster Councils in house translation unit provision

Actions

1. Continue to adapt our engagement practices to ensure co-production and that communities do not feel 'done to'. (**Action for Minorities Partnership Board**)
2. Capture outcomes to evidence impact (**Action for Minorities Partnership Board**)
3. Doncaster Interpretation Translation Unit to raise awareness of their service offer across Team Doncaster system partners (**DITU**)
4. System partners to consider making Link Worker posts long term/permanent posts as challenges are likely to continue over a long term (**Doncaster Council and NHS partners**)

HNA 4: Lifestyle and risk factors- social isolation, smoking, alcohol, local services, gambling, diet etc.

- These actions are to be addressed as part of routinely commissioned services

HNA 5: Wider determinants- housing, employment, education, social capital etc.

PHE 7: reduce inequalities caused by the wider determinants of health ([linked to HNA 5, above](#))

Achievements and Progress

- Health Protection Engagement Coordinator shares Doncaster Employment Hub weekly jobs update with Minorities Partnership Board and partners for dissemination.
- Challenges related to dispersal of asylum seekers in Doncaster were discussed with relevant partners and a mechanism was agreed to address the challenges faced
- The Health Protection Engagement team secured and coordinated English as a Second or Foreign Language (ESOL) and Family Learning classes for underserved ethnic groups (predominantly Roma). The offer includes child care provision at an accessible venue in the heart of the community. Classes commenced in February 2023 and uptake has been positive.
- Over the last year, the Senior Health Protection Engagement Officer has supported Migrant Hotels in Doncaster. This has included:
 - Arranging Initial Health assessments for residents
 - Arranging health literacy sessions for residents
 - Sourcing ESOL for residents
 - Connected residents to a variety of community groups.
 - Coordinated mental health support for residents (weekly drop ins)
 - Sourcing and coordinating donations for residents (including mobile phones and laptops)

Challenges

- The wider determinants often require partnership working and the agencies responsible are often not health but require collaboration/ a partnership approach

Actions

1. This action is being progressed by the system partners (**Action Team Doncaster, system partners and Doncaster's Health and Wellbeing Board**)

HNA 6: Race/discrimination/crime

Action

To be progressed via:

1. Inclusion and Fairness Forum;
2. Ethnic Culture Fusion Network
3. Doncaster Council's Fairness Commission

HNA 7: Establishing BAME Advisory Group

Achievements and Progress

- The BAME Advisory Group/Minorities Partnership Board has now been established for more than 5 years. The Minorities Partnership Board: System

Leaders forum was established in 2022 and meet on a quarterly basis. Community members routinely attend this forum while providing a 'critical friend' approach to the MPBs activities and functions

- Annual Report to capture progress, challenges and actions produced

Challenges

- There are some gaps in membership due to individuals competing priorities

Actions

1. Continue to annually review membership (**Action for Minorities Partnership Board**)
2. Continue to review Terms of Reference annually (**Action for Minorities Partnership Board**)