

Urgent need to address racial inequality in recovery from the impact of Covid-19

Today the Chancellor set out the budget for the forthcoming year and action that will support people experiencing the ongoing effects of the pandemic. A rise in the minimum wage, one off payment for those on Working Tax Credit, more funding for domestic violence programmes and extension of the furlough scheme, are some of the actions that will benefit individuals and families. In response to the announcement, Jabeer Butt Chief Executive of [Race Equality Foundation](#) states *'Whilst we welcome some of the proposals set out, it is worrying that scarce attention has been paid to addressing the impact of racial inequality. Given the evidence of higher risk and severe impact that Covid-19 has had on black, Asian and minority ethnic communities'* this is deeply disappointing.

We know that people from black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds are of higher risk of being severely affected by Covid-19, and working in areas which places them at higher risk of Covid-19 transmission, including working in public transport, social care and health service. Whilst socio economic factors, such as poor or overcrowded housing, insecure employment and low income has affected how these communities cope and manage the challenges of the pandemic, particularly during the various 'lockdowns'. Yet, it is still not clear what will be done to mitigate the disproportionate risks and impact of such inequalities in the recovery plan.

Race Equality Foundation is bringing people together to discuss how black, Asian and minority ethnic people have been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic across seven areas. A project funded by the [Health Foundation](#) will facilitate public discussions to develop solutions of how race and health inequalities should be addressed within the Covid-19 recovery plan across the seven areas.

Race Equality Foundation will work with policy makers including NHS England and Public Health England, academics, practitioners, and people with lived experience in a new project. The [Health Equity Collaborative project](#) will build a narrative across seven collaborative areas focused on solutions regarding health and race inequalities. The seven areas are children & families; housing; long term health conditions and disability; education; employment; older people and mental health and wellbeing. It is important that solutions to inequity across the seven areas are co-produced with people affected by racial and health inequality.

Each collaborative discussion group will facilitate webinars to discuss and debate issues introduced in an evidence-based briefing paper, hear members' perspective of the challenges to be addressed and recommend solutions for their subject area. The project will put forward ideas and solutions to government, public services, and local areas to make sure that everyone benefits equitably whilst we recover from all the issues that COVID-19 has raised.

Of the project, Jabeer Butt, Chief Executive of Race Equality Foundation said *'It is essential to influence how the Covid-19 recovery plan focuses on equality and addresses racial*

discrimination, as these have been areas that have had a detrimental impact on black and minority ethnic people's experience in the pandemic'

The project is running until 30 June 2020. Further information can be found on our website or by contacting Tracey Bignall via email tracey@racefound.org.uk

References

1. Covid-19 and how it affects Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people and communities
<https://raceequalityfoundation.org.uk/health-care/lockdown-2-briefing/>
2. BAME Covid Deaths Task Force Enquiry
<https://raceequalityfoundation.org.uk/uncategorised/bame-covid-deaths-task-force-enquiry/>