



## Health and Wellbeing Board

### **Report title: Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Health Inequalities Progress Update – COVID-19**

**Date:** 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021

**Key decision:** No

**Class:** Part 1

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Contributors:** Dr Catherine Mbema, Director of Public Health, London Borough of Lewisham

### **Outline and recommendations**

This report provides an update to the Board on the work of the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic working group to address health inequalities in Lewisham during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Members of the Health and Wellbeing Board are recommended to:

- Note the contents of this report and updated action plan

## Timeline of engagement and decision-making

### 1. Summary

- 1.1. To provide an update to the Board on the work of the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic working group to address BAME health inequalities in Lewisham during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Members of the Health and Wellbeing Board are recommended to:
  - Note the contents of this report and updated action plan

### 3. Policy Context

- 3.1. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 required the creation of statutory Health and Wellbeing Boards in every upper tier local authority. By assembling key leaders from the local health and care system, the principle purpose of the Health and Wellbeing Boards is to improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities for local residents.
- 3.2. The activity of the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) is focussed on delivering the strategic vision for Lewisham as established in Lewisham's Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- 3.3. The work of the Board directly contributes to the Council's new Corporate Strategy. Specifically *Priority 5 – Delivering and Defending: Health, Social Care and Support – Ensuring everyone receives the health, mental health, social care and support services they need.*

### 4. Background

- 4.1. In July 2018 the HWB agreed that the main area of focus for the Board should be tackling health inequalities, with an initial focus on health inequalities for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities in Lewisham.
- 4.2. Following analysis undertaken by a sub group of the Board, three priority areas were identified through which the Board could play a significant role in addressing the widest gaps in ethnic health inequalities. The areas identified were: mental health; obesity; and cancer.

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- 4.3. A draft action plan covering all three priority areas (cancer, obesity and mental health) was developed in July 2019 in response to a referral made by the Healthier Communities Select Committee.
- 4.4. At the November 2019 Health and Wellbeing Board meeting, Board members agreed to further refine the draft action plan with the Lewisham Black and Minority Ethnic Network taking a co-production approach.
- 4.5. At the March 2020 Health and Wellbeing Board meeting, a further draft of the action plan was approved by Board members with an agreement to return to the next Board meeting with monitoring metrics to capture progress and impact of completing actions within the plan.

## **5. Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Health Inequalities working group and action plan updates**

- 5.1. A health inequalities working group has met since the March 2020 Health and Wellbeing Board meeting to oversee implementation of the action plan.
- 5.2. The working group started to meet on a fortnightly basis from April 2020 owing to the COVID-19 pandemic but has moved back to meeting on a monthly basis as of September 2020.
- 5.3. For 2021, the group will review the actions within each section of the action plan in each quarter i.e. for the January – March 2021 period the group has focused on the COVID-19 section of the action plan reviewing the COVID-19 communications/engagement and data sections of the plan.

## **6. COVID-19 Communications and Engagement**

- 6.1. The two actions that continue to be in progress for this section of the action plan include:
  - To develop culturally appropriate communications around COVID-19: Work is ongoing in the Lewisham Council communications team to identify the most effective channels of communication for those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds in Lewisham. To date relationships are being forged with faith groups via the Lewisham Interfaith Forum, the Lewisham BME network and with our growing network of Lewisham COVID-19 Community Champions who support the dissemination of COVID-19 information across the borough.
  - To engage with Black and Minority Ethnic communities to provide culturally appropriate mental health support for COVID-19: Mabadiliko CIC have been commissioned to provide mental wellbeing support and resilience sessions to Black community members and staff in Lewisham. Having broadly agreed the evaluation criteria the sessions and evaluation is expected to be completed by summer 2021.

## **7. COVID-19 Data**

- 7.1. The outstanding action that continues to be in progress for this section of the action plan includes:
  - To analyse Lewisham COVID-19 cases and death data by ethnicity/country of birth: Lewisham Registry Office now asks for ethnicity of deceased person at all death registrations. Whilst this is voluntary, information is received for the majority of registrations. This analysis of this data is currently underway and is due to be presented at an upcoming health inequalities working group meeting. The breakdown of COVID-19 cases by ethnic group is reported each week within routine

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data surveillance using Public Health England published data, and is reported to Lewisham Council Gold to inform any action required.

## **8. Black Asian and Minority Ethnic Health Inequalities Toolkit**

- 8.1. A Health Inequalities Toolkit has been developed to provide a data overview of existing health inequalities for different ethnic groups in Lewisham. The aim of this toolkit is to present data in a user-friendly format that can be used by community members and will also inform data insights for the joint work with Birmingham.
- 8.2. The development of the toolkit has taken a partnership approach to collate data from Health and Wellbeing Board partner organisations using the existing London Health Inequalities strategy themes as a framework (Healthy Children, Healthy Minds, Healthy Places, Healthy Communities, and Healthy Living). This use of this framework will be reviewed in light of the recent 'Build Back Fairer: The COVID-19 Marmot Review' report from Sir Michael Marmot (<https://www.health.org.uk/sites/default/files/upload/publications/2020/Build-back-fairer-the-COVID-19-Marmot-review.pdf>).
- 8.3. The toolkit is continuing to be finalised with support from Health and Wellbeing Board partners to provide additional health related ethnicity data. The toolkit will then be presented and discussed by the Health leads at the Lewisham Black and Minority Ethnic network before publication in late Spring 2021.

## **9. Financial implications**

- 9.1. The various areas of work within the action plan that are the responsibility of the Council will be met from existing revenue budgets in the Community Services and Children and Young People Directorates.

## **10. Legal implications**

- 10.1. Members of the Board are reminded of their responsibilities to carry out statutory functions of the Health and Wellbeing Board under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. Activities of the Board include, but may not be limited to the following:
  - To encourage persons who arrange for the provision of any health or social services in the area to work in an integrated manner, for the purpose of advancing the health and wellbeing of the area.
  - To provide such advice, assistance or other support as it thinks appropriate for the purpose of encouraging the making of arrangements under Section 75 NHS Act 2006 in connection with the provision of such services.
  - To encourage persons who arrange for the provision of health related services in its area to work closely with the Health and Wellbeing Board.
  - To prepare Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (as set out in Section 116 Local Government Public Involvement in Health Act 2007).
  - To give opinion to the Council on whether the Council is discharging its duty to have regard to any JSNA and any joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy prepared in the exercise of its functions.
  - To exercise any Council function which the Council delegates to the Health and Wellbeing Board, save that it may not exercise the Council's functions under Section 244 NHS Act 2006.

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## **11. Equalities implications**

- 11.1. This report specifically aims to address health inequalities for particular ethnic groups in Lewisham, with race being one of the nine protected characteristics in the Equality Act (2010).

## **12. Climate change and environmental implications**

- 12.1. There are no climate change or environmental implications of this report.

## **13. Crime and disorder implications**

- 13.1. There are no crime and disorder implications of this report.

## **14. Health and wellbeing implications**

- 14.1. Improving health outcomes and reducing health inequalities is central to the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board. This report directly aligns with these aims by outlining a plan of action to address health inequalities in Lewisham's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities.

## **15. Report author and contact**

- 15.1. Dr Catherine Mbema, [Catherine.mbema@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:Catherine.mbema@lewisham.gov.uk)

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