

Subject:[COMMISSION] - DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTED GROUPS (FOCUS ON DISABLED PEOPLE) - 27th Nov

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Date: Thu, 5 Nov 2020 11:59:27 +0000

To Emran and Helen,

Please find below a formal commission for you to work across government, and together with HMT, DWP and the Director of Government Equalities Hub to produce a paper on disproportionate impacts from COVID-19 on disabled people for a COVID-O Committee meeting provisionally scheduled for **Friday 27th November**.

Please place a hold in your calendar in advance of a formal calling notice being issued.

Private Offices to note: we have copied you into this commission for awareness, but Emran will commission colleagues in departments separately in his capacity as Cross-Government COVID-19 SRO on Disproportionately Impacted Groups, so no specific action needed from you at this stage.

Context

At the 29 October meeting of COVID-O, the committee agreed to an ambitious package of measures to prevent transmission to and within groups that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, focusing in particular on ethnic minority communities. The Prime Minister and CDL also asked departments, in slower time, for a more ambitious package that can prevent disproportionate impacts from COVID-19 for people with disabilities.

Purpose

The aim of this paper is for ministers to **agree a package of proposals for policies or interventions to mitigate COVID-19's disproportionate impact among disabled people, including those with learning disabilities**. Specifically, ministers will be asked to:

- I. **consider** the information from the available data setting out how and when disabled people have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19;
- II. **agree** recommendations to counter the impact of COVID-19 on disabled people, in the context of the continuing second wave; and
- III. **agree** the total quantum of funding for this package of interventions at committee, including where funding should come from.

Given the Prime Minister's specific steer, it is critical that all Departments feeding in ensure that recommendations and proposals sufficiently meet the scale of this ambition.

Emran will issue a return template for departments to complete for each proposal and work through any funding requirement and communications implications. When completing the commission, Departments will be asked to set out outline timelines for implementation.

1. Paper

To facilitate this discussion, please provide a short paper outlining recommended proposals. The paper should consider recommendations based on the specific issues below, **as well as any additional/ further recommendations that departments devise internally, on the basis of the data.**

1. Building the evidence base and improving data quality

DWP, DHSC and Disability Unit to seek to improve the data, which should include a breakdown of types of impairment associated with: an increased risk of infection from COVID-19, and an increase in the risk of poorer outcomes from COVID-19 and monitoring of policies to assess effectiveness.

2. Mitigating health impacts such as mortality and morbidity

As part of the DHSC's delivery assurance role overseeing "Adult social care: our COVID-19 winter plan 2020 to 2021", DHSC to conduct some rapid work with MHCLG, LGA, ADASS, local authorities and CQC to assess whether:

infection prevention and control procedures (e.g. regular testing, free PPE and workforce measures) are providing adequate protections to reduce risks to clinically extremely vulnerable disabled people in registered care homes, supported living settings, day services and other social care settings; and, if gaps are identified, to propose how these will be mitigated.

DHSC and MHCLG to consider how community-based care services which have yet to be opened, can re-open, where it is safe to do so, and continue to be delivered and adapt to Covid pressures, and what additional practical support can be given to parents of disabled people affected by day care centre closures

DHSC and MHCLG to review whether existing support for clinically extremely vulnerable disabled people and those being asked to isolate following a positive covid result is sufficient. MHCLG and DHSC to review how different approaches to care delivery outside registered care homes e.g. communal homes, domiciliary support via agencies and/or support via Direct Payments has impacted outcomes for disabled people during the pandemic, what the key factors have been and what action is needed to mitigate any impacts.

3. Mitigating secondary impacts such as employment, poverty and wellbeing

Disability Unit, DCMS and Cabinet Office Comms Hub to put forward recommendations to improve digital accessibility for disabled people. We know that disabled adults are less likely than the rest of the population to have access to the internet.

DWP and HMT to consider and put forward a package of financial support to address the disproportionate impacts on disabled people, including those on 'legacy' benefits not covered by Universal Credit.

DWP to advise on specific employment related provision aimed at reducing impacts on disabled people, highlighting schemes aimed at disabled young people.

MHCLG to consider what role local authority support and community champions (once deployed) can play in delivering support to disabled people affected by closure of services and reviewing existing best practice in the sector to improve service provision.

DCMS (working with CO Comms Hub External Affairs and MHCLG Community Champions teams) to work with local charities/support groups who provide outreach support to disabled people to understand impact on critical support services and what further support is needed to mitigate any

disproportionate impacts.

DfE to consider measures that 1) support the education of disabled children and 2) support their parents.

4. Engagement and effectiveness

All departments to review and make recommendations on how to ensure their COVID-19 guidance and messaging reaches and is understood by disabled people.

All departments to consider their mechanisms to bring stakeholder insight into their work with a view to improving interventions and decision making in respect to people with disabilities.

When preparing the paper, please work with:

HMT to agree funding proposals to support the swift implementation of these recommendations.
Your departmental comms teams to consider comms handling for any recommendations.

Deadlines

The deadline for this commission is **10:00 Friday 20th November** for the draft papers. Your lead official will be expected to attend a COVID-O (O) Officials meeting on **Monday 23rd November** to prepare for the meeting. The deadline for final papers is **10:00 Wednesday 24th November** to be submitted to C-19 Secretariat who will then manage forward to CDL for his clearance ahead of the COVID-O Committee provisionally scheduled for **Friday 27th November 2020**.

Please can you confirm (i) receipt of this commission, and (ii) which official will be required to attend the meeting.

Format

This will last 30 minutes. At the outset the Chair (CDL) will invite the lead official who will have no more than five minutes to summarise the recommendations you are making, referring to the paper (which you should assume has been read by all attendees). The Chair will then guide the discussion through each of the decisions to be taken in turn.

Please get in touch with your secretariat contact if you have any questions, and continue to work closely with and in the C-19 Taskforce.

Best wishes,
C-19 Secretariat

C-19 Secretariat



This is the new mailbox for the central C-19 Secretariat.
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