

Vulnerable Groups – Ethnic Minorities - COVID-19 Contact Tracing

Action Plan

Introduction

The Public Health Agency (PHA) is central to ensuring engagement, cooperation and compliance on the 'Test, Trace, Protect' COVID-19 key messages launched on 10th July 2020.

There are increased risks for specific vulnerable groups within the Northern Ireland (NI) population and therefore a need to put measures in place to support pro-active steps in place to optimise testing, tracing and compliance with PHA COVID-19 Guidelines.

This Contact Tracing Ethnic Minorities COVID-19 action plan addresses pro-active and responsive measures targeting vulnerable groups that includes;

- Black and Ethnic Minority Groups including, though not exclusively, Roma, East Timorese, Refugee, Asylum seekers and Travellers.

Background

Figures from the 2011 Census show the diverse nature of the ethnic minority community in Northern Ireland. Over 32,000, representing almost 2% of the NI population, people indicated their ethnicity as something other than 'white' (Racial Equality Strategy, 2015-2025). There is a lack of up to date information on the numbers of ethnic minority groups who currently live in N Ireland.

Covid-19 has exacerbated existing inequalities by age, sex and deprivation (PHE July 2020). In NI, there are a significant number of people from ethnic minority backgrounds who are at a significantly increased risk due to economic and social disadvantage. In addition, co morbidities, obesity, diabetes, hypertension and cardio-metabolic complications and smoking increase the risk of disease severity.

Additional and related risk factors include language barriers, occupation, poverty / no recourse to public funds, overcrowded and multiple occupancy housing, use of communal transport and public transport, household composition and conditions. This means that Covid-19 pandemic is not a crisis which just affects health but it has an impact upon social and economic factors (Sage, July 3, 2020)

Public Health England (PHE) Review of disparities in the risk and outcomes of COVID-19 shows that there is an association between belonging to some ethnic groups and increased likelihood of testing positive and dying with COVID-19 (June 2020). A particular focus on early intervention, prevention and reacting quickly to outbreaks within vulnerable groups is vital to reduce the numbers testing positive for COVID-19 and subsequent potential deaths.

The Racial Equality Strategy (2015-2025) identifies significant and challenging social, housing, education, community, economic and health issues within the context of differential poorer outcomes that impact on the lives of minority ethnic people across the community. A number of the aims such as 'Equality of service provision' and 'Participation' are relevant to this action plan. The Racial Equality Strategy also highlights the need for ethnic monitoring which is paramount during COVID-19 to successfully trace, monitor those who test positive for COVID-19 and identify any gaps in service provision.

There is an obvious need for sensitivity to avoid an increase in negative false stereotyping, hostility towards and 'blaming' of minority ethnicity communities.

Sage (23 July 2020) provides recommendations for developing culturally appropriate messaging for BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) Groups. Work with community and voluntary partners is critical in taking forward this work to ensure that the Public Health messages around Covid-19 are 'tailored to reflect local realities and consider cultural norms, accessibility of services, and financial disadvantage'.

This Action plan highlights the planning process that would be supportive of and provide regular updates to the Contact Tracing Group, PHA Second Wave Planning Group and PHA Health Improvement Recovery Plan. It is divided into three sections: Early Intervention/Prevention, Reaction to identification of clusters and Other Factors eg Racism, ethnic monitoring, sensitivities in local communities etc. An action log will be generated for the purposes of highlighting the exact progress of overarching actions in the action plan. The action log will be updated on a weekly basis.

NICVA have identified a named lead who will provide complementary information on key V&C contacts and processes and related input to the Plan.

ACTION PLAN

Outcome to be achieved	Action	Lead Responsibility	Deadline	Progress
<u>Early Intervention / Prevention</u>				
Communication & Links with the Voluntary and Community Sector				
1. Provision of appropriate Covid-19 messages which target Vulnerable groups and the BAME population to ensure that they understand Covid-19 prevention and other messages eg when/where/why/how to get tested, what to do if a test is positive, hand washing, social distancing, travelling to work, quarantine etc.	<p>1.1 Evaluate what Covid-19 messages have been translated, during March-June 2020, into different formats (leaflets, posters, video clips etc) and languages.</p> <p>1.2 Identify gaps and ensure translations meet the needs of ethnic minority communities, taking into consideration cultural sensitivities, ensuring translations use terminology that is understandable and clear in their own language</p>	Name Redacted	<p>August 2020</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Information gathered from PHA and other Government sites, links with PHA Communications, Community and Voluntary sector (C&V). Appendix A – list of translations, voice overs.</p> <p>Meeting 27/7/2020 with C&V representatives and HI to share translations and identify gaps around messaging for priority groups and BAME population. Follow up meeting TBC.</p> <p>BHSCT led Roma group to continue to support messaging and highlight issues in relation to target groups eg myths around Covid-19 in the Roma community. Links with Romanian Consul etc.</p>

	<p>1.3 Ensure that messages continue to be reviewed and updated as required.</p> <p>1.4 Messages will be reissued when appropriate.</p>	<p>Name Redacted</p>	<p>Review weekly</p>	<p>Translations as per BSO contract.</p> <p>Highlight the use of BrowseAloud which is on many Government websites etc.</p> <p>C& V partners to be consulted when messages are being translated and involved in the pre-testing of messages in order to ensure they are tailored to the needs of these groups.</p> <p>Review best practice both UK and worldwide.</p> <p>Links with PHA Communications and check PHA and government websites.</p>
		<p>C & V partners</p>		
	<p>1.4 Communication with Regional Groups to ensure information is disseminated to target groups.</p>	<p>Name Redacted</p>	<p>Ongoing – when new guidance issued and to reinforce messages</p>	<p>Translated information disseminated through PHA Regional Minority Ethnic & Migrants group on an ongoing basis and when the need arises.</p> <p>Members, who represent BAME groups and individuals, will in turn disseminate this information (Appendix B)</p> <p>Information disseminated through Regional Travellers group on an ongoing basis and when the need arises. Members, who represent</p>
		<p>Name Redacted</p>		

				Travellers groups and individuals, will in turn disseminate this information (Appendix C)
	1.5 Messages also disseminated through PHA HI BAME and Traveller Leads.	<div>BAME Leads:</div> <div>Name Redacted</div> <div>Traveller Leads</div> <div>Name Redacted</div>	Ongoing	Information disseminated through HI Local leads to targeted groups via contract contacts (BAME, Traveller, Community Development etc)

	1.6 Dissemination of messages and information through PHA HI C&V sector contracts by appropriate contract Lead.	PHA local BAME and Traveller Leads (listed above)	Ongoing	<p>Review of contracts by Leads (monthly contract reviews) and identify needs and gaps in funding.</p> <p>Regional dissemination of messages is through STEP via consortium members (who in turn disseminate information to their members), local BAME communities, e-alerts, www.strongertogetherni.org. C & V BAME sector also use social media, WhatsApp, zoom etc to communicate with target groups.</p> <p>Contract holders have been working closely with HI PHA to support the translation of information into formats which can be understood by the target populations (Appendices D & E list BAME Regional Health Improvement contracts and support for dissemination of information).</p> <p>Appendix F lists Traveller contracts and organisations who have, and continue to, support this work.</p> <p>Link with NICVA re increasing the numbers of community organisations supporting the dissemination of information.</p>
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2. To explore the use and promotion of the new COVID-19 app for vulnerable groups.	2.1 Identify if App can be accessed in different languages eg BrowseAloud.	Name Redacted	August 2020	Link with HSCB who are developing and promoting this app.
	2.2 Identify if any additional translated documents are required to explain use of the app.		Ongoing	Taking into account cultural norms, myths, resistance to use of app, access to appropriate phone in order to download app etc support the promotion off App.
	2.3 Dissemination of information.		Ongoing	Information disseminated in appropriate formats to BAME and Travellers contacts (as per previous actions 1.4, 1.5 & 1.6).

Reaction to Identification of clusters

Communication				
3. Testing of vulnerable groups during an outbreak.	3.1 Link with HI Colleagues regarding testing for vulnerable groups.	Name Redacted	August /September 2020	Appropriate testing sites identified. Connections made with C & V sectors and local Council staff to support contact tracing and testing. Support Contact Tracing Team, as required, to support communication with vulnerable groups through HI community contracts and contacts. Information provided to explain testing, self- isolation if required and where support can be obtained (food etc).
		HI local Leads (1.5) for BAME & Travellers	Ongoing	
Links with Health Protection and other partners				
4. Support Health Protection during Covid-19 outbreaks.	4.1 IMT (Incident Management Team) involvement as required.	Name Redacted	When required	Support IMT particularly around communication with target groups, provision of appropriate information for target groups and links with community organisations working with these target groups.

Other Factors				
5. Racism and sensitivities in local communities.	5.1 Link with BSO Equality staff.	Name Redacted	Ongoing	Exploratory meetings with BSO to consider anti-racism actions and messages eg during Good Relations Week 14-21 September. Actions to be confirmed.
		Equality BSO		
6. Data collection, Ethnic and Nationality monitoring.	6.1 Work with partners to continue to raise the issue of ethnic monitoring.	Trust Roma Group and PHA internal PHA group.	Ongoing	Issue raised at silver, DoH regarding ethnic monitoring in hospitals. Data important for second surge planning.
		Name Redacted	July 2020	Mapping of BAME groups and those who work in food production (Appendix G).
		Traveller Forum Task Group, Long Health Lives linking with NISRA regarding ethnic monitoring.	Ongoing	Meeting planned 6 th August.

7. Support those with no recourse to public funds and those experiencing poverty.	7.1 Highlight issues around poverty which is a disincentive for testing, self-isolation and quarantine requirements following travel.	HI Staff TBC	Ongoing	Paper on Poverty and the role of HI presented to HI Heads to agree the role of HI. Link with TEOs, Racial Equality Unit and Government Departments i.e. DFC, Finance etc
	7.2 Resources available for those who need to self-isolate e.g. food parcels Support from NIHE if required for additional housing.	Link with Nursing Colleagues – Name Redacted and community partners. Links with C & V sector	Ongoing August/September	Nursing meet with NIHE to discuss issues around the Homeless – BAME to be included in these conversations. Following meeting with C & V on 27/7/2020 community partners to come together to make an application to obtain funding to pilot funding to support the Roma, east Timorese and Refugees and Asylum seekers.
8. Supporting Vulnerable groups to register with a GP.	8.1 To ensure that these target groups are supported to register with a GP.	Name Redacted	Ongoing	July 2020 NINES (Northern Ireland New Entrant Service) staff returning to posts from re-deployment due to Covid-19. Health assessments and support to register with GPs to re-commence.

9. Supporting the development of Equality Impact Assessment for contact tracing.	9.1 Working with PHA Operations to support the completion of EQIA	Name Redacted	TBC	Meeting planned for 6 th August.
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Appendices

Appendix A

COVID-19 List of translations

Video/Factsheet /resource	Title	Language
		Links available but removed for action plan as document too large to email (links available from Kim Munce/Janice Armstrong)
Video	Hand hygiene	Bulgarian and Romanian
Video	Advice on Safer Shopping during Covid-19	Bulgarian and Romanian
Video	Testing for COVID-19 animation	Romanian and Bulgarian
Poster	NI COVID-19 poster	Irish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Portuguese, Tetum, Slovak, Polish, Lithuanian, Arabic
Poster	Advice during Ramadan (developed by Belfast Islamic Centre)	Arabic
Poster	Self-isolation (DOH / PHA)	Bulgarian and Romanian
Poster	Safer Shopping (PHA)	Arabic, Bulgarian, Chinese (complex and simplified), Irish, Lithuanian, Portuguese, Polish, Romanian, Slovakian, Tetum
Poster	Poster for GPs (PHA)	Arabic, Bulgarian, Chinese (complex and simplified), Irish, Lithuanian, Portuguese, Polish, Romanian, Slovakian, Tetum

Poster	Isolate your household (PHA)	Arabic, Bulgarian, Chinese (complex and simplified), Irish, Lithuanian, Portuguese, Polish, Romanian, Slovakian, Tetum
Poster	Poster for pharmacies (PHA)	Arabic, Bulgarian, Chinese (complex and simplified), Irish, Lithuanian, Portuguese, Polish, Romanian, Slovakian, Tetum
Poster	Test, trace and Protect	Bulgarian and Romanian
Leaflet	Test, trace, Protect everyone needs support (PHA)	Arabic, Bulgarian, Chinese (complex and simplified), Irish, Lithuanian, Portuguese, Polish, Romanian, Slovakian, Tetum
Leaflet	Testing	Romanian
Leaflet	UK Government COVID-19 leaflet	Romanian
Leaflet	Coronavirus – easy read	English
Factsheet	Understand Depression (Developed by Aware)	Polish, Chinese and Lithuanian
Website	Migrant Help Website	Some resources translated
Website	Coronavirus advice from Doctors of the world	60 languages
Links to resources	COVID-19 material translated from sources in Scotland, England, EU and WHO	Various links and languages
Resources	Resources for Roma community including some translated posters	Romanian

Appendix B**Regional Minority Ethnic and Migrants Group contacts**

Name	Organisation	Email Address
Name Redacted	PHA	Name Redacted @hscni.net
		Name Redacted @hscni.net
		Name Redacted @hscni.net
		NR @hscni.net
NR		
Name Redacted		Name Redacted @hscni.net
		Name Redacted @hscni.net
		Name Redacted @hscni.net
		NR @hscni.net
	Patient, Client Council	NR @pcc-ni.net
	BH SCT	NR @belfasttrust.hscni.net
		Name Redacted @belfasttrust.hscni.net
		Name Redacted @belfasttrust.hscni.net
		Name Redacted @belfasttrust.hscni.net
		NR @belfasttrust.hscni.net
	BSO	NR @hscni.net
	HSCB	Name Redacted @hscni.net

Maire McCotter	South Tyrone Empowerment Programme	maire.mccotter@stepni.org
Bernadette McAliskey		Bernadette@stepni.org
Name Redacted	SET	NR @setrust.hscni.net
Name Redacted		NR @setrust.hscni.net
Mary Kerr	NILGA	m.kerr@nilga.org
Dr Kieran Shields	Education Authority	kieran.shields@eani.org.uk
Name Redacted	WHST	NR @westerntrust.hscni.net
Sinead Trainor	Newry & Mourne Ethnic Minority Support Centre	sinead.trainor@nmandd.org
Ivy Goddard	Inter-Ethnic Forum	ivy.goddard@interethnicforum.org.uk
Camilla Reynolds	Chinese Welfare Association NI	camilla@cwa-ni.info
William Olphert		william@cwa-ni.org
Ineke.Houtenbos	NSPCC	Ineke.Houtenbos@NSPCC.org.uk
Name Redacted	SHSCT	NR @southerntrust.hscni.net
		NR @southerntrust.hscni.net
		NR @southerntrust.hscni.net

Name Redacted		margaret.bunting@southerntrust.hscni.net
		Name Redacted @southerntrust.hscni.net
	Artseka	Name Redacted @executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk
	Executive Office NI	Name Redacted @executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk
		Name Redacted @executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk
Name Redacted		Name @executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk
	NHSCT	Name Redacted @northerntrust.hscni.net
Denise Wright	SBTR	denise.wright@sbtr.org.uk
Jo Marley	Bryson Intercultural Group	jmarley@brysongroup.org
Joanne Morgan	CDHN	JoanneMorgan@cdhn.org
Stephen Smith	Community Intercultural Programme NI	stephen.smith@cipni.com
Sule Iman	HAPNI	suleiman@hapani.org

Appendix C

Regional Traveller Group contacts

Name	Contact details
Name Redacted	Name @belfasttrust.hscni.net
Fidelma Mc Coy Armagh Traveller Support Group	manager@armaghtravellersupport.co.uk project@armaghtravellersupport.co.uk
Pauline McCarry Maureen Sheehan Centre Belfast	Personal Data @gmail.com
Shirley Gillespie – Early Years	shirleyg@early-years.org
Bernadette McAliskey- STEP (An Tearmann – Dungannon / Coalisland)	bernadette@stepni.org
Name Redacted PHA –Regional Lead Travellers	Name Redacted @hscni.net
Lisa Hogg - Craigavon Traveller Support Committee	Manager@craigavontravellers.org
Name Redacted Traveller Community Development Officer SHSCT	Name Redacted @southerntrust.hscni.net
Name Redacted – SHSCT (NINES – Southern area) SHSCT	Name Redacted @southerntrust.hscni.net
Kieran Shields Education Authority	Kieran.Shields@eani.org.uk
Annmarie McKee,	amck@crjireland.org

Community Restorative Justice	
Judith Searle Barnardo's	judith.searle@barnardos.org.uk
Karen Turner Education Authority Traveller Support	karen.turner@eani.org.uk
Marie McLaughlin WHSCT	marie.mclaughlin@westerntrust.hscni.net
Ann Ross Belfast City Council Traveller Liaison Office	Anne.Ross@belfastcity.gov.uk
Mulholland NR SHSCT – Traveller / BME Health visitor	Name Redacted @southerntrust.hscni.net
Paul Reid – NIHE	Paul.Reid@nihe.gov.uk
Natasha McDonagh – Start 360 Northern area	natasha.mcdonagh@start360.org
Name Redacted NIHE	Name Redacted @nihe.gov.uk
Name Redacted PHA West	Name Redacted @hscni.net
Name Redacted PHA Northern	Name Redacted @hscni.net
Name Redacted PHA B/SE	Name Redacted @hscni.net

Appendix D

Minority Ethnic and Migrants (BAME) Health Improvement PHA Contracts 2020-2021

Organisation	Name of contract/ reference	Trust area	Description	Length of contract
BHSCT	NINES (Mig/R/01) (Northern Ireland New Entrant Service)	Belfast	NINES is funded jointly by Health Protection and Health Improvement. It is a service for New Entrants who are not registered with a GP. This includes TB screening, targeted BCG programmes, assessment of the health and wellbeing needs of New Entrants, increasing uptakes of vaccinations other than BCG, assisting with primary care registration, transition to mainstream services and signposting to appropriate health and other services.	31 st March 2021
BHSCT	Roma Community Health Workers (Mig/R/02) <u>Extension 1</u> :Roma Helpline	Belfast Belfast	Two Romanian speaking Community Health Workers are employed by BHSCT. Their roles include identifying early years' needs and potential barriers to accessing services and support. BCC, BHSCT & PHA fund a Roma Helpline 30 hours per week.	31 st March 2021 11 th May 2020- 30 th June 2020

	<u>Extension 2:Roma Helpline</u>			Extended until end of December 2020.
STEP (South Tyrone Empowerment Programme)	Stronger Together (IEQ/N/05)	Regional	STEP developed and now manage and sustain an inclusive and collaborative regional minority ethnic health and social wellbeing, good practice and information sharing network. Activity includes www.strongertogetherni.org , e-alerts to members, seminars based on needs identified, annual conference.	31 st March 2021
STEP (South Tyrone Empowerment Programme)	1+1 Bi-Lingual Workers (Mig/R/04) <u>Extension 1:</u>	Southern Belfast Northern	Three x Bi-lingual Workers each appointed for 22.5 hours per week (1+1 Project).Belfast – Chinese (CWA)Dungannon – Portuguese (STEP)Ballymoney & Ballymena - Polish (Mid & East Antrim Inter-Ethnic Forum).The overall management of this project is by STEP and organisations named manage the workers on a day to day basis and provide accommodation for the workers. Bi-Lingual Workers – 1 Romanian and 1 Bulgarian each funded for 7 hours a week to work with the Roma community in the Ballymena area.	31 st March 2021 1 st April 2020-30 th June 2020

	Romanian & Bulgarian Bi-lingual Workers <u>Extension 2:</u> Romanian & Bulgarian Bi-lingual Workers <u>Extension 3:</u> Romanian & Bulgarian Bi-lingual Workers	Northern	Extension 2 – previous extension was up to end of June this contract extended until end of March 2022 Extension 3 – from 1 st June both Workers hours extended x 7 hours per week to 14 per week due to increase in workload around Covid-19 – support for Health Protection IMT, communicating messages etc.	31 st March 2021 31 st March 2021
Chinese Welfare Association (CWA)	BAME Worker Chinese Advocacy Worker	Belfast Belfast (but accepts some clients from elsewhere)	0.6wte post and programme funds targeting the BAME population.	31 st March 2021 31 st March 2021
Forward South	Development Fund	South Belfast	Programme funds for Health Promoting Homes for families, Fitness programmes in schools and physical activity with older people.	31 st March 2021
ArtsEkta	ArtsEkta	Belfast	Funding goes towards the Mela and other health improvement activity (arts based projects) aimed at BAME groups. Programme funds only.	31 st March 2021

Other Health Improvement contracts such as Community Development activity include BAME groups as priority/target groups – these are not included in the above. This table reflects contracts funded from the regional BAME (Migrants) budget.

Appendix E

Dissemination of Information is through BAME and Travellers Networks which are set out below.

Stronger Together is a multi-ethnic network with a total membership of over 300 made up of BAME groups and individual stakeholders in Racial Equality Work. Individual members are from both BAME and majority communities.

Network Collective Leadership

BAME - led organisations who are members of Stronger Together Leadership Consortium:

- ACSONI (African and Caribbean Society in N. Ireland) (umbrella support group for small groups from Continent of African & also Black Caribbean immigrants)
- Chinese Welfare Association (representing Chinese community in Belfast & Derry)
- Ballymena Interethnic Forum; (all minority ethnic communities; migrant workers & refugees in Mid and East Antrim Council area)
- NW Migrant Forum; (all minority ethnic communities; migrant workers & refugees in Derry City area)

Organisations on Consortium Leadership working in wider community base but having specialist work/ remit in minority ethnic work:

- Ballymoney Community Resources Centre (leads integration work Ballymoney – Coleraine)
- Community Integration Partnership (Leads minority ethnic work in Armagh/ Craigavon / Banbridge Area)
- STEP (facilitates the network and acts as Lead Contractor for PHA contract) – also leads minority ethnic work in Mid Ulster Council area with outreach to Fermanagh

Specialisms in most vulnerable of BAME communities:

East Timorese; STEP & CIP

Roma: CIP and BIEF

Refugees: ACSONI ; NWMF & STEP

Minority ethnic membership groups include groups dealing with specific cluster of immigrants e.g.

- **Wah Hep** (support group for Chinese ethnic group settled in Craigavon area – originally refugees from Vietnam War (‘ the boat people’ was the local terminology of the period- the community was expelled from Vietnam and rescued by volunteer effort by boat – UK refugees scheme – like current Syrian scheme)
- **Hipani** – (Support for those from countries making up Horn of Africa (Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti.) many of these are refugees
- **Voice of Migrant Women** - a small network of migrant women in support organisations addressing key issues for women and children)
- Interethnic Support Groups: Newry Mourne & Down Council Area; Strabane.
- YMCA immigrant support programme
- Welcome House ; Lisburn

The network has regional coverage and approx. 300 members with a very participative engagement of approx.120.

We circulate a **weekly e- alert** increased to twice weekly to meet Covid – need to all ST members who in turn cascade to their networks The e-alert is circulated by email and on Twitter & Facebook. We have a collaborative linguistic capacity enable first language engagement and the network links with other similar networks across the UK. The effectiveness of the network was seen in how quickly important Covid 19 Information could be circulated in mother tongues.

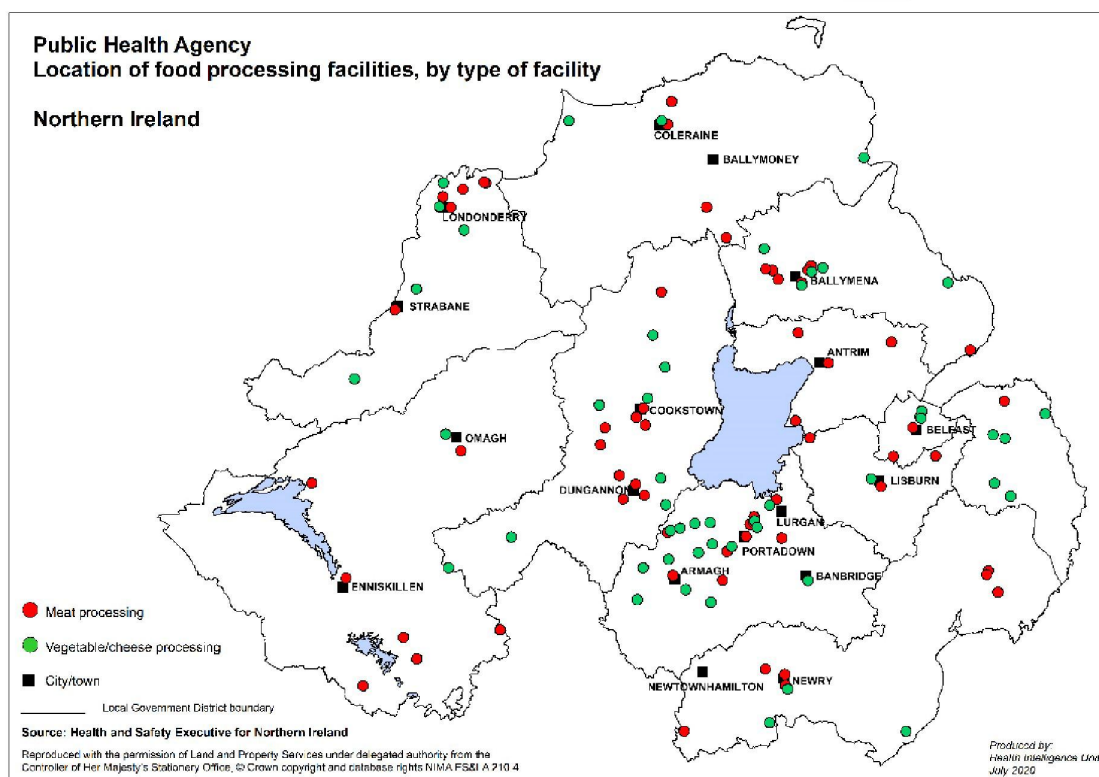
Appendix F

Travellers Health Improvement PHA Contracts 2020-2021

Organisation	Name of contract/ reference	Trust area	Description	Length of contract
BHSCT	IEQ/B/03 <u>Travellers early intervention project- (Maureen Sheehan Centre, CRJ, Barnardos, Extern)</u>	Belfast	Supporting children in school during transition periods. Supporting Travellers with a range of issues including addiction, trauma, mental health, complex housing needs and issues related to release from prison. Support to access services within Healthy Living centres in North and West Belfast. Provides support to families and signposts to community organisations across the Belfast Trust area.	recurrent – reviewed annually
SHSCT	T/S/02 – Enhanced Support to Traveller groups (ATSG, CTSC, An Tearmann, and	Southern	Working in partnership improve the h&w of the Traveller community by coordinating a range of programmes promoting mental and emotional health, physical activity, education, training etc. Deliver cultural	recurrent– reviewed annually

	Family Support SHSCT)		awareness to HSC professional and other organisations, provide support to groups and individuals to access services and work in partnership with other organisations to promote Traveller health and wellbeing.	
SHSCT	T/S/0 – Enhanced Support to Travellers	Southern	An Tearmann (Dungannon & Coalisland), Armagh Traveller Support Group, Craigavon Traveller Support Committee, Family Traveller Support Worker Newry and Mourne. Providing support to Travellers across the Trust area to promote health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities working in partnership with a range of agencies.	recurrent – reviewed annually
WHSCT	TR/W/01 Traveller Health and Wellbeing programme		Traveller Health and Wellbeing programme; Supporting Travellers to reduce health inequalities and improve outcomes in health and wellbeing across the Trust area.	recurrent – reviewed annually

Appendix G



BAME Populations



	Bulgarian	Bulgarian Roma	East Timorese	Hungarian	Iranian	Iraqi	Latvian	Lithuanian	Polish	Romanian	Romanian Roma	Russian	Slovakian	Syrian
Armagh	•	•												
Lack of support structures														
Ballymena	•	•									•			
Outbreak and num of cases														
Belfast	•	•								•				•
Dromore (Village)	•	•												
Dungannon			•							•		•		
Number of cases														
Enniskillen							•	•	•					
Londonderry			•	•	•	•	•	•				•		•
Cross border travel														
Newry	•	•						•	•	•	•			
Newtownhamilton (Village)		•												
Cross border travel														
Omagh			•	•			•		•	•			•	
Large numbers employed														
Portadown, Lurgan, Craigavon	•	•					•	•	•	•	•	•		
Strabane							•	•	•	•				

Location of support services



	C&V Support organisations	Statutory Organisations
Armagh Lack of support structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Church Support 	
Ballymena Outbreak and no. of cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mid & East Antrim Inter-Ethnic Forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STEP Bi lingual Workers
Belfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chinese Welfare Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Belfast Trust Roma Community Health Workers Roma Helpline NINES
Dungannon Number of cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STEP (South Tyrone Empowerment Programme) Bi lingual Worker (Portugese) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NINES (NI New Entrant Service) SHSCT Health Visitor
Londonderry Cross border travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North West Migrant Forum 	
Newry		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newry, Mourne & Down District Migrant Support Council DEAs
Newtownhamilton (Village) Cross border travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Church 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newry, Mourne & Down District Migrant Support
Omagh Large numbers employed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Migrant Centre Omagh Ethnic Group 	
Portadown, Lurgan, Craigavon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Craigavon Intercultural Partnership 	
Strabane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethnic Community Association, Strabane 	

Covid 19 Pandemic and the Roma Communities in NI (9/7/2020)

(paper accompanying above maps)

Long standing health inequalities experienced by people from the BAME and Roma communities have been brought to the fore by the Covid 19 emergency.

Evidence emerging is indicating that the Roma communities in NI have been disproportionately affected by Covid 19, in terms of the prevalence of the illness and aggravation of socio-economic conditions.

There are several Roma communities in NI, primarily Romanian and Bulgarian Roma. Bulgarian Roma tend to live in the Ballymena and South Armagh areas with large Romanian Roma populations in Belfast, Ballymena, Portadown/Lurgan and Newry. These communities are not homogeneous and comprise people from different countries, with diverse cultures, backgrounds, languages and health literacy.

This is an issue that must be treated with sensitivity to avoid an increase in anti-Roma sentiment and hostility to BAME communities.

Covid 19 Risk Factors.

Evidence is emerging from BHSCT, SHSCT and NHSCT of a higher prevalence of Covid 19 infection in the Roma Communities and a correlating higher level of admission to hospitals and ICUs. A large number of Roma families with young children are not registered with a GP, are not known to Child Health Services and do not attend school compounding potential safeguarding issues.

Accommodation:

Roma families tend to live in private rented accommodation with several families living in one house. It is not uncommon for 20 plus people to live in a three bedroom house.

These tenancies are often exploitative in nature with no contracts, rent books etc. being issued to the occupier. Evictions have taken place during Covid and in some instances this has resulted in families being left with no option but to move into Covid positive households.

Risk factor;

The ability/inability to self-isolate in overcrowded accommodation.

Employment:

Literacy problems and related issues result in many Roma left with no option but to work in the NI “grey economy”. The closure of car washes, recycling plants etc. has resulted in numerous people presenting as destitute to the community /voluntary sector and HSC Trusts. People are recruited through unregulated agencies and are not given contracts or payslips etc. They cannot prove entitlement to benefits and therefore they have no recourse to public funds.

Many in the BAME and Roma communities work in the food processing industry in NI and are recruited by agencies on “zero hour” contracts, with no entitlement to sick pay and annual leave.

Many of the recent Covid 19 clusters across Europe have centred on the food processing industry. These ‘unregulated’ industries present obvious challenges in relation to human trafficking, modern day slavery and gangmaster legislation.

Risk factor;

Presenting as Covid 19 positive would lead to an immediate loss of earnings with no safety net to prevent destitution, an obvious disincentive to disclosure.

Travel:

Many from the Romanian Roma community in Belfast chose to return to Romania during the NI lockdown. (estimate 1000 people). It is anticipated that the majority of these people, who have strong connections to NI, will return in August/September.

Flights and buses from both Romania and Bulgaria carrying workers continue to arrive in NI. Bulgarian flights arrive through GB while the buses and flights from Romania arrive through the Republic of Ireland.

Recent reports indicate that there is no guidance or checks for those arriving from Romania into the Republic of Ireland whose final destination is NI.

Romania is currently facing a second surge with many lockdown measures being re-introduced. In the last two weeks there are numerous reports of Romanian Roma returning to NI and recommencing work the following day.

Internal travel in NI remains challenging with groups of people in convoys still travelling from Belfast for employment across NI.

Risk factor;

Travel into NI from a high risk country without guidance or quarantine measures being implemented and adhered to.

Contact Tracing:

The standard approaches to 'contact tracing' via telephone contact are unlikely to work within the BAME community, particularly the Roma communities.

Adopting a community approach to contact tracing will require support from the Trust (Community development team/Specialist Health visitor/NINES) and/or community & voluntary support organisations.

Risk factor;

Current contact tracing arrangements are unsuitable for many in the Roma community and there are 'gaps' in NI with a lack of both statutory and voluntary agencies.

Health literacy:

Getting the 'correct' public health information directly to the communities is essential. A number of PHA publications have been translated, video and 'voice overs' of hand washing and social distancing measures. Some of these have been specifically designed in easy read for the Roma communities who have high levels of illiteracy in their own language. There have been challenges with community "gatekeepers" disseminating inaccurate information and the reliance of the Roma Communities on media from their countries of origin.

Risk factor;

Roma communities being unaware of the NI regulations and guidance.

Equality monitoring:

There continues to be a lack of data due to the failure by Trusts of recording ethnicity and nationality of patients in Secondary Care/time of death. PHA Health Protection indicated on 18/5/20 that only 15% of current inpatients have their ethnic origin recorded. This issue has been escalated to 'Silver'.

Risk factor;

No accurate recording of ethnicity or the impact of Covid 19 on BAME communities

Developmental opportunities:

A strategic statutory approach is required led by the Executive office in partnership with Health, DfC and Councils to include the development of links with the Public Health Authorities in Bulgaria and Romania.

An operational, time bound, working group should be established to deal with “on the ground” issues including messaging, contact tracing, accommodation, NRPF and cooperation with the HSE.

Liaison with the port authorities, airports and bus companies for returning travellers as people, are not being asked to quarantine and are returning to work immediately after travelling. The Patient Locator Form (in English only).

Further development of the NINES service (possible expansion in the Southern area into Newry/South Armagh and the Northern Trust area) and explore potential opportunity in relation to staff supporting the contact tracing.

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