



ETHNIC MINORITY
NATIONAL RESILIENCE NETWORK



Meeting Agenda – Tuesday 10th of August 2021

Chairperson – Charmaine Blaize – Unison Black Workers Committee

09:45 – 10:00am: sign in on zoom

10:00 – 10:05am: Welcome and thanks, Rami Ousta BEMIS CEO

10:05 – 10:10am: Setting the scene – Charmaine Blaize Unison BWC

10:10 – 10:15am: Lorna Ascroft, Head of Inclusive Vaccinations, Scottish Government
– Latest Vaccine Data

10:15 – 10:30am: Panel of African, Caribbean, Black and Minority Ethnic health experts, and professionals

- Dr. Josephine Adekola
- Dr. Henry Prempeh
- Dr. Tolulope Oyeniya

10:30 – 11:20am: Open discussion, Q+A.

11:20 – 11:30am: Summary, date of next meeting and next steps – Charmaine Blaize

Attendees

Name	Organisation
Bertha Yakuba	African Women's Group
Dr. Henry Prempeh	NHS Forth Valley Health Protection Consultant and Immunisation Coordinator.
Dr Tolulope Oyeniya	Molecular Geneticist and Covid Diagnostics Scientist
Dr. Josephine Adekola	Researcher in Risk Management with expertise in factors contributing to vaccine hesitancy
Ebrima	LGBT Unity Scotland
Margaret Lance	Women in Action
Esther Kamonji	Kenyan Women in Scotland Association
George Tah	Jambo Radio
Giscard Kuimi	Africa Future
Harriette Campbell	African Caribbean Elderly Community

Johannes Gonani	Pachedu
Mohammed Razaq	WSREC
Mukami McCrum	KWISA / ACWA
Rizwana Saeed	The Feel Good Womens Group
Solomon Adeboyo	LGBT Unity Scotland
Unyimeobong Matthews	Inspiring Families Scotland
Charmaine Blaize	Unison Black Workers Committee
Danny Boyle	BEMIS
Tanveer Parnez	BEMIS
Rami Ousta	BEMIS
Aqeel Ahmed	Scottish Government
Lorna Ascroft	Scottish Government
Dave Caesar	Acting Deputy Chief Medical Officer
Graham Stout	Scottish Government
Katherine Ross	Scottish Government
Gladys Ngwira	Women in Action
Mandy Watts	Scottish Government
Victoria Lopez	Scottish Government

African, Caribbean and Black Inclusive Vaccinations Group Meeting Actions 10th August 2021

Issue	Policy area	Action	Responsible
1) Need for an African, Caribbean and Black thematic meeting of the Scottish Government Inclusive Vaccinations Group	Inclusive Vaccinations Group – Scottish Government	Invitation to be extended to group chair Charmaine Blaize, Co-Chair Margaret Lance, Dr. Henry Prempeh, Dr. Josephine Adekola and Dr. Tolulope Oyeniyi to attend meeting and respond to thematic agenda item.	Danny Boyle / Lorna Ascroft to facilitate
2) Dr. Josephine Adekola's research has presently been confined to Glasgow Area. There was a clear consensus at meeting that it would be beneficial to extend this research	Health, Race Equality, Vaccination Uptake now and moving forward.	Group to approach the Scottish Government and Public Health Scotland to ascertain the feasibility of accessing funding to extend Dr. Adekola's work to other areas such as Aberdeen and rural and semi-rural communities.	Charmaine Blaize / Danny Boyle / Dr. Adekola
3) Data and African. Caribbean and Black Communities	Health and across Race Equality priorities	<p>a) Update to be requested from Scottish Government on data plans in response to the recommendations of the ERG. What will the disaggregation policy be?</p> <p>b) Request update from National Records of Scotland. Census 2022 – How will African, Caribbean and Black data be collated and disaggregated?</p>	<p>a) Aqeel Ahmed, Danny Boyle</p> <p>b) Danny Boyle</p>
4) Ongoing need for vaccine information support for grassroots African, Caribbean and Black communities	Inclusive Vaccinations, Race Equality	a) BEMIS to allocate £6,000 to the group, subject to approval from the Equality Unit to distribute to local community interventions on vaccination discussions, events, meetings.	BEMIS

Note of Meeting:

- Meeting opened by group Chair Charmaine Blaize of Unison Black Workers Committee and the Ethnic Minority National Resilience Network. Charmaine gave some background on UNISON / EMNRN work across the pandemic in raising issues of workers rights and community experience. UNISON and BEMIS have been collaborating via the EMNRN to respond to core issues. These issues have now evolved and are reflected by the short-, medium- and long-term objectives of this African / Caribbean and Black thematic group on vaccinations.
 - ✓ **Short term July – September:** Help facilitate informed vaccination consent within African, Caribbean, and Black communities via education and investment in vaccine resources via BEMIS Scotland Vaccine Information Fund.
 - ✓ **Medium term September – October:** Initiate engagement between key duty bearers including the Scottish Government, NHS and Public Health Scotland on ongoing vaccination programme and community members and organisations.
 - ✓ **Longer term October – December:** Encourage and advocate for the UK / Scottish governments to ensure they respond to their international human rights obligations within the international distribution of vaccines to the international community.
- **Rami Ousta** of BEMIS Scotland welcomed participants and echoed sentiments of Charmaine. This group aims to provide a platform for African communities, individuals, and experts to lead on responding to issue affecting them in relation to pandemic response and vaccination. BEMIS are pleased to support this and have our commitment via secretariat and policy support moving forward.
- **Lorna Ascroft**, Head of Inclusive Vaccinations Policy at the Scottish Government gave a presentation on the work of the inclusive vaccinations group, present stats on ethnicity uptake of vaccination and priorities moving forward to autumn and winter. The presentation slides are provided as an additional document to this meeting note.
- Our 3 community experts Dr. Josephine Adekola, Dr. Henry Prempeh and Dr. Tolulope Oyenyi gave an oversight of the vaccination programme and African, Caribbean and Black uptake from their professional and research perspectives.
 1. Dr. Henry Prempeh is NHS Forth Valley Health Protection Consultant and Immunisation Coordinator.
 2. Dr. Josephine Adekola is a Researcher in Risk Management with expertise in factors contributing to vaccine hesitancy

3. Dr. Tolulope Oyeniyi is Molecular Geneticist and Covid Diagnostics Scientist.

Key issues / comments arising from expert and community interventions

- Multiple reasons for potential vaccine hesitancy within African, Caribbean and Black populations. Examples based upon the research of Dr. Adekola included,
 - ✓ Concerns about adverse reaction to the vaccine
 - ✓ News on negative or adverse reactions travels faster than good news and a narrative can take hold that is not reflective of scientific evidence
 - ✓ An underrepresentation of African Caribbean and Black people within the trial stages of each vaccine
 - ✓ How did trials differentiate between incredibly diverse African, Caribbean and Black people?
 - ✓ Belief that vaccine manufacturers have been relieved of liability for side effects
 - ✓ Faith or personal preference not to be vaccinated
 - ✓ Conviction that people can deal with it naturally or use alternative remedies
- There is a significant lack of data on the individual lived experiences of African, Caribbean, and Black people in health and across key policy areas and service delivery.
- Where data is collected it is provided in catch all categories like African, Caribbean and Black which cannot respond to the health needs of an individual.
- The African community is growing and developing across Scotland. For example, in Aberdeen the population has grown considerably. What might be a correct approach for Glasgow or Edinburgh might not be the case in Aberdeen. We must have localised approaches for all policy development, including the vaccination strategy utilising local partners on the ground.
- A human rights-based, community and person-centred approach is needed for policy development. There are structural issues that pertain to African, Caribbean and Black communities and they are not properly consulted on these issues. Policy makers need to be involved in discussions directly with communities about issues that affect them directly.
- There is a lack of services for African communities in rural and semi-rural areas. System literacy is very different to conversational or academic English. Thus, throughout the pandemic those who were shielding or needing to access additional services were often isolated and relied on community for support.
- Historical injustices seep into the present and the perpetual policy of collating all African, Caribbean and Black people into one block is obscuring the reality

of the lived experience of individuals. We must have disaggregated data. Since 2001 African has been an option in the census but we need to know what African people. We are a diverse continent of cultures, people and ethnic groups.

- There is a significant lack of investment across African, Caribbean and Black communities. We are funded to fail. Significant investment is required into the communities for them to prosper and reach their potential. All of these issues have affected vaccination participation and engagement

