



BAME deaths and coronavirus CPA Position Statement

5 June 2020

Increased risk of death of people from BAME backgrounds a worrying concern

The findings from the [formal review by Public Health England and NHS England](#) into the higher level of COVID-19 related deaths among people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds is a worrying concern.

The report takes into account age, sex, deprivation, region and ethnicity, and confirms what was widely suspected to be true, in that COVID-19 has had a disproportionate effect on people from BAME backgrounds.

Key findings from the report show that the largest disparity as previously known is age, whereby people aged 80 or older were seventy times more likely to die from COVID-19 than those under 40. Working age males diagnosed with COVID-19 were twice as likely to die as females. Risk of dying was also high for people living in more deprived areas than people living in less deprived areas.

When compared to previous years' mortality, the report found that those in a range of caring occupations, to include social care and nursing auxiliaries and assistants, were at increased risk of death from COVID-19. The inequalities found in the data largely replicates existing inequalities in mortality rates, except for BAME groups.

Lisa Lenton, chair of the Care Provider Alliance says:

“It is critical that we understand the reasons for the disparity in order to draw any meaningful conclusions from the data. The report did not take into account the existence of comorbidities in explaining the differences.

“A more detailed analysis to establish whether there are any identifiable factors that could help inform decisions on how to keep people from BAME backgrounds safe during this pandemic will help us to find a way forward.

“As we continue to learn more about the impact of COVID-19 on people from BAME backgrounds, our immediate focus is to ensuring the safety of social care staff and the people we support.”

There are also concerns about the mental health impact on BAME communities. One small helpline working with a particular faith community have seen more than a 300% increase in calls, web chats, and emails reporting at least one call about suicide every night, compared to fortnightly previously. It is essential that BAME-led/-focused provider organisations working with communities at higher risk are supported effectively.

Kathy Roberts, Chief Executive of Association of Mental Health Providers commented:

“The review has highlighted the detrimental impact of Covid-19 on BAME communities but it does not state anything that was not previously known. There is a need for an equitable response to the pandemic which so far has been lacking, especially in terms of funding. Going forward, we need to support and invest in the development of culturally-appropriate services and work alongside (with, not for) BAME communities and grassroots organisations to enable them to reach their communities.”

Links

[See CPA information on coronavirus](#)

[Read the PHE report](#)

Contact

info@careprovideralliance.org.uk