



Our ref: KW012765. ab

5 May 2020

All Trust Staff
Via email

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Dear Colleague

Covid-19 – BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) Colleagues

We are sure that many of you will have seen the news and updates regarding Covid-19 and in particular the disproportionate impact that this has had on BAME colleagues across the UK. We understand that this whole situation is worrying for you and your colleagues and we want to continue to do all we can to ensure you all feel safe and supported during this difficult time. This will be a particularly worrying time for our BAME colleagues and their families.

We are continuing to monitor the research and data that is being collated with regards to the way the pandemic is affecting different groups, including those statistics for our BAME colleagues. The Government have recently launched an inquiry to understand why people from BAME backgrounds appear to be disproportionately affected by coronavirus, as and when we are updated, we will share findings with staff members as this will enable us to act on any trends or themes to support our people as soon as we receive this information.

You will have seen from all our communications that we are continuing to support the Health & Wellbeing of all our people, by ensuring we are following the national guidance, with regards to social distancing as well as supporting those individuals who fall within the Government's vulnerable and at risk groups who have been notified that they should be shielding. We have chosen to send this communication to all our people, to provide both awareness and to also enable you to provide any support to your colleagues, should this be required.

In addition to our ongoing support, we want to ensure that our BAME staff also feel fully supported and therefore request that these colleagues:

- Identify yourself to your line manager if you consider yourself to be at risk to ensure you can be fully supported with any specific needs and individual concerns
- You are encouraged to feel confident discussing any concerns that you may have regarding Covid-19 and the impact this is having on you and your family with your line managers or through the alternative sources of support identified through this letter
- For you to share, in confidence, any concerns you have regarding any underlying health conditions so that these can be taken into consideration

When you speak to your manager they will discuss with you any concerns you may have. We have established processes in place to enable us to undertake risk assessments with you to ensure we both understand any risk or vulnerability that is present to ensure you are fully supported and that actions can be implemented to support you in your role.

It is really important for us that we ensure all of our people are safe and well supported during this difficult time and we are particularly keen to engage with our BAME colleagues to ensure you are confident in accessing the support you need given the adverse impact that has been noted nationally. In the spirit of this we particularly want to encourage anyone from the BAME community to undertake a test as soon as possible

We recommend you use our own internal swabbing process because we know it is a high quality service with tailored and supportive measures in place for delivering the result, please be assured your result is confidential and is only discussed with you. You will be given the result by a doctor who can discuss what this means for you and your family on an individual, case by case basis. To request a test, please contact the Trust Swab Co-ordinators, Louise.cooper@swast.nhs.uk and Sharon.kirwan@swast.nhs.uk.

At the current time, we are offering the COVID-19 test for any colleague or their family members who they live with who are showing symptoms. If the government changes this process for BAME colleagues we will ensure we update you of this.

For people responding to emergency calls or seeing patients on a face to face basis, we now have over 170 individuals trained to provide fit testing for FFP3 masks. In addition, many more staff locally are able to provide familiarisation on the powered hoods. The Trust are now using the 3M 1863 mask as the primary choice, with the 8833 only for individuals who fail the 1863 fit test. We would encourage you to engage with the training process locally to ensure that you are both fit tested and familiarised on the powered hoods as a priority. If you haven't yet been it tested, please speak to your line manager, IPC or H&S asap.

Our normal channels of support remain in place for all our people, including the Staying Well Service, Peer Support Guardians, your colleagues and line managers, should you need them.



IF YOU'RE STRUGGLING TO COPE
Your Wellbeing Matters

You have access to independent, confidential and free support from PAM Assist through your company's Employee Assistance Programme. Select PAM Assist can offer you support with include:

- ✓ Relationships
- ✓ Working Life
- ✓ Incident or Assault
- ✓ Money Matters
- ✓ Family Issues
- ✓ Crisis and Change
- ✓ Loss or Illness
- ✓ Health Concerns

Telephone a qualified counsellor on
0800 882 4102
24 Hours a day, 365 Days a year

Go online at **pamassist.co.uk**
Check your membership card for login details

Get The PAM Assist App
Download the app Ask your line manager for login details

PAM Assist Let's work together for better health and wellbeing in the workplace

We want to assure you that we do want you to come forward to raise your concerns, without any fear of this affecting your career development or progression within the organisation. We want to ensure that you are safe and well supported during this difficult time.

If for any reason you do not feel able to come forward and discuss any concerns you may have with your line manager, please do make contact with the BAME Forum (e-mail: BAMForum@SWAST.nhs.uk) who will be able to support you during this time, particularly if you have concerns you want to raise.

In addition, the Trust encourages all of our people to speak up on any matters or issues that are affecting them or their work. Please contact our FTSU Guardian Marty Mcauley on marty.mcauley@swast.nhs.uk or on 07554 334549 for confidential advice and support.

Yours sincerely



Ken Wenman
Chief Executive



Amy Beet
Executive Director of People & Culture