

**Wales Race Forum**  
**10:00 – 11:00, Wednesday 6 July 2022**

**Agenda**

1. Welcome and introductions
2. An Anti-racist Wales Action Plan Update – focus on governance
3. Addressing the unmet need for stem cell transplantation in diverse populations
4. Universal guidance on communication with vulnerable groups - to take feedback from Forum
5. AOB Covid 19 Vaccine Update

**Participants**

Jane Hutt MS, Minister for Social Justice (Chair)  
Alan Prosser, Welsh Blood Service  
Alicja Zalesinska, Tai Pawb  
Andrew Harris, Welsh Blood Service  
Bethan Phillips, Welsh Government  
Chris Harvey, Welsh Bone Marrow Donor Registry  
Christopher Harvey, Welsh Blood Service  
Dr Jo Mower, Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board  
Dr Tracey Rees, Welsh Blood Service  
Iolanda Viegas, Race Council Cymru  
Isaac Blake, Romani Cultural & Arts Company  
Kay Denyer, Race Council Cymru  
Pat Vernon, Welsh Government  
Patrick Daly, Welsh Government  
Professor Robert Moore, NWREN  
Professor Uzo Iwobi, Race Council Cymru  
Riaz Hassan, Welsh Government  
Shahien Taj, Women Connect First  
Sue Leake, Welsh Government  
Sue Vincent-Jones, Welsh Government  
Wanjiku Mbugua, BAWSO

**Apologies**

Dr Keith Wilson, University Hospital of Wales  
Heather Payne, Welsh Government  
Joanne Small, HEIW  
Selima Bahadur, EYST

## **Item 1 - Welcome and introductions**

1. The Minister for Social Justice opened the meeting by welcoming attendees.
2. The Minister recognised the current challenges faced, such as the cost-of-living crisis and rising Covid-19 cases, and their disproportionate impact on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people.

## **Item 2 - An Anti-racist Wales Action Plan Update – focus on Governance**

3. Riaz Hassan, the newly appointed Head of the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan Implementation Team, covered the background of the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan and the history of its development since pre-March 2020.
4. Riaz highlighted the importance of the governance in the implementation of the Plan. Explaining the structure of the system of governance, Riaz covered the roles of the Internal Support and Challenge Group (ISCG), the External Accountability Group (EAG) and the Race Disparity Unit.
5. The ISCG will be chaired by the Director of Communities and Tackling Poverty and will meet on a monthly basis. Welsh Government policy leads and the Race Disparity Unit will comprise the membership, and organisations, including Commissioners, regulators and others will be invited as necessary.
6. Meetings between the Implementation team and policy leads are underway and the where the implementation of goals and actions is being discussed.
7. The first meeting of the ISCG will take place on Thursday 14 July.
8. The EAG will be co-chaired by Professor Emmanuel Ogbonna, Cardiff University and the Welsh Government's Permanent Secretary, Andrew Goodall. The Group will meet on a bi-monthly basis. Its membership will comprise of representatives from EHRC, WGA, Wales TUC, WCVA, WG MESN, policy co-designers and others. Welsh Ministers will be invited on an ad hoc basis. Relevant Commissioners, regulators and others will be invited as necessary.
9. In terms of reporting and escalation, the EAG will produce an annual progress report (timing agreed at the first meeting). The co-chairs will meet the First Minister and Minister for Social Justice twice a year and the First Minister will be invited to the EAG twice a year.
10. The first meeting of the EAG is planned for September/October.
11. 7 independent race experts and 8 diversity representatives with lived experience will join the ISCG and the EAG as members and recruitment of these representatives is imminent. The advertisements for these roles will be shared with members of the Forum once they're available.

12. Member of the Forum should review the [appendices section of the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan](#) where the remits of both the ISCG and the EAG can be found.
13. The Minister for Social Justice has written a letter to Welsh public sectors, third sectors, key stakeholders and others, asking them to support the Welsh Government in the implementation of the Plan and for their support in communicating its goals and aims with their networks.
14. A comms plan for the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan is currently being produced.
15. The Minister for Social Justice confirmed that during her Oral Statement in the Siambr, made on 7 June, Members of the Senedd were reminded of the commitment they've already made to anti-racism. This, along with the scrutiny the Plan will receive from Members and committees, will help to ensure the successful implementation of the Plan.

**ACTION: Share Riaz's presentation and recirculate the Minister for Social Justice's letter with Forum members.**

### **Item 3 – Addressing the unmet need for stem cell transplantation in diverse populations**

16. Dr Tracey Rees confirmed the work of the Welsh Blood Service (WBS) includes the collecting, testing and distribution of blood, but an important element of its work is to provide support for transplants in Wales, including stem cell transplants. The WBS also looks after the bone marrow donor register.
17. Despite there being over 40 million unrelated registered donors in the world, there is still an unmet need i.e. when a clinician recognises a stem cell transplant is required for treatment, a matching donor is not available. Availability is even more scarce for those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities as the register is made up of mostly Caucasian people. All ethnicities are underrepresented, but the WBS is fully committed to driving representation on the register.
18. In order to make the process of providing a sample easier, buccal swab (a swab from inside the cheek) kits have been introduced. These can be requested online. A kit will be sent in post before being returned for analysis. This process overcomes the need for a blood test.
19. The Minister for Social Justice asked Dr Tracey Rees to be available to meet groups and members of the Forum to ensure successful outreach from the Welsh Blood Service.

20. It was suggested that ensuring material is available in multiple languages is a good way to ensure successful outreach and offers of support in this vein were made.
21. Members of the Forum offered to support WBS in outreach to relevant groups and communities. Tracey confirmed members can reach out to her.

#### **Item 4 – Universal guidance on communication with vulnerable groups - to take feedback from Forum**

22. At a recent presentation on the new 111 service, information to support urgent care call handlers to help people from vulnerable groups to access the right services and advice for their needs was received.
23. Dr Jo Mower, Clinical Director Goal 4/Co-chair of Clinical Professional Advisory Group, confirmed this information and various resources were gathered and have now been put into a tool for call handlers. This tool was demonstrated to the Forum.
24. The tool allows call handlers to access information on many topics such as communications, transport and resources for a variety of vulnerable groups, including those with cancer, autism and learning disabilities. It is hoped the tool will be launched in August.
25. The Forum was asked for their support with development of translated pages and communication with vulnerable groups.
26. It was suggested the term “vulnerable” may need to be rethought - many of these groups are not vulnerable per se, but are at risk if services are not right for them

#### **Item 5 – AOB Covid 19 Vaccine Update**

27. Chris Jones, Deputy Director of Vaccines Programme, explained that during June the prevalence of Covid 19 increased. It is almost certainly due to a combination of increased mixing and fewer protective measures being taken, but also the more transmissible nature of the dominant strain of Covid 19.
28. We are seeing an increase in the number of hospital admissions, which is causing an increase in pressure on public services.
29. It is hoped the peak of cases will peak in July before decreasing.
30. The spring booster programme came to a formal end at the end of June. The Welsh Government is keen to promote the ‘mopping up’ of everyone who is eligible but has not yet received a booster.

31. An autumn campaign is anticipated, but this is subject to advice, which is imminent. It is intended the autumn programme will see the Covid 19 vaccine linked with the flu vaccine.
32. Flu vaccines will be on the agenda of future meetings of the Vaccine Equity Committee. Both the Covid 19 vaccine and the flu vaccine will be managed on a similar basis going forward.
33. Members of the Forum are invited to provide any further information/comments on any of the issues raised to Sue Vincent-Jones.