



BME STAFF RISK ASSESSMENT FOR COVID-19 INFECTION – supporting information

Employers are recommended to carry out risk assessments, particularly for vulnerable groups, to understand the specific risks colleagues face from exposure to COVID-19 and actions which can be taken to keep staff safe. This includes staff returning to work for the NHS, and existing staff who are potentially more at risk due to their race, age, disability or pregnancy.

[NHS Employers](#)

On 12 May 2020 the Faculty of Occupational Medicine published a consensus document, a risk-reduction framework.

[Update-risk-reduction-framework-for-nhs-staff-at-risk-of-covid-19-infection](#)

On 13 May 2020 the Royal College of Psychiatrists published guidance on the assessment and management of risk for BME staff in mental healthcare settings.

[RCPSYCH impact-of-covid19-on-bame-staff-in-mental-healthcare-settings](#)

On 5 May 2020 the Trust launched the risk assessment of all BME colleagues following two manager briefings. At the BME network meeting on 6 May 2020 some clarifications were requested about the risk assessment process and responses are provided below to the following areas.

- [Does my line manager need to complete my risk assessment?](#)
- [How should the risk assessment be completed?](#)
- [How quickly should the risk assessment be completed?](#)
- [What happens if I am not satisfied with the outcome of my risk assessment and mitigation plan?](#)
- [Do I need to sign my risk assessment?](#)
- [Why is my personal health information being recorded on an online risk assessment system?](#)

Please also refer to the [BME colleague risk assessment FAQ](#) for more information.

Does my line manager need to complete my risk assessment?

No, but in most cases your line manager will be best placed to complete the risk assessment with you as they have a responsibility for your health and safety.

Your risk assessment and personalised risk mitigation plan are essential to protecting your health, safety and wellbeing at work.

The most important consideration in deciding who completes the risk assessment with you is that you feel comfortable to talk about your health and personal circumstances with them, so that a personalised risk mitigation plan can be agreed and implemented.

Once the risk assessment has been completed, your line manager will still need to be informed of the outcome, so that any recommendations can be followed through. This should be done in a manner that both protects you and your confidentiality, whilst allowing the line manager to enact whatever changes or recommendations are required.

If you would prefer to have your risk assessment completed with someone other than your line manager, please email celestine.stafford@nhs.net to make alternative arrangements. It is also possible to request a BME manager to complete risk assessments with BME colleagues and you can request this when you email Celestine Stafford.

How should the risk assessment be completed?

You should lead your risk assessment and risk mitigation plan. To do this a meeting should be planned so that you have enough notice to prepare. Before the meeting, you should receive and review the risk assessment form with the person completing the risk assessment with you. You can get support and advice to help you prepare for your risk assessment from the following people:

sharon.rumin@nhs.net	Chair BME Network
bal.singh@nhs.net	Vice-Chair BME Network
rubina.reza@nhs.net	Workforce Race Equality Standards Expert
tracey.davidson@nhs.net	Workforce Race Equality frontline practitioner rep
clairewright4@nhs.net	Deputy CEO/Inclusion Lead
ifti.majid@nhs.net	CEO/BME Network Exec Sponsor

How quickly should the risk assessment be completed?

There is some urgency to completing your risk assessment to ensure that adjustments to protect you and your family can be made as soon as possible, if needed. However, it is important that sufficient time is committed to the risk assessment by you and the person completing the risk assessment with you. It should be completed in a one-to-one conversation with you in a sensitive manner. You should not feel pressured to complete it and it should not be a tick-box exercise.

What happens if I am not satisfied with the outcome of my risk assessment and mitigation plan?

You can ask for an independent review. Email celestine.stafford@nhs.net to request a review.

Do I need to sign my risk assessment?

No, it is not necessary to sign the form; the form can be completed electronically without the need for a signature. However, the risk assessment cannot be completed without you. The only personal identifier that should be required on the electronic Risk Assessment Form is your ESR/Employee Assignment number.

Why is my personal health information being recorded on an online risk assessment system?

To support the process of BME colleague risk assessments, the IM&T Department has converted the risk assessment form to a secure online form. The online risk assessment form is the Trust-recommended system to capture information securely and confidentially. The only information that needs to be shared is the outcome of the risk assessment, for example, whether you will be at work, working from home or unable to work, so that this can be fed into the overall workforce picture.

Under normal circumstances, staff health records are held by Occupational Health. Due to the pandemic, the current risk assessment process involves recording of BME staff health information on a Trust online system. As a result, documented assurance has been requested on behalf of the BME staff network. A lot of work is happening behind the scenes including a Data Protection Impact Assessment which is being finalised and will be shared with the network.

In the meantime please remember that the most important thing is that a risk assessment and mitigation plan is agreed. In order to make an informed decision, discuss the online recording system and ask any further questions you may have with the person completing your risk assessment.

An alternative approach to the online system is to complete the risk assessment using the electronic form by typing directly into the form. It is recommended that the form is not printed to be completed as a paper form. However, if a paper form has been completed, this should be scanned and the paper form confidentially destroyed. A copy of the electronic form should be kept confidentially by the manager completing the form and you should also keep an electronic copy of the form.

Once the pandemic is over, advice will be sent out to delete all the electronic, scanned copies.