Dear (name)

We are writing to all our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Colleagues as we know you may be really worried about the emerging UK and international information suggesting that some people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds are disproportionately impacted by Covid-19. We want to do all we reasonably can to support you to stay safe.

We know at a national level an inquiry has been launched to understand why some people from BAME backgrounds appear to be disproportionately affected by coronavirus, but these inquiries can take time and we want to support you now. As ever, social distancing is so very important to all of us, so please remember to social distance to keep yourself safe.

**Line Manager & other support**

You can contact your line manager about any health concerns you might have, but we know at the moment many colleagues are operating out of their usual environment, so Occupational Health are also available to support you on 01332 640543. You can also get support from our AXA Employee Assistance Programme and discuss how you are feeling. You can contact them directly via the link on iDerby or you can ring them on 0800 0727072 or textphone 18001 0800 0727072. Visit their website too for more information <https://www.axabesupported.co.uk/> and you’ll need the username derbycitycouncil and the password is supported. We have our Chaplaincy Service, Mental Health First Aiders and also our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Employee Support Network who can all support you through this difficult time.

It’s really important that you look after your mental health at this very worrying time so please use the services we’ve got on offer and don’t forget you can also call the Samaritans too.

**Risk Assessment**

We are offering you the opportunity to have a risk assessment, specifically designed to support our BAME colleagues. We are continuing to support our managers with training on handling sensitive conversations to make sure they feel confident in completing this COVID 19 risk assessment with you and can support you in the best possible way. If you want to complete this assessment, please contact your line manager who will support you through the assessment.

**Staff Testing**

All BAME colleagues will have priority access to testing during the first five days of any symptoms, so if you or your family members have any symptoms, then please get tested as soon as possible. We are currently offering the COVID-19 test for any colleagues who are in the first five days of having symptoms due to good available capacity, and you can access the link here <https://iderby.derby.gov.uk/coronavirus/testing/>. However if this changes, BAME colleagues will remain on our priority list. This also applies to any of your family members who live with you (who are also in the first five days of symptoms).

**Wellbeing Support**

**If you develop any COVID-19 symptoms please stay at home, self-isolate in line with the national guidance and let us know as soon as possible.** Please tell us about any symptoms that worry you so we can support you and provide you and your family access to the testing process. Our iDerby site has a vast range of wellbeing support information, as does our external facing Derby City Council website. Both websites can be found at [www.iderby.derby.gov.uk/coronavirus/wellbeing](http://www.iderby.derby.gov.uk/coronavirus/wellbeing) and [www.derby.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid19/mental-health-and-wellbeing](http://www.derby.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid19/mental-health-and-wellbeing). If you do not have access to iDerby, you can access the content via your line manager, or you can access the external website using the above link.

**Vitamin D**

There is national advice for all to take vitamin D supplements between the months of September and March. This has been extended to advise that all who have reduced sun exposure (due to staying at home) and those with darker skin (and so reduced vitamin D production in sunlight) should take vitamin D all year round. This is important for general and bone health but there is no current evidence that this reduces the risk of coronavirus. Further advice can be found on the NHS Choices website <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vitamins-and-minerals/vitamin-d/>

We are very grateful and value your contribution during this difficult time. If , there are any other ideas or suggestions that would support you and our other BAME colleagues, please do let us know.

We appreciate all that you are doing every day, showing you are truly Here for Derby.

Kind Regards

Nicola Sykes

Director of HR & OD