

December 2021 Diversity Spotlight

News story

The latest news from the Analysis Function's Diversity & Inclusion group



Why disclose your disability information?

This month, Catherine Bean from the AF Diversity and Inclusion working group tells us why it's important to tell your employer about your disability status.

"December 3 is [International Day of People with Disabilities](#) so, I want to spotlight the importance of telling your employer if you have a disability or long-term health condition.

Declaration to your employer is different to telling your manager or team, as it should be anonymous; your personal information will be kept confidential in accordance with [GDPR](#). This data is used for monitoring purposes and allows employers to understand the size of the population with a disability across your office. This can help drive inclusion policies at the organisation level. I've made sure to declare my information, because the [Equality Act \(2010\)](#) covers people who are neuro divergent like me, as well as people with physical or mental health conditions...

Whether you're disabled or not, it's important to provide your information. Rebecca White, a chair of the Office for National Statistics Disability network, says, "Disability and long-term health condition declaration is for everyone. No is as important as Yes. Without more accurate declaration data, major decisions, reviews and changes within the Civil Service cannot fully reflect the negative or positive impact they may have on colleagues with disabling conditions. This will help the Civil Service become truly inclusive".

Share your D&I case studies

The Attract strand of the Analysis Function Diversity & Inclusion working group is putting together an outreach pack aiming to attract new talent to

the varied analytical careers on offer, and needs your help.

The team is interested in your case studies that showcase how analysis shapes government decision-making. If you'd like to take part, please supply one or two paragraphs (with an image if possible) and include:

1. A brief outline of the issue that the analysis was supporting
2. The areas that the analysis looked at
3. An overview of the results of the analysis
4. How the information was used
5. The impact / benefit of the subsequent intervention
6. Highlight any diversity considerations such as cross-government collaboration
7. Consent to share your case study with an external audience

Please email Laura.Armstrong@HMRC.gov.uk and/or Patrick.Rickles@OGAAuthority.co.uk with any questions and to provide your case studies.

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[British Embassy with Uzbek Ministry of Public Education organised a round table on climate](#)

World news story

The round table 'Bridging the education gap on climate change – UK experience and prospects for Uzbekistan' launched a climate project on 26 November 2021.



Bridging the education gap on climate change round table

The round table was attended by representatives from the Ministry of Public Education (MoPE), Ministry of Energy, State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection, and Zamin Foundation. The event was an opportunity to strengthen knowledge and capacity on climate change education through an interactive discussion on the evolution of climate change education in the UK, lessons learned, and current practices. The presentation was delivered by an international sustainability and teaching expert, Dr Dan van der Horst, who currently serves as a Personal Chair in Energy, Environment & Society, School of Geosciences, The University of Edinburgh, UK.

Additional presentations were given by representatives from the MoPE, Zamin Foundation and Chevening alumni, who presented and discussed the prospects for Uzbekistan in terms of climate change education, also presenting case studies of select international low carbon schools with a focus on clean technologies.

The round-table kicked off the project 'Promoting climate change education and low-carbon technologies through increased awareness of schoolchildren in Uzbekistan'. The project aims to promote climate change education and awareness in public education through an awareness-raising campaign in liaison with the MoPE. As a result of the project, school children and MoPE staff will develop a better understanding of climate change action, particularly how individuals can contribute to climate change mitigation through sustainable lifestyles/behaviours as well as the importance of low-carbon technologies. Furthermore, the project will highlight the importance of alignment with the COP26 goals.

For further information

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Published 1 December 2021

[Over £23 million investment to end new HIV infections by 2030](#)

- New HIV Action Plan – backed by over £23 million of government funding – aims to reduce new infections by 80% by 2025 and end infections and deaths by 2030
- The UK has one of the biggest decreases in new HIV diagnoses worldwide and new strategies will build on this progress
- Plans include scaling up HIV testing in targeted, high-risk populations including in Black African communities and increasing access to PrEP

The government has bolstered its commitment to achieve zero new HIV

infections, AIDS and HIV related deaths in England by 2030 via a new Action Plan backed by £23 million of funding.

Current HIV prevention methods are working – with a 35% reduction in new HIV diagnoses in England between 2014 and 2019. This represents one of the biggest decreases worldwide.

The Action Plan, which has launched to mark World Aids Day, will:

- Prevent new infections by expanding and improving well-proven HIV prevention activities, investing £3.5 million in a National HIV Prevention Programme over 2021-2024 and increasing access to PrEP for key groups continues.
- Scale up HIV testing in high-risk populations where uptake is low to ensure new infections are identified rapidly. This will include expanding opt-out testing in A&E departments backed by an additional £20 million over the next three years.
- Ensure people rapidly receive treatment to stop them transmitting the infection further and increase their chances of living a long, healthy life as well as supporting everyone living with HIV to stay in treatment.

Health and Social Care Secretary, Sajid Javid, said:

“We will end new HIV infections in England by the end of the decade.

“We’ve made excellent progress already with transmissions continuing to fall across England and we are well on our way towards our ambition of zero HIV transmissions and deaths by 2030.

“The UK is leading the way to stamp out HIV and the new actions we are taking – from scaling up testing to increasing access to PrEP – will help people affected to live longer, healthier lives and eliminate this cruel disease for future generations.”

Health Minister, Maggie Throup, said:

Our unwavering commitment to prevention and public health campaigns have helped significantly reduce new HIV infections by tackling stigma and urging more people to get tested, as well as accessing life-saving treatment.

We’re taking action to make sure we’re firmly on track to meet our target in the next 9 years – doubling down on existing efforts, and adopting new strategies to reach particularly at-risk groups.

I want to thank Dame Inga Beale, members of the HIV Oversight Group and the Independent HIV Commission for their tireless work in supporting us to develop this Plan.

To achieve this, the government will commit to annually updating Parliament

on the progress towards the 2030 target to end all new HIV transmissions and a new, national oversight group – the HIV Action Plan Implementation Steering Group – will be established to closely monitor progress and ensure current actions are on track to meet the 2025 and 2030 targets.

The plan was developed with the help and expertise of the HIV Oversight Group, chaired by Dame Inga Beale.

Professor Stephen Powis, NHS national medical director, said:

HIV testing, which has been highly successful in England, provides a vital way to reduce transmission and ensure access to life-saving treatment. That's why the NHS is scaling up testing and investing £20 million over the next 3 years to fund opt-out HIV testing in 16 A&E departments covering areas with the highest prevalence of HIV.

Following our pioneering trial that led the way for new HIV prevention drugs for tens of thousands of people at high risk of HIV infection, we will also be widening access to lifesaving pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) drugs to ensure it's equally available to all those who need it.

To progress towards the 2030 goal of having no new HIV infections, AIDS and HIV-related deaths in England, this new HIV Action Plan outlines more detail on the interim target which will be met by 2025:

- to reduce the number of people first diagnosed in England from 2860 in 2019, to under 600 in 2025
- to reduce the number of people diagnosed with AIDS within 3 months of HIV diagnosis from 219 to under 110
- to reduce deaths from HIV/AIDS in England from 230 in 2019 to under 115

Excellent progress has been made to increase diagnoses in key groups – in particular with gay and bisexual men, which has meant new HIV diagnoses in this group fell from a peak of 2,980 in 2014 to 1,890 in 2018, and fell even lower to 1,580 diagnosed in 2019. This is a 47% and 16% drop respectively.

The Action Plan will set out how to maintain this progress, as well as improve diagnosis for high-risk groups, particularly Black Africans who remain the ethnic group with the highest rate of HIV. This includes nearly £3.5 million of ring-fenced funding to deliver a National HIV Prevention Programme from 2021 to 2024. One of the main objectives of this Programme will be to get 20,000 higher risk people to test for HIV in that time.

Additionally, new funding of £20 million will be invested over the next three years to roll out opt-out testing in NHS Emergency Departments within all local authority areas with five or more cases of HIV per 1000 residents. This will make it easier to reach Black African groups as well as heterosexual, gay and bisexual men who might not attend sexual health services regularly and are missing opportunities to test for HIV.

Dr Valerie Delpech, Head of HIV Surveillance at the UK Health Security Agency, said:

We have already made great progress in bringing down HIV transmission in England, but there is still a way to go. The steepest declines have been in white, gay and bisexual men who live in London. We are committed to preventing HIV in everyone regardless of ethnicity, sexual orientation and location. To end HIV transmission, we need to diagnose people early, start treatment quickly and make sure people stay on that treatment to ensure their virus is not detectable. People with undetectable virus cannot pass it on to sexual partners, even without condoms or PrEP.

The Action Plan sets out a clear path to achieve this and we will continue to learn from and share best practice with our partners. Together we will reach our goal of ending HIV transmission by 2030.

- The government is working with the NHS to assess future funding requirements for HIV, particularly in relation to testing.
- For more information on HIV Prevention, visit [HIV Prevention England](#)

[All adults to be offered COVID-19 boosters by end of January](#)

- 400 military personnel to get jabs in arms
- More hospital hubs, vaccination centres and 1,500 community pharmacies to offer jabs
- People urged to get booster when it's their turn as UK hits 18 million top-up jabs

All eligible adults in England aged 18 and over will be offered a COVID-19 booster vaccine by the end of January.

Following advice from the independent experts at the Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), everyone who is currently eligible – including those aged 40 and over, health and social care workers and those at increased risk from the virus due to health conditions – will be able to book their jab from three months after their second dose, meaning an additional 7 million people over 40 are now eligible.

The government and the NHS are urging younger people to wait until they are called forward by the NHS – with the more vulnerable continuing to be prioritised for their booster, to top up their immunity to the virus as soon as possible.

Younger age groups will be invited by the NHS in due course in order of age, grouped into 5-year age bands.

To speed up the vaccination programme, around 400 military personnel will be drafted in to support deployment, with 1,500 community pharmacy sites, additional hospital hubs, and pop-up sites opening in convenient locations across the country. More than 3,000 sites are already open in England – more than double the number in February.

Payments to GPs, community pharmacies and primary care staff will increase to £15 a dose until the end of January. To increase capacity on Sundays, when many community pharmacists are not normally open, the NHS will offer an additional £5 a shot.

To ensure the most vulnerable are prioritised, the NHS will also offer £30 extra for vaccinations delivered to those who are housebound until the end of next month.

More than 18.2 million life-saving top-up jabs have now been given across the UK, with 318,671 recorded yesterday. The daily number of jabs has gone up a third since the start of November.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

Since we learnt of the new Omicron variant a few days ago, our strategy has been to buy the time we need to assess it while doing everything we can at pace to strengthen our defences.

Our best weapon to fight the virus is to get as many jabs in arms as possible. That is why I asked the JCVI to urgently look at expanding and accelerating the vaccination programme in light of the Omicron variant.

Thanks to their rapid advice we are now able to put our booster programme on steroids – and protect even more people even more quickly.

We have set an ambitious target to offer booster jabs to all adults in England by the end of January, while ensuring those most vulnerable to the virus will continue to be prioritised for their booster, and having the gap between second doses and boosters.

This is a national mission and we all have a role to play – so step up, roll up your sleeves, and get protected when the time comes.

The move follows updated advice published yesterday (Monday 29 November 2021) by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), who advised that the offer of a booster jab be extended to people aged 18 to 39 in priority order by age and clinical risk. They also advised the dosing gap be reduced from six months to three after people's second dose.

The JCVI advised yesterday that those who are immunosuppressed and have received a third dose of the vaccine will also be offered a fourth dose to boost their defence. Second doses of the vaccine will be offered to 12 to 15 year olds, with at least 12 weeks between doses, to ensure they have maximum protection against this virus.

The Health and Social Care Secretary asked the JCVI to rapidly advise on extending the booster programme to 18 to 39 year olds as well as reducing the gap between the second dose and booster following the emergence of Omicron. The government accepted this advice.

Vaccines Minister Maggie Throup said:

It's truly a testament to the brilliant work of our NHS and its volunteers that over 18 million booster jabs have now been provided across the UK.

We're now asking them to undertake another big and critical step up in the programme, with millions more boosters being offered over the next few months.

Getting your jab is the most important thing you can do ahead of Christmas to keep yourself safe from the virus – do not delay in booking as soon as you're eligible.

NHS chief executive Amanda Pritchard said:

The NHS Covid vaccination programme was already in its most complex phase and staff are now working at breakneck speed to respond to the new variant and the expansion of the booster programme, which has already administered more than 15 million doses across England.

The NHS will roll out this latest phase of the programme to the most vulnerable first, offering the booster jab to those over 40 who would have previously had to wait six months, before moving on to younger age groups – there is no need to contact the NHS, we will contact you when it is your turn to book in with the NHS working hard to ensure every adult who is eligible is offered a chance to book in for their booster by the end of January.

The first UK real world study from the UK Health Security Agency published showed that boosters give over 90% protection against symptomatic COVID-19 in adults over 50, reinforcing how vital the boosters are keeping people safe ahead of winter.

These findings show that two weeks after receiving a booster dose, protection against symptomatic infection in adults aged 50 years and over was 93.1% in those with Oxford/AstraZeneca as their primary course and 94.0% for Pfizer-BioNTech.

More than 50.9 million first doses and 46.3 million second doses have been given across the UK. The latest evidence from the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) shows that protection against symptomatic disease from the Delta variant falls from 65%, up to 3 months after the second dose, to 45% 6 months after the second dose for the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine, and from 90% to 65% for the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine. Protection against hospitalisation falls from 95% to 75% for Oxford/AstraZeneca and 99% to 90% for Pfizer/BioNTech.

Vaccine confidence is high, with data from the Office for National Statistics showing nearly all (94%) of those aged 50 to 69 say they would be likely to get their COVID-19 booster if offered, with the figure rising to 98% for those over 70.

Flu is another winter virus that can be serious. To give people the best protection over winter, those eligible for a free flu vaccine should come forward and book an appointment at either their GP practice or their local pharmacy, or take it up when offered by their employer or other healthcare provider.

The government has launched a nationwide advertising campaign, encouraging people eligible to get their booster and flu jabs to protect themselves and their loved ones and help reduce pressures on the NHS. This includes outdoor billboards, broadcast and community radio and TV.

The offer of a first and second COVID-19 vaccine remains open to anyone who is eligible. Vaccines are available free of charge and from thousands of vaccine centres, GP practices and pharmacies. Around 98% of people live within 10 miles of a vaccination centre in England.

The UK remains committed to donating 100 million doses by mid-2022. We will have donated more than 30 million vaccines by the end of 2021 and have announced plans to reach 70 million doses in total so far.

In the absence of a political solution, it is vital that we improve conditions for Israelis and Palestinians

Thank you Mr President, and thank you to the Special Coordinator and Ms. Ero for their briefings.

Let me reaffirm at the outset that the UK remains firmly committed to a two-state solution, based on 1967 lines and with Jerusalem as a shared capital.

In the absence of a political solution, it is vital that we continue to support efforts to improve conditions on the ground and promote stability for Israelis and Palestinians alike.

In that regard, we thank Norway for hosting the recent Ad-Hoc Liaison Committee and the parties for the spirit of cooperation they brought to it. In particular, we welcome the commitments made to reinvigorate the Joint Economic Committee and to resolve key technical issues, including an E-VAT pilot by the end of 2021. Further direct engagement between the parties, including to progress commitments made at the Ad-Hoc Liaison Committee is essential, and we should all spare no effort in supporting it.

Mr President, on 19 November, the UK Government proscribed Hamas in its entirety as a terrorist organisation, including its political wing. We remain clear that Hamas must renounce violence, recognise Israel and accept previously signed agreements. These conditions remain the benchmark against which its intentions should be judged.

I offer my condolences to the family of an Israeli civilian, Eliyahu Kay, who was killed in Jerusalem on 21 November, reportedly by a member of Hamas. We condemn Hamas' continued attacks against civilians, which are unacceptable and unjustifiable.

The decision by the Israeli authorities to designate six Palestinian NGOs, and the evidence which forms the basis of these designations, is a matter for the Government of Israel. The UK maintains its own criteria for designation. We continue engagement with a number of these organisations on human rights issues and respect the role that NGOs and civil society organisations play in upholding human rights and democracy.

Mr President, we have heard today of rising pressure and risk of instability in the West Bank, linked to the Palestinian Authority's financial crisis, lack of UNRWA funding and increasing settler violence.

As we reiterated at the International Ministerial Conference on 16 November, the UK remains a firm supporter of UNRWA and values its importance as a vital humanitarian and stabilising force in the region. We encourage all efforts to improve the Agency's serious financial situation, which threatens its service delivery.

We condemn any incidence of violence by settlers against Palestinians; this deteriorating trend must be reversed. We welcome Israeli authorities' discussion of how to address this issue, and urge Israel to bring those responsible to justice and end the culture of impunity.

We continue to call on the Government of Israel to reverse its decisions of 24 and 27 October, to advance the construction of settlement units in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. The settlements being advanced around Jerusalem are a threat to the viability of a future Palestinian state and, therefore, to peace and stability.

Mr President, peace will be achieved only through real movement towards

renewed dialogue between the parties. We encourage further and deeper engagement in this regard, aimed at creating the foundations for future progress towards a two-state solution.

Thank you.