

Have you joined a Culturally Diverse Virtual Staff Common Room?



Colleagues in the national People Team in partnership with NHS Practitioner Health have been busy developing **virtual Staff Common Rooms** for NHS colleagues from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities across the NHS. This is an opportunity for our NHS people to come together virtually and to invest some time in supporting each other during these challenging times. **Open** to absolutely anyone although specifically catering to the needs of our NHS staff from BAME communities working within the NHS across England, regardless of job role, organisational context or hierarchy and **includes** all final year students who have been working on the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Common Rooms are a safe and supportive environment hosted by an experienced and approved practitioner.

They are one-off meetings for one hour with a maximum of 10 NHS staff – although you are of course able to access them as often as you may feel to be helpful to yourself. Discussion in the room is guided by the participants and focusses on present and future coping and support.

They are an opportunity to share experiences and learning, with hosts also guiding people to additional support and resources.



Signing up to a Virtual Staff Common Room through Zoom

Currently operated Monday – Friday, 8:00am – 8:00pm at varying times to provide flexibility with further plans to increase to a 7days a week service with increased daily hours should demand require this.

To register, please visit our online events calendar [here](#) where you will also see a range of events run by NHS England and NHS Improvement throughout the UK on a variety of topics. If you do not already have an account with us, this can be set up quickly [here](#) from any email account.

Any queries, please email Events and Engagement Manager michelle.davies9@nhs.net.

Ground Rules, Hint and Tips

- It is important not to identify specific patients or places of work.
- You can identify yourself using your real name or a pseudonym.
- Chat (messaging) function is available.
- Your presence is appreciated and valued – you don't have to speak if you don't want to.



If anything is raised during the session that causes you concern please contact [NHS Practitioner Health](#) or telephone 0300 0303 300/111 (out of hours) or email prac.health@nhs.net.



The National and Local Offer in Context

Our NHS people continue to do extraordinary things in the face of an extraordinary challenge, and so continue to need an extraordinary level of support.

This is why the NHS nationally and locally have developed a range of wellbeing support to care for and protect **all** of our NHS people, whether at the front line or in supporting services.

All our people, whether **substantively employed or agency workers** continue to have access to a range of support ([#OurNHSPeople Wellbeing Support](#)).



Alongside the specific 'Common Room Offer', there is also a range of other online/virtual groups that staff can access, for example a staff support line and wellbeing apps via [Our NHS People](#) and [NHS Practitioner Health](#).

We encourage NHS teams to continue to take advantage of these services. They can be used in addition to the support available from your own NHS organisations. If you would like to give us any feedback or how we could improve our offer, please email nhsi.wellbeingc19@nhs.net.

Here's some feedback already received:



It was a very small and safe group and I felt incredibly well supported - despite the session being virtual. Thank you so much to Jocelyn and Kim



Opportunity to reflect on where I am at, helpful to hear from others



Supportive, helpful, lovely engaging people with me in common room. Brilliant idea and concept. Safe space to talk and exchange ideas



A nice space to discuss with fellow colleagues and seeing shared worries but also positives and reminding each other of this. 10/10 for effort, just a shame not more people making use of the space



It gave me the space to discuss how I was feeling emotionally and I felt listened to non-judgementally



Important to make time to consider how we are, consider wellbeing, gain expertise



Safe space to talk, exchange ideas, seek support

