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Oral Health for Minority Ethnic (ME) Communities



NEWSLETTER
18TH JANUARY 2020

Hello Members,

We would like to start off this first newsletter of 2021 by wishing you all a very Happy New Year.

Reflecting on the previous year 2020, the year started with crisis after crisis flaring up in every region of the world, many have labelled 2020 as one of the worst years in modern history. It has been an incredibly challenging time, as billions of people in every corner of the world have been plagued by suffering and distress.

Little could anyone predict a virus that started off in the wet markets in Wuhan, China, will spread across the world as COVID-19 pandemic and force the world into an unprecedented lockdown.

Throughout last year as countries across the globe fought the virus and scientists worked hard to prepare vaccine, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to claim many lives and caused massive disruption to families, societies and economies all over the world.

As we welcomed 2021, the UK had been hit by a new strain of coronavirus.

The new variant is known as B.1.1.7 variant of Covid-19 and it is up to 70% more transmissible and is spreading rapidly amongst both adults and children. This saw the country enter its 3rd National lockdown since March last year. The new rules came into effect on 5th Jan 2021.

This newsletter will discuss what the new lockdown rules mean and how to cope with the stress and anxiety caused.

National Lockdown rules



The pandemic has been stressful for people. Fear and anxiety about a new disease and what could happen can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Public health actions, such as social distancing, can make people feel isolated and lonely and can increase stress and anxiety. Coping with stress in a healthy way can improve wellbeing and make communities stronger.

Stress during an infectious disease outbreak can sometimes cause the following:

- Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones,
- Your financial situation or job, or loss of support services you rely on.
- Changes in sleep or eating patterns.
- Difficulty sleeping or concentrating.
- Worsening of chronic health problems.
- Worsening of mental health conditions.
- Increased use of tobacco, and/or alcohol and other substances.

How you respond to stress during the COVID-19 pandemic can depend on your background, your social support from family or friends, your financial situation, the community you live in and many other factors. Taking care of your family and friends can be a stress reliever, but it should be balanced with care for yourself.

Phone calls or video chats can help you and your loved ones feel socially connected, less lonely, or isolated.

Mental health is an important part of overall health and wellbeing. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It may also affect how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices during an emergency.

We have put together some tips on how to look after yourself during this difficult time:



Support each other by keeping in touch via phone/video calls



Look after yourself through healthy eating.



Feel calmer by relaxing with a favourite book, catch up on a movie or programme you always wanted to watch.



Keep active through regular walks, online fitness classes or follow a YouTube video.



Create routine, therefore even though we are at home, have a routine to go to bed and wake up and have meals on time. Those working from home ensure you take regular breaks away from PC.

We are all in this together and hopefully by sticking to the rules and taking responsibility to look after ourselves will help beat the pandemic.