

Rt Hon Caroline Nokes MP
Chair of the Women and Equalities
Committee

By email

Thursday 09 June 2022

Dear Caroline Nokes MP,

Subject: Experiences from health and social care: the treatment of lower-paid ethnic minority workers

I am writing to you in your capacity as Chair of the Women and Equalities Committee to inform you of the publication today of our report into racial inequality in health and social care. I attach a copy of the report, with the executive summary on pages 5-12. I also attach the England briefing with specific recommendations for UK Government and other bodies in England.

We launched the inquiry in 2020 to understand the experiences of lower-paid ethnic minority workers in health and social care across Britain following reported evidence of inequalities by race during the pandemic.

Following extensive research, evidence gathering and analysis, we have identified various challenges facing these workers. These include differential treatment by race, including harassment and discrimination, their lack of awareness of basic employment rights, and high numbers of workers on zero-hours contracts with poor access to training or progression opportunities.

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Out-sourcing in adult social care, and some roles in health, has resulted in more insecure work and poorer pay and terms and conditions than for those directly employed in the NHS for example. This disproportionately affects those in lower-paid roles, many of whom are from ethnic minority backgrounds.

We also found serious data gaps, particularly in adult social care. Missing data may mask the scale of any discrimination against lower-paid ethnic minority workers. We encourage public bodies to gather better information about their workforce in order to fulfil their Public Sector Equality Duty.

We have made recommendations to government, health and social care service providers, regulators and others to address the issues we have identified. We are confident that, by addressing the recommendations, we can collectively do much to benefit all lower-paid workers in health and social care, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds.

I kindly request that the report is shared with the WEC members as I believe this will be of great interest to them.

Yours sincerely,

Jackie Killeen

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