



# British Association of Physicians of Indian Origin

28 September 2020

Letter to : Prof Chris Whitty, CMO England;  
Prof Stephen Powis, Medical Director, NHS England;  
Mr Duncan Selbie, CEO, Public Health England;  
Sir Simon Stevens, CEO, NHS England.

Dear Colleagues,

## **Covid-19 and concern for vulnerable children and adults**

We are writing to draw your attention to the Covid-19 risk to vulnerable children and vulnerable adults, most notably parents and grandparents.

There are three issues of concern:

1. The number of deaths in vulnerable populations due to Covid-19;
2. What seems to be a blanket decision of opening schools without considering vulnerable children and vulnerable parents;
3. The disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) population.

As you will be aware, ninety one percent of deaths due to Covid-19 occur in people with pre-existing conditions. So far, there are a total of 51,935 deaths according to the Office of National Statistics in England and Wales.

The number of Covid-19 positive cases are increasing in the last few days again as well as are the number of deaths. We understand the need to resume normality, but we would like to raise here the absolute requirement to protect the vulnerable if we are to avoid a further second peak of mortality.

It seems that schools have been instructed that children should attend school even if they are very vulnerable, and conversely, healthy children of vulnerable parents have also been required to attend school. We appreciate fully the need for children to have as little interruption in their education as possible but exposing them to unnecessary risk to the pandemic will only result in an increase in morbidity and mortality. Furthermore, in these modern ages we have all adapted digital technology which could be better utilised for school teaching of vulnerable children at home.

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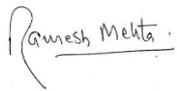


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Unfortunately, adequate measures have not been put in place to protect the vulnerable children and parents (such as those with organ transplant, on chemotherapy, severe lung disease, cystic fibrosis, immunosuppressant therapy). Our members, many of whom work with children and some are vulnerable parents, have raised a concern that the absence of explicit advice to schools is already leading to a surge in both children and their parents or grandparents becoming ill with the infection.

We request you to consider with the utmost urgency a recommendation that immediate plans are put in place to safeguard these individuals otherwise we risk seeing a further disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on BAME communities and NHS staff.

Yours sincerely,



Ramesh Mehta  
President



JS Bamrah  
Chairman