



The Global Society on Migration,
Ethnicity, Race and Health

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Newsletter 1, August 2021

Dear Member,

Thank you for joining the Society and welcome to our first newsletter. These will

be published every two months with the aim of keeping members up to date with developments and thinking in this ever-changing field. As a new venture, we welcome feedback and other contributions from members.

Please send them to: gsmerh@in-conference.org.uk

Since membership opened in early May, over 250 people have joined from over 44 countries across all continents. That's a great start upon which we can build. Please encourage colleagues and friends working in the field to join too.

Previous Events

The Society has held three successful, well-attended webinars since its launch in October 2020:

Migration, ethnicity, racism and the COVID-19 pandemic: key perspectives on a global crisis. (October 12, 2020)

This looked at how the pandemic has turned the lives of millions of migrants upside-down across the world; and how ethnic/racial minorities have been disproportionately badly affected in the United Kingdom and the United States, as have indigenous minorities in Brazil. In contrast, more inclusive government policies in Australia had so far protected Aborigine communities there.

A more detailed summary of the meeting is available at:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7988131/>

COVID-19 Vaccination Uptake among Migrants & Ethnic Minorities: Challenges & Opportunities. (March 25, 2021)

With most countries only just getting their vaccination programmes underway, this webinar highlighted the many factors working against high uptake of vaccine by migrants and ethnic/racial minorities: exclusion or diminished rights of access to healthcare by some groups in some countries; lack of information and poor official communication; misinformation about the vaccine spread on social media; and vaccine hesitancy resulting from mistrust of governments by migrants and ethnic/racial minorities. The picture varies from place to place but unless the underlying causes are addressed in each country, lower rates of vaccination and higher continuing risk of severe illness and death will persist.

The PowerPoint presentations from the event are available [here](#).

Multiple Jeopardies: Long-term Impact of COVID-19 on Migrants & Ethnic Minorities' Physical and Mental Wellbeing. (July 1, 2021)

This webinar looked at the many ways in which the consequences of the pandemic for migrants and ethnic/racial minorities are likely to persist:

- the growing understanding of long-Covid and the additional challenge of studying this among migrants and ethnic minorities;
- the ongoing impact on mental health of the social and economic damage caused by the pandemic, with examples of some encouraging smartphone-based initiatives in Europe using cognitive behaviour therapy and translated into several languages;
- burnout, racism and other negative impacts experienced by migrant healthcare workers on the frontline in Israel;
- a worldwide survey by the WHO (Together Apart) involving over 30,000 refugees and migrants to learn about the impact of COVID-19 on their lives;

- and the WHO's work to map national policies in relation to COVID and migration and develop appropriate policy guidelines.

A more detailed summary of this event is being prepared and you will be notified when it is available.

Forthcoming Events

Beyond the COVID-19 Syndemic: Lessons Learned for Migrant and Ethnic Minority Health. (November 10, 2021)

A fourth webinar will be held in conjunction with the EUPHA Migrant and Ethnic Minority Health Section as a pre-conference to the annual European Public Health Conference.

[Find Out More](#)

2nd World Congress on Migration, Ethnicity, Race and Health

We aim to hold this in late 2023 as a full face-to-face event. Planning is underway to find the most suitable physical venue combined with online accessibility, thereby maximising participation from across the globe. It is likely to follow the template of the successful 1st Congress in Edinburgh in 2018: a series of plenary sessions on key themes led by global experts, combined with an extensive programme of oral and poster sessions and workshops selected from submitted abstracts. Full details will follow in due course.

The Society's Website

Here you can find lots of information about how the Society is organised. We were registered as an Incorporated Charity in the United Kingdom on July 26 2021. Details of our charitable purpose, constitution and Board of Trustees can be found on the website. We will soon be providing more information about how members can get involved in developing the Society.

An essential part of the website is the [Resources Section](#) This contains a unique and ever-expanding collection of publications and links covering the latest developments and findings in the field.

[Visit Our Website](#)

Featured Publication

In this first newsletter, we feature a data brief published in June by Drexel University, Pennsylvania, USA. Written by one of our members, [Professor Ana Martinez-Donate](#), and her colleagues it focuses on the impact of Covid-19 on Latino communities in Philadelphia and can be found [here](#). Combining rigorous statistical analysis with vivid individual examples, it demonstrates with admirable clarity how the effects of the pandemic have been disproportionately severe on many Latinx for many reasons. Multiple efforts have been made to reduce the impact, with some success – but much remains to be done. The challenge is well illustrated by the story of Rosa **María**, featured in the brief. This is but one example of how migrants and ethnic minorities have suffered disproportionately from the pandemic worldwide and it is far from over.

If you know of a policy or practical initiative that has successfully helped migrants or ethnic minorities during the pandemic, please let us know by emailing gsmerh@in-conference.org.uk.

Rosa María, 35 years old, is a single mother from Guatemala who is only fluent in Spanish. She has two children, lives in a house with two other families, is the sole income earner in her family, and has no childcare options beyond their public school, which is only conducting remote learning. After living for ten years in the US, she has been unable to acquire a green card or any other legal status permit.

She is currently uninsured as the cost of a private insurance program was unaffordable while working as a dish washer and cleaner in a restaurant. Insurance is even further out of reach now that she has lost her job due to the pandemic. She is not eligible for public insurance programs or for relief funds, even though she has been paying taxes using an Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN) for many years. Other members of the household started getting sick, but isolating became challenging with several families living in the same house.

When Rosa started experiencing symptoms, she did not know where to get tested and felt scared to consult with health services, since she has heard of the attempted 'medical deportation' of a Guatemalan immigrant in June of 2020 by a large hospital system in Philadelphia. When she sought medical services in the past, she always took her children with her and they helped her translate, but this is no longer a possibility. Rosa and the other members of her family, unable to get tested, assumed being infected and stayed home. Fortunately, all were young and healthy, and none developed severe disease.



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