



30 03 2023

The Rt Hon Steven Barclay MP
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
House of Commons
Westminster
London
SW1A 0AA

Dear Mr. Barclay,

We welcome the priority you have given to patient safety and to staff wellbeing, and to the fact that numerous studies have shown that these are both closely interlinked.

There are widespread concerns about injustices experienced by BME NHS staff, including some recent tragic cases of suicide, with suffering also impacting the families of those who have suffered. We have launched a Petition in February 2023 to commemorate the 7th anniversary of the self-immolation of Nurse Amin Abdullah in February 2016 outside Kensington Palace. Amin was an award-winning nurse who suffered terrible injustice in his workplace, an injustice that was confirmed by a subsequent inquiry. The recent suicide of Dr. Vaish Kumar at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham NHS Trust, is a reminder that such tragedies can still occur. Dr. Kumar stated in her suicide note that the working environment 'just broke me'.

The WRES 2022 findings indicate that 22.4 % of staff in NHS Trusts in England were from a BME background. In 93.5% of the Trusts, a higher proportion of the BME staff compared to white staff suffered from harassment, bullying, or abuse from other staff in the past 12 months.

We would like you to commission an independent inquiry into injustices that have been suffered by BME NHS staff, including those subjected to 'kangaroo courts', such as those identified by Sir Robert Francis in his 2015 report. The most recent (2022) survey from the NHS Workforce Race Equality Standards showed that BME staff were almost three times more likely to suffer discrimination at work compared to their white colleagues. Although the initial focus could be on BME staff, we are equally happy for any inquiry to look at all staff, including whistleblowers, who have been unfairly treated. We need to see what lessons can be learned so that such injustices do not happen again in the future, and to provide support and compassion to those who have suffered. An independent inquiry is needed to identify flawed procedures such as kangaroo courts and review safeguards in NHS systems, so these can be improved. Unfairness in the workplace results in low morale and staffing issues, which will inevitably also then have an impact on patient care. Unfairness also can take up valuable NHS resources.



This request for an independent inquiry is supported by the organizations listed below. Members of these organizations feel very strongly about this matter.

We would like an urgent meeting with you to discuss our concerns.

Marimou Tou Coumarassamy.
Chair, British Indian Nurses Association

Dr Chandra Kanneganti
President, British International Doctors Association

Ramesh Mehta.
President, British Association of Physicians of Indian Origin

cc Prime Minister; NHS England CEO; NHS Providers; NHS Chief People Officer

Supporting organizations –

- 1) Nigerian Nurses Charitable Association
- 2) Philippine Nurses Association of the United Kingdom
- 3) Filipino Nurses Association of UK
- 4) British Sikh Nurses Association
- 5) Nepalese Nurses Association UK
- 6) Caribbean Nurses & Midwives Association UK
- 7) Uganda Nurses Midwives Association
- 8) Association of South African Nurses UK
- 9) Zimbabwean Nurses Association
- 10) Association of South Asian Midwives
- 11) Kenyan Nurses & Midwives Association UK
- 12) Ghana Nurses Association



- 13) Malawian-UK Nurses Association for Advancement
 - 14) Hong Kong Nurses Association
 - 15) Association of Zambian Nurses UK
 - 16) Nursing Association of Jamaica
 - 17) Ivorian Association of Health Promotion UK
 - 18) The organisation of Sierra Leonean Healthcare Professionals Abroad
 - 19) Mauritian Nurses & Health Care Professionals UK
 - 20) Cameron Nurses and Midwives Association
 - 21) Asian Professionals Network Alliance
 - 22) NHS BME Network
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