

Strategic Coordination Group (SCG) – Faith, Community & Volunteering Update

For any enquiries relating to this briefing please contact COVID19CommsHub@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Key Updates

Funding & Charities

The Mayor's team have announced a further £4m funding into the [London Community Response Fund](#). Among those to benefit from the fund are civil society organisations co-ordinating volunteers and equalities groups working to support Londoners disproportionately affected by the coronavirus.

[BBC's Big Night In raised £67 million for UK charities](#). The money will be distributed by the National Emergencies Trust, Comic Relief and Children in Need. UK charities that will benefit include those providing food and essential supplies, tackling isolation, connecting people with services and addressing hidden risks such as domestic abuse or mental health issues. Some of the funds will also go to NHS Charities Together in order to provide mental health support to NHS workers plus bereavement counselling and support to families of front-line NHS staff.

The [#NeverMoreNeeded](#) campaign aims to raise awareness of the charity sector and its role in society, especially during this emergency but also for the recovery. One of the creators of the campaign, CharityComms, also provides [resources and guidance](#) on communications and other aspects of working during the pandemic.

Proud to Care

Over 800 people registered through Proud to Care London. The Proud to Care London campaign, a partnership between the boroughs, is recruiting care workers, care managers, social workers, occupational therapists, chefs and cleaners to fill essential roles in the sector. Less than a week since the campaign's launch, 800 people have registered and approximately 50% of those applications are from people with care experience, either professional or personal. Anybody interested in working in a role in care, such as supporting people in their own home, in a care home or other residential setting, can complete a short application at www.proudtocareLondon.org.uk or [here](#)

Free School Meals

The Department for Education has temporally extended the eligibility criteria for free school meals, to include children from some groups who have no recourse to public funds. [The guidance](#) explains how schools and local authorities can continue to provide free school meals to eligible pupils.

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Public Health England (PHE) has published updated [guidance to help adults with caring responsibilities](#) look after the mental health and wellbeing of children, including those with additional needs and disabilities, during the coronavirus pandemic.

Crime

Victims of crime will have greater access to support during the Coronavirus pandemic after a [£600,000 funding boost for charity helplines and online services](#). This will allow helplines to stay open longer and employ more support workers to handle calls. It will also help fund the technology needed for other forms of contact such as video calls as well as a new online chat service and digital hub run by Victim Support.

Sign Language Support

The Deaf Health Charity, SignHealth and online interpreting company InterpreterNow, have together launched 'BSLHealthAccess'. This enables the provision of immediate, [on demand access to British Sign Language \(BSL\) interpreters](#) for communication with Deaf people in health settings free of charge during the current Coronavirus outbreak. SignHealth also provide the [daily Government briefings in BSL](#) for Deaf people in the UK.

Non-UK Nationals

The GLA has a dedicated [web page on Coronavirus for non-UK nationals](#) including own-language resources, health information and where you can find support.

The Government has issued [specific advice and guidance](#) on the health needs of migrant patients. This includes NHS 111 help for those with an urgent medical problem who are not sure what to do. NHS 111 has access to translators if needed. No charges will be made in the diagnosis or treatment of Covid-19. No immigration checks are required for overseas visitors that are known to be only undergoing testing or treatment for Covid-19.

Digital Support

The GLA is working with partners to support civil society organisations with their increasing digital needs as the ability to work and deliver services remotely becomes necessary. It has created a [Digital Support Access Form](#) to help you find the right digital support for the new and evolving tech and digital challenges. Complete the form, and colleagues at the GLA and across London's Digital and Tech Support sector will be in touch to begin working through your query.

Learning from Home

The London Curriculum has reached out across the city to bring together [free learning and cultural offers that children can access from home](#). They want to ensure that young Londoners still feel connected to the incredible people, places and culture of their city. You can search by age range,

subject, key stage and level of adult input required. They will continue to add content over the coming weeks.

London Together

The Mayor of London interviewed Professor Richard Schilling, Deputy Clinical Director of the Nightingale Hospital in London, who gives a [moving account of the care given](#) and effect of the public support expressed.