

# CITIES on the FRONTLINE



Bi-weekly Manchester Briefing #23 – 14 January 2021

## Cities for a Resilient Recovery: International Lessons on Recovery from COVID-19

This week, we consider how public messaging, involving youth, and shifting from urban- to social planning can play a key role in response and recovery from COVID-19.

### International Lessons

- Shifting from urban planning to social planning (Israel)
- Public messages to improve the effectiveness of vaccination programmes (USA)
- Messaging and resources for staff working with elderly (Greater Manchester)
- Involving young people in response and recovery (Palestine)
- Strategies to mitigate the rise in black markets for negative COVID-19 tests (Hawaii)
- Role of employers in supporting vaccination infrastructure (USA)

### Useful Webinars

## INTERNATIONAL LESSONS

**Health and Wellbeing:** Everyone living and working in the city has access to what they need to survive and thrive

**Consider how your organisation can help relieve the burden of period poverty.** Period poverty has increased sharply in the UK since the COVID-19 pandemic. Period poverty is defined as the struggle to pay for basic sanitary products on a monthly basis. Reports from one charity state they have supplied almost six times as many menstrual products compared with before the pandemic started. Around one in five people have experienced period poverty in the UK which has a significant impact on hygiene, health and wellbeing. Period poverty has risen as result of self-isolation, loss of income, and loss of access to services which may have provided free sanitary products. Scotland has become the first country in the world to provide free and universal access to period products, and places a legal duty on local authorities to make period products available for all those who need them. Consider how to:

- Encourage **schools, colleges and universities** to provide sanitary products for free
- Encourage **businesses and places of work** to provide sanitary products
- Establish programmes where sanitary products are distributed **to low-income households**
- **Partner with pharmacies** to offer free sanitary products to those eligible **for free prescriptions**
- Raise awareness of **trans, non-binary, and genderqueer people's rights** to access sanitary products and ensure provision to them.

### Sources:

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/nov/16/period-poverty-covid-pandemic-uk-crisis-charity-menstrual-products>

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/nov/24/scotland-becomes-first-nation-to-provide-free-period-products-for-all>

**Consider the impact of closing public toilets on public health. During the pandemic public toilets have been closed with a view to reducing possible sites of COVID-19 transmission.** This has resulted in reported increases in open defecation and urination, which could create another public health crisis. Also, the closure of public toilets can negatively impact people's wellbeing and mental health as some people may not feel comfortable using outdoor spaces for fresh air and exercise without knowing there is a public toilet available. Consider guidelines on:

- The safe opening of public toilets in 'BS 45005 Safe working during the COVID-19 pandemic – General guidelines for organizations'
- Revisions of BS 6465 Sanitary installations: Part 1 Code of practice for the design of sanitary facilities and scales of provision of sanitary and associated appliances, and Part 4 Code of practice for the provision of public toilets.

**Sources:**

<http://www.btalooos.co.uk/?p=2196>

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-8826433/How-councils-closed-300-toilets-Covid-19-outbreak.html>

**Economy and Society:** The social & financial systems that enable urban populations to live peacefully, and act collectively

**Consider how cities can shift from urban planning to social planning amid the COVID-19 pandemic.** In recent years urban planning has revolved around principles of shared spaces such as shared offices, vehicles, city squares and parks, and available transport to help people travel to urban centres so that they can access goods and services. COVID-19 has required cities to reevaluate these in light of radically changed human behaviour that relies on distancing from one another. Spaces therefore need to be thought about differently, not just as the physical spaces we inhabit, but as complex realities that can meet a variety of functions. Consider how social planning can:

- Relieve loneliness and allow for spending time with friends and family in the **open air**
- Facilitate alternative safe work environments e.g. moving meetings from offices to outdoor spaces
- Renovating **urban spaces to meet new multi-functional requirements** while considering the need for green space.

Consider also, that social planning may require increased investment in infrastructure and services such as:

- Free and reliable WiFi in outdoor spaces to help meet the requirements of spaces as places that can accommodate work
- **Localising 'downtown' areas**, ensuring every neighbourhood is serviced with essential shops and services to avoid unnecessary travel.

**Source:**

<https://www.jpost.com/opinion/going-from-urban-planning-to-social-planning-amid-the-coronavirus-650531>

**Consider the role of employers in supporting COVID-19 vaccination infrastructure.** Previously, employers in the USA have supported influenza preparedness by providing on-site clinics to administer flu shots for their staff. It may be possible for organisations to use previous arrangements and infrastructure for flu vaccination to support the COVID-19 vaccination programme. If organisations do not have such infrastructure, developing it could help support COVID-19 vaccination programmes and expedite employees return to work. This may be dependent on the type of vaccinations available and requirements for their storage. When a COVID-19 vaccine is widely available and accessible consider:

- Making **vaccination a part of worksite wellness programmes** whereby staff can be vaccinated at an onsite clinic provided by their employers
- How employers can **provide supplementary support in tackling COVID-19 transmission**, alongside the vaccine, through educational material on preventative measures including mask wearing, to promote long-term public health compliance.

**Sources:**

<https://www.benefitspro.com/2020/11/30/the-employers-role-in-creating-a-covid-19-testing-and-vaccination-infrastructure/?sreturn=20201030150251>

<https://www.benefitspro.com/2018/10/03/on-site-flu-shots-can-help-employers-kick-off-a-he/>

**Consider how to promote compassion in organisations.** All areas of peoples' lives have been impacted by COVID-19 in a multitude of different ways. Compassion acknowledges that people may be suffering, and promotes sensitivity about the issues affecting people. Compassion during COVID-19 should acknowledge that while everyone has been impacted, they will have been impacted differently. Recognising these differences will help to build transparency and authenticity within the organisations. Consider how to develop a compassionate organisation through:

- Creating safe spaces where people can air their concerns and views
- Ensure there are processes in place to address legitimate concerns and views
- Regularly check-in with those within the organisation to **actively enquire about their wellbeing** – reducing the expectation and pressure on people to self-mobilise support mechanisms
- Anticipate needs e.g. be aware of pressures, deadlines and potential for burnout
- Believe people when they say they are struggling and trust that they are doing their best
- Consider being **transparent about your own struggles** but be aware of establishing boundaries.

Note that compassion does not lower expectations within the organisation or undermine people's roles and responsibilities. Rather, it creates a **healthier organisational environment** that can reduce anxiety, fear and shame.

**Source:**

<https://www.universityaffairs.ca/career-advice/career-advice-article/profs-teaching-online-need-to-focus-on-increasing-their-compassion-toward-students/>

**Leadership and Strategy:** The processes that promote effective leadership, inclusive decision-making, empowered stakeholders, and integrated planning

**Consider how public messages can improve the effectiveness of vaccination programmes.** Research suggests that the effectiveness of the COVID-19 vaccine will be heavily affected by public attitudes about vaccination. For a highly infectious disease, even a vaccine with adequate efficacy, pace, and coverage may be insufficient to tackle population dynamics (for example age and population size) that produce high disease prevalence. Consider public messaging to:

- Foster **widespread public understanding** and enthusiasm for vaccination, while addressing sources of hesitancy for vaccines (generally and for COVID-19)
- Promote vaccine acceptance through **culturally sensitive, evidence-based and local communication**
- Promote the continued need for other **prevention practices** even after a vaccine becomes available as reducing transmission requires a sustained commitment to public health practices
- Ensure that vaccines are **understood by all communities**, particularly underserved groups for which longstanding disparities in vaccination coverage have been evident.

**Sources:**

<https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hlthaff.2020.02054>

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/11/201119131035.htm>

**Consider developing clear, practical resources containing key messages for staff and volunteers working with older residents.** In Greater Manchester UK, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) Ageing Hub, Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership, and partners launched the 'Keeping Well this Winter campaign' to support older residents in the region. The resources are designed to:

- Encourage **conversations** about keeping well during winter **using a short film** produced by older people, a talking tips guide and booklet to provide clear, practical resources containing key **messages for staff** and volunteers who have any contact with older residents, their friends or families

Resources are also being distributed directly to older residents through printed copies to **avoid digital exclusion**. In addition, to support the promotion and dissemination of this information, a communications toolkit has also been designed for partners and includes:

- Leadership messages
- Briefings and networks/forums
- Internal and external electronic/printed newsletters

- Websites and social media accounts.

The tips in these resources may be adapted to apply throughout the year and with other vulnerable people.

**Sources:**

<https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/keeping-well-this-winter/>

<https://greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/who-we-are/media/comms-toolkits/>

**Consider how to involve young people in response and recovery to promote sustainable and inclusive initiatives.**

In Palestine, officials invited young people to share ideas that they felt could help address the impacts of COVID-19. This has been supported by successful initiatives such as the establishment of a Youth Committee on the Palestinian Water Authority as a means of helping to develop the sector. Members of the Youth Committee were also involved in the 2020 Palestinian National Development Agenda. The Palestinian government and Youth Committee have built on their learning and expertise in these sectors to provide innovative ways of addressing COVID-19. Consider:

- Placing Youth Committees at the heart of **public awareness campaigns** about areas they have been involved, e.g. in Palestine; water consumption and management during COVID-19
- Utilise young people in the creation of **innovative smart apps, and online information** e.g. in Palestine, the "PalWater App," which provides a platform for customers and service providers to communicate. The application also acted as an alarm reporting system where young people could upload live images and their locations to help citizens notify local authorities of real-time issues
- How involving young people in COVID-19 recovery and resilience can help to **build integrated and sustainable long-term solutions** e.g. in Palestine, the water sector initiative is being replicated with the Palestinian Ministry of Social Development to establish more youth committees at the local level.

**Source:**

<https://blogs.worldbank.org/arabvoices/palestinian-youth-make-difference-during-covid-19-and-beyond>

**Consider developing a succinct menu or pathway to help guide organisations through recovery and renewal.**

Developing a succinct plan that details the organisation's overall strategy for recovery and renewal can help ensure the organisation is working towards the same goal and with the same vision. The plan can be developed with partners and disseminated to relevant parties through local networks. An example of this is the Core Cities UK 10 Point Plan to Leave Lockdown – 10 policy initiatives developed for government to work with cities in exiting lockdown. In brief, the plan considers:

- Clear and transparent **criteria** for entering and exiting lockdown
- Rapid, localised Test and Trace and vaccination
- Adequate **business support packages**
- Extended furlough and self-employment support
- Sustainable **financing of local government**
- Winter support packages for vulnerable people
- Safe and secure places to live e.g. **ban on landlord evictions** and return of the 'Everyone In' campaign to end rough sleeping
- Commitment to dialogue with key stakeholders across locally agreed geographies
- Focused **support for education and learning** institutions e.g. rapid Test and Trace for all students and staff, reviewing exam timetables
- Increased **local enforcement** powers to tackle non-compliance.

**Sources:**

<https://www.corecities.com/publications/our-ten-point-plan-leave-lockdown>

<https://www.corecities.com/cities/agenda/economy/our-vision-fully-modernised-resilient-uk-economy-after-covid>

**Consider strategies to manage and mitigate the rise in black markets for negative COVID-19 tests.** As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, people around the world have been utilising black markets to purchase negative COVID-19 test results to enable them to travel. False negative COVID test certificates have been sold for around \$300 USD. Systems which email test results can be easily bypassed by downloading and altering documents such as changing the date of the test, name and test result. Consider how to manage and mitigate proliferation of false negative test results:

- In Hawaii, only results from approved testing partners will be accepted, and they must be transmitted **digitally**, rather than using emails
- Utilising apps **that centralize health and lab data** and test/vaccination results e.g. CommonPass, trialled by United Airlines and Cathay Pacific Airways.

**Sources:**

<https://www.businessinsider.com/global-black-market-for-negative-covid-test-results-2020-11?r=US&IR=T>

<https://www.travelandleisure.com/travel-news/travelers-using-counterfeit-covid-test-results>

## USEFUL WEBINARS

Key past and upcoming webinars on how cities are building resilience in the face of the pandemic and other shocks & stresses.

| Date            | Webinar Title (Click to register or to access materials)  |
|-----------------|---|
| <b>Previous</b> |   |
| 15 December     | <a href="#">UCL &amp; The Health Foundation – Build back fairer: Inequalities and COVID-19 in England</a>   |
| 16 December     | <a href="#">Usher Institute – Addressing COVID-19 in Pakistan and Bangladesh: Public health interventions, policy response, and new research findings</a> |
| <b>Upcoming</b> |   |
| 21 January      | <a href="#">Resilient Cities Network, World Bank – Why cities need play &amp; placemaking to foster children’s wellbeing &amp; city resilience</a>        |
| 22 January      | <a href="#">Arts, Heritage and Design in Healthcare / NHS – Arts in Hospitals during COVID-19: Time to Reflect</a>  |
| 26 January      | <a href="#">Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene – Major challenges for global health in a post COVID-19 world</a>                              |
| 25 February     | <a href="#">Health Campaigns Together – The Pandemic and Privatisation</a>  |

**Produced by The University of Manchester, UK (Professor Duncan Shaw, Dr Jennifer Bealt) in partnership with the Resilient Cities Network (Femke Gubbels)**

### What is the weekly briefing on Cities for a Resilient Recovery?

Every fortnight the [University of Manchester](#) brings together relevant international practices and examples on recovery from COVID-19. The bi-weekly briefing is curated by the [Resilient Cities Network](#) to bring key lessons and examples targeted for resilience officers, emergency planners and other city practitioners. The structure of the briefing follows the [City Resilience Framework](#) – specifically the four drivers that cities have been identified as mattering the most when a city faces chronic stresses or sudden shocks – Health & Wellbeing, Economy & Society; Infrastructure & Environment; and Leadership & Strategy.

For more international examples please register @ [ambs.ac.uk/covidrecovery](https://ambs.ac.uk/covidrecovery)

**Join the Coalition of Cities for a Resilient Recovery [here](#)**

If you would be willing to contribute your knowledge to this briefing series (via a 30-minute interview) please contact [Duncan.Shaw-2@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Duncan.Shaw-2@manchester.ac.uk)