

# PHE Report Shows Minorities are Disproportionately Affected By COVID-19 but Neglects to Mention Why

A PHE (Public Health and Environment) report was released on Tuesday that confirmed COVID-19 disproportionately affects minorities. However, many have been quick to point out that the PHE has not acknowledged the cause of this problem.

Communities that are disproportionately affected by COVID-19 tend to be in areas of higher air pollution. This has been shown in communities in the US, UK, and all over the world. Consequently, this puts these communities at higher risk for health problems that exasperate COVID-19. Air pollution causes an estimated 40,000 deaths a year in the UK alone (very close to the coronavirus death counts to date).

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*“Air pollution is linked to diabetes, strokes, heart attacks, asthma attacks, and those with underlying health conditions are dying more from Covid-19,” she said. “So I expected the black and minority ethnic community to come out worse, because health inequalities are worst in the BAME community, let alone adding a lethal respiratory virus.*

*Omission of air pollution from report on Covid-19 and race ‘astonishing’*

Many experts are surprised that the PHE report neglected to bring up air pollution as the cause for minorities being disproportionately affected by COVID-19. The evidence that air pollution contributes to diminishing health in these

communities is overwhelming.

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*Prof Francesca Dominici, of Harvard University in the US, also said pollution was an important factor. "We have a large body of evidence that health risks associated with air pollution exposure are higher among ethnic minorities." Her research has shown that even a small increase in previous pollution exposure is linked to an 8% rise in Covid-19 deaths.*

Many have said it is irresponsible to leave out this information. To neglect to mention the fact that minorities are disproportionately affected because of air pollution perpetuates systemic racism. It sets a precedent that these communities are wholly responsible for their own circumstances despite the fact that they are continually oppressed by the system.