

BRIEFING NOTE

BUILD BACK FAIRER IN GREATER MANCHESTER: HEALTH EQUITY AND DIGNIFIED LIVES

UCL INSTITUTE OF HEALTH EQUITY REPORT.

A new report *Build Back Fairer in Greater Manchester* from Michael Marmot's UCL Institute of Health Equity provides recommendations for Greater Manchester to Build Back Fairer from the COVID-19 pandemic. These recommendations are also highly relevant to the rest of England.

The recommendations made in the report are based on assessments of health inequalities in Greater Manchester, including COVID-19 mortality and also inequalities in the social and economic arrangements which drive health outcomes. The relevant social determinants of health include:

- Communities and places
- Housing, transport and the environment
- The early years, education and young people
- Income, poverty and debt
- Work and unemployment
- Public health

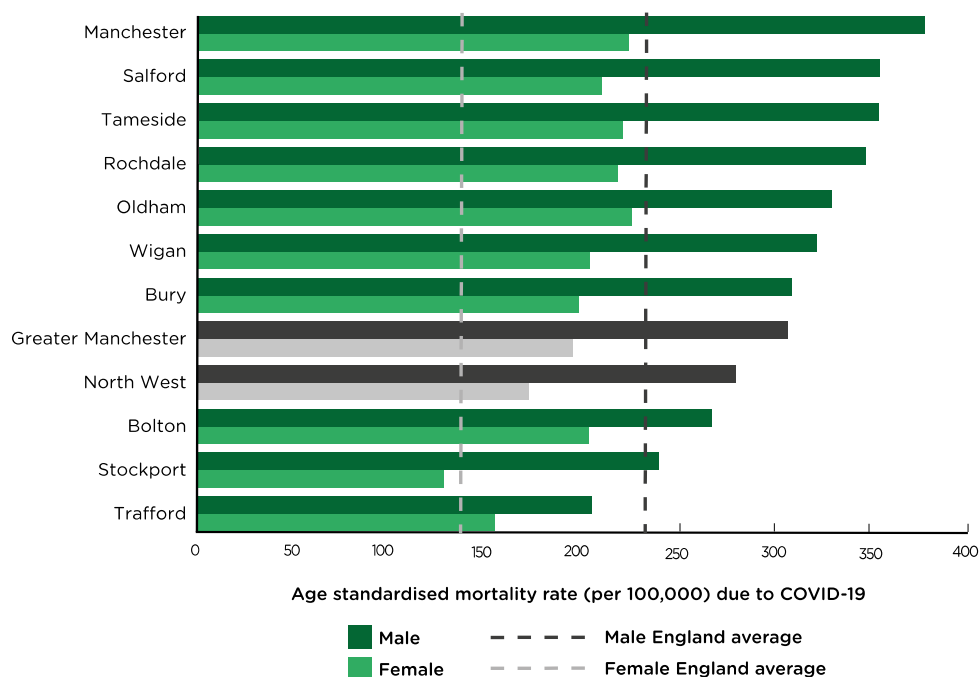
In each of these areas the report overviews inequalities prior to the pandemic, during the pandemic and the likely impacts of the pandemic on inequalities in the future. It is clear that while there are many effective programmes and approaches in place in Greater Manchester, the previous ten years of austerity had damaged health and health inequalities and the COVID-19 pandemic has amplified this damage. There now needs to be additional urgent and more widescale action in order to Build Back Fairer in the aftermath of the pandemic. The recommendations for action are listed at the end of this briefing note.

'Build Back Better' has become the mantra. Important, but we need to Build Back Fairer. The levels of social, environmental and economic inequality in society are damaging health and wellbeing. As the UK emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic it would be a tragic mistake to attempt to re-establish the status quo that existed before – a status quo marked in England, over the past decade, by a stagnation of health improvement that was the second worst in Europe, and by widening health inequalities. That stagnation, those social and regional health inequalities, the deterioration in health for the most deprived people, are markers of a society that is not functioning to meet the needs of its members. There is an urgent need to do things differently, to build a society based on the principles of social justice; to reduce inequalities of income and wealth; to build a wellbeing economy that puts achievement of health and wellbeing, rather than narrow economic goals, at the heart of government strategy; to build a society that responds to the climate crisis at the same time as achieving greater health equity.

COVID 19 MORTALITY IN GREATER MANCHESTER

Analysis in the report shows that rates of mortality from COVID-19 in Greater Manchester are 25 percent higher than in England as a whole. Greater Manchester has also experienced highly unequal mortality rates: the COVID-19 mortality ratio in the most deprived decile was 2.3 times greater than in the least deprived decile between March 2020 and January 2021. These socioeconomic inequalities in mortality from COVID-19 are wider than in the rest of England.

Figure 1. Age standardised COVID-19 mortality per 100,000 for England, the North West, Greater Manchester and its local authorities, 13 month total (March 2020 to April 2021)

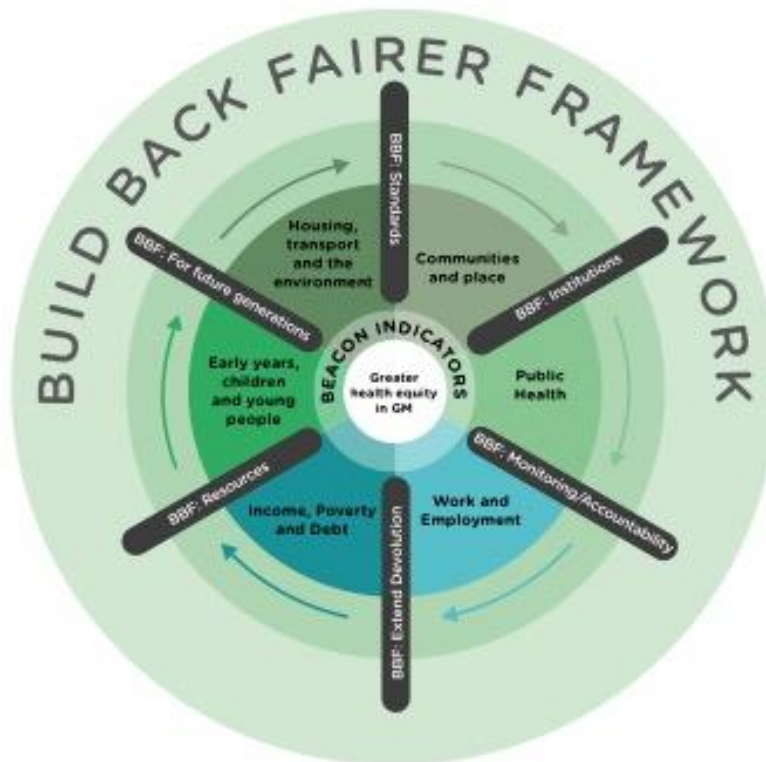


Note: Deaths 'due to COVID-19' only include deaths where COVID-19 was the underlying (main) cause.

Source: ONS. Age-standardised rates from COVID-19, People, Local Authorities and Regions in England and Wales, deaths registered between March 2020 and March 2021 (15).

Central to the recommendations to Build Back Fairer in Greater Manchester is the Framework (Figure 2), which outlines priority areas for action and highlights the role of specific stakeholders.

Figure 2: Framework for Building Back Fairer in Greater Manchester



Central to the approach is a stronger role for business in contributing to societal goals beyond economic prosperity, these include reducing health inequalities and inequalities in the social determinants of health. These roles can be developed through businesses as good employers, having a positive impact on local communities through ‘equitable’ supply chains and using investments and assets, as well as products and services to develop beneficial social and health outcomes. Public sector organisations also have great potential to extend their positive impacts beyond the services they provide.

Young people have suffered greatly through the pandemic in relation to mental health, and prospects for their future. The Build Back Fairer approach prioritises future generations, particularly an ambition that no young person is without employment, education or training after they leave school. Additional support for mental health in schools and workplaces is also needed alongside more provision of mental health services for young people.

The framework highlights the need for more resources for more deprived areas and communities – these can partly be generated through redistributions of existing resources and assets within the Region, but also require greater investment from business and central government. The deep cuts prior to the pandemic, as well as the particularly damaging health, social and economic impacts during the pandemic in Greater Manchester, provide strong justification for these additional national investments.

The framework also sets out the development of ‘healthy living’ standards for housing, environment and employment and a guaranteed offer of universal access to public health

services and training and support for young people, affordable transport and clean air alongside existing public services.

Given high levels of poverty and deprivation – a result of low pay as well as unemployment - we propose that a minimum income level for healthy living is developed specific to cost of living healthily in Greater Manchester. This should be the benchmark for wages and for welfare payments – national advocacy will be required for that.

The framework is underpinned by proposed Marmot Beacon Indicators which support the Build Back Fairer framework. They provide information about the levels of inequalities in health and the social determinants in Greater Manchester and support prioritisation and development of appropriate action, allow assessment of impacts of action, provide greater clarity for the public and stronger accountability for action on health inequalities.

While the pandemic has undoubtedly exacerbated social, economic and health inequalities there are some silver linings. Health has been the priority throughout the pandemic, giving lie to the mantra that ‘it’s all about the economy’. At times society – and government - have worked together for a common goal, business have become more engaged in societal outcomes, and services have worked much more closely and collaboratively with communities. There is greater appetite to reduce the glaring social and economic inequalities exposed during the pandemic. We hope that these silver linings are fostered and supported and the crisis can be a transformative moment.

BUILD BACK FAIRER IN GREATER MANCHESTER RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Build Back Fairer for future generations	Prioritise children and young people <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide further support for early years settings in more deprived areas, including additional support for parents• Extend interventions to support young people’s mental health and wellbeing at school and at work• Ambition for all young people, 18–25 years old, to be offered in-work training, employment or post-18 education• All policies assessed to consider impacts on health equity for future generations• Implement all recommendations and commitments in Greater Manchester’s Young Person’s Guarantee
2. Build Back Fairer resources	Rebalance spending towards prevention <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share expertise and evidence of prevention interventions across local authorities and public services, and continue to build capacity and partnerships• Double the budget for prevention in the total health care budget in Greater Manchester within five years and a system-wide prevention/health spending target for all of Greater Manchester to be developed by end of 2021, with incremental targeted increases over five years.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for real terms percentage increase in the regional budget for public health
	Build Back Fairer opportunities for all <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure proportionate universal funding – increase funding in more deprived communities and particular areas of public services Advocate for increases in local government funding and public service allocations and other regional shares of national budgets Establish a Build Back Fairer Investment Fund in Greater Manchester to include contributions from businesses that support the Build Back Fairer agenda Increase funding and support for training and apprenticeships in more deprived communities Request that businesses invest in a regional Build Back Fairer Investment Fund or equivalent through social value approaches and corporate social responsibility
	Build Back Fairer commissioning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend social value commissioning to all public sector contracts and to businesses in Greater Manchester to enhance business contributions to Building Back Fairer
3. Build Back Fairer standards	Standards for healthy living <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the minimum income for healthy living in Greater Manchester and advocate for national resources to meet this in public sector pay and support business to pay the minimum income for healthy living Guarantee offer of universal access to quality services including existing public services and public health services and universal access to training, support and employment for young people Develop Greater Manchester minimum standards for quality of employment, environment and housing, and transport and clean air and advocate for enforcement powers and resources
4. Build Back Fairer institutions	Extend anchor institution approaches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Greater Manchester’s social value framework and extend anchor institutions approaches to VCSE sector and businesses Extend the remit of anchor institutions to incorporate social value procurement and commissioning and contributions to the Build Back Fairer Investment Fund
	Scale up social value contracting and extend business role <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and social care act as leaders in social value commissioning and work in partnership across local authorities to develop local supply chain across Greater Manchester Embed widescale social value requirements in the Local Industrial Strategy and Good Employment Charter Add provision of apprenticeships for all ages to the social value framework

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link Innovation Greater Manchester with social value framework
5. Build Back Fairer monitoring and accountability	<p>Develop Build Back Fairer equity targets for Greater Manchester</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the Marmot Beacon Indicators develop publicly accessible targets to monitor progress towards Building Back Fairer • Report biannually on Marmot Beacon Indicators related to targets • Invest in routine data collection to support monitoring of reductions in inequalities in wellbeing, opportunity and community cohesion within local authorities
6. Build Back Fairer through greater local power and control	<p>Build Back Fairer devolution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for increased local control of employment services, post-16 skills, labour market, social housing and early years policies and services • Build on success of devolved services and advocate for further powers and resources to deliver local health and wellbeing needs • Further involve communities in the design and delivery of interventions to support their health and wellbeing • Enhance public visibility of the Build Back Fairer approach in Greater Manchester, including explicit commitments and offers to the public • Develop publicly accessible data on equity in health, wellbeing and the social determinants of health

REDUCING INEQUALITIES IN VACCINE UPTAKE AND IN INFECTION AND MORTALITY RATES

- Advocate for local control over vaccination programmes, especially catch-up programmes, and focus vaccine rollout more on groups at higher risk and with lower vaccination rates.
- Follow the principle of proportionate universalism and direct increased resources and supply to ensure the needs of the most deprived, diverse and more vaccine-hesitant communities are met.
- Advocate for resources for adequate financial support and provide practical, clinical and wellbeing support for those who cannot work because of COVID-19 risk and those who have to self-isolate and ensure guarantees of return to employment.

COMMUNITIES AND PLACE

1. Advocate for increased deprivation weighting in funding by level of area deprivation.
2. Advocate for a greater share of resources for regions and local authorities hit particularly hard by COVID-19 and containment measures, and based on remedying shortfalls in funding from the last 10 years.

3. Develop publicly accessible data on equity in health, wellbeing and the social determinants of health within local authorities and strengthen monitoring by ethnicity at the local level.

HOUSING, TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT – RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Improve the quality and affordability of housing

- Fully implement the Good Landlord Scheme.
- Strengthen and enforce decent housing regulation and advocate for resources to enforce housing regulations.
- All new housing to be built to net-zero emissions standards, with an increased proportion being either affordable or in the social housing sector.
- Continue to reduce rough sleeping and hidden homelessness and extend action to reduce risks for homelessness.

2. Green spaces, air quality and quality high streets

- Fully implement clean air zones and monitor for inequalities in exposure.
- Improve quality of existing green spaces and prioritise provision of new green spaces in areas of higher deprivation.
- Adopt city-wide strategies that put health equity and sustainability at the centre of planning.
- Work with local communities to better include their needs when reviving local high streets.

3. Transport and active transport

- Extend incentives to encourage people back to public transport.
- Improve road safety by implementing 20mph speed limit in all residential streets and implement other road safety initiatives in deprived areas first.

EARLY YEARS, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

1. Reduce inequalities in early years development

- Increase the quality and availability of parenting support programmes run through early years centres and schools.
- The regional budget to meet the OECD average for the proportion of spending on the early years and increase funding per child for early years settings in more deprived areas.
- Develop a new measure of school readiness for Greater Manchester.
- Ensure childcare workforce wages in public and private sector meet the Greater Manchester minimum income for healthy living.

2. Reduce inequalities in educational attainment

- Increase catch-up tuition for more deprived students, beyond the UK Government programme, and give additional support to families with children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- Implement all recommendations and commitments in Greater Manchester's Young Person's Guarantee.

3. Prioritise and improve mental health and outcomes for young people

- Prioritise improving the mental health of young people including through providing further mental health support/first aid training in all schools in Greater Manchester.
- Improve mental health treatment options for children and young people rapidly.
- Work with primary care and local charities to provide a whole-system and early response to improve mental and physical health and wellbeing in children aged 0–5 years through the hub-and-spoke model and to address the social determinants of health in local communities.

- Increase the provision of local youth services for young people, advocating for national resources.
- 4. Improve training and work prospects for young people**
- Extend offers of apprenticeships and training for young people linked to requirements for social value employers to participate.
 - Achieve no NEETs in Greater Manchester by guaranteeing an employment or training offer for 18–25 years olds.
 - Advocate to raise the minimum wage for apprentices.
 - Increase mentoring opportunities (including in public services; the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector and business) and add provision of mentoring to the social value framework and Good Employment Charter.

INCOME, POVERTY AND DEBT

1. Reduce poverty

- Establish a goal for everyone in full-time work to receive a wage that prevents household poverty.
- Develop a regional standard for minimum income for healthy living, to be used to establish the minimum wage for Greater Manchester.
- Support food aid providers and charities, and advocate for better national funding.
- Continue to advocate for additional £1,000 annual uplift to Universal Credit and explore other ways of providing this if it is cut.
- Extend eligibility for free school meals.
- Advocate for an end to the five-week wait for Universal Credit and extend cash grants for low-income households.

2. Reduce levels of harmful debt in Greater Manchester

- Increase financial management advice in schools and workplaces.
- Further support community and voluntary sector provision of debt advice.
- Work with Credit Unions to reduce the use of high interest loan businesses and further regulate loan agencies.
- All local authorities in Greater Manchester to offer support for those who are in debt due to non-payment of council tax.

3. Monitoring for poverty and inequity

- Improve local data collection and collation of national and voluntary sector data to estimate inequalities in income and debt within local authorities.

WORK AND UNEMPLOYMENT – RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Improve the quality of work in Greater Manchester

- Fully implement the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter and Local Industrial Strategy and monitor for inequalities, particularly the proportion of employers signing up to the Charter offering lower paid jobs.
- Provide incentives via the Good Employment Charter to reduce precarious and insecure work.
- Define and implement a Greater Manchester quality of work guarantee which extends commitments in the Good Employment Charter and is publicly available for each employer.
- Lead discussions about a four-day work week.

2. Reduce unemployment and build skills

- Build on actions to increase local recruitment into all jobs and work with employers to improve retention rates.
- Increase funding for adult education more in more deprived communities and link to job market demands. Offer training and support to older unemployed adults.
- Incentivise the private sector to participate in training and skills development and link this to the social value framework.

PUBLIC HEALTH – RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Allocate public health resources proportionately, with a focus on the social determinants

- Advocate for real terms percentage increase in the regional budget for public health.
- Strengthen the public health focus on the social determinants of health.
- Public health to provide a key leadership role post-COVID-19 in plans to Build Back Fairer.
- Continue to support Greater Manchester's integrated health and care system to be a true population health system, working in partnership with the 10 local authorities and the GMCA.
- Develop equity targets for local authorities and the City Region, with clear lines of accountability to reflect priorities for reducing health inequalities and inequalities in the social determinants in the longer term.

2. Prioritise inequalities in mental health

- Increase mental health provision in workplaces.
- Continue and expand existing programmes which focus on preventing mental health problems, and strengthen monitoring and evaluation for equity.
- Work with planners to develop mentally healthy high streets and access to good quality green space within a 15–20 minute walk for all in Greater Manchester, including specific actions to reduce noise and air pollution, improve community safety and reduce anti-social behaviour.

3. Give prevention interventions time to succeed

- Invest for the long term, measure success over five and 10 years, and improve sharing of best practice between local authorities in Greater Manchester.
- Identify and embed learning from the COVID-19 pandemic, including the value of place-based services and other 'bottom-up' approaches.
- Place prevention and taking action on the social determinants at the centre of the integrated care system