

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

Dear Prime Minister

9/4/23

Re: Condemnation of statement made by Home Secretary Suella Braverman about British Pakistani's.

We, the undersigned national organisations of health and care professionals, write to express our profound disappointment with the recent comments made by the Home Secretary to stereotype, stigmatise and discriminate against the British Pakistani community with false accusations. It is important to look at the evidence; in 2020, a report commissioned by the Home Office itself concluded that "research has found that group-based child sexual exploitation offenders are most commonly white" and that it was not possible to conclude that one particular ethnic group was disproportionately over-represented¹.

It is unacceptable for the Home Secretary to use inflammatory and divisive rhetoric that is sensationalist and contradicts her own department's evidence. Critically, it enables these heinous crimes to continue by focusing on political exhibitionism instead of implementing impactful action that is evidence-based and requires a whole system response rather than singling out one particular ethnic group.

As health and care professionals, we are committed to working in multi-agency partnerships to protect vulnerable young people who may be at risk or victims of child sexual exploitation (CSE). We are also acutely aware of the impact that cuts in public sector and community services under the current government have had on young people in increasing their vulnerability and reducing access to support for CSE. These facts are being conveniently overlooked and replaced with discriminatory and racist scapegoating.

It also overlooks insensitively, the immense contribution of healthcare professionals from different ethnic backgrounds (in this case British Pakistanis) contribution towards wonderful British intuitions like the NHS. This was very evident recently during COVID-19.

We demand an apology from the Home Secretary and an honest commitment to meaningfully tackling this vital issue which has ruined the lives of thousands of young people. We must also remind the Home Secretary that words have consequences; in 2014, Boris Johnson's comments on women in niqab resembling letterboxes directly resulted in a 375% increase in hate crimes targeting Muslim women². Language that empowers racist

hate crime has no place in modern British society. We urge the Home Secretary to reflect on her grossly irresponsible framing of this complex and serious issue and commit to working with members from all communities to address the urgent issue of CSE together. A retraction of her statement and apology is sought.

Signed by the following healthcare organisation:

- British Pakistani Psychiatrists Association (BPPA)
- Association of Pakistani Physicians of Northern Europe (APPNE)
- Muslim Doctors Association (MDA)
- British Indian Psychiatrist Association (BIPA)
- British Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (BAPIO)
- British Indian Doctors Association (BIDA)
- British Indian Nurses Association (BINA)
- Black women in health UK
- British Pakistani Ophthalmic Society (BPOS)
- TEAMS Charity, Radio Ramadan
- British Egyptian Medical Association
- Association of Pakistani Physicians and Surgeons UK (APPSUK)
- Association of Pakistani Physicians & Surgeons of Scotland (APPS)
- Sudanese Psychiatrists Association UK
- Nigerian Nurses Charitable Association UK
- British Islamic Medical Association (BIMA)
- Asian Professionals National Alliance (APNA) - South Asian NHS Staff Network
- British Bangladeshi Psychiatrists Association (BBPA)
- Allama Iqbal Medical College Association UK
- International British Urology Society IBUS
- Bangladeshi Doctors in UK

- National Overseas Doctors Family Association UK (NODFA)
- Rawalpindi Medical University Alumni UK
- Nishterians Medical Alumni UK
- Dow Graduates Association of Northern Europe (DOGANE)
- Sri Lankan Psychiatric Association of UK
- Cameroon Doctors in the UK (CamDocUK)
- Medical Association of Nigerians Across Great Britain (MANSAG)
- NHS Muslim Women's Network
- Muslim Doctors Cymru
- B-ME Health UK
- Association of South Asian Midwives
- Alchemy Arts UK
- UK Pakistan Science and Innovation Global Network (UPSIGN)
- British Pakistani Nurses and Midwifery Association (BPNMA)
- NHS Muslims Network
- Uganda Nurses and Midwives Association UK (UNKA-UK)
- Faisalabad Medical University UK Alumni
- King Edward Medical College Alumni Association UK (KEMCAUK)
- Association of Black Psychiatrists UK (ABP-UK)
- Sindh Medical College Graduates Association UK (SMCGA-UK)
- Ghanaian Doctors & Dentists Association (GDDA-UK)
- Cardiff University PakSoc

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/group-based-child-sexual-exploitation-characteristics-of-offending/characteristics-of-group-based-child-sexual-exploitation-in-the-community-literature-review-accessible-version>

² <https://tellmamauk.org/press/islamophobic-attacks-in-uk-rose-significantly-after-boris-johnsons-controversial-comments-comparing-veiled-muslim-women-to-letterboxes-watchdog-reveals/>