COVID-19 Reflective session
Motivate room, Etc. Prospero, 241 Borough High Street, London, England, SE1 1GA

10am-4pm Tuesday 28th March

Why this session?

The impact of COVID-19 response work on those involved has been profound, on both a personal and professional level. People worked for extended periods of time within an extremely high-pressure environment. This was high impact work, which was used to inform the government's public health response. It brought with it tight deadlines, long hours, and in many cases harassment from members of the press and public. Some of the consequences of this are severe, including: burnout, exhaustion, mental ill health, becoming isolated from loved ones and lack of future career prospects within academia due to insufficient focus on traditional academic outputs. These impacts have been made clear through anecdotal discussions, ad-hoc workshops, or sessions where the impacts on 'responders' has been touched on (these have been hugely valuable but often project-specific and time-limited) and indirectly through ongoing issues with staff retention and burnout.

What will the session entail?

We will provide a dedicated time and space, in a neutral environment facilitated by an independent professional facilitator, for those involved to reflect on their experiences and make suggestions for improvements for future outbreak responses.

See the agenda and suggested/preliminary questions below for more details.

Who is this session for?

Researchers and aligned staff who were part of the UK's COVID-19 modelling response.

How can I sign up?

In the first instance please put a hold in your calendar and complete an **expression of interest form** by close of business 14th March. Expressions of interest will be reviewed by

the organisers on a rolling basis. The organisers will be in touch with more information asap following the deadline.

Can I share the details of this session with others who might be interested?

Yes, please share with others who you think would benefit from attending this event

Agenda

10-10.30	**Arrival, refreshments, and initial response to questions**
	Welcome, overview of workshop and timeline of COVID
	Working Agreement – Code of Conduct
	Reflection and insights
	Break
	Identifying themes
	Lunch
	Response to themes
	Recommendations
4.00	**Thanks and close**

Hosts:
Anna Carnegie – Community & Project Manager (LSHTM)

Sam Abbott – Research Fellow (LSHTM)

Facilitator:
Janice McNamara https://www.linkedin.com/in/janicemcnamara/
http://janicemcnamara.com/

Here are some questions for you to reflect upon, in readiness for our discussions:

If asked to summarise your pandemic experience with one word what would it be?

Do you think sufficient action is currently being taken to improve future outbreak responses to the standard you think is acceptable? (yes/no as a sticker response)

Who is responsible for ensuring people are supported, and appropriately credited, for their work - you, your line manager, your research group, your institution, academic funders, or the system more generally? (group by option using stickers)

1. What was your **pandemic timeline**? What were the highs and lows?

2. **What was your experience** of pandemic work like? *Below are some suggested directions to take this:*
   - *What did you expect to experience when you started working on the pandemic response, and how did this differ from what you actually experienced?*
   - *Did you get any benefits? Where there any negatives?*
   - *How did your professional and personal experiences differ? Do the professional gains outweigh the personal costs or vice versa?*
   - *Do you think privilege played a role in your experience?*

3. What were some of the things that **helped assist you** to do effective research during the outbreak response*? Some examples could be:*
   - *Management practices*
   - *Contract duration*
   - *Professional services staff*
   - *Funders*
   - *Employer organisations*
   - *Supervisors*
   - *Peers*
   - *Computing resources*
   - *HR policies*

4. Do you think **team science** was appropriately supported over the pandemic? *Some potential directions:*
   - *What elements of team science were most important to your work?*
   - *Has anything changed since prior to the pandemic in terms of support for team science?*
   - *What role did professional services staff, research administrators and managers, press and media teams - have on your ability to do effective response work?*

5. Has your **employer or the wider community** taken action to help mitigate any of the personal or professional costs/challenges you identified? What more can be done?

6. Do you think there were **barriers** to doing effective and sustainable COVID-19 outbreak response work? If so, what were they?

7. What has been done and what more can be done to reduce any barriers to effective outbreak response work in the future?