

# **Victoria awarded the MBE for work during the pandemic**

**Victoria Lopez works as Head of Partnerships with The Scottish Government and has been awarded the MBE in the New Year Honours for her services to Minority Ethnic Communities in Scotland during Covid-19.**

This work contributed to saving lives during the pandemic among minority ethnic and other communities by spreading factual information about wearing masks and reducing social contact.

Ms Lopez said to The Edinburgh Reporter: "I am extremely honoured and appreciative of this recognition on behalf of my team at Scottish Government Communications, and I look forward to continuing to collaborate with the diverse and vibrant communities across Scotland."

Ms Lopez made an explainer film about the Covid-19 vaccine in collaboration with Public Health Scotland directed to seldom heard communities. This provided key facts about vaccination to an additional 2.3 million people. IN addition she expanded the information to 17 languages and formats, also working on alternative methods of delivery such as WhatsApp for community leaders to send to their own networks. This work will continue with Ms Lopez advising on diverse and inclusive communications to the wider public sector in Scotland.

She also spoke to many community groups finding a degree of distrust of government and authorities which needed to be overcome to make the essential information effective.

- Building relationships with these groups, and listening to their concerns and persuading them to advise on effective information for their communities she then secured their agreement to act as trusted messengers for their communities for essential information.
- Victoria co-created culturally-specific materials with NHS Lothian, NHS 24, Public Health Scotland and the Traveller communities on COVID-19 and developed multi-lingual videos and accessible documents for Test & Protect, to enable understanding of the need to test and isolate when required to prevent infection spread.



Victoria Lopez