

Health & Social Care Scrutiny Commission

Health Inequalities of Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) children and young people

May 2021

DRAFT

INTRODUCTION

This review spans the work of two administrative years. The previous year addressed the Mental Health of children and young people 0 – 25 years, with a particular focus on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) and male people, given the poorer mental health outcomes for BAME people and the higher suicide rate of boys & men. With the onset of the pandemic the Commission also looked at the impact of COVID 19, and particularly lockdown, on children and young people's health and wellbeing.

This administrative year the Commission widened the review scope to look at the health inequalities of BAME children and young people using a race equality framework, in order to better understand the impact of discrimination and deprivation, and how these can be addressed.

BACKGROUND

The review took as it's starting point the commitment made in November 2018 by the Health and Wellbeing Board to 'set a shared ambition to meet 100% target of children and adolescents with Mental Health needs and that they would aim to achieve this by 2020', followed by a later decision in June 2019 to adopt the Thrive Model ¹

To achieve this the Health and Wellbeing Board has:

- Established the 'Southwark Child and Adolescent Mental Health Commission'.
- Commissioned statutory, as well as additional, CAMHS services.
- Refined KOOTH, an online digital offer of counselling and signposting introduced to Southwark in 2019, initially targeting 11 – 19 year olds, and moving to support young people up to age 25.
- Developed wellbeing and mental health services, in schools, using an additional 2 million funding from the Council.
- Delivered an Open Access Service, The Nest, to support self help, group support and 121 sessions for children, young people and their families. In response to the COVID pandemic, The Nest mobilised and launched a remote service, in May 2020, offering coaching and therapeutic support either through phone or video calls to young people aged 13 - 25 throughout lockdown. As lockdown has eased The Nest has made the transition from remote to socially distanced face to face delivery having moved into new premises on Rye Lane, Peckham.

1

During the course of the review, following the horrendous death of George Floyd at the hands of the police in Minneapolis, and rise of Black Lives Matter, tackling racism has taken center stage and Southwark Council has launched Southwark Stands Together. This work will include:

- An anti-racist audit of the borough to identify statues and street names that do not reflect our borough's diversity, especially anything with links to slavery or our country's colonial past, and to identify positive opportunities for the celebration of more diverse figures
- A listening exercise with communities across the borough, partner organisations, and our staff, to hear their concerns, and identify solutions to address entrenched and persistent racism and injustice
- A call to all businesses and organisations in the borough to work with us to implement these solutions, taking positive action to ensure equality of opportunity
- Work with the EMPOWER Network and colleagues across the council to make sure our response is collaborative and inclusive.

EVIDENCE

Commission heard evidence from:

- Social Care, Public Health, Domestic Abuse and Education officers
- Southwark NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) colleagues
- South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLaM) on the Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) they provide.
- Lambeth Healthwatch and Black Thrive, which was set up through community organising in Lambeth to particularly address the systemic causes of mental health of black people, and shift away from a focus solely on treatment of symptoms.
- PemPeople, a voluntary group working with young people.
- Wigan Deal, following a visit to look at community and prevention work (completed in 2019)
- GLA report 'Connecting up the care: Supporting London's children exposed to domestic abuse, parental mental ill-health and parental substance abuse.
- Baroness Doreen Lawrence report 'An Avoidable Crisis: The disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities'.

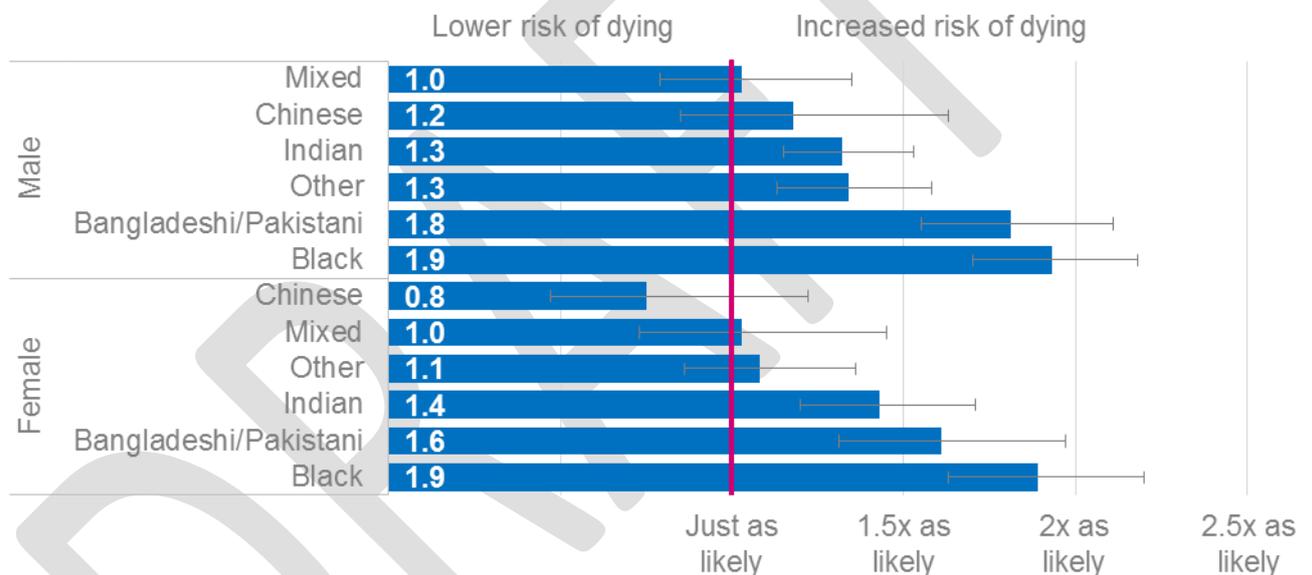
THEMES

The disproportionate impact of COVID 19 on BAME children and young people

COVID 19 Infections

The Commission received two reports from public health on the impact of COVID 19, one of which looked at the impact of lockdown on children and young people. Another report looked at the increased risk of Domestic Abuse and the mental health of children and young people during lockdown.

BAME adult populations are generally more at risk of becoming seriously unwell or dying of COVID 19, with significantly higher mortality rates among certain ethnic groups, most notably those of black and Asian ethnic backgrounds.



Children appear less susceptible to infection and the risk of severe illness is lower in children generally, apart from those with pre-existing conditions. Paediatric multi-system inflammatory syndrome is severe but incredibly rare. The most frequent impact on children and young people of COVID -19 infection is therefore likely to be the bereavement of a family member, or a loved one becoming very unwell.

Officers told the commission that Public Health England conducted extensive community engagement as part of their national review into why COVID-19 is particularly impacting Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups. The engagement identified a number of themes, including:

- **Long-standing health inequalities**
COVID-19 has exacerbated long-standing inequalities affecting BAME groups, including poorer socio-economic circumstances. Associated poor

health outcomes (e.g. asthma, obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and mental health problems) raise the risk of severe COVID-19 illness.

- **COVID-19 exposure**

BAME people are more likely to work in occupations which increase their chances of COVID-19 exposure, via (i) greater general social contact, and (ii) greater contact with people likely to be COVID-19-positive.

- **Healthcare and disease prevention**

Existing health promotion and clinical healthcare programmes are not accessible and effective enough to reduce chronic disease levels. Chronic physical and mental health problems raise the risk of severe COVID-19 illness and death.

- **Racism, stigma and fear**

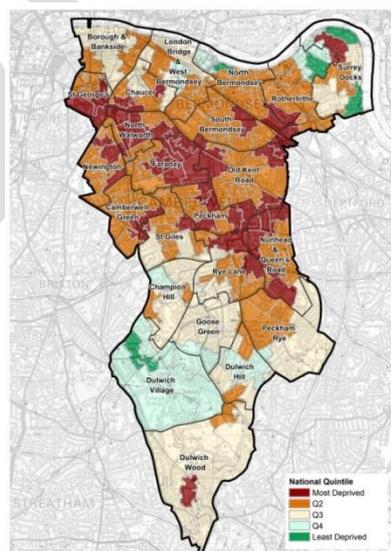
Stress due to chronic racism depletes physical and mental health. Previously experienced stigma and discrimination, plus fear and lack of information, reduce health-seeking and delay COVID-19 diagnosis and treatment.

Workplace bullying erodes self-advocacy and compounds occupational risks.

The commission also heard that people in more deprived and urban areas are more likely to be diagnosed with COVID-19 and have poor outcomes. Between 1 March and 17 April 2020 the most deprived areas in England had more than double the mortality rate from COVID-19 than the least deprived areas.

Over a fifth of Southwark residents live in communities ranked in the most deprived 20% of England. More of our adolescents live in our deprived areas than the general population, especially those aged 10-17 years.

Deprivation in Southwark, orange-red are among the most deprived nationally



COVID 19 Vaccine take up

Vaccine take up is lower amongst many BAME communities and this intersects with socio economic status.

A BMJ² editorial reported that as of 14 February 2021 over 90% of adults in Britain have received or would be likely to accept the covid-19 vaccine if offered. However, the article highlights the much greater vaccine hesitancy among people from some ethnic minorities, with a survey from December 2020 showing that Vaccine Hesitancy was highest among Black, Bangladeshi, and Pakistani populations compared with people from a white ethnic background.

The commission had a presentation from Southwark CCG on Vaccine Hesitancy and NHS colleges identified the following reasons:

- Lack of trust and confidence
- Concern about unknown side effects
- Distrust of pharmaceutical companies and authority
- Distrust of vaccines in general
- Lack of information from trusted sources
- Perception of not being at risk
- Belief that vaccination is another form of control
- Lack of understanding of who is at risk and why and whether people are guinea pigs
- Concern about ingredients

At the time of the presentation, at the end of January 2021, officers said that the vaccine refusal rate is declining, with some people indicating they may change their mind and decide to be vaccinated later down the line. As of January 2021 71% of over 80s were receiving the vaccine in Southwark.

Vaccine Hesitancy has, however, translated into lower vaccine take up, nationally. The latest ONS data available shows that vaccine rates for the over 50 population are highest amongst the White population (93.7 %) and lowest for the Pakistani (78.4 %), Black African (74.2 %) and Black Caribbean (66.8 %) populations.³

The BMJ linked the higher levels of Vaccine Hesitancy to racism noting that levels of distrust are highest amongst black populations and that trust is eroded by systemic racism and discrimination, previous unethical healthcare research in black

² Covid-19 vaccine hesitancy among ethnic minority groups
<https://www.bmj.com/content/372/bmj.n513>

³ ONS Coronavirus and vaccination rates in people aged 50 years and over by socio-demographic characteristic, England: 8 December 2020 to 12 April 2021
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthinequalities/bulletins/coronavirusandvaccinationratesinpeopleaged70yearsandoverbysociodemographiccharacteristicengland/8december2020to12april2021#identity-and-cultural-factors>

populations, under-representation of minorities in health research and vaccine trials, and negative experiences within a culturally insensitive healthcare system.

The BMJ went on to note that Vaccine Hesitancy has serious implications as the pandemic continues to have a disproportionate effect on people from ethnic minorities, with higher covid-19 morbidity and mortality and greater adverse socioeconomic consequences. They advocated building trust through GPs and community organisations, and the importance of addressing legitimate concerns with information from trusted sources, rather than dismissing worries as conspiracy theories or people as 'anti vaxxers'. At the same time they urged that false information be addressed.

NHS and Southwark officers outlined the community engagement work that they are doing to understand and reach communities, which include outreach, surveys, social media, advertisements and the use of GPs, community and religious leaders.

Systemic racism and COVID 19

The commission considered a report from Baroness Doreen Lawrence report 'An Avoidable Crisis: The disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities' produced summer 2020. This concluded that:

Covid-19 is having a disproportionate and devastating impact on ethnic minority communities. Not only are Black, Asian and minority ethnic people dying at a disproportionate rate, they are also overexposed to the virus and more likely to suffer the economic consequences. Despite repeated warnings, the Government has failed to take sufficient action.

Covid-19 has thrived on inequalities that have long scarred British society. Black, Asian and minority ethnic people are more likely to work in frontline or shutdown sectors which have been overexposed to Covid-19, more likely to have co-morbidities which increase the risk of serious illness and more likely to face barriers to accessing healthcare. Black, Asian and minority ethnic people have also been subject to disgraceful racism as some have sought to blame different communities for the spread of the virus.

This virus has exposed the devastating impact of structural racism. We need immediate action to protect people this winter, but we must also fix the broken system that has left ethnic minority people so exposed.'

The report highlighted a number of inequities in lockdown towards BAME communities, highlighting that Liberty has found that police forces in England and Wales are up to seven times more likely to fine Black, Asian and minority ethnic people for violating lockdown rules.

A number of recommendations were made. Some of these are specific to winter preparation and PPE which have been covered in previous reviews on care homes,

and most are targeted at central government, rather than local government. Nevertheless some can be modified and adopted by Southwark, in particular:

- *The Government should remove linguistic, cultural and digital barriers to accessing public health information. The Government should work with all relevant bodies, including faith and community groups, to identify effective channels to disseminate information and provide support.*
- *The Government should take immediate action to ensure comprehensive ethnicity data collection across the NHS and social care. The Government should also ensure all appropriate data collected and released by Government and public bodies is disaggregated to include a demographic breakdown.*
- *Implement a Race Equality Strategy, developed with Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and with the confidence of all those it affects.*
- *The Government, working with the Devolved Administrations, should launch a review into the diversity of the school curriculum to ensure it includes Black British history, colonialism and Britain's role in the transatlantic slave trade.*
- *Equality impact assessments should be used much more effectively to shape and inform policy, and policymakers should seek to tackle structural racism with their decisions. The Government should also enact section 1 of the Equality Act which covers socio-economic disadvantage.*
- *The Government must develop a clear plan to combat stigmatisation of communities during the Covid-19 crisis.*

Economic, educational, interpersonal and emotional impacts of lockdown

The impact of successive lockdowns has had wide ranging impacts on children and young people. The pandemic is likely to widen existing inequalities and to disproportionately impact our more vulnerable children and young people.

Impacts include:

- Delays in educational achievement and progression
- Increased vulnerabilities to exploitation and offending
- Poorer future outlook & lack of optimism
- Increased exposure to Domestic Abuse and Child Abuse
- Increase in child to parent violence
- Bereavement
- Decreased visibility of vulnerable children not known to services
- Decreased ability of services to identify risks through virtual assessments

- Substance use & reduced access to sexual health services
- Food insecurity
- Poorer mental health & wellbeing, including loneliness
- Impact of increased parental stress, coping, poor mental health
- Negative impact on self-management of Long Term Conditions and access to support
- Uncertainty and difficulty in child contact arrangements (with parents)
- Lack of access to formal support
- Lack of access to social support networks
- Lack of diversionary activities
- No access to safe and nurturing spaces outside of the home, e.g. schools, youth clubs and play centers

The commission took a particular interest in the impact of Domestic Abuse, safeguarding and mental health.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse (DA) is defined as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can include, but is not limited to: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional. Witnessing Domestic Abuse is an Adverse Childhood Experience that has the potential to negatively impact on children's mental and physical health throughout their life course.

Southwark has one of the highest volumes of DA in London with generally rising demand over the last several years, although there was a reduction in demand prior to lockdown. However, July 2020 saw the highest number of referrals ever received by the service in a single month.

Southwark Domestic Abuse Advocacy and Support Service, delivered by Solace, saw referrals for survivor support increase by 25% in the period from 1st April to 30th June compared to the same period in 2019. The number of referrals received from victims aged 16 to 25 also increased significantly, by 46%.

The increase in referrals was largely driven by a dramatic increase in high risk referrals. In line with this, there was a corresponding increase in referrals to MARAC. The Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) is coordinated by Southwark Council and meets fortnightly to provide a multi-agency response to high risk cases of domestic abuse. During the period 28th April 2020 to 18th August 2020, 312 cases were heard by Southwark MARAC, this compares to 232 in the same period last year, an increase of 34%.

Children's social care also recorded a 34% increase in contacts relating to domestic abuse in the period 1st April 2020 – 31st July 2020 (781), when compared to the

same period in 2019 (584). Whilst referrals for domestic abuse increased by 76%, from 151 (April – July 2019) to 266 (April to July 2020).

Nationally NSPCC reported that contacts to their helpline about the impact of domestic abuse on children increased by 32% since the start of the lockdown, to an average of one an hour. In May 2020 the helpline received its highest number of contacts about domestic abuse since 2016 when the current recording method began.

A report by Oxford and Manchester Universities suggests that child to parent violence has also significantly increased since lockdown measures were put in place. They found that the number of child to parent violent episodes increased by 70%, and that 69% of practitioners surveyed, said they had seen an increase in referrals for child to parent violence.

The commission heard that the council recognised very quickly the need to adapt the delivery of services including domestic abuse services during lockdown, moving from face to face to delivery via online and remote means. Additional funding has been put in place for two DA workers, to increase telephone capacity and put in place a communications campaign across Southwark to raise awareness of domestic abuse and how to seek help. A new group service has been delivered to support parents where there is child to parent abuse, measures have been put in place to use pharmacies as safe spaces and extra support has been provided to children in shelters. Longer term there are call for the government in increase the profile and funding for domestic abuse.

Mental Health

Young Minds (a young people's mental health charity) carried out a survey with 2,036 young people with a history of mental health needs between Friday 6th June and Monday 5th July. This showed that:

- 80% of respondents agreed that the coronavirus pandemic had made their mental health worse (41% said that it had got much worse).
- 87% of respondents agreed that they had felt lonely or isolated during the lockdown period
- Among more than 1,000 respondents who were accessing mental health support in the three months leading up the crisis (including from the NHS, school and university counsellors, private providers, charities and helplines), 31% said they were no longer able to access support but still needed it.

Officers identified that lack of access to school; formal support; reduced access to wider extended family and social support; a lack of access to youth clubs, play spaces, and peers have all impacted on children and young people's wellbeing. This

is particularly so for young people who may be particularly reliant on support outside of the home, and more exposed to abuse in the home.

Although some formal support has been possible through virtual mean, practitioners and young people have reported this has been less effective.

The Nest, Southwark's new open access mental health service for young people was able to open virtually.

Pem People emphasized the importance of a safe space for young people, generally but during lockdown in particular , and that young people raise the need for this continuously, for example an adventure playground. They acknowledged that this is not something that is easy to deliver, however they reported that young people are saying they are being taken to places they do not want to go, or are more vulnerable to street violence or stop and search, when they do not have access to a safe space. They reported that young people are using BMX and garages. As well as more promotion of The Nest a virtual peer support network was also proposed by Pem People.

The commission was particularly concerned by those families experiencing particular hardship, in particular children with SEN and young carers.

Conclusion

COVID -19 infection and lockdown is exacerbating existing race inequalities and these intersect with economic inequalities. Although children are at low risk of mortality their wider families and social networks are at a disproportionate risk. Black and Asian families, in particular, are suffering higher levels of infection and mortality, because of a combination of overexposure through work on the front line, higher levels of existing health conditions, racism and barriers to accessing health care.

Vaccine rates are lower among Black African, Black Caribbean and Pakistani communities, which has serious potential health consequences for future COVID 19 waves.

Black, Asian and minority ethnic people are more likely to experience economic hardship through lockdown and be more harshly treated by the criminal justice system. Lockdowns have disproportionately impacted children and families with living in economic deprivation, experiencing mental ill health, disability, with special needs, and young carers. Providing safe and connected spaces for children and young people during any future lockdowns must be a priority.

Recommendations

The provision of physical and online Youth and Play spaces for young people ought to be prioritised, in recognition of the importance of the social support from adult and peers that young people are able to access in social spaces.

Keeping these places open as safely as possible during any future lockdowns ought to be a key objective.

The council and NHS should implement a Southwark Race Equality Strategy, as part of Southwark Stands Together, developed with Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and with the confidence of all those it affects.

Equality impact assessments should be used to tackle structural racism with their decisions. Southwark should also include socio-economic disadvantage (which would be a local government enactment of section 1 of the Equality Act which covers socio-economic disadvantage).

The police and criminal justice system must develop a clear plan to combat stigmatisation of communities during the Covid-19 crisis.

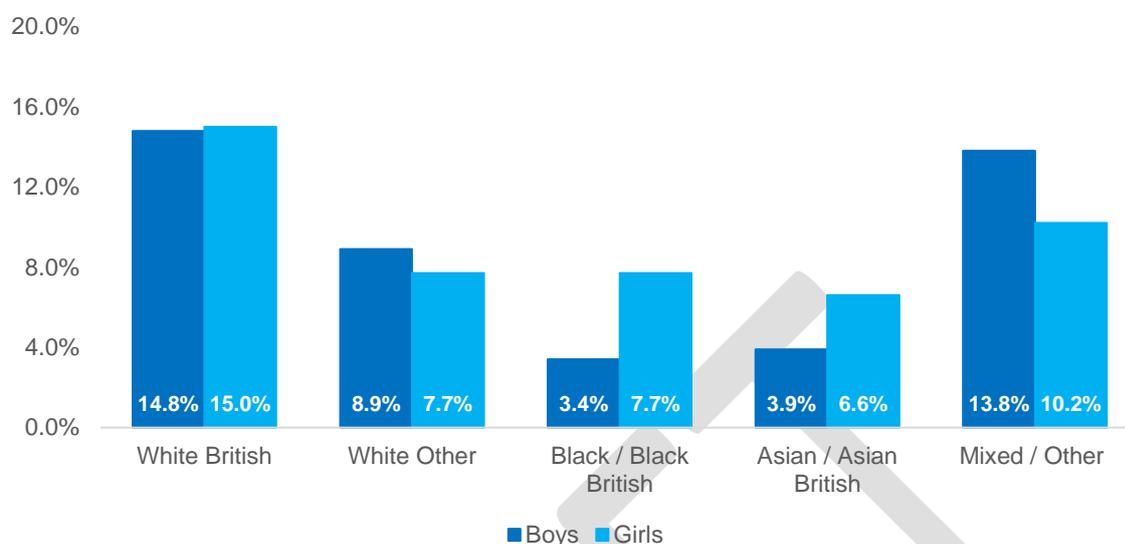
Prevalence of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic children and young peoples mental ill health

The commission heard contradictory evidence on black people's mental health, with underrepresentation of disorders young people from all ethnicities recorded in national survey, but elevated risk in older adults from Black communities.

The commission heard that Black and minority ethnic communities are at comparatively higher risk of mental ill health because of the wider socio-economic detriments associated with mental ill health, including deprivation and racism, however young black people report less mental ill health but older people from black ethnic groups are more at risk of severe mental illness.

Results from a national survey in 2017 of the mental health of children and young people show that 14.4% of children and young people in England aged 11 to 16 had a mental health disorder, with emotional disorders being the most prevalent. The results from the survey indicate that the prevalence of disorders is higher among those from a White British background, and lower among those from Black / Black British or Asian / Asian British backgrounds. The pattern is evident for "any disorder", as well as for different types of disorder.

Prevalence of any mental disorder by ethnicity and sex, 2017⁴



Amongst adults almost one in five adults in Southwark are experiencing a common mental disorder, equating to approximately 47,000 individuals. The prevalence of severe mental illness in Southwark is 1.4% (approximately 3,800 patients) and severe mental illness disproportionately affects male, older and black ethnic population groups.⁵

Nationally people from African Caribbean communities are three times more likely to be diagnosed and admitted to hospital for schizophrenia than any other group. Locally black people are disproportionately diagnosed with schizophrenia and psychosis, though the picture is complex⁶. Black Thrive, and national research, has raised concerns that racism impacts on the over diagnosis of psychosis and schizophrenia, which can negatively impact on treatment trajectory⁷.

The discrepancy between the low levels of mental health being recorded amongst BAME young people and the relatively high levels of serious mental ill in black older adults will be examined below, with several possible explanations.

⁴ 2018 Annual Public Health Report: Statistical Appendix page 8 & 9

⁵ Page 2 Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic access to mental health services indicative review provided to the Commission 10 September 2020

⁶ See Briefing to the Commission, 21 January 2020, appendix A, slide 10, Top Diagnosis by Ethnicity.

⁷ <https://diversityhealthcare.imedpub.com/schizophrenia-and-psychosis-the-magical-and-troubling-disappearance-of-race-from-the-debate.php?aid=3730>

Mental distress is more likely to be treated as a behavioral issue by institutions

Schools

Black Thrive told us young black people are more likely to experience institutional racism in school with children less likely to receive a positive response to distress and more likely to experience punitive behaviour managing techniques such as detention and exclusion.

This is born out to an extent by statistics provided by Southwark's education department, particularly for Black Caribbean students, mixed heritage students and Gypsy Roma children.

The rate of permanent exclusion for Black Caribbean children is 1.5 times higher than the rate for White British children and the rate for Mixed White and Black Caribbean children slightly (1.1 times) higher. However Black African children, have lower rates of permanent exclusions than White children.

| Rates of permanent exclusions per detailed ethnicity group in Southwark, compared to the national rate | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------|---------|-----|----------------|---------|-----|---------------|---------|-----|
| Ethnicity | Number | | | Southwark rate | | | National rate | | |
| | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | DoT | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | DoT | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | DoT |
| Any other Asian background | 0 | 0 | ◀ | 0.00 | 0.00 | ◀ | 0.08 | 0.08 | ◀ |
| Any other Black background | 2 | 1 | ▼ | 0.27 | 0.14 | ▼ | 0.30 | 0.29 | ▼ |
| Any other Ethnic Group | 3 | 1 | ▼ | 0.23 | 0.08 | ▼ | 0.15 | 0.18 | ▲ |
| Any other Mixed background | 5 | 2 | ▼ | 0.53 | 0.22 | ▼ | 0.30 | 0.24 | ▼ |
| Any other White background | 1 | 1 | ◀ | 0.08 | 0.08 | ◀ | 0.15 | 0.13 | ▼ |
| Bangladeshi | 0 | 0 | ◀ | 0.00 | 0.00 | ◀ | 0.09 | 0.09 | ◀ |
| Black African | 12 | 9 | ▼ | 0.25 | 0.18 | ▼ | 0.18 | 0.15 | ▼ |
| Black Caribbean | 11 | 8 | ▼ | 0.67 | 0.49 | ▼ | 0.50 | 0.46 | ▼ |
| Chinese | 0 | 0 | ◀ | 0.00 | 0.00 | ◀ | 0.02 | 0.02 | ◀ |
| Gypsy Roma | 0 | 0 | ◀ | 0.00 | 0.00 | ◀ | 0.96 | 1.08 | ▲ |
| Indian | 0 | 0 | ◀ | 0.00 | 0.00 | ◀ | 0.04 | 0.03 | ▼ |
| Irish | 0 | 0 | ◀ | 0.00 | 0.00 | ◀ | 0.28 | 0.10 | ▼ |
| Pakistani | 0 | 0 | ◀ | 0.00 | 0.00 | ◀ | 0.14 | 0.13 | ▼ |
| Traveller of Irish heritage | 0 | 0 | ◀ | 0.00 | 0.00 | ◀ | 0.88 | 0.91 | ▲ |
| White and Asian | 0 | 0 | ◀ | 0.00 | 0.00 | ◀ | 0.21 | 0.18 | ▼ |
| White and Black African | 1 | 0 | ▼ | 0.37 | 0.00 | ▼ | 0.32 | 0.24 | ▼ |
| White and Black Caribbean | 4 | 2 | ▼ | 0.75 | 0.35 | ▼ | 0.58 | 0.47 | ▼ |
| White British | 7 | 11 | ▲ | 0.22 | 0.33 | ▲ | 0.20 | 0.22 | ▲ |

This trend is even more pronounced when looking at the ethnicity of pupils given fixed period exclusions. The highest rates of fixed period exclusions in Southwark in 2018/19 were Gypsy Roma (27.78) , though the numbers are small, Black Caribbean (9.31), White and Black Caribbean (9.97) and Irish (6.10).

| Rates of fixed period exclusions per detailed ethnicity group in Southwark, compared to the national rate | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------|---------|-----|----------------|---------|-----|---------------|---------|-----|
| Ethnicity | Number | | | Southwark rate | | | National rate | | |
| | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | DoT | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | DoT | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | DoT |
| Any other Asian background | 9 | 1 | ▼ | 1.27 | 0.15 | ▼ | 1.45 | 1.50 | ▲ |
| Any other Black background | 135 | 99 | ▼ | 5.56 | 4.40 | ▼ | 5.80 | 5.91 | ▲ |
| Any Other Ethnic Group | 57 | 101 | ▲ | 1.84 | 3.26 | ▲ | 3.16 | 3.34 | ▲ |
| Any other Mixed background | 87 | 77 | ▼ | 3.65 | 3.20 | ▼ | 4.52 | 4.89 | ▲ |
| Any other white background | 67 | 64 | ▼ | 1.87 | 1.75 | ▼ | 2.74 | 2.89 | ▲ |
| Bangladeshi | 5 | 9 | ▲ | 0.49 | 0.91 | ▲ | 1.93 | 1.97 | ▲ |
| Black African | 551 | 502 | ▼ | 4.67 | 4.21 | ▼ | 4.08 | 4.13 | ▲ |
| Black Caribbean | 345 | 316 | ▼ | 10.01 | 9.31 | ▼ | 10.46 | 10.37 | ▼ |
| Chinese | 0 | 5 | ▲ | 0.00 | 0.88 | ▲ | 0.50 | 0.56 | ▲ |
| Gypsy Roma | 2 | 5 | ▲ | 11.11 | 27.78 | ▲ | 16.52 | 21.26 | ▲ |
| Indian | 0 | 0 | ◀ | 0.00 | 0.00 | ◀ | 0.75 | 0.88 | ▲ |
| Irish | 9 | 13 | ▲ | 4.59 | 6.10 | ▲ | 5.00 | 4.93 | ▼ |
| Pakistani | 5 | 3 | ▼ | 1.74 | 1.07 | ▼ | 2.52 | 3.10 | ▲ |
| Traveller of Irish heritage | 2 | 0 | ▼ | 4.88 | 0.00 | ▼ | 17.42 | 14.63 | ▼ |
| White and Asian | 2 | 5 | ▲ | 0.41 | 0.91 | ▲ | 3.41 | 3.79 | ▲ |
| White and Black African | 36 | 29 | ▼ | 4.65 | 3.59 | ▼ | 5.78 | 6.22 | ▲ |
| White and Black Caribbean | 140 | 137 | ▼ | 10.56 | 9.97 | ▼ | 10.13 | 10.69 | ▲ |
| White British | 360 | 412 | ▲ | 4.18 | 4.71 | ▲ | 5.70 | 6.01 | ▲ |

The commission discussed school exclusions, with a reported recent downward trend following a big focus on working towards Zero Exclusions.

Pem People raised concerns that Managed Moves may be increasing at year eleven, resulting in young people ending up in a PRU or criminal justice system, and advocated for more work addressing the reasons for children not engaging – for example depression and disengagement arising from bereavement, poverty, poor housing etc.

The commission considered some information on Managed Moves, however the demographic data is not complete because the process is managed by schools independently .This is an area that could be potentially be improved with more engagement with schools.

Southwark is putting 2 million into mental health provision and a proportion of that has resulted provision of Mental Health nurses, which Pem People noted as a worthwhile provision.

Officers report that as part of the Improving Mental Health and Resilience in Schools (IMHARS) project, there are now more than 260 Mental Health First Aiders in schools across Southwark who play an important role in spotting the signs of mental health issues in a young person. Mental Health First Aiders offer first aid and guide a young person towards the support they need, as well as speed up a young person's recovery and aim to stop a mental health issue from getting worse. Officers said that

school-based interventions, like Mental Health First Aiders, and others, can help improve the quality of children’s home lives and family relationships, ensuring more children live in stronger families.

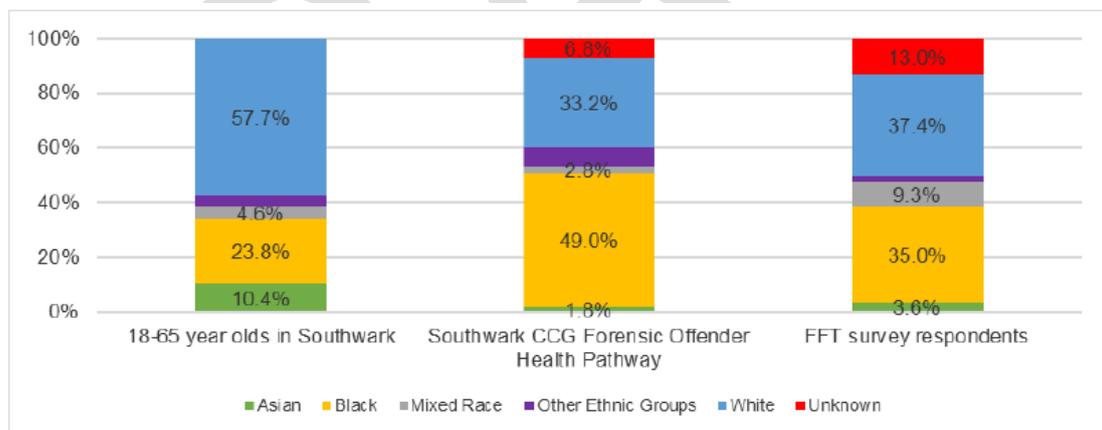
School Attainment

In other respects Southwark schools are doing exceptionally well to tackle inequalities. It is notable that Southwark’s disadvantaged students⁸ have the highest average attainment, compared to non-disadvantaged students nationally, post 16.⁹

Forensic and crisis care

Black and minority ethnic communities are more likely to end up in crisis and forensic care. Nationally black and minority ethnic people are 40 percent more likely to access mental health services via the criminal justice system than white people¹⁰: The same is true locally.

The chart below shows the ethnicity profile of Southwark NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) service users in forensic offender mental health services (between April 2018 and March 2019) compared to the ethnicity profile of 18-65 year olds in Southwark and the ethnicity of Friend and Family Test respondents to these services (between April 2016 and March 2019). This shows the disproportionate proportion of black people using these services:



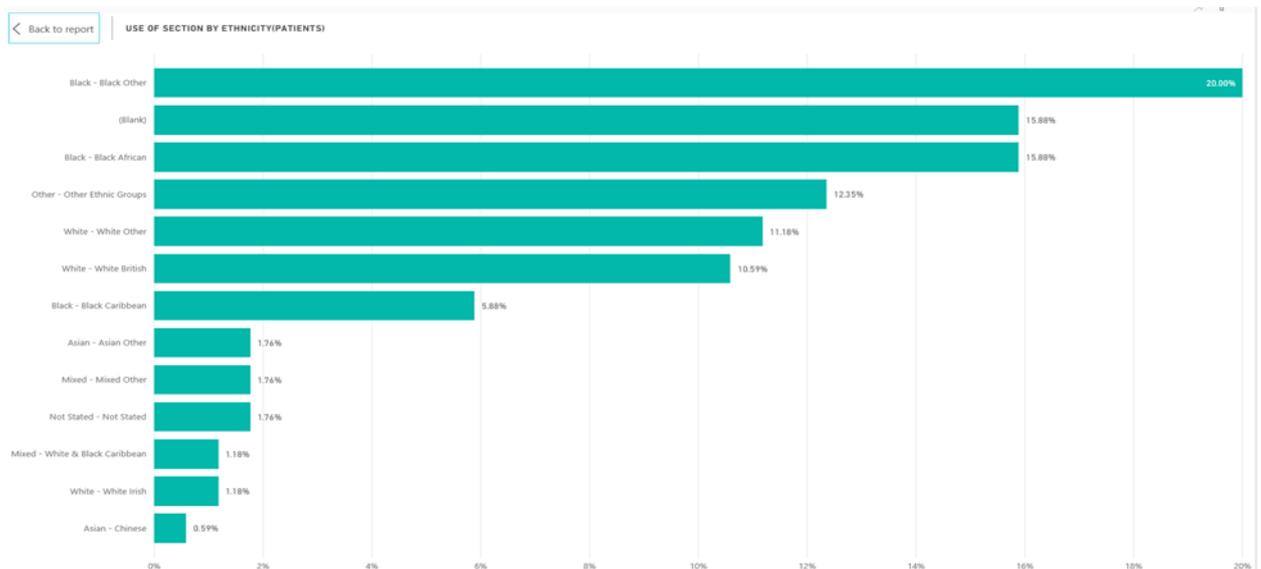
⁸ Disadvantaged students are defined throughout the below report as those who were known to be eligible for and claiming free school meals in any of the six years prior to finishing key stage 4

⁹ Page 10 and page 31 Measuring the disadvantage attainment gap, Education Policy Institute & Nuffield Foundation, March 2021

¹⁰ Racial disparities in mental health: Literature and evidence review, Race Equality Foundation 2019

Locally black people are also disproportionately sectioned:

Briefing to the Commission, 21 January 2020, appendix A



This information was discussed at the commission where the Strategic Director, David Quirk-Thornton remarked that the pathway to support for white people is often CAMHS, whereas for black young people it is often youth offending. This is racism rather than health inequalities. The commission would agree with this assessment and urge a consistent focus on reversing this trend through the work of Southwark's Stand Together and the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Recommendations

The commission would urge the officers to ensure that Mental Health nurses are diverse, that there is monitoring of the demographics of the young people they work with to ensure equal access, and that Mental Health nurses have an understanding of racism. A role is also needed in schools addressing the wider social issues that many young people are facing.

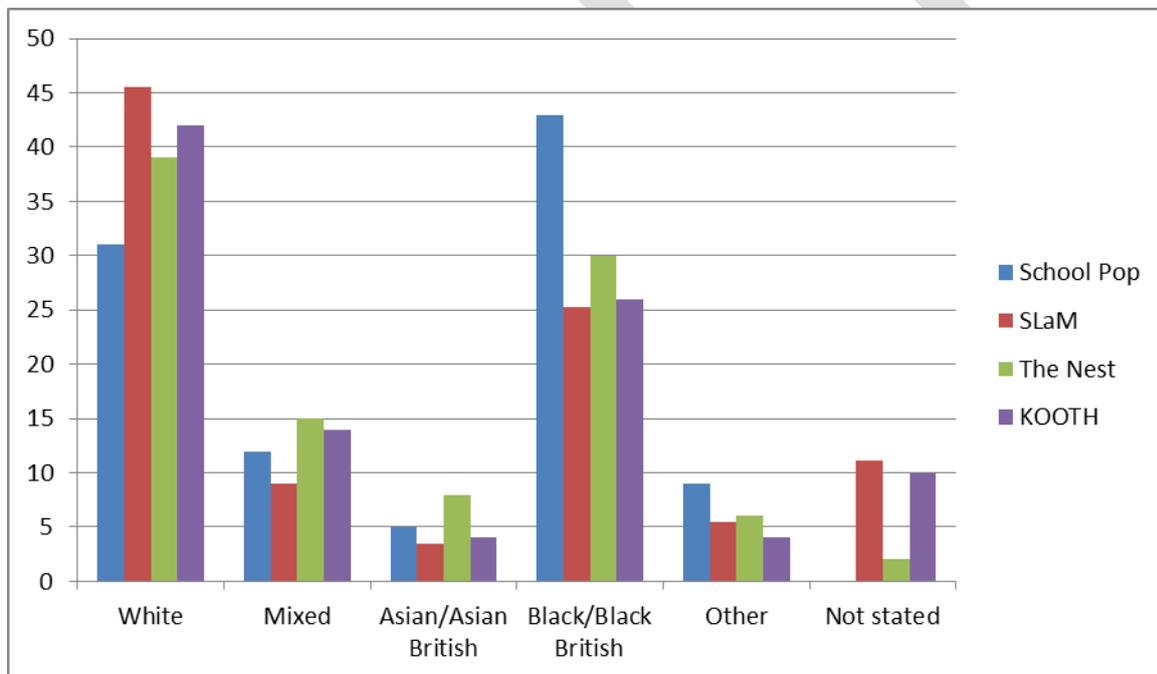
Southwark Stands Together and the Health and Wellbeing Board ought to develop a joint plan to reverse the trend of over representation of black and minority ethnic people in crisis, forensic care and the criminal justice system through preventative work, a focus on race equality and by facilitating better access to mental health care.

Unequal access to Mental Health service

Nationally black and minority ethnic people are less likely to be referred to talking therapies and more likely to be medicated for ill mental health. Locally there is an under representation of the black people in mental health service provision, and particularly SLaM CAMHS provision. This is the most intensive intervention for young people, and Black young people comprise only 25% of patients despite being making up 43 % of Southwark school age children.¹¹

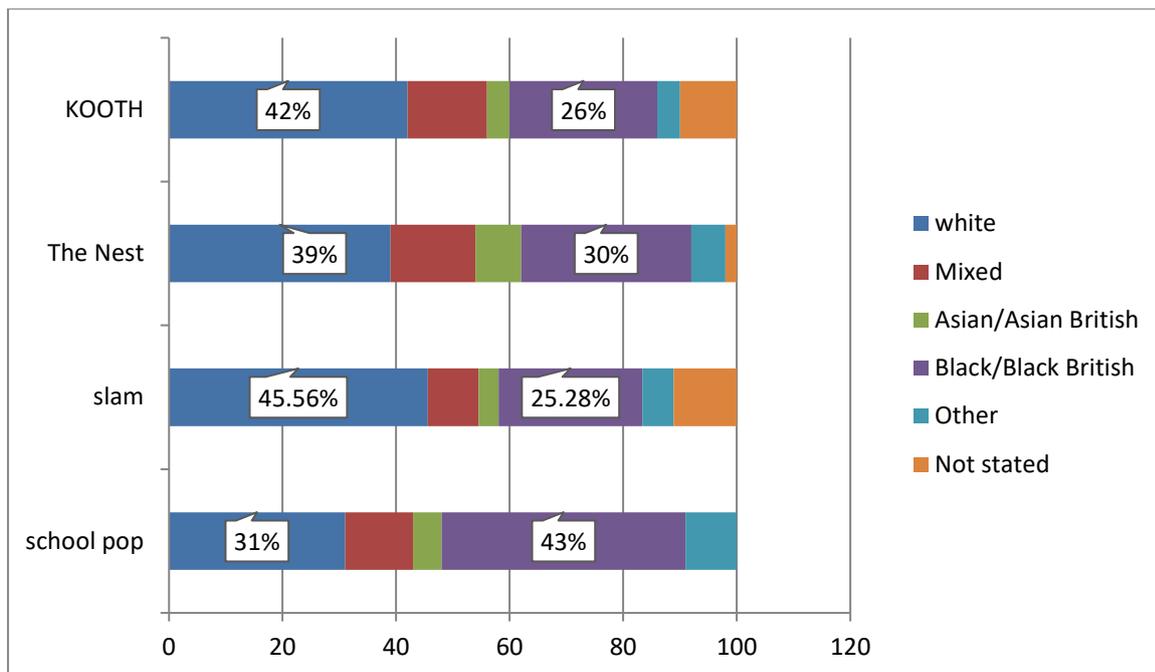
Graphs comparing the ethnicity reporting across school population, SLaM, The Nest and KOOOTH show an under representation of BAME young people, to varying degrees, of young people within the black/black British group across all providers. The variance within the mixed group and the Asian/Asian British group is less marked, with The Nest slightly over-performing in these categories

Graphs comparing the ethnicity reporting across school population, SLaM, The Nest & KOOOTH (available data 15 April 2021)¹²



¹¹ Page 3 UPDATE REPORT FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMISSION - APRIL 2021, Children And Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health , Equality Monitoring Task and Finish Group

¹² Page 4 & 5 UPDATE REPORT FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMISSION - APRIL 2021, Children And Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health , Equality Monitoring Task and Finish Group



The numbers for 'not stated' are high and potentially mask significant numbers which might either improve access data for those who appear to be under represented, or which might increase disparities. Officers highlighted that it is crucial that providers endeavor to fully record ethnicity data, and move towards capturing data for the Latin American community.

Work to address inequalities in mental health services

In the summer of 2020 the commission received a helpful and extensively researched paper from council officers and the Southwark NHS CCG, conducting an indicative review of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic access to mental health services. This report recommended the mandatory collection of comprehensive ethnicity data and to improve access, experiences and outcomes of NHS, local government and integrated care systems commissioned services by BAME communities.

In 2021 the commission received further follow up on this work, with a report from Children & Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Joint Working Group, who are overseeing a project which enables Southwark to demonstrate and to be assured that any inequalities within children and young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health provision are identified and addressed, and that learning is reflected in planning of future provision.

The project includes analysis of both quantitative data and qualitative data which helps to identify barriers to access and includes analysis of whether there is either over or under representation or any group or groups in specific services.

The project group includes a range of stakeholders including service leads and practitioners from SLaM (provider of CAMHS), KOOH and The Nest. The data above was provided through this work:

The following areas of good practice were noted

- Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework is being implemented
- Equality & Diversity training is mandatory for all staff
- Diversity champions are being identified from within the workforce
- Access to interpreters is generally good
- Specific staffing placement programmes to encourage applicants from BAME groups are being introduced

Officers indicated that further areas require focus:-

- ethnicity is not always recorded
- The current recording of outcomes does not enable comment on whether there is a BAME outcome bias.
- The diversity of the workforce – to varying degrees amongst providers - is not representative of the population they serve
- There is a lack of resources in languages other than English
- There is a lack of training/provision in culturally adapted therapies
- Workshops & participation events for children and young people are generic – consideration of BAME groups is not consistent across providers
- Nothing specific in place for asylum seekers/refugees

The commission welcomed the above work and makes the below recommendations to expand data collection and stakeholder engagement to include forensic and crisis care, and conduct additional engagement with BAME young people.

SLaM CAMHS

The commission heard directly from SLaM on work they are doing to address inequalities, which they acknowledge as a significant issue. CAMHS have prioritised increasing access for Asian and Black young people by 25% by March 2023.

They told the commission that they have identified a number of reasons for underrepresentation. The first is mental health stigma, family, cultural and community issues and concerns. The second centres on potential barriers in referral

routes to CAMHS .The third is more directly about the service provision, for example where clinical staff do not reflect the population served.

SLaM outlined their strategy to increase the equality of provision and work they are doing presently:

- Established Equality leads in every borough and are encouraging champions in every team
- CAMHS anti-racist forums and reflective spaces
- Co-production with young people on cultural competencies Engaging Black and Asian communities
- Quarterly monitoring of ethnicity caseload data on service users accepted and seen by CAMHS
- The diversity in recruitment champion programme and delivering the WRES in CAMHS.

They are also planning:

- Collaboration with community groups, representing BAME communities
- Improving the way CAMHS communicates about race equality (e.g. CAMHS Equality Newsletter and communication with schools)
- Trust is implementing Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework (PCREF) to address race inequalities across the Trust in partnership with local communities
- Recruitment uses Black and Asian therapy network

SLaM identified the following opportunities:

- Continuing to learn through Southwark engagement and involvement groups and activities; including other providers
- Working in partnership with our referrers to remove barriers in the system (e.g. GPs, schools)
- Work in partnership with other providers e.g. The Nest Southwark, Kooth
- Continuing to develop a diverse CAMHS workforce who are supported to flourish at SLaM and have pride in the services they deliver
- Continued focus on staff access and analysis of existing data
- Across CAMHS and with partners, develop new ways of working in prevention and early help approaches across our communities

Recommendations

Children & Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Joint Working Group:

- **Expand stakeholders and the collection of data on different black and minority ethnic groups' usage of mental health services to the work that**

Southwark funds in schools, as well as young offending, forensic and crisis care, in order to enable specific research and actions to address overrepresentation and underrepresentation in service provision.

- **conduct engagement with black and minority ethnic communities to ensure therapies are culturally appropriate and geographically accessible, and provide better and more equitable access to talking therapies according to local need and local demographics.**

The commission is keen to see the above work by SLAM develop and to deliver on the outcome of increasing uptake of CAMHS services and improvement in meeting the unmet mental health needs of BAME young people .

Secondly the commission would like to see a particular focus on the last approach, with CAMHS working with partners, including BAME community groups, to develop new ways of working in prevention and early help approaches across our communities.

Addressing the causes of mental health, stigma, racism and cultural barriers to accessing mental health institutions

Pem People told the commission that young black men are more likely to encounter mental health difficulties as they face greater challenges but there is reluctance to access services, because of stigma and cultural barriers. They commented that Southwark has a richness of services; however there is a need to move away from a medical model to a social care model with relationships at the core.

They said that CAMHS is a quite scarce resource that has failed to register with young black people, who are more likely to go to community groups with people who look like them. Likewise Pem People said The Nest is unlikely to have registered with many young people. Pem People suggested that messaging is developed with the community so there is a meeting of minds with an ongoing conversation and collaboration in order to promote this service effectively.

There was a discussion about if there is a need to decommission services and make them more people centred, or if it would be better to review services, such as CAMHS, to address systemic issues , rather than either adding more money or doing away with a particular service.

National research echoes the points made by Pem People as this suggests that matching the cultural, linguistic religious and/or racial identity between service users and practitioners can improve treatment duration and outcomes¹³.

Black Thrive, working with a similar community in Lambeth, identified institutional racism as one of the reasons that black people have poorer outcomes from services. They said that national and local evidence indicates that black and minority ethnic people want the impact of racism and wider inequalities on their mental health to be addressed in the treatment for their mental illness and in preventative work.

The commission discussed broadening Southwark's mental health coalition, by ensuring bodies such as the Health and Wellbeing Board are diverse. A specific proposal was made to formulate a network of BAME young people to be on boards and involved in Southwark's commissioning process.

Pem People said there is a need for practitioners and commissioners to come and visit outside local projects outside of the 9-5 pm, commenting that young people are not hard to reach, but rather hard to hear.

Both Black Thrive and Pem People also proposed a more social and structural approach to mental health which addresses racism, structural inequalities and the wider causes of mental ill health. Pem People said that young people are lacking hope and feeling displaced by regeneration, and emphasised the importance of safe social spaces. Black Thrive have a broader remit focused on prevention and tackling racism with priorities such as reducing violence that affects young people, Stop and Search and Decolonising knowledge production.

The last recommendation is informed by the work of Black Thrive, which works strategically with partners to co-design services with the BAME community to tackle the causes of mental distress, including racism and the wider determinants of mental health.

Recommendations

The Health and Wellbeing Board monitor the diversity of its members and take action to address any lack of diversity

A network of BAME young people and community groups are developed to inform the work of the Children & Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Joint Working Group / Health and Wellbeing Board.

Adopt a Race Equality Framework in the delivery of Southwark 100 % universal reach target. This calls for a broader piece of work, with BAME communities, to address the causes of mental ill health, which explicitly seeks to address racism and structural inequalities.

¹³ Racial disparities in mental health: Literature and evidence review , Race Equality Foundation 2019