

Apologies received from: Jennifer Maher, Rebecca Albrow, Michelle Dowd and Cllr Susan Haworth

Hannah Carrington - Project Manager, Adult Mental Health Bolton NHS CCG – Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT), encouraging referrals from BAMER communities

Hannah spoke to the embedded presentation:



BAMER IAPT
presentation March

Elisabeth Long shared 1point information: 1point is an independent 3rd sector agency - owned by 5 Bolton based charities, who offer 1:1 and couple counselling - either face to face when safe to do so or remotely (telephone or online). more details www.1pointbolton.org.uk or call us on 01204 917744

Elisabeth welcomes any thoughts/feedback as to how 1point can better engage with Bolton's diverse communities.

Mandy Jelenje kindly spoke to her own experience of accessing services and provided insight into some of the barriers highlighted in the presentation. Points raised included:

- 'BAMER' being used as a high level term, not always with the acknowledgement of the extensive differences it encapsulates
- Knowledge of available services and support is not always as accessible for some communities
- Acknowledgement of the potential stigma associated with/ reluctance to people speaking of their personal experience and mental health

Mandy also shared: *I think community building and space is an excellent idea. That is the problem within the Caribbean and African Community. The only building we had i.e. The New Unity Centre was taken away for room for the Bolton Interchange and to date we do not have a community building.*

The membership thanked Mandy for her contribution. Hannah suggested a separate catch up out with ETAG may be useful to further explore some of the points raised.

Joanne Gavin noted that in her experience things such as children attending appointments with their parent can be a challenge.

Leah Payne explained that there can often be a reluctance to people specifying their ethnicity in initial paperwork as they are sceptical of how it will be used. Leah suggested that by being transparent about what the information will be used for from the offset may help with this.

Comments made into the chat function:

- ➔ Lack of representation of people of colour as therapist (talking to people that look like you makes such a difference). busting myths around MH and spirituality. having mentally healthy conversations in communities would be a way to break down barriers - **Priya Narsai-Punam**
- ➔ In my experience it is difficult to work with a practitioner that you have no connection with and who may lack understanding of your issues or background. There is stigma attached to "therapy" too - **Laurent Fernandez**
- ➔ It is not just promotion of targeted services it is lack of appropriate services available. Digital poverty has been at the forefront during pandemic and still is a big issue specially when people want to access it for advice on health issues. The video messages are the need of the time. we need to move away from translated metrical particularly for older people - **Shabeen Rehman**

- Is this not an opportunity to engage with where they exist, and where they don't to promote community champions/navigators within these ethnic groups to help as a conduit with the wider services available? – **David Ruane**
- Stigma plays a very large part in BAME and tackle it is to involve community in small groups. – **Ruxmani Patel**
- These issues can be discussed in therapy with a professional counsellor. Pam Duxbury

Members are welcome to take time to review the attached slides and are encouraged to feedback any further thoughts or comments directly to Hannah or Elisabeth as appropriate.

Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next E-TAG is due to take place in April. A date will be circulated in due course.

The membership agreed there is merit in continuing with shorter but more frequent meeting whilst social distancing restrictions remain.

Suggested agenda items for next meeting:

- CCG Communication and Engagement (forwarded from March)
- Living Well
- ETAG and connectivity to other lived experience platforms

Participants were encouraged to be mindful of those who perhaps have not engaged in the remote E-TAG sessions and if possible, connect with them outside of the meeting and encourage them to attend.

If you would like to suggest a specific topic to be the focus of the next catch up, or if you have any pertinent questions you would like to discuss, please contact Lauren via lauren@boltoncvs.org.uk