



Mind's response to Black Lives Matter

Friday 5 June 2020

We believe Black Lives Matter and black mental health matters. Today we have publically shared our support for the Black Lives Matter movement.

In mental health – as in other areas of life – there is a huge disparity in how black people are listened to and supported at every level. People from black and minority ethnic (BAME) groups living in the UK are more likely to:

- be diagnosed with mental health problems
- be diagnosed and admitted to hospital
- experience a poor outcome from treatment
- disengage from mainstream mental health services, leading to social exclusion and a deterioration in their mental health.

Under the outdated Mental Health Act, Black people are more likely to be compulsorily admitted for treatment, more likely to be on a medium or high secure ward and more likely to be subject to seclusion or restraint. This weekend marks 18 months since the Mental Health Act review - and we are still waiting for the UK Government to make vital changes.

Our work to date

We are working to make sure that everyone experiencing a mental health problem gets the support and respect they deserve. As part of our strategy, we are working to make sure our projects and processes include a focus on diverse and/or marginalised communities. We are working to align mental health support with the challenges black people face in a way that's authentic and engages with the entirety of their lived experience of racism as an everyday reality. We accept that delivering on this ambition involves fundamental change within Mind, addressing racial disparity internally to enable us to deliver on our equality ambitions.

Mind already has initiatives underway that focus on the mental health of BAME people, alongside work we've done in the past. The 300 voices project in Birmingham as part of Time to Change work gave young black men a voice in engaging with the police and health staff. The work of many local Minds working with their BAME communities: for example, the work with Imams on mental wellbeing. Our Up My Street programme focused on engaging with young African Caribbean men before they experienced mental health problems.

We're currently lobbying the government to implement our recommendations to the review into the Mental Health Act and its disproportional impact on BAME people. We're also involved in the NHS Mental Health Inequalities work, leading to some very clear ambitions about what should change in the next few years. We've also undertaken a large-scale project to deliver local mental health services for Young Black Men. We're channelling parts of the Department of Health fund that addresses the mental health impact of coronavirus

towards BAME groups. We're also realigning our brand to resonate more with BAME people.

We won't give up until everyone experiencing a mental health problem gets support and respect. We know there is a lot of work to do and we will fight for everyone.

There's more we need to do

At Mind, we have campaigned alongside the most marginalised and discriminated against. We also recognise the white privilege inherent in our own organisation and we are committed to addressing this.

We know that, as an organisation, we are part of the problem and that we have issues we need to fix. We need to "problematize" the issue – we need to become uncomfortable with the status-quo, and account for it in any plans we make, so that we can really address the mental health needs of BAME groups and how we can recruit, retain and support BAME colleagues.

What's next

We know there's no easy solution and that there is still a long way to go to make sure everyone experiencing a mental health problem and other forms of discrimination, is treated equally, both within our organisation and outside it. We are committed keeping this on the agenda of our senior leaders and our trustees, and to co-develop a plan in the longer-term with you for what further action we need to take to do more to address the inequalities we know we have in our organisation.