

MENTAL HEALTH AND ME: THE UNSPOKEN TABOO IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY

FEEDBACK FROM THE EVENT



WHAT IT WAS

When: October 13th 2018

Where: Victoria Methodist Church

Organised by: ADIRA, Sheffield Flourish,
Sheffield Mind

Signups: 100



WHAT WE DID

The morning was spent listening to peoples stories and experiences. Giving a real insight into some of the mental health challenges specifically facing the black community.

The afternoon started with a panel of speakers featuring young activists, mental health services, SHSC, SCC and community leaders, taking questions from the delegates. It was a really interesting opportunity to gather ideas and get the debate going.

From this, we took three main headings and broke off into groups to talk about these themes. You can find the final results of these discussions [here](#).

We hope the conversation will continue!

Thank you to all the amazing volunteers who helped us make it such a successful event.



How can we best respond to mental health issues in young people?

- Respond to inter-generational differences
- Understand the conflict of social identity versus mental health (culturally sensitive)
- Community champions/role models can be incredibly beneficial
- Education is a huge issue (history behind communities/mental health issues/black identity)
- Give young people a safe space to speak
- Oppose digital/social media stereotypes
- Services should be more tailored for young people
- Evidence of need for having black specific services
- Need to make sure there is awareness of existing services among young people
- There should be a specific approach by mental health services
- Young people can benefit from self-help tools

How can we look beyond the medical intervention?

- Social prescribing can be really positive
- We need to educate both medics and patients (especially so people feel able to challenge their GPs)
- Language and approach is really important when thinking about interventions
- Long waiting time for help (short-termism not effective)
- Self-help tools can make a big difference
- People experience a lot of stigma (from mental health & from being black/poor)
- We should look for a holistic approach
- Role models important (black therapist directory could be helpful in this)
- Need to make sure there is access to info and awareness of options

How can we increase the representation of black people in mental health services?

- Awareness of mental health services/children & young people/black therapists
- High pressure on black mental health workers to 'know it all'
- Engagement & partnership with – church, inpatient services, 'street' (anti-social behaviour), schools, professionals
- Break down inter-generational opinions around 'acceptable careers'
- Pursuing careers/staff recruitment (board)
- Look wider – link up with people from different counties to gain experience and expertise
- Engagement with faith leaders
- Break barriers, stigma (include well-known people and celebs)
- Support for those who represent
- Make sure we support and manage expectations around identity
- Give proper funding and resources
- Give mutual respect for cultural differences
- Reverse mentoring/better communication (afrocentric model)
- Peer support (young people supporting young people) agenda