

**LEICESTER CITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD
27 JUNE 2024**

Subject:	Black Mental Health and Me
Presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board by:	Mark Wheatley, Public Health, Leicester City Council A representative from African Heritage Alliance
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

"I struggle to access mental health services because of my African heritage; the Black community does not have organisations catering to their mental health service; I feel uncomfortable accessing mental health services from the general avenue".

These words, from a participant in the 2023 Black Mental Health and Me consultation, give pause for thought. Almost 20 years on from the NHS initiative, Delivering Race Equality in Mental Health (DRE), there is much to be done to engage with local communities, to deliver appropriate and responsive mental health services.

Leicester City Council Division of Public Health worked with African Heritage Alliance to support an initiative to explore key areas related to black mental health in Leicester. Funding for the project was approved by Public Health Divisional Management Team and Lead Member.

Past initiatives, such as DRE, suggested that people from minority ethnic backgrounds are more likely to be compulsorily detained, to be treated in hospital, to be subject to measures like seclusion and to encounter health services through the criminal justice system.

The Black Mental Health and Me report shows that these issues continue to deter some people from Black/Black British ethnic backgrounds from seeking support early in their illness. It highlights the following themes:

- Positive and negative experiences of engagement with mental health services
- Challenges with mental health services
- Effectiveness of handling issues of diversity and inclusion.

This report is timely, the NHS Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework was launched in November 2023, and its adoption by providers will be mandatory by the end of 2024-25.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Health and Wellbeing Board is requested to:

Encourage commissioners, providers and organisations linked to mental health care, to consider and promote the implementation of the recommendations of Black Mental Health and Me. These are summarised on page 11 and described, along with the findings, in section 4. They include:

- To develop and deliver a pilot programme to promote mental wellbeing for people from African Heritage backgrounds.
- To prevent mental health problems through tailored provision for people from African Heritage backgrounds.
- To build capacity for those delivering mental health care to people from African Heritage backgrounds.
- To raise awareness of black mental health in Leicester.
- To develop and employ a black mental health engagement lead.