

3rd International Conference on

Depression, Anxiety and Stress Management

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Has the UK Brexit decision increased stress, anxiety and depression in UK Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and how would we know?

While there is growing research on severe mental health issues such as psychosis and suicide amongst Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities, less attention is paid to the wider range of mental health issues for these communities such as depression, anxiety and stress. Often people can try to manage these issues through self-medicating (alcohol or other substance abuse) or access to non-statutory services (including religious ministry) rather than visiting a GP. In the aftermath of the UK referendum to leave the European Union some have argued that mainstream media narratives have shifted towards 'normalising' rhetoric about immigration that would have previously been regarded as unacceptably racist. While there is some evidence that across the UK racist physical assaults and harassment have increased there has been no exploration of the mental health impact of this narrative shift. This presentation explores the impact of 'everyday racism' as a cause of depression, anxiety and stress, the interaction with existing stigma towards mental illness in BAME communities and considers the potential consequences for those struggling with these issues to gain access to appropriate help. Recent experience working to improve access to support services for people BAME communities with OCD and for BAME ex-offenders with mental health problems will be used as illustration of some the challenges.

Biography

David Truswell has worked in the Community based Mental Health Services in the UK for over 30 years developing services for people with complex care needs and enduring mental health problems. From 2009-2011, he was the Dementia Implementation Lead for Commissioning Support for London, working with commissioners across London to improve dementia services. He is the Chair of the Dementia Alliance for Culture and Ethnicity, a grassroots alliance of dementia organisations. He recently left the NHS to set up somefreshthinking, an independent health sector change management consultancy.

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