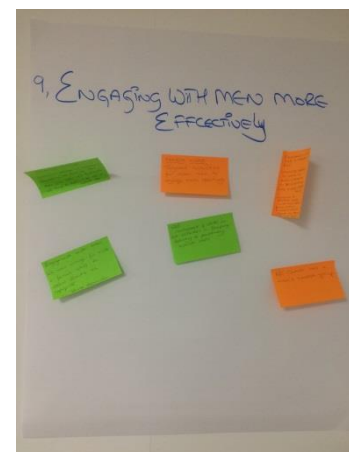
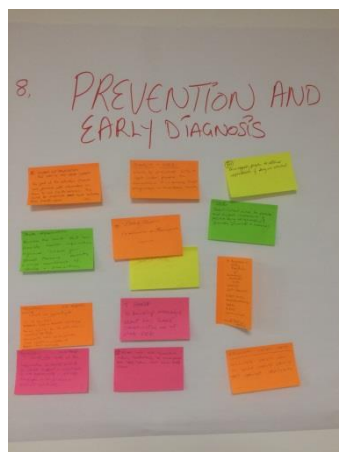
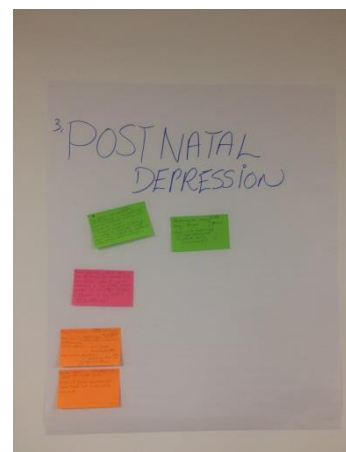


**Health issues for BAME communities identified by HAREF network
5 December 2017**



Action Log

We asked organisations to indicate work they are currently delivering or looking to deliver to help deal with the health concerns and inequalities raised at the network meeting in 2016. Not all of the actions are attributed to one agency, either because more than one agency is doing this, or this information was missing.

Theme: Mental health and well being

1. Impact of austerity and universal credit on mental health and wellbeing

The impact of welfare changes and poverty is a significant issue for a range of organisations and their service users. This is an issue that will continue, and is likely to get worse. Organisations have stated that the demand for support about Universal Credit and advice about benefits outstrips their ability to provide it. **More campaigning and awareness raising and improving access to Welfare rights and Advocacy projects are needed. We all need to gather evidence about the impact of Universal Credit.**

- Asylum Matters are looking for case studies of people falling through the gaps between asylum support and accommodation, and starting Universal Credit.
- Riverside Community Health Project provides a free advocacy service and referrals to other supporting organisations. They provide budgeting advice for those on low incomes.
- Advocacy Centre North publicise welfare reform support and are fundraising for increase provision of their welfare advocacy service as current provision is oversubscribed.
- Newcastle Carers has an information and advice service, and gives basic benefit information and signposts to relevant services information on grants, social care etc.
- Signposting to holiday hunger projects that people can access.

2. Social isolation: need for activities to encourage a sense of belonging

There is a lot of hard work carried out by many organisations to help reduce social isolation for individuals and communities. **Organisations need to try to ensure that they signpost people but we all need to make sure we share information about what we are doing, and what services are available. Everyone can make use of the HAREF monthly newsletter to publicise events and information.**

- Gateshead Carers Association will be offering café style sessions on four different wellbeing topics to improve carer's mental health.
- Stroke Association run activities and services for people following stroke or brain injury in Newcastle and Gateshead.
- Riverside Community Health Project supports and facilitates women's groups and international groups.
- Gateshead Carers Association support monthly meetings for nine different BAME communities in Gateshead which have become a safe social space.

- The Comfrey Project helps people grow food to take home provide a weekly healthy meal and also group work, café and social meals.
- Newcastle Carers run a carers café to offer peer support.
- Rainbow Home is a LGBTQ asylum seekers' charity and supports those seeking asylum on the grounds of sexual orientation.
- Childrens NE runs baby social groups, young people's groups and parent's groups are run by different organisations.
- A number of organisations are delivering work around domestic violence and forced marriages.

3. Post-natal depression

There is a suggestion to widen this brief to look at any issues that impact on parent's baby early relationships.

- Children's NE are involving parents in baby social groups to help with identifying Post Natal Depression and with follow up through midwifery and health visitors. It is also important that any resources are culturally relevant.
- Riverside Community Health Project provides childcare (free of charge) for women who have children under 5 and are interested in accessing women's groups at the Carnegie Building.
- Children NE have a new Parent Infant Partnership service which provides support for parents and babies where PND may be an issue.

Theme: Access / knowledge, information and language barriers

4. Tackling islamophobia, homophobia, and Hate crime in all its forms and ensuring people get signposted to appropriate advocacy

Since austerity and the Brexit referendum, there has been nationally an increase in hate crime, and a government agenda of creating a hostile environment for migrants. **We all have a responsibility to listen to victims' stories, signpost to support organisations, and challenge hate safely. Hate affects not just the individual but the whole community.**

- Northumbria Police Community Engagement Team can talk to any groups about how to report a hate incident, and how they can help them.
- The Comfrey Project helps provide emotional support to service users who may have been affected by hate.
- Asylum Matters are lobbying for an integration strategy for newly recognised refugees and asylum seekers including access to English language lessons.
- Riverside Community Health Project develops contact and trust between the community and the police to ensure the people know who to get help from.
- Advocacy Centre North has established a Hate crime advocacy service and will look to secure funding for next financial year. They have also developed a community partnership with other organisations and developed a hate crime

awareness training pack which it is currently delivering.

- Newcastle CVS is holding a launch of a toolkit for tackling extremism.
- Organisations have linked up with Tyne and Wear Citizens UK campaigns.
- Organisations are working with young people to encourage conversation and debate and re-educate.

5. Providing accessible information on services and carer's support

Providing information about services in the right language and format for communities is a continuing issue. **Organisations have to be able to signpost and know what other services do, so sharing correct information effectively is important.**

- Stroke Association provide a home visiting service to provide advice, information and emotional support following a stroke.
- Riverside Community Health Project works with local groups to translate leaflets explaining roles of people working for the NHS.
- Newcastle Carers provide information on services via telephone, face to face, at drop ins and appointments.
- Information Now is an information and advice website primarily aimed at older people, and includes translation into different languages.
- Advocacy Centre North employs bilingual advocates and translation software on website.
- The Comfrey Project provides information about detention, housing, health. Men engage well due to wide range of activities, gardening and building, joinery, cooking.
- Organisations are signposting service users to foodbanks, benefits advice, tribunal representation and Families in Care.
- The Elders Council raises awareness with older people on how to access benefits and their entitlement.

6. People not being eligible for health care, or made to feel not welcome in services, NHS charges regulations

This has become an increasingly worrying issue with changes in government policy and with is confusion about how the policy is implemented and who should be charged for services. Any policy that causes the public to disengage with medical treatments will have an impact on society as a whole. **Asylum Matters has been leading nationally about campaigning about the charges but we all need to collect information and case studies about the impact on service users.**

- Asylum Matters is working with partners to collect evidence to feed into government and European Convention of Human Rights review.
- Asylum Matters is working at a policy level about the Home Office accessing patient data and requesting medical records. They have a document for anyone asked to give consent for medical records to be shared with the Home Office.

- Asylum Matters is looking to challenge the extension of charging into Accident and Emergency for groups including refused asylum seekers.
- Involve NE have helped students with GP registration for those new to the area. More than 6000 students were registered in 2017 across Newcastle with a GP of their choice, including large numbers of international students.
- Advocacy Centre North have been involved in the campaign against NHS charges, contribute letters of support on action for case studies, i.e impact on our service users.

7. Accessibility issues: making appointments, information provision, interpreters

Some communities find navigating health services difficult and we need to provide the right information and support to ensure equity of access. In many ways this is the very reason that HAREF exists as a network, and organisations are every day taking action to support service users into healthcare. Information needs to be provided in accessible formats via a variety of methods to maximise reach

- Stroke Association provides support to stroke survivors and their carers at any suitable venue.
- Information Now holds information about services and the website has a function for translation into other languages.
- BME advocacy service employs bi lingual advocates and supports service users with appointments.
- Newcastle Carers has a dedicated budget for interpreters. They support carers to access other services and explain what other services do.
- Search provides accessible information on health support services and carer support and assistance for older people to complete welfare rights forms and online digital.
- Organisations have helped people get ID documents and set up bank accounts to access work/benefits and fill in Universal Credit applications.
- Organisations have supported clients to access services by providing interpreters when making appointments.
- Organisations have made referrals for service users to Talking Therapies, Housing Advice and support workers.
- Equality and Diversity training has been provided to staff.
- Staff have accompanied service users to doctor and hospital appointments and made them aware that interpreters can be requested at the appointments. However it is becoming difficult to make appointments in surgeries.
- Engagement programs are being developed so that we hear more from groups who traditionally are hard to reach e.g. men and working age people.

Theme: Prevention and early intervention

8. Prevention and early diagnosis of health issues

For BAME communities there are some health issues that they are at more risk of, or have more difficulties accessing services for these. **For some organisations their core work is around these health conditions, and for others it is about informing, signposting and encouraging services users to access services.**

- For Newcastle City Council prevention is part of their Public Health strategy. They help with staff health and wellbeing through the BAME staff network.
- HAREF are developing new messages about how BAME communities are at more risk of some diseases such as diabetes.
- Stroke Association across the north east can provide health information, organise check your blood pressure events, and raise awareness of stroke and prevention.
- Involve NE helps students with GP registration for new to the area students. Students are provided with information on how to use health services. This could be improved and could include health issues.
- Search work to prevent long term conditions and support older people to maintain and improve their physical and mental health.
- Children NE are providing parent and infant work to promote and support importance of positive early relationships between parents and babies.
- MESMAC and SHINE are holding a prevention and early diagnosis sexual health event on 30th Jan and BAME communities need to be encouraged to attend.
- Riverside Community Health Project are working with organisations making health checks at women's groups and NHS talking about women's health issues.

9. Engaging with men more effectively

Engaging with men around health issues is historically difficult and for some communities there are extra barriers to support them about health concerns. **We all need to need to do more to engage with men more effectively about health issues.**

- Engagement with men is MESMAC's main role and they would be happy to work on men's health in a wider group. They are looking to engage more with men from BAME groups about HIV testing.
- Search has targeted activities for older men.
- Newcastle Carer's have a men's carers group.
- Children NE involve dads in all activities, shaping delivery to proactively include dads.