



## Partnerships for Success Delivering Race Equality in Mental Health

### What is the Delivering Race Equality Programme (DRE) and Action Plan and who is it designed for?

The Delivering Race Equality Programme is an innovative five year action plan set up in 2005 by the Department of Health. Located within the Care Services Improvement Partnership (CSIP), it is designed to reduce inequalities in how people from black and minority ethnic communities access, experience and achieve outcomes from mental health services. The DRE Programme includes people of Irish or Mediterranean origin and East European migrants as well as refugees and asylum seekers and works across all age groups.



**Implementing DRE should be a matter for everyone involved in planning, managing or delivering Mental Health Care.**

Delivering race equality in mental health care: An action plan for reform inside and outside services  
[www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk)

### Why set up a DRE Action Plan?

For many people who are affected by mental health problems it can be difficult to find the right service to help them meet their needs. We also know that some people from black and minority ethnic communities, who are affected by mental health issues, can also experience barriers and inequality in getting mental health care.

The DRE Action Plan seeks to address areas of inequality in mental health by working with commissioners, providers, users and carers and the voluntary and community sectors to actively promote better outcomes for people.



**Service users should be involved in the design of policy from the outset – not when we get it wrong.**

DRE Service user

## What are the priorities for the DRE Programme?

The NHS Management Board has identified three priorities for the programme. These include:

- recruitment and continued support for 500 community development workers
- equal access to services appropriate to ethnicity and culture
- increased levels of confidence of BME communities in the statutory sector

In order to deliver this the programme is focusing on:

- more effective working with clinicians and managers
- strengthening involvement of users and carers
- strengthening partnerships with the community and voluntary sectors
- enabling greater understanding within a broader equalities context



**The role of the Focused Implementation Site (FIS) is to fast track the DRE action plan. When a site is awarded with FIS status this means they will have focused work on priority areas, identify and spread good practice, test out what works, facilitate and guide change and will champion partnership working.**

FIS Project Manager, North East Region

## Who delivers the DRE Programme and Action Plan?

The DRE Programme is part of the Care Services Improvement Partnership (CSIP). The work is commissioned by the Department of Health to implement the DRE action plan. For further information about CSIP visit the website at [www.csip.org.uk](http://www.csip.org.uk).

The DRE team works at national, regional and local levels as part of a broad equalities brief.

- At national level, Melba Wilson OBE, is the National Programme Director supported by a small national team. This team works closely with policy developers, regional implementation teams and service providers seeking to help ensure that mental health services for all are of equal parity, regardless of race, creed, age, or status.
- The CSIP regional development centres employ nine Race Equality Leads working across England to support delivery of the DRE Programme.
- At the heart of black and minority ethnic communities project managers and community development workers focus on the reality of inequalities in mental health care. They engage people, in each community, who either use mental health services or care for someone using these services. The DRE team also works in partnership with mental health providers, e.g. NHS Trusts, community and voluntary groups, private providers and central government. This partnership approach seeks to inform and to support service improvements.



**A Community Development Worker effectively acts as a go-between for BME communities and service providers in order to increase the engagement, exchange of information, the sharing of skills and resources to bring DRE alive in my community.**

Community Development Worker, East Midlands region

## What are the Aims of the Programme?

The DRE Programme aims to:

- **Engage with communities** to plan and develop services. Part of this work also includes helping people understand mental health. Greater understanding of mental health improves awareness and helps reduce stigma
- Gather and **provide better information** about people who use mental health services. This includes working to improve monitoring of ethnicity, better dissemination of information and good practice, and improved knowledge about effective services
- Support **more appropriate and responsive** mental health services by working closely with the mental health workforce to improve services



**Very positive. These opportunities to meet together and share play an enormous role in our recovery. Very well worth the money invested in them.**

Evaluation from the DRE Performance Indicators workshop for service users and carers, September 2007

## What does success look like?

Success on the programme will be measured by how well commissioners and providers incorporate the work of DRE into service development. Examples of this include:

- making progress in the delivery of the 78 practical actions identified for the NHS
- making progress on the 12 service change characteristics set out in the 2005 DRE Framework for Action
- making use of the wealth of information and research available through the programme, e.g. the Count Me In census
- improved workforce training to take account of culture and ethnicity



**Race equality and the wider field of Health and Social Care Inequalities needs to be maintained at the top of the agenda. I see this objective as a core aspect to my role in the region.**

Race Equality Lead, Eastern Region

## Has the DRE Programme and Action Plan made a real difference?

Yes. Since the DRE work programme began in 2005 the DRE team has:

- Recruited a cohort of nine regional Race Equality Leads (RELs) who operate at strategic and operational levels in order to deliver on the aims and objectives of the programme
- Instituted regional programmes of work through CSIP regional development centres, which has been led by RELs, working with CSIP regional directors and other regional stakeholders
- Developed and supported partnerships with users and carers at local, regional and national levels, including the setting up of a national User & Carer Reference Group which informs and influences how the work is developed
- Worked with local communities to strengthen DRE's regional implementation
- Worked with NHS and social care partners to establish 18 Focused Implementation Sites (FIS) – including one within the private sector – to look at the needs of local communities and to test out new ways of working to improve mental health services for people from black and minority ethnic communities
- Supported the development of 80 community engagement projects nationally to forge partnerships with the voluntary and community sectors (VCS) and to develop the skills base of people involved with small BME VCS organisations
- Supported the recruitment and development of more than 360 community development workers nationally
- Introduced an annual census – Count Me In – to aid better understanding of the numbers of pathways for mental health patients. This work is in conjunction with the Healthcare Commission and the Mental Health Act Commission
- Developed Race Equality Cultural Capability training
- Set up 20 clinical trailblazer sites to test out new ways of working with clinicians

## How can I get involved with the DRE Programme?

The DRE Programme welcomes the involvement of service users and carers; clinicians, managers and others in statutory and voluntary sector organisations.

For more information about how you can work with us please contact:

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