

**time to change**

let's end mental health discrimination

Time to Change Programme:  
October 2011 to March 2015

# Summary of impact and learning

## Black and Minority Ethnic communities

Working with Black and Minority Ethnic communities to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination, including targeted work with African and Caribbean communities



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## What we did

**We worked with Black and Minority Ethnic communities to run activities that aimed to reduce mental health stigma and discrimination. This involved some targeted work with African and Caribbean communities.**

**We recruited a specialist advisor to our governance group to guide this work, and set up an expert advisory group for our work with African and Caribbean communities. We also created specialist posts, including two coordinators who worked with individuals and groups from Black and Minority Ethnic communities across England.**

We commissioned audience insights research to inform our work with African and Caribbean communities. As well as some targeted advertising, we undertook ongoing community-based work in South London and Birmingham. We organised three large 'Stereo-Hype' events

with African and Caribbean communities, and ran a seminar for media professionals to explore how people from Black and Minority Ethnic communities with mental health problems are represented in the media. We also commissioned new research into mental health discrimination experienced by people from Black and Minority Ethnic communities.

In 2013, we launched a new pilot project in Birmingham called 300 Voices. The project aims to reduce discrimination that young African and Caribbean men experience in statutory mental health settings and the police. The pilot will continue until March 2016.

## What we achieved

- **830,000 from African and Caribbean communities reached via social marketing**
  - 46% recalled the campaign
  - 38% said they were now more likely to talk about their own mental health
- **£750,000 awarded to projects led by Black and Minority Ethnic communities**
- **10.8% improved attitudes of Black and Minority Ethnic audiences at events (compared to 8.1% in the wider population)**
- **47% of volunteers from Black and Minority Ethnic communities 'a lot more confident' to talk about their own mental health (compared to 41% from the wider population)**
- **59 young African and Caribbean men co-designed the 300 Voices project, and delivered sessions with 384 professionals from the police and mental health services**

# Our learning

## 1. Identify a target Black and Minority Ethnic audience

**In 2011, we commissioned an external review of our work with Black and Minority Ethnic communities. The review recommended that we identify a target audience for work across the whole programme. We selected African and Caribbean communities.**

African and Caribbean communities are over-represented in secondary mental health services and under-represented in primary care. They are less likely to seek mental health support, so there is a pressing need to address issues around stigma and discrimination. We also had existing links with African and Caribbean communities through the work of our partner organisation, Mind. The decision to identify a target audience did not mean we only worked with African and Caribbean groups, but it gave us a programme-wide focus for our work with Black and Minority Ethnic communities.

## 3. Understand the concerns and experiences of different communities

**It was important not to assume that people from Black and Minority Ethnic communities were in the 'same space' as the general population. We needed to consider, for example, how multiple discrimination (on the basis of race and mental health problems) can shape someone's experiences. It was also important to recognise diversity within communities, such as age, gender and where people live.**

We commissioned audience insights research to inform our work with African and Caribbean communities. We also worked directly with people from these communities to develop the targeted campaign. Our community work in South London and Birmingham involved finding out about local issues that were important to our audience. We also ensured the programme had ongoing access to advice and expertise, eg through the African and Caribbean advisory group and expert advisor on our governance group.

## 2. Raising awareness of the issues helps to build a strong foundation

**We had already built up campaign momentum and raised awareness of issues around mental health stigma and discrimination. By 2011, there was awareness of Time to Change amongst Black and Minority Ethnic communities and many were already involved in the campaign, for example as volunteers and individual Champions.**

This gave us a good foundation for our targeted work in 2011-2015. From early on, we were able to publish personal stories by people from Black and Minority Ethnic groups, and ensure images were representative in all public-facing work. However, it was also important to acknowledge that more work was needed, and to publicly outline our future plans.

**"Engaging with people who come together every Sunday is a great way to reach African and Caribbean communities. If you stop someone in the street and try to have a one-to-one conversation with them about mental health and stigma you're not going to get very far."**

**Grant-funded project**

# Our learning

## 4. Review your approach to working with target communities

**It was important to find the best strategies that worked with our target audience, in order to achieve the overall goal of reducing mental health stigma and discrimination.**

For example, we found that our model for social contact events was not appropriate with Black and Minority Ethnic audiences. Our large Village events involved volunteers initiating conversations with the public about their experiences of mental health problems. However, our key message around 'talking about mental health' did not resonate as well with Black and Minority Ethnic audiences, and it was difficult to recruit volunteers from these communities to talk openly. We found it was more effective to undertake ongoing work in local communities.

We ran activities with local partners around church services, the arts, club nights and hair salons, with conversations taking place in smaller, more natural settings.

## 6. Plan targeted work from the outset

**We identified our target audience (African and Caribbean communities) after activity plans and budgets were agreed with our funders. This created some challenges around ensuring the work was prioritised and adequately resourced.**

We were able to review our plans, and set targets for our work with African and Caribbean communities, when we secured additional funding from the Big Lottery Fund in 2013. However, we learnt that targeted work with Black and Minority Ethnic audiences should be considered as early as possible when planning a programme of work.

## 5. Invest time in community development work

**Organising large, one-off events can be counter-productive. Local Black and Minority Ethnic communities can mistrust large organisations or campaigns, especially if they are perceived as 'parachuting' in and out of the community with their own agenda.**

It is therefore important to spend time building relationships with organisations, groups and individuals within communities. Anti-stigma activities should be developed in partnership with communities, and there should be a focus on building local capacity to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination in the long term. We found that gaining the support of a partner or individual within the local community helped to develop new relationships. Our community development work also helped us to recruit new volunteers and Champions with experience of mental health problems from Black and Minority Ethnic communities.



**"Being a user of mental health services, I am very aware of the issues and the stigma attached around mental health and the over-diagnosis of African and Caribbean communities. It was the support of my family and community - particularly my mother - that has helped me to develop into the person I am now."**

## Find out more



**Time to Change's work with Black and Minority Ethnic communities:**  
[www.time-to-change.org.uk/black-and-minority-ethnic-communities](http://www.time-to-change.org.uk/black-and-minority-ethnic-communities)

**'Speak Out' magazine (issue 5 focuses on work with Black and Minority Ethnic communities):**  
[www.time-to-change.org.uk/resources/speak-out-magazine](http://www.time-to-change.org.uk/resources/speak-out-magazine)

**Research into mental health discrimination experienced by people from Black and Minority Ethnic communities (conducted by Ethnos):**  
[www.time-to-change.org.uk/news/black-and-minority-ethnic-communities-faced-double-levels-discrimination](http://www.time-to-change.org.uk/news/black-and-minority-ethnic-communities-faced-double-levels-discrimination)

**Stereo-Hype 2013 (East London):**  
[www.time-to-change.org.uk/stereohype](http://www.time-to-change.org.uk/stereohype)

**Stereo-Hype 2014 (Birmingham):**  
[www.time-to-change.org.uk/stereo-hype2](http://www.time-to-change.org.uk/stereo-hype2)

**Position paper on our work with Black and Minority Ethnic Communities (2012):**  
[www.time-to-change.org.uk/sites/default/files/black-minority-ethnic-communities-position-statement.pdf](http://www.time-to-change.org.uk/sites/default/files/black-minority-ethnic-communities-position-statement.pdf)