**Case study: Lewisham IAPT Culturally sensitive materials**

**Background**

Lewisham IAPT [identified](https://slam.nhs.uk/media/17733/lewisham-iapt-d-e-report-final.pdf) that local residents from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities experiencing mental health problems were under-represented within IAPT pathways, were less likely to access therapy and if they did, experienced poorer recovery and reliable improvement scores indicating that they were less likely to achieve good treatment outcomes. BAME service users were more likely to drop out of treatment and more likely to report negative experiences compared to white majority service users.

Therefore, Lewisham IAPT committed to addressing these local health inequalities for BAME communities through the following:

1. To improve access and engagement of BAME service users across all step 2 and step 3 care pathway stages.

2. To work closely with Community Groups to achieve this aim.

3. To provide culturally sensitive training to the IAPT workforce. The training was largely experiential; materials used for this training is held by Mabadiliko.

4. To review the diversity of the IAPT workforce and consider how we might develop a more diverse workforce in line with the WRES (NHS Workforce Race Equality Standard) objective.

**What they did**

The IAPT service collaborated with [Mabadiliko](https://mabadiliko.org/) (a local Community Interest Company which specialises in creating safe spaces to talk about race in workplaces and communities). Together they worked with Service User Participation Groups to amend existing IAPT therapy materials (see below) to be more culturally sensitive and appropriate to Black and Minority Ethnic groups; in particular for Black African and Caribbean communities.

The IAPT team co-facilitate 12 Week Culturally Sensitive Emotional Support Groups with Mabadiliko, which include Low Intensity Psychological treatments. IAPT Lewisham actively offers this group at their Telephone Triage to Black African and Caribbean service users. Attendance to this group does not exclude Black African and Caribbean service users from receiving IAPT therapy and thus increases the offer of culturally sensitive therapies to Black African and Caribbean communities in Lewisham.

**Outcomes**

Qualitative feedback has been collected, which suggested increased trust between the community and IAPT service. This should hopefully lead to increased referrals in time.

 Findings suggest the group was a successful intervention that was well received by participants. Participants reported that the culturally adapted emotional support group felt more personal and relevant to them, compared to therapy interventions they had experienced in the past. They also commented on how a sense of community was created amongst group members, which helped them to feel supported and less alone in dealing with their emotional difficulties, and which facilitated honest and open disclosure of their feelings and experiences.

Participants reported noticing a positive improvement in their mental health, which they attributed to their participation in the group. Specifically, participants reported increased confidence, an increased tendency to trust other people, decreased self-blame, and an improved understanding of the factors that can contribute to their emotional difficulties

**Resources:**

Culturally sensitive depression workshop slides

Culturally sensitive anxiety workshop slides

Culturally sensitive LTC workshop slides

Culturally sensitive LGBTQ+ Step 2 group slides

Additional information on this approach can be found in this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e1mFHac8vro>