



North-East & Yorkshire Psychological Professions Network: Anti-Racism Community of Practice

Addressing racism in healthcare requires addressing internal biases, power and prejudice and transforming institutional policies, practices, and cultures, to improve patient care and the wellbeing of both service users and healthcare professionals.

An approach to tackling the ‘wicked problem’ of racism in healthcare is the development of an Anti-Racism Community of Practice (ARCoP) affiliated with the Psychological Professions Network (PPN) in the North East and Yorkshire. The ARCoP utilises race-based caucusing, which is an evidenced and internationally recognised approach to tackling racial inequality. The approach involves creating separate groups by self-identified racialised identities which accommodates for the differing needs of racially minoritised and white individuals in antiracist and racial equity work. Caucusing helps to foster ‘brave spaces’ where group members feel safe to take interpersonal risks and approach topics with greater honesty and vulnerability.

The ARCoP was commissioned by Sharon Prince (Chair of the PPN NEY), and the first meeting was in July 2022 with Dr Romana Farooq, Dr Richard Thwaites, and Yahya Delair as Co-chairs and secretary respectively. Meetings are attended quarterly by a diverse membership, and each session focuses on a single topic, facilitating deeper exploration and understanding of anti-racist practice.

Assessing the impact of an initiative aimed as producing a culture shift is hard to quantify but the qualitative feedback collected via an anonymous online survey after each session has provided rich learning and insights.

Responses from participants uncovered distinct themes in the experiences and processes of racially minoritised and White individuals. Racially minoritised caucus members reported a strong sense of solidarity and connection, with the group providing a place for open discussions about racism and discrimination. Racially minoritised members also reported to have found empowerment in confronting oppression within a safe space, where members were free from the responsibility of educating or comforting their White counterparts.

In contrast, members of the White caucus occasionally experienced discomfort, particularly when conversations delved into personal narratives and emotionally charged topics such as shame and guilt. However, these instances of unease served as invaluable opportunities for introspection and growth within the White caucus, fostering heightened self-awareness and a strengthened commitment to allyship.

Inter-caucus dialogue has sparked moments of insight, fostering empathy and highlighting opportunities for personal and professional development. Feedback has underscored the importance of establishing safe and inclusive environments for candid discussions of racism and its impacts. Recommendations going forward include ongoing support and evaluation of

Communities of Practice (CoPs), exploration of systemic reforms to embed anti-racist principles, and potential expansion into additional regions. Overall, the ARCoP continues to serve as a transformative platform for reflection for Psychological Professionals.

Read the full report [here](#).

