**Ethnic Minority Resilience Network**

**Mental Health and Domestic Abuse Subgroup Meeting** **06/10/20**

Attendance:

Fiona Crombie Freedom from Torture (Chair and minutes)

Ahlam Souidi - Freedom from Torture

Tanvir Parnez - BEMIS

Julia Fernandez – Aditi Sacro

Martinez - Citizen Rights Project

Clare Daly HIMRA Highland

Emma Craddock – PID Partner in Dialogue

Apologies:

Ephraim Borowski - Scottish Council of the Jewish Community

Zenib Ali Aditi - Sacro Edinburgh

Emma Cashmore Gordon - Aberlour Perinatal Befriending

Rami Osta - BEMIS

Fiona Opened the meeting with a welcome.

Minutes of last meeting discussed and approved.

Brief discussion followed on from this on the need for specific focused events focusing on promoting positive mental health. The Scottish government response to request to our letter requesting attendance to discuss with us how we promote the MH needs of the ethnic minority community has only been the automated response to say it has been received. The meeting recognised that there is a massive lack of access to MH Services and the impact from Coronavirus continues to escalate. This is particularly concerning in relation to the ethnic minority population where there is a need for cultural understanding.

Resources are scarce and more needed to support increased access and increased joined up care services from GP to psychology and psychiatric services spanning short-term intervention to long-term therapy.

Lack of cultural sensitive counselling within mainstream services. Repeated short-term intervention of eg 12 week model based interventions not always effective and individuals can invest time and recreating understanding with each therapist only to repeat the cycle again and again.

Issues being raised with group members:

Impact of Coronavirus – fears, social isolation, anxiety and depression.

Hate crime – racial discrimination particularly focus on SE Asian community

What’s required:

Funding

Training

Access to mainstream and ethnically focused MH Services as well as specialist services catering to individual ethnic minority populations or needs.

Clare raised a issue from her expeirence of supporting Syrian families at the lack of low level preventative work promoting well-being. She recognised NRPF Policy – discriminates and particulary disasvantages those with MH difficulties who are unable to seek help and support. The group recognised the Scottish Government has power to do more.

Domestic Abuse:- Julia raised the issue of accessability and flexability of services. Service need to offer acess to Zoom type platforms to clients in evenings as few opportunties for women get out and to access support due to restrictions an barriers. Which include privacy and spaces issues for them within their homes.

Kimi spoke of social isolation experienced by the many South and South East Asain as they are a very scattered population, They are aware of statistically high population of vietnames/chinese are trafficked but they remain hard to reach. They continue to run support group sessions. Once they have gathered insight into preexisting needs are known/recognised the will review support but they feel there remains a hidden need which needs to be addressed.

Digital literacy to access support may challenge some organisation who are providing MH support and again may need to be a onsideration while the option of face to face contact has been removed and when it can restart remains unclear.

Recognition of areas not represented within our group were Alzheimers and Dementia in Ethnic minorirty groups. We recognised the challenge that a robust needs assessments can not be undertaken unless face to face as in many cases impossible over the phone/zoom.

EU Settlement and capacity: Noelia discussed how to support EU citizens who don’t have the mental capacity to navigate the EU settlement schement. HO stats suggest 10% to 20% have vulnerabilities including mental health and may need support. The Citizens Rights project project offer support. PID

have undertaken social media campaign to raise awareness. Further details to be circulated via email.

Race Equality Action Plan: includes a mandatory Ethnic Minorty Services. Danny Boyle BEMIS to attend the next meeting to allow for a fuller discussion. We acknowledged the need for specigic EM services for those requiring MH Services.

Date of next meeting Tuesday 3rd November 3 pm