

DELIVERING RACE EQUALITY IN MENTAL HEALTH

Sue Merchant is currently working with the Strategic Health Authority as the Site Activity Co-ordinator for the Delivering Race Equality (DRE) Programme. Sue says “DRE in Mental Health Care is an action plan for achieving equality and tackling discrimination in Mental Health Services in England for all people of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) status. The North East London Sector has been selected as one of 17 Focused Implementation Sites (FIS) across the country and their task is to eliminate discrimination and ensure equality of care.

The aim of all FISs is to bring about reform both inside and outside Mental Health Services over the next five years. Implementation of the DRE action plan should have begun everywhere but the FIS will act as “hot houses of reform” demonstrating that change and improvements are possible.

The local FIS consists of two cluster groups, a North East London cluster (Mental Health Trust and 4 PCTs) and an East London cluster (Mental Health Trust and 3 PCTs). Each cluster group has now developed detailed partnership action plans which will help us to move closer to the vision of a reformed, fit for purpose service. The action plans are focused around four main themes:

- Use of information
- More appropriate services
- Community engagement
- Workforce development

The Local Implementation Teams (LITs) will be the driving force for action plan delivery and coordination. The North East London FIS is the largest site in the country which presents many challenges but also many opportunities. The greatest opportunity is that it provides us with a framework through which we can really improve the experiences and outcomes for BME communities.”

The PCT Leads for DRE are:

Barking and Dagenham	- Bernard Hannah
Havering	- Stephanie Sullivan
Redbridge	- Pam Lloyd
Waltham Forest	- Nick McNulty

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