



scottishdevelopmentcentre
for mental health

'Building the Strengths Within'

A project responding to the needs of young people from black and minority ethnic communities in Scotland who self-harm or are at risk of self-harm

1. Introduction to the project

The project aims to strengthen capacity in organisations working with young people aged 16 to 25 from black and ethnic minority (BME) communities, including young refugees and asylum seekers, who self-harm or are at risk of self-harm¹, in order to be able to respond appropriately to their needs.

The objectives of the project are:

- To increase understanding of the issues to be addressed among young people from BME communities, who self harm or at risk of self harm
- To inform and improve practice
- To provide a platform for the voice of young people from BME communities to inform policies and practice
- Increase confidence among mainstream service providers in working with young people from BME communities in relation to issues of self-harm.

The project is funded by the Camelot Foundation.

¹ For the purposes of their programme, the Camelot Foundation defines self-harm as:

- Cutting behaviours
- Other forms of physical self-harm such as banging, bruising, hair-pulling etc.
- Self-poisoning.

They exclude eating disorders, drug and alcohol abuse and other forms of risk-taking such as unsafe sex or dangerous driving.

2. The project

The project aims to build links between and across individuals and organisations involved in statutory mental health services, community development, youth work and education and has involved a number of stages:

1. Mapping the organisations in Scotland supporting young people aged 16-25 from BME communities who self-harm or may be at risk of self-harm. The mapping includes: who is doing what, with whom, accounts of practice, areas of perceived unmet need etc.
2. Setting up a network, creation of a database and a launch event. The database is held at the Scottish Development Centre for Mental Health (SDC) and copies of the report of the launch event are available from SDC.
3. Through the network, undertaking consultation with workers and young people.
4. Developing practical short seminars around working with BME young people who have self-harmed or are at risk of self-harm and implementing these with a variety of youth and health service providers.

A Steering Group oversees the work of the project. The core membership of the Steering Group is Saheliya; *the big step*; Minority Ethnic Mental Health Project Royal Edinburgh Hospital; Glasgow Association for Mental Health; Glasgow Anti-Racist Alliance; National Resource Centre for Ethnic Minority Health and Penumbra.

The Scottish Development Centre for Mental Health coordinates and supports the network on behalf of the Steering Group.

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