



**COLLABORATIVE
CENTRE**

- ETHNIC INEQUALITIES
- SEVERE MENTAL ILLNESS
- MULTIPLE DISADVANTAGE

NATIONAL STATEMENT OF INTENT

**PLEDGE TO REDUCE ETHNIC
INEQUALITIES IN MENTAL
HEALTH SYSTEMS**

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#ethnicinequalitiespledge

PRESS RELEASE

STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL: 00.01am on Tuesday 25th May 2021

Signatories to the UK's first *National Pledge to reduce ethnic inequalities in mental health care* publish their inaugural progress reports today

Plans to launch a National Pledge Alliance announced

Senior leaders in NHS and public sector mental health care, who signed the UK's first ***National pledge to reduce ethnic inequalities in mental health systems***, publish their inaugural progress reports today (**Tuesday 25th May 2021**).

The pledge, launched by the Synergi Collaborative Centre on Wednesday 5th August 2020, features seven commitments to help counter the worrying lack of progress over four decades to alleviate the ethnic inequalities facing black and minoritised people diagnosed with a severe mental illness, including the disproportionate risks they face in mental health services.

Representing 28 of the 33 pledge signatories, the progress reports show that despite the ongoing challenges presented by the pandemic, there has been greater investment to tackle ethnic inequalities. This includes resourcing black and minoritised voluntary and community sector service providers and organisations, and recurrent funding for an annual grants programme to inspire a city-wide community response.

The reports also reveal where steps are being taken to become an anti-racist organisation. Alongside overwhelming support for the launch of a Synergi National Pledge Alliance, signatories call for collaborative leadership to accelerate the pace of change and identify new approaches. In some cases, there are attempts to rethink the commissioning process, making it more agile and inclusive.

Joy Francis, Co-Director, Synergi Collaborative Centre and Pledge Lead, said: "The pledge isn't a lip service exercise. It is focused on productive, inclusive and meaningful action. The signatories' unanimous support for the creation of a Synergi National Pledge Alliance to share the learning, challenges and create collaborative leadership for meaningful change is an example of what is possible. There is no space for inaction and ambiguity on ethnic inequalities and the impact of racism, amid a pandemic that has laid bare the devastating consequences of pre-existing inequalities on ethnic minority people's lives and mental health."

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Warren Heppolette, Executive Lead, Strategy and System Development, Greater Manchester Health & Social Care Partnership, said: “We are pledge signatories because we recognise ethnic inequalities in mental health care are real and longstanding. Those inequalities mean some communities have a higher risk of experiencing symptoms of psychoses, an even higher risk for psychoses diagnosis, and are more likely to experience adverse pathways leading to poorer outcomes and follow-up. The idea of a Synergi National Pledge Alliance is about understanding how you drive meaningful, authentic and major change, which is what we are reaching for.”

Dr Sara Munro, Chief Executive, Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, said: “Signing this Pledge marks our public commitment to bringing about real change within our individual organisations and across our city. Having a Synergi National Pledge Alliance will help us structure our thinking around key areas of work, identify gaps and see where there is potential to go further-faster across Leeds, and nationally, in partnership with other signatories.”

Marianne Fredericks, Chairman of the City of London Corporation Health and Wellbeing Board, said: “Tackling health inequalities across the Square Mile is a key objective for the City of London Corporation’s Health and Wellbeing Board. Now, more than ever, we must redouble our efforts to raise awareness of ethnic inequalities in mental health and reduce them. As the coronavirus pandemic and economic impact unfolds, the risks faced by those from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds continue to grow disproportionately. We are committed to doing everything we can to tackle this issue for our residents, workers, and students across the City.”

Mayor Philip Glanville, London Borough of Hackney, said: “The pandemic has highlighted the stark health inequalities that exist in our communities. These have been especially apparent for our diverse communities, many of whom have been disproportionately affected by Covid-19 and its economic effects. Building on the culturally sensitive work of the Mental Health Wellbeing Network, and the Young Black Men Programme, the Hackney Health and Wellbeing Board pledges to reduce ethnic inequalities in mental health by working with our partners in the community and health and care system.”

Joy Francis added: “We are championing collaborative, creative and entrepreneurial approaches that have practical, real life impact, such as commissioning in a less hierarchical and a more community-led way. The pledge signatories’ progress reports are just the tip of the iceberg. There is a great deal more to do, but it is an encouraging start.”

The Synergi National Pledge Alliance will be launched in October 2021 and the second Synergi Pledge Makers Progress Report will be published in November 2021.

Ends

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The Inaugural Synergi Pledge Progress Report 2021's official web page is under strict embargo until 00.01am, Tuesday 25th May 2021.

View the progress reports here: <http://bit.ly/PledgeProgressReports>

Access the press folder here: <http://bit.ly/PressProgressReports>

Notes to the Editor

About the National Pledge to reduce ethnic inequalities in mental health systems

The **National Pledge to reduce ethnic inequalities in mental health systems**, the first of its kind in the UK, was launched by the [Synergi Collaborative Centre](#) on Wednesday 5th August 2020 in response to black and minoritised communities facing disproportionate risks in mental health services that require urgent action, intent, shared vision and collaboration. Black and minoritised people have a higher risk of experiencing 'symptoms' of psychoses, an even higher risk for psychoses diagnosis, are more likely to experience adverse pathways to and through care, are subject to coercion and restrictive care, compulsory admissions and treatments, and poorer outcomes and follow-up.

CEOs, medical and nursing directors of NHS Mental Health Trusts, along with commissioners and senior leaders in public bodies (as pledge signatories) committed to take action to:

1. Initiate fundamental service level changes to reduce ethnic inequalities in access, experience and outcomes.
2. Measure, monitor and report the nature and extent of ethnic inequalities and progress made.
3. Work in partnership with local BAME communities, service users and relevant community agencies.
4. Provide national leadership on this critical issue.
5. Ensure inclusive and sustainable change in our localities and communities.
6. Support timely and progressive research and policy development.
7. Contribute to a biannual progress update as part of this Statement of Intent. Initiate fundamental service level changes to reduce ethnic inequalities in access, experience and outcomes.

You can read the full pledge here: <http://bit.ly/SynergiPledge>

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The pledge signatories are:

Leeds

- Tom Riordan, CEO, Leeds City Council
- Tim Ryley, Chief Executive, NHS Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group
- Dr Sara Munro, Chief Executive, Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, and CEO Lead for the West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership: Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Autism Collaborative
- Cllr Rebecca Charlwood, Chair, Leeds Health and Wellbeing Board
- Victoria Eaton, Director of Public Health, Leeds City Council
- Jim Barwick, CEO, Leeds GP Confederation

Birmingham

- Roisin Fallon-Williams, CEO, Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust
- Dr Hilary Grant, Medical Director, Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust

London

- Dr Rhiannon England, Clinical Lead for Mental Health, City and Hackney Integrated Care Partnership
- Philip Glanville, Mayor of Hackney, Hackney Health and Wellbeing Board
- Marianne Fredericks, Chairman, the City of London Corporation's Health and Wellbeing Board
- Dan Barrett, Director, Thrive LDN
- Sarah Blow, Accountable Officer, South West London Clinical Commissioning Group
- Vanessa Ford, Acting Chief Executive, South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust
- David Bradley, CEO, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust
- Dr Navina Evans, former CEO, East London NHS Foundation Trust

Greater Manchester

- Warren Heppolette, Executive Lead, Strategy and System Development, Greater Manchester Health & Social Care Partnership
- Sir Richard Leese, Chair, Greater Manchester Health & Social Care Partnership
- Evelyn Asante-Mensah, Chair, Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust
- Clare Parker, Executive Director of Nursing, Healthcare Professionals and Quality Governance, Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust
- Dr Nihal Fernando, Medical Director, Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust

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- Claire Molloy, Chief Executive, Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust
- Dr Tom Tasker, Chair, Salford Clinical Commissioning Group
- Dr Sandeep Ranote, Medical Director, North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- Helen Bellairs, Chairman, North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- Simon Barber, CEO, North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- Dr Alice Seabourne, Medical Director, Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust
- Joanne Hiley, Executive Director of Nursing and Quality, North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- Joanne McDonnell, Executive Director of Nursing and Governance, North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- Neil Thwaite, CEO, Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust
- Gill Green, Director of Nursing and Governance, Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust
- Andrew Maloney, Director of Human Resources and Deputy Chief Executive, Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust
- Rupert Nichols, Chairman, Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust

About the Synergi Collaborative Centre | synergicollaborativecentre.co.uk

The Synergi Collaborative Centre is a national five-year initiative focused on eradicating ethnic inequalities in severe mental illness through championing systems change, new science, creative inclusion, collaborative leadership and co-production/co-creation, while forging solutions with those experiencing mental distress, carers, commissioners, policymakers and politicians. Launched in 2017, the centre is funded by [Lankelly Chase](#) and is a partnership between the University of Manchester, University of Oxford and Words of Colour Productions.

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