

Caribbean & African Health Network Black Men's Health Forum The Manifesto.

INTRODUCTION

The Black Caribbean and African Men's Forum consists of men from across a range of intersecting identities and was established to provide a platform to share issues of importance, in relation to their health and well-being.

The evidence-based data reflects their own lived experiences and reveals significant information on the state of Black men's health and wellbeing.

Despite the data, action that drives universal and sustainable change is not evident in policies and practices.

This manifesto therefore incorporates the views of a group of Black men on matters they believe, the next government should prioritise to address some of the health and wellbeing challenges they face.

The voices of Black men are different to the voices of other groups. It is therefore imperative that we advance knowledge and understanding of Black men's health issues within and across society; in order to change attitudes and eradicate practices that serve as barriers to Black men receiving quality health and wellbeing care.

This manifesto calls for fundamental changes to be made in the provision and dissemination of programmes and initiatives that enhance greater understanding, promote awareness and improve the overall health and well-being provided to Black men of African Caribbean heritage.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1** Appoint a Minister for Men's Health with a focus on underserved communities.
- 2** Collaborative and partnership working to design services that Black men are competent and confident in using.
- 3** Actively ring fence funding for multi-agency initiatives that will educate, promote and develop greater awareness of Black men's health needs.
- 4** Empower Black men to become more knowledgeable in matters relating to their health and to understand how to navigate services in an accessible and timely manner.
- 5** Provide culturally and racially appropriate education and training programmes for providers across sectors that impact on the Black men's experiences.
- 6** Safeguard the physical health and mental wellbeing of Black men.
- 7** Improve access to Healthcare and Healthcare Services.
- 8** Develop community based programmes to engage Black men in research and clinical trials.
- 9** Decolonise policies, procedures and practices to enable equity and social justice.
- 10** Provide incentives that encourage Black men to seek and gain entry to health careers as a means of increasing representation within the communities they serve.

We urge the next government to prioritise Black men's health and reduce preventable and unacceptable health outcomes through the following ten recommendations.

#1 **Appoint a Minister for Men's Health.**

- Create a new ministerial role for men's health.
- Undertake round table discussions with the new minister for men's health that are inclusive of Black men intersectional voices.
- Develop a Men's Health Strategy.

#2 **Collaborative and partnership working to design services that Black men are happy and confident to use.**

- Support the development of community-based co-production forums to enable Black men to work in collaboration with multi-agencies.
- To build better relationships with Black men to ensure a greater understanding of how improvements can be made to their overall health and well-being

#3 **Actively ring fence funding multi-agency initiatives that will educate, promote and develop greater awareness of Black men's health need.**

- Procure opportunities for local community-based organisations to lead tenders that work with Integrated Care Boards (ICBs), to develop localised services for Black men.
- Develop community-based outreach programmes and invest in spaces that Black men access to ensure that they are supported with an infrastructure to supports health and wellbeing.

#4 **Empower Black men to become literate around their health as well as providing knowledge of how to navigate services in an accessible and timely way.**

- Develop a universal health literacy prevention and disease management programme for Black men around the disproportionately long-standing health conditions.
- Train and employ community health workers from within Black communities to build skills and competencies to effectively communicate and champion health messages.
- Provide information on chronic self-management strategies, extending knowledge and skills necessary to manage diseases daily.

#5 **Culturally and racially appropriate education and training programmes for providers across sectors that impact on the Black men's experience.**

- Provide the infrastructure and resources to enable stronger collaboration with education providers to work with faith and community-based leaders.
- Develop robust training of professionals to ensure they employ the right attitudes, behaviours, skills and knowledge to inform and support men who experience a range of health needs in a supportive and efficient manner.

#6 **Safeguard the physical health and mental wellbeing of Black men.**

- Develop a national working group that reviews prevalent Black men's health outcomes and has a strategic based approach to reduce incidence of disease.

Black men are 2x more likely to die from prostate cancer and at a younger age, 5 times as likely to be detained under the Mental Health Act-342.

They are more likely to have severe and enduring mental health issues, to be sectioned in mental health institutions; and are over represented in sexually transmitted infections (STIs), such as gonorrhoea and HIV.

Increase access to information, treatments and timely examinations that will prevent delayed referral and treatment of health conditions due to poor engagement and culturally appropriateness.

Launch targeted health awareness campaigns which focus on specific health issues that remain prevalent among African Caribbean communities.

#7 **Improve Access to Healthcare and Healthcare Services.**

- Remove benchmarked approaches to Black men's health and employ holistic and personalised assessments and treatments according to individual need.
- Increase the availability of Black therapists and counsellors to provide culturally competent care.

#8 **Community based programmes to engage Black men in research and clinical trials.**

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#9 **Decolonise policies, procedures and practices to enable equity and social justice.**

- Develop and embed an anti-racist framework that incorporates policies and practices and decolonises the historical theories and narratives regarding Black men.
- Include within health and social care professional regulatory bodies and councils' curricula, and competency frameworks, content that embeds anti-racist practices and only enables progression following tested anti -racist practice.

#10 **Create incentives for greater numbers of Black men to gain employment in the health sector.**

- Create incentives that encourage more Black men into health care roles to increase levels of representation within communities they serve.
- There are around a quarter of Black and Minority staff working in the NHS but yet Black men are not represented and not in senior decision making positions.
- Create education and training that address gender based stereotypes around healthcare roles such as nursing, where males are grossly underrepresented.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the Black men's collective for the time they gave to us to hear their views and perspectives across a number of different workshops. This manifesto brought together men from our grassroots communities, men across different age groups, religious affiliations, gender assignments, socio-economic backgrounds and across professions.

CAHN is looking forward to continuing our work with you over the coming months and years and we look forward to the Independent Mens Day event in November 2024.