

Men from ethnic minorities take longer to recover from mental illness, study finds

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(Medical Xpress)—Men from ethnic minorities suffering from mental health problems in the UK can take longer to recover than white men as they are more reluctant to seek professional help, according to research at Royal Holloway, University of London.

Researchers at Royal Holloway have called for an active programme that promotes [mental health](#) to black and minority ethnic (BME) men, as a disproportionate number, compared with [white men](#), have been shown to come into contact with [mental health services](#).

Speaking during Mental Health Awareness Week (Monday 12 May to Sunday 18 May), Dr Frank Keating, from the Department of Social

Work at Royal Holloway, said: "Mental illness can have a devastating effect on people and their families, but sadly many men from black and ethnic minority communities can be hesitant to seek help.

"This can be for a number of reasons, including previous experiences with health professionals who have lacked cultural sensitivity, as well as the stigma attached to [mental illness](#). The different social expectations of men among ethnic minority communities can also lead to them feeling pressurised into conforming to unrealistic ideals that can cause further stress."

The study, which analysed the experiences of twelve groups of men with poor mental health from African-Caribbean, African, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Chinese communities in London and the West Midlands, found that BME men's ability to talk openly about feeling vulnerable was affected by masculine identity.

"These findings suggest that creating an environment of trust and cultural sensitivity are essential to enable BME men to talk about their mental health. For healthcare professionals, it's also vital to engage with the ideals that the men have of themselves and increase the patients' understanding of their own well-being in order to put them back in control," Dr Keating added.

Provided by Royal Holloway, University of London

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