

10th International Conference on

Neuroscience and Neurochemistry

&

6th International Conference on **Vascular Dementia** February 27-March 01, 2017



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The Dementia alliance for culture and ethnicity: A UK call to action on responding to the impact of dementia in Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities

Statement of the Problem: The number of people living with dementia in Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities in the UK is anticipated to increase seven fold in the period between 2011 and 2051. The age demography of migrant populations in the UK indicates that significant burden of the impact of this will fall on the larger, longest settled migrant communities (such as the Irish, African-Caribbean and South Asian). For the South Asian and African-Caribbean populations there is known higher risk of vascular dementia than for other minority ethnic communities. This will present a significant and large scale challenge for UK health services in urban areas.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: The dementia alliance for culture and ethnicity (DACE) is a grass roots initiative that grew out of a seminar held in the UK to explore the commonalities of experience of these communities. The seminar participants formed the alliance and developed a call to action.

Findings: The call to action sets out commonalities in the service experience and cultural stigma regarding dementia and recommends ways of responding to the challenges at the level of policy development, service provision and public education.

Conclusion & Significance: The call to action has now been endorsed in the UK's National Health Service 2020 implementation plan for dementia. The Alliance believes that strategic and sustained investment in working with community groups is necessary to improve the understanding of dementia in Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. It is only through this improved understanding that people from these communities will come forward for earlier diagnosis and treatment and participate in larger scale research studies. The presentation will highlight some examples of the work done by the Alliance to date.

Biography

David Truswell has worked in Community based Mental Health Services in the UK for over 30 years developing services for people with complex care needs and enduring mental health problems in a career spanning the UK voluntary sector, local authority services, and the NHS. From 2009-2011, he was the Dementia Implementation Lead for Commissioning Support for London, working with commissioners across London to improve dementia services. He is the Chair of the Dementia Alliance for Culture and Ethnicity, a grassroots alliance of dementia organisations. He recently left the NHS to set up somefreshthinking (somefreshthinking.com) an independent health sector change management consultancy.

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