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An examination of economic evaluation approaches in mental health promotion initiatives targeted at BAME communities in the UK – a critical discourse analysis.

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Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people are more at risk of developing mental health disorders because they are more exposed to unfavorable social, economic, and environmental circumstances. These include housing, education, employment, community development, stigma and discrimination. However, the majority of BAME mental health intervention studies focuses on treatment with therapeutically effective drugs and use basic economic methods to evaluate their effectiveness; as a result, little is invested in the economic assessment of psychosocial interventions in BAME mental health. The UK government's austerity program and reduced funds for mental health services, has increased the need for the evaluation and assessment of initiatives to focus on value for money. The No Health without Mental Health policy (2011) provides practice guidance to practitioners but there is little or no mention of the need to provide mental health initiatives targeted at BAME communities that are effective in terms of their impact and the cost effectiveness. This therefore appears to contradict with, and is at odds with the wider political discourse which suggests there should be an increasing focus on health economic evaluation. As a consequence, it could be argued that whilst such policies provide direction to organizations to provide mental health services to the BAME community, by not requesting effective governance, assurance and evaluation processes, they are merely paying lip service to addressing these problems and not helping advance knowledge and practice through evidence based approaches. As a result BAME communities suffer due to lack of efficient resources that can aid in the recovery process. This research study explores the mental health initiatives targeted at BAME communities, and analyses the techniques used when examining the cost effectiveness of mental health initiatives for BAME mental health communities. Using critical discourse analysis as an approach and method, mental health services will be selected as case studies and their evaluations will be examined, alongside the political drivers that frame, shape and direct their work. In doing so it will analyse what mental health policies initiatives are directing this work and demonstrate how economic models of evaluation are used in mental health programs and how the value for money impacts and outcomes are articulated by mental health programs staff. It is anticipated that this study will further our understanding in order to provide adequate mental health resources and will deliver creative supportive research to ensure evaluation is effective for the government to provide and maintain high quality and efficient mental health initiatives targeted at BAME communities.