

Exploring dementia health and social care systems and services across the African Caribbean Diaspora

Background

The World Health Organization (WHO) has identified dementia as a public health priority (WHO, 2012) and discussed the need for coordinated global and national action in the recent ministerial conference on global action against dementia (WHO, 2015). In the UK, the Prime Minister's Challenge on Dementia outlined a vision to make England a world leading country in dementia care by 2020 (Department of Health, 2015). To achieve this goal, the Government called on health and social care systems, higher education institutions, charities and voluntary organizations to collaborate in working towards reducing dementia risks and stigma, raising awareness, and engaging in social action and/or research. Meanwhile, there remain significant gaps in understanding and meeting dementia healthcare needs and developing more culturally responsive delivery systems nationally and internationally. The global potential for diasporic and cross-cultural learning to inform development and evaluation of more culturally competent dementia services remains untapped.

What is the project and why is it needed

The increasing number of Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) people living with dementia in the UK (Prince et al., 2014) indicates the need for more community-centred and culturally-sensitive approaches. Building on prior work conducted by co-investigators (DE, RL), it was found dementia awareness and psycho-social tools to engage people with dementia (e.g. life story work, talking mat, reminiscence boxes) were not culturally-resonant with the lived experiences of Caribbean and other minority groups in the UK. Reports from the Caribbean and North America reflect our findings in Manchester. Given Caribbean dispersion and currently unknown disease burden associated with higher rates of some forms of dementia in this group, we argue that a diasporic approach is needed. We therefore propose a scoping review to detail Caribbean people's understandings of dementia and to identify existing psychosocial interventions used with/for this population. Specifically, this scoping review will help identify knowledge and areas of misinformation about dementia, what is being done in this population, and strategies to inform more culturally-sensitive care. Review findings will inform consultation events with Caribbean community groups involving people with dementia and their carers, health and social care professionals (e.g. reminiscence therapists, nurses and social workers in Manchester and Jamaica). Consultation events will enable us to clarify which evidence-based interventions from the scoping review are practised in the communities. This will also highlight the gaps in research and facilitate making recommendations for culturally competent dementia care. Review findings and consultation group discussion will be the first phase in producing a guide that can inform culturally-sensitive approaches in dementia care. In the UK, for example, such a guide has the potential to inform reminiscence therapy and social care assessments for other ethnic groups.

Interdisciplinary Team & Applicants

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