EMHIP
ETHNICITY & MENTAL HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

CROYDON BME FORUM

arcc
asian resource centre for communities

NHS
South London and Maudsley
NHS Foundation Trust

South West London Integrated Care System

EMHIP Mental Health Conference 2026

Roots of Resilience



Celebrating Heritage. Strengthening Mental Health.

Conference Programme Booklet

Wednesday 14th October 2026

12pm–5pm

St Mary's Church, Croydon, CR0 2AR

An inspiring afternoon exploring mental health, heritage, resilience, lived experience and community support.

Community Heritage. Stronger Together.

Meet the CEO

Welcome to our EMHIP Mental Health Conference.



Welcome to our EMHIP Mental Health Conference.

As Chief Executive Officer of Croydon BME Forum, I am delighted to welcome you to a day of conversation, learning and connection, focused on improving mental health support for our communities.

This year marks six years of the Ethnicity Mental Health Improvement Programme (EMHIP). It is an opportunity to celebrate the programme's journey and renew our commitment to tackling inequalities, building trust and ensuring that people's voices and lived experiences shape the support they receive.

I would like to give special thanks to Dr Kevin Vemto, Dr Dev, Malik Gul, Councillor Janet Campbell and Ima Miah for their support and contributions to EMHIP.

I also want to recognise and thank our current EMHIP staff team for their dedication, care and creativity. It is wonderful to see the range of programmes and activities they are now delivering within our communities, creating opportunities for people to connect, build confidence and access support.

One of the most valuable lessons from these six years is that our communities need a variety of activities and different pathways into our services. People have different experiences, interests and needs, and we must offer ways to engage that feel welcoming and relevant to them. Listening to our communities and responding to what matters to them remains central to EMHIP's work.

My thanks also go to our funders, South West London ICB, and to our partners, volunteers and community members, whose support and commitment continue to strengthen the programme.

Our conference theme, "Roots of Resilience", invites us to recognise the strength within our communities, while acknowledging that no one should have to face mental health challenges alone. Resilience grows when people feel heard, valued and supported.

I hope today leaves you inspired, better connected and ready to turn our discussions into meaningful action.

Thank you for joining us and for being part of EMHIP's continuing journey.

Dr Andrew Brown
Chief Executive Officer
Croydon BME Forum

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About EMHIP

Ethnicity & Mental Health Improvement Programme



EMHIP provides culturally responsive, community-based mental health and wellbeing support for Croydon's Global Majority communities. The programme combines emotional wellbeing support with practical advocacy, trusted relationships and community-based delivery to reduce inequalities in access, experience and outcomes.

What EMHIP offers

- Mobile Hubs in trusted community settings
- One-to-one emotional wellbeing support
- Counselling with culturally sensitive counsellors
- Practical advocacy and signposting
- Therapeutic group workshops and wellbeing activities
- All-age, whole-family support

Community activities

- Art for Wellbeing
- Whisk & Wellbeing
- Mind Body Soul wellbeing sessions
- Roots of Resilience community conference

Support is delivered through community venues including places of worship, schools and voluntary sector organisations.

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Meet the Team

The people behind EMHIP



Terry Crooke

EMHIP Manager

Terry Crooke is EMHIP Manager and has over 28 years' experience in the voluntary sector, supporting individuals, communities and teams to improve mental health and wellbeing.

His career spans service delivery, policy reform, programme management, community outreach and development, always rooted in compassion, partnership and resilience.

Terry is proud to lead the EMHIP team hosting this year's conference and to showcase the team's achievements, partnerships and reflections on building resilience.



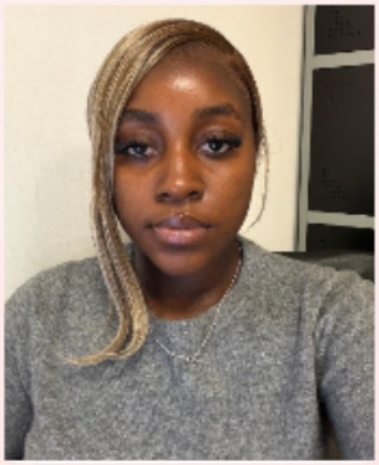
James Henshaw

EMHIP Data Analyst

James Henshaw is EMHIP's Data Analyst. A retired computer science lecturer specialising in databases and data management, he now helps voluntary organisations use data to show the difference their work makes.

His work with Croydon BME Forum brings that expertise to mental health and wellbeing.

Away from data, he is also an accomplished playwright with a love of theatre.



Maame Acheampong

Senior Mental Health Support Worker / Designated Safeguarding Lead

Maame Acheampong is EMHIP's Senior Mental Health Support Worker and Designated Safeguarding Lead.

For over two years, she has supported clients through one-to-one guidance, signposting, counselling referrals and access to wellbeing services.

She also leads the Whisk and Wellbeing Workshops, using cooking to encourage connection and wellbeing.

She values supporting clients and looks forward to continuing EMHIP's growth and community impact.

"Different backgrounds. A shared commitment to stronger, healthier communities."

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Tobi Odusanwo

EMHIP Assistant Support Worker

Tobi Odusanwo is an EMHIP Assistant Support Worker, supporting people across Croydon through one-to-one guidance, referrals, signposting and community outreach.

He also leads Who Else But Us, a youth project for 16–25-year-olds that offers a relaxed space to connect, build confidence, develop life skills and access support.



Abigail Oyeleye

EMHIP Mental Health Support Worker

Abigail Oyeleye is an EMHIP Mental Health Support Worker and one of the newest members of the team.

She supports clients through one-to-one guidance, signposting, counselling referrals and other appropriate services. She also leads the Bake A Difference Baking Workshop, helping community members build social connections and engage with support.



Shine George

Assistant Psychologist and EMHIP Support Worker, Asian Resource Centre

Shine George is an Assistant Psychologist and EMHIP Support Worker at the Asian Resource Centre for Communities (ARCC).

He supports the coordination and delivery of the EMHIP counselling service and facilitates Unfolding Layers, a group therapy project at ARCC. Drawing on training in psychology, multilingual skills and experience with diverse communities, he provides culturally responsive mental health support and uses mindfulness, meditation and Mandala art to promote wellbeing and connection.

"Different backgrounds. A shared commitment to stronger, healthier communities."

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Meet the Team

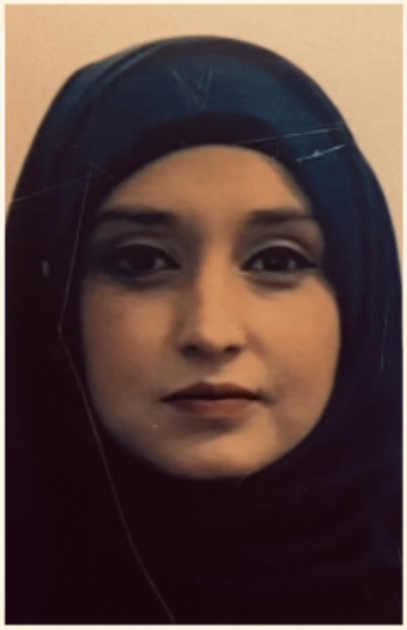
The people behind EMHIP



Shahana Rashid Kalam

EMHIP Support Worker, Asian Resource Centre (ARCC)

Shahana Rashid Kalam has been part of EMHIP for over two years, supporting and engaging the local community through creative and social activities. She is passionate about challenging mental health stigma and helping people access the support they need to improve their wellbeing.



Asima Quereshi

EMHIP Support Worker, Asian Resource Centre

Asima has been a valued member of EMHIP for over two years, helping to make a positive impact on community wellbeing. She is passionate about bringing people together, building meaningful connections and empowering individuals to thrive.

"Different backgrounds. A shared commitment to stronger, healthier communities."

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EMHIP
Stats & Evaluation

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Understanding our impact. Building stronger communities.

Why EMHIP matters

4.6x
Black people are more likely to be detained under the Mental Health Act.

4x
Black people are more likely to experience restrictive interventions in inpatient settings.

EMHIP helps address inequalities in access, experience and outcomes of mental health support.

2025/26 snapshot

420
Client records supported

755
Recorded support sessions delivered

893
Hours of direct support provided

20
Croydon outward postcode areas reached

89.8%
Clients identified as belonging to Global Majority communities

Client records by gender

59.5% Women

38.6% Men

Reported impact

- Improved emotional wellbeing and resilience
- Better management of stress, anxiety and low mood
- Reduced feelings of isolation
- Greater confidence navigating services and systems
- Stronger social connections and confidence for the future

Based on Croydon BME Forum EMHIP Annual Report 2025/26.

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EMHIP Mental Health Conference 2026

Speakers

Voices contributing to Roots of Resilience



Dr Kevin Vento

Consultant Clinical Psychologist

Dr Kevin Vento is a consultant Clinical Psychologist working in the Croydon Health and Wellbeing Space. He has worked in adult mental health for over 20 years, specialising in trauma, psychosis and anti-racist clinical leadership across the NHS.



Dr Dev Malhotra

GP and Clinical Lead for Mental Health, Inclusion and Homelessness

Born, raised and educated in Croydon, Dr Dev Malhotra has almost 20 years' experience in mental health leadership. He works as a GP at Brigstock Medical Practice and co-chairs the EMHIP Steering Group.



Councillor Janet Campbell

Deputy Leader of Croydon Labour Group / Shadow Cabinet Member for Public Health and Adult Social Care

A Croydon resident for over 50 years and foster carer for 20 years, Janet Campbell brings both lived experience and public service to her work. She is passionate about prevention, mental wellbeing and tackling inequalities.

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Speakers

Voices contributing to Roots of Resilience



Natasha Irons MP

MP for Croydon East

Natasha Irons is the Labour Member of Parliament for Croydon East, elected in July 2024. Raised in South London, she previously worked for a leading public service broadcaster and served as a councillor in Merton. She is committed to being a strong voice for Croydon East, with priorities including decent housing, improved public services, opportunities for young people and a thriving local economy.



Leon Berry

Systemic Psychotherapist

Leon Berry is a therapist and EDI consultant who offers a warm and compassionnte environment to explore difficulty, trauma and identity. He works systemically, holding in mind the wider social, familial and cultural contexts that shape people's lives, and brings experience of working with children, families, adults and communities affected by trauma, displacement, loss and belonging.



Malik Gul

Director of Wandsworth Community Empowerment Network (WCEN)

Malik Gul is Director of the Community Empowerment Network (CEN) Wandsworth, which he has led for over 20 years. A long-standing advocate for equity in mental health, he helped develop EMHIP through the Healing Our Broken Village Black Mental Health Conferences in Tooting. He also co-chairs the NHS London BME Mental Health Group and serves on the London Mental Health Board.

Malik currently convenes EMHIP, a collaborative initiative between NHS Southwest London, South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust and community partners, working to reduce ethnic inequalities in mental health services by addressing structural inequalities and systemic racism, and shifting power and resources towards community-led solutions.

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Croydon IAG

Croydon Independent Advisory Group



The Croydon Independent Advisory Group is a community-led movement dedicated to improving mental health services and reducing racial ineqqualities across Croydon. Working in partnership with South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, the group helps shape services that are fair, inclusive, culturally responsive and accessible to everyone.

Our vision

"To empower and educate people experiencing racial health inequalities in mental health services, inspire healing, and create lasting change for future generations."

When and how do we meet?

Online every **second Thursday** of the month at 6:00 pm

Why join?

- Influence mental health services
- Attend monthly community meetings
- Participate in workshops and events
- Help challenge inequalities and create change

Join the Croydon Independent Advisory Group

Be part of a community working towards fairer, more inclusive mental health services in Croydon. Scan the QR code or use the link to sign up.

forms.cloud.microsoft/e/uEbVHgHmWa

Scan to sign up!

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Counselling the Community



EMHIP offers culturally responsive counselling support rooted in trust, community and lived experience.
Our counselling service provides a safe and supportive space to talk, be heard and work through life's challenges.



EMHIP Counselling

One-to-one support with a culturally competent counsellor. Our experienced counsellors provide a safe, confidential and non-judgemental space for you to explore your thoughts, feelings and experiences. We work at your pace, supporting you to build resilience, improve wellbeing and make positive changes in your life.



Rooted in Care

A systemic model focused on relationships. Support can involve you, someone you are experiencing relationship or communication difficulties with (for example a family member, partner or other important person), and the counsellor acting as a mediator. This approach helps improve understanding, strengthen relationships and support positive, lasting change.

Key information

- **6–8** free sessions
- Holistic and tailored therapeutic approach
- For people living in Croydon from Global Majority communities
- **14+** years old only

For information: emhiphub@bmeforum.org | 020 8684 3719

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What Next?

Lead Out Loud

Young voices. Stronger communities.



Funded by BBC Children in Need, Lead Out Loud will support young people aged 11–18 to build confidence, develop leadership skills and shape positive change in their communities. Through the Croydon Youth Leadership and Belonging Hub, the programme will create a safe, welcoming space for young people, particularly those affected by racism, xenophobia and Islamophobia. Participants will explore identity, celebrate their cultures and develop a stronger sense of belonging.



Leadership training

Develop confidence, communication and leadership skills to create positive change in your community.



Creative workshops and digital storytelling

Explore your identity, celebrate your culture and share your stories through creative arts and digital media.



Wellbeing support and peer leadership

Access a safe, welcoming space with wellbeing support, connect with peers and help create a stronger, more inclusive Croydon.

> *"At the heart of Lead Out Loud is a simple belief: young people have the ideas, strengths and potential to make a difference."*

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