Have some faith in community:

A Family Therapy & Faith based Partnership for mental health in Wandsworth

Dr. Rochelle A Burgess, PhD

Research Associate, Health, Community and Development Research Group, *London School of Economics*

Centre for Primary Health and Social Care
London Metropolitan University

Aim of presentation

➡ Feedback on findings from an external research evaluation of the *Family therapy-community network for family care* partnership between:

➡ Wandsworth NHS CCG

➡ South West London Mental health Trust

➡ Wandsworth Council

➡ Wandsworth Community Empowerment Network

➡ Pastors Network

Outline of presentation

- Context: Mental health – access, racial disparities and community networks

- Rethinking mental health responses : Community mental health competencies

- Community competencies in action: programme successes

Context: Mental health – unmet needs

- **Unmet need**: Approximately 48,500 individuals may have an unidentified mental disorder (JSNA, 2014)
  - Equates to 200/1000 people showing symptoms of common mental disorders
  - Higher than England average
  - Higher prevalence among women – 30,500 of estimated cases
  - Mental health presents the largest cohort of early intervention needs in the borough

Challenges to early intervention: racial disparities in access

- In a borough as demographically diverse as Wandsworth, broader implications of race and ethnicity on health are of particular interest
  - Black and ethnic minorities are over-represented in in-patient mental health services in UK
    - 3x likely to be admitted into medium security mental health units
    - 8 x likely to be admitted into high security units (Mohan et al., 2006)
  - Cultural barriers to engagement – discomfort with services and service providers, experiences of racism in services (Rabiee & Paula, 2013)

Challenges to early intervention: Stigma
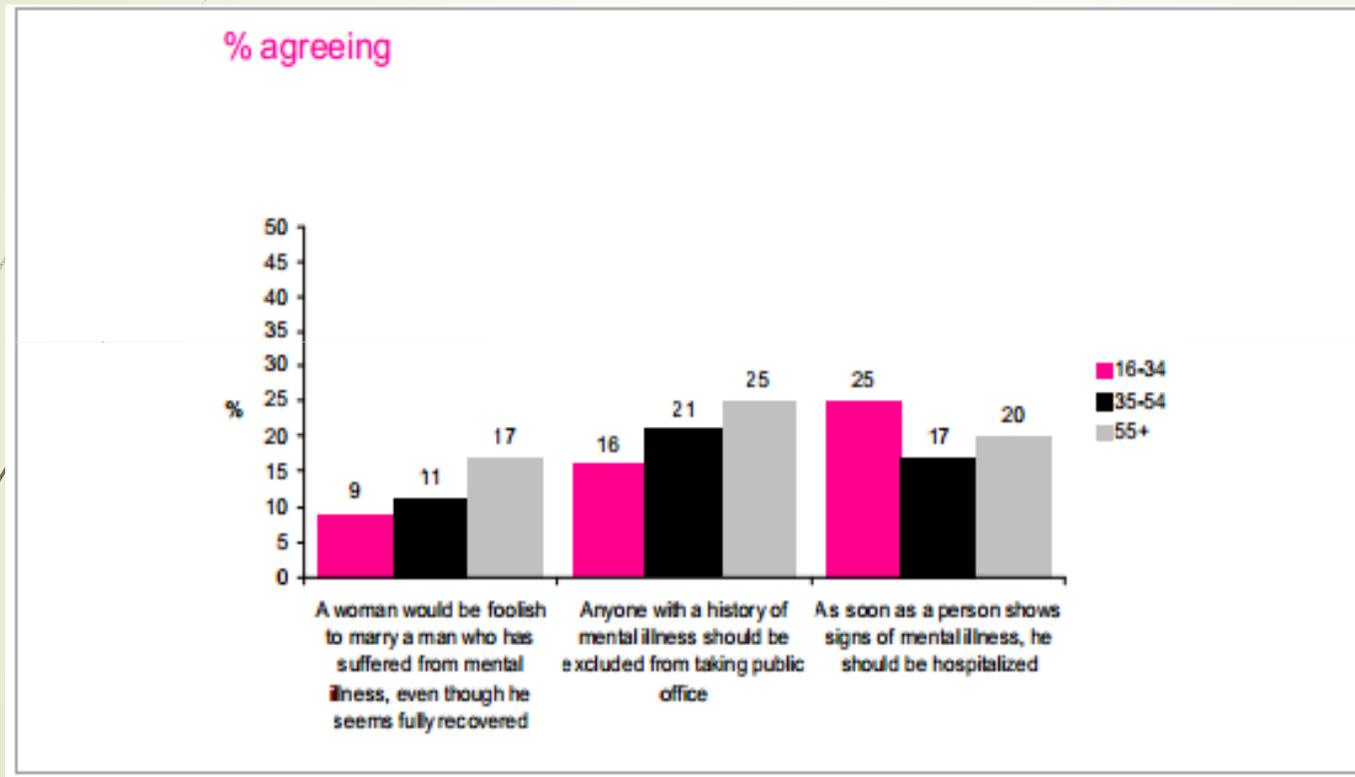
Fear and exclusion of people with mental illness by age

Source, NHS 2011

Community networks as health promotion ?

- NHS engagement with communities has been linked to targeting the following areas

Primary care approaches: Focus primarily on early detection and treatment to reduce severity through services such as Improving Access to Psychological Therapies **(IAPT)**

Co-production: Community collaboration and multi-sector partnerships to inform the planning and design of services – accessing service user views

But is this enough?
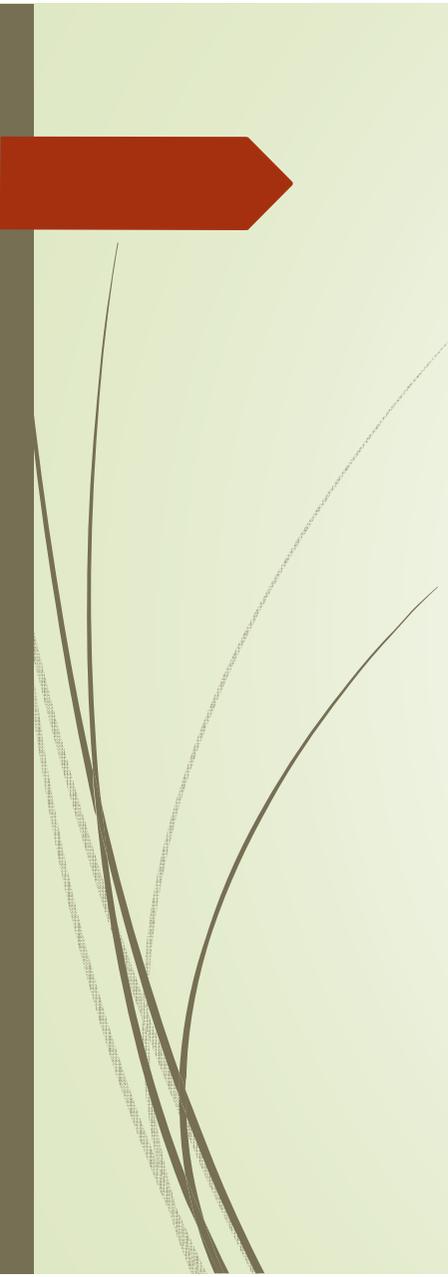
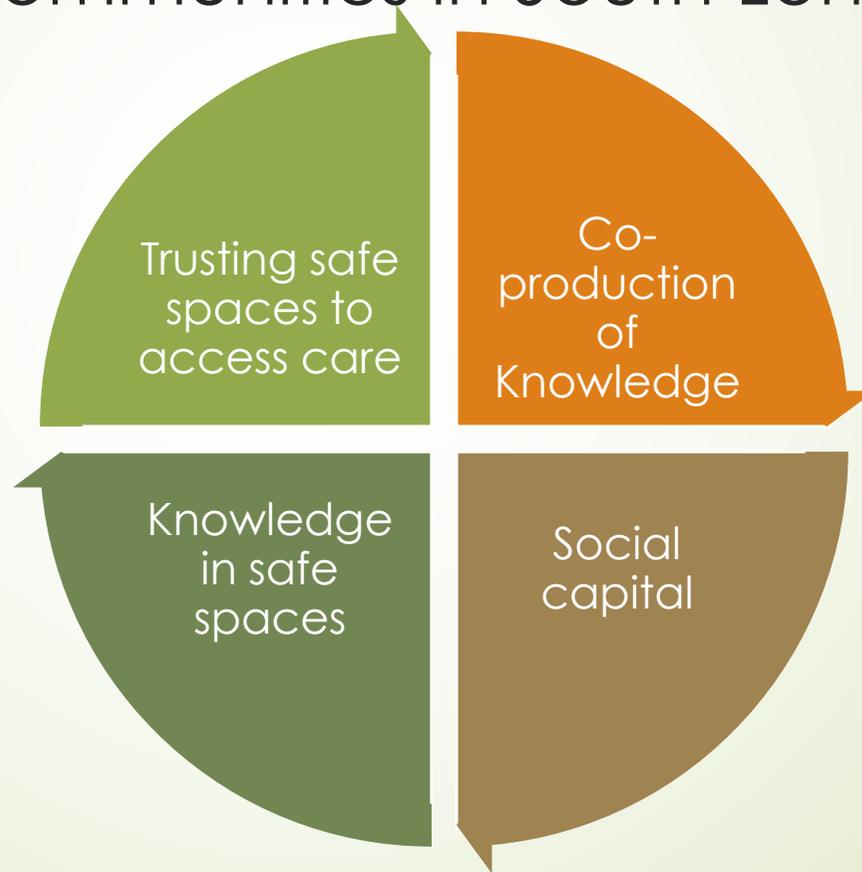# Community competencies: A framework for local collaborative thinking and action for health

- Evidence argues the need to expand health promotion and early intervention beyond typical dimensions of access to information and services at primary care (Lavarack, 2012)

- Work towards mutually addressing broader systemic issues that drive health inequalities – in this particular instance cultural and racial dimensions of care (Campbell et al., 2007)

- Community engagement through other means has been viewed as a route to this –

- i.e. Community participation in ways that move beyond the transfer of information, or participation in steering groups (Campbell and Cornish, 2010)

Community mental health competencies

- **Knowledge** of how to recognise symptoms of stress and illness at an early stage, and how to access services and use them in ways that do not compromise core cultural beliefs, local support networks or resilience;

- **safe social spaces** in which local people can engage in critical dialogue with liked and trusted peers, in which they seek to identify the drivers of distress or poor mental health and how these might be avoided or tackled;

- **Ownership** of the challenge of tackling the problem of mental ill-health rather than waiting passively for outside services to do so, (iv) recognition of the contribution of local indigenous skills to contributing to the fight for mental health;

- **Partnerships and social capital:** awareness of, and ability to access, external organisations and agencies (NGOs, health services) with the will and resources to support good mental health in the community

(Burgess, 2012; Campbell and Burgess 2012; Burgess & Campbell 2013)

Pastors network, South West London Mental Health Trust & WCEN:
Making mental health competent communities in South London

- Trusting safe spaces to access care
- Co-production of Knowledge
- Knowledge in safe spaces
- Social capital

Knowledge in safe spaces

- Dialogue within training of pastors

  - Not didactic learning but rather horizontal discursive approach to teaching

  - Enabled the family therapy training to be experienced as a safe space where issues with content could be broached directly

Doing it together: Co-production and translation of knowledge

- Involvement in Knowledge - co production of knowledge in the training process – feeling of involvement helps to reduce drop out
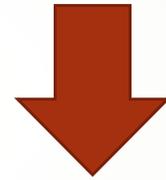
- Translation of knowledge: establishes psychological anchor to new information which helps to reduce psychological resistance to novel ideas (about mental health)

Someone you can trust: Capitalising on social capital

- Social capital worked in two ways to support the success of the programme:

- Pastors and ministers are the gateways to communities

  - bridges into communities, trusted individuals who provide information to parishioners as part of their existing practice

  - symbolic capital: respected and revered in ways that open others to accept novel ideas from them.

- Supporting each other: bonding the pastors together for support in working with and translating new ideas into practice

Trusting and safe spaces to access care

- By providing pastors and ministers with knowledge about mental health conditions and training with therapeutic tools to include in their own practice, physical barriers to community members accessing MH therapies are eliminated

- Stigma associated with the physical space of a mental health hospital/ practitioner can be avoided by those unwilling to attend services – via accessing support in churches/community spaces
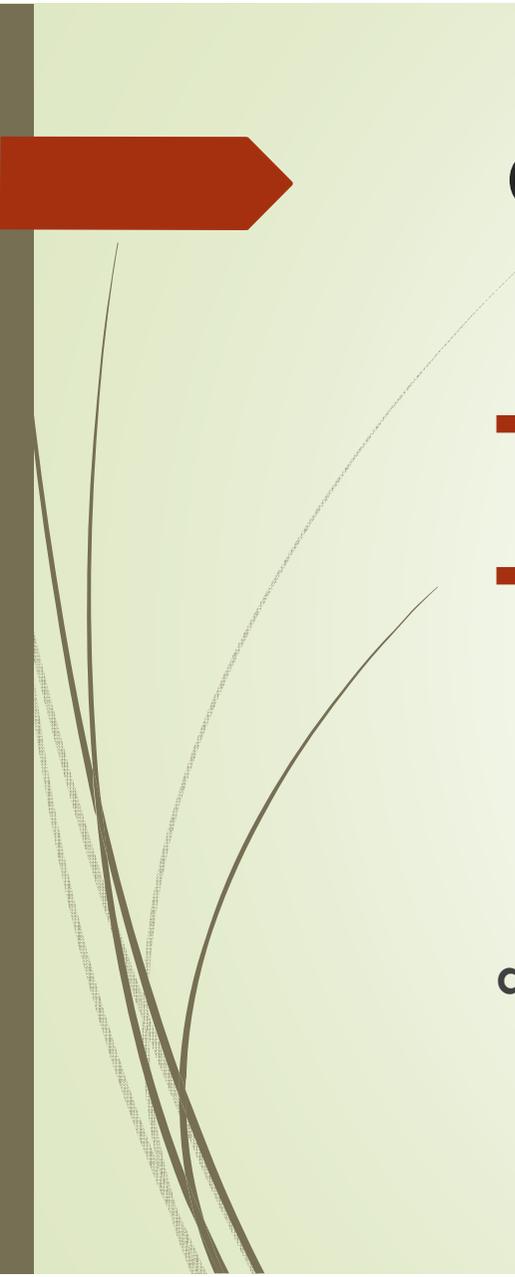
Competencies in action: A faith based partnership for mental health

- The pastors network family therapy programme highlights the **value and importance of partnerships** and community strengthening for mental health

- A combination of co-production and the principles of IAPT have enabled the community to develop:

  - a set of critical local experts on 'mental health'

  - the ability to provide key psychosocial resources for the promotion of mental health that moves beyond early intervention

Partnership represents a valuable evidence based framework with ability for scale up within other boroughs seeking to increase access to vulnerable groups

Thank you !

For more information on this study or other research please contact:

Rochelle Burgess, PhD

Lecturer in Health and social care

Centre for Primary Health and Social Care

London Metropolitan University

r.burgess@londonmet.ac.uk

Research: researchgate.net/profile/Rochelle_Burgess

Blog: Psychology Matters

Twitter:@thewrittenro