Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Role Models

Letter from Co-Chairs of BME Staff Network Committee

Welcome to the first issue of BME Role Models. We have created this publication to:

i. Share the career journeys of BME staff who have progressed their careers within CNWL

ii. Inspire others to do the same

In our volunteer role as chairs we continue to work passionately to raise the profile of BME staff because we firmly believe in inclusion and celebrating progress and success. You will read about the resources we harnessed, our motivation, as well as key challenges and how we overcame them.

As part of our ongoing programme of work to improve outcomes for BME staff, we are working collaboratively with the Trust to ensure it delivers on the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES). With the Trust’s support we have:

- Developed a mentoring programme for senior BME staff (Band 8a and above) to be mentored by the Trust’s Executive Members, with a view to increasing representation of BME staff at the most senior levels in CNWL
- We have also worked with the CNWL Recovery & Wellbeing College to create a leadership programme to develop BME staff (Band 3 to 6) called ‘Aspiring Leaders’ in order to grow our own leaders, and provide support at entry level
- We hosted events such as ‘the Power of Me’ an inner reflection of how we are active participants in our career journey, which included a career panel discussion and much more.

On Friday 28 July 2017 we held an event called ‘Celebrating Cultural Diversity’ which was an afternoon of culture, food and fun. To receive further information about our events, please email bmenetwork.cnwl@nhs.net.

The BME Staff Network is made up of CNWL staff who volunteer and share our vision to improve BME staff experience of working in the NHS. The Committee and ally colleagues offer their time and expertise to support the Network and its members which we truly value.

As we start work on our September role model series we invite you to submit your own inspirational stories about your career journey. We often underestimate how much our experience can encourage others, so please share! We hope that you enjoy reading this publication which we will share and cascade to your teams and colleagues. If you have any comments or would like to feature in future issues, please contact us at bmenetwork.cnwl@nhs.net.

J’nelle James  Ayo Ogunkolade
J’nelle James

Started working at CNWL in 2005 as a Ward Clerk (Band 4)
Now works as Quality Improvement Manager (Band 8a)

I like my job because:
I get to lead improvement initiatives in the service. I also get to hear directly from patients and their carers/families about how they are experiencing our service, and act on their feedback.

I have faced challenges including: Studying full time whilst working full time, bereavement and ageism.

I have overcome them by:
- Remaining positive
- Focusing on developing myself
- Taking on projects to develop new skills
- Seeking feedback from peers and seniors about their experience of me, and making improvements where necessary
- Being open to opportunities
- Speaking to colleagues who are where I want to be, and learning about what I need to do to get there.

I think inclusion is important in CNWL/NHS because:
Working in the NHS is very challenging and providing patient care is difficult if staff do not feel included and cared for. The population we serve is very diverse as is our workforce, therefore inclusion is important to make staff feel welcome and valued, so that they in turn can effectively look after our patients.

I love working in CNWL because: I have made some life-long friendships in CNWL, and I work with frontline staff and peers who are so committed and caring. Their commitment to their patients’ and the service inspires me to want to do more.

I would like to be remembered in CNWL for: My positivity, passion and drive.

In five years’ time I would like to: Look back on my career in CNWL, and feel like I have made a true difference to driving up the standard of patient care, and improving the working lives of our BME staff as well as those who support them for example, managers, directors and peers.

Wise words to the BME Staff Network:
If you would like to be a part of a positive, progressive, supportive staff network then join us! What are you waiting for?
Ayo Ogunkolade

Started working at CNWL in 2013 as an Information Manager (Band 8a)
Now works as Head of Information (Band 8b)

I like my job because:
I work with a fantastic team of people who love data as much as I do and enjoy making a difference in the health service through information. I do not underestimate the importance of what I do and how it impact on jobs, lives and the organisation as a whole. This drives me to continuous improvement and I see myself as a key part of this organisation, working to ensure its goals and objectives are actualised.

I have faced challenges including:
Staff retention and work life balance.

I have overcome them by:
- Building relationships in the workplace
- Surrounding myself with key support systems
- Remaining positive and focused

I think inclusion is important in CNWL/NHS because:
Now more than ever before in the NHS, staff satisfaction and engagement is being valued through more increased scrutiny on staff measures including the FFT (Friends and Family Test) the WRES (Workforce Race Equality Standards) and CQUINS (Commissioning for Quality and Innovation) to promote staff mental and physical health initiatives. Inclusion at every level is key to staff retention, values, patient safety and overall wellbeing of staff.

I love working in CNWL because: There is a saying that: ‘You do not work for a company, you work for an individual (your line manager)’. In CNWL I have found a group of people who get along with each other and are passionate about patient care in kitchen conversations, meetings, quiz nights, leaving do’s. This is also an organisation where there is room to grow, learn and move as opportunities always presenting themselves. No wonder people keep coming back right?

I would like to be remembered in CNWL for: My passion and drive.

In five years’ time I would like to: Be making an even bigger impact in health using key information.

Wise words to the BME Staff Network:
Adapted:
If I faced a hundred fears, if I cried a hundred tears, if I moved a hundred walls, if I fall a hundred falls, I will still be the BEST me I can ever be!
Meera Mistry

Started working at CNWL in 2003 as an Information Officer in Brent Mental Health Services.
Now works as Divisional Head of Business and Transformation for Goodall Division.

I like my job because: The role is very diverse, so I cannot imagine ever being bored. I also work with a number of different services within my Division.

I have faced challenges including: Managing a large portfolio of projects and programmes including new business opportunities means that I am continuously stretched. I am involved in so many amazing initiatives but there is never enough time to dedicate as much as I would like. The jump up to middle management was also a difficult transition. When I moved to managing other business and project managers, rather than the projects directly, meant that I had to relinquish control over the operational elements and the urge to know every detail.

I have overcome them by: Building a great team around me and trusting in their abilities to deliver. I have been very lucky to have very capable people within my team.

I think inclusion is important in CNWL/NHS because: Diverse teams bring so much strength and richness to what we deliver. It is important that we reflect on those who we support, but more than that, diversity of thoughts, cultures, beliefs, practice challenges the status quo and ensure that we evolve and strive for better.

I love working in CNWL because: It really is a caring and compassionate organisation. It has its challenges and there’s a lot it needs to change but at the heart of it, the Trust wants to make a difference to patients and the population it serves – I really believe that. I also feel that there are some truly exceptional people in CNWL and I am proud to be able to work with so many of them. I also love the variety of services it provides across so many different places.

I would like to be remembered in CNWL for: Making a positive difference to patient care.

In five years’ time I would like to: Continue to enjoy what I do and remain challenged and stimulated. Most importantly I want to add value and make a difference. I appreciate that these are rather vague goals but I like to remain open to what the future holds.

Wise words to the BME Staff Network: Trust your instincts; don’t give up and take on as many opportunities that come your way – even if you feel you can’t do it or that there is someone else who can do it better. Chances are that you are perfect for it. If it’s not scary or challenging then you are not aiming high enough. You might not have set out to become a manager (most don’t) but if you don’t take that opportunity how will you then make the biggest possible impact on the system. Also you don’t have to know everything – surround yourself with great people and trust in their expertise.
Dr Patricia Berko

**Started working at CNWL** in August 2008 as a Clinical Psychologist (Band 7). My first job was covering maternity leave in the Clinical Health Psychology Department at Hillingdon Hospital.

**Now works as** a Clinical Psychologist (Band 7), in the Health Psychology Service at Northwick Park Hospital, Harrow.

**I like my job because:**
My job involves working with people who either have a physical health problem which is causing them distress, say a new diagnosis of HIV. I also learn something new about health problems almost every day, which is really interesting. My handwriting is too neat, so I wasn’t allowed to train as a medical doctor!

**I have faced challenges including:**
I qualified in 2007 at the start of the global financial crisis which led to the age of austerity in public services.

**I have overcome them by:**
- Looking for senior positions whilst taking every opportunity to expand my experience and skills in my current role.
- Using my initiative to conduct an audit of the Pain Management Group that I am the lead clinician for, and writing a report for the Clinical Psychology Forum (a British Psychological Society publication). I did the majority of this work in the quiet period between Christmas and New Year, and it was fuelled by a mince pie or two!

**I think inclusion is important in CNWL/NHS because:**
The professionals working within CNWL need to reflect the diversity of the communities they are serving, seeing that others like them are part of a welcoming and accepting organisation encourages people to engage with mental and physical health services. Also, diversity within organisations creates an increased likelihood of diversity of ideas, leading to innovation, which can greatly benefit CNWL.

**I would like to be remembered in CNWL for:**
Not being afraid to speak my mind and for my sense of humour making the working environment slightly more pleasant.
Joshua Tedam

Started working at CNWL in 2016 as an ICT Strategic Enterprise Architect (Band 8d). Now works as (same role)

I like my job because:
I am able to make the lives of service users better through the use of digital technology.

I have faced challenges including: Lack of recognition and opportunity to exercise significant levels of autonomy and initiative consistent with my Agenda for Change (AFC) banding.

I have overcome them by: Helping to create awareness of the hazards of discrimination and of unconscious bias within the organisation. Helping the organisation to be more inclusive and valuing of a diverse workforce, respecting and valuing others.

I think inclusion is important in CNWL/NHS because:
- Helps to recognise and, appreciate and use the unique viewpoints and backgrounds of others who may be different
- Helps to avoid discrimination and promote respect for others regardless of our differences
- Create an environment of trust, respect and tolerance for others
- Helps to understand and serve our service users who come from a diverse background
- It helps us to operate within the law so that our reputation as a first class mental health service is further enhanced.

I love working in CNWL because:
- There is a diverse workforce all yearning to make our service users lives better
- Employees are enthusiastic in what they do
- Executive team is accessible and listen to all staff, take feedback well and act to change the organisation.

I would like to be remembered in CNWL for:
- Standing up for vulnerable staff and service users
- Using technology to change lives by improving quality
- Improving the service user experience
- Respectful and tolerant of others.

In five years’ time I would like to: To be a fervent servant of CNWL at the board level in whatever capacity the organisation requires my services.

Wise words to the BME Staff Network: Education is vital to developing tolerance and inclusion. We must accept others despite our differences, create a sense of belongingness for all, promote broader participation, worth and dignity.
Jackie Shaw

**Started working at CNWL:** in 2010 as a Service Director for the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) at Band 8D.

**Now works as:** Service Director for CAMHS and Eating Disorders Service (EDS) at Band 8D.

**I like my job because:** I like the need to work across systems and interfaces, I meet and work with Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), local authorities, NHS England (NHSE) commissioners as well as our service users and staff. Relationships are key in order to progress issues and build credibility and respect as a manager and a leader. It has been good learning more about eating disorders in the last 20 months.

**I have faced challenges including:** Externally constant change has been a challenge and a reality. In my 30 years in the NHS and even more so now! In the past six years in CNWL, I interviewed for any post following the Divisional structure.

CAMHS commissioners are constantly changing, so holding on to agree objectives and finding myself as the history folder is a challenge. Similar changes within NHSE specialist commissioning has meant building new relationships.

Internally to CNWL structures can be a challenge to navigate. There is an assumption that service directors have all been nurses – we haven’t! I have a clinical background which is Occupational Therapy. Not being afraid to name issues that get in the way of delivering good care to our service users. That might be funding, staffing or attitudes to each other.

**I have overcome them by:**
- Listening to people to understand where they are coming from
- Not being afraid to say ‘I don’t know’ or ‘I got that wrong’
- Knowing who in my Service/Trust is and working with them
- Using experiences and learning from elsewhere I have worked – other trusts and local authorities
- Keeping in mind why we are in the job, for example our service users.

I work hard myself and expect same from my team and colleagues. They know I have their back so they support and are loyal as a team. They work over and above and I could not do what I do without them.

**I think inclusion is important in CNWL/NHS because:** The NHS and CNWL deliver services for a wide range of people across not just North West London but in prisons where you will find an over representation of people from black and minority ethnic and other vulnerable groups such as those with mental health issues or a learning disability. Staff approaches need to represent all groups in order to get the best outcomes for our service users, that is both the direct face to face clinical roles as well as support roles at all levels. The organisation needs to be able to spot talent, and support to develop it through offering practical experiences that give the opportunity for staff to build confidence, so they have
clear positive examples to offer when looking for other jobs whether they be sideways or upward moves. This would give a wider scope of clinical and managerial leaders which makes the organisation stronger and more responsive to service user and commissioner needs leading to better quality care. The organisation needs to ‘grow its own’ leaders and managers.

All managers need diversity competency training in managing difficult conversations and confidence in HR structures so they are not afraid to have early conversations with any staff from any background without fear of being deemed racist. All managers need tools to do the job.

_**I love working in CNWL because:**_ My team, the clinicians in the CAMHS and EDS service line. The service users tell us that we are doing a good job but also are now and more confident in telling us when they are not satisfied.

_**I would like to be remembered in CNWL for:**_ Doing a good enough job, leaving behind a stable service and for treating people well.

_**In five years’ time I would like to:**_ I never plan too far ahead. My approach has been one of being open and taking advantage of opportunities that have come my way. I would never have been a manager if I had not taken that approach.

_**Wise words to the BME Staff Network:**_ The new approach to the Network is an opportunity to influence the Trust in its approach to diversity and inclusion. As well as the Trust Board endorsing the approach what are you personally going to do to exploit opportunities to raise your own profile? Developments do not only come through promotion in a job or a course. What else are you doing in your team or service that gives exposure to a different experience and your team to a different side/skill?
Julie Adams

Started working at CNWL: I have worked within CNWL for ten years, for eight years I was a Mental Health Act Locality Manager.

Now works as: Trust Mental Health Law Manager

I like my job because:
This role was exactly what I was looking for, providing me with a new challenge and opportunity. Working at Stephenson House, I gained great exposure to working at a more strategic level, preparing reports and attending senior meetings which brought to life my professional development that I'd experienced throughout my career to date.

I have faced challenges including: Working with Multidisciplinary Teams (MDT), advising clinicians, patients and carers on the Mental Health Act 1983.

I have overcome them by: Having a great grounding within this role, building great relationships and gaining great exposure to an array of stakeholders.

I think inclusion is important in CNWL/NHS because: It helped me identify that the time was right for me to set myself a new professional challenge and apply for a nine-month secondment as the Deputy Trust Mental Health Law Manager.

I love working in CNWL because:
Advising on the Mental Health Act and Mental Capacity Act Trust-wide and building internal relationships within the Trust with external colleagues and organisations such as Imperial and Chelsea and Westminster hospitals and neighbouring Trusts. I am finding the role really fulfilling working for the best for clinicians, service users and carers alike and it's giving me great experience as I complete my LLM in Mental Health Law.

I would like to be remembered in CNWL for:
Building great relationships and gaining great exposure to an array of stakeholders.

In five years’ time I would like to: complete my LLM in Mental Health Law.
Lisa Oluyinka

Started working at CNWL in 2014 as a Health Visitor (Band 6). Now works as a Health Visitor, Specialist Practice Teacher with a Queen’s Nurse Award (Band 7). In addition to this, I am also a professional mentor at City University.

I like my job because: It gives me the opportunity to make a positive impact in the lives of my clients by giving expert public health and health promotion advice.

I have faced challenges including: Short staffing, juggling family life and full time employment.

I have overcome them by:
- Staying focused
- Seeing the positive even in difficult challenging situations
- Being self-motivated and having a coach/mentor
- Surrounding myself with positive optimistic people who see the positive in everything

I think inclusion is important in CNWL/NHS because: CNWL having a value to promote inclusion has helped the Trust, staff satisfaction and patient engagement has improved. Staff retention is also on the increase, although it could be better especially for BME staffs; morale is low based on lack of support and self-motivation. CNWL can be a role model for other NHS organisations in the way they support their BME staffs into managerial positions.

I love working in CNWL because: CNWL gives opportunity to develop and explore other gifts that are beneficial to services. I actually started in CNWL in 2009 as a bank Band 2 support worker, I have worked in other NHS organisations but kept coming back to CNWL because of the values that CNWL stands for Compassion, Respect, Empowerment and Partnership. CNWL is also a place to grow professionally compared to other NHS organisations I have worked with.

I would like to be remembered in CNWL for: My passion and drive to aim higher even in the face of obstacles.

In five years’ time I would like to: To look back with a smile on my face for what I have been able to achieve for the lives I have touched positively. Complete my MSc in Public Health and/or Social Work and make an even bigger impact on a wider scale.

Wise words to the BME Staff Network: Do not allow the colour of your skin to limit you. Limitations only come if you allow it. Learn to draw strength from troubles, smile during distress and believe in yourself.

Adapted:
“Stop telling yourself what you can’t do and start embracing the fact that you’re capable of doing a lot more than you realise”

“Start thinking positively and see how fast your world changes.”
Anshu Rayan

Started working at CNWL in December 2000 as a specialist Addictions Pharmacist at Paddington Drug Treatment Centre.
Now works as an Associate Chief Pharmacist, Diggory Division.

**I like my job because:** My job involves managing medicines optimisation and pharmacy services across all sites within the Diggory division. This division has a range of different services which makes it very interesting as well as challenging. I am very lucky to work with a very kind and supportive line manager who I have learnt a lot from as well as the pharmacy staff under my management. They are incredibly dedicated, loyal and hardworking people. The greatest reward is knowing that as a team we contribute to safe and effective patient care.

**I have faced challenges including:** One of the biggest challenges has been to educate people about the role and benefits of pharmacy services. In particular what value they add to patient care and to the organisation, there is sometimes the misconception that pharmacists only dispense medication.

**I have overcame them by:** In my early years of working at the Trust I worked very closely with patients and the Multidisciplinary Team, and this enabled me to demonstrate the role of the pharmacist in medicines optimisation and the benefits it brings to improve safety and patient outcomes. For example, counselling patients, educating healthcare teams on medicines, advising clinicians on appropriate and cost effective treatment and monitoring all aspects of governance, such as carrying out audits.

**I think inclusion is important in CNWL/NHS because:** I feel strongly that patients, carers and staff must be treated in a manner which respects their religious beliefs, culture, gender or sexual orientation. Diversity enriches peoples care and improves standards of care. As a second generation Indian British woman, I feel passionate about providing opportunities to each and every staff member I manage. My ethos has always been to promote leadership and to facilitate the success of myself and others.

**I love working in CNWL because:** It is so diverse in the services we provide to patients and in the staff we employ. I feel this keeps me stimulated and enables me to learn something new every day.

**I would like to be remembered in CNWL for:** Maintaining a positive attitude, being sincere and loyal, and most of all not being afraid to raise concerns and be heard.

**In five years’ time I would like to:** Further my career and explore ways in which I can challenge myself.