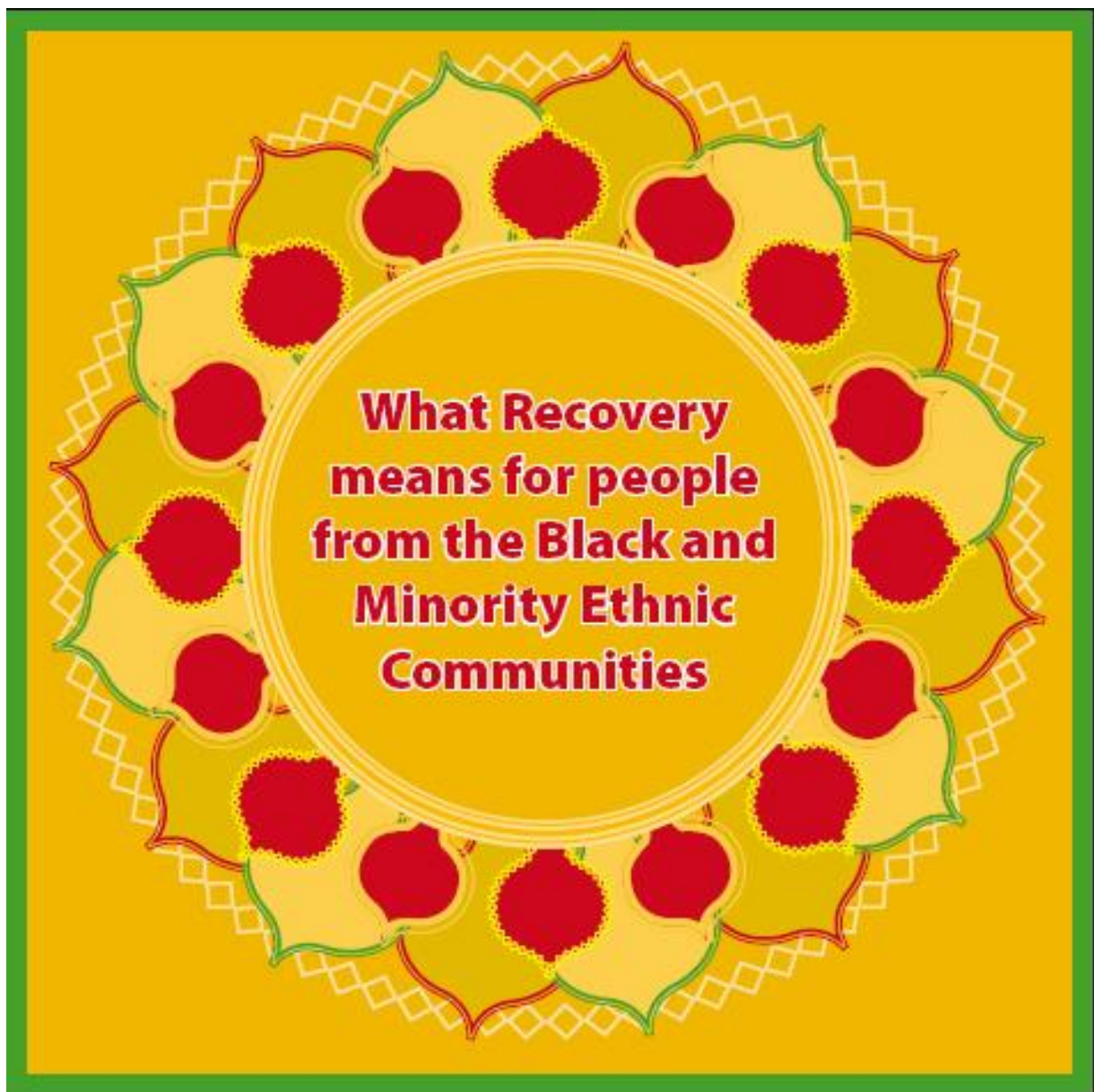


The launch of the report:

“What Recovery means for people from the Black and Minority Ethnic Communities”



Launching the report from the BME Recovery Group Glasgow project

Background



On the 29th August 2007, the Black and Minority Ethnic Recovery Group (BMERG) which is based in Glasgow launched their report. The BME recovery group brings together women in Glasgow who have experience of living with mental health problems – for themselves or for people whom they care about. This report was the culmination of the previous 6 months work of the group and an event that they held in 21st March 2007.

The initial project was a partnership between Glasgow Association for Mental Health, the National Resource Centre for Ethnic Minority Health (NRCEMH), the Scottish Recovery Network (SRN) and Outside the Box and the Women's Group.

This short report describes how we organised the launch and what happened on the day. We have prepared this note to encourage other people to consider having events like this as part of their work.

Style of the event

In deciding how launch their report, the group felt that they wanted a launch that reflected the mood of the group. They did not want to have a formal launch that might discourage people from the BME communities attending. Instead they wanted to have an event that was relaxed and gave people a chance to talk with each other with no pressure to participate.

To achieve this, the group decided on the tasks that members would take on to make this launch the day they wanted.

They decided the timing of the event should be over lunch time as that was the time when most women could be available.

They wanted to have a lunch that reflected the communities that they came from and they wanted to have taster sessions of alternative therapies available for people to try.

The venue that the group chose was one that was often used for community events. The reasoning behind this was that it was not only accessible but also easy to get to from other parts of the city.

The group had agreed that they wanted to have information stalls, so that anyone that attended could pick up information that they found interesting.

They particularly wanted information from the main funding organisations.

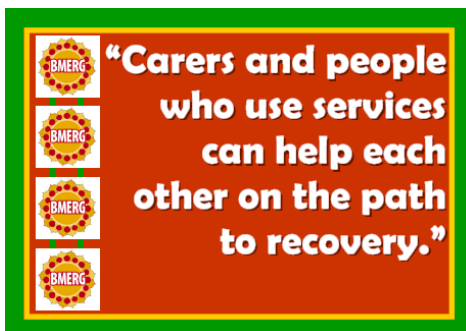
The group decided that they did not want long formal speeches, instead they wanted someone to just talk briefly about the report and a about the group.

It was more important to the group that people had a chance to relax and meet other people and talk about Recovery.

The wording and graphics on the invitation were produced in a way that made people feel that the event would be informal and welcoming. Having this type of invitation set the scene so people knew what to expect.

The invitation is attached as an Appendix

Organising the event



The work was shared out among several organisations and people:

- Outside the Box organised the venue and the invitation list
- GAMH organised the catering and all the alternative therapies
- The women from the group distributed invitations within their own communities

Electronic invitations were issued to a range of organisations and groups using NRCEMH, GAMH and Outside the Box distribution lists.

What happened on the day

People began gathering, then Pratima from GAMH and Margaret from Outside the Box introduced the report, and then everyone got back to talking and meeting each other. There was tea/coffee, water and juice throughout, so people could be comfortable, and we had lunch after the (very short) speeches.

Around 70 people attended the event and the women were delighted at the success. Almost all the people there were women – 2 men came along. The atmosphere was very informal and social. The hall was buzzing with conversation and most of the women there took advantage of the various alternative therapies on offer.

Tables with lots of information from NRCEMH, Scottish Recovery Network, GAMH and other organisations were set up so everyone had the opportunity to see what was happening in Glasgow around Mental Health and Recovery.

We put up the big graphic from the 21st March event, which described the first project and showed the sources of the report that was being launched, the event which was bringing more people together and the on-going work of the group.

A selection of Indian music cds were brought along by GAMH. The music was playing in the background after the short informal speeches and this gave the event a backdrop against which people could mingle and chat.

The Henna painting proved very successful with many of the woman taking advantage of the opportunity to have their hands or arms embellished by a very artful young woman who obviously enjoyed her work.

The demand for Reiki resulted in many women being unable to get on the list. Although they were disappointed, they understood that the time constraints and the size of audience led to the situation and said that they would have to be quicker in future.

“In future we’ll just have to get our names on the list before we do anything else”.

The Royston Stress Centre sent along a therapist, and she was very popular and busy also. The women who used the massage therapies enjoyed the opportunity to have a “quiet time” and chill out.

What people thought about the day

There was a Graffiti Wall where everyone could write up their thoughts from the day and this was very successful, as there were entries in different languages all of which carried the same themes.

People felt that there should be lots more of this type of event.

The feedback forms contained a consistent message that people really enjoyed the day and it would be good if more events were like this.

The Graffiti Wall was headed:

“YOUR IDEAS AND COMMENTS”

This is the transcript with the other language comments translated as shown.

“Great Day”

“I am delighted that so many folk came today”

“Very good event, everyone is happy and has had good networking – it just goes to show it doesn’t take much effort and time to make the local BME community feel welcomed, wanted and apart of the community. I’m sure it has made a great impact on people (NRCEMH)”

“We really liked it and we need more and more of days like this” (translated)

“We should have more days like this. We learnt a lot of new things and we hadn’t heard of these before” (translated)

“A nice day. A chance to meet lots of people”

“Programmes like this should be encouraged in future” (translated)

“Brilliant! Really enjoyed myself! More activities definitely in future in a fun and relaxing way”

“Had a great day. Everyone friendly. All the best.”

“There should be someone to see our pain
There should be someone to share our pain
Is it right to keep suffering in your life? “
(poem translated)

Another woman explained what the poem meant.

“This means that it is from this event you can see that for people like us there are also people out there to listen to us and to support us!” (Translated)



“It was very relaxing. – enjoyed very much with Reiki – should have more workshops for body relax which play the biggest part in Mental Health”

“It was really good to meet up with so many people”

“All the best for GAMH who is supporting such a cause – Best Wishes + DVAS”

“People were happy and enjoyed the sessions. Food was great. Thank you for all the information. We will volunteer!!”

“I am a little girl who came along with her mummy and enjoyed the day”

“Very enjoyable afternoon, great Reiki experience and got to meet a lot of people. Good luck and thanx!”

“It was really good and enjoyable with a delicious lunch, henna that was beautiful and Reiki that was relaxing and soothing. Many thanks for a lovely day!”

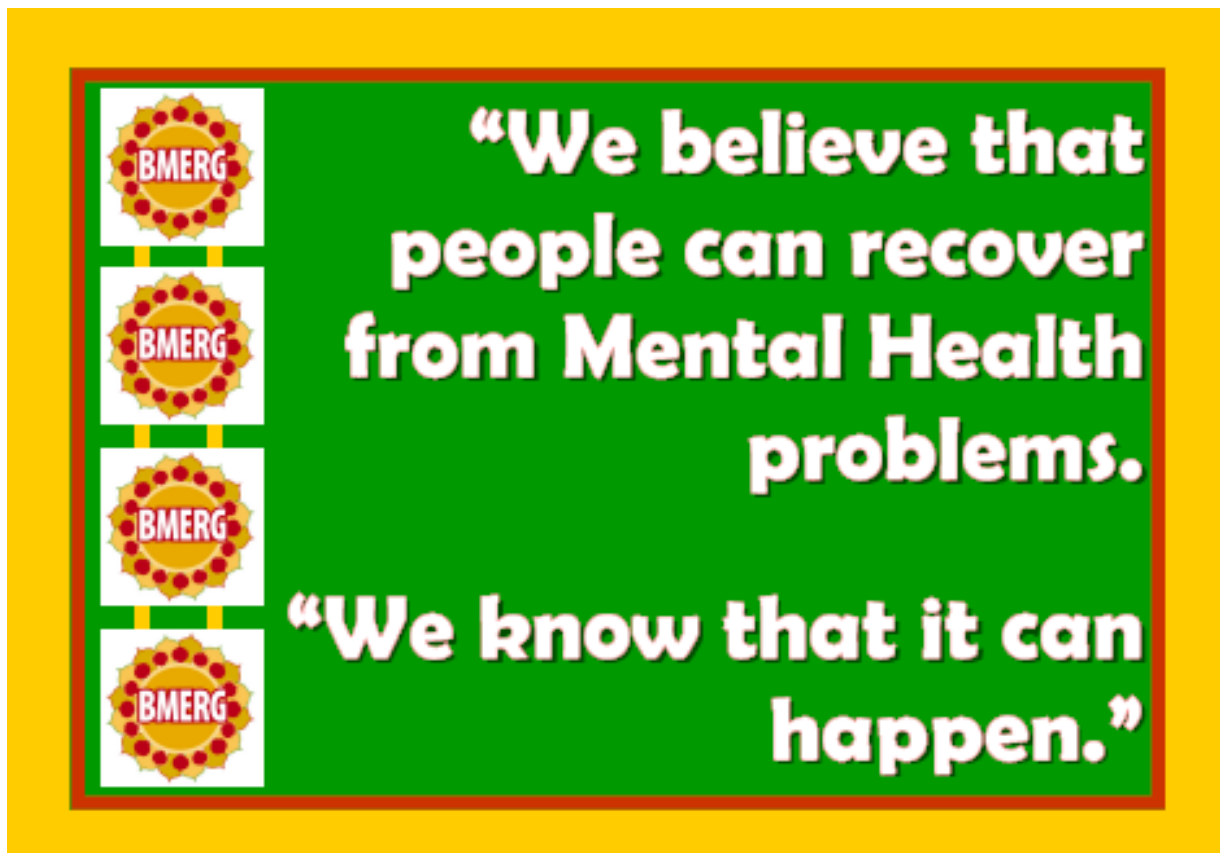
“Perhaps link up with local mental health resource centres would be beneficial – Elderpark Clinic Mental Health Team”

“It is a good idea to continue with the minority ethnic recovery group. If anything it is a means of providing much needed support”

“It was really great to have so much information to take away with us. Many thanks”

“There was a really good atmosphere”

“Didn’t think I’d manage to come but with the help and support of a GAMH worker I came and enjoyed it and (I’m) glad I came”



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Copies of this report are available from GAMH, Outside the Box and can be downloaded from Outside the Box website, www.otbds.org

