

# What works to support better access to mental health services (from primary care to inpatients) for minority groups to reduce inequalities? A rapid evidence summary.

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Judit Csontos, Deborah Edwards, Elizabeth Gillen, Juliet Hounsome, Meg Kiseleva, Mala Mann, Abubakar Sha'aban, Olivia Gallen, Mel McCaulay, Elizabeth Doe, Ruth Lewis, Alison Cooper, Adrian Edwards

## Background

It is estimated that one in four people will experience poor mental health throughout their lifetimes. However, **ethnic minority groups, refugees and asylum seekers** experience more **barriers accessing mental health services** and have **poorer mental health outcomes** than those from non-ethnic minority groups.

## Aim

To explore the literature on what works to **support better access to mental health services** for ethnic minority groups, refugees and asylum seekers **to reduce inequalities**.



## Methods

Our **Rapid Evidence Summaries (RES)** are designed to provide a **rapid response product**. They are based on a **limited search of key resources and the assessment of abstracts**.

**Priority** is given to studies representing robust evidence synthesis. **No quality appraisal or evidence synthesis are conducted, and the summary should be interpreted with caution.**

## Key Findings

While **evidence** is available on improving mental health care access and experience of these groups, **they often do not have an evaluative component**.

Most common recommendations to improve mental health care equity included:



- **language** and cultural adaptations;
- **education** of healthcare professionals;
- employing **ethnically diverse staff**;
- better **information provision**;
- **collaborative working** between different sectors;
- facilitating referral routes and **improving pathways**;
- **specialist and outreach services** for minority groups;
- **patient education** and skill development;
- involvement of communities.

## Evidence Gaps

There is **limited review evidence** regarding the **effectiveness of interventions** to improve access to mental healthcare across ethnic minority groups.

Furthermore, review evidence of interventions to support **refugees' and asylum seekers' access to primary healthcare or specialised clinics** (e.g. pregnancy and postpartum) **is available**, but the **findings related to mental health care cannot be extracted**.

## Next Steps

This report leads to a subsequent **focused rapid review**, to be published in Summer 2024, on the effectiveness of interventions to enhance equitable or overall access to mental health services by ethnic minority groups.

A link to the review protocol is available here <https://osf.io/xpfje/>