

# Anti-Racism for Health Equity Community of Practice

**Strengthening Anti-Racist Practice in Health  
and Care: Summary Report**

March 2025

# Overview

Systemic racism continues to drive health inequalities across the UK, with racialised communities facing persistent barriers to accessing care, poorer health outcomes, and lower levels of trust in health and care services. These disparities are rooted within institutional structures, decision-making processes, and workforce dynamics. Addressing them requires a long-term, system-wide commitment to anti-racist practice, critical self-reflection, and meaningful action to advance health equity.

In response, the **Anti-Racism for Health Equity Community of Practice (CoP)** was launched in **Greenwich in January 2024**. Unlike traditional training models, the CoP was intentionally designed as a **peer-led, ongoing learning space** where health and care practitioners, policymakers, and voluntary sector representatives could engage in open, honest dialogue, share experiences and best practices, and collaboratively explore the structural drivers of inequality.

To evaluate the impact and sustainability of the CoP, **Healthwatch Greenwich** was commissioned to carry out an independent evaluation. The evaluation was co-designed with CoP members to reflect their lived experiences, priorities, and goals for the CoP. Recognising that discussions about racism and equity can be emotionally complex, especially for those with direct experience of discrimination, a **trauma-informed approach** was used, ensuring that evaluation methods did not cause further harm or place undue emotional burden on participants.

A key feature of the evaluation was the use of **racial identity caucuses**, where members self-identified and joined one of two groups: one for **global majority members** and another for **non-global majority members**. Through this approach, the evaluation captured honest reflections and deeper insights into the impact of the CoP on members' understanding of anti-racist practice, their professional roles, and their contributions to broader efforts to dismantle systemic racism in health and care.

This report presents the findings of the evaluation, structured around **five areas**:

# Purpose of the CoP

## Findings:

- The CoP's goals were co-produced with members, ensuring their relevance and inclusivity.
- However, the broad and evolving nature of these goals created ambiguity around the CoP's core purpose.

## Recommendations:

- **Clarify the CoP's purpose:** Distinguish between goals for individual learning and system-level change.
- **Communicate goals consistently:** Regularly revisit objectives during sessions and in follow-up materials.
- **Create a CoP Introduction Pack:** Provide a clear, accessible overview of the mission, values, and outcomes for all members.

# Safe Space and Psychological Safety

## Findings:

- Members agreed that the CoP offered a **psychologically safe environment**, though definitions of "safety" varied.
- **Global majority members** emphasised the need for spaces free from the burden of educating others.
- **Non-global majority members** viewed safety as the opportunity for reflective learning.
- **Racial identity caucuses** were seen as essential for honest, identity-specific conversations.

## Recommendations:

- Acknowledge differing definitions of safety: Clearly communicate the CoP's approach.
- **Continue racial identity caucuses:** Provide these spaces alongside mixed-group sessions.
- **Reinforce ground rules:** Develop and agree upon discussion principles that support respectful and trauma-informed engagement.

# Membership, Sharing, and Collaboration

## Findings:

- The CoP was valued for enabling **cross-sector networking** and knowledge exchange.
- Attendance was inconsistent; many members only attended once, raising questions around **engagement and retention**.
- Members wanted **more action-oriented learning** and implementation opportunities.
- While collaboration flourished at the peer level, **engagement from senior leaders** remained limited.

## Recommendations

- **Introduce Action Planning sessions:** Support members in turning learning into practical strategies.
- **Expand peer-to-peer learning:** Use case studies to highlight real-world applications.
- **Engage senior leaders:** Involve decision-makers to strengthen the CoP's strategic influence.

# Sustaining Engagement

## Findings:

- Members appreciated **high-quality content** and **hybrid events** but found attendance difficult due to workload.
- A lack of access to past content limited continuity for continued learning.
- Members suggested that alignment with wider equity initiatives and a **clear programme roadmap** would help boost engagement and ownership.

## Recommendations:

- **Develop a Resource Hub:** Host recordings, toolkits, and summaries for continued learning.
- **Co-design inclusive programming:** Involve members and experts in shaping the agenda.
- **Publish programme in advance:** Share a 6-month schedule to help members plan attendance.
- **Formalise the joining process:** Offer a structured introduction for new members.
- **Map and align with existing initiatives:** Build connections with related anti-racism efforts to complement rather than duplicate work.

# Reflection and Impact: Moving from Learning to Action

## Findings:

- Many members reported **greater confidence** in applying anti-racist principles in their roles.
- Some shared learnings with teams, leading to **local-level impact**.

- Global majority members expressed the **emotional toll** of needing to repeatedly explain racism and its impact.
- There was a strong call for **structured pathways from reflection to implementation**.

### **Recommendations:**

- **Establish a governance model:** Provide strategic direction and accountability for CoP activities.
- **Create an Impact Framework:** Track how learning translates into individual and organisational change.
- **Encourage self-directed learning:** Offer curated resources to reduce dependence on global majority members as educators.

# Conclusion

The Anti-Racism for Health Equity Community of Practice has established itself as a vital space for reflection, learning, and collaboration across the local health and care system. While members value the CoP's inclusive, peer-led approach, the evaluation highlights the need for greater clarity of purpose, sustained engagement, and stronger pathways from learning to action. Moving forward, a renewed focus on strategic alignment, inclusive programming, and system-wide influence will be essential to realising the CoP's full potential in advancing anti-racist practice and driving meaningful health equity.

# healthwatch Greenwich

Gunnery Works  
9-11 Gunnery Terrace  
Woolwich Arsenal  
SE18 6SW

[www.healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk)  
t: 0208 301 8340  
e: [info@healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk)  
@HWGreenwich  
Facebook.com/Healthwatchgreenwich

Registered Charity Number 1209971  
Company registered in England Number 9891557



Committed  
to quality

