

## Factors affecting mental wellbeing of BAME staff

- Inherent impact of invisibility, isolation, marginalisation and racial discrimination / Heavy workloads / Disproportionate levels of scrutiny / Fewer opportunities to enhance promotion prospects (*Equality Challenge Unit, 2009 ~ now Advance HE*).
- Experiencing racial inequality and discrimination can be very stressful and have a negative effect on overall health and mental health (*Williams, 2018*).
- Racism in academia has major impact on BAME staff mental health (*Times Higher Education blog, 2020*).
- Mental health problems rarely spoken about in some communities (*Memon et al., 2016*).

### My University My Voice 2019 (response 58 %)

- 63 % positive about wellbeing at Greenwich.
- Mental & Physical Health among top 5 factors to improve on.

### BAME staff survey November 2019 (response 37 %)

My Department / School has a clear and transparent way of allocating workload.

58 % negative

Do you have a leadership role ?

51 % negative

Do you feel you have been treated unfairly or denied an opportunity for career progression because of your ethnicity ?

49 % negative

## Some proposed actions to boost morale and aspirations

### Support for mental wellbeing

- Organisational competence framework to better understand and address mental health issues among BAME staff.
- Pastoral and counselling services must be culturally appropriate.

### Inclusivity

- More ethnic minorities within leadership and managerial roles, as BAME staff consistently face barriers to accessing these roles.
- BAME staff on selection and promotion panels.
- Broader policies to support BAME staff (e.g. Race Equality Charter mark).
- Unconscious bias training for all staff.

### Feel-good factors

- Success stories of BAME staff should be highlighted more often.
- Intentional push to enhance careers of BAME staff towards visible senior positions.

### References

Equality Challenge Unit. The experience of black and minority ethnic staff working in higher education. Literature Review 2009.

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Williams, D.R. (2018). Stress and the mental health of populations of color: Advancing our understanding of race-related stressors. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 59(4), 466-485.