

# **Second-generation African-Caribbean men and psychosis: Developing frameworks for anti-discriminatory mental health research**

**Mark Wheeler**

**University of East London**

It is widely acknowledged that membership in certain migrant and ethnic minority groups in Western Europe carries with it an increased risk of being diagnosed with psychotic disorders (Cantor-Graae and Selton, 2005; Fearon and Morgan, 2006, Veling and Susser, 2011). In the United Kingdom for example, higher incidence rates of schizophrenia and mania are noted amongst first and second generation African-Caribbeans (Bhurga et al., 1997; Cantor-Graae, 2007; Fearon and Morgan, 2006; Pinto et al. 2008). People do overcome such diagnoses and the rebuilding, or reconstitution of a 'sense of self' has been identified as important in the 'recovery' process (e.g. Czuchta et al., 1998; Forchuck et al. 2003; Laithwaite and Gumley, 2007; Pettie and Triolo 1999). Yet, the majority of research informing mental health policy and clinical practice with regard to minorities of non-European descent and psychosis continues to adhere to third-person ontological and epistemological assumptions associated with the Western medical-model. There are a dearth of studies which examine the subjectivities of those said to be at the greatest risk of what the World Health Organization refers to as global 'priority conditions' (WHO, 2008). Aligning with the conference theme of 'Promoting human rights and the role of research', this presentation will discuss key directions for research exploring psychosis in the contexts of ethnicity and migration. It will draw upon thinking from the development of a current project examining how second-generation African-Caribbean men make sense of and reconcile the self-disturbance that can accompany psychosis, to outline strategies for constructing anti-discriminatory theoretical and methodological frameworks in mental health research. While ethnicity will be a central topic, attention will also be given to other aspects of diversity that can be overlooked. The presentation will conclude by articulating the ways in which European based social work practitioners and educators are ideally situated to strengthen the scientific bases of social work by generating practice relevant and practice informed knowledge while also drawing attention to covert forms of discrimination and bias inherent within current mental health research.

Key Words: Mental Health, Anti-discriminatory research, African-Caribbean, Social Work