



PRESS RELEASE

National Black Cardiovascular Health Advisory Group

The first National Black Cardiovascular Health Advisory Group has been created to tackle the healthcare inequalities experienced by Black African and Black Caribbean people in relation to the prevention of cardiovascular disease.

NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSEI) and the Caribbean & African Health Network (CAHN) will be collaborating on this pioneering life changing initiative.

Heart and circulatory disease, also known as cardiovascular disease or CVD, causes a quarter of all deaths in the UK and the NHS Long Term Plan has identified CVD as the single biggest area where the NHS can save lives over the next 10 years. Spotting risk factors early reduces the chance of developing potentially life-threatening conditions including heart attacks, stroke, and dementia.

Millions of people are unaware that they are living with serious but treatable conditions such as atrial fibrillation, high blood pressure and high cholesterol. These are known as the A-B-C conditions, which are the major causes of CVD. Black African and Black Caribbean individuals experience significant inequalities across these A-B-C conditions. For example, a Black person with hypertension (high blood pressure) is less likely to be receiving treatment to control their blood pressure than those from other ethnic groups.

The advisory group will be chaired by Dr Faye Bruce (Chair, CAHN), with secretariat support provided by Dr Tom Gardiner (National Medical Director's Clinical Fellow, NHSEI). The group includes a broad base of stakeholders including clinicians, Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise (VCSE) partners, faith leaders, patient representatives, public health colleagues and policymakers.

Faye Bruce, Chair of CAHN and the National Black Cardiovascular Health Advisory Group said: "I am delighted to be chairing the first National Black Cardiovascular Health Advisory Group; to start our focus on CVD in the Black community is very much welcomed as CVD is indeed emblematic of a health inequality. I am looking forward to working with an incredible team of highly esteemed individuals to identify the actions to be implemented which will be centred around the voices of our Black users with lived experiences."

Pastor Wellington Olayomi Obadimeji said: "It is a real pleasure to be a faith leader and patient representative on the Advisory Group. I have been living with CVD for over 20yrs; it has been a hard journey. I believe the work of the Advisory Group will benefit many Black Caribbean and African people who are struggling with CVD by providing the right health education and support they need."

The efforts of this group are directed towards advising, supporting and driving CVD prevention for members of Black African and Black Caribbean communities. There will be an emphasis on the identification of the different issues driving health inequalities in CVD prevention, examples of best practices across the country, and where applicable, internationally.

Dr Bola Owolabi, Director – Healthcare Inequalities Improvement at NHS England and NHS Improvement said: “Addressing inequalities in cardiovascular disease is one of the key areas of focus identified in the NHS’ Core20PLUS5 approach to narrowing the health inequalities gap.

“This advisory group, convened by CAHN in partnership with the NHS, brings together the energy and expertise that will be invaluable as we seek to deliver our vision of exceptional quality healthcare for all, ensuring equitable access, excellent experience and optimal outcomes.”

Dr Shahed Ahmad, NHS National Clinical Director for Cardiovascular Disease Prevention said: “We saw during the NHS Covid-19 vaccination rollout there is much to be learnt from working with community groups and the voluntary sector to tackle health inequalities.

“As with COVID, we know CVD differentially impacts on ethnic minority communities and deprived communities, however by working in partnership with community leaders we can target our interventions and save lives.”

#CVDPrevention #CVDAwareness

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CAHN Social Handles

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CAHN is a Black-led organisation set up to address the wider social determinants to reduce health inequalities for people of Caribbean & African in Greater Manchester and beyond. We work with the Black community and cross-sector organisations to build community resilience, relationships, and a social movement to reduce health inequalities.

CAHN’s vision is to eradicate health disparities within a generation by building community resilience and a social movement. Our mission is to lead strategic engagement to change the unhelpful practices of service providers, commissioners, and member organisations to influence policy and practice to ensure racial and social justice is a focus of health and other sectors service reform.