Welcome

Welcome to the first newsletter for the NIHR School for Public Health Research funded project 'Integrating attention to ethnicity and migration within applied public health and health inequalities research'. We are making solid progress on the various activities and are keen to get your feedback. This means you! Please see the ‘Can you help?’ headings below and email us at s.salway@sheffield.ac.uk or fill in the online form by clicking here

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RECAP: WHAT IS THE RESEARCH ABOUT?

Typically, UK public health intervention and health inequalities research pays little attention to race/ethnicity and migration. Yet the English population continues to become more diverse. This project aims to begin to redress this marginalisation and increase attention to the public health needs of minority ethnic and migrant populations.

A range of activities are underway, including: (i) assessing current data availability and opportunities; (ii) mapping current understanding of health needs/inequalities linked to migration status and ethnic identity; (iii) identifying capacity development needs among public health researchers/practitioners; and (iv) building partnerships across research, policy/practice and the public.

Data Workshop in June

One of the main tasks of the project is to map out available data that can be used to research ethnicity, migration and health inequalities. The UK has very rich and high-quality data sources that are often underused. In addition, there are good opportunities to link datasets, such as linking survey data with school registers or healthcare records.

We are currently searching for datasets with untapped potential for analysing ethnicity and migration-related health inequalities. These might be survey data, administrative data, or any other type, and be at local or national level. The work involves recording the main properties of the datasets of interest to researchers, such as opportunities for data linkage, exemplar studies, and the included measures of ethnicity, migration and health. This will feed into a workshop in June with the aim of increasing awareness of, and ultimately the use of, available data and identifying key data gaps to be filled.
Can you help? If you are aware of any datasets that might be good candidates for us to include, please let us know. We currently have documented: Understanding Society, Born in Bradford, Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey, Patient Satisfaction Surveys, Determinants of Adolescent Social Well-being and Health (DASH), Sheffield’s Every Child Matters Annual Survey, and the UK Biobank.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and interviews
For those of you who may be less familiar with them, JSNAs aim to assess the health and wellbeing needs of the local population (at local authority level) using all available data and information. They are therefore key public health policy documents that ideally should pay attention to the diversity of the health needs according to key axes of inequality. As part of the project we are currently reviewing a sample of these documents (around 30 in total) to see whether this is actually the case. Preliminary findings show huge variation in the extent to which JSNAs acknowledge ethnic/migrant diversity.

Linked to this task, we are also interviewing public health professionals (around 10 so far) who have insight into how JSNAs do better or worse (or otherwise their knowledge of the national picture), and how we can improve the way in which public health practice acknowledges diversity.

Can you help? Do you know of any areas where the JSNA and/or related needs assessment exercises have done a particularly good job of documenting health needs by ethnicity or migrant status?

**EQUAL NORTH ACTIVITIES**
An Equal North networking meeting on Communities and Neighbourhoods was held in Sheffield in November. There were around 100 attendees including public health professionals, researchers, and members of the public. We were able to hold two professional stakeholder discussions for our project at this event.

**Existing funded research**
Another activity we are currently undertaking involves searching funders’ databases for health-related projects that are giving some attention to ethnicity and/or migration. We are keen to document both the quantity and the quality of current and recent research in the area. Currently the plan is to focus on the ESRC, NIHR and MRC, and on applied public health research rather than basic science. This work is currently in the early stages, so we would value any ideas you might have about this task.

Can you help? Are you aware of any significant pieces of work that are ongoing, particularly any that are generating new datasets that might lend themselves to further analysis?

**EAST OF ENGLAND REGIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH ACADEMIC FORUM MEETING**
A networking meeting on Migration and Ethnicity was held in Cambridge in December. Around 50 public health professionals, researchers, and students attended a morning of presentations from academic and professional speakers. Topics included: global migration and implications for practice; what we can learn from data; local joint working in Gypsy, Roma, Traveller communities, co-produced approaches to addressing patient ‘churn’ in migrant populations.

Presentations from the day are available via the project website.

**Finally**
Thank you for reading about our project. We will be in touch with many of you in relation to the specific activities listed above if you have indicated interest. Otherwise, please get in touch if you would like to be further involved with any aspect or you have any ideas to contribute.

With very best wishes

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