



VALUING OUR WORKFORCE: PROVIDING PSYCHOSOCIAL MENTORING SUPPORT TO ZIMBABWEAN SOCIAL WORK PRACTITIONERS IN SEFTON

Valuing Our Workforce (VOW) is an independent online psychosocial mentoring resource working to improve the experiences of Black, Asian, and 'ethnic minority' social work practitioners across the UK. VOW provides a place to *think things through* and offers 1:1 mentoring support in the workplace as part of CPD, paid for by social care organisations committed to challenging inequitable practice.

www.valuingourworkforce.co.uk

This proposal outlines the benefits of psychosocial mentoring support for Zimbabwean social work practitioners in Sefton.

I have recommended a six-month support plan for practitioners, their supervisors, and managers. The plan will enhance practitioner resilience and support managers to recognise what 'gets in the way' and how to effectively support their supervisees when experiencing inequitable practice and behaviour.

VALUING OUR WORKFORCE (VOW)

What is VOW?

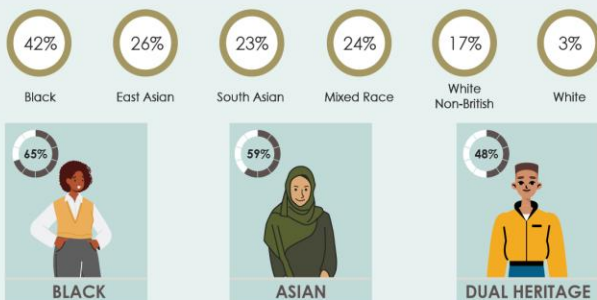
VOW offers independent online 1:1 psychosocial mentoring support to Black, Asian, and 'ethnic minority' social work practitioners navigating dilemmas and challenges in the workplace. VOW is a CPD resource funded by social care organisations dedicated to challenging inequitable practice

Who is VOW?

Jac Shelley is the founder of VOW and has over 25 years' experience working as a social worker and registered systemic and family psychotherapist



PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE EXPERIENCING RACISM AT WORK



Reported that experiences of racism at work impacted their mental health and wellbeing to a very large, large, or moderate extent

Mental Health and Race at Work Research Report (2021). City Mental Health Alliance UK

Why VOW?



BENEFITS OF PSYCHOSOCIAL MENTORING

73% reported an increase in personal confidence

The findings of a mentoring project for Black, and 'ethnic minority' staff members in Further and Higher Education in Scotland

64% reported increased confidence in their job

54% felt that participation had helped them develop professionally

PSYCHOSOCIAL MENTORING IS ASSOCIATED WITH INCREASED JOB INVOLVEMENT AND DECREASED STAFF TURNOVER

Factors and outcomes associated with mentoring among healthcare professionals – Journal of Vocational Behaviour (1998) Vol 52: 58 - 72

VOW - HELPING PRACTITIONERS MOVE FORWARD CONFIDENTLY BY

MODELLING

Psychological Development

SCAFFOLDING
VALIDATING COMPETENCE



Psychosocial mentoring is the process of enabling and strengthening resilience and helping practitioners recover

MIRRORING

Professional Development

STRATEGY
DEVELOPING TOOLS



from and/or actively respond to episodes of inequitable practice, which can have a potentially damaging long-term impact

MENTORING

Career Development

STORIES OF SUCCESS
INCREASED CONFIDENCE



VOW provides a confidential and safe environment where practitioners can think things through and explore professional dilemmas, challenges, and barriers to progression

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The PRACTISING@RACE framework, The Metro Map, and the 3S's® (Scaffolding, Strategy, Stories of Success) are the tools effectively used by VOW to support practitioners in creating realistic strategies and developing new stories that will help them move forward confidently

WHAT IS PSYCHOSOCIAL MENTORING?

A psychosocial mentoring approach will strengthen resilience and help practitioners recover from and respond to inequitable practice by exploring their thinking and responses to dilemmas and challenges.

A psychosocial approach will benefit Zimbabwean social work practitioners by providing them with confidential spaces to *think things through*.

VOW – MENTORING TOOL & CONVERSATIONS

VOW uses three different tools to strengthen resilience:

The **PRACTISINGRACE** framework

The PRACTISINGRACE framework was created in response to deficit stereotypes regarding the competency of Black, Asian, and 'ethnic minority' social work practitioners. It is a reflexive tool that enables practitioners to think about dilemmas or challenges, the positions people adopt and why, creating opportunities for new narratives to emerge.

All in a Day's Work – The Metro Map

The Metro Map is a visual representation of the experiences of Black, Asian, and 'ethnic minority' social work practitioners along their social work journey. It aims to serve multiple purposes such as validating practitioner experiences, providing different entry points into difficult conversations exploring themes arising from inequitable practice, and serving as an aide-memoire and Call to Action. The map encourages audiences to reflect on their unconscious biases, how they affect their interactions, and to what extent they may influence the practitioner's journey in unhelpful ways.

The 3S's© tool -Scaffolding, Strategies, Stories of Success

- Scaffolding refers to the emotional and practical resources available to practitioners, which are essential for success, and will be nurtured.
- The strategy is based on planning and scripting and is the *how-to* and *what-to do next* in response to professional dilemmas and challenges.
- Conversations will focus on past and present Stories of Success to strengthen resilience and increase confidence.

Migrating to a new country and assimilating professionally and culturally is challenging at the best of times. Sadly, Zimbabwean social work practitioners in Sefton will also encounter inequitable practice and behaviour.

If the professional support system does not know how to respond, this will increase their disadvantage and negatively affect their well-being. VOW will provide practitioners with an opportunity to explore identity, expectations, rights, duties, and responsibilities and equip them with the necessary tools.

A SIX-MONTH PLAN – INDIVIDUAL MENTORING SESSIONS & MONTHLY GROUP SUPPORT

I will provide each social work practitioner with three one-hour online sessions that occur weekly or fortnightly during working hours.

I will offer an in-person group support session called FACT, which stands for Fancy a Cuppa Tea. The FACT is an opportunity for practitioners to come together for one-half day from 09.30 a.m. – 12.30 p.m.* to think things through and share stories of scaffolding, resilience, and success.

After that, the FACT will be an ongoing conversation that will occur once a month for the next six months and will be online or in-person for 1 hour and 30 minutes.

I will divide the practitioners into two groups, and each group session will take place between 10.00 a.m. – 11.30 a.m. and 12.00 p.m. – 1.30 p.m.*

I will review the efficacy of mentoring and the group sessions via an Evaluation Form midway and at the end of the 6-month process.

SUPPORT FOR SUPERVISORS & MANAGERS

I will invite supervisors and managers supervising Zimbabwean social work practitioners to a FACT.

There will be two FACT meetings arranged at the beginning and the end of the six-month support period.

I will arrange a FACT meeting from 10:00 a.m. to

“It is no surprise that leadership and culture play a key role in creating obstacles while also providing the solutions that enable BME individuals’ success. We have also found that mentoring and sponsorship have consistently delivered results and it is incumbent upon all management to play their part in supporting people from all backgrounds.”

The McGregor-Smith Review (2017)

12:00 p.m.** or 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

I have created a Practice Tool for Research in Practice called Exploring Unconscious Bias & Racial Microaggression in the Workplace. However, this tool may need adapting from its current form, as it may be challenging to perceive that dilemmas exist within the system.

Therefore, I will devise a new tool that uses the PRACTISINGRACE framework, specifically focusing on the Metro Map. This new tool will explore the practitioner's journey and how supervisors and managers provide support and containment to supervisees experiencing inequitable practice.

PRICING

1-hour online sessions once a week for three weeks

Weekly sessions allow for intensive mentoring support using the PRACTISINGRACE framework, the Metro Map, and 3S’ s© tool to devise and implement strategies

£excl. Vat x 3 one-hour sessions

In-person group sessions (2 hours or 3 hours)

£.....* excl. VAT.

£.....** excl. VAT.