

KMPT and FNC Event Summary: 22nd February 2024



On the 22nd February 2024, KMPT were delighted to co-host with FNC an event called 'The Art of Mental Health'. The aim of the event was to enable the Gurkha and Nepalese community of Folkestone to begin to have their voices heard within Kent and Medway health and social care, particularly mental

health.

Accessing appropriate mental health support for the Gurkha and Nepalese community can be incredibly challenging and many NHS frontline staff are not aware of the specific needs of this community. For instance, having a general Nepalese translator within a medical setting is often not enough because there are over 123 languages spoken within Nepal and the translator must be from the same tribe as the person who is needing assistance.

In collaboration with the FNC manager, the exceptional Maha Rai, an art-based event was created to help the Folkestone Nepalese Community articulate the challenges they face when trying to access appropriate health care. Maha was a delight to partner with from the beginning and advised the Partnerships and Engagement Team (Holly Till, Kirsty McInnes, and Nat Farley) about the best day and time to host the event. The KMPT staff were amazed by the number of attendees at the event and how engaged they were with us especially as mental health is a relatively new concept within the Gurkha and Nepalese community.

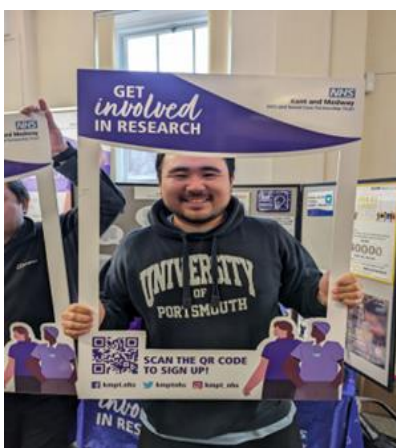
The Partnership and Engagement Team and our fantastic colleague, Clinical Research Practitioner, Jamie Harper were made to feel incredibly welcome by the FNC and though the day was grey and raining the FNC turnout was significant. From the minute we started speaking, and the amazing translating from Lin and Maha, meant that we could interact and laugh with one another whilst also addressing some of the most pressing issues for the FNC in relation to mental health services and research.

The art-based part of the event was supported by KMPT but led by members of the FNC and the brilliant staff.

Members were encouraged to be creative and just draw whatever came to mind about mental health support within Kent and Medway. FNC members created images which illustrated the following concerns within the



community: loneliness, Dementia, a lack of appropriate translators, being misunderstood and ignored, and sense of identity.



The FNC members created images that really illustrated how they feel about mental health research and services and helped KMPT staff appreciate the challenges members of the Gurkha and Nepalese community face within health and social care.

Spending the morning at the FNC not only educated KMPT about the need for greater awareness of mental health within the Gurkha and Nepalese community, but also what KMPT can do to help affect positive changes within mental health research and services to the benefit of the community.

It was a fantastic time, and we cannot thank FNC enough for their generosity, time, and enthusiasm. KMPT are delighted that we now have a Community Partnership Agreement

with FNC which means that we will co-produce community projects and ensure the Gurkha and Nepalese community have an active voice that is heard within mental health research.

KMPT are looking forward to planning our first community project and feel so privileged to support and partner with the wonderful Folkestone Nepalese Community Centre.



Thank you FNC! We are proud to be your Community Partner 😊