

Dr Asma Shahin Khan

Key Lessons from Developing the 'Understanding Mental Health in Muslim Communities' Online Course

I will present insights collected during the development of the online course, 'Understanding Mental Health in Muslim Communities', at the Centre for the Study of Islam in the UK, Cardiff University. Drawing on analysis of qualitative data collected during interviews with experts in mental health research and practice, I identify three themes for future research and practice on the topic of British Muslim experiences of mental health problems.

The first of these themes is the effectiveness of drawing on Islamic resources and knowledge in the provision of mental health support for British Muslims. We found that some Muslim practitioners, working in private practice and in mainstream healthcare settings, adopt this practice and have suggestions for how non-Muslim practitioners can fully consider and incorporate the religiosity of Muslim clients in the assessment and treatment of mental health problems.

Secondly, I will consider evidence around how mental health support is accessed in community settings through religious leadership and third-sector organisations, and the value of localised and religiously informed mental health support. I will make suggestions for how this work in communities can be better supported by mainstream public health organisations.

Finally, I will outline some of the challenges and barriers British Muslims experience when accessing mental health support and consider ways in which some of the negative stereotypes of mental health in British Muslim communities, and of British Muslim communities in mental healthcare research and support, might be challenged and addressed.



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Dr Asma Shahin Khan is Research Associate in British Muslim Studies at the Centre for the Study of Islam in the UK, Cardiff University. Asma is a mixed methods (QUANT-QUAL) researcher with close to twenty years of experience in conducting research with British Muslim communities. Her research interests include labour market inequalities, migration, and mental health. Asma specialises in co-produced research with third sector organisations and people with lived experience and conducts research that helps people to live healthy, happy and productive lives.