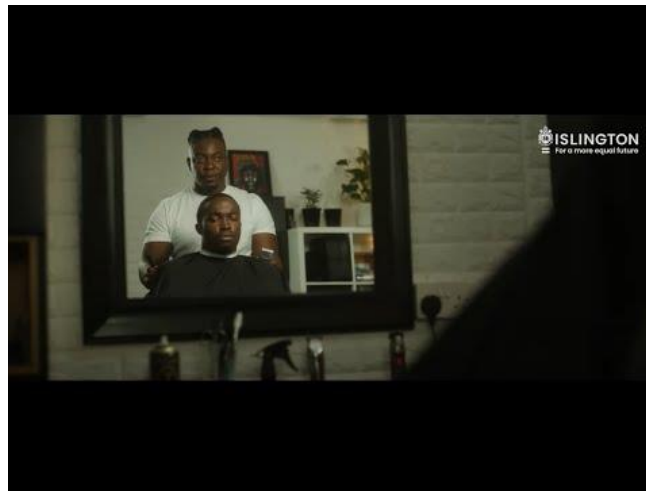


## Islington Systems Change Champions Blog Post by Dr Rini Paul

Well done Islington Council who organised and with The Staff College delivered [Cultural Competency & Let's Talk About Race](#) training across multiple local organisations and sectors from health, social care, council, and the police. This work has come from focus groups with young black men and teens listening to how to best support their mental health and understand and tackle the inequalities in health and systems through a cultural competency-based approach. They have trained [barbers to discuss mental health](#), one of our GP Fellows will be supporting this and have full time counsellors in four secondary schools. You can read more about this initiative and sign up to the training [here](#). This **training programme is aimed at ALL front-line practitioners, team managers and system leaders** across Islington Council and the NHS.



Another aim was to have 50 systems champions across our borough and organisations. As one of their systems change champions, I have had two further days of training on leadership and systems change theory, practical exercises to clarify and reinforce our values, dreams and next steps.

I was reflecting on the fact that we had nearly 30 systems champions in a room, mostly from social care and the local council, some CAMHS colleagues and sadly **only one policeman and one GP** and **mostly people from global majority backgrounds**. However, despite underrepresentation in certain groups, this is an important and brilliant initiative and start and I am grateful for the six ongoing action sets and inspiring, likeminded people I met in the room and to have safe and constructive spaces to think through some of the challenges of implementing change in this area. I would encourage more people to join, this should be a **priority for us all**. We know from [the NHS Pan London Workforce Race Equality Standard \(WRES\) Survey Findings in Primary Care](#) that racism is the main cause of discrimination for staff too and this is something we cannot tackle alone – it truly requires a systems approach.

1. [Cultural Competency Vs Cultural Humility](#) YouTube Video 2.5 mins
2. 'I nearly took my life': Islington council training black barbers in mental health issues Guardian Article by Aina J Khan, 2022
3. [Young Black Men and Mental Health Programme](#) – Islington Council
4. Podcast on [Racial Discrimination in Primary Care](#) with the WRES Team and Munir Adams