

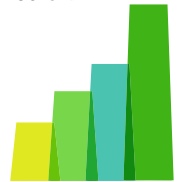
MUSLIM MENTAL HEALTH FACT SHEET

DETERMINANTS

Muslim communities in Britain are among the fastest growing religious groups in the UK. Research suggests that Muslims face some of the greatest mental health inequalities, yet too many encounter significant barriers to support. This fact sheet has been developed in partnership with the Woolf Institute and brings together the latest available evidence on Muslim mental health across the life course.

MENTAL HEALTH PREVALENCE

Overall, Muslims are **more likely than the general population** to be exposed to a range of social and economic risk factors and determinants for poor mental health.



An estimated **1 in 4 adults** in the general population report a common mental health problem, such as anxiety and depression, each year (McManus *et al.*, 2016).

1 in 6 children and young people also report a common mental health problem (NHS Digital, 2022).

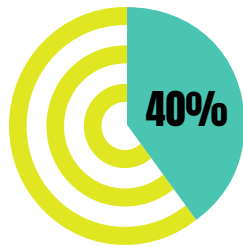
MUSLIM POPULATION

There are **3.9 million Muslims** in England and Wales, equating to **6.5% of the population**, up from 4.9% in 2011 (ONS, 2022).



INCOME INEQUALITY AND POVERTY

40% of the Muslim population in England live in the **most deprived local areas** (Muslim Council of Britain, 2022).



In 2018, Muslims had the **lowest median reported hourly earnings** out of all religious identities (ONS, 2023b).



£9.63

compared to average

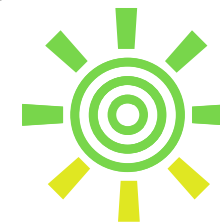
hourly earnings of

£19.22

REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

Refugees and asylum seekers are more likely to experience poor mental health (including depression, PTSD and other anxiety disorders) than the general population (Mental Health Foundation, 2016).

- ⊙ In 2021, the **top five** most common countries of origin of people who applied for asylum in the UK were Muslim majority nations (Migration Observatory, 2022).
- ⊙ While not all refugees from these countries will identify as Muslim, it is likely that a significant percentage of refugees to the UK identify as Muslim.



EMPLOYMENT

People identified as Muslim report the lowest percentage of people aged 16 to 64 years who are in employment, **51.4%**, compared with 70.9% of the overall population (Census 2021).

Children from the **poorest 20% of households** are **four times** as likely



to have serious mental health difficulties by the age of 11 as those from the **wealthiest 20%** (Morrison Gutman *et al.*, 2015).

EDUCATION

A quarter (25.3%) of Muslims do not hold formal qualifications. This compares to 18.2% of the overall population (ONS, 2023).

HOUSING

Nearly **a third** of Muslims (32.7%) live in **overcrowded homes**, compared to 8.4% of the general population (Census 2021).



MUSLIM MENTAL HEALTH FACT SHEET

ACCESS, EXPERIENCE & OUTCOMES

Data suggests that only



people who experience a mental health problem get access to support (NHS Digital, 2016).

Muslim communities face significant delays, often made worse due to



STIGMA

DISCRIMINATION

LACK OF FAITH SENSITIVE SUPPORT



There is currently a lack of data on the mental health of different faith groups, including Muslims. There is a need for further data collection and research in this area to improve our understanding and establish a full picture.

People from racialised communities are much more likely to be detained under the Mental Health Act than white people (NHS Digital, 2023).

It is likely that Muslims are also overrepresented, but data is not currently collected or disaggregated according to faith groups.

A survey carried out by the Muslim Youth Helpline of over 1,000 British Muslims aged 16-30 found that

only 13%



of respondents with mental health needs saw a counsellor (Hekmoun, 2019).

Nearly half (48%) said they would turn to their friends



and nearly a third (32%) said they would seek support from their family.



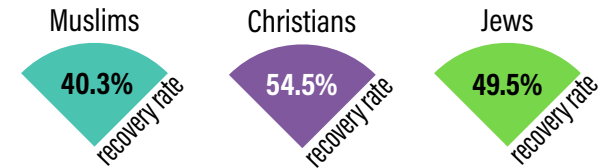
Of the 45,999 Muslims referred to NHS Talking Therapies in England during 2021-2022 only 2.6% finished their course of treatment.

This compares to 18.4% of Christian patients and 38.9% of those reporting no religion (NHS Digital, 2022).

This raises questions as to why Muslims are unlikely to finish treatment.



When accessing NHS Talking Therapies, Muslims experience a lower recovery rate compared with Christians and Jews (Alharbi *et al.*, 2021).



A survey of Muslims by the Lantern Initiative found that

1 in 5 people

felt judged or dismissed as a Muslim by structured, formal counselling.

However, respondents overall felt mainstream counselling did help in some capacity.

84% of respondents expressed the desire for faith informed counselling services (Lantern Initiative, 2021).

The Woolf Institute is an interfaith charity with strong ties to the University of Cambridge. Established 25 years ago, it delivers research, public engagement, teaching and policy work on the relations between Christian, Jewish and Muslim communities and the relationships between each and wider society. Our Faith in Mental Health research and public education project studies mental health from an interfaith perspective. The project aims to better understand issues concerning mental health and faith communities with a particular focus on Muslim communities in England and Wales.

www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/mental-health-project



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