



Caribbean & African Mental Health Unit CIC

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



DECEMBER 2025- ISSUE 1

Fikawelie Caribbean and African Mental Health Summer to Winter Update



We hope you are well. It has been a very full and positive summer for Fikawelie as we continue supporting Black Caribbean, African South Asian and the wider communities across Greater Manchester. Here is a look at what we have been doing.

Words of Wellness

Over the summer, we delivered our Words of Wellness sessions, an inviting space shaped by creative expression, storytelling, poetry, and shared lived experience. Drawing inspiration from Caribbean and African traditions, the programme brought people together to explore confidence, emotional wellbeing, and personal identity through writing and guided activities.

For many participants, Words of Wellness became a familiar and supportive environment where they could speak openly and be heard. Together, we explored themes of resilience, heritage, healing, and community connection. Each session carried its own energy, shaped by the diverse stories, strengths, and experiences people brought into the room. We are incredibly proud of everyone who took part and of the growth we witnessed across the 12 weeks. Watching participants rediscover their voice, celebrate who they are, and build confidence in their own stories truly reflects the heart of Fikawelie's mission.

Community Fairs and Local Events

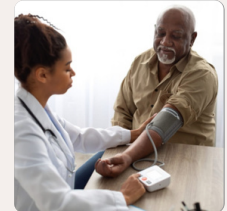
We attended several community fairs and well-being events across Greater Manchester. Attending these events allows us to raise awareness by speaking to residents and offering on-the-spot advice about emotional health and the support available through the [Cultural Wellbeing Programme](#).

Meeting people face to face remains one of the most powerful ways for us to break down stigma and increase trust among health professionals and diverse communities.

L-R Dr Gail Coleman Clinical Psychologist, Barry Schilling, Stockport ME Network Paula King our, CEO Founder and Mental Health Nurse with Afzal Khan CBE MP



Health, emotional and physical health checks



This summer, we expanded our support by offering physical health checks to individuals in our community. At the heart of our work is a commitment to holistic health, recognising that well-being goes beyond just physical care. For many, accessing healthcare can be challenging due to cultural barriers, mistrust, or past negative experiences. By providing health checks in safe, familiar, community-based settings, we empower individuals to take charge of their health, deepen their understanding of their bodies, and better navigate their medications and overall well-being.

These checks also bring significant benefits to local GP practices and primary care teams. By building trust within communities particularly among Caribbean and African populations who may have faced barriers in the past we encourage earlier engagement with health services. This proactive approach leads to fewer missed appointments, better medication management, and enables GPs to identify and address health issues before they escalate.

When community support and primary care collaborate, the result is stronger, healthier, and more confident individuals who feel seen, heard, and valued.

Mental Health Support

Paula recently met with Labour politician Navendu Mishra to discuss the ongoing inequalities in mental health support for Black communities in Stockport. Navendu highlighted that “Black individuals in Britain are four times more likely to be detained under the Mental Health Act,” pointing to the urgent need for earlier intervention and culturally appropriate support.

At FikaWelie, we work closely with health organisations across Greater Manchester to help bridge this gap through culturally responsive support, medication understanding, wellbeing activities and community outreach that meet people where they are. As Black History Month ends, Navendu stressed the importance of keeping this issue on the agenda. We must continue challenging inequalities and improving access to fair, timely and culturally informed mental health support for Black communities all year round.



Starting December 2025



Soup for the Soul

Open to all - no booking needed

Join us in a safe, friendly space where you can:

- ✓ Connect with others
- ✓ Relax and enjoy good soup in great company
- ✓ Take part in optional health checks
- ✓ Just drop in, open to all

Where: Reddish North Community Centre SK5 6ET
When: Thursday 18th December
Time: 1pm-3pm
Cost: Free
Be part of a supportive community, fortnightly meetings

For more information, contact:
Fikawelie 0753 852 8876
Email: fikaunite@gmail.com



Meet our volunteers, Areej and Hamadi

Soup for the Soul is a new free wellbeing group from Fikawelie, starting Thursday the 4th of December and running every other week at Reddish North Community Centre. Our next session will be on Thursday 18th of December.

This warm and welcoming group is open to anyone who would like company, conversation and a supportive space. Each session includes a wellbeing activity, time to connect with others and, of course, a bowl of homemade soup.

It's a simple, friendly way for people to feel supported, make new friends and take a break from social isolation.

Community groups are warmly encouraged to share this with anyone who may benefit.



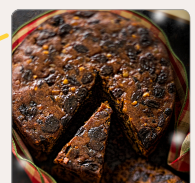
Celebration of Culture and Tradition

As we approach the Christmas season, we recognise that this time of year can bring both joy and challenge. For some, it is a season of celebration, laughter and togetherness. For others, it can be a reminder of loss, loneliness or financial stress. Within our Caribbean and African communities, the holidays can also stir deep emotions connected to family, migration and a sense of home.

At Fikawelie, we want everyone to know they are not alone. Whether this season brings joy or heaviness, we are here to offer support, understanding and a listening ear. Taking time to care for our mental and emotional well-being is just as important as any festive preparation. Christmas holds a special place in our communities, blending faith, family and culture into something uniquely joyful. The smell of jerk chicken, curried goat, rice and peas, and freshly baked fruitcake fills the air. Music plays a big part, from reggae and soca, bringing rhythm, movement and connection.

For many, this time is about gathering with loved ones, sharing stories, laughter and gratitude. The traditions passed down through generations remind us of who we are and where we come from. Even when families are spread across countries, the spirit of community, kindness and hospitality keeps us connected.

At Fikawelie, we celebrate these moments of cultural pride and togetherness. They remind us that wellbeing is not only about the individual but also about belonging, roots and shared experience.



USEFUL SUPPORT CONTACTS OVER CHRISTMAS

Samaritans 24/7 listening and emotional support.
Phone 116 123 free from any UK mobile
0330 094 5717 local call charges

Mind

Support and information for anyone experiencing mental health difficulties.

Phone 0300 123 3393

Shout

Free confidential text support for anyone in crisis.

Text SHOUT to 85258

SANEline

Emotional support for people affected by mental illness.

Phone 0300 304 7000 and it is open every day of the year, including over the Christmas 2025 period, from 4pm to 10pm.

Hub of Hope

Directory of national and local mental health services.

Website hubofhope.co.uk



PAPYRUS HOPELINE247

Support for young people under 35 who are experiencing suicidal thoughts.

Phone 0800 068 4141

CALM Campaign Against Living Miserably

Support for people in crisis especially men.

Phone 0800 58 58 58

Stockport Homes / Housing Support

For homelessness, emergency accommodation or urgent housing issues.

Tel: 0161 217 6016

(Out-of-hours emergencies available)



Wellspring Stockport (Homelessness Support)

Hot meals, support, advice and warmth. Tel: 0161 477 6344