

The service of three
different
discriminatory
practices in health
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Assess the effects on those using the service of three different discriminatory practices in health and social settings Discriminatory practice can be defined as making or showing an unfair or prejudicial distinction between different categories of people or their beliefs and practices, centred around race, age, gender, religion, sexual orientation and disability. Although there are many laws in place to protect individual rights against discrimination such as the Equality Act 2010, there are still cases of it occurring in many different situations including within the health and social care system.

One type of discrimination which occurs regularly is Racism. Racism can be defined as possessing certain views, carrying out practices or actions which reflect the belief that humanity is divided into ‘ groups’ and that members of a certain ‘ race’ share certain attributes which make that group as a whole less desirable, more desirable, inferior or superior. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Racism> 17/05/13 Sadly, some individuals take their views too far and have acted out violent attacks on innocent people, purely because of their ethnic background, for example, the case of Stephen Lawrence.

Stephen was a Black British man from Eltham in south east London, who was murdered in a racist attack while waiting for a bus on the evening of 22 April 1993. It was suggested during the course of that investigation that the murder was racially motivated and that Stephen was murdered purely because he was black. Initially, no one was arrested after the attack which then led to questioning about the handling of the case by the Police and the Crown Prosecution Service who were then themselves accused of institutional racism (according to the 1999 McPherson report). The investigation into Stephen’s death was found to have been marred by <https://assignbuster.com/the-service-of-three-different-discriminatory-practices-in-health-and-social-settings-essay/>

professional incompetence and categorical errors. The general public were outraged when they learned that the Police had dismissed Stephen's attack as some type of gang war, (and failed to carry out even basic duties such as collect evidence and data from the scene)when in fact, he was brutally attacked while innocently trying to make his way home.

There have been several changes in the aftermath of the attack on Stephen Lawrence. Initially, the effects on public attitudes towards the Police and the way they handle race related crimes in Britain. It left many people (particularly from ethnic backgrounds) very angry, questioning whether they could put their trust in the British system any longer and if it operated in a fair and democratic manner?

However, on a positive note, it led to the Introduction of Race Relations Act 2000 and a recruitment drive for police officers from an ethnic background in a bid to show that the institution of the Metropolitan Police are not racist which has been successful in some respect. [http://www. guardian. co. uk/uk/2013/apr/22/stephen-lawrence-murder-changed-legal-landscape](http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2013/apr/22/stephen-lawrence-murder-changed-legal-landscape) A recent poll by the British Future showed that " nearly 60% of the British public believed the police response to such cases is now quicker, fairer and less racist. The police say that much has changed over the past decade and there is now a firm desire throughout policing, especially within its leadership, to tackle racism more robustly".

Assess the effects on those using the service of three different discriminatory practices in health and social settings However, even Black police officers themselves argue that little has actually changed in the wake of the Stephen

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Lawrence case and that the police are still infact guilty of institutional racism This argument comes from the Metropolitan Police’s Black Police Association (MBPA) who have claimed that Britain’s largest force was still institutionally racist. “ The national BPA said it was unacceptable that less than 5 per cent of officers in England and Wales were from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Talented black people should be allowed to enter the police at senior levels to tackle the lack of ethnic recruits, and the Met branch called for more to be done by the leadership of the force to get rid of the problem”. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/metropolitan-police-still-institutionally-racist-20-years-after-stephen-lawrence-murder-black-police-leaders-say-8581873.html> It seems that even 20 years after this case, there are still lasting effects surrounding the discriminatory practices displayed by the British justice system in their handling of the racist attack on Stephen, and perhaps further fueled by the 1981 Brixton riots which were also said to be linked to racism.

Racism claims and discriminatory practices exists in other institutions, for instance the NHS. Similarly to the police force, the NHS has been accused of limiting senior roles to those of origin other than black or minority ethnic backgrounds. Only around 1% of these positions are occupied by individuals from these backgrounds. Hari Sewell

An account from an individual who is of ethnic origin and was in a Director’s position with the NHS 2002 to 2009 said that effects of the discrimination he received while working for a London Hospital left him feeling isolated. “ I went to deliver an event in a rural community hall. When I arrived in my suit

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with my brief case, I went to the office, I knocked on the door to say ‘ I’m Hari’, and this woman turned around and said ‘ don’t come and beat me up. When I went back to my office and I said to my colleagues ‘ you won’t believe what happened. I outlined my account and one of my colleagues said ‘ maybe she was trying to crack a joke and be funny.’ I was taken aback. Racial inequality is an issue in the NHS”.