

Changing Cultures:  
Health and Inequality in Edinburgh –  
Commentary

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3<sup>rd</sup> July 2013

# Structure of Commentary

- What this research adds
- Consistency of findings in relation to limitations of place-based approaches for equality groups
- Implications for policy making and resource allocation

# What this research adds

- Provides nuanced insights into lives of South Asian women who use NKS (and many others)
  - Multi-dimensional; complex, dynamic and fluid
  - Negotiation of (cultural) identity at level of family, community and societal levels
  - Ways in which social and cultural milieu affect health-related behaviour
- Vividly illustrates kind of resource needed through use of NKS services
- Provides insights into what a 'culturally sensitive' health service (eg NKS) looks like
  - Holistic view of health and wellbeing
  - Responsive to language use; respectful of religious beliefs
  - Sensitive to degrees of cultural integration/assimilation
  - Provides services which recognise socio-economic disadvantage and routes out of poverty (Netto et al, 2010)
- Evidences the limitations of standard indicators for resource allocation *and* of mainstream health services

# Consistency of findings with other research

- Place-based policy responses to socio-economic inequality have been, and continue to be, a feature of Scotland's public sector
- EHRC commissioned report on effectiveness of place-based approaches on equality groups (Matthews, Netto and Besemer, 2012) revealed:
  - Place-based approaches provide some benefits for those living in deprived neighbourhoods
  - However, the extent to which equality groups (gender, ethnicity, disabled people, LGBT) benefit from these approaches is not clear
  - Many from equality groups do not live in the most deprived neighbourhoods
  - Specific needs of individuals in equality groups often not met
- Targeting poor areas would appear more successful in reducing poverty among equality groups only when it is combined with robust equality impact assessment and appropriately tailored services'
- Even then, a place-based policy alone will not comprehensively tackle poverty and inequality in Scotland.

# Implications of the research I

- Need for greater awareness among policy makers of specific needs of:
  - South Asian women
  - Other ethnic and equality groups which are not revealed by standard indicators
- Mainstreaming needs to be supplemented by specific approaches in order for NHS/Lothian Health to meet its obligations under the new Public Sector Equalities Duties
- Important to continue to engage with community groups as part of process of carrying out Equality Impact assessments at health board level

# Implications of the research II

- Need to continue to consider how mainstream services can work more closely and consistently with specific services (eg routes of referral, discharge procedures)
- Need for:
  - Continued focus on improving data on equalities groups
  - Evaluation of the usefulness of standard indicators for other equality groups

# References

- Matthews, P, Netto, G and Besemer, K (2012) *'Hard to reach or easy to ignore' : a rapid review of place-based policies and equality* Equality and Human Rights Commission: Edinburgh
- Netto, G, Bhopal, R, Lederle, N, Khatoon, J and Jackson, A (2010) "How can health promotion interventions be adapted for minority ethnic communities? Five principles for guiding the development of behavioural interventions." *Health Promotion International* [Vol 25, Issue 2](#) Pp. 248-257.

*Thank you*

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