

NEWSLETTER



TRANSFORMATION EVENT

In December, EmpowerED hosted a Transformation Event at Aintree Racecourse in Liverpool, with delegates from across the North West. A line-up of speakers, including members of the EmpowerED Expert by Experience Forum who shared their personal journeys accessing mental health services. Their insights touched on various aspects, such as barriers, commendable practices, and direct interactions with commissioners and senior clinical leads from throughout the North West.

With a focus on the EmpowerED Forum priorities:

Waiting Times

- Better support for patient's families/carers in between appointments

Engagement - BAME, LGBTQ+ and Other Underserved Communities

- Raise the awareness of eating disorders within underserved communities and continue to develop these relationships

ED Training

- GP Eating Disorder Awareness Training (Primary Care focus), Education – particularly Universities staff and students, Third Sector, Local Authorities and Health Services

EmpowerED is committed to driving improvements across the eating disorders patient pathway and working with Experts by Experience to ensure people who access eating disorder services are empowered to play a full and active role in the development and delivery of these services.

Duncan Campbell, Lead for Care, EmpowerED said:

"Delegates from community and inpatient teams from across the patch came together with experts by experience and commissioners, to look at what's working well, and what needs to improve.

"The topics discussed will be prioritised in our Clinical Delivery Group which is made up of senior clinicians from across Lancashire and South Cumbria, Greater Manchester, and Cheshire & Merseyside.

"It's great to have all of the people from across the pathway in one room talking to each other and help us with the improvements we're making.

"Huge thank you to all our Experts by Experience who delivered insightful presentations and actively participated in the workshop sessions. Your invaluable input contributes significantly ensuring that people are at the heart of everything we do."

'SHADES OF ME'

Artwork from an EmpowerED Expert by Experience.



EMPOWERED HOSTS SUCCESSFUL EATING DISORDER AWARENESS TRAINING FOR BBC INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING LEADS

In February EmpowerED Experts by Experience delivered training to over 30 BBC International Children's Safeguarding leads.

The event aimed to equip safeguarding leads with the knowledge and tools necessary to address and support individuals dealing with eating disorders.

The training, facilitated by Duncan Campbell, EmpowerED LPC's Lead for Clinical Care, was delivered alongside EmpowerED Experts by Experience, Ruth and Molly, and supported by Fiona Jenkins, the Experts by Experience Lead.

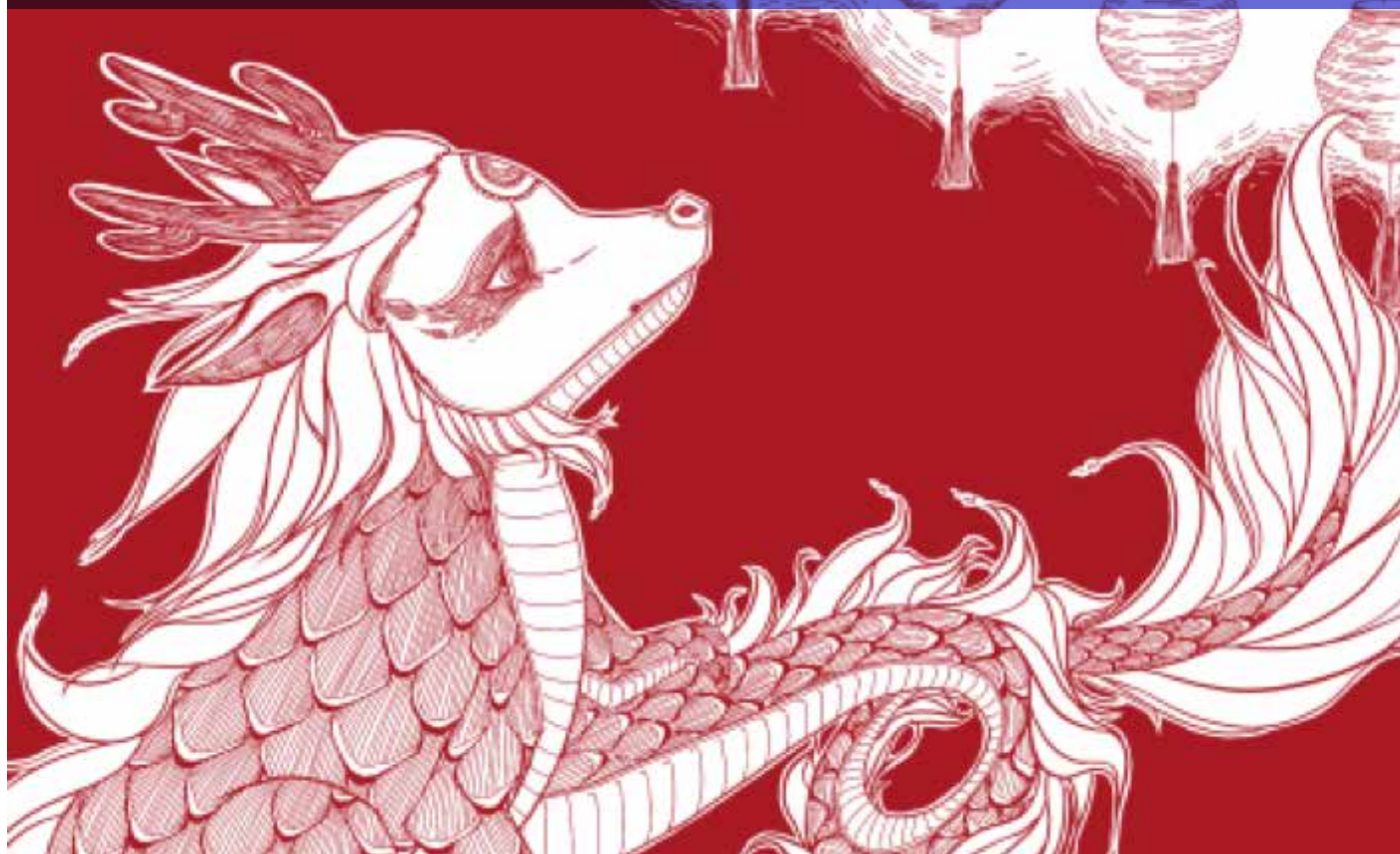
The training covered several key topics:

- What is an eating disorder?
- Types of eating disorders
- Signs and symptoms
- Considerations to ensure a healthy environment
- How to support young people with an eating disorder
- Accessible support and resources available

The training received overwhelmingly positive feedback from the attendees. One participant said: "This was the best training we have received from an outside agency."



NAVIGATING EATING DISORDERS DURING THE SPRING FESTIVAL



By Mary Dai

How does a first-generation Chinese immigrant who has lived in Britain for the majority of her life begin trying to talk about Chinese New Year?

I am told that it is a time for family, food and new beginnings - but I've never actually had much opportunity to celebrate the Spring Festival, as it is called in China.

I can count on one hand the number of red envelopes that I've received in my entire life, for example: traditionally, you would get one of these every year from pretty much every family member in the generations above you. My experience probably isn't particularly unique - I imagine it's very common amongst others like me, but I do have a few things I usually muse upon in the run-up to Lunar New Year.

In Chinese culture, food is almost entirely synonymous with love. Some form of this exists in many cultures, and is probably one of many reasons why celebrating Christmas in Britain usually comes with such a long menu. In my experience, though, a reliance on food to express your unspoken feelings to your family members is an intensely Chinese (and possibly unproductive) habit - there's a saying amongst Chinese youth: your parents won't ever apologise to you, but they might bring you a plate of cut fruit instead. But what happens after that?

Turning it down is usually not an option if you don't want to start another fight, and whether or not you actually want to eat the fruit doesn't really seem to be important (or at least, not to your parents). Mix that in with societal and cultural expectations

for Chinese women to look a certain way, maintain a meek and conflict-averse persona (whether intentionally or not), or pay respects to your elders (something that's expected regardless of your gender) - it's tough to navigate, to say the least. It's rarely as simple as accepting it or turning it down.

When living in a Western country, this feeling can be magnified even more: if you don't have a strong sense of your identity as an individual from a blend of cultures or a different race, it can be easy to let other people's perception of your identity influence you. East Asians are often represented in a very specific way in our media, and with the rise of K-pop and anime in pop culture, we might find ourselves susceptible to holding beliefs about what is a "correct" body image or personality for us regardless of whether that is what we want, let alone if it's healthy or not. If your parents spent most of their lives growing up in China, there's an even wider mix of messages being thrown at you about how you should or shouldn't be. There's a certain pressure to live up to something that you perceive to be relevant to you, even if you don't personally connect with it.

All of these issues can be intensified during the time around Lunar New Year.

I guess in a very roundabout way, I'm simply here to say: you're not alone. Your family might be half a world away, and maybe the whole food-and-love thing brings you nothing except anxiety.

But I think the true message and spirit of the festival is this: there's always an opportunity for new beginnings.

MEET THE TEAM



Paula Almeida, EmpowerED Community Champions Lead

Greetings, fellow changemakers!

I'm Paula, your enthusiastic guide on the journey of community empowerment and wellbeing. With roots in Portugal and a heart captivated by England, my background in cancer diagnosis with the NHS and current pursuit of the NHS Graduate Management Training Scheme reflects my passion for improving people's health. Now, as the Community Champions Lead, I'm here to empower and support you to become an EmpowerED Community Ambassador or Champion.

Our program, developed hand-in-hand with EmpowerED, is about making tangible differences in the lives of others. As a volunteer, you'll collaborate with like-minded individuals, spreading essential health and wellbeing information across the North West region.

Equipped with comprehensive online training and access to a centralized platform, you'll have the tools and resources needed to make a genuine difference.

As a Community Ambassador/Champion, you'll actively engage with the community, fostering communication, and dismantling barriers to accessing vital support services. Your innovative ideas, valuable feedback, and contagious enthusiasm will be pivotal in shaping our initiatives and propelling us toward our shared vision of healthier, more resilient communities.

Today, I extend an invitation for you to join us and become an indispensable part of a movement dedicated to enhancing the health and wellbeing of everyone around us.

Sign up now, and let's embark on this empowering journey together!

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS AND AMBASSADORS

EmpowerED Lead Provider Collaborative is recruiting Community Ambassadors/ Champions. If you're over the age of 18, the provider collaborative is looking for people who can volunteer their time and help promote key messages, signpost families/ carers to local support services and help us identify barriers to accessing services. For more information visit: www.empowerednw.nhs.uk/champion



Monaza Choudry, Diversity Lead, EmpowerED

My name is Monaza Choudry and I am the Diversity Lead to CWP Level Up and EmpowerED Lead Provider Collaboratives.

My role involves listening to diverse voices and ensuring equitable and inclusive engagement in the co-creation of diverse ways of working, staying ahead of diversity related challenges and opportunities, shaping and delivering strategies and practices.

I will be supporting equity of opportunity, removing all barriers and ending discrimination. Mental health and eating disorders can affect anyone irrespective of who they are and where they come and there are certain underserved communities that may need additional support to access the services we have available for them.

I want to ensure that everyone is provided with equal access to the health care and support they may need.



EMPOWERED PODCAST

EmpowerED Podcast Episode 4 is here! Join hosts India & Georgia as they dive into the world of adult eating disorders with special guest Stephen Worthington (Worthy), EmpowerED Commissioning Case Manager for Adult Eating Disorders North West.

- Listen to Episode 4 on our website: www.empowerednw.nhs.uk/podcast.
- NEW: Now available on Spotify! Don't miss this insightful conversation as they discuss challenges, breakthroughs, and the importance of breaking the stigma surrounding eating disorders.
- Gain valuable insights, find support, and discover hope as EmpowerED Experts by Experience shape the future of services. Let's break the silence and empower each other on this journey.



EMPOWERED EXPERTS BY EXPERIENCE FORUM

If you have lived experience of eating disorders and are over the age of 18, you can join our Experts by Experience the EmpowerED Forum and help us influence and shape eating disorders services across the North West.

If you're interested in joining the EmpowerED Forum programme please visit: www.empowerednw.nhs.uk/forum

WEBSITE REFRESH

EmpowerED, Adult Eating Disorders, Lead Provider Collaborative, North West, is excited to announce the refresh of its website. The updated site serves as a digital gateway, offering comprehensive information about the EmpowerED Lead Provider Collaborative, as well as updates on news and events.

It includes dedicated sections for Experts by Experience, Community Ambassadors/Champions, Carers, and professionals.

The EmpowerED website's design has been crafted in collaboration with experts by experience, and ongoing development will be guided by their support. Explore more at www.empowerednw.nhs.uk.

We value your input, and since a website is an ever-evolving platform, we welcome your feedback. Share your thoughts on the new website and suggest content you'd like to see by emailing: cwp.empoweredforum@nhs.net.

NEED URGENT MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS SUPPORT?

If your mental or emotional state quickly gets worse or deteriorates, this can be called a 'mental health crisis'. In this situation, it is important to get help quickly.

Depending on the area you live in, please call the numbers below and dedicated local staff will support you to access the help you need.

The phone lines are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and is open to people of all ages, including children and young people.

LOCATION	TEL.
Cheshire and Wirral	0800 145 6485
Bolton, Salford, Trafford, Manchester	0800 953 0285
Halton, Knowsley, St Helens and Warrington	0800 051 1508
Lancashire and South Cumbria	0800 953 0110
Liverpool and Sefton * anyone aged 16 and over	0800 145 6570
Wigan	0800 051 3253