

## Experiences

### Racism in the Workplace

Research in the health service in 2006 has revealed the disturbing level of racist behaviour experienced by healthcare workers. For example

- 47% reported having been harassed by patients, 27% indicated friends or relatives of patients and 19% said that they had suffered racist harassment from a manager or supervisor.
- 50% stated that work colleagues were most likely to be the source of racist harassment in the workplace.
- 59% experienced racist harassment outside of work.
- On occasions where staff had suffered harassment from colleagues, incidents that involved humiliation were found to be the most upsetting.

*Jennifer Betts & Jennifer Hamilton, An Investigation into the Nature, Extent and Effects of Racist Behaviours Experienced by Northern Ireland's Ethnic Minority Healthcare Staff, 2006.*

[www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/ICRracismreport-06.pdf](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/ICRracismreport-06.pdf)

A report in 2009 on migrant worker experiences (many in the health service) confirmed these findings

- 54% of respondent have been personally exposed to racism at work and 83% have encountered racism in their workplace.
- 80% of respondents working in the private care sector have experienced racist bullying, discrimination and have felt humiliated at work.

*Migrant Workers, Racism and the Recession Survey Results on the Impact of the Recession on UNISON Migrant Worker and Black and Minority Ethnic Members, 2009*

Workers in restaurants and fast food outlets often experience verbal abuse.

‘Sometimes people will talk the bad language. Maybe call you Chinkie and maybe ‘go back to your country’ just like that you know. Some...will not be friendly you know. But most people is quite nice’.

A Chinese woman restaurant worker quoted in *Into the Light* (Conference Report). Belfast: Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, 1999

### School

Interviews undertaken by the National Children's Bureau show a high level of racist bullying.

- 51 % of respondents said that they had witnessed racist bullying or harassment in their school.
- 31% said that they had been a victim of racist bullying or harassment in their school.
- I have witnessed a racist attack. It was in P6. Two boys were being picked on by about six people and they said ‘go back home’ ...
- 16-year-olds from a minority-ethnic group were 8 times more likely to say they had been bullied or harassed than their counterparts.

*Attitudes to Difference: Young people's attitudes to and experiences of contact with people from different minority ethnic and migrant communities in Northern Ireland, 2010*

[www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/attd\\_web\\_final.pdf](http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/attd_web_final.pdf)

Young people seeking asylum and young refugees report similar experiences

‘Well, I was doing my papers [paper round] and a group of people they just attacked me and my sister was with me and they started calling me Paki, Paki, Paki and then they tried to bully me and my sister but then a man came out of a house and said get to your houses and leave people alone so then we were safe (Young refugee).’

*New to Northern Ireland: A study of the issues faced by Migrant, Asylum Seeking and Refugee Children in Northern Ireland* by Teresa Geraghty, Celine McStravick and Dr Stephanie Mitchell, 2010 [www.gulbenkian.org.uk/pdf/files/NTNI\\_final.pdf](http://www.gulbenkian.org.uk/pdf/files/NTNI_final.pdf)

## Officials

‘I asked [a Social Security official]: “Can you please tell me if there is anywhere else I can go for help?” The answer was blunt and direct: “No! Go and ask the Portuguese Government to help you. And if you need money for the return ticket to Portugal, find a job.”’

A woman dismissed from her job because she was pregnant. *Case Studies of Discrimination and Disadvantage for Portuguese Migrant Workers, quoted in the Animate Research Compendium, 2006*

‘Foreigners can be more demanding and pushy.’

Social Security Agency official quoted in Roisin Devlin and Sorcha McKenna, *No Home From Home, an Investigative Report into Homelessness and People who are Excluded from Accessing Public Funds*

## Racist Attacks

‘My car was burnt while parked in front of my home’

‘Verbal abuse, Damage to property. Our wheelie bins were stolen, our fence was damaged and they peed at my door.’

‘I was hit with a bottle on the head’

The experience of Polish people surveyed by Dr Robbie McVeigh and Chris McAfee,

*‘Za Chlebem’: The Impact of the Economic Downturn on the Polish Community in Northern Ireland, NICEM, 2009.*

‘One Polish woman who doesn’t want to be identified describes how her son was attacked. “He was hit on the head by two boys and was taken to the hospital, he had stitches on his head, and that case was reported to the police”.’

An incident in Portadown, 27 February 2008.

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern\\_ireland/7266249.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern_ireland/7266249.stm)

‘The man then made several racist comments towards me and then began to walk away. He had not gone far when he turned around and returned, he continued to shout racist and abusive comments at me and then began walking towards me with his two dogs. .... When I moved the man punched me in the nose, which knocked me to the ground. One of the dogs then jumped on me and bit me on the arm. ... I had to take three weeks off work. I now experience a high level of anxiety and do not feel safe in my own home.’

*Race Crime and Criminal Justice in Northern Ireland; Towards a Blueprint for the Eradication of Racism from the CJSNI, 2013*

[http://nicem.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Race\\_and\\_Criminal\\_Justice\\_2013.pdf](http://nicem.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Race_and_Criminal_Justice_2013.pdf)