

P01-344 - **HELP SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF CHINESE LIVING IN BELFAST, NORTHERN IRELAND**

E.Y.-W. Yeung

Faculty of Health and Applied Social Sciences, Liverpool John Moores University, Liverpool, UK

Background: The Chinese community is the largest ethnic minority community in Northern Ireland. Previous research findings showed that they had a low uptake of mental health services.

Aim: This study aims to examine the help seeking behaviours of Chinese people when they experience mental illness.

Methods: About 96% of Chinese in Northern Ireland worked in catering business. Questionnaires (both in Chinese and English) were sent to ninety-one addresses occupied by catering businesses in Belfast. Focus group meetings were held with mental health workers and community leaders.

Findings: Twenty-four questionnaires were returned. 66.6% reported that they visited their GPs the previous year. Only one person visited the GP for a mental / psychological problem. Poor recognition of mental illness (41.7%) and mental illness stigma (25%) were the main reasons for not seeking professional advice.

Focus group meetings revealed that most Chinese people who came into contact with mental health professionals had severe mental health problems. 40% of their Chinese patients were referred by hospitals, 30% by GPs and another 30% by mental health workers. The community generally had little knowledge about mental illness, which often resulted in delay in seeking appropriate professional help.

Conclusion: Findings revealed that the Chinese do seek help from their GPs but may not see their doctors when they or someone they know actually become mentally unwell. Further investigation is needed to explore different ways to provide information about mental illness symptoms and mental health services for the community.