

professionals of duties, roles, and responsibilities. Initiatives to identify housing for homeless remand prisoners before their release, as well as ensuring the availability of community services to supervise treatment, would overcome some of the obstacles identified and increase availability of the MHTR. Funding for additional staff to conduct the assessment and referrals process would also be likely to improve uptake.

### Providing Mental Health First Aid Training to Hatzola

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doi: 10.1192/bjo.2022.112

**Aims.** Hackney is home to the largest Charedi Orthodox Jewish community in Europe. According to the Census 2011, 7% of the population of Hackney are Charedi. Hatzola is a non-profit, volunteer organisation established in 1979 to provide pre-hospital emergency medical response and transportation to acute hospitals at no cost, to those living in and around the North London Charedi community. Given the large Charedi population served by Homerton University Hospital it is a common occurrence for psychiatry liaison staff to work side by side with Hatzola in delivering care to those in mental health crisis. Our aim was to create and nurture a professional relationship between Homerton University Hospital Psychiatry Liaison Service and Hatzola ambulance. We wanted to gain an understanding of the perception of mental illness within the Charedi community, and identify issues faced by members of Hatzola when working with those with mental illness. We wanted to identify the learning needs of Hatzola around psychiatric illness as well as increasing confidence within team members when called to manage mental health crises.

**Methods.** We scheduled an initial meeting with Hatzola to gain an understanding of their service. We used questionnaires to ascertain their level of knowledge on managing mental health patients. We set out to provide teaching sessions to address Hatzola's learning needs.

We designed interactive teaching sessions based on providing mental health first aid, discussing case studies, considering the legal framework around emergency mental health. We ensured coverage of working with both adults and children with mental health difficulties. We delivered these teaching sessions in person over four consecutive weekly meetings, with the sessions being recorded to serve as an educational resource.

**Results.** We gathered qualitative evidence reflecting the impact of our intervention. We were able to compare levels of confidence among Hatzola members before and after our teaching programme.

**Conclusion.** Our training programme was well received by Hatzola, and it was an excellent opportunity to develop links with members of the community.

We have learned that mental health is a taboo subject for members of the Charedi community, and have identified a need for more support to Hatzola in coping with the emotional toll working with mental health patients can take. There may be scope for providing further training on developing reflective practice and more emotional support for Hatzola members in future.

### Buddhist Philosophy and Mental Health: Lessons for the 21st Century

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doi: 10.1192/bjo.2022.113

**Aims.** The aim of this research was to highlight the aspects of Buddhist philosophy which may help to improve mental health. COVID-19 has had a considerable psychological impact on health-care staff and the general population, emphasizing the importance of treatments and techniques to aid their mental health.

**Methods.** Mindfulness, Impermanence and Non-self were discussed as core aspects of Buddhist philosophy and how these relate to mental well-being. Reference was made to peer-reviewed studies that show the positive effects of these concepts.

**Results.** This research highlighted the wealth of evidence that Mindfulness, Impermanence and Non-self has in improving mental well-being. However, there were also risks, including depersonalisation and increased anxiety in certain mindfulness practitioners.

**Conclusion.** The findings of this research has generated new ways in which we discuss mental well-being and challenges our current understanding of suffering, providing individuals with further tools to assist with their mental health. This study challenges the idea that philosophy and medicine must be discussed separately and seeks to find further common ground between these two disciplines.

### Catch Them Young! Changing Attitudes and Perspectives Towards Psychiatry by Using Patients as Educators Early in Medical Training

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doi: 10.1192/bjo.2022.114

**Aims.** This teaching project aims to improve attitudes and perspectives towards psychiatry by using Patient as Educators (PaE) in a psychiatry teaching program early in medical training.

**Methods.** Following the success of a small pilot study in 2020, the project was rolled out to the entire second year medical student body in 2021. Two-hour interactive sessions were delivered online to groups of approximately twelve students. Each session was introduced by a psychiatrist, followed by PaE discussion with questions and answers. The students completed a bespoke online survey at the beginning and the end of the session, looking at attitudes towards psychiatry. Comparative analysis of attitudes pre- and post-intervention was then undertaken. Qualitative data were examined through content analysis and quantitative methods were used to compare pre- and post- attitudes on the Likert scale.

**Results.** The pre- and post-intervention questionnaires were completed by 373 and 305 students respectively. Both pre- and post-intervention attitudes were overwhelmingly positive. Post-intervention qualitative results demonstrate the session, especially the PaE, helped students to better understand the complexities of mental illness, the stigma faced and the potential efficacy of good treatment. There was a 25.7% increase in