

Pathway response to the report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities

The Government's recent [report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities](#) (CRED) suggested that structural racism in the UK does not exist. We are extremely disappointed that this report has sown more division in society rather than increased our shared understanding of the impact of racism.

It is unfortunate that the report failed to fully take note of all the compelling evidence that racial disparities, particularly in health, are very significantly driven by structural social and economic factors, which include racism.

The CRED report has caused huge damage and offence by choosing to disregard decades of research into race and ethnic inequality, and largely ignored considerable and significant evidence of lived experience.

Government's own data shows that people from ethnic minority backgrounds are more likely to suffer worse health outcomes: from higher numbers of Black African and African-Caribbean women dying as a result of childbirth, to more people from ethnic minority backgrounds suffering worse outcomes with Covid-19.

Research has shown that these health inequalities are driven by accumulations of interlocking factors in the circumstances in which people live. Institutional and structural forms of racism are among these factors. The factors that keep ethnic minority groups poorer or more marginalised are structurally driven. People in these groups are more likely to live in poor quality or unstable accommodation, precarious or low paid employment or experience poverty. These circumstances are bad for human health. The chains from cause to effect are cumulative, overlap and include many feedback loops but institutional and structural racism helps to explain the 'causes of the causes'.

It is dangerous to blame individuals for the negative experiences and discriminatory challenges they face and is contrary to the vast weight of evidence that structural racism does indeed exist. The report relies on outdated and selective research, which makes its conclusions unreliable.

Pathway works to improve the health and wellbeing of people experiencing homelessness and other extremely marginalised groups. We believe in health equality for all. Inequalities in health draw our attention to, and are a consequence of inequalities in society. It is vital that we extend our understanding of the role racism plays in this. The Government's CRED report is a depressing missed opportunity.