"Taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase"

Independent evaluation of the impact of the Anti-racism Project of the
Health Innovation Network (HIN)

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Executive Summary

This evaluation explores the impact of the Anti-racism Project of the Health Innovation Network (HIN), an intra-organisational project which had grown out of informal conversations following the murder of George Floyd in May 2020. The project ran between December 2021 and May 2023. Its goal has been to support the HIN in being an actively anti-racist organisation.

Aims, primary audiences and methods

The brief for the evaluation asked the following questions:

- What impact has the project had?
- What aspects of the project have had the greatest impact?
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- Is the organisation positively impacting on:
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In total, 21 interviews with 18 members of HIN staff were conducted between March and May 2023 (three interviews were continued over a second session). 10 of the interviewees were white and 8 were members of the global majority. Interviewees were from all hierarchical levels of the HIN, including leadership and executive team members. Male and female staff and a variety of age groups, years of service at the HIN, teams, bands and role types were represented. Further breakdown on any characteristic other than global majority/ white heritage is not offered, as combinations of parameters, especially when added to claims in the report, may identify participants.

Key findings
Incontestable yet not easily demonstrable change

In light of the evidence, it is incontestable that the Anti-racism Project has had an impact on individuals working at the HIN and on some organisational processes and structures. This is the case even though the reported increase in racial and ethnic diversity of staff has been relatively small but nonetheless consistent. The proportion of global majority staff increased by 2 percentage points between reporting years 20/21 and 21/22 and by 3 percentage points between reporting years 21/22 and 22/23 (25% in 20/21, 27% in 21/22 and 30% in 22/23; percentages are of all staff, including those who have not reported ethnicity). Behaviours experienced as racial discrimination continue to be identified at the HIN. They are of types which would be typically considered "microaggressions" or "not of grave proportions", yet the minimisation inherent in such language conventions may not reflect the harm they cause. Actively anti-racist behaviours, from calling out racist comments and behaviours to persistent work on achieving structural change, such as in recruitment, were also clearly identified yet, at times, experienced as insufficient or ineffective. Although the Chair and Chief Executive of the HIN are both members of the global majority, concerns about the leadership team continuing to be predominantly white were strong and widely shared.

Most interviewees' overall evaluation of the project ranged from solid appreciation ("important and valuable", "a really good job", "a very good first step") to generous, at times effusive, praise ("fantastic", "really excellent", "special", "an incredible piece of work").

Substantial impact on individual micro-actions and the organisational conversation

The most frequent types of impact this evaluation identified were cognitive, emotional and motivational impacts at an individual level which then gave rise to micro-actions in daily life.

All interviewees reported some level of change in how they thought about race, racism, anti-racism and themselves relative to those phenomena. They noticed new elements in situations, relationships and structures around them. They made new internal checks on how something would be experienced by the person they were interacting with. There were new inner conversations and engagement with new ideas. Most frequently, interviewees reported becoming aware of implicit biases and microaggressions and reflecting on and managing their own. Such an increased awareness and self-reflexivity

were reported not only by white interviewees in relation to global majority individuals but also by global majority interviewees in relation to ethnic minorities other than their own.

Most of these cognitive experiences had emotional aspects too, such as of compassion and self-compassion; gratitude, relief and sense of validation; guilt and grief; anger and pain.

The personal impact of the new thoughts, ideas, emotions and experiences varied in intensity, yet, overall, a noticeable inner change had occurred.

Every interviewee reported noticeable and lasting impact of the project also in terms of *actions* in support of global majority individuals or as a positive assertion of one's global majority heritage. These were, most often, micro-actions. For instance, interviewees (both white and global majority) were more careful and intentional when speaking to individuals from other ethnic groups, including friends, staff they were served by in daily life, or strangers. They would voice concerns about discrimination and expectations of a more respectful treatment they would have previously kept silent about or not even experienced clearly. Some of those new behaviours occurred daily. Some also generalised towards people experiencing other forms of discrimination or disadvantage, such as on the grounds of gender, disability or religion.

There was unanimous agreement that the project had created "very open spaces for dialogue". It had enabled HIN staff to have conversations about race – at all and in better ways, "without stumbling over your words". This was paralleled by just as unanimous agreement that the conversation must continue. Some interviewees also believed that certain very uncomfortable conversations have not yet happened.

The project has also created new language habits, a greater self-reflexivity and attention to language, and new conversations about language, both inner and outer. This was most noticeable in relation to the term "global majority". The latter was broadly accepted and appreciated, but some interviewees were still hesitant to endorse it, primarily because it was "such a huge bucket" which homogenises an immensely complex and diverse group.
Work aiming at structural change, particularly around recruitment, had started and achieved initial results, primarily in terms of the socialisation and new integrity of diverse

job interview panels and the change of team composition (up to equal proportions of global majority and white staff) in at least one team.

There are indications that individual micro-actions have been a more frequent outcome of the project than work leading to structural change, even though a qualitative study can only make tentative claims in this respect. Such an outcome is in line with the project's theory of change.

The main mechanism through which impacts have been achieved appears to be through individuals taking ideas offered by events and resources of the project and making them their own – reflecting on them, seeing how they relate to their own lives, and adjusting actions accordingly. There is not enough evidence to assert whether individual-level change needed the consistency and frequency of the work over the months and years or happened through sudden insights. Greater clarity in this respect could have informed decisions about the regularity and intensity of future work, now the project is moving to business-as-usual.

The complex experience of global majority staff

The evidence of impact of the project on the experience of global majority staff does not come together into a simple over-arching message.

Global majority interviewees rarely made generic comments about how their overall experience of working at the HIN had changed as a result of the Anti-racism Project. A couple reported a new sense of belonging to and pride in the organisation.

Global majority interviewees appreciated the project and trusted it was "for real", in spite of initial hesitations and continuing experiences or concerns about racial discrimination at the HIN (though not necessarily in their team).

For all global majority interviewees, the project has led to learning, self-exploration and re-engagement with memories pushed at the back of the mind. The emotions triggered have been complex and often contrasting – such as relief, grief, gratitude, anger, doubt, trust, mistrust, empowerment and passion to do something to achieve lasting change. While some members of the global majority felt that they have just "learned more", without experiencing any significant personal change, others have been set on a path

towards deeper transformation of exploring past trauma, of questioning their own tendency to "occupy as little space as possible, to "shrink to fit in", and of feeling more empowered.

Overall, the project has impacted the experience of global majority staff in complex ways. There is dust to settle and more work to be done before global majority staff feel that their daily experience at the HIN has clearly improved. It is also important to acknowledge that the sample of this evaluation may be biased. For instance, there were interviewee comments that some global majority staff preferred not to engage with the project, as they did not trust certain members of the leadership team.

Insufficiently granular evidence about impact on communities and partners
The evidence about the project enabling HIN staff to address race-related health inequalities through their work with communities and partners remained largely at an abstract level. As relevant impacts are felt primarily at the level of patients, carers, health professionals and partners as opposed to HIN staff, a different study design and sampling approach are needed to explore them with sufficient granularity.

Partial and negative impacts, unintended consequences and potential risks
Certain positive impacts of the project were achieved more partially, including the sense of being given a voice and a safe space and the capacity to call out behaviours perceived as discriminatory. The perception of lacking effective communication skills and tools, particularly when there was a need to challenge a superior and/or navigate the boundary between playfulness and discrimination, were often the main blocker.

The disruptive nature of the project also meant that it had unintended consequences, negative impacts and potential risks associated with it. It was also going through 'growing pains'. Most frequently discussed were the emotional discomfort and emotional exhaustion associated with the project and the degree to which some members of staff have become scared to say the wrong thing. The latter was seen as stifling discussion, learning and growth, apart from affecting the experiences of staff at the workplace. Both routine work on the project and the unanticipated volume of work arising from attempts at structural change (e.g. through advertising jobs more broadly) placed significant demands on staff. This often required much discretionary effort, even when the project was still funded.

Less frequently discussed but clearly articulated unintended consequences/ negative impacts were the new, at times uncomfortable, expectations of global majority staff. For instance, they could begin to feel like unwilling "gatekeeper[s] for the whole global majority" – being expected to express the collective view and defend the collective interests of the global majority rather than one's own, if willing to do so at all on a particular occasion. In turn, individuals who do not identify as either "global majority" or "white" could find it difficult to locate themselves in the debate and activities.

Differences across teams

Teams differed in how the anti-racism work was integrated in their working life, and, at times, socialising with colleagues outside of work. They also differed in the degree to which global majority staff experienced instances of discrimination or felt strongly supported and valued.

Staff perceptions of next steps

There appears to be powerful energy to continue the work. Perspectives on the project moving to business-as-usual differed: from it being seen as necessary and appropriate; through it being disappointing and worrying; to appreciating the worries but placing one's hopes in the irreversibility of the change of mindset. Priorities for the future were to 1) "keep the conversation going" and maintain the psychological safety around the topic; 2) develop and implement HR-initiatives, such as around recruitment, promotion, mentoring, upskilling people, and developing pathways for apprenticeships or internships; and 3) broaden the scope of the work in several directions, most often in terms of increasing the variety of ethnicities and cultures in the spotlight.

Sustaining the impact

Individuals who have experienced an inner transformation in becoming more anti-racist will, highly likely, continue to be anti-racist in their individual-level actions. It is less certain if they would have the capacity to work towards modifying processes and structures that embody racial discrimination. Staff turnover may also result in weakening of this internal capacity.

Whether a business-as-usual model will sustain and expand the existing impact is, ultimately, an empirical question. At present, the HIN is at a natural juncture to collect quantitative baseline data from across the organisation to help assess this and, potentially, to set up "natural experiments" which its team structure provides. Any

decision about the way forward for the anti-racism work requires not only evidence and its interpretation, but also structured exploration of the values, value conflicts and values prioritisation of relevant stakeholders, including ones who may have felt side-lined by the work so far.

It remains to be seen whether the HIN and the pioneers and supporters of its Anti-racism Project have not just shown the faith to start a courageous walk, but also the perseverance to persist and engage others on a long road. Most likely, this long road is one which none of us will see walked fully in our lifetime but more and more of us – white, global majority and numerous "other-ed" within and between those groups – are called to commit to.

1. Introduction

This evaluation explores the impact of the Anti-racism Project of the Health Innovation Network (HIN), an intra-organisational project which had grown out of informal conversations amongst a small group of HIN staff following the murder of George Floyd in May 2020. The project was formalised in December 2021 and ran till the end of May 2023. Its goal has been to support the HIN in being an actively anti-racist organisation.

Public-facing information on the project is relatively limited. This evaluation *did not* have as one of its goals to describe the history, contents, theory of change or trajectory of the project. Pointers are given in Appendix 1. Further information is available from former members of the team and the Executive Lead for the project.[1]

1.1. Aims, objectives and primary audiences

The brief for the evaluation asked the following questions:

- What impact has the project had?
- What aspects of the project have had the greatest impact?
- Do people feel more confident in talking about race and racism?
- Is the organisation positively impacting on:

    o the experience of staff within the organisation, particularly those from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds?
    o contributing to addressing race-related health inequalities through our work?

This report is aimed primarily for HIN's internal consideration. It has, however, also been written to inform the work of other organisations interested in developing and implementing similar initiatives. It has an extensive section on HIN as the project context. Causes of impact, or lack of it, arise both from a programme of work and the environment in which a programme is developed and implemented. The context of HIN is thus essential to the project impact and an element of explanations for it. Detail on this context can also help external partners in reflecting on similarities and differences between the HIN and their own organisation and, as a result, consider how to adjust features of the project to fit better the affordances and barriers inherent in their own organisations.

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1.2. The term "global majority"

The report uses consistently the term "global majority". It stands for "people who are Black, African, Asian, Brown, dual-heritage, indigenous to the global south, and or, have been racialised as 'ethnic minorities'". "Globally these groups currently represent approximately eighty per cent (80%) of the world's population." The persistent verbal acknowledgement of this reality is expected to "permanently disrupt" "deficit narratives" about racialised and "othered" groups, to "relocate the conversation on race" and, hopefully, "shift the dial" (2).

2. Methods in brief

The evaluation used a qualitative approach of semi-structured interviews informed by principles of realist and episodic interviewing (further information in Appendix 2). Data were analysed using thematic analysis. While a qualitative study cannot achieve representativeness, it is the approach of choice when individual experiences, perceptions and understanding are of primary interest and when outcomes and forms of impact are under-specified.

21 interviews with 18 members of HIN staff were conducted between March and May 2023 (three interviews were continued over a second session). 10 of the interviewees were white and 8 were members of the global majority. Interviewees were from all hierarchical levels of the HIN, including leadership and executive team members. Male and female staff and a variety of age groups, years of service at the HIN, teams, bands and role types were represented. Further breakdown on any characteristic other than global majority/ white heritage is not offered, as combinations of parameters, especially when added to claims in the report, may identify participants.

Single interviews ranged from 44 minutes to 1h 30 min, average of 59 minutes. The average time of the double interviews was 2h 5 min.

Of the interviewers, MP (the lead evaluator) is "white, other" and SM is a member of the global majority. MP conducted 13 interviews and SM – 8.

Data were analysed by MP. The analysis was validated as a draft report by SM. The evaluators also discussed at some length the final version of the report. Versions of the report were sent for feedback on contents and checks about risk of identification to the project leads, all interviewees, and two senior evaluators at the HIN. Feedback was provided by 15 individuals, in some cases more than once.

Further methodological detail is provided in Appendix 2.

3. Ethical issues

At the start of the evaluation, the lead evaluator's main concern was that the interviews may trigger traumatic memories for global majority interviewees. Exploring personal experiences of racial discrimination was outside of the scope of the evaluation, but it was likely they would become relevant. They did. Intensifying emotion was, at times, palpable but nonetheless contained. Two other ethical concerns became more prominent with the progress of the evaluation. First, navigating confidentiality, anonymity, harsher criticism, and weaker signal of high-risk outcomes in a relatively small organisation are complex tasks when interacting with scientific requirements for transparency.

At times, the need for preserving anonymity required withholding informative detail. For instance, quotes are only selectively tagged for "white" or "global majority". This was primarily because, in combination with what was said, the risk of identification was non-trivial. No indication of leadership status has been added to quotes. The views of Project Team members have been amalgamated with the rest, even if it would have been informative to separate them.

Examples of experienced discrimination were abstracted into generic descriptions, which makes them lose emotional impact and may also make the illustrated behaviours unclear. Telling elements of quotes which gave them vibrancy, as well as some individual mannerisms of speaking, were redacted and replaced with […]. The decisions on how to balance anonymity and confidentiality, on the one hand, and transparency and rigour, on the other, were taken on a case-by-case basis. They are not flawless and represent our (ultimately the lead evaluator's, even if in discussion with colleagues) current best judgement.

The second ethical issue the study was not well prepared for was that the evaluators, who were new to the topic as an object of study, found some of the interviews quite triggering. They brought back familiar experiences of racial (SM) and nationality (MP) discrimination and powerlessness in the face of power structures. The evaluators instituted their own debrief and protection mechanisms. As no person, including an evaluator, has a neutral position relative to race, control of potential bias and issues of transference become a stronger concern in evaluations of such projects, not only in developing and implementing them.

4. Findings

Findings are organised in six sections: overall reception of the project (4.1); key strengths and weaknesses from the perspective of processes and structures as opposed to impact, even if these cannot be neatly separated (4.2); best remembered project initiatives (4.3); impact (4.4); HIN as the project context (4.5); and, finally, the future of the anti-racism work once the project becomes business-as-usual (4.6). The section on impact is the most extensive one.

Illustrative quotes are included throughout the Findings. Quotes are tagged with GM (for global majority) or W (for white) if there was a difference in perspective and if there was no residual risk of identifying an interviewee. Quotes were not tagged if this may have compromised anonymity; if there was no difference between white and global majority views; and if the quotes were single words or short phrases integrated within a sentence.

4.1. Overall reception of HIN's Anti-racism Project: from "really good" to "an incredible piece of work"; from "relieved" and "validated" to "proud and privileged"

Every interviewee identified both strengths and weaknesses of the project, including serious challenges and unintended consequences. Nonetheless, overall evaluations were overwhelmingly positive. They varied from solid appreciation ("important and valuable", "a really good job", "a very good first step") to generous, at times effusive, praise ("fantastic", "really excellent", "special", "an incredible piece of work").

Often, and particularly amongst global majority interviewees, the appreciation was refracted through one's personal experience: "I'm really impressed with the fact that the HIN are actively trying to be anti-racist"; "I was quite surprised by, but also quite happy about it"; "I love the fact that they did this anti-racism thing".

The most frequently reported specific emotional responses were a sense of relief and validation and/or sense of pride and privilege. The former two were more dominant in global majority and the latter two in white members of staff:

> [I]t was the first time I felt, I felt, really, sort of, like a sense of relief … 'this is an organization that wants to talk about this and recognize that people within their organization from a global majority would feel certain ways'. It's being validated.

> *[I]t feels like a privilege to have that space created for it … that it's considered a priority enough that it gets time allocated.*

> *It's a real honour to be part of it.*

In such summary comments, the project and the HIN were praised particularly for their courage to "grasp the nettle" and look inwardly, and for being "ahead of the game". Global majority participants tended to compare the HIN to other organisations they have worked for before. They also often mentioned an initial caution and suspicion that the work was "on paper" only, but so far concluded that people "genuinely care" and that it is for "real":

> *I've never been in an organisation like this before.*

> *Most companies just do this as part of their KPIs for EDI. But here there was actual discussion, real conversation, and constant reassurance.*

The perception of being a leader in intra-organisational work to tackle racism was, however, also questioned relative to awareness of similar work in other public sector organisations.

A small number of interviewees (white) were more negative or uncertain in their overall evaluations, acknowledging that good work was done but believing that "we've not set out and done what we said we were going to do" or looking towards this evaluation to provide a more reliable answer.

Regardless of the overall evaluation of the project individual interviewees gave, they perceived the work to have only just started.

4.2. Key strengths and weaknesses

4.2.1. New, thought-provoking and provocative ideas; active and honest conversation

There was broad agreement that the work brought new, thought-provoking, and provocative ideas to the table. Similarly, the conversation was experienced as having happened – actively and honestly – not least because of the successful creation of a safe space for it. The very acknowledgement of the HIN having internal issues with racism, even if, arguably, not major, was considered an important step.

> *[J]ust having the discussion and being aware that we might be a really nice organisation to work for generally … but within that we've all got to actively think about being anti-racist … don't just assume everything's OK. (W)*

> *A lot of people were asking questions or giving anecdotes or giving their own experiences and saying, well, they maybe have messed up in the past … [E]veryone's just been able to contribute … no-one's really been saying, 'we are feeling uneasy'. (GM)*

> *[T]he meetings were thought-provoking. We'd come out of those meetings, and it would have relevance to our work, and we'd be like, 'my God, of course we shouldn't be referring to people as "minority groups"! I would hate to be described as [that], so disempowering'. (W)*

4.2.2. Professional execution

The project team were also praised for formal aspects of the events they had organised. The praise concerned primarily the quality, professionalism and rigour of the external input and the variety, sensitivity and flexibility of the formats for engagement and contribution (e.g. in-person meetings, resources to explore in one's own time, recorded and unrecorded events or parts of these, etc.). Such formal features were considered an essential aspect of the creation of a safe space, yet one which tends to be overlooked.

4.2.3. Limitations of planning, structure and tangible action

As far as project weaknesses were concerned, criticisms clustered strongly around limitations of planning, structure, and specific, tangible action. Interviewees shared perceptions and experiences ranging from concern to frustration, at times significant, about several inter-related features of the project:

- the length of time it took the project to move from conversation to action;
- the dominance of explorations that remained relatively abstract and theoretical in comparison to actions that were specific, practical, tangible and measurable;
- the lack of detailed planning;
- an over-focus on describing and framing the problem as opposed to setting up processes and structures to begin making dents in it, even if these were not fully worked out or remained low-level for a start;
- outcomes of good conversations dissipating before they were channelled into action.

While some interviewees conceded that there was a lot more visible activity in recent months, this was seen as potentially tipping into the other extreme, lining up disconnected, "one-off", "low-level" actions that did not cohere into a clear path and direction.

There was a fear that the project may remain "tokenistic" and that the "soul-searching" may be, rather, "navel gazing", ultimately failing global majority staff.

> *There was always well meaning and there was always intent. But it always struggled to get to the detail of the delivery.*

> *[I]t's quite embarrassing because, when you look at the timeline, we do have a year when there was no action … where there are no outputs other than the group was meeting.*

> *My question all along has been, 'So what can I do? What are the practical steps I can take?' and … I'm still at the point where I don't necessarily feel I've got practical steps that I can do.*

> *Probably the introduction in the HIN team meeting was still quite strategic and theoretical. And then also the listening workshop in February was quite nebulous … [But] I think that the intention wasn't to come out with an action plan at the end of that. So the fact that I then feel like I don't have actions is not anyone's fault.*

Challenges around traditional project structures and processes were identified predominantly by people in leadership or project management roles. They were also

identified exclusively by white interviewees. None of the global majority interviewees highlighted traditional project management features of the over-arching project as an area of concern. When these were discussed, it was in relation to limited team uptake. For instance, interviewees shared frustrations that there was insufficient and/or tick-box project action in their teams and called for holding teams accountable to their commitments.

A minority of interviewees, both white and global majority ones, disagreed directly with the above perspective (as opposed to not making relevant claims), presenting arguments from three main directions.

First, the work was started at a time when there was no "blueprint to follow". It concerned an area of immense complexity: "highly emotive", "personal", "political", "structural", "sensitive", "enormous topic that people have grappled with for hundreds of years" in one. The uncertainty whether people would sign up at all had been significant. Challenges, resistance and backlash were expected. When support for the project was insufficient, there was no internal mechanism to secure it, unlike with an externally facing project.

Second, the actions and stimuli which such interviewees saw as difference-making were more diffuse, often playing out in the inner world of an individual:

> *[The project] has been a little bit dragged into 'what are your actions, what are your deliverables, what can you show you've achieved' [… while] it's subtler than that, it's … getting into how people perceive things and how people think about things.*

> *[S]ome of the doing is more reflective, is more sitting with discomfort. It's more pausing and just allowing space for this massive, challenging topic to hit you, and overwhelm you for a bit, and then still stick with it, and then come through and then think, 'well, how on Earth do we make sense of this?!', and then start to make sense of it.*

> *This is the doing, this conversation, getting people to really spend time thinking about these concepts is the doing.*

Finally, such interviewees expanded further on it being a "sensitive project". An incompletely articulated feeling was shared that there was something incongruent between, on the one hand, the depth of the inner experience and sharing that was occurring for some members of staff and, on the other hand, an expectation to move faster:

> Some of us were able to show, to share some of the things that have happened to us at a place of work. Here in England. It's not just something that you, just, 'ok, right now, we are checking this, "a novel project, was it actioned, was it this, was it that"', and we move on.

For all of the above reasons, the project label was also challenged and the decision to formalise the work as a project was experienced as a "double-edged sword".

4.2.4. Insufficient baseline data and insufficiently specific goals
A further re-occurring concern was that baseline data were not collected appropriately. Consequently, it was difficult, close to impossible, to make a reliable judgement if the project had made a difference. The lack of clarity about "what good looks like" and of specificity of goals were sometimes discussed as the other missing ingredient in measuring progress.

The typical counterargument to such concerns (through rarer than the concerns) was that much of what the project aims at is difficult to measure, that an over-emphasis on measurement can result in "meaningless" measures, and that what represents success is difficult to pin down.

The discussion of challenges of and opportunities for measurement remained too abstract with one exception. An interviewee shared well thought-through, systematic observations and hypotheses about metrics and goals related to recruitment for diversity.

4.2.5. Instances of being "cornered" or, vice versa, prevented from performing an active role
There were rare mentions of individuals being "cornered" to perform certain roles related to the project (indirect reports, i.e. from an interviewee who was told this as opposed to having experienced it).

Contrasting experiences were, however, also shared, suggesting that waiting for volunteers was not necessarily a better course of action. One interviewee described how the question of their manager, delivered with a clear projection of openness to and acceptance of any response, helped them resolve an inner hesitation if to become more actively engaged with the Anti-racism Project.

There were reports of global majority members of staff volunteering to lead project activities but their offer being turned down. The latter case was subsequently handled through involvement of the Anti-Racism Project Team.

4.3. Highlighted project initiatives

To respond to one of the main questions in the evaluation brief, "What aspects of the project have had the greatest impact?", we asked a range of questions about activities, events, initiatives, resources, communication materials, features, etc. which stood out for participants, made a difference to them, had the greatest impact on them. Frequently, in response to these and similar questions asking interviewees to "remember", they struggled with specifics: "I think I did [look at some of the resources]. I don't actually remember… because it was a while back, but I think I do remember reading …"; "[C]an I remember the discussion? No, it would have been … about …". "Ohh, crikey, it's hard trying to remember everything now, isn't it?!"; "[M]aybe that's wishful thinking rather than proper remembering".

Here we present the two elements of the project (an event and a process/ structure) which were singled out most often as impactful, standing out, best remembered and described in rich detail. These are the "What's in a name?" workshop and the diverse job interview panel. In the summary of findings, we propose an alternative view on what aspects of the project have had the greatest impact, based on the broader picture of impacts described.

4.3.1. "What's in a name?" workshop

If there was one theme that attracted focused attention in all interviews, that was the "What's in a name?" workshop (Feb 2023).[2] It had discussed the importance of a

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[2] Part of Race Equality Week, 6th – 12th February 2023; attended by 38 members of staff, making it the best-attended event of the week.

person's name and the powerful signal sent by a person or an organisation making an effort to use a person's 'true name', relative to a standard practice for individuals with non-British or non-Western names to shorten, simplify or even replace them because they are persistently mispronounced or because their use is avoided. No other topic was infused with a similar sense of wonder, fascination and often gratitude for the insight. This was regardless of whether the interviewee was white or of the global majority, had a British or non-British name, easy-to-pronounce or a hard-to-pronounce one, although those whose names were "difficult" engaged with the topic for longer.

Both the clarity of insight about something so basic yet so important and the "practical", "actionable" aspect of the workshop were consistently emphasised. In addition to the personal-level impact, the workshop was considered to have inspired a basic HIN-principle that "[h]ere, we make the effort"; "you can be called whatever you are called; it's our responsibility to work out how to pronounce it".

4.3.2. Diverse job interview panels

Of the structures associated with the Anti-racism Project, having a diverse job interview panel was discussed most often. The practice preceded the Anti-racism Project. It was an HR initiative put in place by Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust (GSTT). During early stages of the anti-racism work, significant concerns about the implementation of the GSTT requirement were identified, including people being brought to tears by the manner in which requests were made. Such concerns were subsequently addressed in the context of the Anti-racism Project, including through a recent focus group (March 2023). This trajectory may mean that some of the reports of tokenism below concern earlier periods, as some interviewees seemed to believe that this was an initiative set up by the project.

The practice was appreciated, including by global majority staff who were recruited through such a process: "[It] puts you at ease because you know that at least they'll try, try to cut down the racial bias amongst those people". Both global majority and white members of staff who took part in such panels felt that the practice added a different perspective to the process. They also reported demonstrable effects on shortlisting decisions and interview scores.

One of two major concerns around the diverse panels was that global majority staff "get called a lot to do that", by virtue of being a small proportion of the workforce. This took them away from the demands of their day-to-day job and personal and professional development opportunities.

The ways they were asked to perform the role had been jarring at times: it felt "weird"; it had been "rude, rude". This may have improved as the Anti-racism Project progressed. There were reports that "because of this project, I feel as though they [global majority members of staff] understand … [there is] a stronger purpose of why … they probably should become a diverse panel member. And, equally, I feel as though line managers have better approaches to asking people to join that panel".

Some interviewees relayed reports of tokenism ("from what I've heard, that person often is just tokenistic"; "I don't think they're involved in any of the actual decision making of who is appointed") or experiences of being asked to serve as "the diverse member"[3] when they did not feel they could be reasonably considered one.

One global majority interviewee reported to have swung from one side of the pendulum to the other in terms of attitude: from a doubt about tokenism ("just because I'm [ethnicity], doesn't give me the right to interview someone") and a need to "process" it, "really sit and think" to a strong commitment to engage with the process.

Outside of these two initiatives, impactful events, resources, etc. were generally described far more briefly. Examples were dispersed too: the workshops to clarify a team's anti-racism commitments; the sessions with external presenters; a "shocking" video on health inequalities associated with racism; one-to-one conversations; Black History Month as a whole. Some responses focused on the mechanism behind the impact: the sharing of lived experiences; the "interactions sparked"; "just talking about it".

Importantly, inputs that were small, low-key or even not-quite-about-racism (but about cultural humility, for instance) could also have impact. Some interviewees reported to have had *a-ha* moments followed by immediate action (e.g. revising patient and community facing materials) right after such as-if minor events.

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[3] The phrasing of "a diverse member" was also problematised, by virtue of "diversity" being a characteristic of a group, not a person.

4.4. Impact

4.4.1. Forms of impact achieved to a meaningful degree

The sequencing of impacts reported below moves, roughly, from impacts that may remain largely internal (e.g. changes in thoughts, feelings and attitudes of a single person) to impacts that are more visible and collective. As a qualitative study, this evaluation cannot estimate reliably how frequent those types of impact were. Broad quantifiers (e.g. 'most interviewees') are included but may be reflecting the nature of the sample as opposed to serving as a rough guide of frequency. Nonetheless, every interviewee reported some non-trivial and lasting impact of the project in terms of actions, even if small personal-level actions outside of the workplace rather than ones aimed at dismantling deep-seated workplace structures. In the words of one (white) interviewee, however, it is through the "tip" of "the little things" that one begins to see "the iceberg" of institutionalised racism.

This section discusses forms of impact that have been achieved if not for all, for most interviewees who highlighted a particular type of impact. Divergent perspectives are noted when there was a contrasting view, but it was a minority view, typically one-off. Further below, 'uncertain impacts' are reported, in cases where interviewees' views on whether an impact had occurred or not were more equally split. 'Growing pains', negative impacts, unintended consequences and potential risks are presented from p. 22 onwards.

4.4.1.1. Cognitive, emotional and motivational impacts

All interviewees reported some level of change in how they thought about race, racism, anti-racism and themselves relative to those phenomena. They noticed new elements in situations, relationships and structures around them. They made new internal checks on how something would be experienced by the person they were interacting with. There were new inner conversations and engagement with new ideas. Most of those cognitive experiences had an emotional aspect. The personal impact of the new thoughts, ideas, emotions and experiences varied in intensity, yet, overall, a noticeable inner change had occurred.

Most interviewees reported becoming more aware of the workings of implicit bias and making an effort to self-check and self-correct for them. This was noted by both white members of staff and global majority ones relative to people from racial and ethnic

groups different to their own. Similarly, most interviewees, both global majority and white, reported a new sensitisation to microaggressions. A small number of interviewees described conversations in which the concept was contested but, largely, this was considered a productive way of engaging with it.

There were some clear differences in cognitive, emotional and motivational impacts between white and global majority staff.

Global majority interviewees reported a new self-permission to allow anger when experiencing racial discrimination and, conversely, a deep gratitude when somebody expressed a heartfelt acknowledgement of the challenges they face or called out a discriminatory behaviour.

> *[T]here's always an element of having letting people pass like, 'It's fine. It's not the end of the world'. But … I'm starting, or I need to start, learning the fact that I can be pissed off with some comments and be allowed to feel that.*

> *[S]ome people just want, just come up afterwards [and say], 'we didn't […], we didn't know … we would generally be ignorant … of this fact'.*

> *And then they've messaged me on my phone to say, 'Oh my God. [interviewee name], thank you so much. You're my hero!'* [in response to intervening in a situation of unfair treatment]

They also reported questioning long-standing behaviours of making oneself small and fitting in and reflecting on "buried" trauma, pushed at the back of the mind a long time ago and never dealt with.

> *The workshop on names made me think, 'why are we, as people of colour, trying to occupy as little space as possible? Why was I shrinking to fit in?'.*

> *One of the things I learnt from this project is, 'It's ok to acknowledge what had happened … In acknowledging it and in speaking to someone about it, there is a sort of … therapeutic … healing to the trauma' ... The project has helped me crystallise these things in my head and to be able to talk about it.*

In one case, a global majority member of staff considered how past trauma affected not only them but the white members of staff they interacted with:

> *I left the organisation, but the experience did not leave me. And then I get into another organisation, then meet another white manager and in my head, I'm just almost reacting to this person, transferring my cautiousness and maybe hurt from what had happened ten years ago to this poor person who does not have a clue about what had happened to me.*

White participants reported a new appreciation of the realities of daily life for some of their colleagues and an awareness of their own (relative) privilege, even if, in some cases their own background could hardly be described as privileged.

> *Having [microaggression] clearly explained from a global majority group point of view … I found quite upsetting … [H]ow subtle it is, just, like, not making eye contact, closing off your body language and just how <u>relentless</u>[4] that must feel growing up on the receiving end of that.*

Frequently, the new thoughts, perceptions, attitudes, etc. related to race, racism and anti-racism generalised to other forms of discrimination and bias. Interviewees were questioning their behaviours relative to individuals with other protected characteristics, such as sexuality, disabilities or religious affiliation. Others added pronouns to their signatures, as a way of taking a stance against gender-related bias.

There were also reports of greater attention to cultural differences overall. Once natural behaviours were adjusted towards a more sensitive middle ground, including in cases where forms of respect in one's culture (e.g. direct, passionate challenges to an argument) could be experienced as aggression and dismissal in another culture.

A smaller number of interviewees commented on changes at the level of broader self-knowledge ("learning more about myself"), confidence ("The project has helped empower me more, it's given me more confidence") and personality ("It has made me a more empathetic person"). Change at that level did not require deep immersion in the project and may thus be unpredictable or undetected. In turn, deep immersion was

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[4] Strong emphasis made.

compatible with softer claims of impact: "No, I don't think I've changed truly, as a person. I've just learned more, that's all".

4.4.1.2. Impact on actions aimed at learning more

Several white interviewees spoke of having committed to learning more about racism, anti-racism and associated issues. While this was mostly by booking themselves on training sessions recommended by the project team, in some cases the exploration went far deeper, including in the context of higher education degrees taken alongside work. The discussions enabled by the Anti-racism Project were felt to have "added weight of importance" to such training opportunities while, in the past, they had been taken up more "superficially", in a generic "a good thing to do" way.

4.4.1.3. Impact on conversations and communication

There was unanimous agreement that the project had created "very open spaces for dialogue". It had enabled HIN staff to have conversations about race – at all and far more comfortably, "without stumbling over your words". "Comfortably" could accommodate the discomfort:

> We're able to talk about it in a really, really comfortable way. Obviously, sometimes the conversation wouldn't be comfortable.

> We're just having an awareness and also having the ability to talk about it without stumbling over your words, feeling really awkward … Being able to talk about something … without stumbling over your words and without being embarrassed about it is the key.

The degree to which the guided, facilitated conversation led to 'other' conversations differed across teams. In some teams, the conversation was actively continued and expanded on during team meetings ("we talked a lot about what we saw on the slides, about what it made us feel"). It also prompted less formal "spin-off conversations", including while chatting in breaks from work. In other teams, "any discussions we've had, have taken place quite formally".

The project has also created new language habits, a greater self-reflexivity and attention to language, and new conversations about language, both inner and outer.

This was most noticeable in relation to the term "global majority". The latter was broadly accepted, appreciated, and considered far preferable to "ethnic minorities", even if initially it "stir[ed] a lot of opinions and a lot of confusion". Some interviewees were still hesitant to endorse it, primarily because it was "such a huge bucket" which homogenises an immensely complex and diverse group.

Interviewees reported becoming more mindful in how they spoke to others, including people outside of the workplace – friends, staff they were served by as customers in daily life, or strangers. This was reported by both white and global majority interviewees. The impact was not attributed singularly to the Anti-racism Project. Broader societal, social media and friends' and family's influences mattered, but the project was one of its drivers.

> [W]e're boys…we like to say a bunch of jokes and stuff like that. But now we try to be a bit … a lot more respectful of one another … more tame when we say things to one another … more sensitive essentially.

> [H]e's [non-HIN friend] matured, in the sense of saying he wants to be a little more sensitive, and I've done in the same way. These projects and these works … had enhanced that and strengthened that.

While such changes in communication generally affected word choice, one interviewee identified, as a key take-away from the project, no longer considering one's accent as the reference standard when talking to non-native speakers. They had replaced their implicit position of "I am the default and you have to work around it" with a conscious accommodation of what the other side may be hearing.

Some interviewees appeared to have thought in detail about "politically correct" language as a phenomenon, primarily how dynamic it is and how using the "right phrases" does not necessarily signal lack of bias or an anti-racist stance. One (white) interviewee considered the importance of a language that "helps" the discussion and avoids "othering" through language. They also appealed for a language embedded in the realities of HIN's south London context.

Some interviewees reported effects of the project on HIN's written and visual communication. This was mentioned both by members of staff who generated internally or externally facing copy, e.g. internal newsletters or patient-facing materials, or who were primarily recipients of HIN communication. One global majority interviewee commented that the organisation's written communication had definitely become more inclusive but did not perceive similar effects on the intra-organisational verbal communication.

Some global majority participants reported a new capacity to sense-check with white colleagues whether they were being "paranoid", "emotional" or "over-reacting" after situations of potential racial discrimination and to experience the relief of being validated in their perception. Previously, such self-doubt and debate would have remained unexpressed.

Interestingly, many interviewees spoke about discussing the project and what they had learnt from it with family and friends. Generally, it was about 'just sharing' one's learning from and experiences with the project, but at least in one case the sharing was also intentional education, aimed at gently guiding a family member towards overcoming their own overt racism.

4.4.1.4. Impact in terms of work that seeks structural change

Several interviewees spoke of efforts seeking deeper change they have initiated in their teams. Of these, work on recruitment had gone beyond the setting of commitments and/or initial explorations. In one case, the new awareness, intentions and actions informed by the Anti-racism Project have contributed to a 50:50 ratio of white to global majority staff in a team. In another case, modification of the advertising approach at the level of HR had led to unprecedented interest in two relatively low-banded posts, with over 100% increase in applications. One of the panel members for the post stated that, at least at the level of international universities (the shortlisting had been blinded), they have "never seen that [much diversity] before, after all the shortlisting that I've done at the HIN".

There was also a broader perception that, as a result of the project, the HIN is "much clearer now about how we want to be recruiting".

4.4.1.5. Impact on patient- and community-facing projects

The Anti-racism Project was credited for its impact on designing patient- and community-facing projects and evaluations that were even more sensitive to the circumstances and needs of the people they were for. The minimisation of barriers to engaging marginalised communities became even more intentional. Arrangements for remuneration and travel, the location and timing of engagement events, the background of interviewers were looked at through the magnifying glass of the likelihood of excluding certain groups of people. The topic of health inequalities seems to have acquired a new depth for many interviewees working on it.

One participant reported to have decided to identify research on racism in the context they were working in and to have found out that it was "shockingly" little.

4.4.1.6. Impact on interactions with partners and the latter's subsequent actions

A most basic way in which effects from the project may be trickling into interactions with partners was the use of the term "global majority". Some interviewees mentioned that colleagues in the NHS had adopted the term on hearing it and were spreading it within their services. Some members of staff shared their newly acquired knowledge of racial inequalities in healthcare ("[W]e're sharing a lot more insights about how to address inequalities in healthcare") or signposted partners to organisations they had learnt about through the Anti-racism Project, e.g. Mabadiliko.

In some cases, the networks and forums where the HIN is one partner amongst many have also been involved in key activities on the project, such as the early team-level workshops.

The anti-racism work at the HIN interacted with work on the Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework (PCREF), a recently developed document which will be mandatory for all Mental Health Trusts, with south London mental health trusts already piloting it (as of April 2023), even if the work streams arose independently of one another. Interviewees differed in terms of their beliefs about the degree to which ideas crystallising through the Anti-racism Project had fed into the PCREF and how exactly the two work streams fitted together.

Finally, project team members discussed contributing successfully to the away-day of an external, also predominantly white, organisation. Some of the feedback received was of

participants being "a 100%" certain that the event would accelerate their organisation's journey towards anti-racism and of "good discussions with colleagues about what it would take to launch our own anti-racism project" (quotes from post-event emails).

4.4.1.7. Impact on first-time impressions at interviews

One interviewee reported to have found it impressive how their job interview involved questions touching on inequality and race, and "whether you can think outside of the box as to who is missing from the conversation".

4.4.1.8. Impact on daily working life for global majority staff

Unprompted generic comments about the overall experience of global majority staff working at the HIN were limited. A couple of interviewees reported a new sense of belonging to and pride in the organisation:

> It's made me a bit more comfortable in this workplace. It's built my trust towards my managers … because it makes me know that it's not that they just say, 'we are an anti-racist organisation, by the way'. They have these workshops … have these sessions … [T]hey are trying to actively do something about it.

> [I]t's definitely made me a bit more included […], a bit more at ease and just a bit happier to work here, knowing that we're trying to actually make a change.

> I am really proud I was part of it [the project], part of the organisation as well.

4.4.2. Unstable impacts

In some interviews, early comments asserted that certain impacts had occurred while later comments threw doubt on the degree. Alternatively, different interviewees reported contrasting experiences, observations or behaviours.

4.4.2.1. Being given a voice and a safe space

Most noticeably, the first type of unstable impact (making a claim and later discounting it) concerned the experience of global majority interviewees of having been given a voice or a safe space to speak in:

> I think that's what's been really helpful, it's given me, it's given me a voice.
> Later in the interview:

[I]t didn't really give a lot of people a voice. It's given me a voice to some degree. And I'm still thinking about what to do. [Note MP: Interviewee is still thinking about escalating an issue.]

I felt it was a comfortable space to talk about it … I felt validated, I felt comfortable, and it felt like a safe space.
Later in the interview:
And that [note MP, experience retracted to protect confidentiality] *made me feel like, 'maybe that wasn't a safe space?'. And that had a knock-on effect for* [subsequent event] *… I just felt very quiet.*

Other global majority interviewees owned more strongly their new-found ability to speak up and share openly but acknowledged that their experiences were in the context of a very supportive team.

4.4.2.2. Impact on one's actions vis-à-vis experiences of racism

Some interviewees reported to have called out behaviours they perceived as driven by or intersecting with racial discrimination. This had happened both in the context of HIN and their broader life. Using one's "white privilege" was often an element of the description. Some global majority colleagues reported having experienced racial discrimination in the workplace (by internal or external colleagues) and for somebody else to have escalated the issue.

Only one situation escalated to the Anti-racism Project Team was discussed in some detail across interviews. It concerned a case of activities on the Anti-racism Project being (micro)managed in a way that was experienced as racially discriminating. The escalation had, reportedly, resulted in useful learning for the person whose behaviour was perceived as problematic. It had helped them handle better a subsequent situation of racial discrimination involving an external partner.

Some interviewees reported having been in situations where they wanted to intervene but felt they did not have the communication skills to do so constructively. Complicating factors were the need to challenge a superior and/or the uncertainty of the boundary between playfulness and discrimination. Others refrained from intervening because the person "just won't understand"; "it's their personality and they will say it again".

Some global majority interviewees mentioned that colleagues have passed on stories about discriminatory remarks made by other colleagues, but not called out the behaviour in the moment.

4.4.2.3. Behaviours of racial discrimination that endure

Box 1 presents types of discriminatory behaviours experienced at the HIN currently or at least while the project was underway. The types of behaviours have been abstracted from specific examples the interviewees gave.

Box 1: Experiences of racism at the HIN

Directly related to the job

Observing that white members of staff are given more opportunities, at times they "get the door held open for [them]".

Feeling that white members of staff who seek more flexibility in their working patterns have their requests approved far more easily; feeling you need to put in extra hours and work much harder so that the opportunity is not taken away.

Feeling an overall different type of treatment than your white colleagues.

Having a person change course once a behaviour is challenged but not apologising.

Arising in social situations around the job

Minimization of one's expressed concerns about racially driven comments by phrases such as: "It's just him/her", "You know him/her", "He/she didn't mean that".

Identifying "parallels" of being treated differently which are no parallels at all.

Stilted, narrowly constrained conversations that, for instance, dry out quick, avoid certain topics and consistently seek interaction around a single topic related to a minority culture as opposed to simply recognising the person opposite as a human being you have a lot in common with.

Attributing appearance, behaviours or conversations to ethnic or racial origin, while they cut across ethnicity and race. It may be made in the form of a compliment too.

Comments revealing assumptions that if a person is of a certain ethnic minority, they are, almost by default, impoverished.

Comments revealing assumptions that high-profile individuals of certain ethnic minorities are only popular amongst a particular ethnic minority, as opposed to having a valued contribution to society that can touch hearts and minds in all social groups and strata.

Directly related to the Anti-racism Project

Declining offers to lead the project (resolved).

Going full circle and re-asserting the needs of white people.

4.4.3. Growing pains, unintended consequences, negative impacts and uncertain risks

4.4.3.1. Emotional discomfort and emotional exhaustion

The feeling of emotional discomfort was often discussed by interviewees and largely presented as expected. It was experienced by global majority and white members of staff alike, even if the sources were different.

> *It was difficult for me to address and talk about it openly but [pause], yeah, I, I, I still wanted to share what I felt. [GM]*

> *It wasn't easy! Some of us talked about things that have happened in our lives. [GM]*

> *[U]nless you're uncomfortable about this at some point, you haven't realized the benefits of the society that you live in are because you're white. (W)*

> *[W]hat I did appreciate was that [role], who's of a white background, did say that [he/she] feels uncomfortable with how to address this, because [he/she] doesn't know how to … I liked that comment because this will never be a comfortable conversation. And the first step is to be uncomfortable.*

Other respondents, including global majority ones, did not identify a level of personal emotion that became uncomfortable. They were more concerned about the emotional impact of the work on others:

> *It's not too emotional for me, it's more like I'm thinking about the other people … I'm just trying my best to make a change. And if I get too emotional about it, I feel I probably won't think as clearly. [GM]*

Some respondents also felt that, in the long run, the discomfort was worth it:

> *[A]s much as I didn't feel comfortable afterwards, I can now say, 6-7 months later, that I'm glad we did have that.*

Still other interviewees believed that certain truly uncomfortable conversations with white colleagues have not yet happened.

The overall emotional intensity of the work could also result, after months-to-years of full-hearted commitment, in exhaustion. Such experiences were reported by both global majority and white members of staff:

> *We've tried this for two years and it's hard, it's a hard thing to engage with. Is the road to engage with it further or not, at that level, at that emotionally intense level? … I'm exhausted!*

> *I found it very emotionally draining at times, but that's nothing compared to … I don't have personal experiences of race and racism in the same way.*

4.4.3.2. People scared to say the wrong thing, which stifles discussion, learning and growth

Some white interviewees acknowledged being far more "cautious" and "careful" when speaking to global majority persons but normalised the experience. They felt that the stage of caution was necessary in changing society. It was also likely to be protracted: "it's probably going to be generational; we need to do that to get past this time".

Other interviewees (both global majority and white ones), in contrast, perceived such over-consciousness and worry about saying the wrong thing as counterproductive. It made people hold back on speaking or consistently agree overtly, without sharing their deepest thoughts. As a result, the opportunity for a meaningful discussion that helps both sides learn and grow was inhibited. Experiences were also shared of having been 'taught' that it was safer to keep quiet.

> *People are very scared. We're quite a liberal, open-minded organization by and large … I think people are really worried to come across like, in case they say something that might seem judgmental, and that stifles discussion and conversation. (W)*

> *I imagine [he/she] probably is now aware of some of the comments [he/she] makes and doesn't want to talk too much in case [he/she] says the wrong thing … But you don't know what you said is wrong until you're corrected and it's being open to correction. (GM)*

> *I feel like whatever I say, they're just going to agree. (GM)*

> *The message I got was 'don't say anything'. (W)*

Still other global majority participants felt that some of their white colleagues worried about things they did not expect them to "get right":

> [mimicking white staff, with amusement and affectionately] *Did I say the right thing …*
> *oh, oh, oh? … I don't want them to beat themselves up. (GM)*

4.4.3.3. High demands on the time of global majority staff

Some white interviewees expressed a concern about the time global majority staff dedicated to anti-racism work. It could take them away from routine work, "adding to their burden" and "draining them". It also limited their time for personal and professional development. Paradoxically, doing less for the Anti-racism Project could mean that a global majority member of staff would have more time to focus on personal and professional development. This, in turn, would help them enhance their career and act as a more effective solution to handling structural barriers of racism in the workplace than addressing those structural barriers head on.

Some global majority staff spoke, indeed, of having invested their own time to do anti-racism work but keeping it "quiet for the most part". They feared that something they enjoyed and were strongly emotionally invested in would be "taken away". They felt they had "the bandwidth and the drive" to do the work and did not want their managers to be too concerned.

Other global majority staff noted that work on the Anti-racism Project was not restricted to global majority staff and asserted that they had made a choice to be involved.

4.4.3.4. Increased workload at managerial levels

Structural change to tackle racial inequality could increase managerial workload too. For instance, a manager reported to have dedicated an unsustainable number of working days to a recent recruitment process, fielding dozens of emails and phone calls from candidates, spending 2.5 days shortlisting, conducting 8 interviews, and nonetheless feeling that some of the elements of the process were rushed and that bias may have crept in, even if the final candidates were excellent.

4.4.3.5. New choices for and expectations of global majority staff

Some global majority interviewees realised that now their words and actions were more likely to have an effect, they would be faced with more decisions, at times dilemmas, about whether to say something or not, take action or not. The expectations – whether actual or perceived – of people around them were also becoming higher. This was especially the case when a person was the only representative of the global majority in a particular context.

> *[I]f I have ever escalated it in the past, nothing's ever happened. And now I'm starting to see something happen, then [it's], 'oh, crap. I need to think about this better'.*

> *I felt like they were all looking at me to make sure that they were saying the right thing.*

> *I didn't really like [that] because I'm, I'm not a gatekeeper for the whole global majority.*

With all its positives, being in the spotlight could also objectify people. Relaying comments of a global majority individual from an external organisation, one of the interviewees stated that colleagues can begin to feel like "case studies", asked way too often "what does it feel like for you?". Increased attention to unpalatable comments may also impede career progression:

> *[I]t's bringing the spotlight onto [people of colour]: 'I feel a bit uncomfortable now because … I'm going to receive all these questions regarding racism and that might impede on my development or my career if I speak out of turn'.*

4.4.3.6. Challenges for individuals at the boundary to locate themselves

Several interviewees discussed, variably in reference to themselves or others, that individuals who do not self-identify as either "global majority" or "white" can find it difficult to locate themselves in the Anti-racism Project debate and activities. These can be individuals of mixed heritage who can "pass" as white; people of white minorities who have been brutally discriminated against throughout history; white but not "white British"; even white British but having a background that felt nothing like "white privilege". Representatives of such 'other' backgrounds may be the least likely members of staff to

voice their perspective or, as reported in some cases, to have "closed off" after unwelcoming responses to their contribution.

4.4.3.7. Expectation that the project team would provide the answers
Project team members and colleagues working closely with them noted that the project team were sometimes expected to provide far more answers than they could:

> *I was concerned that people will think that I'm an expert in this and I'm not an expert. … I have personal interest, but then I am also learning a lot as we go along. So I am developing my knowledge, but I'm not an expert at all.*

With a greater degree of uncertainty, the following two risks were identified:

4.4.3.8. Sharpened concern for global majority staff that one might be "the tick-box person"
Some global majority interviewees reported that they experienced a recurring doubt that they might have been recruited into the HIN or given opportunities because they ticked the right boxes of diversity. While the doubt and fear fluctuated and were reported as generally well-managed, they were central inner experiences for global majority staff who touched on them.

> *There's a small part of me that thinks I'm a tick box for my team.*
> *And I'm not saying that I am. I wasn't … I do think I'm, I deserve the position, but I think that's my only little bug bear at the moment, 'was I picked for that reason?'.*

The experience seemed moderated by team dynamics and atmosphere. A global majority interviewee who affirmed strongly that "I have not felt this way" (a tick-box person) felt that their team was helping them see themselves as "adding value". "That did not even give me the space to think that, 'oh, I was chosen to do this because I am [origin]'".

One global majority interviewee mentioned that it was entering such a white organisation that had triggered worries about being the tick-box person, not the sharpened awareness of racism in the workplace the project had led to.

4.4.3.9. Indirect reports of global majority members of staff leaving

The final claim in this category concerns a hypothesis based on indirect reports (an interviewee discussing the choices and reasoning of others). There were reports that some global majority staff had left the HIN and/or its associated structures partly because of challenges of working with their manager, including in terms of experiences of racial discrimination. At least in one case, this was not reported in the exit interview ("[Name] just wanted to leave").

It can be hypothesised that, in some cases, the project has been more successful in sharpening awareness of racism amongst the global majority staff being managed than in modifying the behaviours of their white managers. As a result, global majority staff may choose to leave. Such a hypothesis needs to be checked directly with people who have left the HIN. Our attempts to reach them were not successful. The hypothesis and the (indirect) evidence behind it are included here as they relate to a high-impact unintended consequence.

4.4.4. Differences in uptake and impact across teams

Identifying team belonging was not sought in the interviews, even if some interviewees mentioned it unprompted. This was partly because the evaluation was conducted at the level of the organisation, partly because the attribution of successes and challenges at the level of individual teams requires a different methodology and further ethical safeguards. In general, however, it was clear that the uptake and impact of the project in some teams had been much more significant than in others. Some participants reported conversations about racism, anti-racism and the project as being a constant current running through their team's work and daily interactions. Other felt engagement was lacking:

> *I feel like my team could be better. And I don't know how to do that. And I think that's been my biggest frustration at the moment.*

> *I definitely felt like it [having the team workshop] was more of a tick box for them to say that they've done it as opposed to having some outcome from it.*

4.5. HIN as the project context

This section summarises aspects of the organisational culture and nature of work at the HIN which are likely to have affected the development and implementation of the project,

both positively and negatively. The impact of the project and/or its limitations are not only a matter of inherent project characteristics. They are also determined by its context. This section may be particularly helpful for external readers seeking to develop and implement similar initiatives in their own organisations.

The push and pull of contextual factors at the HIN had resulted, as a sum total, in an atmosphere of "a real enthusiasm and appetite" to do something about racial discrimination.

4.5.1. Enabling factors

4.5.1.1. Positive, compassionate, supportive and values-driven culture

The HIN was frequently described as a "fantastic", "lovely place to work". It was praised for its positive, compassionate, mature, trust-based culture. It was perceived as one of the (rare) organisations which take its values seriously. Staff felt enabled to do their job well and supported to overcome challenges. Decision making was experienced as having "a real compassionate heart at the centre". The organisational culture was seen as embodying much of the caring mindset of health and social care work, while being shielded from many of the gruelling aspects frontline health and social care staff experience. The HIN was even described as "a bit of a bubble" relative to the wider society in terms of levels of acceptance, empathy ("it recruits for empathy, from what I've seen") and openness to difference and diversity.

There were disclaimers about differences across teams and periods of difficult experiences ("I've had moments of extreme frustration working at the HIN"). Nonetheless, the overall representation was of a highly positive and valued organisational culture.

4.5.1.2. Lovely, friendly, helpful people as well as self-reflective, articulate and open ones

Colleagues were consistently described as "warm", "friendly", "supportive", "compassionate", "welcoming", "helpful" people "you can connect with and you can relate to", apart from "highly-skilled" and "competent" individuals you can learn a lot from. The rare members of staff who were perceived as exceptions were, in the words of one interviewee, "stand[ing] out like a sore thumb".

The manner of presenting one's point of view during the interviews was consistently one of taking ownership for one's opinions and perspective, without trying to assert them as 'the truth' but as a perspective offered to the debate as just that, one view amongst many. Many interviewees hedged their claims by highlighting characteristics of their personality or positioning, e.g. being white, higher up in the organisation, of a certain personality type, etc.

Even if a feeling of intense frustration or strong criticism was conveyed, these were disclaimed or softened by owning that the perception may be personality-driven, for instance of somebody who likes moving to action quickly or likes practical things, or while acknowledging the hard work on the project.

4.5.1.3. Size of the organisation and lack of cases of discrimination of grave proportion

The relatively small size of the organisation and the fact that racism was identified as an issue but "not a massive issue that was going to tear the organisation apart" were experienced as further factors that placed the HIN in a good position to begin to address racism and, ideally, help other, including much bigger, organisations in multicultural geographical areas.

4.5.1.4. Prior initiatives on equality, diversity and identity; broader supporting structures

As one interviewee phrased it, the HIN was "primed for this kind of work". It maintains a rich web of interconnected initiatives and structures supporting staff health, well-being and self-exploration as well as engagement with challenges of diversity and inclusion. This is in addition to a range of outward-facing projects which address health inequalities, involvement, patient experience and mental health and, as such, both demand a particular type of professional background and further sensitise staff to issues of vulnerability, empowerment and well-being.

Most notably for this project, the HIN has had a highly successful programme of work called Identity Season (Sep 2019): a month of activities around identity, aiming to enable staff to "bring their whole selves to work". These activities included three "experience exchanges" where personal, potentially triggering, issues were discussed in a safe space. The experience exchanges were described by one interviewee as "one of the most meaningful experiences I've ever had in a professional context".

The HIN has "health and well-being reps" (representatives) who had prepared campaigns around Black History Month (2020, 2021 and 2022) and Race Equality Week (2023), as part of the broad range of well-being activities they initiate, ranging from yoga and meditation through "Pitch your passion" sessions to playing the ukulele.

The HIN also has a regular programme of "co-consulting groups" where members of staff can talk about problems in a confidential environment. In these, self-nominating staff at all levels of the organisation are allocated into small groups. They meet to receive feedback on current work issues from colleagues they do not work with on a regular basis.

Some participants also mentioned that, at times, it was difficult to draw a line between the Anti-racism Project and "other stuff going on".

4.5.1.5. Too much of a good thing?

Finally, some interviewees mentioned that the HIN may be, at times, "too positive" for its own good. It may not acknowledge sufficiently the limitations of its power (in this case, that it would not be able "to fix racism"). People were also seen as "too fond of each other" to risk conflict. In the words of a white member of staff:

> The global majority colleagues in the team have huge respect and affection for the white colleagues as well. And I don't think that they want to upset anybody. So quite often I hear words tempered a little.

> [T]he white colleagues care very much about their global majority colleagues and will be really upset to hear it.

The commitment to broad agreement and collaboration, "to get everyone on board", could also result in being too slow to institute organisational change (see below).

4.5.2. Constraining factors

4.5.2.1. Somewhat slow to change as an organisation

In some respects, the organisation was considered inflexible, risk-averse and too slow to change (for an organisation that supports innovation and change in others), not least because of the larger bureaucratic machine surrounding it. A further factor that

constrained change at the level of the organisation was the relative independence of teams. Some members of staff ultimately chose to redirect their work from the organisational to the team level:

> [I]t has felt quite difficult trying to get agreement at an organisation level, and not because nobody wants to do it, but it's just been exhausting trying to jump through the hoops. … And it probably sounds awful, but you get to a certain point where you're like, 'I can't impact on everyone else's team … I will do it in my area and have my conscience clear that I've done as much as I can'.

4.5.2.2. Insufficient support for staff to grow and develop internally

Several interviewees (both white and global majority) commented that the HIN is not particularly successful at offering internal development and promotion opportunities. "[A] lot of people do need to move on for their promotions"; "I don't feel the organisation is particularly interested in developing me". A level of traditional, narrow typecasting of "people who are seen as having potential" (e.g. a preference for extroverts or members of higher social classes) was also discussed. Difficulties were identified in moving internally from "corporate" functions (interestingly described in contrasting terms – "core", "central" but also "back office" and "supportive") to topic-specific areas of work.

Barriers to internal progression applied to both white and global majority staff, but the low diversity at senior levels and, in relative terms, higher diversity in corporate functions meant that global majority staff experienced the consequences more acutely, "without anyone meaning to do anything".

4.5.3. Ambivalent forces

The predominantly white make-up of the HIN – as a whole organisation and as leadership – was perceived as enabling the project and broader work on anti-racism in some respects and constraining it in others. On the one hand, this discrepancy was experienced as a lack of integrity of a most "shocking" kind. On the other hand, precisely because of that, the motivation to do something about it was strong: "That should give us more push to make sure that we have that diversity". To complicate matters further, these factors interacted with other factors crucial for the success (or otherwise) of the work – for instance, that predominantly white leadership was held in high regard and overall perceived very positively.

4.5.3.1. Supportive leadership – but too white

The leadership at the HIN was experienced as decisively supportive, compassionate and "mature" in general. With respect to the Anti-racism Project, there was almost unanimous agreement that it showed clear, unequivocal, powerful support for it, although there were also voices that called for (even) greater support, particularly from the Executive Team, and for leaders' help in advancing the work in teams where it was struggling.

Having a (white) member of the leadership team as one of the project initiators and leads was seen as being "really helpful in being able to take it to the leadership" (GM). The CEO of HIN, Rishi Das-Gupta, is himself a member of the global majority. As one global majority interviewee said, "Seeing a person of colour as a CEO just feels nice. It makes you feel [that] if he can do it, you can do it too". In partial contrast, a white member of staff felt that the CEO's support for the project could be even stronger and more visible.

The sentiment of leadership support for the project was shared by both global majority and white staff:

> [A]ll the events were supported through attendance of the Exec Team. There was always a member of the Exec Team, one or two of them, and it was referred to in Rishi's newsletter, the CEO newsletter. There was a real kind of awareness of it across it the organisation.
> [I]t was very, very much a lot of the seniors and executives out there.

> [S]ome white … leaders, they tend to be a bit more … at least the ones that I've dealt with, a bit more active … trying to learn or trying to listen… It seems like they're actively trying to learn, which I think is really good.

Comments such as the above co-existed, typically in other parts of the interview, as if a compartmentalisation of the respective experiences was needed, with comments about the lack of diversity at leadership and Board level. The "snowy white peaks" pattern (3) – in HIN's case with a predominance of middle-class, middle-aged women – in combination with a perception of some individuals in leadership roles as racist and biased – was a reason why certain global majority staff did not want to join project activities.

It's very noticeable and lots of people externally have pointed that out to me, and considering the HIN is south London's Academic Health Sciences network, that [it] is not representational of the population they're serving. (GM)

The program directors are all clones of each other. And why is this? (GM)

[They] didn't trust some of their personal values or some of the members on the leadership team who will then have to take responsibility to take this work forward. … [W]hat they were trying to say is that some of our leadership have this issue that they need to grapple with the fact that they can come across racist and biased. (GM)

Overall, most interviewees who discussed the white leadership also recognised that "you can't take people out of those jobs"; that recruiting for diversity at that level cannot trump all other considerations; and that there are aspects of diversity that are not easily visible in appearance or behavioural terms.

The white leaders we spoke to did not shy away from directly exploring the topic, often volunteering comments prior to the interviewer asking them.

More controversially, the HIN board was seen as unacceptably white in view of the fact that membership of it was by invitation, not application.

[O]ur HIN Board, which people are invited to join, [is] far from representative of our south London population and I don't understand why that hasn't been addressed … We need to start at the top and show by example, especially as that's by invitation … If you look on our website and you see our HIN Board, it's like, 'ohh, wow, OK, that's a bit shocking'. (W)

4.5.3.2. Predominantly white organisation in an area of 38%5 global majority population

As illustrated in Table 1, the proportion of global majority staff has increased consistently since initial stages of the project, even if by small increments of 2 to 3 percentage points. As the figures for the last reporting year (2022/23) became available shortly before the

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[5] https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/hinsouthlondon/viz/Protectedcharacteristicsdashboard/Story1

current evaluation was completed, the positive tendency was not discussed in any of the interviews and may have been under-appreciated.

Table 1: Proportion of white and global majority staff in the last three reporting years[6]

Reporting year	Total number of staff	White	Global majority	Not reported	GM as % of all staff	GM as % of reported
2020/21	83	58	21	4	25%	27%
2021/22	86	57	23	6	27%	29%
2022/23	98	64	29	5	30%	31%

The key characteristic of the HIN that needed to change for it to be experienced as a truly anti-racist organisation – "when you walk into an organisation and look at the faces around you" – was its predominantly white staff make-up. This was, nonetheless, discussed in a far more matter-of-fact way than the white leadership. There were also cautionary comments against aiming to mimic the composition of the local population within the workforce: "having a representative workforce of the local population does not necessarily mean that the HIN is an anti-racist organisation" (W). The gap between white – global majority representation closing quickly felt "scary" (GM).

In partial contrast, a global majority interviewee expressed the sentiment that there was something powerful in having a predominantly white organisation take anti-racism so seriously:

> [T]he HIN is very white, so you wouldn't anticipate that there would be as many conversations about being anti-racist, and conversations … that for some people might make them uncomfortable … So that was really, really telling of [the] type of organisation I am in.

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[6] Figures for reporting years 20/21 and 21/22 as per anonymised tables used to underpin the annual reporting of pay gaps between men and women and white and non-white staff. Figures for reporting year 22/23 as per a table on "Breakdown of diversity by band" from the annual report (only table seen).

4.5.3.3. Overall high-banded organisation of more experienced professionals

Less frequently in comparison to the "whiteness" of the HIN but still regularly, interviewees considered the ways in which the high bands within the organisation supported or hindered project progress. 79% of the 98 staff at HIN in the reporting period 2022-23 were Band 7 or above. See also Table 2 below.

Table 2: Staff numbers by Agenda for Change band, 2022-23 reporting year [8]

Band	No	%
Bands 4, 5 and 6	21	21%
Band 7	21	21%
Band 8	43	44%
Clinical Directors and Very Senior Managers	13	13%

Staff turnover was described as low at the highest bands, resulting in limited opportunities to recruit for diversity at that level. Just as importantly, people belonging to the global majority are primarily at lower bands. In response to a question whether this meant that they were more concerned about the consequences of speaking up, the answer was "Yes, absolutely. You hit the nail on the head" (GM).

It was noted that the HIN was a senior organisation also in the sense that many members of staff had a fair amount of life experience and had been exposed to certain types of difficult conversations. The fact that this was not an organisation of very young individuals and/or ones who lacked emotional maturity was considered as enabling the conversation.

4.6. Looking towards the future

4.6.1. Perceptions of moving from a project model to business-as-usual

There was strong agreement that the HIN is still "at the beginning of the conversation", that "the work has only just started" and must continue. In contrast, perspectives towards the project moving to business-as-usual differed, up to being polar opposite.

Some interviewees, primarily with leadership and project management roles, were more likely to consider the shift to business-as-usual appropriate in view of competing priorities for organisational deliverables, the fact that this has been "a considerable investment for a small organisation" and that it is "too big" for a project.

Other interviewees, both global majority and white ones, were concerned. Still others were willing to trust that an irreversible change in mindset had been achieved:

> Oh, no, it would be … would be disappointing, to say the least. (GM)

> [I]t's not 'Identify problem. Fix a problem. Move on' … and that's why people are also worried that the project is coming to an end … There will be less focus, there will be less attention, but I hope that something has shifted … You can't undo people noticing things.

4.6.2. Priorities and actions for the new stage

The most frequently discussed generic priorities for the future clustered around three topics:

(1) All interviewees felt that the HIN must "keep the conversation going" and maintain the psychological safety around the topic.

(2) Most interviewees identified some type of HR initiatives as a priority for future work.

Such HR-initiatives included work on recruitment, promotion, mentoring, upskilling people, and developing pathways for apprenticeships or internships. A couple of interviewees emphasised the importance of "elevating" the career and personal goals of global majority staff and encouraging them (or "everybody" who needs such encouragement) to be ambitious.

(3) Many interviewees believed that the scope of the work needed broadening.
Most consistently, there was a call to move beyond the White vs. Black framing and towards hearing from the "so many voices we haven't heard from" and directing the "spotlight [towards] all cultures and races".

Interviewees spoke of the importance of grounding the work in the racial and ethnic realities of south London. Some, including global majority participants, discussed the importance of exploring discrimination within the complex, multi-ethnic, non-homogenous group of the global majority itself ("Racism in people of colour is even more terrible").[7] Some members of staff discussed the ways in which white people too can be strongly stereotyped in the minds of representatives of other races. Some particularly "British" forms of segregation and inner-outer group behaviours (in terms of social class, education, and postcode, for instance) were also mentioned as relevant to the debate on racial discrimination.

In addition to discussing what may need to be added to the conversation, some interviewees emphasised following up on the original intentions to create "an offer for the outside … push this more", for instance to GSTT. Others considered the importance of bringing in more external knowledge, learning and expertise: "what have others done, what do other experts think, what's happening in the community".

Box 2 lists staff ideas on taking the work forward. It does not include ideas with sufficient visibility, such as those incorporated in the team commitments, the intention to create a "community of practice" or to weave anti-racism considerations into performance reviews.

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[7] EDI experts who have worked with the Project Team have recommended not to label prejudice between people from the global majority as "racism", as the power relationships are different. The reporting represents the language of global majority interviewees themselves. The recommendation to avoid labelling the phenomenon as "racism" was also challenged by the global majority co-evaluator (SM). The issue of whether we can talk about racism in the global majority itself appears contested.

Box 2: Staff ideas for further actions to achieve incremental change

Information provision
Continue and expand the provision of information about different cultures in and around the HIN (e.g. in the internal newsletter).

Conversation expansion
Have responsive structures in cases of events with a powerful negative impact on certain groups of people.
Consider providing generic support for public speaking skills. In some cases, people are not comfortable with talking to bigger audiences, irrespective of the topic.

Resources requested
Communication tool for handling microaggressions.
Support for white managers around asserting authority to global majority staff without being experienced as racist.

Formal expectations
Hold teams accountable to the anti-racism commitments they have made.
Make the training in implicit bias a stronger requirement for all staff.
Be careful in treading the boundary of expectations – "I don't want to participate if I have to".

Recruitment and promotions
Conduct a detailed study of what happens at different stages of recruitment for HIN roles in terms of diversity.
Consider hiring at a lower band than the one needed for a role and "build up" the person.
Emphasise the "equivalent experience" possibility or monitor if it is, indeed, considered equal to formal qualifications.
Explore opportunities with Integrated Care Systems for a greater flow of people.
Explore the current use of visa sponsorship.
Include a team's anti-racism commitments in the starter pack for each new member of staff.
Elicit the views of each new starter.
Provide support in applying for promotions, including in completing the application and preparing for the interview.

Reducing the burden of the work
Create the structures to enable white staff to "give back time" to their global majority colleagues who have taken up anti-racism work.
Consider how to make the anti-racism work career-enhancing, something colleagues can "put on their CV".

Communities and partners
Conduct a health inequalities impact assessment in south London – unpack the lived experience, realities and dynamics of racism within HIN's own community.
Enable shadowing.

Capitalising on the learning
Develop a consultancy offer for other organisations.

Data and reporting
Develop better systems for monitoring EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion).

5. Summary of findings

5.1. Incontestable yet not easily demonstrable change

In light of the evidence, it is incontestable that the Anti-racism Project has had an impact on individuals working at the HIN and on some organisational processes and structures. This is the case even though the reported increase in racial and ethnic diversity of staff has been relatively small but nonetheless consistent. The proportion of global majority staff increased by 2 percentage points between reporting years 20/21 and 21/22 and by 3 percentage points between reporting years 21/22 and 22/23 (25% in 20/21, 27% in 21/22 and 30% in 22/23; percentages are of all staff, including those who have not reported ethnicity). Behaviours experienced as racial discrimination continue to be identified at the HIN. They are of types which would be typically considered "microaggressions" or "not of grave proportions", yet the minimisation inherent in such language conventions may not reflect the harm they cause. Actively anti-racist behaviours, from calling out racist comments and behaviours to persistent work on achieving structural change, such as in recruitment, were also clearly identified yet, at times, experienced as insufficient or ineffective. Although the Chair and Chief Executive of the HIN are both members of the global majority, concerns about the leadership team continuing to be predominantly white were strong and widely shared.

Most interviewees' overall evaluation of the project ranged from solid appreciation to generous praise.

5.2. Substantial impact on individual micro-actions and the organisational conversation

The most frequent types of impact this evaluation identified were cognitive, emotional and motivational impacts at an individual level which then gave rise to micro-actions in daily life.

All interviewees reported some level of change in how they thought about race, racism, anti-racism and themselves relative to those phenomena. They noticed new elements in situations, relationships and structures around them. They made new internal checks on how something would be experienced by the person they were interacting with. There were new inner conversations and engagement with new ideas. Most frequently, interviewees reported becoming aware of implicit biases and microaggressions and reflecting on and managing their own. Such an increased awareness and self-reflexivity

were reported not only by white interviewees in relation to global majority individuals but also by global majority interviewees in relation to ethnic minorities other than their own.

Most of these cognitive experiences had emotional aspects too, such as of compassion and self-compassion; gratitude, relief and sense of validation; guilt and grief; anger and pain.

The personal impact of the new thoughts, ideas, emotions and experiences varied in intensity, yet, overall, a noticeable inner change had occurred.

Every interviewee reported noticeable and lasting impact of the project also in terms of *actions* in support of global majority individuals or as a positive assertion of one's global majority heritage. These were, most often, micro-actions. For instance, interviewees (both white and global majority) were more careful and intentional when speaking to individuals from other ethnic groups, including friends, staff they were served by in daily life, or strangers. They would voice concerns about discrimination and expectations of a more respectful treatment they would have previously kept silent about or not even experienced clearly. Some of those new behaviours occurred daily. Some also generalised towards people experiencing other forms of discrimination or disadvantage, such as on the grounds of gender, disability or religion.

There was unanimous agreement that the project had created "very open spaces for dialogue". It had enabled HIN staff to have conversations about race – at all and in better ways, "without stumbling over your words". This was paralleled by just as unanimous agreement that the conversation must continue. Some interviewees also believed that certain very uncomfortable conversations have not yet happened.

The project has also created new language habits, a greater self-reflexivity and attention to language, and new conversations about language, both inner and outer. This was most noticeable in relation to the term "global majority". The latter was broadly accepted and appreciated, but some interviewees were still hesitant to endorse it, primarily because it was "such a huge bucket" which homogenises an immensely complex and diverse group.

Work aiming at structural change, particularly around recruitment, had started and achieved initial results, primarily in terms of the socialisation and new integrity of diverse job interview panels and the change of team composition (up to equal proportions of global majority and white staff) in at least one team.

There are indications that individual micro-actions have been a more frequent outcome of the project than work leading to structural change, even though a qualitative study can only make tentative claims in this respect. Such an outcome is in line with the project's theory of change.

The main mechanism through which impacts have been achieved appears to be through individuals taking ideas offered by events and resources of the project and making them their own – reflecting on them, seeing how they relate to their own lives, and adjusting actions accordingly. There is not enough evidence to assert whether individual-level change needed the consistency and frequency of the work over the months and years or happened through sudden insights. Greater clarity in this respect could have informed decisions about the regularity and intensity of future work, now the project is moving to business-as-usual.

5.3. The complex experience of global majority staff

The evidence of impact of the project on the experience of global majority staff does not come together into a simple over-arching message.

Global majority interviewees rarely made generic comments about how their overall experience of working at the HIN had changed as a result of the Anti-racism Project. A couple reported a new sense of belonging to and pride in the organisation.

Global majority interviewees appreciated the project and trusted it was "for real", in spite of initial hesitations and continuing experiences or concerns about racial discrimination at the HIN (though not necessarily in their team).

For all global majority interviewees, the project has led to learning, self-exploration and re-engagement with memories pushed at the back of the mind. The emotions triggered have been complex and often contrasting – such as relief, grief, gratitude, anger, doubt, trust, mistrust, empowerment and passion to do something to achieve lasting change.

While some members of the global majority felt that they have just "learned more", without experiencing any significant personal change, others have been set on a path towards deeper transformation of exploring past trauma, of questioning their own tendency to "occupy as little space as possible, to "shrink to fit in", and of feeling more empowered.

Overall, the project has impacted the experience of global majority staff in complex ways. There is dust to settle and more work to be done before global majority staff feel that their daily experience at the HIN has clearly improved. It is also important to acknowledge that the sample of this evaluation may be biased. For instance, there were interviewee comments that some global majority staff preferred not to engage with the project, as they did not trust certain members of the leadership team.

5.4. Insufficiently granular evidence about impact on communities and partners

The evidence about the project enabling HIN staff to address race-related health inequalities through their work with communities and partners remained largely at an abstract level. As relevant impacts are felt primarily at the level of patients, carers, health professionals and partners as opposed to HIN staff, a different study design and sampling approach are needed to explore them with sufficient granularity.

5.5. Partial and negative impacts, unintended consequences and potential risks

Certain positive impacts of the project were achieved more partially, including the sense of being given a voice and a safe space and the capacity to call out behaviours perceived as discriminatory. The perception of lacking effective communication skills and tools, particularly when there was a need to challenge a superior and/or navigate the boundary between playfulness and discrimination, were often the main blocker.

The disruptive nature of the project also meant that it had unintended consequences, negative impacts and potential risks associated with it. It was also going through 'growing pains'. Most frequently discussed were the emotional discomfort and emotional exhaustion associated with the project and the degree to which some members of staff have become scared to say the wrong thing. The latter was seen as stifling discussion, learning and growth, apart from affecting the experiences of staff at the workplace. Both routine work on the project and the unanticipated volume of work arising from attempts

at structural change (e.g. through advertising jobs more broadly) placed significant demands on staff. This often required much discretionary effort, even when the project was still funded.

Less frequently discussed but clearly articulated unintended consequences/ negative impacts were the new, at times uncomfortable, expectations of global majority staff, which could make them feel like unwilling "gatekeeper[s] for the whole global majority". In turn, individuals who do not identify as either "global majority" or "white" could find it difficult to locate themselves in the debate and activities.

5.6. Differences across teams

Teams differed in how the anti-racism work was integrated in their working life, and, at times, socialising with colleagues outside of work. They also differed in the degree to which global majority staff experienced instances of discrimination or felt strongly supported and valued.

5.7. Staff perceptions of next steps

There appears to be powerful energy to continue the work. Perspectives on the project moving to business-as-usual differed: from it being seen as necessary and appropriate; through it being disappointing and worrying; to appreciating the worries but placing one's hopes in the irreversibility of the change of mindset. Priorities for the future were to 1) "keep the conversation going" and maintain the psychological safety around the topic; 2) develop and implement HR-initiatives, such as around recruitment, promotion, mentoring, upskilling people, and developing pathways for apprenticeships or internships; and 3) broaden the scope of the work in several directions, most often in terms of increasing the variety of ethnicities and cultures in the spotlight.

6. Strengths and limitations of the evaluation

This evaluation analysed data from 18 members of staff, which represents almost a fifth of the workforce of HIN. A qualitative study does not aim at representativeness but this was, nonetheless, a solid sample which provided rich, detailed and multi-layered data (approximately an hour-long interviews on average). Saturation of themes at high and middle levels of generality was reached relatively early. New considerations at lower levels continued to emerge until the very last interview. They contributed important nuances and explanations and led to clarifying, softening or strengthening claims. The picture drawn through this evaluation has depth and detail. It is not, however, complete.

The sample was varied and well balanced in terms of white/ global majority belonging, levels of seniority, types of job, gender, age and years at the HIN (specifics need to be withheld to prevent identification). As the sample was self-selected, it is likely to over-represent interviewees who were more deeply engaged with the project; had stronger and, potentially, more positive, views on it; and are more passionate about the cause of anti-racism or equality, diversity and inclusion more broadly. Indeed, overall evaluations of the project were positive almost without exception, though at various degrees of intensity. However, the degree to which significant challenges and dilemmas were openly identified and well-articulated can, at least to an extent, allay concerns about a positivity bias.

We neither interviewed, nor did interviewees mention individuals who owned their racist views, even if not expressing them openly, or people who felt threatened or harshly judged by the anti-racism work. Such points of view, if present at the HIN, need to be heard. Attempts were made to reach participants who had not engaged with the project, but time and budget limitations meant that they were not followed up on after an initial lack of success.

The focus of the evaluation on impact meant that subsets of rich data are not reported on. Most prominently, these concern the history of the project; the specific composition of the project team and its allies in terms of personal strengths and organisational resources; the amount of work required; the reasoning and philosophy behind more controversial choices. Such data is highly relevant in considering the strengths and weaknesses of the project and in explaining its trajectory and impacts. It can serve to guide other teams in developing and implementing similar work. Data on the broader

context of the HIN (e.g. GSTT or the NHS more broadly), which can also help explain the degree of impact of the project, was also not prioritised for inclusion. Nevertheless, this evaluation has been more sensitive to the context of the work relative to many project evaluations.

The time and budget constraints of the evaluation also resulted in some limitations in terms of transparency and exemplary systematicity of coding. Coding was highly granular and transparently recorded in NVivo until the coding framework stabilised. After that, data were extracted from interviews only if they differed from what was already in the framework. This is a valid process but it does not leave a clear "audit trail". It is also more prone to low-level errors.

The interview schedule did not have a direct question on experiences of racial discrimination at the HIN. This was because cataloguing and describing instances of discrimination was outside of the scope of the evaluation. It was also considered a more challenging topic, requiring further ethical safeguards. It was expected that the topic would arise naturally, and it did. With the benefit of hindsight, not having a direct question on experiences of discrimination when evaluating the impact of an anti-discrimination project is problematic.

While the interviews were conducted by both a white and global majority interviewer, the analysis was done by MP ("white, other") in order to contain the work. While the evaluators debated the findings and their phrasing and prioritisation, sometimes at length, analysis of the data from both directions would have enriched the picture.

7. Recommendations for next steps

When evidence concerns issues which are heavily value-laden, making recommendations requires a complementary process of elicitation of values. Any helpful proposal for the way forward for the anti-racism work requires not only interpretation of the evidence, but also an exploration of the values, value conflicts and values prioritisation of relevant stakeholders. Box 3 offers a glimpse of some of the persistent tensions of values the interviewees touched upon.

For this reason, the brief recommendations made below prioritise improvements in terms of data collection and values elicitation:

1. Consider designing an accompanying survey. This evaluation has provided ample material from which to construct a high-quality survey, which can begin to enrich the currently limited arsenal of tools for evaluating anti-racism work.

    Such a survey can throw light on the frequency of different perceptions and experiences – something which a qualitative study cannot do. The data will serve as a solid, even if imperfect, baseline against which to evaluate the impact of future work. The survey can also be developed further into a tool to be used by external organisations. Limitations of baselining were a concern for several interviewees. There is a natural point for collecting data on a new baseline, which is *now*.

2. Use the fact that teams have very different levels of engagement with the project, as well as different racial composition, and consider setting up natural experiments. For this to happen though, a level of baseline data collection will be needed.

3. Consider enabling creative and emotionally safe ways to hear from staff who have felt side-lined by the Anti-racism Project and were not included in this evaluation either.

4. Seek to elicit the diversity of values that lies underneath the shared endorsement of anti-racism in order to specify further HIN's anti-racism goal and pathway to achieving it.

Box 3: Values that may come into persistent conflict when considering racial discrimination

This box describes some of the clashes of values and values systems that may persist even if there is a strong agreement that racism is unacceptable. Some of the statements below remain very close to the data. Others represent the lead evaluator's interpretation of the data, based on an analysis of how a claim is complemented or contradicted by other claims or non-verbal signals.

There is a tension between a citizen's attitude that values human rights and dignity and a more spiritual or psychologically informed attitude that values compassion for the mistakes and flaws of each and every one of us.

Some discriminatory comments and conversational patterns are – sadly, funnily, infuriatingly – primarily driven by a desire to connect, clumsily and incompetently translated into a behaviour. People on the receiving end of such behaviours differ in whether they typically choose to focus on the potentially positive intention or on the unacceptable delivery. Their momentary states also differ.

One has limits to their mental and emotional capacity to challenge certain behaviours. At the same time, not challenging them enables others to think that something is "ok".

Perceptions that something is "not his/her [a white person's] fault", it's "social conditioning" come into conflict with expectations that, beyond a certain age, a person must take responsibility to undo some of the effects of social conditioning with harmful consequences on fellow human beings.

Social privilege is an immense resource. At the same time, openness of mind and resilience earnt the hard way can be so valuable that one wonders who, in the final analysis, is the truly privileged.

While lack of engagement in racial equality events may be considered a form of disinterest and discrimination, it is also perfectly valid for people to care more about some discrimination/ equality causes than others.

People are at very different stages of the journey. For some individuals, such conversations may be eye-opening. Others may feel that the assumption implicit in the conversion resembles "I've been beamed down from Planet White People", i.e. that they have never engaged with such issues before.

When a white manager manages a global majority employee and there is a need to be strongly directive, the line between doing one's job as a manager and discriminating on racial grounds can be very hard to draw.

8. Conclusion

A quote attributed to Martin Luther King affirms that "faith is taking the first step even if you don't see the whole staircase". HIN's Anti-racism Project has taken a first step with little visibility of the staircase it needed to climb. The project has successfully achieved an inner change for every interviewee we spoke to, at different degrees of depth and intensity. Some of this change may appear minor and/or remain invisible; some of it may dissipate. The sample may also be biased. Nonetheless, the sample amounted to almost a fifth of the workforce of the HIN. If the 20/80 rule applies here (asserting that 80% of the outputs often result from 20% of the inputs), this may be the critical mass needed to shift the organisational culture. Major change may also occur incrementally as opposed to following a revolution. The project has made promising, though still limited, change in organisational processes and structures, most visibly around processes of recruitment. The proportion of global majority staff has increased by 2 percentage points between reporting years 20/21 and 21/22 and by 3 percentage points between reporting years 21/22 and 22/23.

Often, the first step is the most important step one can take. Often, it is also the hardest. But perhaps just as often first steps do not carve a path. Perhaps just as often the hardest part of walking a path is to keep going without the glory, enthusiasm, and energy of a new endeavour, in ways that are persistent, unremarkable, uncelebrated, repetitive, boring. It remains to be seen whether the HIN and the pioneers and supporters of its Anti-racism Project have not just shown the faith to start a courageous walk, but also the perseverance to persist and engage others on a long road. Most likely, this long road is one which none of us will see walked fully in our lifetime but more and more of us – white, global majority and numerous "other-ed" within and between those groups – are called to commit to.

Appendix 1: Further detail about the project

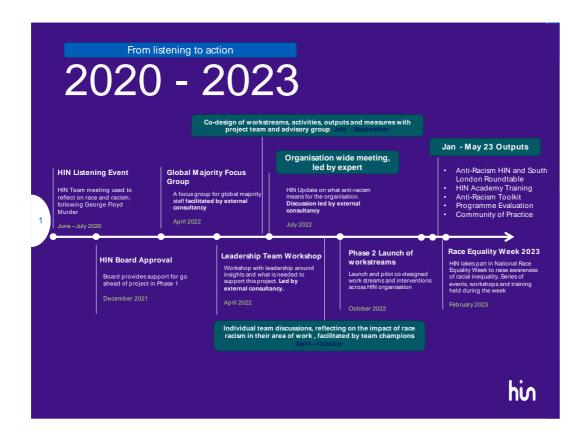## Key milestones and activities

June – July 2020: HIN Listening Event – a safe space for staff affected by racism to speak openly about experiences and views, directly with the then Chief Executive and another member of the Executive Team. Followed by all staff conversation – a HIN Team meeting was used to reflect on race and racism.

December 2021: HIN Board approves Phase 1 of the project.

April 2022 – July 2022: Phase 1: Initial exploratory focus groups and workshops held with global majority staff, leadership team and organisation-wide team meetings. All led by an external EDI consultant, exploring subject issue and lived experience.

August – September 2022: Co-design of logic model, activities, interventions and measures with internal advisory group.

October 2022 – April 2023: Phase 2: Delivery of identified workstreams and activities across the organisation.

Logic Model (21 Nov 2022)

Activities and interventions	Outcomes	Longer term outcomes and impact

Activities and interventions:

- Through individual team meetings, HIN themes to build awareness and knowledge and develop theme-specific anti-racism plans

- Provide information and education opportunities on anti-racism and cultural diversity through external speakers, HIN team meetings, HIN Academy sessions, stories, blogs and case studies

- Promote and encourage participation in GSTT's equality, diversity and inclusion activites related to anti-racism

- Develop a brochure on relevant training available for leadership, line managers and all staff (eg micro-aggressions, unconscious bias, compassion-based practice, power dynamics, cultural safety, racial equality, speaking up)

- Develop a HIN anti-racism toolkit covering topics including: 'How to talk about race in your team, How to take action'

- Review HIN's implementation of GSTT's diverse panel initiative and identify action to empower and support diverse panel members

- Enhance the organisational commitment to anti-racism within the HIN's practices related to recruitment, retention and development of staff

- Increase the awareness of informal and formal mechanisms and processes to raise concerns within the HIN and GSTT and review the perceived psychologically safety of them

- Capitalise on HIN's health and wellbeing programme to promote and extend anti-racist and EDI initiatives

- Enhance the use of Health Inequality Impact Assessment and the Health Inequalities Pre-Mortem tool to identify and combat risks within key local and national projects

- Share learning, promote good practice and collaborate with others e.g. with other AHSNs, HIN members on our anti-racism learning and outputs

Outcomes:

Recognition
Recognition of racial bias and importance of taking responsibility for individual, team and community actions

Understanding
Understanding what it means to be anti-racist and the importance of moving to becoming actively anti-racist

Commitment
Staff know and feel why this is important (we take steps to educate ourselves, show empathy and take responsibility for our actions)

Speaking up and listening
All staff have the confidence, language and tools to speak up and challenge percieved bias and inequity. When others speak up, all staff listen.

Leadership
Anti-racism is led from the front. Leaders are supported and capable of leading anti-racism agenda in their areas of work

Global Majority Representation
Increased Global Majority representation across HIN at all working levels

Global Majority Experience
Global majority staff have an improved experience of working in the HIN

Shift in Culture
HIN establishes a culture that champions anti-racism, supports psychological safety creates a learning environment founded on humility, curiosity and accountability

Longer term outcomes and impact:

All staff experience
Staff regardless of ethnicity and background but especially Global Majority staff feel heard, valued and supported to contribute to major organisation activities

Health Inequalities
All staff are knowledgeable and comfortable talking about racial inequity and therefore able to contribute to addressing health inequalities

Recognised leader
The HIN is recognised as a leader in anti-racism

Our goal is to be an actively anti-racist organisation

Four main themes of project and agreed activities (October 2022 – April 2023)

Theme	Activity
Recognition, Understanding and Commitment	• Develop theme specific anti-racism action plans from individual team anti-racism focused meetings. • Deliver two organisational training (HIN Academy) and learning events with external anti-racism clinical psychologist facilitators. • Establish anti-racism in internal and external comms through signposting anti-racism resources and information from GSTT/KHP/KCL (Talking About Race Team Note, Webpage) to support ongoing learning.
Speaking up, Listening and Leadership	• Identify specific anti-racism and EDI training to incorporate into HIN's Priority 1 training framework for all staff. • Develop and co-design a *'HIN Anti-Racism Toolkit'* that focuses on how to talk about race in your team, taking action, building an anti-racist scope into your work and keeping focused on change.
Global Majority Representation	• Conduct a focus group to review and evaluate the HINs implementation of the GSTT diverse panel recruitment initiative. • Conduct a focus group with an external facilitator on global majority lived experience in the workplace.
Shift in HIN Culture	• Host a learning and sharing anti-racism roundtable event for organisations in south London.

Appendix 2: Further methodological detail

Recruitment

To recruit participants, a member of the Anti-racism Project team sent a brief organisation-wide email introducing the evaluation, with more detail provided in an attached study Information Sheet. If an individual was interested in participating, they needed to reach out to the evaluators directly. Members of the Anti-racism Project team sent follow-up emails to colleagues they considered 'key informants', clarifying that whether they chose to participate in the study or not would not be disclosed by the evaluation team to the project team. At a stage in the study when global majority participants were under-represented, the lead evaluator sent three personal emails to randomly selected members of the Anti-racism Champions and Advisory Group list, as provided by the project team. Two of them agreed to take part; the third did not to respond (reasons for non-response unrelated to the evaluation became clear later).

Interview approach and underpinning theories

The interviews followed principles of realist (4) and episodic interviewing (5). The realist approach of Pawson and Tilley (4) was also a broader conceptual and theoretical influence on the study, although the brief time for the evaluation meant it was not performed in a way that qualifies it as a realist evaluation.

A realist evaluation starts from the assumption that the effectiveness of any programme is always "partial and conditional" (6). It therefore asks a version of the question "What works, how, why, for whom, to what extent and in what circumstances, in what respect and over what duration?" (6). The realist approach is particularly well suited for the study of complex social programmes designed and delivered in complex, dynamic and variable contexts. In its conceptualisation, a programme, such as HIN's Anti-racism Project, offers a set of mechanisms (taking the form of resources and ways of thinking) to its participants, aiming to introduce change in pre-specified outcomes. Whether the mechanisms lead to the intended outcomes depends on the context in which they function. The outcome of a realist evaluation is a set of causal explanations specifying the relationship between contexts, mechanisms (both internal and external to the evaluated programme) and outcomes.

The realist interview tests preliminary hypotheses based on a "rough programme theory" developed at the start of the evaluation. This testing of hypotheses is more direct than typical of most semi-structured interview approaches. The interviewer tends to share their evolving hypotheses, theories and findings and engage in a more active conversation as opposed to recede into the background (7).

A further methodological influence for the evaluation was Flick's "episodic interview" (5). Episodic interviews distinguish between three types of situations: "episodes" (particular events or situations, e.g. a case of racial discrimination in the workplace), "repisodes" (repeated episodes, e.g. recurrent instances of microaggression) and historical situations (e.g. the George Floyd murder). Interviewees are prompted to share "stories", "examples", "episodes" with almost every question, while also addressing more conceptual issues (e.g. the meaning of "actively anti-racist", "structural discrimination", "global majority", etc.). Episodic interviewing thus enables the collection of rich, evocative examples and quotes alongside more conceptual reflections.

All interviews were conducted in Microsoft Teams and all but one were recorded and transcribed using the software's in-built transcribing function (one interviewee declined to be recorded and detailed notes were taken).

Data analysis

The edited transcripts of 7 interviews (1-5, 7 and 11, as checked and edited at the time) were coded highly granularly in NVivo (Version 12), using principles of thematic analysis and conceptual ideas from the realist approach, primarily around contexts and mechanisms. Coding remained very close to the data throughout. Codes were periodically regrouped, renamed and reorganised to reflect new ideas about the core of their contents and about their inter-connections. After this process, the coding framework had 288 nodes and had stabilised at high and middle levels of generality, with new codes added at lower levels only. To meet the time and budget constraints of the evaluation, the remaining interviews were read as transcripts and/or listened through in their entirety but data were extracted only if it contributed new codes (themes) or quotes that illustrated a theme more clearly. This further data extraction was done in Microsoft Word.

Semi-structured interview schedule, general participants, 2nd April 2023

This interview schedule is for HIN staff who have not had formal or semi-formal roles in shaping, steering and delivering the project. I.e. it is for the project beneficiaries/ target group as opposed to its developers and implementers.

[Introduction about the evaluation and me, the interviewer.]

[Check if the interviewee has any further questions about the study and confirm preference for/against audio-recording. Confirm also if they've had the chance to return the consent form.]

Part 1: Introductory questions about interviewee's role at HIN and language around racism

1. **I'll assume you have at least heard of HIN's Anti-racism Project but correct me if it's not the case!**

2. Before we get down to discussing the project though, can you please tell me **something about your role at HIN?** For instance, can you tell me **how long you've been with HIN and briefly about your role?** Can you tell me about **the aspects of your role you love the most and the ones which you've been finding most frustrating recently?**

3. **Are there words and phrases which you find particularly unhelpful and triggering in conversations about race? Or which you know may be unfamiliar or problematic for some people, but you have thought them through in detail and use them fully intentionally?**

Part 2: Initial encounters, level of engagement and clearest impressions of HIN's Anti-racism project

4. **When did you first hear about HIN's Anti-racism project?**
5. **When did you first take part in one of its initiatives?**
6. **Looking back at the Anti-racism project initiatives you've engaged with, which one stands out?**

Further prompts and probes:

What was good about it?

What was negative (more controversial, problematic, ambivalent) about it?

What did you take away from it for yourself? *Leave open; if needed, probe:* What did you start seeing differently (situations, relationships, other people, yourself?)? Speaking about differently? Doing differently?

Can you give me a specific example, story, episode to illustrate it?

Have you noticed any changes in others, or the organisation more broadly, as a result of this event/ initiative?

Has something changed for you as a result of changes in other people or the organisation this initiative triggered? *Probe in positive, negative and ambivalent directions.*

Probe again for specific examples, stories and episodes, in line with episodic interviewing principles.

7. **What other events, initiatives, resources, communications, etc. of HIN's Anti-racism project can you remember?**

Probes as above:

What was good about it?

What was negative (more controversial, problematic, ambivalent) about it?

What did you take away from it for yourself? *Leave open; if needed, probe:* What did you start seeing differently (situations, other people, yourself?)? Speaking about differently? Doing differently?

Can you give me a specific example, story, episode to illustrate it?

Have you noticed any changes in others, or the organisation more broadly, as a result of this event/ initiative?

Has something changed for you as a result of changes in other people or the organisation this initiative triggered? *Probe in positive, negative and ambivalent directions.*

Probe again for specific examples, stories and episodes.

8. **Going beyond specific events, initiatives, communications, etc., can you think of something about the make-up of the project – in terms of its underlying principles, philosophy, values, management, leadership – that, from your perspective, worked particularly well or vice versa?**

Part 3: Focus on outcomes

9. **The project places a strong emphasis on starting and having the conversations and speaking up. Can you remember a story, an example, an episode where you felt somebody spoke up in new ways because of the space given to them, because the organisation has opened up to those conversations?**

10. **How about those words being followed by further action – whether by the person who spoke up or somebody else – that had further consequences?**

    Probe again for specific examples, stories and episodes.

11. **Are you aware of situations when this didn't happen because the opportunity was given, the space was given but something was not quite right?**

12. **Can you remember a situation, a story, an episode where you saw (perceived, experienced) things in new ways because of that new conversation about race, racism and anti-racism?** It can be a situation, a person, yourself, a relationship. …?

    Was this new way of seeing followed up by action that had further consequences? I.e. were you able to do something as a result of that insight?

Part 4: Structural racism and relationship between surface and deep change

13. **We've begun to touch on the relationship between having the conversation, speaking up, awareness, new ways of seeing and thinking, etc., on the one hand, and action and change, on the other. Let's explore this further.**

    The issue with structural discrimination is that it's deep-seated. An aspect of this deep-seatedness is that it's exceptionally hard to shift. Often, problems can't be pinpointed easily even if we can speak about them without fear. Being invited,

encouraged, welcomed to speak up does not guarantee that what is said would be welcomed. Also, words and sporadic actions, or even regularly repeated actions, do not change structures by themselves.

How do you see the relationship between work of the Anti-racism Project in terms of starting the conversation, raising awareness, creating goals and initial structures, stimulating new types of behaviours, etc. and action that achieves deep and structural change?

Further prompts and probes:

Which of the project initiatives and structures do you think have achieved, or are likely to achieve, deep-running change?

How has this worked in detail?

What else is needed?

[Those are important points/ good things but]

[What you say is linked to the fact that]

14. **HIN is a white majority organisation – it was at the start of the project, it continues to be now, towards its end. Why do you think impact at the level of increased visible diversity has been elusive? What have been the barriers to achieving it?**

Further prompts and probes:
What are the deep-seated, structural barriers to change in:
   - broader society?
   - the health sector?
   - innovations sector?
   - at HIN more specifically?

Probe again for specific examples, stories and episodes, in line with episodic interviewing principles, if it veers into the abstract realm.

15. **It is also possible that change is 'brewing' under the surface, not least driven or catalysed by the HIN Anti-racism Project, but has not yet reached levels where it's**

seen in the overall profile of HIN staff. How likely do you think that is? If you think it's likely, how can this process of 'brewing' be facilitated?

Further prompts and probes:

What aspects of HIN's organisational culture are likely to facilitate that change, even if it continues to be under the surface for some more time?

What makes HIN a good place to advance such a project and see it achieve results?

Where does its leadership sit in this respect?

What about external influences? From broader society? The health sector? The innovation sector?

Partners?

Part 5: Testing hypotheses, in line with realist interviewing principles

The next part of the interview may feel a bit different, as I'll be asking more specific questions to test some tentative hypotheses.

Reading through project documentation, including unstructured feedback post events, talking to the project team and also knowing something about the broader literature suggested several factors that may act as important barriers for the project achieving significant impact. You touched on some of them independently. The methodological approach I am using (realist evaluation) recommends such explanations/ hypotheses are tested directly with interviewees rather than only accommodating naturally emerging topics and explanations.

Perhaps I can read all of them out and we can discuss one or two that resonate the most or, conversely, which you find highly improbable as explanations.

- o Leadership at the HIN is almost exclusively white, with some recent exceptions. This may affect the resources and levers that are put in place to enable such a project.

If interviewee engages with explanation, probe for specific examples, stories and episodes, in line with episodic interviewing principles, if it veers into the abstract realm.

- o The other side of this is that the members of staff whose experience becomes relevant – representatives of the global majority/ ethnic minorities – are people in positions of more limited power. Speaking up is more difficult at the lower levels for hierarchical reasons, not just racial reasons.

If they engage with explanation, probe for specific examples, stories and episodes.

- o The project has a strong personal dimension as well as one of social activism. For some people, these may have very limited, if any, place in the workplace.

If they engage with explanation, probe for specific examples, stories and episodes.

- o The opportunity and the space for speaking up, even if created with the best of intentions, even if accompanied by consistent reminders that there is no pressure to speak up or answer questions, may still result in such pressure. The latter can come from the inside (you feel it's your responsibility to say something, to take this conversation further, to be part of the change) or from the outside (e.g. colleagues who become overly curious to understand the global majority/ ethnic minorities' experience).

If they engage with explanation, probe for specific examples, stories and episodes.

- o Racial discrimination may be the classic example of discrimination, but there are other characteristics which draw in discrimination. It may feel too one-sided to run such a project at the HIN when the organisation may have similar issues with other forms of discrimination.

If they engage with explanation, probe for specific examples, stories and episodes.

- o There is no neutral, objective participant in this project. Everyone is positioned somewhere when it comes to race, even if it may be a very uncertain positioning when one's heritage is from many corners of the world. This makes it quite the minefield and also very complex, because the starting points are different, the relevance, the valued goals, the outcomes, etc. are different.

If they engage with explanation, probe for specific examples, stories and episodes.

- o Sometimes we MUST talk about a problem to resolve it. We must even shout about it, be inconvenient and difficult about it, risk our own well-being to achieve progress (apart from the fight for racial equality, think about Extinction Rebellion. They ultimately made the world listen about climate change). But there are times when drawing attention to a problem deepens it. It sometimes happens when repeating the stories of past trauma. It may be the case that an anti-racism project makes us pay more attention to somebody's race as opposed to seeing the person far more broadly, irrespective of their race. Paradoxically, we may invite more racial thinking by directing our thoughts towards race so consistently.

If they engage with explanation, probe for specific examples, stories and episodes.

Any other explanation that came to mind while I was reading those out?

Part 6: What needs to change?

16. I know the vision for the HIN as an anti-racist organisation has been explored as part of the Anti-racism Project, but it hasn't been fully clarified yet, not least because it's a complex undertaking. Also, there is a difference between an agreed organisationally shared vision and one's personal vision. **For you, what does an anti-racist organisation look like?**

Further probes and prompts:
What are its three key parameters?
What about the opposite? What is the 'wrong type' of an anti-racist organisation? Or anti-racist only in words?
You partly covered this but for you, personally, what will feel like a meaningful positive change in the inner experience?

17. **To what extent do you feel the intra-organisational conversation and change, if any, have found their way into your work with partners?**

Probe for specific examples, stories and episodes.

What have been the barriers to achieve more?
What else can be done there?

18. The project funding is coming to an end this financial year. What are your thoughts on the project being, ultimately, closed?

Further probes and prompts:

Prompt them to think contextually too, in terms of all the trade-offs that need to be made within an organisational budget. But also:

If you are encouraged to advance the project without it being part of your formal responsibilities, how likely are you to be able to give it time and attention? E.g. what is likely to happen, for you personally, if the managerial steer is: "We fully support this work but we don't have money for it. We are very happy for you to work on it as long as it doesn't compromise your main work."

19. If there are two things the HIN can put in place to achieve its anti-racism goal, what would they be? They don't need to achieve fast results.

20. If there are two things the HIN better stop doing so that it achieves its anti-racism goal, what would they be? They don't need to achieve fast results.

21. Is there another discriminated-against characteristic which you think the HIN needs to address through a similar project?

We've finished! Anything else important we've not covered or you would like to add?

[Thank the interviewee, explain next steps and close.]

[If you have concerns that the interview may have opened a Pandora's box to past trauma, make sure it's closed well. Advise them how they can contact you and who else they can contact for confidential support if they've found some of the conversation upsetting.]

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