

# Addressing inequalities in heart valve disease:

## Building trust in Black African and Caribbean communities

Clinicians found a stark difference in the diagnosis and treatment rates of heart valve disease (HVD) in Black African and Caribbean (BAAC) communities.

We wanted to know why.

### 1 STUDY AIMS

We wanted to engage with BAAC communities to understand:

- Awareness of heart valve disease
- Attitudes towards HVD and treatment
- Ways to increase levels of trust and engagement
- How to encourage culturally sensitive clinical communications



### 2 PARTICIPANTS

We recruited 86 people from BAAC communities aged 50 and older (56% female, 44% male). They were recruited through culturally sensitive promotional materials, and were to watch a video on HVD to participate.



### 3 METHOD

The study was based on the Theoretical Framework of Acceptability. We used surveys, focus groups, and 1:1 interviews for qualitative and quantitative insight.

### 4 SELECT FINDINGS

- Historic / current racialised health inequality impacts trust in the healthcare system
- Ethnicity not sensitively considered by clinical teams in diagnosis / treatment



- High acceptability of community sites / mobile units for screening, including pharmacy
- Trust with providers can significantly mitigate wider system mistrust

### 5 SELECT RECOMMENDATIONS



- Develop NHS-led culturally sensitive written and video based communications for use at diagnosis
- Embed treatment options and autonomy during treatment discussions into face to face diagnosis
- Empower and enable community led support
- Deploy cultural sensitivity training to care teams
- Create space for lifestyle impacts and alternative treatments

“It's not that people don't want to get fixed. It's probably because most of our hearts are broken already and need fixing.”



**Read the full report**  
[slcn.nhs.uk](https://slcn.nhs.uk)

The study was conducted by Mabadiliko CIC, which aims to amplify the voices of those often overlooked through community engagement and research activity.