

Written Evidence Submitted by Chris Frederick, Founder of Project Soul Stride

Subject: The Mental Health Bill [HL] 2025 — Statutory Implementation of the Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework (PCREF)

Executive Summary

This submission strongly supports the statutory implementation of the Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework (PCREF) in the Mental Health Bill [HL] 2025. PCREF is the only co-produced, governance-ready national framework designed to embed anti-racism in mental health services. As someone with lived experience and a track record of policy engagement and co-production, I have seen firsthand the urgent need for structural accountability. Without legal backing, PCREF risks becoming another well-meaning but toothless policy. We must move beyond rhetoric and make equity enforceable in law.

1. About Me

My name is Chris Frederick, and I am a suicide survivor, mental health advocate, and founder of Project Soul Stride—a lived experience-led initiative committed to addressing racial inequities in mental health. With over 25 years in the corporate sector and extensive work across NHS and VCSE advisory roles, my work centres on transforming systems through storytelling, co-production, and evidence-based advocacy. I write and publish 'The Ripple Report,' a citizen-led platform tackling mental health inequalities with clarity and courage.

2. Rationale for Statutory PCREF

PCREF was created to be more than a framework—it was intended as a commitment to eliminate racial disparities in access, experience, and outcomes. Yet April 1st, 2025, its official rollout date—revealed confusion, silence, and lack of oversight. The abolition of the NHS England has only deepened this crisis. Without statute, PCREF lacks durability, direction and enforcement. We risk another performative initiative while communities suffer. My April 2025 edition of The Ripple Report—titled 'PCREF, This Is No Joke!' (: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/pcref-joke-chris-frederick-jts6e>) —outlines these concerns in detail, including: missing data (up to 30% of ethnicity data incomplete), inadequate training and self-reporting mechanisms that invite self-congratulation without accountability. Racialised communities, particularly Black communities, remain over-

represented in detention and restraint, yet under-represented in trust, recovery, and leadership. PCREF is our opportunity to embed equity as infrastructure—not aspiration.

3. Legislative Recommendations

I urge the Committee to amend the Mental Health Bill [HL] 2025 to include the following statutory requirements:

- Mandatory implementation of PCREF by all NHS mental health providers, with legal duties to publish and deliver Race Equity Action Plans (REAPs).
- Appointment of a named board-level lead for Race Equity in every Trust.
- Disaggregated ethnicity data reporting on detention, restraint, treatment outcomes, and access to therapy.
- Formal mechanisms for community-led co-governance and escalation where equity is not achieved.
- Oversight by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and alignment with the Use of Force Act (Seni's Law), Equality Act, and Human Rights Act.

4. Conclusion

If equity is not enforceable, it is optional—and optional equity is no equity at all. The Mental Health Bill is Parliament's moment to act. Racial justice in mental health will not be delivered by codes, contracts or goodwill. It must be written into law. PCREF must be made statutory. Not as a gesture—but as a guarantee. Not later—but now.

Submitted by:

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