



<b>PLENARY SESSION NINE</b>	
Event Code: LEE22-00523 World Mental Health Congress London Mental Health a Global Priority, London, UK 28/06/2022-01/07/2022	
<b>Your details</b> (as you want them listed in the programme)	Professor Vishanth Weerakkody Faculty of Management, Law and Social Sciences, University of Bradford UK
<b>Date and time of your plenary session</b>	Friday 1 July 2022 08:30-10:10 hrs Overall Session Theme: Pathways to health
<b>Duration</b>	20 mins
<b>Proposed title</b> (please complete)	Can community networks influence the wellbeing of socially isolated people: a study of people living on social welfare in the UK
<b>Learning Objectives</b> (please complete)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand the impact that community networks have on personal wellbeing of individuals</li><li>• Understand the impact of scarcity on people’s mental health and wellbeing</li><li>• Appreciate the role that public services has on influencing the health and mental wellbeing of people living in scarcity</li></ul>
<b>Abstract</b> (max 500 words)	<p>This session will discuss the results of a project undertaken in a Large Borough in West London during the period 2017 to 2019 to examine how social networks and ties which communities form support their resilience and wellbeing. The study hypothesised that if a ‘struggling’ person’s social network can be changed, their sense of wellbeing can be improved, thus reducing their dependency on public services. The project worked with several service providers and commissioned research to identify residents who are dependent on social welfare and considered socially isolated and with high service usage as the research sample.</p> <p>The study was approached based on interpretivism research paradigm, i.e. data collected from the project participants were interpreted in the social context of the participants and their life events to find its meaning, rather than to check if it is true or false. The data collection process was approached longitudinally – i.e. across certain span of time through surveys, interviews and observations. This approach and methods allow the observation of changes in life settings of the participants, which are relatable to the data that they provided – hence helping the researcher to have a better reflections and deeper understanding on the results.</p> <p>Several observations were made from the study as follows:</p> <p>a) Personal circumstances, stress and mental health issues are key factors that prevent individuals from being able to adapt and strengthen their social networks;</p> <p>b) Volunteering in the local community has been seen to build an individual’s self-confidence as well as developing one’s social connections within the community;</p>



	<p>c) Too many connections/activities can be detrimental to the wellbeing of an individual whereas a limited number of strong social and support networks provide them with a sense of safety; and</p> <p>d) Race, ethnicity, and language have substantial influence on the quality of the doctor-patient relationship in people with medical conditions, thus affecting the quality of their treatment.</p>
<p><b>Key references or resources</b> (maximum five)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dodge, R., Daly, A., Huyton, J., &amp; Sanders, L. (2012). The challenge of defining wellbeing. <i>International Journal of Wellbeing</i>, 2(3), 222-235.</li> <li>2. Forgeard, M. J. C., Jayawickreme, E., Kern, M. &amp; Seligman, M. E. P. (2011). Doing the right thing: Measuring wellbeing for public policy. <i>International Journal of Wellbeing</i>, 1(1), 79-106</li> <li>3. Morrow-Howell, N., 2010. Volunteering in later life: Research frontiers. <i>The Journals of Gerontology: Series B</i>, 65(4), pp.461-469.</li> </ol>