

Moving Up BAME

Bristol City Council - Maria Hamood

Maria is the Adult Principle Social Worker and Mental Health Act Manager for Bristol City Council, specialising in adult care. She is an integral member of the senior adult care leadership team and has responsibility for maintaining the quality and standards of social work practice across Bristol City Council Adult Care. The council has a population of over 450,000 people and serves a diverse community.

What did you hope to achieve from the Moving Up BAME programme?

Maria was drawn to the Moving Up BAME programme because she was always keen to develop her skills further and keep her job during restructuring processes. She is from a Yemeni background and felt she had a very different communication style to others in the organisation. She wanted to remain true to herself and still be able to operate effectively in the work environment.

This was a fine balance between fitting in and remaining authentic to herself. Maria also wanted an opportunity to develop her skills and strengthen her profile within Bristol City Council by being given the opportunity to progress a complex development role in the council to showcase her skills. In particular, Maria wanted to help herself prepare for future opportunities to understand a senior role when she started the Moving Up BAME programme.

Were there any unexpected benefits from the Moving Up BAME programme?

The programme allowed Maria to learn and bring a different voice and perspective to her organisation. She gained support from her Service Director, the HR Partner and the senior management team which made her feel very valued.

- It gave Maria a fresh perspective to her new leadership role and she was a better prepared and informed employee. It also gave her valuable thinking time to prepare for the crucial role.
- The organisation retained an experienced and valued employee who was able to showcase her skills and progress within the organisation.

Case study

Maria Hamood, completed in 2017



Starting position: Mental Health Lead

Present position: Adult Principle Social Worker, reporting to the Director of Adult Social Services

What were your main benefits from the programme?

- Acceptance and recognition.
- Mentoring and support.
- Role preparation.

Best memory of the programme

“The speakers were inspirational and made me think I had made a good choice undertaking the programme. My mentor who was an ex-director of adult social services, was really supportive and challenging offering me invaluable coaching and advice that I still draw on. The time on the programme was very well spent, it gave me a reflective space with people who were facing similar challenges.”

Finally, as an organisation, would you recommend the Moving Up BAME programme to others?

“I was determined to seize the opportunity and would encourage others to do so. I wanted to carry out a project to showcase what I could really do and show my capabilities.”

“I think it would have been much more difficult to have progressed within the organisation without the opportunities the programme gave me, especially in a climate where leadership and management development is hard to come by.”



The programme gave me the space to evaluate my leadership style and learn how to be a more effective and inspiring leader

Maria Hamood