

Date:

To whom it may concern

HIP HOP PSYCH

Co-founded by Dr Akeem Sule and Dr Becky Inkster

I would like to express my support to Dr Akeem Sule and Dr Becky Inkster, co-founders of Hip Hop Psych.

Dr Akeem Sule is a Consultant Psychiatrist in general adult psychiatry, at South Essex Partnership Trust, and Dr Becky Inkster is a Project Manager for a large scale Wellcome Trust strategic award called the NeuroScience in Psychiatry Network (NSPN) from the University of Cambridge. Hip Hop Psych, was launched in late 2012, with the aim of engaging and cultivating awareness of mental health issues in young people through the creative medium of hip-hop, and to bring teaching innovation using a hip-hop framework to medical professionals.

Mental health diagnoses have long been increasing, with one in four people experiencing some kind of mental health problem. Hip Hop is a powerful vehicle for raising awareness about mental health issues. It is rich with references to psychiatric illnesses including addiction, psychosis, conduct disorder, bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorder and so on. By deconstructing hip-hop lyrics and by applying the five elements of hip-hop culture, in particular the fifth element: knowledge, HIP HOP PSYCH offers a unique and innovative approach for engaging with mental health experts alongside the wider public in order to challenge stereotypes and to disarm the boundaries between psychiatry, medical humanities and hip-hop culture.

Drs Inkster and Sule were invited to Exeter University to perform HIP HOP PSYCH at two events: one public engagement event held at a local nightclub aimed at people from the Exeter area, the other held at the University for academics and students. The performances to both public and academic audiences inspired stimulating and rich discussion about the representation of mental illness and substance abuse in music by artists such as Eminem and Kendrick Lamar. HIP HOP PSYCH is a new and novel medium with which to open important conversations about mental illness and we were delighted to host their events here at Exeter.

Yours sincerely



Professor Mark Jackson
Centre for Medical History
HASS Medical Humanities Theme Lead
Academic Advisor to the Wellcome Trust