MENTAL HEALTH ACTION UK

14 March, Online Conference
NHS Mental Healthcare: the erosion of compassion and empathic care

How digital & AI tech, psychotropic drugs and neoliberal policies are hollowing out compassion in NHS mental healthcare

11am-1pm, online
Link or QR Code to register

NHS Mental Healthcare: the erosion of compassion and empathic care

How digital & AI tech, psychotropic medication and neoliberal policies are hollowing out compassion in NHS mental healthcare

Register via Eventbrite link here

Despite increasing public awareness of mental health and campaigns to combat stigma, NHS mental healthcare remains significantly understaffed, underfunded, and undervalued. Mental health remains the "Cinderella Service". "Parity of Esteem" is still on the waiting list. While mental health conditions account for over 20% of need, they receive less than 10% of the NHS budget.

But lack of funding and staff are not the only issues undermining the provision of humane care. Just as damaging is the ideological framing of mental ill-health and its treatment. While the primary environment of care is surely human relationships, compassion and empathic communication, healthcare policy seems to be travelling in the opposite direction.

Psychotropic medication remains the most common response to psychological distress. Technology is increasingly replacing human contact. On psychiatric wards, 24-hour CCTV surveillance provided by the private company Oxevision operates in 50% of NHS mental health trusts. NHS digital apps and software platforms of self-help "treatments" are mushrooming.

Talking therapies provide short courses of cognitive behavioural therapy, often consisting of two sessions. Two thirds of referrals drop out. They are regularly delivered digitally as self-help exercises. Currently, autonomous AI therapy is being developed by private talking therapies providers using recordings of millions of NHS sessions for machine learning.

What are the consequences of eroding compassion and human relationship in mental healthcare? How do we campaign to reverse the rising tide of AI "care"? What models of mental healthcare are out there offering progressive alternatives?

Register via Eventbrite link here   *Event organised Mental Health Action*