​Ajay Dattani audio 1

Transcript

”Even within my patience, there are microaggressions you pick up on, you rationalise it away, you don’t want that to be your focus, you want to maintain a good healthy space, where the nurses feel comfortable coming to your bedside. But I noticed the nurses were very scared, there was a fear within the staff. I know that a lot of other patients have problems, it’s hard to get blood out of a lot of sickle cell patients. My arms, my veins, I have good veins, good vascular health. So anyone who knows how to take blood, I am that guy, you will get blood out of me. They assumed things about me, they don’t know that I chair the board of OSCAR Birmingham, that I run a youth project, that I ran a theatre – depending on my look on the day, I can be the most Indian of Indians or the most yardiest of Jamaicans, depending how I present myself in A&E will dictate the way I am treated, there’s this fear that I’m this black criminal. Maybe they’ve had bad experiences where they’ve tried to take blood, it hasn’t worked, and sometimes patients get frustrated and lash out, and I don’t do that. they’ll try to take blood and if it fails, you can see their spirit drop. But I remain calm, and it doesn’t matter how much pain I’m in, I tell them again to encourage them. I’m being that patient, yet I’m having nurses treat me like I’m making them feel uncomfortable, then they go away and get another member of staff, then they try and treat me like I’m creating a problem – I’m not the problem, you can’t get blood out of a healthy vein. They’re constantly pandering to their fragile, I don’t know what to call it, their fear, you know. And then there’s the other times I might have grown my beard out, but I’m presumed to be Muslim now, and I’m being mistreated because they think I’m something that I’m not. And I feel it for the Muslim community, because I know they feel it to