

Embrace

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BME Health Forum Quarterly Meeting

Launch of the findings and recommendations

from two projects:

- **Oral Health, Dental Services and the BME Communities in KCW**
- **Circumcision Services in KCW**

Date/time: Wednesday, 8th July 2009, 1.00 – 3.30pm (**Lunch: 1.00-1.30pm**)

Venue: Lighthouse West London - 117 Lancaster Road, London W11 1QT (nearest underground station: Ladbroke Grove, on the Hammersmith & City Line)



Pictures from the Forum's visit to Toronto – see back page for more details

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Embrace is the official newsletter of the BME Health Forum. It aims to reflect the health issues, views and concerns of the BME communities in both boroughs.

It is a quarterly newsletter and is published in the following months: **March, June, September and December**. If you would like to contribute to it, please e-mail the Forum at bmehealthforum@westminster-pct.nhs.uk.

Embrace is currently circulated to over 430 organisations, groups and individuals from the statutory, voluntary and community sectors in KCW.

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Vivien Davidhazy

Deadline for contributions for the next issue of Embrace is 28 August 2009

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BME Health Forum Quarterly Meetings for 2009

Date	Venue	Time
Wednesday, 8 th July	Lighthouse West London**	1.00 –3.30
Wednesday, 23 rd September	Tbc	12.30 –3.30
Wednesday, 16 th December	Tbc	12.30 –3.30

*Muslim Cultural Heritage Centre, 244 Acklam Road, London W10 5YG (nearest tube station: Westbourne Park, on the Hammersmith & City Line)

**Lighthouse West London, 117 Lancaster Road, London W11 1QT (nearest underground station: Ladbroke Grove, on the Hammersmith & City Line)

Details and agendas for the meetings will be sent out in time.

The BME Health Forum is funded by Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster Primary Care Trusts

Kensington and Chelsea 
Primary Care Trust

Westminster 
Primary Care Trust

BME Health Forum Quarterly Meeting – March 2009



Brief update of the Forum's news and work so far:

- Under the new chairing structure MRCF has chaired the Forum until December. The next chairing period will be from April 2009 until March 2010, in accordance with the financial year, and it will be held by the Queens Park Bangladeshi Association.
- The Good Practices program is well under way. It has had 8 applications from community groups so far. 7 Have been shortlisted and 6 will be recruited.
- Current projects on Oral health and Circumcision are almost finished. Interviews and Focus groups have been successfully held and final reports should be ready by June.

Presentation: BME Leadership & Engagement Project. (Balraj Purewal, The Asian Health Agency.)

A presentation about the work of the Asian Health Agency with BME communities in London.

Q&A

Robin Tuck (Links): Does the word 'Health' really help you to address the wide variety of BME projects and organisations you are proposing to help out with?

Answer: Yes. Health allows access to and affects all areas, from housing, environment and employment to mental health. It allows cross-borough and cross-region work.



Balraj Purewal

Lev Pedro (Kensington and Chelsea Social Council) mentioned that for those organisations interested, the Department of Health has just started up the 'Future Builders fund for social enterprises'.

Amjad Taha (BME HF): Is there a significant difference between what you are proposing to offer and that of organisations such as the K&C Social Council?

Answer: We offer the whole package; from writing the bid to acting as a guarantor that the organisation will comply with all the necessary standards.

Presentation: Healthcare for London (Melanie Smith, Director of Public Health, NHS K&C)



Melanie Smith

Healthcare for London's pan London consultation for acute stroke and major trauma services was launched on Friday 30 January 2009. The proposals being consulted on are the locations and configurations of the service for both stroke and trauma.

Q&A

Rita Buhanda (from FORWARD): How are you getting people involved who are not directly part of an organisation?

Answer: This is always challenging, but there is a big PR campaign on the internet, with public events; also leaflets are being handed out, for example in train stations.

David Truswell (CNWL): Are you confident you can recruit the necessary staff required in time.

Answer: Yes.

Albab Syed (Marylebone Bangladeshi Association): Will these units have an impact on after care at all?

Answer: No. But the PCT's are looking at the rehabilitation stage.

Additional:

Question: Will there be adequate information and communication about the care patients will receive?

Answer: Specialist centres should be better equipped and have higher levels of communication with patients in their care.

Presentation: Westminster Smoking Cessation Service (Lola Fasehun, NHS Westminster)

The Stop Smoking Service: what it does; training needs; referral forms/contact details; new materials.



Lola Fasehun

Q&A

Lak Gill (Sixty Plus): Will you offer one to one help for pregnant women who have stopped smoking but are worried they will start again after their pregnancy is over.

Answer: No. We only offer the service to people who are currently smoking and want to quit. However health professionals can talk to them about the dangers of passive smoking.

Additional:

Question: How many times can someone fail?

Answer: There is a time limit of 6 months. However sometimes we do bend the rules. We never turn away people who are genuinely motivated.

Question: After a health check and advice, what is the range of treatment options?

Answer: We offer advice on all the drugs available and we assess each

case individually to find out what would work best for them.

Presentation: Smoke Free Homes Project
(Nicole Hutchings, RBKC)



Nicole Hutchings

Kensington and Chelsea Smokefree Homes- A presentation on how to pledge to have a smokefree home and protect your family from tobacco smoke.

Q&A

Question: Is this just a local project?

Answer: It is, but there are similar projects in existence nationally.

Coming to a GP near you...

Would you like to get involved with how services are run at your GP Practice? Work with the doctors to make services better? Do you have any good ideas for changes?

We are working with all the GPs in Westminster to set up a Patient Participation Groups at each of the practices. These are groups made up of patients who will meet and work in partnership with the doctors to make services better for everyone.

If you would like to join your local **Patient Participation Group** or find out more information then get in touch with **Gayle Muers** on **020 7150 8124** or **gayle.muers@westminster-pct.nhs.uk**



**Important
information
about swine flu**

The Department of Health has produced versions of the swine flu information leaflet in a number of languages:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Pandemic-flu/Pages/Otherlanguages.aspx>

Good Practices for Access and Well-being Programme

My name is **Isis Amlak**, I am the **Access Coordinator** employed by **Migrant Refugee Communities Forum** (MRCF) to coordinate the Black Minority Ethnic (BME) Health Forum's Good Practices for Access and Wellbeing (GPAW) programme.

My background

I am a dynamic senior manager, leader and advocate; I have over twenty years experience providing a broad range of interventional services to a variety of individuals and groups in various settings. I have a strong track record in voluntary sector management combined with substantial theoretical and practical experience working within social welfare and legal settings. I possess significant expertise with BME communities, community legal services, substance misuse, mental health and youth related issues; my experience includes policy and research. I welcome the opportunity to run this project and to continue working with the BME Health Forum (the forum).

Background (GPAW)

In 2006, the forum's report "Minding the gaps – Are BME groups' partners or substitutes in health provision?" identified that access to GPs was a major health concern for BME communities in Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster (KCW). In response, the forum developed the 'Access to GP Practices' project, which aimed to improve access to GP services for BME communities. The project consisted of two stages:

- Research/investigation stage - This involved interviewing 55 patients and 16 health professionals, including 5 GPs, in order to identify what the issues are, which was
 - concluded with the launch of the 'Primary Concern' report in June 2008.
 - Piloting stage – The GPAW Programme; which involves working with Black Minority Ethnic (BME) community-based projects to enable them to respond to the recommendations of 'Primary Concern'. The community projects are required to act on a number of issues to improve access for their members and their communities. This stage will also involve working with providers of primary care services to implement some of the recommendations of 'Primary Concern' and to develop a workable, practical set of measures and processes for improving access for people from BME communities in KCW.
- As part of this programme, the BME Health Forum has commissioned **six community projects** in KCW to host this pilot. These projects will aim to improve access to primary care services for BME communities through working with primary care providers (GPs and Dentists) and BME patients to develop and disseminate good practice for better access to services. Each host project will employ a full time 'Access Facilitator' to deliver the work. The six organisations are:
- Al Hasaniya Moroccan Women's Project
 - Chinese National Healthy Living Centre
 - Kongoles Centre for Information & Advice
 - Midaye Somali Development Network
 - Queen's Park Bangladesh Association

- WSPM Agape Community Project

The **key objectives** for the Host projects are to appoint an **Access Facilitator** whose responsibility it will be to:

- identify members of BME communities experiencing barriers to accessing primary care services and engage them in this project;
- develop a written guide on interpreting for family and friends.;
- produce a questionnaire for the community-based groups in the top six community languages, to help identify and develop good practice in relation to providing interpreting support;
- develop internal structures within the community groups to:
 - a) enable patients to report dissatisfaction with service, either through a system in the community/voluntary sector or through PALS;
 - b) enable community groups to actively collect information on practices that are not fulfilling their obligations in registering patients, and feed research into the PCTs;
 - c) establish information collection systems on bad and/or good practice and feed that information back to the NHS;

- produce and actively disseminate a fact-sheet on NHS Primary Care and how it works;
- engage with GP practices and support them in delivering accessible services.

Access facilitators will also help improve the health of their communities by providing input to local health care providers and raising issues on behalf of their users. By educating their communities on how to make effective use of services, supporting users to make complaints or raise challenges and providing support to overcome any language difficulties.

Influencing Good Practice

In meeting our goal at the forum of focusing both on the strategic policy issues and initiatives within the health services and on the grassroots health concerns of the diverse BME communities in the area, we will use the learning and experience of the communities that we are working with to discern what good practice is; by working with primary care providers we will identify how to disseminate good practice, so that the needs of BME groups are specifically considered in the planning and in the provision of health care. The learning gathered through piloting this project will facilitate a better understanding of why policies on reducing health inequalities should consider needs of BME groups, be sensitive to their needs and promote awareness of their health risks. Furthermore, empowering communities to support and educate their members has the potential to positively impact the health of the entire community.

Isis Amlak – GPAW Coordinator

Six Community Groups for the GPAW Programme

The six following organizations have been selected through an open tender process to participate in the GPAW Programme with an Access Facilitator in place for each. Here is a brief summary of their organisations:

Al-Hasaniya



Souad Talsi

My name is Souad Talsi. I am a member founder of the only Moroccan & Arabic speaking women's organisation in the UK, which has been campaigning on behalf of women for health, social and economical quality for the last 25 years.

The present post of AF will be a tool for me to channel our ideas and push for a better, inclusive and transparent health service delivery available to all regardless of race, gender, education or indeed cultural difference.

I hope that the present pilot scheme will be the beginning of a bigger, more exciting challenge for all of us to see a true equal and inclusive health service delivery to our diverse communities.



Samantha Herron

My name is Samantha Herron. I have been a volunteer at Al-Hasaniya for almost 2 years supporting the organisation in a variety of roles. More recently I have taken on a job share with Souad Talsi for the post of AF and look forward to working on this project.

Organisation:

Al-Hasaniya is a registered charity set up to address the inequalities in health care provision for Moroccan and Arabic speaking women and their families. The centre has been operating since 1985 offering a variety of projects and services all tailored towards improving access to health care and other mainstream services.

Chinese National Healthy Living Centre

The Chinese National Healthy Living Centre (CNHLC) was founded in 1987 to promote healthy living, and provide access to health services, for the Chinese community in the UK. The centre aims to reduce the health inequalities experienced by the Chinese community. Language difficulties and cultural differences present major obstacles to many

Chinese people in accessing mainstream health and social services. These barriers can result in their being given inappropriate health care and social isolation. The Chinese National Healthy Living Centre works closely with both statutory and community organisations to deliver its mission.

The centre provides a range of services designed to tackle both the physical and psychological aspects of health. Amongst several funded projects, the centre provides core services that include a Chinese-speaking doctor's surgery, Traditional Chinese Medicine clinic and Tai Chi classes, open on Sundays and a Chinese-speaking counselling service, available by appointment on Friday afternoons. The centre also stocks over 20 Chinese language leaflets and videos that cover a range of health concerns. It continues to answer the queries of the Chinese population, ranging from locating the nearest Chinese community centre or helping them to register with a GP.

We believe that building partnerships is the key to success. We work closely with government departments, with organisations large and small, whether statutory or voluntary, with community

groups and individuals, to develop services to meet the needs of the Chinese community in a multi-cultural Britain.



Mingzi Shi – Access Facilitator for GPAW program

Mingzi Shi is a new joiner in the centre. She is a recent graduate with various experiences of community and social service activities. She is trying her best to deliver the information and support to the community, receive and analyse feedbacks and facilitate access to health services.

Midaye Somali Development Network

Midaye Somali Development Network is a non-profit community organization; our office is based at the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, our clients are mainly from the Somali community but not exclusively as we help and support other ethnic minority groups.

Our opening hours are 10.00-16.00 Monday to Friday, where clients can just walk in for advice and information at anytime during those hours; we currently have six paid staff and two volunteers in our office. We mainly give generalist advice and information in various social and welfare issue such as housing, education, health, benefits and debt advice. We also give support in empowering people to overcome difficulties whether its physical, and or mental problems, we liaise with other agencies namely; social workers, police, council, local law centre, hospitals, Mental health departments, GP's and schools or colleges. Our ability to liaise with

different agencies is solely to prevent inequality and to provide a social network for the Somali, Arabic speaking and East African community. Currently Midaye has over 300 clients, the majority of whom are newly arrived (to UK), and in need of advice on all the above mentioned issues. We also run sewing classes for elderly ladies in partnership with Open Age, Transition support for parents and children who are entering different levels of school, supplementary schools, ESOL classes, a Well Woman Health Programme & Health Projects, the BME Access to GPs, Mental Health & Wellbeing, and Outreach, Information and general Advice (OIA).

On average we help, give advice, translate information, fill forms or refer to another organization at least 10 clients a day.

Amun Osman – Access Facilitator for GPAW program

Kongolese Centre for Information and Advice

The Kongolese Centre for Information & Advice (KCIA) was set up in June 2002 as a charity. The organisations' main objective is to serve the needs of individuals with first languages of French, Portuguese and Lingala; mainly from the African countries of Congo and Angola. KCIA provides advice and advocacy in legal matters around the issues of immigration, health, housing, and employment. In addition, the organisation provides tutoring/ training in ESOL, numeracy and ICT in collaboration with Westminster Adult Education services. KCIA work is funded through a service area agreement with the LB of Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea. The organisation is also currently contracted to develop and deliver health related services through the BME Health Forum '**Good Practices for Access & Well-being Programme**'.

Most of KCIA service deliveries are targeted at the migrant and refugee communities within Brent, Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea, mainly in wards that contain a higher proportion of health inequality. Hence KCIA, through its history of collaboration and service provision, has a good background knowledge and understanding of issues that affect these communities.

KCIA also co-ordinates and chairs the Westminster French & Portuguese Speaking Community Network (FPSN), with the Counsel for Voluntary Services (VAW) overseeing the Community Involvement aspects.

Membership of this network includes representatives from voluntary organisations throughout the whole of London, and French & Portuguese religious groups. The aim of this organisation is to enable local French & Portuguese speaking community

groups from multi-cultural backgrounds within Westminster and the catchments areas to work together to tackle common problems that affect them as refugees or asylum seekers, and to develop a strong and positive relationship between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, meetings and within neighbourhoods through activity based ventures.



Denham Evelyn – Access Facilitator for GPAW program

Queens Park Bangladeshi Association

The Queens Park Bangladeshi Association (QPBA) is a registered charity and a community-led voluntary organisation set up in 1990. QPBA is dedicated to supporting and uplifting Bangladeshi people in Queens Park North Westminster and the wider Bangladeshi communities in surrounding areas.

QPBA provides culturally sensitive and appropriate advice and information services in relation to health and social care to the community. The QPBA also works to enhance community-led social, economical, cultural and ethical values in order to eliminate discrimination and reduce inequalities in society.

With the aims of the ‘**Good Practices for Access & Well-being**’ programme being to improve access to primary care services for BME communities through working with primary care providers (GPs and dentists) and BME communities, we hope to develop and disseminate good practice for better access to services. Working in partnership with key stakeholders, the Access Facilitator’s role is to research, identify and disseminate a range of health services and service providers available to residents of the Bangladeshi community.

“Previously having worked with people living with long term health conditions and looking at ways for them to manage themselves and their conditions, I am now looking forward to working with and helping people who are having difficulties in accessing NHS services. Working closely with the community, means that I will have a better understanding of people’s needs and wants”.

Shami Begum – Access Facilitator for GPAW programme

WSPM Agape Community Project

Striving for excellence in young people

WSPM Agape Community Project is a charity organisation established since 1997, for the disadvantaged community groups residing in Westminster and Greater London. Our objectives cover Education and Social Services.

Education: We provide information, advice and advocacy for parents and young people enabling them to access education in schools and colleges. The supplementary after school/homework club is for children between the ages of 5 – 17 years. We teach them English language, Mathematics and Science following the national curriculum so that they can achieve high standards in their academic life, build their self esteem and become more confident to be what they want in life.

The supplementary classes are from Mon – Fri from 4 pm – 8 pm. We also provide the summer school from July – Sept, Mon – Fri from 8.30 am – 5.30 pm, which includes morning classes in

English, Mathematics and Science, and afternoon visits to museums, theme parks, art galleries, swimming, bowling, cinema trips, library and education as recreational places of interest. We also provide dance, drama and art classes to enhance the children’s and young people’s abilities which will enable them to achieve high standards in life.

Social Services: We provide information, advice and advocacy in Health, Immigration, Housing, Employment, Debt finance, Family law and Social Security matters empowering them and enabling people to feel relieved of their problems by accessing the right methods.

All our services take place at unit 4, 51 Elgin Avenue, London W9 3PP, or you can contact us on 0207 998 1647, 07956 671382 or 07944 297 111 for further information.

Yemi Samuels – Access Facilitator for GPAW Programme

Wayfinders – taking information into the community

Wayfinders is a new initiative in Kensington and Chelsea to provide older people with a first stop, assisted signposting service. There is no shortage of voluntary and statutory organisations dedicated to helping older people in the Royal borough, but just how many people are aware of the full range of services and how to access them? And what about those who experience barriers such as language, culture or disability?

Wayfinders builds on Age Concern Kensington and Chelsea's mainly telephone service, by taking information directly to these communities. The project is establishing fixed and occasional sites throughout the borough and Volunteer 'Wayfinders' are prepared to travel to wherever there's a need to ensure that older people with particular needs are able to make use of the information provided.

The project's aim is to improve health, well-being and independence - addressing the full range of issues that add 'life to years' – everything from getting help with benefits and financial matters to finding a GP or a dentist, to opportunities for socialising and keeping fit.

A key element of Wayfinders is its team of dedicated volunteers, trained

to provide signposting and support the older person to use the information to benefit their lives.

Wayfinders is about connections – making the most of what's on offer and identifying opportunities for older residents to make their own contributions as well, possibly through volunteering.

Wayfinders volunteers intend to spread the word by dropping into a wide variety of places from supermarkets to parks, but currently Wayfinders can be found at –

EPICS

Westway Centre
2-4 Malton Road W10 5UP
Thursdays, 11.00 – 15.00

Emperors Gate Health Centre
Emperors Gate
SW7 4HJ
Thursdays 10.00 – 12.30

World's End Health Centre
529 King's Road
SW10 0UD
10.00 – 17.00

Or drop into our main office anytime at 1 Thorpe Close, W10 5XL.

For more information contact Redi at Redi.kowa@ackc.org.uk or ring 020 8964 8624.

Kalayaan research project on migrants providing elder care in private households

Kalayaan, a London-based migrant domestic worker charity, in collaboration with the Centre for Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) at the University of Oxford has been researching into migrants who care for the elderly in private households. Demographic, social and policy changes (including cash

payments for care) suggest that this sector is likely to be increasingly reliant on migrant labour, yet there is very little research currently available on this topic. Given this, the study, funded by the Big Lottery Fund (BLF), is exploring the living and working conditions of migrant elder carers, covering broad areas such as

employment relations, care regulation, race and racialised labour, integration and skills.

The methodology is based on 50 in-depth interviews with migrant carers. Analysis will draw from these interviews, in addition to consultations with migrant groups, policymakers, academics, trades unions and the Kalayaan database.

A workshop for migrant carers and migrants interested in learning more about care work will be taking

place on Sunday July 5th 2009. The workshop will highlight the major findings of the project as well as being an opportunity to learn more about career opportunities within the care industry and to gain some practical skills. This workshop is by invitation only so if you are interested in attending please contact Kalayaan on 020 7243 2942.

Publication of the report will be forthcoming in September 2009 and will be available on the Kalayaan website: www.kalayaan.org.uk.

Bringing Dementia Out of the Shadows for BME Elders

Executive summary of the Ethnic Minority Dementia Advocacy Project 2009

The EMDAP project

An important and groundbreaking report on the experience of Black and Minority Elders with dementia has been published and can be downloaded in full from the Westminster Advocacy Service for Senior Residents website, www.wassr.org

This national project was undertaken with the aid of a Department of Health grant made to Westminster Advocacy Service for Senior Residents (WASSR) and the Dementia Advocacy Network (DAN). Its aims were to

- **raise awareness of dementia and dementia advocacy amongst Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities and support these communities in providing dementia advocacy services for their members;**
- **raise awareness amongst existing advocacy**

services of the need to make their services accessible to older people from BME communities and with dementia,

- **and to support these advocacy providers by sharing expertise and providing training;**

This national project was based in a small local advocacy organization, WASSR, as a result of the charity's work over many years developing dementia advocacy and undertaking outreach to local Black and Minority Ethnic Communities.

The project is timely because of the publication of the National Dementia Strategy early in 2009, the government's drive towards personalization of services that requires that people who have difficulty in accessing services for whatever reason will need skilled advocacy to enable them to voice their

needs and the government's wish to address health inequalities.

Resources attached to the Project

EMDAP was funded by the Department of Health to provide a project worker and organisational support for 3 days a week. The project worker was Gona Saed. Supervision and co-ordination was provided by Jan Kendall, the Manager of the Dementia Advocacy Network and line managed by WASSR Director Irene Kohler, During the later phases of the project funding was found from within the WASSR budget to increase the project workers hours to 4.5 days a week.

Important findings of the research

- Very little is known of the numbers or of the experience of BME people with dementia. A reasonable estimate is that in 2007 there were between 10,000 and 10,500 people over 65 from BME groups, with dementia and resident in England.
- That many BME community organizations know little of the prevalence of dementia in their communities, the nature of dementia and are unaware of the services available, including dementia advocacy.
- That for some BME communities there are additional cultural barriers to diagnosis and access to support to BME people with dementia. There is prejudice, shame and fear attached to dementia for many and a tradition of keeping it within the family.
- That many advocacy organizations lack the knowledge, understanding and skills to outreach to people with dementia in the BME community.
- That few advocacy organizations have the resources to support people with dementia in the indigenous population, let alone BME people with dementia.

The project has succeeded in

- mapping the low level of knowledge about the BME population with dementia, both in terms of numbers, their experience of dementia and the existing (minimal) provision of dementia advocacy for this group of people triply disadvantaged by ethnicity, age and disability.
- raising the awareness of the need for and value of dementia advocacy with two kinds of organisation, **advocacy providers** and **BME community groups** through workshops, training sessions, conference presentations and through advocacy network events and publications.
- developing awareness raising, training materials and approaches that have been very positively received
- developing good practice guidance for advocacy organizations wishing to outreach to BME people with dementia.
- Identifying gaps in provision and offering suggestions for projects to take the work forward

Working with advocacy providers

Extensive feedback from training sessions and workshops conducted by the project shows great appreciation of the high level of understanding of diverse cultures and the need for a sensitive approach to less familiar cultures that is felt to be fundamental to success in working with BME communities. The frustration for providers is that the lack of resources means that they find it difficult to extend their work into areas that need investment over time, like building relationships and understanding, since these do not produce quick results that funders want.

“There are so many barriers - language, non verbal communication, history, cultural background, protocols. In some groups there is a stigma attached to dementia. BME people with dementia don’t get listened to and don’t understand.” An advocacy worker

Working with BME community organizations

The research indicates that the groups that have been supported by the EMDAP have gained valuable information about dementia and advocacy and BME group workers have been able to use the skills and knowledge gained to help identify relevant problems and to signpost to available services.

But the evidence gathered as part of this evaluation indicates that the process of finding BME support groups, getting to know them, working with them and successfully encouraging community led advocacy projects is likely to take much longer than initially expected. This aspiration is also hampered by the lack of funds and other resources available to BME support groups, making any new project difficult to establish.

The way forward

The report includes a series of project proposals for consideration by prospective partners and/or funders in order to help the move towards greater access to dementia advocacy and greater equality in dementia services.



Westminster
Local
Involvement
Network

You might have already heard about Westminster Local Involvement Network (LINK). It is a new way for people who use any of our area’s health and social care services to speak to the people who run them. What you might not know though is that the LINK is progressing fast and needs to hear from you soon.

A group of volunteers (“Steering Group”) has been chosen and elected to help run the LINK and they are waiting to hear from you. In June 2009, all of the issues that members have raised will be grouped together and prioritised by the Steering Group. The LINK will then look into these chosen areas to see how improvements can be made to our services. This all means that now is the perfect time for you to get involved in Westminster LINK. If you have used or have opinions on any aspect of health or social care services in Westminster then we need to hear from you. Contact the Steering Group to let members know what you think they should investigate.

If you think a specific area of health or social care in our community needs to be improved contact James Shafe (02077231216, jshafe@vawcvs.org). You can get involved in the LINK without having to attend any meetings.

The LINK is also looking for volunteers to help run work groups which will investigate the issues chosen next month. Please contact the LINK Team on 020 7535 0492 or westminsterlink@vawcvs.org to join in.

Share and Care

Share to Care is a unique endeavour of Central London Youth Developing Trust which includes a series of events and activities targeting the BME communities. This project is about putting the health of the community first and at the top of the agenda. Too often health care support services and benefits are hidden away and inaccessible to those who need it, when they need it.



Health Awareness Session

The knowledge of health and health care should be shared within the community and between health care professionals and the community. Through this project a two way communication will be established, and following the programme we will establish a core group, including young people, who will continue the notion in their own community. Through this programme have been running the following activities:

- Exercise sessions for aged people of diverse community (More than 50 women are already participating in this programme).
- Swimming sessions for ethnic women and young children (More than 70 women and children are participating in Swimming sessions every Wednesday at Seymour Leisure Centre).
- Swimming sessions for ethnic men.
- Health awareness sessions.



Karate Session

- Exercise / Martial Arts sessions for young children (More than 55 young children are participating in our Gym and Karate sessions).
- EPA (Experience Patient Ambassadors).
- Women Lifeguard training for 10 women to work with leisure centres.



Health Awareness Session

Through EPA we will train 10 people from our contact who are suffering from long term health problems to become Experience Patient Ambassadors. Those people will work with others and share their skills on how to manage their own health without having any medication. Young people will also be participating in health promotional activities, will volunteer in the programme and will take an effective role in implementing the programme. If anyone from Westminster wishes to participate, especially in EPA or Women Lifeguard training, please contact **Mr. Toki** at **CLYD** on **07903865156** or email info@clyd.co.uk.

Are you a BME organisation that currently involves volunteers? Would you like to involve volunteers in your organisation but are not sure where to start? Read On.

For many organisations there is a perception that volunteering requires training and particular skill sets required to do a particular task.

Staff members believe volunteers need too much support and doubt whether they have the time to manage them. With a proper volunteer program in place volunteers can not only enhance your capacity but often add fresh ideas that staff members are too busy to introduce.

The impact of volunteering

Volunteers are adaptable in terms of what they can do, the time they give and how they cope with changes of tasks and expectations. They get a lot out of their experience, and majority of volunteers do get a sense of satisfaction from their involvement; many felt they gained a broader experience of life and improved their social skills. Volunteering also led to the development of new skills and for some it had enhanced their career prospects, or provided an alternative to paid work.

Support and Recommendations for Volunteering

Before you involve volunteers it is important to make sure your organisation is ready.

VCW is Funded by City Bridge Trust Volunteer Centre Westminster's new Quality Volunteering Project has been set up to help BME groups with their volunteer program.

What separates successful volunteer organizations from the others is not just the product or service delivered, but the structure that supports operation. Volunteer Centre Westminster [VCW] offer this service

and are able to help to set the ball in motion.

We are on hand to offer advice and guidance in all areas of your volunteer program and help this is actively communicated across to all parties. VCW has a wide depth of expertise helps ranges from recruiting, training supporting and also retaining volunteers. VCW helps with formulating policies and protocols for complex situations that may arise. VCW also offer specialist advice around CRB checks, rejecting unsuitable volunteers and dismissing problem volunteers.

If you want to ensure that your organisation is complying with good practice contact Michelle Gardner-Ford, Volunteer Engagement and Best Practice Manager via telephone on 020 7402 8169 or email michelle@volunteercentrewestminster.org.uk



Supported by City Bridge Trust

Change of Staff at the Forum...

Since April the Forum has had a change of staff for the Admin Support role. Charmaine Mukherjee has left the Forum and Vivien Davidhazy has taken on the role at this stage on a temporary basis. A tender has been sent out to the Forum's mailing list for a 12 month contract, and interviews will be taking place in early July.

Charmaine Mukherjee worked in the Admin support role for the BME Health Forum for two years up to April 09 when she left to work for a new organisation.

Recently she played an integral role in the Oral Health and Circumcision projects in various areas. She organized the training and coordinating of volunteers and provided support; organized the focus groups and took the notes; helped in organizing the interviews across both projects, between various community groups and organisations and also the shadowing in the Oral Health Project. All in all, she provided invaluable support to all those involved and helped to make the projects a success.

We thank her very much for all her hard work. She will be greatly missed by Amjad Taha and the members of the Steering group and we wish her all the best in her future career.



Charmaine Mukherjee



Vivien Davidhazy

Vivien Davidhazy - profile

She has been a volunteer at the Migrants Resource Centre in Pimlico since October 2008 principally as a mentor, giving one to one help to users of the centre.

Since early this year she has been working on the 'Access to Britain' course alongside Catheryn Cheetham. The 'Access to Britain' course is designed to both instruct people who are planning to take the Life in the UK test for citizenship and also as a general introduction to the UK, its history, customs, governance and general culture.

'After having recently done some volunteer work for the BME Health Forum for their Oral Health project I am very happy to have had the opportunity to take on the role of Admin Support Officer and be more involved with the current Health projects being undertaken.' Vivien Davidhazy

New Chair for the BME Health Forum

I am currently working for the Queens Park Bangladesh Association and have been in post from November 2008. I am responsible for the coordination of all the projects and ensuring the organisation is running well and the needs of the community are being addressed. I am passionate about community work and coming from a corporate background have maintained a link with the sector in many different capacities and roles both professionally and voluntary. I have worked with a wide spectrum of the community in different roles and with different organisations including Youth/Community/Neighbourhood Development, Project Management, Access Point Manager to Learning & Employment Officer and various consultancy and intervention work.

I am delighted at becoming the Chair of the BME Health Forum and keen to carry on the brilliant work that they have been doing. The Forum for me operates as a voice for those who cannot be heard highlighting needs faced by BME communities and addressing their issues. I am confident that with your support we can make the Forum even better in the coming year.



Ziaur Rahman

*Community Development Manager
Queens Park Bangladesh Association (QPBA)*

The Migrants Resource Centre is offering new **ESOL for health sessions**

The session will consist of 2 parts:

1) Health related vocabulary and exercises aimed to:

- Enable students to describe the symptoms of the most common illnesses
- Provide them with phrases to use while dealing with staff at the surgery

2) Basic description of the NHS system with particular focus on Primary Care Services and explanations of the most common jargon.

For more information please contact Ambra Caruso or Catheryn Cheetham

Ambra Caruso – Health Project Coordinator, Migrants Resource Centre, 020 7834 2505 ext.106, ambra@migrants.org.uk

Learning from the experience of Toronto The BME Health Forum's recent visit to Toronto

As part of its participation in The Health Foundation Leadership for Change (BME) programme, the Kensington, Chelsea & Westminster BME Health Forum Team has just returned from a study visit to Toronto, Canada. The purpose of the visit was to explore and learn from their approaches to tackling race equality in health and social care.



Meeting at Across Borders in Toronto

The objectives of this study visit were:

1. To learn about alternative approaches to delivering healthcare to a diverse population.
2. To explore how we could learn from the way primary care services are delivered in Toronto. Relevant areas of investigation would be:
 - a. National policy and legislation
 - b. Local health structures and governance
 - c. Diversity of the BME sector
 - d. Levels and nature of community engagement

The Team will be producing a detailed report about the visit highlighting the conclusions and recommendations.



Meeting at Access Alliance in Toronto

More details will be available in the next issue of Embrace