

LANCASHIRE GUJARAT HEALTH USERS FORUM Working towards a healthier community in partnership with

Preston Primary Care Trust



Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

c/o Gujarat Hindu Society,
South Meadow Lane,Chairman :- Professor R.C. Gupta
Secretary :- Mr. John Freeman
Preston
PR1 8JN,

Tel:- 01772 253901 Fax:- 01772 882221

Gujarat Health Users Forum

Health Mela Report 2005

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The Health Mela 2005 was organised by the Lancashire Gujarat Health Users Forum in partnership with Preston Primary Care NHS Trust, Lancashire Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and the Gujarat Hindu Society. The Health Mela was held at the Gujarat Hindu Cultural Centre on South Meadow Lane in Preston, Lancashire.

Since its establishment, the Health Forum has been advising local healthcare commissioners and providers about the health and social needs of the community, and in particular, BME groups. This has enabled the commissioners and providers to make well-informed decisions regarding health care provision. The Forum has gained much respect for its work and is officially recognised by Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Preston Primary Care Trust, Voluntary Services and other agencies as a means of partnership working with the BME Community.

The ethnic community, particularly those from Asian backgrounds, are more likely to suffer from the killer, yet preventable, diseases such as coronary artery diseases, strokes, diabetes mellitus, hypertension and chronic renal failure. The access and uptake in preventative measures is poor amongst these groups.

There are several factors to explain this, including the lack of awareness of health services available to them, as well as the inappropriateness of the timings and locations of some of the clinics. The people of ethnic minority need to be educated in a non-threatening environment and in a sensitive manner by the health care professionals to improve their awareness of health issues, services and facilities.

The primary vision of the Lancashire Gujarat Health Users Forum is to improve access to health and social services and to reduce inequalities by adopting the following key aims and objectives:

- To improve awareness of the range of health care services within the community.
- > To encourage a greater and appropriate use of health care services.
- To ensure that services are developed and organised in a user-friendly manner to cater for all groups.
- To develop partnerships between health care users, health care providers and Social Services.
- To assist the service providers in raising the general health of BME communities by empowering them to adopt healthy life styles.

- To understand the importance of non-medical, environmental factors which affect health such as education, housing, pollution, employment and other health issues.
- To advise the Patient Advocate Group and other agencies regarding the health needs and issues related to BME communities.
- To provide feedback on policies and strategies impacting the health of the community.

Benefits to the community from annual Health Mela and Seminars:-

- The community learns how to improve health and prevent illness by gaining knowledge from attending such events and meetings.
- The community learns skills that can help people to remain physically fit throughout their lives.
- Attendees can discuss health concerns, identify health problems, and gain advice on healthy eating and, if necessary, community services can be identified for them to access.
- The community has access to support and services that help them address their mental and emotional health as well as physical health.
- It develops a partnership between health care users and health care providers.
- It provides valuable advice to the Patient Advocate groups and bodies regarding the health needs and issues related to access etc. of South Asian communities.
- It comments on policies and strategies impacting the health of South Asian communities.

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Health Mela

The Health Mela and seminars are a continuous form of education for the local community in improving their health and life styles. It strengthens the partnerships and alliances with community and professionals and allows a better understanding of the services offered by the health service. It generates a positive climate that influences how the community form relationships, make decisions and develop their values and attitudes. Healthy, well-educated people can help to reduce inequalities in society, thus contributing to the health and wealth of the population at large.

The Chief Executive from Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Mr Tony Curtis, sent the following message of support for the Health Mela:

"This annual event is beyond a plan or a programme of action; it is clear evidence of the engagement of Health Organisations with some of our ethnic minority communities, led by those communities, with tangible health gains generated through increased awareness, screening and knowledge of health issues. It creates a network within the community which can be used throughout the year and this is essential for our success as a Foundation Trust.

At sometime in the lives of local people, they will more than likely be cared for at one of our hospitals and this event is an important way of building bridges between our staff and ethnic minority communities."

The Mela was officially opened with a spectacular Indian Dance from the Young Girls of the Gujarat Hindu Society, which was enjoyed and complimented by all. There was also an excellent solo dance by Dhruti Bhatt

Mr Khandelwal welcomed the Chairman of the Lancashire Gujarat Health Forum - Professor Romesh Gupta who said:

"The Health Mela is all about celebrating and strengthening patient and public partnership with health care providers, commissioners and other organisations including social services and engaging in improving health status. Our way of promoting health has been endorsed by the Department of Health by the very presence of the Chief Dental Officer, Professor Raman Bedi and a message delivered through him by Sir Nigel Crisp, Chief Executive of the NHS."

Following Professor Gupta's opening speech, the Chief Dental Officer Professor Raman Bedi was asked to officially open the event. He was delighted with the organisation and attendance of the Mela and said: "The Health Mela is an example of good practice to health professionals across the UK. It's an example of how to work with community leaders to engage with ethnic minority groups who traditionally don't access NHS services because of fear or apprehension. I was delighted to open the event, which is a great way to encourage people from minority ethnic communities to meet health experts and get informal and friendly advice."

Chief Dental Officer Professor Raman Bedi read out the following:

Personal Message from the Chief Executive of the NHS – Sir Nigel Crisp:

"The opening of the Health Mela signals a real and positive step forward in promoting greater awareness of minority ethnic health issues. This is a subject I am personally committed to and I very much regret that I cannot be here in person to speak to you today.

The NHS is the largest single employer of black and minority ethnic staff in England – employing over 170,000 black and minority ethnic staff (13% of the NHS Workforce). Over the next 10 years, half the growth in the population of working age will come from black and minority ethnic communities, as will 14% of all graduates. The NHS needs to bring in this talent and we need to retain and develop it.

The NHS must understand the health needs of all communities and groups and we embed this understanding into mainstream health care delivery. Morbidity and mortality for some diseases is disproportionately high amongst people from ethnic minority communities. This is something we must tackle head on. It is quite clear to me that our success on tackling equality issues will be judged not on what we say but what we do. Let me quote one of the core principles of the NHS Plan:

"The NHS of the 21st Century must be responsive to the needs of different groups and individuals within the society and challenge discrimination on the grounds of age, gender, ethnicity, faith, disability and sexuality. The NHS will treat patients as individuals, with respect for their dignity. Patients and citizens will have a greater say in the NHS and the provision of services will be centered on patients' needs."

I wish this partnership between health professionals and community leaders my personal best wishes for the success of this Network in promoting Asian Lifestyle."

Professor Raman Bedi also chaired a discussion forum at the Health Mela involving key health professionals to endorse the need for partnership working in order to reduce health inequalities. This was thought to be very useful and productive as endorsed by Khurshid Alam from the Healthcare Commission who commented:

"I found the event very useful and enjoyed participating in the round table discussions with Professor Raman Bedi and other professionals."

Khurshid Alam also acknowledged the success of the Health Mela:

"I must say this was a great Health Event at a community level. I was impressed with all aspects of it but in particular the way it is helping the community in empowering them in meeting some of their specific health needs. The Mela was a great source of knowledge, information and advice on a range of health issues for the local community and likewise for the professionals who are engaged in providing the services. The Health Mela in Preston proved to be a perfect example of good practice - of the empowering of and engaging with a diverse community on health issues - and in my view should be replicated in other parts of the country for the benefit of wider sections of the community and professionals. I congratulate you and all the organisers of the event!"

The event was attended by other distinguished guests including Charan Singh Bamhrah – President of the India League (Blackburn) who commented:

"Preston Health Mela was a successful activity seen as reaching to the community at large to make them aware of health issues in a very friendly and caring way. It has been seen also as a very informative exercise. I have personally enjoyed the diabetic seminar."

The National Director of Equality and Human Rights – Mr Surinder Sharma was also invited as a key guest to the Health Mela but was unable to attend and sent the following message:

"Promoting good health is of great importance in overcoming health inequalities for the whole population of the U.K. This theme of the Health Mela is central to my job."

Health Mela Workshops

There were various workshops that took place

- Accident Prevention / Road Safety
- Oral Hygiene
- Healthy Eating
- Head Massage
- Holistic Therapy / All things Holistic
- Alternative Therapies
- Faith Healing
- Reiki
- Diabetes.

The seminars and workshops were very well attended, as were the exhibitions. In the morning. Up to 200 children attended a seminar on Accident Prevention/ Road Safety and Oral Hygiene/Healthy Eating:

Various freebies were distributed to the children, which included customised Tshirts with the Health Mela 2005 logo, oral hygiene kits, and various other goodies donated by the various organisations who contributed to the success of the Health Mela.

THE EVENT

50 organisations and individuals participated in this event. The organisations included:

Local Acute Trusts Primary Care Trust Local Mental Health Trust Social Services Age Concern Lancashire Partnership for Road Safety NHS Direct Voluntary organisations such as alcohol and drug services, breast care and Preston HIV support group. Many local health groups such Diabetes U K, Multiple Sclerosis, Heart Beat and Incontinence Advisory Service.

There was also Complimentary Medicine including Acupuncture, Homeopathy, Indian Head Massage and Yoga.

The blood sugar/cholesterol checks were again very popular. The public were seated in a queue and were happy to wait for their turn. The blood pressure sessions were on several stations. This prevented large crowds building up in one area. This also allowed staff to discuss issues on blood pressure with individual members more efficiently.

Out of 300 screenings, we found two undiagnosed diabetics and 88 had abnormal cholesterol values. The two diabetics are already on medication. The visitors with abnormal cholesterol values were asked to go and see their GPs for further follow up. However we did suggest altering their life style and diet.

A total of 1000 adults and 200 children attended the 2005 Health Mela. Efficient handling at the entrance allowed an accurate record to be kept and the collection of the evaluation forms was more effective. The participants were from all age groups. Although their numbers were small, it was very pleasing to see members from the Muslim and Sikh community. More work needs to be done in this area to encourage other communities to attend.

It was very pleasing to see a high number of the attendances from the elderly population. The Health Mela addressed issues such as promoting healthy life styles, reducing health risks and increasing quality of life. An aging population often puts a demand on the economic and health service. It is important to expand the participation of older people in all aspects of society. The Health Mela has succeeded in addressing issues, which focus on health promotion, disease prevention and equitable access to quality primary health care, secondary and long term care.

The Health Mela has successfully seen the way forward for the local community. It changes behaviours and attitudes and is a cost-effective way to promote health and prevent disease. Its aim is to provide an enhanced learning environment for the community.

The 4th Health Mela 2005 was certainly a great success. The success lies upon the planning and management of the Steering Group and co-operation from the Gujarat Hindu Centre.

The Health Mela has proved community partnerships can work by involving the public, professionals and volunteer groups. It has also shown that community partnerships can bring about enormous benefits to the community:

• The community learns how to improve their health and prevent disease, by developing skills and knowledge that can help them stay healthy.

• The community learns the skills that can help them remain physically fit throughout their lives.

• The community and families are offered advice on healthy foods and information on nutrition and diet.

• The community and families can be given information on how to access support and services that can help them develop healthy attitudes and behaviours and prevent or address problems that affect their mental and emotional health.

• The Health Mela will encourage a greater and appropriate use of Health Care Services.

• The Health Mela will develop partnerships between Health Care Users and Health Care Providers.

Summary

The Lancashire Gujarat Health Users Forum is an excellent and proven model to use as an example of good practice as it allows health professionals to create positive relationships with the community. Other districts have also shown a great interest and have requested support on how similar schemes can be set up in their area. The Forum has already helped the Manchester Asian Community to set up a similar body and they are hosting their inaugural Health Mela on the 24th September 2005.

The Lancashire Gujarat Health Users Forum would like other communities to benefit from such a model and would like to disseminate this good practice by helping other organisations and bodies nationally to develop similar initiatives locally and welcome any enquiries via the Forum's secretary: Mr John Freeman who can be contact ed by email: john@jfutd.freeserve.co.uk. Further contact details of the Health Forum can also be found on the website www.ghs-health-forum.org.uk

The commitment of the health professionals and the volunteers has allowed the Lancashire Gujarat Health Users Forum to continue successfully and look forward to many initiatives and partnerships.

Patient and public partnership with the local health care commissioning team and health providers is the key to achieving success. Such empowerment of the public and patient will no doubt improve the relationship and strengthen the partnership between the different stakeholders.

The Lancashire Gujarat Health Forum is dedicated to make future events even more appealing in order to improve the health and well being of its local population.

The Forum would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the success of the Lancashire Gujarat Health Users Forum and the events hosted to date.

Public Relations and Advertising

Pre and post event publicity had been organised by the PR team. Posters and invites were distributed to various health centres, hospitals, community centres, mosques, temples, GP/dental surgeries, opticians and the local press. The event was also publicised in the temple's newsletter known as 'Samaj Deep' (Community Light).

Press Officer at the Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (Craig Noonan) was responsible for the press releases to the local and national media. We are thankful to the local Trusts and to both the Lancashire Evening Post and the Citizen for their publicity and coverage of the event. The event had further mention on BBC Radio Lancashire.

The event was also publicised on the Lancashire Gujarat Health Forum website: <u>www.ghs-health-forum.org.uk</u>

Evaluation from attendees, workshops and presentation stands

The support from the volunteers and the steering group was much appreciated. Increasing on the number of volunteers allowed an accurate record to be kept of the number of attendees and the successful collection of the evaluation forms.

The evaluation forms were informative and showed great enthusiasm from both attendees and exhibitors. The majority had found it enjoyable and informative. Over half the attendees took the opportunity to have a test carried out. The committee has discussed the need for more stations for blood sugar and cholesterol checks. It may also be advantageous to have blood sugar, blood pressure and blood cholesterol checks at the centre during the summer vacation, as there is an increasing demand for the service.

We had visitors not only from Preston but also from Manchester, Blackburn, Telford and also from London.

Once again not all evaluation forms were collected.

Although the number of visitors attended including children was well over 900 we had only 422 evaluation forms returned.

- 58% Found Health Mela Enjoyable
- 50% Found Health Mela Informative
- 54% Found Health Mela well organised

- 97% Found exhibitions informative
- 0.7% Found exhibitions NOT informative
- 49% Found seminars informative
- 2.4% Found seminars NOT informative
- 46% Did not attend seminars
- 58% Had their blood tested for Glucose & Cholesterol
- 35% Did not
- 81% Would attend similar events in future
- 9.5% Would probably attend
- 7% Would NOT attend

Exhibitors Evaluation.

- 80% Found venue VERY satisfactory
- 20% Found venue satisfactory
- 80% Found display area satisfactory
- 20% Found display area inadequate

100% Visitors attended stands

- 96% Would come again
- 4% Probably come again.

Monthly Health Seminar and Workshops

Benefits to the community from regular planned meetings:

- The community learns how to improve their health and prevent illness by gaining knowledge from attending such meetings.
- The community learn skills that can help them remain physically fit throughout their lives.
- Attendees can discuss health concerns, identify health problems, and gain advice on healthy eating and if necessary community services can be identified for them to access.
- The community has access to support and services that help them address their mental and emotional health as well as physical wellbeing.
- The health seminars encourage a greater and appropriate use of health care services. It develops partnership between health care users and health care providers.
- Identified specialists are invited to run the workshops: the specialist professionals also take part in the evaluation of the workshops to identify the benefits and areas of improvements.
- Each session is provided with a translator to explain the lecture notes in Hindi and Gujarati.
- A register and evaluation form is completed at the end of each session.

A summary report is completed after each session identifying the topic, number of attendees, feedback report and evaluation. The feedback so far has been positive. The community feels the centre should continue monthly seminars as they cover a wide variety of health issues and it ca be a means of improving their health and well being. Each session so far has up to 80 attendees. The seminars will also provide a greater potential and opportunity for both health professionals to participate in health improvement and evaluate the needs of the community.

Some of the topics addressed in previous seminars include:

- Coronary Heart Disease / Stroke
- Diabetes Mellitus
- Arthritis
- Asthma
- Menopause
- Osteoporosis
- Mental Health
- Accident Prevention
- Tuberculosis
- Oral Health Hygiene
- Eating Disorders
- Incontinence
- Complementary and Holistic Medicine such as Homeopathy, Reiki etc.

All of the sessions have been well attended and very well received by the attendees. The feedback received from the participants has been very positive with a strong commitment to attend future workshops and seminars:

- Women's Health Issues
- Men's Health Issues
- Eating Disorders

• Management of primary illnesses, for example management of cold and flu symptoms, temperature vomiting and asthma.

The feedback received from the participants at the seminars and workshops has been very positive and there is a strong indication for those to be continued in the future.

With the support of Age Concern, the Forum has developed the 'The Sloppy Slipper Campaign'. This is aimed at the elderly population to be given advice on Falls Prevention and at the same time be offered a falls assessment. As a gift, attendees are given a free pair of slippers to ensure safe footwear to prevent injuries. The Falls evaluation has identified a need for the Asian elderly population, in particular to have some form of identification on them, as many are not able to provide personal details such as their date of birth, address and telephone number due to language barriers. Age Concern and the Forum are working together to find a solution.

The Lancashire Partnership for Road Safety and the Health Forum organised a play aimed at emphasising the message of the importance of Road Safety in general and the importance of wearing a seat belt.

As a means of auditing the success of the events organised by the Forum, each event has a summary report completed to identify the topic, number of attendees, and evaluation of the programme. The speakers also take part in the evaluation of the workshops to identify the benefits and areas of improvements.

Website

With the ongoing success of the Forum, a dedicated website has been developed to publicise the good work of the Forum and the various activities organised by the body. The address is: www.ghs-health-forum.org.uk

Accounts

LANCASHIRE GUJARAT HEALTH USERS FORUM

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR MARCH 2004 APRIL 2005

INCOME

Preston Primary Care Trust Preston Primary Care Trust Roach Diagnostic		4000 5300 450
Total income		9750
EXPENDITURE		
Hall Hire/Refeshment for Health Mela Adminstration support CVS Health seminar 12 x 250 Publicity Website development Special lights/Banners		3300 900 3000 1000 700 650
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		9450
Balance at bank		300
Income received for Tee shirts	LTHT	£4,000
Expenditure 2000 @ 2.00 per tee shirt		£4,000

Key Achievements

- Health Mela is held on an annual basis where advice is given on various health related issues including BMI, blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar and healthy life style. The achievement resulting from this is the identification of undiagnosed diabetics and patients with high cholesterol and high blood pressure.
- The public has been able to understand the need for altering their life style to make improvements on their diet and exercise.
- Establishment of 'well man' clinics at the temple. This has yielded a greater understanding of men's health issues and has allowed men to discuss sensitive matters where normally they may not have had the opportunity. Also its success was dependent upon providing information and discussions in their own language.
- Establishment of flu vaccination clinics. This allowed the community to be protected from cold and flu and provided an opportunity for them to understand why it was necessary to be protected from the illness.
- Consultation with Acute Trusts regarding the merger of Chorley District General Hospital and Royal Preston Acute Trust.
- Consultation with the Healthcare Commission with the forum regarding performance assessment.
- Regular workshops and seminars to improve health awareness and empower the public to make an informed decision and buying into the concept of healthy living.
- Luncheon clubs for the elderly population.
- ➢ Regular committee meetings.
- Continued interest and regular evaluations of events.
- Continued support and involvement of clinical specialities.
- > Partnerships with Age Concern for Falls Prevention.

Partnership with Lancashire Partnerships for Road Safety. An organised play aimed at emphasised the message of the importance of Road Safety in general and wearing a seat belt. Raising awareness to decrease road side accidents by putting on the play "Chalega Chalega" in the temple on 17th February 2005.

Partnership

Patients and the public have been involved from a very early stage; the public views were taken seriously to provide the information they would find most useful. Several of the users of the Health Forum are also volunteers at the community centre, which again brought more unity and involvement in the community. The public completed the evaluation forms at each stage of setting up new initiatives and each health seminar and Health Mela. The benefits were explained to them and competitions were also run to encourage more feedback.

Partnership with Preston Primary Care Centre, Lancashire Teaching Hospitals, Lancashire County Council, Adult Learning, Police, Voluntary Services and the Health Mela partners can make an impact on health improvement strengthening partnerships where by everybody feels they have made a difference. Patient and the public feel they are empowered and have increasing trust with health care professionals. And users by bringing services to the public in their own environment.

The professional organisations contributed their time and expertise and financial support. Over the Past 2 years both Preston Primary Care Trust and Lancashire teaching hospitals have provided financial support along with the pharmaceutical and Volunteer Organisations. The professional organisations have also submitted their evaluations of the Health Seminar and the health Mela making valuable suggestions and producing a clearer understanding of what is wanted by the public for making the greatest impact on improving their health.

The volunteers have been invaluable in the running of the Health Mela and assisting in the safety of the public from the time they arrive to the time they leave. Their skills were used to control traffic in the car parks and to facilitate the safe parking of the cars. Registration of the attendees was important to determine the total number that had attended. The volunteers were very helpful in the organisation of the food and drinks supplied to over 1000 visitors. Also the completion and collection of the evaluation sheets was of vital importance to understand how the Health Mela was perceived by the public and the professionals. The joint discussions with the professionals, volunteers and the committee members allowed improvements to be made and allowed joint decisions on the organisation of the Health Mela and the Health Seminar.

Photographs & Press Report



Professor Raman Bedi -- the guest of honour for the opening of Health Mela 2005.



Lancashire Gujarat Health Users forum with Chief guest and Chairman of Preston PCT and Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust.



Exhibitors

It's smiles all round at Preston NHS Preston's Health Mela



IF you judge an event by smiles on faces, then Preston's Health Mela was certainly a resounding success.

Hundreds of people were attracted to the event, which is a unique partnership between community leaders and health professionals, aiming to encourage greater health awareness in minority ethnic communities.

The event, primarily sponsored by Preston Primary Care Trust, also serves as a showcase for Asian lifestyle and culture, with the consequent boost for health and community links.

says: "It is the only event of its kind in the UK, and this popular local event is now in its fourth year. Preston PCT values the involvement which this gives us, and which makes people aware of the health Forum. initiatives we support as a primary care trust."

The main speaker at the successful event was Professor Raman Bedi, the Chief Dental Officer

for England, who told organisers and guests: "The Health Mela is an example of good practice to health professionals across the UK. It's an example of how to work with community leaders to engage with ethnic

minority groups who traditionally don't access NHS services because of fear or apprehension.

"I was delighted to open the event, which is a great way to encourage people from minority ethnic communities to meet health experts and get informal and friendly advice."

As the PCT's chairman Wendy Hogg The event was held at Preston's Gujarat Hindu Society Community centre, where Wendy Hogg was shown round by Professor Romesh Gupta, Chairman of the Lancashire Gujerat Health Users

> It is seen as particularly important by the PCT, since the incidence of conditions such as diabetes, heart problems and strokes is high among ethnic

communities. However, people from all walks of life attended the Health Mela, which served as a fun family day out, as well as a forum for good health and lifestyle information.

The event included advice about diabetes, arthritis, heart disease, cancer services and workshops and seminars on reflexology, holistic living, aerobics, yoga and meditation. Free

blood glucose and cholesterol testing was on offer too.



MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE VIEWS

A major review of mental health services throughout Lancashire is about to be undertaken and we would like your views.

The review will focus exclusively on mental health and social care services for adults of working and older age living in East. Central and West Lancashire and on the Fvide Coast, but not those services for people living in Lancaster.

The review's aim is to improve services by:

- · Helping people with recovery from illness and/or the effects ill health has on their lives, through services which work to promote optimism and hope.
- · Promoting positive mental health and tackling the causes of mental ill-health.
- · Addressing the stigma and discrimination surrounding mental ill-health to ensure people have equal access to opportunities

More information from the initial consultation document will be available in libraries, Citizen Advice Bureaus, GP practices and health centres in April, or you can view the information at www.lancashirementalhealth.org.uk

Preston PCT, Preston Business Centre, Watling Street Road, Fulwood, Preston PR2 8DY 01772 645500 enquiries@prestonpct.nhs.uk • www.prestonpct.nhs.uk