

**Breaking barriers, saving lives:**

Cancer screening awareness among the Nepalese Community



# Case study

**In February  
2024...**

Popley fields Community Centre, in collaboration with Shakespeare Medical Centre, Senior Commissioning Manager (North Mid Hants) ICS and Action Hampshire embarked on a groundbreaking initiative to raise awareness about cancer screening within the Nepalese community in Basingstoke. Popley fields Community Centre applied for a Communities Against Cancer (CAC) grant to enable them to do this work. CAC is sponsored by Wessex Cancer Alliance. This case study delves into the key strategies, challenges, and impactful outcomes of this collaborative endeavour.

## Background

The Nepalese community in Basingstoke faced significant barriers to accessing preventive healthcare services, including low awareness of cancer screening programs and language barriers hindering effective communication with healthcare providers. Recognising these challenges, Popley fields and Shakespeare Medical Centre sought to bridge these gaps through targeted awareness sessions.

The initiative involved hosting two separate male/ female cancer screening awareness sessions tailored specifically for Nepalese patients registered with Shakespeare Medical Centre.

## Aims

Increase awareness of cancer screening among the Nepalese community.

Overcome language barriers by providing translation support.

Foster trust and engagement through culturally sensitive communication.

Empower community members to take proactive steps towards their health.

The sessions, led by Dr. Nicola Decker with Mrs Nisha Sharma (Nepalese Translator) and Dr. Robin Harlow with Captain Harkaraj Rai (Nepalese Translator), addressed male and female audiences separately to ensure culturally appropriate engagement.



# What was our role?

Action Hampshire's Communities Against Cancer project was the trusted bridge to engage with the Community Nepalese leadership. Action Hampshire collaborated with the various groups to facilitate community engagement and translation support.

## This included:

- Reaching out to GPs and community leaders within specific communities
- Producing a leaflet in Nepalese for men and women with cancer awareness material
- Organising translators for the event
- Recommending ways to make the project more inclusive
- Worked with Shakespeare Medical Centre to co-design posters for the event

- **Utilisation of existing community networks to disseminate information and encourage participation.**
- **Clear communication of session details, including time, location, and purpose.**
- **Provision of translation services to ensure all participants could fully engage in the sessions.**

## Challenges faced

Securing male and female translation support for the session led by doctors. Addressing scepticism and building trust within the community. Ensuring effective communication and understanding of the importance of cancer screening.



## Outcomes:

### Strong attendance:

Over 80 (50 male and 30 female) Nepalese community members participated in the sessions, demonstrating the effectiveness of targeted outreach efforts.

### Active engagement:

Participants showed keen interest in the topic, engaging in meaningful dialogue facilitated by interpreters.

### Positive feedback:

Community leaders and participants provided favourable feedback, indicating increased awareness and appreciation for the initiative.

### Knowledge dissemination:

Educational slides co-produced by medical professionals and community translators will be made available on the practice website, ensuring ongoing access to valuable information.

*It was really helpful and has increased my knowledge. I've come away with lots of ideas about how I can spread the word to the community I work in.*  
**Testimonial from participant**


## Conclusions

The Cancer Screening Awareness Sessions exemplify the transformative impact of collaborative community initiatives in overcoming healthcare disparities. By addressing language barriers, fostering trust, and providing culturally sensitive education, Popley fields, Shakespeare Medical Centre, Action Hampshire's Communities Against Cancer project and Wessex Cancer Alliance have empowered the Nepalese community to prioritize their health and well-being. Moving forward, sustained support and investment in similar initiatives are essential to advancing health equity and saving lives within diverse communities.



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