



Lancashire Gujarat Health Users Forum

Working towards the wellbeing of the Community
c/o Gujarat Hindu Society, South Meadow Lane, Preston PR1 8JN

HEALTH MELA REPORT 2007

The 6th Health Mela was held at Gujarat Hindu Cultural Centre, South Meadow Lane, Preston on Saturday 24th March 2007.

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Aims and Objectives of the forum

The Lancashire Gujarat Health Users Forum was established in October 2001 with the following aims and objectives.

1. To improve the awareness of the range of Health Care Services within the South Asian Community.
2. To encourage a greater and appropriate use of Health Care Services.
3. To ensure that services are developed and organized in the user friendly manner for all South Asian groups.
4. To develop partnership between the Health Care Users, Health Care Providers and Social Services.
5. To assist the service providers in raising the general Health of South Asian Communities by empowering them to adopt Healthy Living Life Styles.
6. To understand the importance of non Medical Environment Factors which affect Health such as Education, Housing, Pollution, Employment and other Health Issues.
7. To advise the Patient Advocate Group or Bodies regarding the Health needs and issues related to access etc. of South Asian Communities.
8. To provide comments on Policies and Strategies impacting the Health of South Asian Communities.

Message from the Chairman

Since Lancashire Gujarat Health Users Forum was established strong partnerships have been formed with Central Lancashire Primary Care Trust (formerly Preston Primary Care Trust), Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Lancashire County Council, Adult Learning, Police and Voluntary Services. Patients and the public feel empowered and engaged and have increasing trust with health care professionals by bringing services to them in their own environment.

The main aim of the Health Mela is to improve access to health and social services. A healthy and well-educated community can help to reduce inequalities in society thereby contributing to the health and wealth of the population. The Health Mela allows partnerships to strengthen and enables the community and the professionals to have a better understanding of the services being offered by the NHS.

This is the only event of its kind in the United Kingdom and acts as a unique partnership between community and the health care professionals in an effort to empower and encourage greater health and healthy lifestyle awareness especially amongst the ethnic minority community. This also gives the wider community a better understanding of different cultures, dietary requirements, religion and languages.

Over the past five years we are grateful to both Central Lancashire PCT (formally Preston Primary Care Trust) and Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust for their continued financial support along with the pharmaceutical and Volunteer Organisations.

The event also provides excellent learning opportunities to medical students, young doctors and other health professionals.

This event is only possible with the support and endorsement from Gujarat Hindu Cultural Centre, Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Central Lancashire PCT, Pathology department and other voluntary sectors. We very much hope that this support will continue for future events.

Professor Romesh Gupta
Chairman
Lancashire Gujarat Health Users Forum

What People said of the Health Mela 2007

Professor Romesh Gupta, (Chair of LGHUF)
Consultant Physician at Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

"I am proud to say that the Health Mela is now in its sixth year and its success locally at raising health awareness among people from all communities has attracted national interest. We have created a template that could soon see similar events springing up across the UK."

"The Health Mela is a blueprint for NHS professionals across the UK on how to engage minority communities, which traditionally don't access services - either because of a reluctance to talk about their health or because of fear."

Official Opening and Messages by the Chief Guest Professor Christine Beasley
Chief Nursing Officer, Department of Health, England

"The Health Mela is a shining example of good practice to health professionals across the U.K. of how to work with community leaders to engage with ethnic minority groups."

"The importance of encouraging greater health awareness cannot be underestimated, particularly among communities, which traditionally have been reluctant to access health services because of their fear or apprehension. It also serves as a showcase for Asian lifestyle and culture to boost community links."

Other Chief Guest's remarks

Tony Curtis, Chief Executive,
Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

"It is a great way to encourage people from minority ethnic communities to meet health experts and get informal and friendly advice. At some time 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 minority ethnic communities."

"We value being involved in supporting this popular event. Promoting good health is of great importance in overcoming health inequalities for the whole population of the UK."

Dennis Benson, Chair
Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

"I for one am looking forward very much to this year's Mela. It is an event that is not only entertaining and a wonderful chance to meet old friends and make new ones, but also an important opportunity to involve the whole community in the promotion of good health."

We believe that Lancashire Teaching Hospitals is the best in the land but every one of us would prefer to practice prevention rather than cure and the Mela is a good place to start.

Mark Wilkinson, Chief Executive,
Central Lancashire PCT

"I am delighted that Central Lancashire Primary Care Trust is supporting this important and popular local event. We value the involvement this gives in raising awareness of the health initiatives and schemes we support and offer as a primary care trust across central Lancashire."

"The event is an ideal way of promoting health awareness amongst minority ethnic communities and a model of practice that could be used with other Black and Minority Ethnic communities. The Health Mela provides local people with an opportunity to take a greater interest in their own health as well as promoting closer ties between service providers."

Professor Iqbal Singh, Commissioner,
Healthcare Commission

"The Health User's Forum is a shining example of a partnership between health professions and communities helping to address issues of access, information safety and health inequalities. The leadership is to be commended and should help facilitate replicating the message and practice nationally."

Professor Christine Beasley enjoyed meeting the health professionals. The Health Mela had attracted many visitors from a variety of communities, the quality of information and the diverse collection of activities had impressed Professor Beasley from the moment she arrived till the moment she left.

Sarifa Kabir
Public Health Co-ordinator
Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

"Professor Chris Beasley was extremely impressed to see nurses from a variety of areas, being involved in a community setting with so many other organisations to raise the awareness on improving healthy life styles. Professor Chris Beasley was also very pleased to see the Radiography Department and the Hand Hygiene display stand."

Publicity

Along with posters (A4 and A5 size) that were distributed widely, there were also articles in Lancashire Evening Post, Preston Citizen, and Asian Leader and also in national publications "Doctors" throughout the month of March. GMCtoday has published an article regarding the event in its May 2007 issue. Prior to the health mela Arun Vithlani was interviewed by Radio Lancashire on the Friday before and actually on the day of the Mela.

Attendance

A total of 900 people attended including 150 children. It was very encouraging to see members of the Muslim and Sikh Community, as well as the local residents of Preston.

It was also encouraging to see high number from the older population as well as men from all age groups. The Health Mela has always promoted health life styles, reducing health risks and increasing quality of life. An ageing population often puts a demand on the economy and the health service.

Exhibition Stands

This year there were 48 stands providing information and advice on a wide range of health related matters.

Organisations that were involved included

- Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Central Lancashire PCT
- Lancashire Ambulance Service
- Social Services
- Age Concern
- Voluntary organisations including Gujarat Hindu Society

The stands displayed a variety of information covering a range of subjects including

- Diabetes
- Alcohol and Drug Services
- Breast Care
- Sexual Health
- Stroke
- Falls Prevention
- ENT
- Healthy walking

In addition visitors could participate

- Salsa Dancing
- Observe the Cookery Demonstration
- Reiki
- Reflexology
- Eye Test to determine Safe Driving
- Head Massage
- Acupuncture

Health Screenings

With the support of the volunteers from the Clinical Biochemistry Department screening was offered for

- Blood Sugar
- Blood Cholesterol

A total of 226 blood tests were taken and out of this 79 samples were identified as having raised cholesterol.

The Medical Students with the assistance of Dr Rajbhandari (consultant from Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust) offered the following

- Blood Pressure
- Height
- Weight
- BMI
- Risk Assessment for smoking, heart attacks and body fat measurement.

A total of 227 Blood Pressures were taken. 127 of these were found to have raised blood pressure.

163 Risk assessments were performed.

This is broken down as follows:

116 South Asian

53 males

63 females

47 others

Out of these there were 33 diabetics already and 1 newly diagnosed diabetic was found.

The Medical Students from Manchester University were extremely enthusiastic with their work and they thoroughly enjoyed the day. They were involved with performing a full body fat risk assessment for stroke and cardiovascular events. The Health Mela gave the students a learning opportunity; they learnt common skills as well as being introduced to public health and health in-equalities.

It is very important that the needs of the community is addressed in their local area. The Health Mela attracted many other communities raising awareness on issues such as

- Diabetes
- Raised blood pressure
- Obesity
- Chronic renal failure
- Strokes
- Coronary artery disease

Other events at the Health Mela

For the first time a bus service was offered to the general public. The bus collected people from Ribbleson, Avenham and Deepdale areas. This service was not greatly received and is unlikely to be tried again.

Eye Test for Safe Driving was very popular as this identified if one could drive safely and the importance of eye checks and wearing spectacles.

Many observed the Cookery Demonstration, as it demonstrated healthy recipes and alternative ingredients to use to make healthy meals. A variety of printed healthy recipes were also given out on the day.

A visit from Lancashire Ambulance with an ambulance on the Health Mela day delighted many of the visitors, particularly the children. Visitors were allowed to sit in the ambulance and discuss the use of the ambulance in the emergency situation. The ambulance visit was very valuable as it gave the children and visitors an understanding on emergency use of the ambulance and the equipment they carry.

Feedback from visitors, workshops and display organisers.

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.

Visitors returned a total of 336 evaluation forms.

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|-------|---|
| 98.5% | found the event to be enjoyable, informative and well organised |
| 1.5% | felt that it could be better organised outside of the Hindu cultural center in a neutral venue. |

A total of 48 evaluation forms were returned by exhibitors
100% exhibitors would participate next year
97% exhibitors felt that the number of visitors attending their stall made it worthwhile

Some of the comments recorded on the evaluation sheets by visitors:

“Very well organised, gets better each year”

“appointments always full for therapies. Could do with more head massage/reflexology”

“more of health about eyes and dental”

“enjoyable, informative and friendly”

“a lovely environment with very useful information. Thank you”

Some of the comments recorded on the evaluation sheets by exhibitors:

“wonderful experience”

“should not be in a faith based place – should be somewhere neutral”

“many thanks for the health mela – everyone worked very hard to make this an enjoyable visit”

Lessons learnt

We value the feedback we receive as this always helps us to improve the event. The present feedback will be considered seriously by the committee to improve next years event.

With regards to the testing. There was still some delay with people having tests performed and some queue jumping. Also visitors aren't prepared to take a number and come back just in case they miss their place. This needs to be looked at again next year so that we can run a smoother operation.

Also commented upon was the layout of the hall. Some display area's along the columns and left of the stage were difficult to gain access to and at times access was blocked.

Car parking needs to be better organised and monitored. Also better signage of events taking place upstairs.

Activities during the past 12 months and Future Events

Health Seminars

Since 2002 many activities have been developed at the Gujarat Centre. The Health Seminars which are arranged once a month on a Sunday, are still continuing to be very popular. Areas that have been covered have been.

- Osteoporosis
- Smoking Cessation
- Women's Health (Breast Examination)
- Mens Health
- Managing Stress and Mental Health

Visit by Anna Walker 7th February 2006, Healthcare Commission

Anna Walker visited the Gujarat Centre in 2006, her Visit was attended by many of the members of the LGHUF and the Lancashire Teaching Hospitals Foundation Trust Governing Council Members. Anna Walker was very pleased to see so many activities arranged at the Gujarat Centre in Partnership with so many Voluntary and Professional Organisations.

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals Foundation Trust Governing Council Members. Have visited the Centre on 2 other occasions the visits were welcomed by the Governing Council as it give them very important information on the local community and some of the traditional and cultural health needs that are specific to the Ethnic community.

Dr Bansal, Consultant Physician, City Hospitals, Sunderland and Professor Gokal, Consultant Nephrologist, University Hospitals of Manchester visited on 16th November 2006

The session was attended by many of the LGHUF members, Voluntary Sector and Lancashire Teaching Hospitals Foundation Trust Governing Council Members. Dr Bansal gave a presentation on "Beyond Evidence Based Medical Practice" and Professor Gokal gave a presentation on "Spirituality and Health" The presentations was extremely interesting and relevant, as it is very important to understand how the health service is developing and how the needs of the population particularly in the ethnic community need to be addressed. Medications budget identified by the NHS as extremely high the above session identified very clearly how a supportive community working in partnership with Voluntary and Professional organisations can lead to a much healthier community.

Mark Wilkinson, Chief Executive, Central Lancashire PCT spoke to Forum members on 7th February 2007.

He was very impressed with the work that is progressing for the Health Mela 2007. Mark has informed the LGHUF he will give his full support from Central Lancashire PCT for the future Health Mela and other ongoing activities at the Gujarat Centre.

Wild Life Walk 2006-2007

The Gujarat Centre was very pleased to partnership with Wild Life Trust on arranged walks this was to encourage the local community in healthy exercise through walking. The Wild Life Trust Group has met on 2 occasions in 2007. There are other walks arranged during the spring and summer months. Each group was given free bottles of water and information on safe walks in the area around the Gujarat Centre.

Charity Event 22nd September 2007 (Rosemere Cancer Foundation)

An evening dinner event has been arranged on the 22nd September 2007 at the Gujarat Centre. The event is arranged to raise funds for the Rosemere Cancer Foundation Ray of Hope Appeal.

The membership of Lancashire Gujarat Health Users Forum is drawn from health care and voluntary sectors working in partnership. We are grateful to Gujarat Hindu Cultural Centre for allowing us the use of their venue and catering facilities.

Health Mela

The next health mela is planned for 8th March 2008.

Finance

LANCASHIRE GUJARAT HEALTH USERS FORUM April 2006 to 31 March 2007 INCOME & EXPENDITURE BALANCE SHEET

INCOME	£
Roche Diagnostic/sponsors	1,200.00
Central Primary Care Trust	10,000.00
Booklet Income	1,500.00
Lancashire Teaching Hospitals	5,000.00
LGHUF reserves	1,000.00
TOTAL INCOME	£18,700.00
EXPENDITURE	
Health Mela 2007	6,060.00
Health Seminar	1,928.50
Website Development	525.50
Stationery	1,882.94
Contribution of Eye sight project	500.00
Admin support	1,249.00
Meetings & Refreshments	1,305.63
Marketing, Health Seminar DVD	1,195.00
Booklet	3,677.50
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£18,324.07
BALANCE	£375.93



Arun Vithlani and the dental health team

The ladies of the temple demonstrating their cooking skills



Smoking Cessation was a popular stand.

Our Chief Guest,
Professor Christine
Beesley has a health
check



Cholesterol and Blood
Sugar Testing



Risk Assessments
carried out by
Manchester
University's 5th
year Medical
Students





Everybody hard at work and enjoying themselves.



Aileen Frediani performing reflexology.



Chief Guest, Dignitaries and member of the Gujarat Hindu Society and Lancashire Gujarat Health Users Forum.



We are all really a huge jigsaw puzzle!