



REPORT OF 13TH ANNUAL PRESTON HEALTH MELA Saturday 3rd May 2014

FOREWORD from Professor Romesh Gupta, OBE FRCP MBA Chair: National Forum for Health and Wellbeing



I am very pleased to report on this, the 13th. consecutive Health Mela to be held in Preston which took place on Saturday, May 3rd. 2014.

My thanks go to the Mayor of Preston, Cllr. Veronica Afrine and her colleagues on the City Council. With their enthusiastic support we were able for a third time to hold our festival in the Guild Hall. The opportunity to use this prestigious city centre venue contributed greatly to the success of the event. Preston can be truly proud of its trailblazing position as the as source of exciting new ideas for the promotion of community health and wellbeing.

Let me tell you about some of the exciting new developments that have happened to the National Forum for Health and Wellbeing since the Health Mela took place here last year. On the basis of our work in Preston we have successfully extended the Health Mela format holding a second well-attended event in Leyland, a fifth in Bolton and the first ever Health Mela's in Bradford and also the Fylde coast where we attracted over 1100 visitors to a vibrant event in Blackpool's famous Winter Gardens.

Another major milestone has been the acquisition of a permanent office in the University of Bolton which now functions as our home base. We used this new facility when we helped to organise the well attended fourth Bolton Health Mela referred to above and followed this up with an equally successful first conference, co-hosted with the University, on the theme ' A Holistic Approach to Health and

Wellbeing' This event, which was attended by over 100 delegates, generated very positive feedback, and is the first of a planned series on themes related to community health and well-being.

In all of the developments referred to above it has been possible to extend and develop our links with local Rotary Clubs and Rotary International. We are building upon this partnership to help extend the reach of the Health Mela's northwards into Cumbria.

The success of the Health Mela is built upon the close support and collaboration we receive from our partners in the NHS and wider community. My thanks go to these and all the other individuals and organisations who have contributed so much to promoting the health and wellbeing of the people of Preston and those further afield.

Finally can I thank Dr Tim Ballard, Vice chairman of the Royal college of General Practitioners for kindly agreeing to be our Chief Guest and to open the event.

Introduction

The origins and development of the annual Preston Health Mela dates back to 2001 when a group of health care professionals and executive members of the Preston Gujarat Hindu Society led by Professor Romesh Gupta and President Ishwer Tailor respectively, set up a steering group to create awareness of health inequalities amongst local ethnic



and social groups. They planned an event to promote healthy living. Designated a Mela – a gathering or festival – this was to be an opportunity to mobilise the community to take an active and enjoyable part in securing its own health and well-being.

Over the years the scope of the Health Mela has expanded to take in all sections of the community and it has become an annual fixture in the Preston calendar. The 2014 Health Mela was thirteenth in the series. It drew together large numbers of health professionals, voluntary organisations and committed individuals working together to promote healthy living in their own community.

It has been noted in previous reports that the Preston model provides a valuable reference point of national significance for those committed to community involvement in the promotion of health and well-being. In addition to the Mela's described earlier in this report, similar events have been organised in venues across the UK and interest in the ideals of the 'Health Mela' movement continues to grow. The Preston Mela is increasingly used by community leaders as a flagship on which to model their own engagement programmes.

A Theme for 2014

Within the overall theme of community health and well-being, the programme on this occasion was designed to raise awareness about the importance of safety at home, workplace and community and its relationship to health & Wellbeing. The children were made aware of wearing safe protective clothing, glasses, gloves and helmets to protect themselves and others while engaging themselves in potentially hazardous activities.

Breakfast Meeting

This has always been a highlight of the day where the invited guests, leaders of the communities, Health and local service providers debate and Share their views on a topic of the day. This year 'The role of General Practitioners in Promoting the Health & Wellbeing within the Communities' was discussed. The meeting was Chaired by Mr Stuart Heys, chair of the Lancashire Teaching hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. The Chief guest Dr Tim Ballard gave a fascinating and stimulating presentation setting the scene of the future of healthcare provision.



Partners in the Health Mela

Partnership is the essence of the Health Mela, whether between organisations and organisers, communities and health professionals, young and old or amongst ethnic groups. The organisers acknowledge the support received from the partners listed below, The success of the Health Mela is a vibrant testimony to the energy released when so many diverse groups join to move towards a common goal.

The major partners associated with the Health Mela in 2014 were:

- The Gujarat Hindu Society and their volunteers
- Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust
- NHS Central Lancashire
- Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Preston City Council
- The Rotary Club of Leyland
- Roche
- The University of Central Lancashire
- The 'Blood Drop' team from Lancashire Teaching Hospitals
- Medical students from the University of Manchester Health Olympics Team
- The University of Bolton

Entertainment at the event was provided by the Dance Group taught by Abhinandana.

Awards of NFW Fellowships

These are given to individuals and organisations in recognition of their work and efforts who contribute significantly towards the achievements of the Aims and Objectives of the Forum. This year the Fellowship was extended to the following:
 Sarifa Kabir: Children and Young Person's Advocate Safe Centre LTHTR.
 Christine Hughes team leader of the radiology display LTHTR.
 Amelia Payne, chairman of the Health Olympics, University Of Manchester
 Penny Page, Scientist, Blood drop Team, LTHTR

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals Quality Awards 2014

NFW is very proud to have supported the Falls and Fracture Prevention Service at LTHTR. The partnership it has formed with the Falls Service has enabled the Falls Service to network and build strong lasting partnerships with the community, other organisations and





services. NFHW has always maintained to support and advise services that are connected to the Health Mela. Sarifa Kabir was invited by the Falls Service and Consultant Dr Gaurav Agrawal as Volunteer Partnership support from the NFHW. The Falls and Fracture Prevention Team were delighted to receive the Special Governors Award 2014 LTHTR. NFHW congratulates the Falls and Fracture Prevention Service and wishes them all the best for the future.

Publicity

Word of mouth provides probably the most effective publicity for local events of this nature and it was good to see a significant number of repeat visitors attending the Mela. To augment personal recommendations, a more systematic publicity programme was provided utilising a number of strategies including:

- * Use of the media; because of the high cost and unpredictable impact, a decision was taken not to use commercial press advertising. In its place a carefully timed, pre-event, press notice was sent to local press, radio and television outlets. This resulted in very useful advance coverage for the occasion in the press and on local radio including articles in the Lancashire

Evening Post.

- * Posters and flyers; these were extensively distributed via pharmacies, surgeries etc. in particular in the deprived areas and circulated to Parish Councils by courtesy of the Lancashire Association of Local Councils.

- * Local radio; interviews with the organisers were arranged and broadcast on Radio Lancashire.

- * Banners and posters; these were displayed at strategic positions in the town and on the Guild Hall.

- * Collaboration with partners; very significant help in ensuring publicity for the event was provided by our partners and in particular the Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust and the Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. The work undertaken by them in cascading publicity material, including the use of the hospital radio station, provided an invaluable boost to the publicity campaign.

On the basis of the attendance figures noted below, the publicity strategy is judged to have been successful taking into account of the Winkley Square festival.

Exhibitors

This year the number of displays was kept At 80 to provide more of the circulation space. This limit was largely achieved by allocating space on a first come first served basis. This resulted in a much more comfortable visitor experience. Those taking part in the event represented local health related organisations, local government, health trusts, voluntary bodies, pharmaceutical and medical diagnostic companies, commercial organisations etc. Exhibitors provided information, advice and support to visitors. Health MOT's were on offer allowing visitors to take a health check including height, weight, BMI, blood pressure, cholesterol level and blood glucose. Hearing and vision checks were also available. The results of these health checks are included later in this report. Some exhibitors provided an opportunity for direct experience, for example of Reiki, Yoga and head massage. The organisers gratefully acknowledge the support of all the exhibitors who were involved in the event and who provided such a wide range of interesting experiences for visitors to the festival.

Attendance

1196 visitors completed the registration form on entry to the Health Mela. This figure is a very significantly less than the actual number of visitors who attended the event. The organisers are aware that substantial under-recording occurred because, at many times during the day, the registration desks were





overwhelmed by the number of guests arriving and the volunteers were unable to record a large proportion of visitors entering the Guild Hall. The importance of establishing accurate attendance figures is recognised and it is intended that more effective registration procedures will be provided at future events. Even at the figure recorded, the number of visitors once again reflects well on the attractiveness of the city centre location and the effectiveness of the publicity. The majority of visitors who provided information at registration were from the districts of Central Preston, with a significant proportion from other towns in the North West. A sprinkling of visitors were from further afield some coming from as far away as, for example, Leyland, Chorley, Blackburn, Blackpool, London, Burnley, Leicester, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Wales, Darwen, Colne, Birmingham, Coppull, Bamber Bridge, Scotland and Bradford.

Health checks

The Health Mela provided an opportunity to undergo a comprehensive range of health checks performed in a friendly, non-threatening environment. 261 visitors took advantage of this facility.

The results of the screening tests are summarised below:

- **Reiki taster session: 29 visitors enjoyed the positive effects of these sessions and felt relaxed and better.**
- **Oral cancer screening: 34 visitors were screened, out of these 3 were referred to hospital for urgent opinion.**
- **General screening: Including lipid profile and blood glucose – 161 tests, 33 referrals.**

In all cases counselling was provided to the individuals concerned and their GPs informed when this was appropriate. Health checks on this scale are only possible thanks to the help of the student volunteers; the Health Olympics Team from the University of Manchester and the Blood Drop Team from Lancashire Teaching Hospitals. Essential support in the form of materials and equipment was also provided by Roche. These contributions are gratefully acknowledged.

The Health Mela and Older People

A dedicated section of the exhibition focussed on health issues associated with older people and in particular,

health assessment and medicine management. This element of the Mela proved to be a great success as it encouraged patients, carers and members of the public to engage with relevant health topics including the Falls Prevention Pathway, Osteoporosis, Dementia and the role of the voluntary sector including Age Concern.

The Health Mela enabled on-going discussion about topics specific to Older Person's health and well being. Within the Health Mela in 2014 it is planned to build on this and to offer Bone Health Assessment and a more detailed focus on Medicine Management.

Feedback from exhibitors and visitors

74 exhibitor evaluation forms were returned of which 95% agreed the Health Mela was a good platform for networking and helped them to communicate with the public better. Allocation of time and resources was used effectively and a better understanding of the needs of the community was identified more efficiently.

Exhibitors felt there was positive feedback from the community. The public felt they valued the information and leaflets they were given, and they could learn and be better informed on how to look after their own health.

Holistic research questionnaires revealed that 99% agreed the NHS system of Health assessment and treatment was not holistic enough to promote maximum patient Health and Wellbeing. 88% agreed Inclusion of Holistic approach in health care can lead to



Health MOT questionnaires revealed:

- 68% had a health MOT in the past 5 years of which, 38% were completed at the GP and 24% at the Health Mela.
- Over 95% agreed the Health MOT helped them to understand their health needs better and had empowered them to take control of their own health.
- 54% would prefer to have their Health MOT at the GP surgery.
- 44% would prefer to have the Health MOT at the Health Mela.
- 100% agreed Local authorities should consider more health MOTs in the community.

improvements in people's general Health and Wellbeing.

The public had commented the Health MOT was an excellent opportunity to be checked out and have expert advice on how to improve their lifestyle.

Comments from this year's guests

Chief Guest, Dr Tim Ballard vice-chairman, Royal College of General Practitioners

It was a great privilege to attend the Preston Health Mela in May. The NHS faces enormous challenges with our changing society with many more of us happily living into old age but then facing living with long term conditions. The Preston Health Mela is an exemplar for us all in how to reach out to a local population in order to help them both identify risk factors as well as helping communities to be more resilient by engaging with community groups outside the NHS family. I was particularly impressed by the enthusiasm and energy shown by the Manchester medical students and the time they gave up on a Saturday to organise and help with the health promotion activities. Well done our doctors of the future!



The National Forum for Health and Wellbeing and the Health Mela movement

The National Forum for Health and Wellbeing was established in the belief that the 'Health Mela' movement provides a realistic structure capable of involving communities in a meaningful way in the promotion of their own health and well-being. The Forum and its predecessor the Lancashire Gujarat Health Users Forum have already provided advice to organisers of similar events in places as far apart as London, Cardiff, Manchester, Chorley Bolton, Leyland and Bradford. Working in an ever developing partnership with local Rotary Clubs, NFW members are happy to provide help and support to any group thinking of developing their own version of this event. Please contact the Secretary at the address given below for further details.

For further information please contact:

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Plans for future Health Mela's

Since the Preston Health Mela, a successful event has taken place in:
BRADFORD Saturday, 17th May at the University.

Future Health Mela's are arranged to take place in:

LEYLAND Saturday, 13th September in the Civic Centre.

BLACKPOOL Saturday, 4th October at the Fleetwood high school.

Events for 2015 are in planning to take place in:

- **BOLTON** 14th March
- **PRESTON** 18th April
- **BRADFORD** to be announced
- **Leyland** 12th September
- **Fylde Coast** TBA

Acknowledgement :

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all the members of the NFWW, Rotary and everybody else who have contributed to make this event a success. This has only been possible due to commitment of all the partner organisations and I very much value their contributions and hope that they would continue to support us in future as well. A special thank you this year to Russell Hogarth who played a key role to engage the University of Central Lancashire. 🙏

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