

HEALTH MELA RETURNS TO UNIVERSITY OF BOLTON FOR 6th SUCCESSFUL YEAR

March 20, 2015

The sixth annual Health Mela (Community Health Fair) at Bolton turned out to be a great success. This annual event, aimed at engaging the local communities to empower them to take care of their own wellbeing and to promote a healthy lifestyle, was organised jointly by the University of Bolton and the National Forum for Health and Wellbeing (NFHW) on Saturday 14th March 2015 at the University.

Over 400 visitors visited the event.

Professor Gupta, Professor Dame Sue Bailey, Mr Steve Hodgson, Professor Rob Campbell
Professor Rob Campbell, Pro Vice Chancellor opened the breakfast meeting by welcoming the guests and all attendees.

Mr Steve Hodgson, Medical Director of the Bolton NHS Foundation Trust chaired the session.

Speaking at the breakfast meeting, Chief Guest Professor Dame Sue Bailey said “Physical Exercise is the new miracle cure for the promotion of mental wellbeing”. She noted that engaging in physical exercise encouraged people to get out more, become fitter and encouraged them to think more positively.

The address was followed by a lively and constructive discussion about the NHS services, funding and how these resources could be best used to improve the health and wellbeing of communities. During the discussion several speakers pointed out that organisations such as schools and universities should be involved so as to provide their students with a continuous concept of wellbeing that would be a stable on-going support for children, parents and staff.

Sarifa Kabir raised the issue of referral pathways for children requiring mental health services. Dame Sue Bailey gave some very valuable advice flagging reports out soon from NHS England and suggested how best to apply for funding through the local CCG.

Professor Romesh Gupta and Mr Khusal Kumar pointed out that the role of complementary therapies such as yoga, Reiki, etc. should not be overlooked by the planners of the health services whilst working towards a holistic approach. At 11 am, Councillor Martin Donaghy, Mayor of Bolton and Professor Dame Sue Bailey formally declared the Health Mela open.



Councillor Martin Donaghy,
Mayor of Bolton opening the Health Mela

This was preceded by a colourful Indian dance choreographed by Ms. Abhinandana who is a PhD student of the University.



The Health Mela had nearly 44 health related stalls as well as face painting, henna, smoothie bikes etc.



The special attraction was an ambulance where members of the public had the opportunity to see inside and talk to the ambulance crew about their experiences.



Children talking with ambulance crew and learning resuscitation

Many children and adults took the opportunity to learn about resuscitation and other life-saving emergencies.



Mr Steve Hodgson, Medical Director of the Bolton NHS Foundation Trust has his health check

As is customary with Health Mela, there were the Health Olympics and Blood Drop teams who provided free health MOTs and tested them for blood sugar and cholesterol so that confidential life style advice could be provided.



Professor Rajbhandari guiding a Health Olympics health assessor

The health team carried out 72 blood tests and of 64 health counselling, 23 were referred for further care by their GPs. These tests identified 13 individuals with high cholesterol, 3 with high blood glucose who were not known to be diabetic and one with Hepatitis C. All have been referred to their own GP for further advice. There were also the taster sessions in Reiki and 15 individuals took the opportunity to taste this complimentary therapy.



Prize winners with Professor Campbell and Rtn Peter James Robinson MBE



Rotarians at Bolton Health Mela

The National Forum for Health and Wellbeing is particularly grateful to the local Rotary Clubs in Bolton who gave great support in the planning and organisation of the Health Mela. In particular they arranged painting and cooking competitions for primary school children, based on the theme "Taking Control of Your Health" and donated the trophies. The winners were awarded prizes by Professor Campbell and Rotarian

Peter James Robinson MBE from Radcliffe Rotary club. Rotarian Swati Mukherjee from the Rotary Club of Bolton Lever, in addition to supporting planning of the Mela, efficiently undertook the very important task of operating the registration desk along with 22 Rotarians from 4 different local clubs.

The event came to an end by 4 pm.



Thumbs Up from the Mayor

The organisers gratefully acknowledge the contribution of all the partner organisations, participants, volunteers and others who worked hard to make this event such a great success and look forwards to their continuing support next year.