



REPORT OF 2ND SUCCESSFUL HEALTH MELA IN LEYLAND

Saturday 14th September 2013

A summary ...

In close cooperation with the National Forum for Health and Wellbeing, the Rotary Club of Leyland ran its second Health Mela on Saturday 14th September. The event took place at the Civic Centre in Leyland.

Popularly known as a "health MOT", members of the public and their friends and families were invited to a free health check.

Many visitors also took the opportunity to have their sight, hearing and dental health checked and everyone involved was offered professional health and life-style counselling.

Of the 700 or so visitors, some 100 chose to have the full MOT of whom 40% were referred to their GP for further investigation.

The Mela was opened by Dr Archie Prentice, President of the Royal College of pathologists who stressed the importance of bringing pathology services out of hospitals and into communities.

Also helping to open the Mela was Rtn. Kevin Walsh, District 1190 Governor who expressed his wish to encourage the development of similar Health Melas in the whole of Lancashire and Cumbria.

Rtn. Nan McCreadie, President of Rotary International Great Britain & Ireland in a good wishes message said that 'health and wellbeing [in the community] is a top priority for Rotarians'.

Supporting the event was Cllr. Dorothy Gardner, Mayor of South Ribble and Prof. Rob Campbell, Pro Vice-Chancellor of Bolton University together with other local and public and health leaders including the Chair of Chorley and South Ribble Clinical Commissioning Group, Dr Gora Bangi.

The Health Mela movement is supported by NHS Trusts and local authorities, Universities, The Gujarat Hindu Society and health-related companies.

Introduction and background to the Health Mela

In the Indian sub-continent the Mela is a festive get together involving whole villages or wider areas. It has long had a role in promoting community well-being.

This is a model that found traction in the north of England some twelve years ago under the leadership of Prof. Romesh Gupta and President Ishwer Tailor of the Preston Gujarat Hindu Society.

They planned an event to promote healthy living which used the Mela format to mobilise the community to take an active and enjoyable part in securing its own health and well-being.

The Mela's immediate success provided a solid foundation for what was to become a popular, multi-cultural, annual fixture in Preston.

With support from the Preston Steering Group, similar events have been organised in venues as far apart as Bolton, London Bradford and Cardiff and interest in the objectives of the Health Mela movement continues to grow.

The involvement of members of Rotary International raises the exciting prospect that this organisation might act as a conductor, transmitting the ideals of the Health Mela throughout the Northwest and beyond.

This year health checks were conducted by the Health Olympics Team from the University of Manchester partnered with the





Blood Drop Team from Lancashire Teaching Hospitals. They conducted tests for cholesterol, blood glucose levels, height, weight and body mass index. In addition, more than 50 stalls provided a wealth of information on all aspects of health and wellbeing, traditional and alternative.

The venue

The Health Mela was held on Saturday, 14th September 2013, in Leyland Civic Centre by courtesy of South Ribble Borough Council. The organisers record their gratitude to the Mayor, Cllr. Dorothy Gardner and her staff for allowing us to utilise their excellent facilities.

The Civic Centre provided space for around 50 exhibitors together with areas to accommodate the wide range of health checks detailed below. Appropriate catering facilities allowed for the provision of refreshments to visitors and exhibitors.

The venue is fortunate to have extensive free car-parking facilities adjacent to the site.

Opening ceremony and theme

The opening ceremony was performed by the Chief Guest, Dr Archie Prentice: President of the Royal College of Pathologists. The overall theme of the event was 'Community Health and Well-being'. Within this theme the event had a plan to focus on the extensive range of health checks and counselling opportunities which were on offer. These are detailed later in the report.

Acknowledgement of support received in planning and staging the event

Partnership is at the heart of the Health Mela concept. The Rotary Club of Leyland and NFHW gratefully acknowledge the substantial assistance in planning and resourcing the event which was provided by the organisations listed below. Also gratefully acknowledged is the enthusiastic support of

the volunteers from the Gujarat Hindu Society and the Health Olympics team. Without this help the Health Mela could not have taken place. The organisers hope and believe that, in return for the invaluable support provided by our foundation partners, the Health Mela provided them with an opportunity for public engagement and networking in a unique and supporting environment.

The major organisations involved in organising and supporting the Leyland Health Mela are listed below:

- **National Forum of Health & Wellbeing**
- **Leyland Rotary Club**
- **South Ribble Borough Council**
- **Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust**
- **Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust**
- **Roche, MSD and the scientific staff of the pathology department RPH**
- **The Health Olympics Team, University of Manchester**
- **The University of Bolton**
- **St John Ambulance**
- **The Gujarat Hindu Society**
- **North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust**

Publicity

As this was the second event of its kind to take place in South Ribble, effective publicity was seen to be very important to secure its success. An extensive campaign was conducted in the weeks preceding the event.

This included:

A full page colour advert in the Leyland Leader, an A5 colour booklet delivered to 12,000 homes across Leyland and District and in the Village Handbook circulated to a further 6,000 homes in Buckshaw Village, Astley Village and Euxton.

A broadcast interview on Radio Lancashire.

An editorial item included in 'Forward', the Newspaper of South Ribble Borough Council distributed to all 49,000 homes in the Borough together with a note of the event on posters distributed to publicise the Leyland Festival.

A door to door leaflet drop conducted by members of the Rotary Club of Leyland.

Poster advertising in local buses.

Banner advertising on the Civic Centre and four key gateways to Leyland.

Targeted press releases sent out before and after the event which resulted in reports in the Lancashire Evening Post, the Leyland Guardian and the Citizen. In terms of the attendance at the event which is recorded below, the publicity strategy is judged to have been successful.

Exhibitors and supporters

Over 50 exhibitors attended or provided material support for the event. As a result of the interest shown in the event, all the space available in the venue was utilised. Those involved represented local voluntary organisations, local government, health trusts, pharmaceutical and medical diagnostic companies and a major food retailer. Participants offered information, advice,



Wounded Ishwer Taylor fighting on with colleagues





support and a comprehensive range of health checks. The organisers gratefully acknowledge the support of all the organisations taking part.

Attendance

Some 700 members of the public were registered visitors to the Health Mela although it is possible that some managed to overlook the registration process.

Registered visitors came from Adlington, Ashton, Bamber Bridge, Blackburn, Blackpool, Bolton, Barrowford, Chorley, Croston, Garston, Hutton, Leyland, Lanarkshire, Lytham, Lostock Hall, New Longton, Preston, Whalley.

100 completed feedback forms were received. Taking this as a representative sample, 25% males attended and 75% females.

The age groups of male and female combined were: 0-5yrs: 20%; 11-16yrs: 10%; 17 and Over: 70%.

56% had attended a Health Mela before of which 46% had made life style changes as a result.

Comments from visitors

Visitors were almost unanimous in judging the Health Mela to be informative (99%), well organised (97%) and representing time well spent (99%).

There were many positive individual comments made with particular reference to the friendly atmosphere, good venue and the extensive, helpful information available.

Constructive suggestions for improvement included: need for more space for wheelchairs; wider advertising; more activities for children. There was a request for reflexology and Yoga at future Events.

All visitors and exhibitors were invited to complete a feed-back form. A summary analysis of the comments received is shown below.

and exhibitors for their helpful feedback.

All the points raised will be taken into account in planning future events.

Health checks and counselling

In excess of 230 health checks were carried out covering a general health MOT which included tests for blood pressure, blood glucose and cholesterol.

These figures indicate that a high percentage of visitors (around 33%) took the opportunity to be tested and counselled. On the face of it, this appears to be a lower uptake of opportunities for a health check than observed at previous events. However, the figures are incomplete as there is no information on sight and hearing tests.

The results obtained are summarised below:

SIGHT: 22 tests completed; there were no concerns or referrals, several individuals with outdated prescription glasses.

HEARING: 50 tests completed; two thirds of which were advised to contact GP for further investigation.

GENERAL MOT: 232 recorded screenings completed, of which:

24 patients had high cholesterol, 13 had a raised blood pressure and 4 had increased cholesterol and hypertension.

26 patients had Glucose between 7.0 and 11.0 nmol/l and 1 known diabetic with Glucose > 11.0 and one not stated with a Glucose >11.0 nmol/l.

18 patients tested with Cholesterols >6.0.

Where potential problems were identified, appropriate professional counselling was provided to the individual concerned.

Feedback from exhibitors

50 completed feedback forms were received from exhibitors. *Of these:*

49 (98%) rated the venue and 49 (98%) as excellent.

49 (98%) rated the number of visitors to their stand made attendance at the Health Mela worthwhile.

50 (100%) indicated their intention to participate in the 2014 Health Mela.

Positive comments included: Good venue and parking; excellent networking opportunity; well organised and friendly staff; good steady stream of visitors.

Constructive comments included: more space for wheelchairs. Use Chorley Town Hall. The organisers are very grateful to visitors





Comments from our honoured guests

Chief Guest: Dr Archie Prentice: President of the Royal College of Pathologists

Dr Prentice stressed the importance of bringing pathology services out of hospitals and into communities. He congratulated the NFHW and the Rotary Club of Leyland for their initiative in holding Health Melas in the community. He congratulated everyone involved with the organisation of the event.

Tim Burridge

President: The Rotary Club of Leyland

President Tim expressed his delight that the Rotary club of Leyland was able to hold its second Leyland Health Mela with the support of the National Forum for Health and Wellbeing and other partner organisations. He believed that it was a positive way to serve the local community. The success of last year's Mela had encouraged the Rotary Club of Leyland to make this an annual event and so help Rotary fulfil its primary objective of providing Service in the Community.

Honoured Guest: Mr Kevin Walsh, Governor of District 1190 Lancashire and Cumbria, Rotary International

Rotary Governor Rtn. Kevin Walsh said that he was delighted that the Rotary Club of Leyland had continued to hold this event in partnership with the National Forum for Health and Wellbeing and so many other health organisations. He said that Health Melas are an effective way to raise health awareness among local communities. He expressed his wish to encourage the development of similar Health Melas in the whole of Lancashire and Cumbria.

He passed on the good wishes of Rtn. Nan McCreadie, President of Rotary International Great Britain & Ireland who said that health and wellbeing in the community is a top priority for Rotarians.

Romesh Gupta, OBE, FRCP, MBA. Chair: National Forum for Health & Wellbeing (NFHW)

Professor Romesh Gupta said that he was delighted to notch up another milestone in extending the influence of the Health Mela movement across Lancashire in collaboration

with the Rotary Club of Leyland, part of Rotary International which has a world-wide reputation for promoting health and wellbeing. He said that partnership is the essence of the Health Mela. Organisers, exhibitors, visitors and sponsors engage together to celebrate and promote the health of their community. He expressed his thanks to all involved in ensuring the success of the event.

Future plans

It is intended that the Leyland Health Mela will continue as an annual event.

HEALTH MELAS arrangement for 2014:
PRESTON.....Saturday 3rd May 2014
BRADFORD.....Saturday (no date as yet)
LEYLAND.....Saturday 13th Sept. 2014
FYLDE COAST...Saturday (no date as yet)
BOLTON.....Saturday 15th March 2014

Volunteers from the NFHW have continued to provide advice and support to organisers of similar events in places as far apart as London, Cardiff, Manchester, Chorley, Blackpool, Bolton and Bradford. The Forum is happy to help any group thinking of developing their own version of this event. 🏥

Please ask the contacts below for further information: Mrs Sarifa Kabir, Secretary, NFHW. Email: Sarifakabir@btinternet.com
 Rotarian Pietro Deluca, Chairman of Community Service Committee, Rotary Club of Leyland. Email: pietrodeluca@totalise.co.uk

www.nfhw.org.uk

Working towards healthier living in partnership with:



LEYLAND HEALTH MELA ~ CIVIC HALL

September 2013

