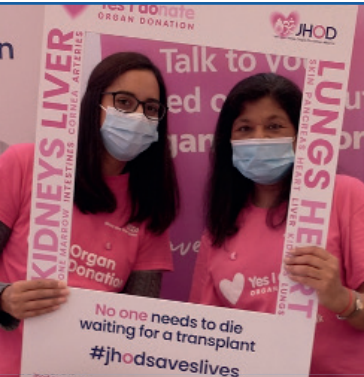


EVALUATION REPORT

Coming together to raise awareness of organ donation in West London



Talk to your loved ones about organ donation

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organ donation in West London

Introduction

We are delighted to share this report on a unique partnership between JHOD and City Sikhs to promote organ donation among the Hindu, Sikh and Jain communities in West London (Brent, Ealing, Harrow, Hillingdon and Hounslow - home to one of the largest Hindu, Jain and Sikh communities in the capital)). This project was part of the Community Investment Leads pilot project funded by NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT). It started in April 2021 for a year. The initial idea to work in partnership arose following a discussion between Kirit Modi, MBE, Chair of JHOD and Jasvir Singh, OBE (Chair of City Sikhs). This resulted in a successful bid for funding to NHSBT. A Project Team consisting of a small group of experienced and committed members of JHOD and City Sikhs was established. The Project Team developed a comprehensive Baseline Assessment of health inequalities in five West London boroughs, developed an Action Plan based on the assessment and appointed two Organ Donation Outreach Coordinators to implement the Action Plan.

The members of the Project Team were:

Rita Chadha (Director of City Sikhs)

Anup Mehta, Treasurer of JHOD

Kirit Modi, MBE, Joint Chair of Project Team

Rohit Sagoo (Founder, British Sikh Nurses)

Prafula Shah, Secretary of JHOD

Jasvir Singh, OBE, Joint Chair of Project Team

Dr Neil Soneji, Member of JHOD Steering Group

The two outreach co-ordinators were:

Reena Patel, JHOD Outreach Co-Ordinator and

Hardeep Singh, City Sikhs Outreach Co-ordinator.

In addition, Bharti Bhikha, who is a member of the JHOD Steering Group supported Reena Patel in her work.

Our Activities

Local Government

West London is home to a large number of members of the Hindu, Jain and Sikh community and many places of worship and faith based community organisations are based in this part of London.

Engagement during the pandemic has been particularly difficult and getting the attention and space with local councils has been a challenge.

Nonetheless, the partnership of JHOD and City Sikhs has persevered and towards the end of the funding period has been successful in initiating discussions with the health, community and communications teams of a number of local councils.



For many South Asian communities, councils are considered a reliable and consistent form of information. They are trusted disseminators of key messages.

We contacted five councils within the West London remit: Brent, Ealing, Harrow, Hillingdon and Hounslow. JHOD had previously worked with Harrow Council and so contact was re-established, and we were able to collaborate closely with them to get twitter posts and newsletter articles on organ donation published. A long-term working plan was also agreed on, with a view to involve all councillors.

We initiated relationships with the other four councils and had several meetings to determine what support we would receive and how we could work together. With Brent Council, having met all key stakeholders, we discussed a working plan of action which would have a peak at Organ Donation Week in September 2022. Initial discussions had also taken place with Ealing council for a similar event later in 2022.

Education Institutions

Every community relies on its next generation for the future. In raising awareness of organ donation, it was vital that we engaged with young people. Young people reaching independence were more likely to be receptive to idea of altruism and the act of organ donation. It is a time when many were also applying for driving licences, this was an opportunity to initiate long term relationships and discussions.



Three educational institutes were approached during this project: Avanti House Secondary School, Harrow College and Uxbridge College.



We met with the Principal of Avanti House Secondary School and discussed collaborative working to promote organ donation. They were keen to spread the message and were excited to explore how we can support them with covering organ donation as part of the PSHE aspects of the curriculum for secondary schools.



Harrow College and Uxbridge College have now merged but are still independent of each other. We had several discussions with them and were invited to their "Healthy College", "Stay Safe" and "Harrow College Health" fairs to engage with the students via a face-to-face stall to raise awareness on organ donation. The events were

remarkably successful. We engaged with almost 1500 students and staff members across the 6 days. It was very encouraging to get the younger generation talking about organ donation and discussing it with their peers. We are hoping to continue supporting both colleges, subject to receiving funding from NHSBT to undertake this work.



Community Engagement

We decided to work with local Hindu, Jain and Sikh communities that we knew had not been actively working on the issue and that we had not worked with before. Through JHOD we approached Young Jains, Lohana Community North London and the Mahavir Foundation. Through City Sikhs we approached Ramgarhia Sikh Association and Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Southall.

Overall community engagement was a significant challenge. The project coincided with the pandemic and places of worship were either closed or cautious in their engagement with third parties. During the time of the project, the community calendars were very full, and it was difficult coordinating meetings with all the relevant parties. Covid restrictions also meant that all meetings had to be virtual or over the phone. It also meant that it was not always possible to help them arrange face-to-face events (which they felt would be better suited for their community).

A large number of the Sikh community organisations in West London are entirely volunteer led, their capacity to engage with third parties whilst also managing their own personal and organisational commitments in the context of the pandemic was a specific hurdle for engagement. Nonetheless the project team is continuing the engagement beyond the formal duration of the existing project.

Young Jains and Lohana Committee North London, both had online virtual community events on organ donation which we were delighted to support by providing advice and JHOD speakers. Both events were successful and had big audiences both during the events and afterwards via their social media channels. We are hoping to continue working with both organisations in the future.

The work with the Mahavir Foundation was more challenging. We had some issues beyond our control, such as changes in their management committee, but we had valuable discussions and they have decided that they would like to have a stand-alone event on organ donation in the future, when Covid restrictions are eased, and community members feel comfortable to attend face-to-face events again. We will continue to liaise with them so that we can work together in the future.



Impact of our work

Throughout the project we have tried to keep the impact of our work at the forefront of our thoughts and actions. Our overall aim was to spread the message about the importance of organ donation to as many people as possible across West London and amongst the Hindu, Jain and Sikh communities. We feel we have achieved this aim through all the events that we were able to host and attend, via our social media channels and those of the local communities we approached and will continue to do so through the long-term working relationships that have been developed.

During the online events, we were able to see how many people had logged on to the live event and monitor the number of post event views. This enabled us to get an estimate of the number of people we had reached, although it is not a true depiction, since there are quite often more than one person watching from the same stream.



We also conducted polls before and after the session to measure the level of engagement and again the outcome was always very encouraging.

In the face-to-face events we monitored the number of people spoken to and made a note of any sign-ups that were made on the day.

We used our social media channels and those of the communities we were working with, to not only promote the events that we were partaking in, but also to keep the momentum going post event. The number of impressions were monitored and showed impressive results.

Having engaged with a wide variety of people from all backgrounds and religions across West London, our work has been very impactful and has hopefully prompted many conversations and discussions about organ donation amongst peers and across multiple generations.

What did we learn?

The establishment of a strong Project Team which met monthly was particularly important. The Project Team developed the Baseline document before we finalised the Activity Plan, monitored and supported the two Outreach Coordinators and monitored out Activity Plan. The time available to undertake the Activity Plan was short (8 months) and the amount of time we initially allocated to the Outreach Co-ordinators (two hundred hours each) was insufficient. It was not possible to arrange face to face meetings because of the pandemic and it took time to arrange initial meetings to discuss the project with key individuals within organisations. The Outreach co-ordinators were appointed on a consultancy basis. This worked well for the JHOD Outreach co-ordinator.

What went well

The quality of partnership working between the two organisations was remarkable and a high degree of trust was established from the beginning. The development of the baseline document was a good example of team working and the writing of the Evaluation report also followed this approach. Our Activity Plan had seventeen actions. We exceeded expectations in implementing some of the actions and made good progress with all of them. The establishment of partnership working with some local authorities and education institutions was most satisfying and will continue in the future. Similarly, engaging with Hindu, Jain and Sikh community groups, which had not previously arranged events to promote organ donation in their communities, was successful and will provide opportunities for further work. There is a significant appetite for engagement on health matters and organ donation must remain a vital part of the dialogue with Hindu, Jain and Sikh communities.

Conclusion

Overall, we are incredibly pleased with the outcomes from this pilot project. The key achievements are the excellent partnership working between JHOD and City Sikhs, establishment of effective relationships with a number of councils, educational establishments and community groups. The employment of the two Outreach Coordinators was key to our success as was the monitoring and support provided by the Project Team. We plan to continue build on the partnerships we have developed and hope that NHSBT will provide funding for us to do so.



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