



South East London
Clinical Commissioning Group

**Our Healthier
South East London**
Integrated Care System

Working with people and communities: Lot 2 – Bengali Community of Royal Borough of Greenwich



Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : Engagement Objectives

The purpose of this engagement programme is to:

- Share information about what the ICS is and what it does
- Build on previous engagement and data ICS have about inequalities experienced across south east London to ensure that they are reaching those communities
- Understand experiences from those experiencing health inequalities and seldom heard groups to inform the engagement strategy of ICS
- Develop, build and strengthen relationships with communities experiencing health inequalities so that ICS can: find the best ways to engage to enable ICS to develop and continue conversations; demonstrate ICS is listening and responding to what is heard; feeding back to communities the difference their input has made

Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : **Scope of Engagement**

At this stage, ICS are looking to engage with communities around the following topics:

- How individual circumstances affect day to day lives and health and wellbeing
- What barriers are faced in accessing health and care
- What we can do to reduce those barriers
- How we build relationships and earn trust within communities
- Understanding how we need to work differently to support communities to share their views with us

Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : About SELIC

The South East London Islamic Centre (SELIC) was established in 2007 to work with and bring the Bengali community of Royal Borough of Greenwich together in one space.

The initiative started by hiring the assembly hall at Charlton for a small congregation of Bengali community for Fridays prayers. After prayers they would discuss the issues within the community and how they can help and support them. Now they are located at the Charlton house and have a much bigger congregation (Approx 60-100) serving the wider Muslim communities of Royal Borough of Greenwich and South East London.

Some of the things **SELCC** have done before and during the pandemic:

1. Provided extra support to students from the Bengali community, who were struggling in core GCSE subjects like Math's, English and Science in preparation for their exams. Some of the students have gone onto universities, pursue different careers and some are currently working for the NHS.
2. Worked together within their network to help people from the community to get jobs within the restaurants and as taxi drivers.
3. Organised Bengali and Arabic lessons for the youth to learn about their culture, language and religion. It is very difficult to run these sessions on a regular basis as the cost of the hall or space is expensive and hall is not always available.
4. On Monday 13th December 2021 from 17:00 pm - 19:00 pm a community event at New Charlton Community Centre was organised, **approximately 60 people attended**. Both **men and women** attended the session. Public Health Greenwich and NHS South East London Clinical Commissioning Group attended the event– Greenwich representatives spoke about how they can help the Bengali community coming out of the pandemic and how they would like to work with the Bangladeshi community within the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
5. SELCC have core groups of volunteers who want to help and support the Bengali community within RBG.

Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : RBG, NHS & SELIC

As part of the partnership between the Royal Borough of Greenwich Council, the NHS South East London Clinical Commissioning Group (SELCCG) and the local communities; South East London Islamic Centre (SELIC) have been working very closely with Abubokkar (Abu) Siddiki from Public Health Greenwich, who is the community lead for Woolwich Riverside Dockyard area and communities of interest in particular the Afghan, Bengali and Pakistani communities within Royal Borough of Greenwich (RBG).

- SELIC have used their WhatsApp group to cascade information for both Public Health Greenwich and NHS SELCCG.
- Abu Siddiki has translated information in Bangla and produced videos in Bangla that were circulated within the WhatsApp group and via emails to the Bengali community.
- Abu's role has facilitated and opened up a dialogue between Public Health Greenwich, NHS SELCCG and the Bengali community of Royal Borough of Greenwich, to listen to their needs and for the community to understand what services are available to them.



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First Event: Ramadan Iftar Even 21st April 2022



Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : Iftar Event Invitation

Greenwich Bangladeshi Community Event Ramadan Iftar Event



Thursday 21st April 2022 from 18:00 pm - 21:00 pm.

Location:

New Charlton Community Centre
217 Maryon Rd, London SE7 8DB



**Our Healthier
South East London**
Integrated Care System



Dear Friends,

South East London Islamic Centre in partnership with South East London Integrated Care System which includes local NHS services, local councils and voluntary and community organisations would like to invite you all to a **Ramadan Iftar Event** where we will be holding a community workshop to understand how to develop approach to working with the Bengali community within Royal Borough of Greenwich followed by Iftar.

This is an opportunity for the Bengali community of Royal Borough of Greenwich to have their voices heard and work with health and care services to tackle the biggest health problems affecting our community.

South East London Integrated Care System staff working for the NHS will talk about how they have worked with other communities and how they can work differently with us to hear our experiences. This will be an opportunity, for you, to be listened to and to talk about your experience of using health and care services.

Join the event and tell us how we can work together to keep our community well, prevent ill-health and support people to thrive and live healthier lives.

Numbers are limited so let us know if you are coming via email:
Kamal Ahmed 07904688667 kahmed11@hotmail.com; or Jewel Ahmed Choudhury 0795172038

Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : Iftar Event Program

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 18:00 – 18:15 | - Guests Arrival |
| 18:15 – 18:20 | - Welcome Everyone |
| 18:20 – 18:45 | - Guest Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Rosemary Watts – SEL ICS- Luliana Dinu – SEL ICS- Kelly-Ann Ibrahim – Public Health Greenwich (RBG) |
| 18:45 – 17:20 | - Community Engagement Workshop |
| 19:20 – 19:40 | - Feedback Each Group |
| 19:40 – 19:45 | - Closing of the Community Workshop |
| 19:45 – 20:10 | - Talk from the Imam of South East London Islamic Centre <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Recitation from the Quran by youth |
| 20:10 – 21:00 | - IFTAR |

Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : Engagement Answers

1. What's important to you in looking after you and / or your family's health?

আপনার পরিবার ও
নিজের সাস্থ্যের যত্ন
নেওয়ার জন্য কোন
বিষয় গুলো
গুরুত্বপূর্ণ?

- Spaces for relaxation and exercise
- Healthy eating habit - Eating well, keeping fit, engaging and socialising with the family
- Playfields for children near home
- Increase walkability
- Exercise is important we do not have a local outdoor gym in Woolwich. We would prefer something which is at walking distance
- Mental health - Access support and resources for family members
- Having the right access to information. Open and comfortable access to professionals through local communities
- Access to health services, shorter waiting times, right services depending on needs
- Encouraging healthy diet, access to gyms
- Physical and mental wellbeing
- Socially connected, kids are happy, medical needs are met, good friends, stable homes, good happiness is collectives
- During the pandemic getting appointments at the GP for the kids was challenging
- Lots of people not being able to work impacted their lively hood and mental health and wellbeing
- First generation affected especially those who are self employed
- Having a mosque

Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : Engagement Answers

2. What makes things difficult when looking after yourself, your family and friends' health and wellbeing?

কোন বিষয় গুলো
আপনার, পরিবারের ও
বন্ধুদের দেখাশোনা, ও
হাসিখুশি থাকার
প্রতিবন্ধক?

- No interpreting services available for the older generations and for those whose English is limited when calling up GP for appointments
- Community activities for adults not affordable
- No specific place for women to get together
- For those of us who require regular medication and are elderly we would like support to collect our medication
- We would like local services and awareness for families effected by substance abuse
- We would also like access for ladies only swimming sessions at a discounted rate
- For those of us who want to improve our mental health we would like to gather in community space to learn skills such as sewing
- Work can sometimes be overwhelming, which can sometimes jeopardise family / social time.
- Accessing services, financial struggles, housing, isolation from wider community, lack of awareness of mental health & wellbeing
- GP is far away
- Lack of communication, more dialogues
- Long waiting times, communication barriers, discrimination
- Education on making healthy food
- Not having a mosque
- Laziness – Motivation
- Not having a mosque within the area, not close by so having to travel far to pray at a mosque.
- Interpreters for older generations, a big barrier for them
- Having posters in different languages in different access points in the borough
- Having a community space equals less social isolation
- Opportunities to go out on trips makes people happy
- Intergenerational issues – It is very difficult for the first generation connecting to the wider community, accessing services, language barriers
- Too much false information around

Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : Engagement Answers

3. What could we do to make things easier for you?

কিভাবে আমরা এই বিষয় গুলো কে সহজ করতে পারি?

- Affordable community space
- Separate space for female for physical activity – like gym, swimming, walking, yoga
- Increase old people engagement in different community activities
- We would like more support with languages. We appreciate the use of interpreters when they are available.
- We would prefer to have access to English classes so that we can independently access support
- Guidance on health services and sign posting
- Easily accessible information
- Dental treatment, more information, regular community engagements
- Funding to build a community centre
- Having a local mosque
- Free gym services and partial help
- Community centre (Islamic) for us to pray, maybe a fitness centre for the ladies
- Helping to upskill for new jobs opportunities
- Comfortable and open discussions

Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : Engagement Answers

4. What do we need to do differently to support you to continuing

আপনাদেরকে ভাল রাখার জন্য আলাদা ভাবে আমরা কি করতে পারি?

- Religious space for mental peace
- More engaging public space for all age
- Access to more interpreters at the GP, hospital and specially to make phone calls
- Financial support if needed
- Continued communications with local communities
- Provide access to services for older generation in a language they understand.
- Interpreters should always be used, the expectation that family members can interpret should be avoided.
- Interpreters, giving information about interpretation services, help with filling up forms
- Build a community centre for this (Bengali) community
- Open a mosque
- More community focused events / activities / initiatives
- Help us strive to open the community centre, a mosque
- More social care and assistant should be available to elderly people of the community by those can speak and understand Bengali.

Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : Engagement Answers

5. share your experiences and views and be our partner?

আপনিও আমাদের একজন.
দয়া করে আপনার অভিজ্ঞতা ও
মতামত আমাদের সাথে শেয়ার
করুন।

- Although it is a nice area to live in but still there are a lot of to do make our living space more liveable.
- We are happy to work together for the betterment of the community.
- We would like more initiatives which will help women be more active and independent. In order to improve our mental health this will be important to for us to have language support
- Face to face interactions
- Events are more beneficial as they are better at connecting with the community
- Yes, very good
- In terms of booking appointments at the GP, the wait time for appointments is long

Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : Iftar Event 21.04.2022



- Rosemary and Iuliana spoke about NHS SEL ICS and how they would like to work with Bengali community



- Kelly-Ann spoke about the work Public Health Greenwich are doing and how they would like to work with Bengali community



- Abu spoke in Bengali and English about both RBG and SEL ICS' work and explained how the workshop will be carried out

Bengali Community Workshop 21.04.22: Iftar Event



- Kelly-Ann facilitating the workshop at the women's table



- Shabina facilitating the workshop in Bengali at women's table



- Discussions happening at the workshop at the men's table



- Abu facilitating the workshop and answering a question

Bengali Community Workshop 21.04.22: Iftar Event



- A youth doing a recitation from the Quran before iftar



- A youth explaining the reason behind fasting



- Behind the scenes- food preparation



- Everyone enjoying the Iftar food



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Second Event: Eid Event 9st May 2022



Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : Eid Event Invitation



Dear Friends, following the huge success of the Ramadan Iftar event **South East London Islamic Centre** would like to invite you an **Eid Event** where we will be holding a community workshop to continue the conversations we started with the Bengali community about health, care and wellbeing.

The conversations will inform the new South East Integrated Care System on what is important to local people about looking after their health and wellbeing. This will help the ICS develop its plans and ways of working with local people and communities. The ICS is a local partnership made up of local health services, local councils and voluntary and community organisations and one of its key aim is to help improve the health of the people in south east London.

Date:

Monday 9th May 2022 from 18:00 pm - 21:00 pm.

Location:

St. Thomas' Church, Woodland Terrace, London SE7 8EN

Numbers are limited so let us know if you are coming via phone or email:

Kamal Ahmed 07904688667 kahmed11@hotmail.com; or Jewel Ahmed Choudhoury 0795172038

Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : Eid Event Program

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 18:00 – 18:30 | - Guests Arrival |
| 18:30 – 19:00 | - Meet and Greet |
| 19:00 – 19:05 | - Welcome Guests (Abu) |
| 19:05 – 19: 30 | - Guest Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Majidur Rahman – Newly Appointed Councillor (British Bangladeshi)- Khasruz Zaman – Bengali Community Representative- Kell-Ann Ibrahim – Public Greenwich- Gilles Gabon – GRIP |
| 19:30 – 20:30 | - Community Engagement Workshop |
| 20:30 – 20:45 | - Feedback From Each Group |
| 20:45 – 21:15 | - FOOD |

Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : Engagement Answers

1. How does individual circumstances affect day to day lives and health and wellbeing?

- Social Isolation
- No regular community space / socializing + prayer
- Need for intergenerational work
- Loneliness, isolation, lack of common meeting space, regular meetings
- Interpreting and translation is an issue, attending appointments and filling in application forms.
- Exercise - Yoga sessions and other exercise classes
- Access to GP in Bengali language
- Drugs intervention services with Bengali speakers to help worried parents to seek help and support
- Having access to services and women only groups: Gym, park run / walks, cooking session. Important to learn and speak English – Access to English courses and women interpreters.
- Eating well, keeping fit, engaging and socialising with the family y gym sessions and swimming
- Language barriers: Services not reaching out to the Bengali community and the community not able to access the services
- Lack of funding available for the Bengali community
- Lack of resources within the borough
- Elderly people having access to services in Bengali without the need of the family members translating.

Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : Engagement Answers

2. What barriers are faced in accessing health and care?

- Language barriers– Family members interpret, and health services are not pro-active in providing interpreters. Communication via relevant authorities.
- No regular community space / socializing + prayer.
- Changing mindset, social prescribing, see the information in a format people understand. Translating into the language mental health information, bereavement, isolation and wellbeing.
- Having to travel to Sidcup from Greenwich to get help with forms.
- Issues with understanding bills.
- Children's parks are not local, so more difficult to get to.
- Communication center – interpreters for schools, GP, Hospitals
- Language and cultural barrier
- No confident in speaking, need someone to speak on behalf.
- Language barrier.
- No access to Bengali welfare office that can help with reading / sending official letters.
- Problems using modern technology.

Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : Engagement Answers

3. What we can do to reduce those barriers?

- Basic needs – Housing, food, exercise, quality of relationships.
- Use community networks – word of mouth is important to inform communities of services available.
- Speakers at community events about mental health and bereavement support and wellbeing.
- Interpreting
- Local services to help with forms, understanding bills and interpreting.
- Have community centers to help Bengali members & community.
- Provision of services that can be accessed easily.
- Have more accessible classes.
- On-going trainings.
- Have facilities to improve social health like day trips, picnics, swimming, exercise aimed to help Bengali community.
- Central base – where we can meet and communicate in own language (Bengali).

Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : Engagement Answers

4. How can we build relationships and earn trust within the Bengali community?

- Relationships affected by language miscommunication.
- Providing services from an office locally.
- Could be a mobile service arriving in the area on suitable days.
- Training to up skill community.
- A provision of services where people can gather and help each other resolving issues.
- Regular activities where all community meet and greet each other to promote cohesions.
- Have more community officials visible to encourage women to go out for walks.
- Bilingual school – youth work – culture
- Lessons at school that prepares students to pursue Bangla at GCSE.
- Having more Bengali people within the services that communicate with the community.

Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : Engagement Answers

4. How can we work differently to support the Bengali community of Royal Borough of Greenwich to share your views with us?

- Have issues understanding bill payment, often over payment occurs but hard to explain and get a rebate.
- Will be good to have a liaison officer who speaks Bengali to understand ongoing issues and raise issues.
- Could be a mobile service arriving in the area on suitable days.
- Advice center / contact center in Bengali
- Have community engagement programs like this.
- All service providers are aware the Bengali community facing various issues with regards to their need e.g., councilors, MPs & community-based organization.
- Information from the council to the Bengali community
- Knife crime with youth
- Cycle lane is a huge problem for elderly people going out and crossing the road.
- Gardening space for women to grow vegetables.
- Women only activities, exercise and sports.
- Social interaction.

Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : Eid Event 09.05.2022



- Bengali community and guests at the Eid event



- Guest Speakers: Kamal Ahmed, Shamsul Hoque (Yahiya), Gilles Gabon (GRIP), Majidur Rahman (Councillor),



- Women of the Bengali community at the Eid event



- Guest speakers: Khasruz Zaman (former teacher), Kelly-Ann Ibrahim (Public Health Greenwich)



Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : Eid Event Workshop



- Workshop engaging the women in the conversation

- Workshop engaging the men in the conversation

Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : Eid Event Workshop



- Women cutting cake to celebrate Eid event



- Men cutting cake to celebrate Eid event



- **The volunteers:** Abu Siddiki (RBG), Abdul Basit, Jewel Ahmed Choudhary, Kamal Ahmed, Fokrul Islam, Shamsul Hoque (Ahia), Ohidur Rahman Choudhary, Harris Ahmed (not in pic), Syed Bahar Miah (not in pic)

Lot 2 – RBG - Bengali Community : Recommendation

Recommendation

1. Bring services to the community in language they understand.
2. Continue community engagement and conversation in a language they understand and working in co-production approach.
3. Provide access to separate space for women to socialize, exercise and learn new skills.
4. Creating a permanent space for the Bengali community will enable them to be socially connected, decrease social isolation, and provide a point of contact for the community to get together.
5. Empowering the older generation by removing barriers by providing access to services in a language they understand.
6. Provide social care to the older generation by people who speak their language and have a deeper understanding of their culture and religion.
7. Supporting the community to access funding to bring the community together to socialize and connecting to the wider community.
8. Championing and empowering the Bengali community voice for both men and women.