

THE AFRICAN AND CARIBBEAN DIABETES HEALTH FORUM (ACDHF)

Introducing the African and Caribbean Diabetes Health Forum (ACDHF) team, working in Brent, and led by Dr Joan St John. Read on to find out how they've been using the Lab to co-produce bespoke, culturally sensitive and specific information to improve health outcomes for the Somalian community.

Type 2 Diabetes is 3 times more common among the African and Caribbean communities living in the UK than compared with other populations. While diverse, they are frequently pooled together under the umbrella of BAME, which oversimplifies the specific and different beliefs, cultures and requirements of each community.

Currently, the NHS healthcare provision fails to meet the differing needs and experiences of these communities and so health education and service engagement are lower among these groups. In particular, the Somalian community in Brent, North-West London, reported that they feel underserved by healthcare providers.

How can we ensure that this Somalian community receives the care they need, in a culturally appropriate and relevant way?

Here's where our team comes in

The team from ACDHF have been engaging deeply with the Somalian community in Brent, connecting with the local Imam, women's groups, and community football team. These relationships allowed them to build enough trust for the groups to share their stories, highlighting a need, and a thirst for specific diabetes education- the idea for this team's prototype.

“ It's not about what we want to do, it's about what the community needs. ”

Connecting with the community in this way has allowed the team to get quick responses and feedback on their work. They've used a combination of surveys, videos, presentations, and leaflets to ensure that their materials are accessible and can reach as many people as possible.

“ We had a quick response and good feedback from the community that we trained, mostly they are diabetic or know somebody with diabetes, and they played football together on Sundays. After just one week, I received good feedback that they changed their lifestyle, some of them now change the amount of food they eat, or

they say the level of sugar they eat is not similar to before... they even showed me pictures of the difference of their portion sizes, so that was amazing.



The ambition of this Lab team has been unwavering, persevering through challenges caused by the pandemic and busy work schedules- they've even been planning for their future work. Using their learnings from this process, ACDHF wants to be able to provide tailored healthcare services to other population groups with unmet needs.

We're looking forward to hearing how they get on and will keep you updated here and on Twitter, (@DiabetesUKProf)