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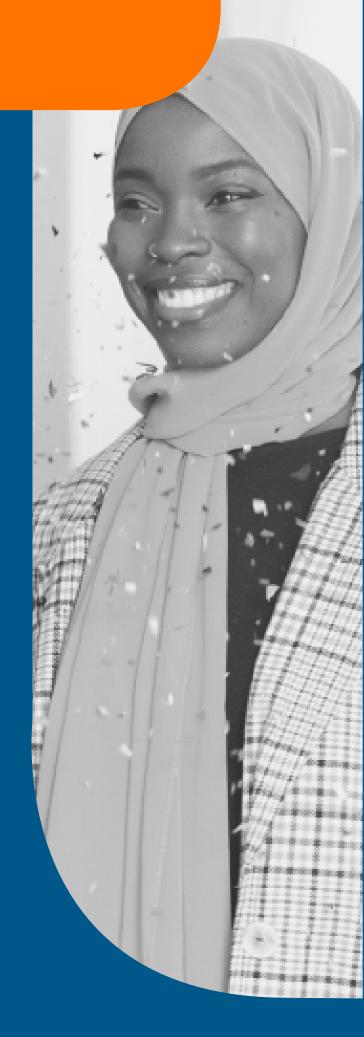
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ABOUT US

Croydon BME (black & minority ethnic) Forum is the umbrella organisation for Croydon's Black and Minority Ethnic voluntary and community sector organisations by engaging people, building capacity and promoting equality and cohesion. The Forum was established to maximise the engagement of BME communities in all aspects of living and working in Croydon.

We make representations on behalf of Croydon's black and minority ethnic communities to public sector agencies and non-statutory organisations.

We Work with our communities to:

- 1. Ensure that they are involved in local policy and decision making; regeneration and neighbourhood renewal.
- 2. Facilitate joint-working among BME communities to develop best practice and provide a unified BME voice within local strategic partnerships.
- 3. Promote networking, collaboration and partnership between the BME voluntary sector and mainstream agencies building their organisational capacities.
- 4. Engage with BME communities in all aspects of Croydon life.
- 5. Encourage good race relations, community cohesion and equality of opportunity for all throughout Croydon.

CORE SERVICES



EQUALITY AND COHESION

Building Bridges within and between communities and providing a strategic equality function in Croydon within the framework of the Equality Act 2010 and Croydon Strategic Partnership



BUILDING CAPACITY

Empowering BME voluntary and community sector organisations indeveloping their people, systems and structures so that they are better able todeliver quality services to their users.



EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

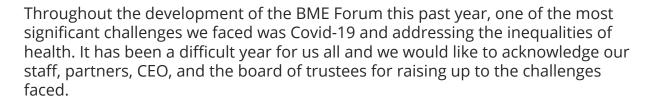
Working to empower Croydon's BME communities to contribute towards policy development & decisionmaking in order to ensure equal access to services aswell as development of cultural sensitive services.



Message from the Chair Paulette Lewis MBE Chair - Croydon BME Forum

I am delighted to present our 2021 Annual report which highlights how we have developed and created new work streams as we operate to deliver vital services to meet

the needs of the Croydon community. This report will outline of all our projects, activities, and achievements across the past year.



We can be proud that despite these unprecedented events we have continued to work and respond to the health care community projects in partnership with other organisations. We have worked tirelessly in responding to the impact of the pandemic while continuing to maintain essential services, community development and strengthening partnership working across the borough.

We are committed to providing fair and transparent community focused services which help in reducing inequalities of health. Whilst maintaining our business we also developed new projects to further develop the organisation.

We continue to face challenges, but it has not prevented the organisation to make strong strides in working to meet our key priorities for the community. There have been several positive projects, which has helped in supporting our population and enhanced our position in the community. We do have more work to do in developing our workforce and structures in preparation for transformation across systems and communities.

Looking forward into the next financial year, there will be further developments taking place with our partners. We are proud to have achieved good outcomes from the work and project undertaken to date. We will ensure the voice of our population is embedded within the way we develop our community services.

I would like to thank the Board of Trustees, the CEO, Staff members and all our Volunteers for all their hard work and commitment to the development of the organisation. We look forward to the continued support in taking the BME Forum forward.





Message from the CEO Andrew Brown

Chief Executive Officer

What a year it's been! We've had an exciting year of growth with Black History Month, The launch new projects such as the long-term health conditions and our mental health PICS.

I am incredibly happy to be able to say Croydon BME Forum has moved up another level despite facing obstacles like the pandemic. The forum could have shieled away but the staff and myself stepped to the plate by outperforming ourselves and helping others.

On March 23rd 2020, as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic, the government announced a partial lockdown nationwide. This resulted in Croydon BME Forum being placed in the unwanted but unavoidable position of having to shut down their two busy offices. Additionally, Impacting on the BME community whom they support as it meant valuable face to face services could no longer be delivered.

While understanding that the needs of the community where likely to increase during this challenging time, undeterred, Croydon BME Forum quickly set about ways in which they could provide support to its members and the BME community in general. Through the use of digital media such as WhatsApp and Zoom, we have been able to provide a range of activities, launch innovative ideas and offer support alongside partners, that have had a far-reaching positive effect on Croydon's BME community.

These have included:

- Creating a range of online resources, including providing a weekly updated list of emergency numbers where the community could seek support.
- The weekly delivery of culturally relevant food, essential to the over 60s, people who are shielding and unable to leave their houses.
- A fully packed, day-to-day, morning and evening Mental Health Awareness week programme that actually had to be extend into a second week.
- Working alongside Croydon Council to help ensure that the voluntary sector get much needed funding to deliver essential work to the community, as quick as possible.
- Allowing food banks to use on of our premises, to enable the crucial distribution of food to continue to those in the community who would otherwise go without.
- Hosting and delivering over 40 online zoom meetings that have enabled people to stay in touch and keep informed.

The Impact of the worldwide Pandemic and murder of George Floyd has an immense impact on the community's mental health.



Activities & Programmes

Raise your Game

The Raise your Game project, lead by Debi Roberts, was launched with aims to support business start-ups and help them to navigate those early stages and provide anunderstanding of how to build a viable business. The raise Your Game Programme worked with 16 organisations to do just that.

It gave each of them attention and help with capacity building as long as their business needs responded to or met the local needs within the Croydon community, they were working towards improving their financial planning, service delivery, governance and management and their turnover was 50K or below.

The Chip Project

Delivered 14 fantastic events, a health and fitness programme and assist a local VAWG organisation to help women and children who need to move to a safe house. We were able to meet identifies BAME community needs and provide solutions to their problems. 606 individuals took part in the project. We provided workshops such as:

- Supporting parents with GCSE results
- COVID 19 and it's impact on Disabilities
- Death in a time of COVID that allowed us to continue to be a 'single door' for a wide range of problems during the pandemic
- Give people the space to improve their wellbeing by developing coping skills to improve their resilience to the situation

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORKERS (CDW Workers)

The mission of Community Development Workers is to work in partnership with statutory providers, voluntary sector organisations, faith groups and BME communities in order to address the inequalities in mental health service experience and outcomes.

In the past year at the Croydon BME Forum, it has been one of growth, adaptability, and forward thinking for the team.

Croydon BME Forum faced a challenging year but progressive even with the pandemic. The growth, adaptability and forward thinking was extraordinary. CDW's for working age and older adults were dynamic and kept the community going. Over the past year various online workshops and meetings, was reached.

Mental Health Awareness Week 2020

Mental Health Awareness Week 2020 was a joint effort by the BME Forum and the Croydon Commissioning Group.

The Workshops covered various areas affecting people with their mental Health and Well-Being during the lockdown.



The informative sessions introduced attendees to the topic of Mental Health and Well-Being, giving awareness of the simple things they can do every day to support themselves proactively.

The workshop comprised of

- Mental Health Discussion
- How to improve your brainpower
- Mindfulness Session
- Dementia Awareness
- Fathers Forum Workshop
- Understanding Depression and Anxiety
- Compassion Fatigue
- Bereavement and loss impact on Mental Health during lockdown
- Trauma Training
- Sleep Deprivation and the Impact on Mental Health
- Stress on the body
- Lockdown and Anxiety
- · Cook with Me



Young at Heart Group

Young at Heart' is a social and educational group for those aged 55+, aiming to improve the wellbeing of all that attend.

The Young At Heart group fell under the vulnerable and were told to stay at home. We quickly adapted the services and brought Young At Heart Group to zoom. We were able to collate a database and was able to start calling them to do weekly wellbeing checks, created a WhatsApp group where we could still manage to communicate with them and send them information that kept them engaged and informed about what was going on in the community and a the BME Forum.

Each week, special guests are invited to speak about various topics the group has expressed interest in learning more about. Over the past year, we have held over 55 sessions on an array of topics.

We have attracted over 600 participants to attend 'Young at Heart' sessions since September 2020. This participant number includes older adults who live in Croydon as well as other South West London areas, such as Sutton, Merton, and Lambeth. We are excited to continue reaching over 55's in more boroughs, as this weekly group is key in reducing loneliness and improving the mood of those who attend.

As lockdown eased the sessions were about getting the group members back into the community and helping them to take those steps, providing confidence workshops to enable them to deal with worry, resilience, changing tiny habits, doingthings in tiny steps as and when it is comfortable for them.



Clinical Commissioning Group

Barbershop Project

BAME Barbers Network in association with the Croydon BME Forum, Off The Record and London South Bank University is targeting black and Asian men as they are statistically more likely to have undiagnosed high blood pressure.

Supporting their Croydon Clientele to improve the detection and management of high blood pressure otherwise known as hypertension. The risk to the BAME (Black, Asian and minority ethnic) communities developing high blood pressure is higher than others therefore BAME Barbers Network offer free checks to adult men when they come in for a haircut.

It helps the community since some may not visit the GP for a check but will able to measure their blood pressure in a friendly informal environment.

The barbers are trained Blood Pressure Champions and are given the knowledge, confidence and equipment to carry out blood pressure monitoring.

Aiming to:

- Prevent longer-term health problems by supporting clients with on-the-spot blood pressure checks which may show an undiagnosed high blood pressure
- Signposting them to find the treatment they need and provide health information to them.









Long Term Conditions (LTC) and Expert Patient Programme (EPP)

The long-term conditions (LTC) project was commissioned by Southwest London Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) in March 2020, based on a similar pilot of the project run by a team in the London borough of Wandsworth. The project was commissioned for Croydon, due to research carried out by the CCG and One Croydon which concluded:

- •23% (93,317) of the Croydon population has two or more long term conditions with a 10% increase in people with 2 or more long term conditions between 2015-2017
- •Significant future growth is likely particularly driven by the rise in long term conditions in younger populations, which if not addressed, will have a drastic impact on longterm health outcomes and financial sustainability for the Croydon system
- •The burden of LTC on patient's lives from poor management is culminating in the number of strokes, amputations and recurrent emergency admissions for care associated with CVD, respiratory and diabetes problems
- •BAME (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic) communities have higher risk of developing long term conditions such as type 2 diabetes and at a younger age

Croydon BME Forum (CBME) and Asian Resources Centre of Croydon (ARCC) were awarded the project and set to work creating a team, to target specifically the Black and South Asian communities, who are as stated above at a higher risk of developing and not self-managing these conditions. Both charities were already carrying out significant work with these target audiences.

CBME and ARCC are both dedicated to producing better outcome for the Croydon BAME communities through educating and supporting those already diagnosed with LTC's and providing awareness on risk factors for those undiagnosed locally.













Black History Month 2020

Our theme for Black History Month in Croydon this year was 'Learning from our past to create an equal future'. We not only reflected on what has been done but we were inspired to use our history to shape the future we want to see.

Croydon BME Forum celebrated the Black Lives Matter movement whilst paying tribute to our key workers who worked tirelessly during the pandemic, not only to keep us save but to keep society moving.

The BME Forum invites individuals, local businesses and VCS organisations to organise and share information about events taken place which are then placed into a booklet where which is released annually.

With COVID 19 taking place, like many other organisations we had to adjust our work practices in order to keep staff and the community safe. As an infrastructure organisation in the borough, we provided support to our members, adapted our programmes, workshops and events to be accessed almost exclusively online. This approach was extended to all Black History Month events.

The programme started with a virtual launch on 1st October, streamed live onto YouTube and Instagram. It included a tribute video to all keyworkers in the borough followed by words from the Leader of the Council, Cllr Tony Newman, Cllr Patricia Hay-Justice and Madam Mayor Cllr Maddie Henson. There was energising music played by DJ Milktray and a ground-breaking performance by Croydon's own Roger Samuels.

This year a host of activities celebrating the history, heritage and culture of the African and Caribbean community took place online across the borough such as:

- Black History Studies workshops on historical figures
- An animated screening of the Samuel Coleridge-Taylor Story
- Croydon's biggest quiz on Black History (in partnership with Croydon Council's BAME Network and Croydon NHS Trust). And many, many more.

The month-long celebrations ended with a panel discussion on the impact of the Black Lives Matter movement, chaired by Croydon BME Forum trustee Nichole McGill-Higgins.











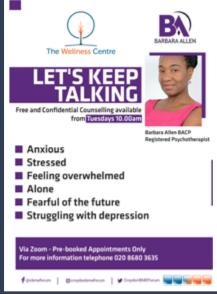
Wellness Centre

Even with the Wellness Centre being closed for 8 months due to COVID 19, we still managed to do run workshops and events via zoom. We re-opened in July to the public where we were able to have face to face interactions with everyone again.

Lockdown made it difficult for everyone nevertheless, the Wellness Centre continued to strive throughout the pandemic.









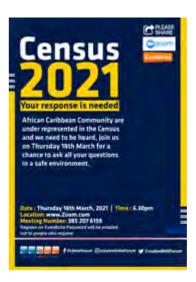
Past Events



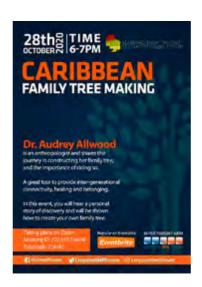


















Past Events





















COVID-19 **Outreach Work**

The Croydon BME Forum coordinated Emergency support numbers and added to the resource document under the heading for the Wellness Centre. This consisted of Emergency support, financial help and advice, information for the self-employed and businesses, and list of black counsellors.

Our response to the community:

- Supported a family where they had lost a family member to COV19, information, advice on counsellors for that borough and done referral to Centre of Change that provided immediate emotional support few hours later.
- Provided information to members of WhatsApp group, to get support for a friend regarding Council Tax-information signposting to Croydon Council website.
- Advised groups working with on adapting services for community, P4YE project started food deliveries of hot meals on Wednesdays and Saturdays and Centre of Change offering counselling service by phone and food parcels

And many more.













Celebrating Key Workers

The BME Forum felt that it was important to pay tribute to our key workers who have worked determinedly during the COVID-19 pandemic to keep us safe and to keep society moving.

In doing this, the BME Forum created a video with representatives from the community expressing gratitude on behalf of Croydon to say thank you to all of our key workers. Croydon BME Forum teamed up with a videographer to film and create a video that could be shared on YouTube and circulated via social media.

We worked with Transport for London's press office to engage their staff at the Thornton Heath bus garage and West Croydon station. We engaged with local councillors to take part in the video, a local food bank, the Deputy Mayor of Croydon and various leaders in the BAME and faith community.

This video premiered on Thursday 1st October 2020 at the launch for Black History Month 2020 on YouTube live stream.





Black Lives Matter

In June 2020, the world watched as George Floyd, an unarmed Black American man, was held to the floor by multiple police officers, while one had a knee to his neck for nine minutes and 29 seconds. The public pleaded with the officers as George Floyd begged for his life stating that he could not breath. The world watched the breath leave his body.

This sparked world-wide outrage and protests against racism and police brutality, as well as opening up conversation about the unfair treatment of Black people in America and across the world. Leading this conversation was the 'Black Lives Matter' movement. The BME Forum decided to make this 'Black Lives Matter' one of the subthemes for this year's black history month to commemorate this movement and continue the conversation.





Funding

Croydon BME Forum received income from Croydon Council and Croydon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). This helped us with staff salaries, overheads and other charity expenditures thoroughout the year.



Staff Costs £179,285 Overheads £53,337 Project Costs £54,241 Depreciation £431 Total:£287,294



Our Future

Despite the economic downturn we have experienced in the past 18 months, the future for the Croydon BME Forum looks bright and prosperous for the BAME community in Croydon due to the various opportunities that have arisen for the organisation.

My Ends

Unfortunately, knife and youth crimes is still prominent in London, in particular Croydon. However, with the new My Ends project, we look forward to working with groups of vulnerable people in Croydon to help combat crime rates.

MHPICS

The Mental Health Personal Independence Coordinators (MHPICs) project will commence in April 2021. This project will be funded by South West London CCG and we are currently recruiting 6 MHPICs with capacity for 9 MHPICs, working with the Integrated Care Network Plus areas.

PCREF

Another interesting project is the Patient Carer Race Equality Framework project which will be funded by the South London and Maudsley and CCG which will help eliminate the racial disparity within the Trust to improve the confidence of black communities. A new project co-ordinator will be recruited for a two-year contract to lead on this project. This year, we will be working with job centres to provide employment for young people seeking work in line with government Kickstart scheme.

EMHIP

The Ethnicity & Mental Health Improvement Project (EMHIP) is a new project we will be working on in partnership with the CCG, SLaM and the Wandsworth Community Empowerment Network. This project will work to improve mental health care for BME communities and reduce inequalities in terms of access, experience and outcomes regarding mental health.

Croydon Health and Wellbeing Space

A new innovating and exciting project that we will be working on is the Health and Wellbeing Space which will open in the Whitgift Centre near our established Wellness Centre. This new project, funded by the CCG will be a pilot mental health hub, first of its kind. If this is a success, we will be opening up more mental health hubs across Croydon and South London. We will be working with Mind in Croydon, to provide better access to mental health services for the BAME community combining clinical mental health and social care expertise in an easy locatable area.

All these programmes can now be seen on our website WWW.CBMEFORUM.ORG.UK





Our Funders

- BAME infrastructure Fund
- Croydon Council
- Croydon Council Local Voluntary Partnership
- Energy Redress Scheme
- Independent Age Grant
- My Ends (Mayors Office)
- London & Quadrant
- London South Bank University
- Martin Lewis Coronavirus Emergency Fund
- South London and Maudsley (SLaM)
- NHS South West London CCG (Croydon)
- The Whitgift Centre
- Young Londoners Fund
- London Community Foundation (LCF)



Our Partners

The following organisations have worked with us over the past 12 months:

- Asian Resource Centre of Croydon (ARCC)
- Black Thrive Global
- Crown Prosecution Service
- Croydon Neighbourhood Care Association (CNCA)
- Croydon University Hospital
- Croydon Voluntary Action
- Diabetes UK
- Fathers Forum
- Kings College University
- Masked Men
- Metropolitan Police

- Mind In Croydon
- Croydon University Hospital
- Off The Record
- Project 4 YouthEmpowerment (P4YE)
- Race Equality Foundation
- Real Talk Mentors
- Voice4Change England
- Victim Support
- Ubele
- Walk With Me
- Wandsworth Community Empowerment Network (WCEN)



A Special Thanks

Croydon BME Forum would like to offer their gratitude to a number of people who have assisted in different ways throughout the year. First and foremost, to our board of trustees who continue to support our endeavours, offer valuable advice and guidance when needed:

Trustees

Paulette Lewis Chair Ashok Kumar Vice Chair Chandra Babu Treasurer Vivienne Witter - Secretary Patrick Reid- Board Member Ghazala Mirza - Board Member Malti Patel - Board Member



Staff List

A big thanks to all the staff, without whom our many projects would not be possible. From organising to delivering they always make it an extraordinary experience. The team go above and beyond to ensure the clients get the best possible and deliver our services.

Andrew Brown/CEO

Nadine/Communications Officer
Caroline/Community Development Worker
Epiphany/Community Development Worker
Anna/Community Development Worker
Melissa/Experts Patient Programme
Tracy/Long Term Conditions
Maxine/Wellness Centre Manager
Debi/Project Manager
Lisa/Project Outreach Officer
Stella/Partnership Co Ordinator











Our Website www.cbmeforum.org



Follow us on Instragram
@CroydonBMEForum







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The Wellness Centre
1st, Floor Whitgift Centre, Croydon CR0 1LP
Our NEW Site:
Croydon Health and Wellbeing Space
Unit 1101-1102, Whitgift Centre, Croydon CR0 1TY

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