

## Understanding and supporting faith groups and their practises

### BACKGROUND

London Borough of Hounslow has a large Muslim and Asian population. There are 15 Mosques, several Mandirs, Gurdwaras and community centres, and many Churches.

People in the Muslim community have been reluctant to have the Covid-19 vaccine due to concerns it may contain pork, and the side effects.

There are a high number of people with underlying health conditions that would be recognised as vulnerable and in high-risk groups.

There was a low number of vaccinators from the Muslim community; some women felt uncomfortable having their vaccine administered in a public area.

*“No matter what someone’s religion or culture is, don’t be shy. If you see someone who is unaware or unsure, ask if they are ok and offer them support”.*

*Ikran Ahmed, SPLW*

### THE APPROACH

The Clinical Director and Social Prescribing Link Worker (SPLW) from the Primary Care Network (PCN) both Muslim, met with Mosque Leaders to discuss a community outreach programme and the possibility of using their site to set up a Covid-19 Vaccine Hub.

The Mosque Leaders were very supportive and hosted a conference meeting to >70 people about the Covid-19 vaccines. Attendees were invited to share their reasons for not wanting the Covid-19 vaccines and had the opportunity to ask questions. The SPLW attended the conference to help answer questions and provide reassurance.

Following the conference Mosque Leaders continued to engage with their community through their WhatsApp group and Twitter, sharing information about the vaccinations and the Covid-19 Vaccine Hub.

The SPLW was trained as a vaccinator and recruited a Pharmacist and Midwife to help administer the Covid-19 vaccines.

Private areas were set up for women in the Mosque where they felt safe and comfortable. The SPLW also visited other hubs to discuss privacy concerns and sites planned for this.

### CASE STUDY CONTACT

**Name:** Ikran Ahmed, Social Prescribing Link Worker  
**Organisation:** Brentwood Primary Care Network

## TOP TIPS

- Engage with Community and Faith Leaders, exchange knowledge and information,
- Find out how you can best support diverse communities and their needs,
- Recruit people who can best support different communities and have a similar background,
- Share information with Community and Faith Leaders, about what Social Prescribing Link Workers can do and how they can support.
- Keep the connections that you have built, they will help with issues later on.

The AstraZeneca vaccinations were administered in the Mosque. If people needed to have Pfizer, they were signposted to the relevant vaccination centre and were supported with their appointments and documentation to ensure people were aware of their arrival and needs.



Information leaflets, vaccination documentation for registration purposes and questionnaires for feedback were also produced and translated.

The SPLW took the opportunity to share information about Social Prescribing with faith and community leaders, which included, what SPLWs can do and how they can support people.

### THE OUTCOME

Many Faith and community leaders have been extremely supportive of the Covid-19 Vaccination Hubs.

Following the conference and ongoing support via WhatsApp and Twitter, three Covid-19 Vaccine Hubs were established in March, April and June.

Twelve people attended the initial pilot in March. Mosque Leaders then sent out a wider message and >300 people responded to say they wanted to attend the Mosque for their vaccination next time. During the programme **>500 people have received both vaccinations** at the Mosque.

### ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This case study has been produced by **Healthy London Partnership** in support of the development of social prescribing in London and National Covid-19 vaccination programme. For more information about this case study or to put forward your scheme as a potential case study, please contact