

Dementia Consultation Report

Older People Services Development Project



The Older People Services Development Project has been working with Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) older people over five years and has gained a wealth of information on their needs. The project remit is to raise awareness of important issues that affect BME older people and their families where there is a lack of information tailored for their specific needs. This includes conditions and illnesses that typically affect older people, such as dementia.

It is important to realise although there is a wealth of information generally available on dementia, this is not always easily accessible to BME clients for a number of socio-economic and cultural reasons, including language and literacy challenges. This can prevent older BME clients from accessing mainstream information sources.

For these reasons, it is important to address BME clients' particular needs rather than presenting them with existing information.

The Older People Services Development Project Team held a series of group consultation sessions with BME older people directly – as well as with people with carer responsibilities for BME older people – to assess their current understanding of dementia and related issues. We also canvassed their views on what kind of information they would find useful and in what format they would like it to be delivered.

We consulted more than 277 individuals in total, including a mix of BME older men, women and carers, as well as people from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds with diverse language needs. The consultations took place at centres in Scotland used regularly by BME older people, where they feel comfortable sharing and exchanging views.

The consultation highlighted a number of key issues concerning older clients from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds with diverse language needs, including illiteracy in their own language.

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The consultation's key findings:

- ⚙️ Some people had no knowledge at all of dementia – more commonly there was a limited understanding of the condition
- ⚙️ There were significant gaps in knowledge and understanding about the symptoms and causes of dementia, how to care for people suffering from the condition, and also about different forms of dementia
- ⚙️ Clients expressed a strong desire for information delivered verbally
- ⚙️ There is also a demand for written information in diverse languages
- ⚙️ Many people raised the possibility of being able to participate in regular screening or monitoring to identify early signs of dementia

This consultation identified an urgent need for:

- ⚙️ Verbal delivery of information on dementia – face-to-face discussion – in addition to the provision of language-specific group Q&A sessions
- ⚙️ More published information in different community languages
- ⚙️ Direct engagement with health professionals

The following organisations participated in this consultation:

Anand Bhavan Day Care Centre, Kirkintilloch

Shanti Bhavan Day Care Centre, Glasgow

Dixon Centre, Glasgow

Nari Kallyan Shangho (NKS), Asian Older Women Group and Bangladeshi Women Group, Edinburgh

MECOPP (Supporting Minority Ethnic Carers)

Chinese Elderly Club, Irvine

Newton Mearns Day Centre, Glasgow

Milan, Burnbank Centre, Hamilton

Fife Chinese Community

Aberdeen Chinese Community

Perthshire Chinese Community Association

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