

## How MCT has adapted and changed its approaches to respond to the global Covid-19 pandemic.

MCT's response to the global Covid-19 pandemic is both dynamic and strategic. We are actively providing holistic phone-based support services to isolated Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) residents in North Westminster, London.

### Community Advocates:

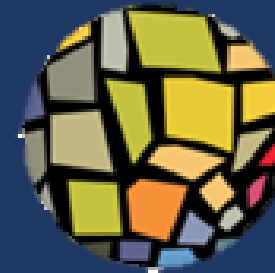
As a first, critical step, we enhanced the skill set of our **community-based Advocates** to deliver much needed phone-based services to isolated and vulnerable BAME residents. Skills building included a focus on providing emotional health and wellbeing support, advice and tools which are culturally relevant and delivered effectively using new ways of engaging with our clients, i.e., over the phone and through digital platforms.

MCT invested in weekly workshops to improve Advocates' listening, time-management and English language skills as well as improving their confidence, motivation, and ability to use new technologies. A focus has also been on building Advocates' **social development skills**.

### BAME Community:

In turn, MCT also worked closely with BAME residents to motivate, engage and support them to access and respond to our new, adapted services. Our Advocates have been focussing on building the confidence of residents to regularly access our phone-based support, working with them to maximise engagement in our unique service delivery.

MCT continues to invest in building stronger communities, one of our key strategic objectives and a driving activity in our **Theory of Change to Reduce Health Inequalities**. During the pandemic, we have done this by focussing on supporting clients to build stronger, healthier relationships with families and friends, gain the knowledge and skills to make informed choices regarding their health and wellbeing and access to statutory health services, as well as address the current digital divide.



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## Amplifying the BAME Voice with Health Service Providers

### Patient Empowerment

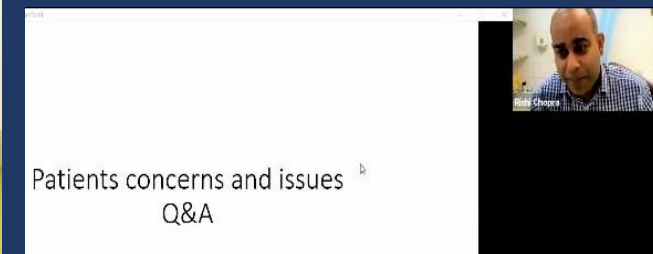
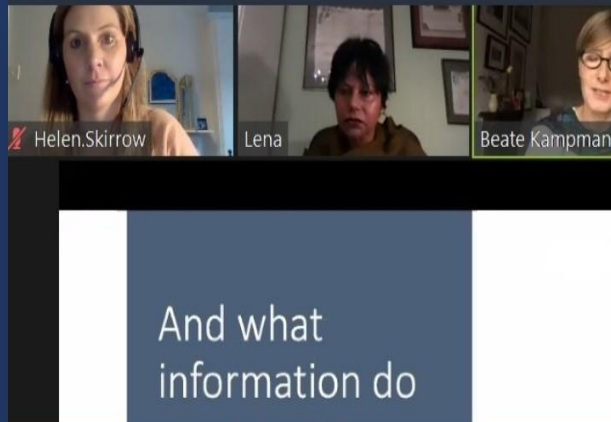
The global pandemic has heightened the existing, widespread **health inequalities** experienced by our client group. MCT has focussed on improving BAME residents' engagement with health service providers, facilitating Patient Participant Group meetings and initiating information sharing forums with health care professionals.

MCT's role in supporting residents to overcome concerns and meet challenges, in relation to the pandemic and service provision, is testament to our role as an 'enabler' or 'driver' in improving community health and wellbeing.



### Influencing our Partners and Stakeholders

During the pandemic, MCT continues to collaborate and influence external stakeholders and partners, informing and representing the **BAME voice** to influence policy decision making and service provision during this critical time. We have been actively engaging with local Health Centres, the Central London Clinical Commissioning Group, Westminster Community Intelligence Forum, IAPT Westminster, Healthwatch Westminster, Westminster Community Network and Westminster City Council to influence the adaptation of health service provision to BAME needs, in line with our organisational Theory of Change.



## A Culturally Appropriate Response

MCT works with BAME communities in North Westminster to champion community participation and community strengthening. As a starting point, we focus on the tensions within multi-generational households, exacerbated during the current pandemic. Conflicts within households are leading to communication and relationship breakdowns. Our community-based Advocates are supporting individuals to address mental health needs and to work through systemic problems resulting from varying religious values and practices.



Our work with BAME men for example, is focussed on reaching out to BAME men using avenues firmly rooted within the Islamic faith and are facilitated by recognised religious community leaders. Weekly discussion forums dispel misinformation in relation to the pandemic and Covid-19 vaccinations, whilst also providing a platform for culturally appropriate discussions on mental health and wellbeing and tools to overcome anxiety and stress.



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## AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE ON COVID -19

Topics (Delivered by Imam Jabir)  
Prophetic Guidance , Dispelling misconceptions  
and the Importance of following Government  
Guidelines

Free weekly workshops Including: Practical  
advice by Health professionals

STARTING FROM WEDNESDAY 13<sup>th</sup> JANUARY  
6PM-7PM  
ONLINE workshops VIA ZOOM



Imam Jabir  
07960890309



# Prioritising Community Health and Wellbeing

MCT has adopted three key avenues to improve community health and wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic.

## 1. Information and Guidance

Community-based Advocates are working with residents to provide and reinforce key information, guidance and preventative measures in relation to the pandemic such as: Social distancing; contact tracing; vaccinations; school attendance.

## 2. Emotional Health and Wellbeing

Advocates are also actively reaching out to BAME residents with self-help management tools in relation to stress, anxiety, fear and depression. We are also working with clients to restore family relationships, support with parenting and to manage long-term health conditions during the pandemic.



## 3. Befriending service

Advocates are also working with local Health Centres and GPs to provide a befriending service for isolated BAME women and men referred to us through the social prescription service link workers. Advocates support the emotional health and wellbeing of these clients using culturally relevant tools and skills, tailored to tackle the anxiety, stress and loneliness caused as a result of the pandemic.

