

Utilising your networks to reach your communities

BACKGROUND

Waltham Forest has many different community groups living within the borough. There is a lot of scare mongering about the Covid-19 vaccines, conspiracy theories and people telling others not to take it across different age groups.



Farah Ahmed and Saiba Salam are both Social Prescribing Link Workers (SPLW). Farah is Pakistani and Saiba is Bangladeshi, they both hear the different stories and concerns spreading across their communities about the Covid-19 vaccine that are stopping people from having them.

They are also Co-Chairs of the [Waltham Forest Women's Network](#) (WFWN), a committee of women from all different backgrounds, experiences, and expertise. Over 50% of the committee come from a BAME background. The network's purpose is to make sure the wellbeing of women of all different backgrounds are living happy, healthy lives and improving their confidence.

“Culturally adapting your approach and interventions is the key to having an impact”.

Farah Ahmed, SPLW

THE APPROACH

Farah and Saiba have used their SPLW role and the network to strengthen support for the community, sharing information and about Covid-19 vaccinations and vaccination opportunities in different languages, with messages relevant to people's culture and religion.

They created a series of films with Dr Sayeda Abu-Amero, Virologist and former Chair of WFWN [‘Real talk with Sayeda’](#). Sayeda speaks from a scientific perspective about key topics of concern; what vaccines are, how they are made and work, using facts and figures to mitigate misinformation. Sayeda is from a Mauritian and Pakistani background, she talks from a personal perspective and about protecting the vulnerable people in her family and why testing regularly is important.

They spend time to talk with patients about perceived risks, offering an opportunity to discuss different perspectives to help people form a clearer understanding.

CASE STUDY CONTACT

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Organisation: Walthamstow West Primary Care Network

TOP TIPS

- Use your networks to reach community groups who are concerned about having the vaccine.
- Signpost patients to clinical professionals they can speak to and relate to if more reassurance is needed.
- Use Social media to share factual and reliable information.
- Ask your community for support, people want to help!

If more reassurance is needed, they sign post people to doctors, pharmacists and other experts of the same culture or religion who will have a better understanding of their backgrounds and concerns.

They actively use social media to promote the vaccination programme and encourage people from BAME and religious groups to also post and share their Covid-19 vaccination story and experience to support others. They also share information from the [Stay Safe Waltham Forest Team](#).

OUTCOME

The support from the WFWN and community have been invaluable. Providing an opportunity to reach wider community groups, this has been a key asset to help spread consistent factual messages and updates about vaccination sites.

In support of the local vaccination campaign people have been sharing their experience to help reassure their community.

The short films and other resources are available on YouTube and have been shared on community Facebook groups, Instagram, WhatsApp groups and Twitter.



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