

EngageGM

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Opportunities >>>

Digital Cancer Champions

Powering the next chapter

Social distancing measures have restricted face-to-face engagement to get cancer awareness messages out.

Now, there is a whole new opportunity to use social media to influence change and support the most vulnerable and at-risk in our communities.

Register your interest [here](#).



Coronaissance: The new normal

Social media seems to have coined a new term "Coronaissance", meaning "the period in history (the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic) when people learnt and perfected a skill they would have not done, if not for strict lockdown measures".

At the beginning of the pandemic, many were apprehensive as to how life would pan out under lockdown. It was as if without the gyms, the restaurants, the pubs and the cars, life was going to be unbearable.

A few days into staying at home, the world suddenly became innovative and adaptive. Although physically apart, many found ways to remain digitally together. The reality is, our communities are now engaging on a different level.

The gyms have now moved onto our phones, whilst home schooling has unlocked children's creativity and hidden talents. Families and neighbours are bonding through the Thursday "clap for carers and keyworkers".

So whilst you are able to, why not take some time to check on someone you may not have seen or heard from in a while?

What about helping others to cope or achieve a goal? Perhaps you can explore and share these resources from the [NHS One You website/ App](#).

We also need to consider our mental wellbeing, and GMCVO in partnership with 10GM has a rolling micro grant programme that supports mental wellbeing. [Just click here for more information.](#)

We are in this together, so let us do it together!

Keep up the good routine!

ANSWER CANCER would like to applaud the Muslim community for observing this year's Ramadan under strict social distancing measures, which was challenging.

For many, the period offered an opportunity to focus on "spiritual devotion acts", as well as renewing their mind and body. There were many who committed to new lifestyle routines and occupations.

This is what Seher Sheikh, who recently joined the ANSWER CANCER team, had to say:

"There are many reasons for families to continue eating healthily and maintaining adequate hydration, even after Ramadan. Not only does it promote longevity but also provides a model for the next generation. Exercise is good no matter how minimal and visit your GP if you identify any changes in your health. Early detection of any health condition is important".

[Here is a video on how to contact your GP practice remotely.](#)

Cervical screening stories

Cervical screening awareness week runs from 15-21 June 2020. This year's event, organised by Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust, aims to help women understand changes to cervical screening (smear test) as a result of coronavirus, including what to expect if you go. Click on the [link here](#) to find out how things work now.



Cervical cancer is one of the most common forms of cancer in women under age 35.



The majority of cases are due to long lasting infections with certain types of the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), which can easily be detected during a "smear test".



About a quarter of women in the UK, do not respond to their screening invitations, and sadly two lives are lost daily to cervical cancer.



Key Points to Remember

Cervical screening is only designed to find high-risk HPV or cervical cell changes which, if not monitored or treated, may eventually develop into cervical cancer.

Cervical cancer may not cause any symptoms or the symptoms may not be obvious. It is therefore important to attend your screening appointment. The most common symptoms of cervical cancer include:

- vaginal bleeding that is unusual for you, including after the menopause, after sex, or between regular periods
- changes to vaginal discharge
- pain or discomfort during sex
- unexplained pain in your lower back or between your hip bones (pelvis).

It is important to remember that these symptoms usually happen for reasons other than cervical cancer. But it is also important to contact your GP straight away, so they can give you reassurance and support.

All women and people with a cervix between age 25 and 64 can go for regular cervical screening, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity. This includes those who have not had sex and those who are not sexually active.

(Source: Jo's Cancer Trust)

What is trending >>>

Messages making the airwaves

Have you been listening to the radio lately? Perhaps you may have heard the ANSWER CANCER team on Radio Africana, ALL FM 96.9MHz, FastFm (Radio Ramadan) 87.7MHz, and Salford City Radio 94.4 MHz.

Thanks to:

- Erinma Bell, OBE
- Arshad Mahmood
- Sean Connors
- Jill Bowyer

The radio presenters were curious to know why cancer awareness was important during a time when the whole nation was talking about COVID-19.

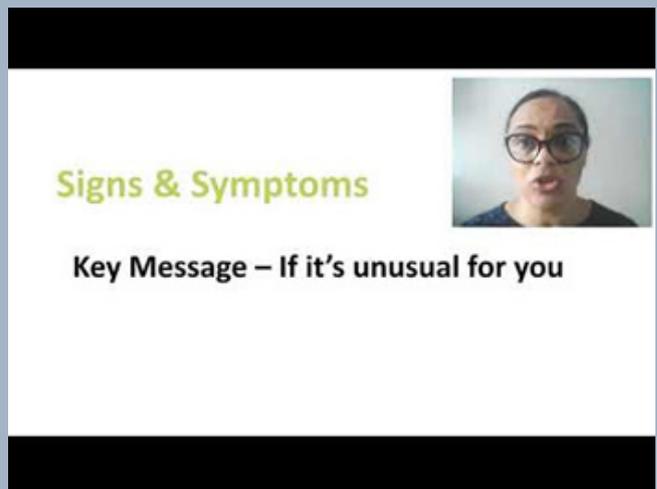
This is what Nana Opoku, Community Engagement Manager had to say:

“There has never been a more important time to inform our communities about cancer. With cancer screening services temporary suspended, CRUK estimates that about 200,000 people per week are not being screened for bowel, breast and cervical cancer across UK. This represents a significant number of early cancers that will be left undetected before these programs can be reintroduced.

Helping people know when and how to seek help, so cancer is detected early is important.”

For the team, it was new, it was different, and it was a positive way of reaching lots of people.

For those who missed the interviews, we have uploaded a summary on our new Youtube channel.



Click on the image above to watch the video.

ANSWER CANCER would like you to continue staying alert, so we can control coronavirus and save lives.

Talking trends >>>

Would your organisation or community group like to play a part in boosting cancer screening rates in Greater Manchester?

ANSWER CANCER has free online training resources for individuals and community groups, who can help spread health and well-being messages amongst under-represented groups.

[Please click on the link here for further information.](#)

Final Thoughts...

If we detect cancer early it can be treated. You can find signs and symptoms of common cancers in community languages [here](#).

Eat well, live well, and get checked!

About us >>>

Answer Cancer is a partnership of four VCSE organisations: Unique Improvements, Voluntary Sector North West, BHA for Equality, and Salford CVS. Our work is funded by the Greater Manchester Health and Social care partnership.

Our aim is to address the cultural, social and systemic barriers that prevent people from taking up cancer screening.

How do we do it?

1. We work with community and faith groups across Greater Manchester, so they know what causes cancer & why screening is important.
2. We offer free information sessions on breast, bowel and cervical cancer screening.
3. We train individuals as Answer Cancer Champions.
4. We support community groups with grants so they can increase awareness about cancer screening.

For more information please contact:

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CANCER**

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