

EngageGM

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What's On >>>

Removing the barriers to cancer screening - I am, I will

Here in the UK, February is a month dedicated to promoting diversity and inclusion. Many will have heard of activities to celebrate [LGBT History Month](#), [Hate Crime Week](#) and other events aimed at removing prejudice towards others because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. Some cancer charities also believe February should be a time for reflection on the milestones made in making cancer services more inclusive and accessible.

Being inclusive requires that systemic barriers that prevent certain groups of people from getting cancer diagnosed early are removed. This may include:

- Producing cancer awareness information in formats that are easy to read and understand, especially for people with a learning disability and those whose first language is not English.
- Making reasonable adjustments for disabled people by providing lifts, wide doors, ramps and tactile signage at GP surgeries, hospitals and cancer screening hubs.
- Providing more specialist screening hubs and longer appointments slots for those who may have complex social and medical needs.
- Training health personnel to communicate more clearly.

For this year's [World Cancer Day](#) which fell on the 4th of February, the world promised to make big and small positive changes that will remove barriers to cancer prevention and treatment using the hashtag #IamIwill.

Watch the pledges that Answer Cancer Champions and staff made on World Cancer Day [here](#).

To help understand the challenges that people who have cancer, or the challenges that people supporting someone with cancer are facing during the current pandemic, please complete the survey [here](#) before the 27th February 2021 if you live in the Oldham area.

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

Hot Topics >>>

Getting back to normal with Covid vaccinations

For more than a year, Covid-19 has had a devastating toll on all of us. Most health and community services have been restored and are working towards full recovery. Despite a successful roll out of the first phase of the Covid vaccination, we are still expected to:



- Wash our hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds regularly throughout the day, or use hand sanitiser.
- Wear face coverings in public
- Maintain a safe distance of 2 metres from others.
- Ventilate our homes: [watch the video here.](#)

Concerns exist that people of Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) background are not taking up the vaccine as expected. A likely reason is lack of information. Please click [here](#) to access Covid-19 vaccination video messages in community languages.

Update >>>

What has Answer Cancer been up to?

Getting rid of taboos during Cervical Cancer Prevention week:

Cervical Cancer Prevention Week was from 18th to 22nd January. Due to Covid restrictions community engagement activities were held online and through community radio stations. Perceived barriers to screening and HPV vaccination uptake were just some of the topics discussed. Amongst the panel was a retired medical consultant Dr. Minaxi Desai who provided some helpful information to debunk the myths than exist in our communities. You can listen to the radio show [here](#).



Stakeholder's collaborative event:

The Answer Cancer stakeholder's collaborative event was held on Zoom on the 13th January 2021, themed around cervical cancer prevention. It was a moment of reflection for the Answer cancer team and a time to celebrate the achievements of our community champions. There were loads of ideas shared on how to execute a successful campaign on cancer prevention. You can watch the event again [here](#).

Following the event, Answer Cancer teamed up with ABL Health to produce a video for the #smearforsmear campaign, which you can watch back [here](#).

Online Training:

Answer cancer rolled out a brand-new training module just before Christmas: Train the Facilitator – Training for Answer Cancer Champions. The course aims to equip Answer Cancer Champions with the skills, knowledge (and above all) the confidence to be able to run a short cancer awareness session. Since its inception, many who have attended the course have found it beneficial. Please click [here](#) for February to March dates.

Coming up>>>

International Women's Day celebration #ChooseToChallenge

Each year, millions across the world use the 8th of March to celebrate the tremendous efforts by women and girls in shaping a more equal society.

In some communities, women's right to decision-making about their own health is curtailed by cultural norms and taboos. This includes their right to attend cervical screening if young and / or unmarried. There are others who struggle to find healthcare services that respond to their needs. These may include those who have been subjected to female genital mutilation and other sexual violence, which makes their experience of routine cervical screening quite uncomfortable.

As we approach this year's International Women's Day, you may be inclined to celebrate women and girls that have taken a bold stand to rid our society of painful, abusive and ultimately futile practices. You may also start the conversation about these harmful practices and how victims can be supported to have cancer screening just like everybody else.

There are so many way you can raise awareness against bias. Just click on the link [here](#). The hashtags are #ChooseToChallenge and #IWD2021 if you want to join on social media.

It is not too late to start your own campaign. This is all that you need:

- Just be willing!
- Get a team together to think through when and how to start, for it to make the greatest impact.
- Decide what delivery channels will be appropriate e.g. social media, radio, newsletters or using WhatsApp groups Stick to your timelines, be thorough and aim to finish!

The engagement team are happy to support you through this year's campaign. Please contact: engagement@answercancergm.org.uk

Your questions answered >>>

Q: Why can't I have a smear test before my 25th birthday?

A: Cervical cancer before that age is extremely rare now that HPV vaccinations are given at school age. Most people who go for the smear test before that age end up with false positive results and unnecessary treatment.

Click [here](#) for more information.

Answer Cancer February - March Training Sessions

Start 2021 by taking part in one of our online training sessions:

Train the Facilitator – Training for Answer Cancer Champions

- Tuesday 16th February and Tuesday 23rd February 10am – 12:30pm

Community Researcher Training

- Tues 2nd March 11.00am – 12.30pm

Women & Cancer – Health awareness, Screening & Prevention

Special one-off session for International Women's Day

- Weds 10th March 10.30am – 12.30pm

For more information and booking please see:

www.cancerchampionsgm.org.uk/online-training-modules/

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:

Email: engagement@answercancergm.org.uk **Phone:** 0161 883 3037



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