

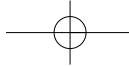
# The National Health Volunteering Project



Promoting Minority Ethnic Community  
Involvement in the National Health Service  
and local Social Care

COUNCIL OF ETHNIC MINORITY VOLUNTARY SECTOR ORGANISATIONS





## Introduction

The National Health Service aims to provide equal access for all users. In order to develop improved services there must be strong coordinated input from all sections of the community. People from minority ethnic communities have a lower take up of health and social services because of language, cultural barriers and personal circumstances. There is a real need to influence and shape services at a local level to bring about positive outcomes.

CEMVO believes that a thorough understanding of the needs of minority ethnic communities, combined with developing solutions, is the key to ensuring that services meet the specific needs of these disadvantaged groups.

## About the CEMVO National Health Volunteering Project

Developed by CEMVO and funded by The Department of Health, this project was conducted in the North East, North West and South West English regions. It was an innovative three year programme involving hundreds of people from minority ethnic communities, primary care trusts and voluntary organisations. The objective was to increase minority ethnic community involvement in influencing the way health and social services are developed and delivered.

At a strategic level, the project encouraged minority ethnic individuals to identify local health needs. For instance, the project recruited volunteers to join Public and Patient Involvement Forums (now replaced by Local Involvement Networks (LINKs)) and other local health networks.

At an individual level, the project recruited volunteers onto work placements, enabling them to gain valuable practical experience at health and social care institutions.

The project also linked mainstream service providers and communities to regional health networks and forums, assisting minority ethnic community organisations to participate in the discussion of health and social care issues.

**BME** Volunteers

**DH** Department of Health



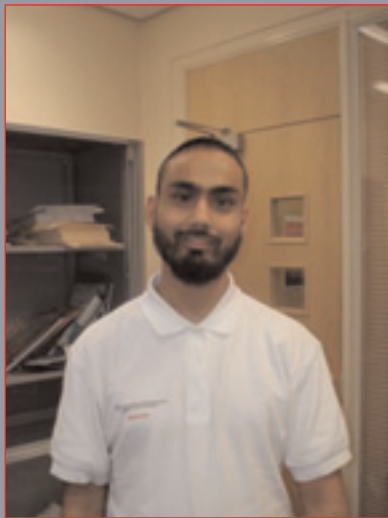
## The aims of the Project were to:

- Create an awareness and understanding of current health policies and the local health agenda.
- Encourage involvement in Patient and Public Involvement Forums (PIIF) and recruit volunteers.
- Establish a strategic partnership between health providers and minority ethnic communities.

## How the Project was delivered

The project increased the involvement of members of minority ethnic communities in developing services by:

- Promoting and publicising the project to encourage involvement in the PPIF and encourage volunteering at the local health and social care institutions.
- Organising workshops and focus groups to increase and facilitate community involvement.
- Recruiting volunteers through outreach visits, one to one meetings and online registration.
- Attending graduate fairs to encourage graduates to volunteer and gain experience at local hospitals and care institutions.
- Conducting broadcasts through community radio stations.
- Providing capacity building support to enable minority ethnic led organisations to engage better with local health and social care providers.



### Case Study

#### Rizwan Aziz

Rizwan volunteered at Manchester Royal Infirmary Hospital as a clerical assistant under the supervision of a volunteer service coordinator and a Patient and Public Involvement Service Coordinator.

Rizwan says:

*"I volunteered as a pathway into a paid job. I have always liked helping. I enjoyed working with patients and staff. I have gained new skills and I am using my existing skills to help Hospital services. I would recommend becoming involved in this project to others because its a friendly environment. They are helpful and caring."*

# Recommendations

## Ensure Diversity in Volunteering

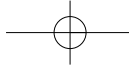
A thorough understanding of different communities is essential to ensuring that there is true diversity in volunteering. To achieve this, targeted approaches need to be developed through effective engagement with other interested organisations. The following will increase diversity in volunteering:

- Publicise volunteering opportunities within local communities using a wide range of media.
- Recruit at community level through GP practices, community centres, outreach events, using recruiters who represent diverse communities.
- Provide induction for volunteers and develop a structured work placement programme of activities to manage, monitor and evaluate volunteer progress and development.
- Offer recognition, accreditation and rewards for skills and knowledge gained at work placements.
- Simplify the volunteer recruitment process by standardising procedures.

## Work with health and social care institutions to recruit volunteers into mainstream practice

To increase diversity in volunteering, CEMVO makes the following recommendations:

- For health and social care institutions to form strategic alliances with volunteering and health based organisations setting out mutual objectives.
- Encourage and celebrate the value of volunteering. This needs to be supported and properly resourced, and include partnerships with key stakeholders.
- Volunteering recruitment and supervision should be an integral part of the work of health and social care organisations.
- Working relations between the statutory and voluntary sector should be formed to promote volunteering and active citizenship.
- Develop formal recognition, accreditation or qualification which verifies skills acquired from volunteering.



## Achievements

The three year National Health Volunteering Programme forged vital links between NHS institutions, PPIF and local minority ethnic communities by identifying and bringing forward local needs to shape health and social care service delivery. Specifically, the project achieved the following:

### Report of the Commission on the Future of Volunteering and Manifesto for Change

CEMVO contributed to the development of the above report. Based on its extensive experience and lessons learned from this project, the Commission on the Future of Volunteering incorporated CEMVO's recommendations to promote best practice to encourage active citizenship through volunteering.

### New Skills, Knowledge and Experience acquired by Volunteers

221 Volunteers recruited onto work placements and PPIFs. Volunteers acquired new skills through placements and their career prospects were enhanced in their chosen field. Younger volunteers used their new experience to apply for further education.

### Stakeholders aware of local developments raised

12 Public meetings held to increase awareness, identify barriers for involvement and to develop partnership between health and social care institutions and minority ethnic communities.

24 Workshops were delivered to local community groups to inform them about developments in local health and social care provision and how they could become involved in decision making. The workshops also served as a platform in which the needs of the community were shared with service providers.

8 Graduate events attended to raise awareness and provide young graduates with work placements at local NHS institutions.

### Service Delivery of Community Groups Improved

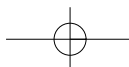
CEMVO's capacity building programme assisted minority ethnic organisations to acquire new skills, knowledge in maintaining effective management systems and project management to enable organisations to meet their objectives effectively.

### Project Website and Database of Volunteers established

Health and social care related information was regularly updated on to the project website. A web based volunteer database was developed to provide information about involvement in health service development. This helped to attract volunteers from hard to reach communities. The database has reduced administrative work involved in volunteer placement.

### Translated Health and Social Care Information

9 Community languages were used to develop information promoting involvement and volunteering in health and social care. The information has played a significant role in reaching minority ethnic, refugees and faith based groups.



## ABOUT CEMVO

The Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations (CEMVO) is a national registered charity established in 1999 (Charity Number: 1077004) and Company Limited by Guarantee (Number 3733756).

CEMVO is based in five English Regions (North West, South West, East, South East and London), Scotland and Wales.

CEMVO works towards securing the social regeneration of minority ethnic communities by securing more inward investment and resources to increase the sustainability of minority ethnic organisations through:

- **Providing a Voice to the Minority Ethnic Third Sector and its Communities** - To undertake strategic work that improves the leadership skills of community representatives enabling them to better articulate the needs and aspirations of the communities they serve.
- **Capacity Building** – To equip minority ethnic third sector organisations with the skills and knowledge to enable them to deliver local services more effectively.
- **Volunteering Recruitment** – Increase volunteering within the minority ethnic community to help them influence and shape local service provision through volunteering.
- **Building Social Cohesion** – To deliver projects that raises awareness of welfare entitlements and local services and information available to minority ethnic communities.
- **Developing Community Assets** – To provide support on capital project management particularly for training and community workspace development schemes.
- **Policy and Research** – To bring about long term positive social and economic outcomes for minority ethnic communities by contributing to key policy debates and conducting research as an evidence base to inform mainstream policy development.

COUNCIL OF ETHNIC MINORITY VOLUNTARY SECTOR ORGANISATIONS

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