Can you C me

APRIL - MAY 2025

Quarterly Report

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PRESENTED TO
MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT

CROYDON BME FORUM

In partnership with

MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT

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In partnership with

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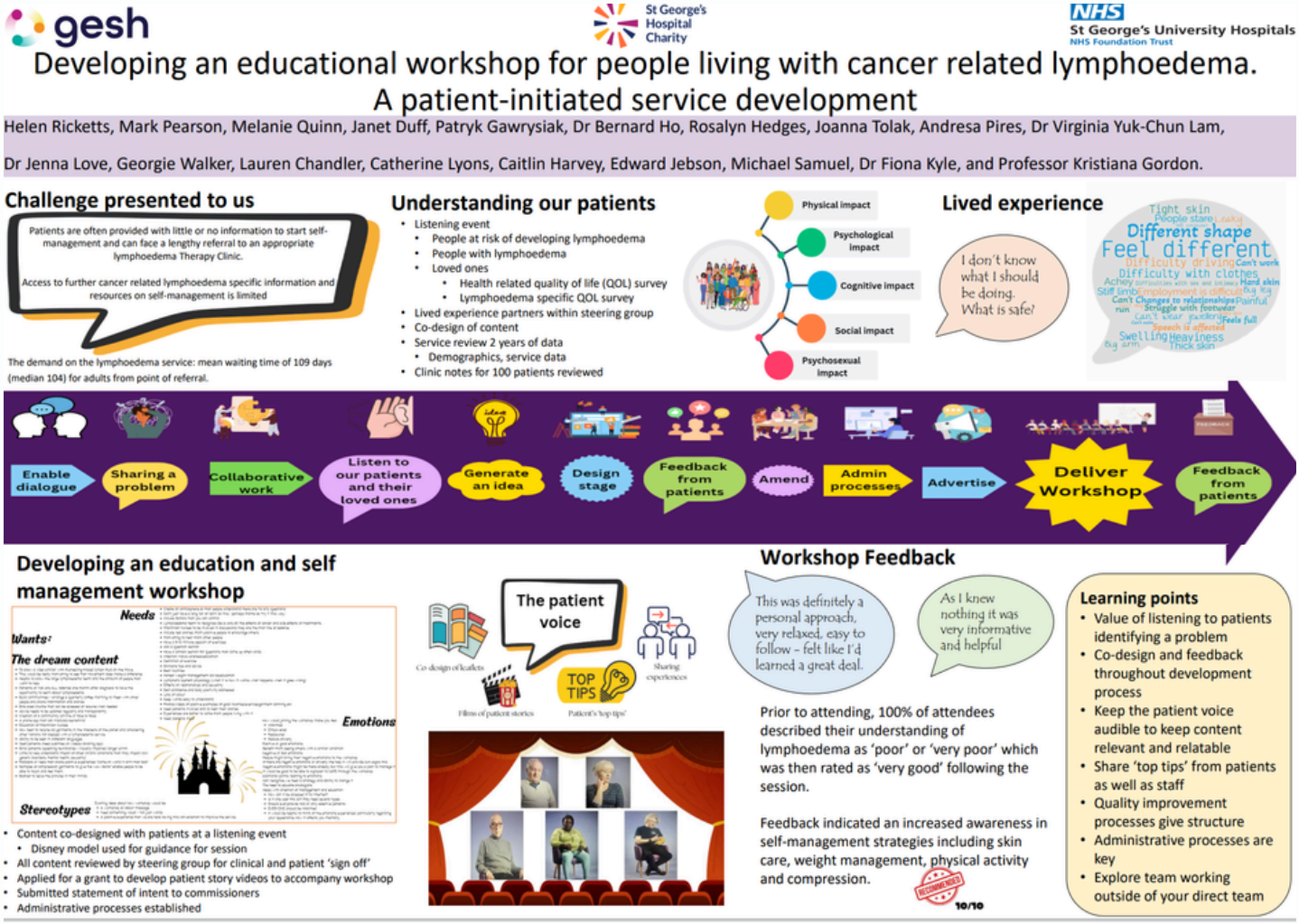
KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Key Achievements

- Successfully hosted the third Kingston Cancer Conference, strengthening community engagement and knowledge sharing.
- Continued development of training videos with St George's Hospital, enhancing education for healthcare professionals.
- Delivered a presentation to 100 trainee nurses at Kingston University, increasing awareness and future professional involvement.
- Hosted Macmillan Cancer Support's Trustee and Executive Leadership Away Day 2025, spotlighting our community-driven work.
- Presented at the South West London NHS Quarterly Meeting, engaging key stakeholders in our mission.
- Confirmed a new hub in Merton, expanding local access to support services.
- Michael was invited to present his focus group findings to the Clinical Nurse Specialist team at St George's Hospital's Cancer Unit, contributing valuable patient insights to inform clinical practice.
- Contributed to the Sutton Council SAB Meeting, advocating for integrated, inclusive care.
- Presented at Wandsworth Care Alliance's Community Event, building local trust and visibility.
- Delivered a well-received workshop at Hub 2, where participants praised Michael's empathy, clarity, and ability to create a safe, engaging space for learning and discussion.
- Partnered with Places Leisure and RMP to develop a new initiative integrating leisure centres into the cancer care pathway, offering holistic therapies such as pottery, line dancing, and art—successfully piloted at our recent conference.
- Increased engagement with local minority communities by introducing culturally tailored activities, including a Korean-language pottery class led by a native-speaking instructor to connect with the South Korean community.
- Initiated dialogue with Mayor Hadjimichael and explored future collaborative opportunities with Deputy Leader of Kingston, Councillor Alison Holt.
- Collaborated with Places Leisure and a regional food programme to promote healthy eating among cancer patients, with a focus on reaching individuals from deprived backgrounds.
- Presented our integrated care project to the Primary Care Anchor Network (PCAN) Delivery Group for South West London, gaining valuable stakeholder feedback and support.

Award-Winning Co-Production: Advancing Lymphoedema Education with St George's



Michael has been actively contributing to a recent collaborative project with St George's Hospital, which was recognised at the GESH Excellence in Education 2025 Awards. The team's educational poster on lymphoedema was awarded joint second place in the Education category out of more than 100 entries.

As a member of the project's steering group, Michael helped shape and refine the content that will be used to educate both patients and healthcare professionals. His involvement ensured the materials were accessible, inclusive, and impactful, aligning closely with the values of the Can You C Me? programme.

This work was also showcased nationally during NHS England's Co-production Week, where the team was invited to present at one of the week's featured webinars. The partnership between St George's and the Can You C Me? team was highlighted as an example of best practice in co-produced health education.

Beyond awards and recognition, this project is already having real-world impact, improving understanding of lymphoedema across both clinical settings and the wider public. It stands as a clear example of how Can You C Me? is helping drive meaningful, inclusive change in cancer education and awareness, by building trusted, collaborative relationships with healthcare professionals.

Impact Story – Culture Change Through Co-Design

As part of our ongoing collaboration with St George's Hospital, we've been co-producing a series of powerful educational films for healthcare professionals. These videos, created in partnership with Pearldrop and featuring members of our Can You C Me? lived experience network, capture deeply personal stories from BME cancer patients.

The films spotlight both examples of best practice and moments where care fell short; offering invaluable insights to help NHS staff deliver more culturally sensitive and compassionate support.

One of these films, featuring M.J.'s story, was screened at the Kingston Cancer Conference this quarter. In it, M.J. spoke movingly about the moment she said goodbye to her father on a noisy hospital ward. Her words highlighted how a lack of peace and privacy at such a critical time can leave a lasting emotional impact.

What followed was a testament to the power of co-produced education: a clinician from a different hospital, who attended the conference, was so moved by the film that they contacted St George's to share how it had shifted their practice. Inspired by M.J.'s experience, their team has now introduced a discreet LED candle and sign system. When the candle is lit, it signals to staff and visitors that a patient is spending their final moments with a loved one; prompting a quieter, more respectful atmosphere.

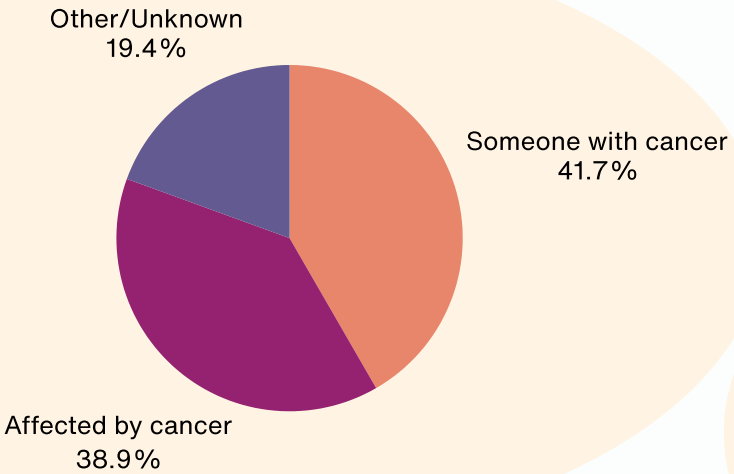
This simple yet meaningful change came about directly because of the honesty, courage, and generosity of our lived experience advocate, M.J., and through the platform that the Can You C Me? and St George's partnership created. It reflects exactly why we do this work: to make real systems change rooted in lived reality, compassion, and community voice.

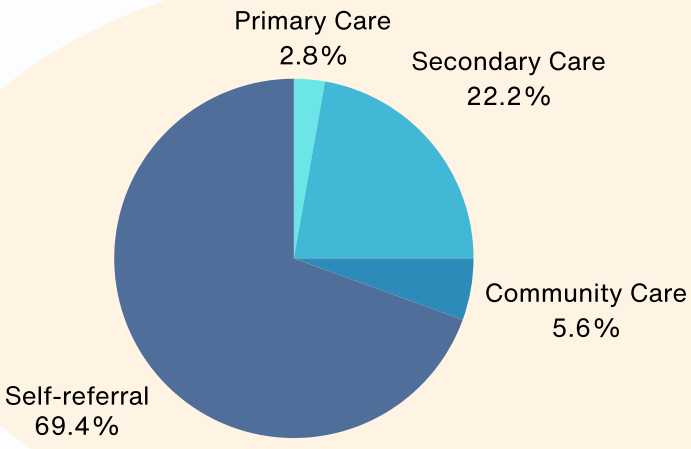
02

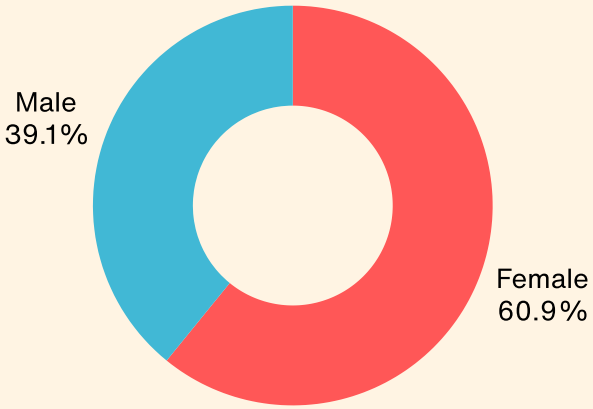
CLIENTS

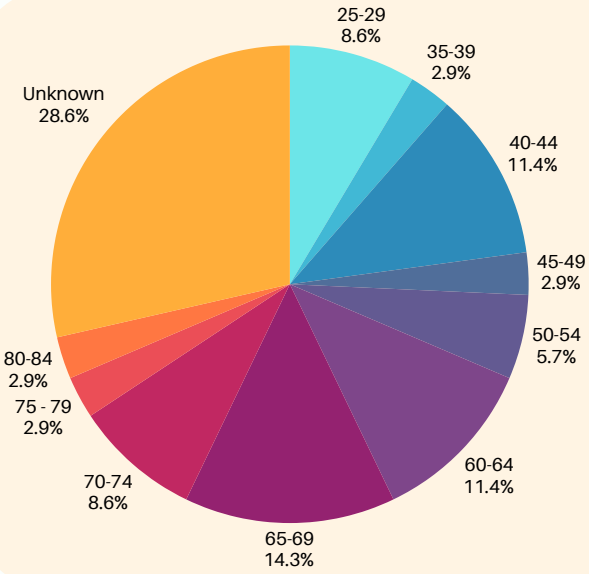
Client referrals

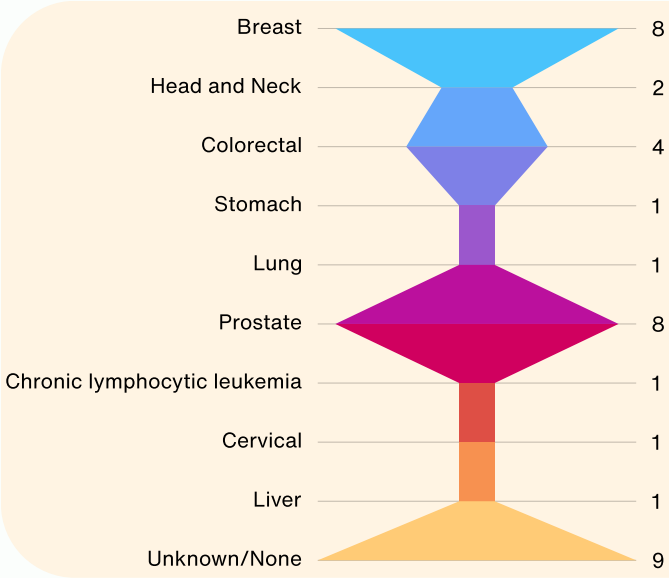
Apr - Jun	Total No. of Contacts			
	April 2025	May 2025	June 2025	**Total**
Croydon	3	4	1	**8**
Merton	0	0	4	**4**
Sutton	7	7	1	**15**
Wandsworth	0	2	1	**3**
Richmond	1	1	0	**2**
Kingston	2	1	1	**4**
Total	**13**	**15**	**8**	**36**

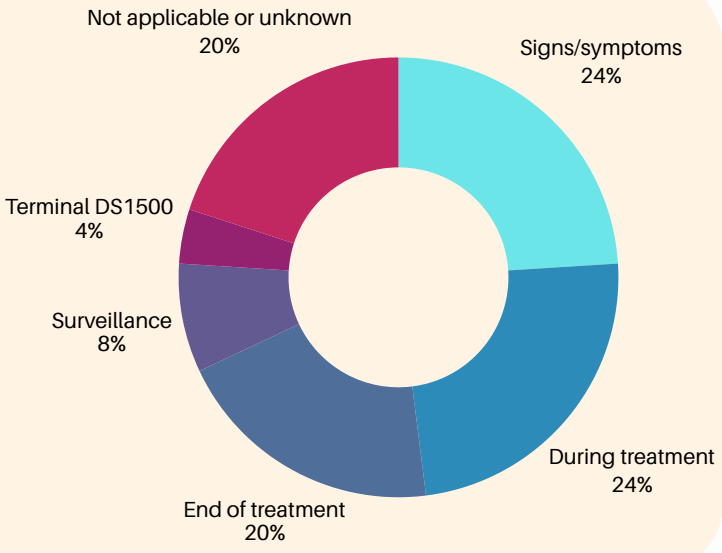


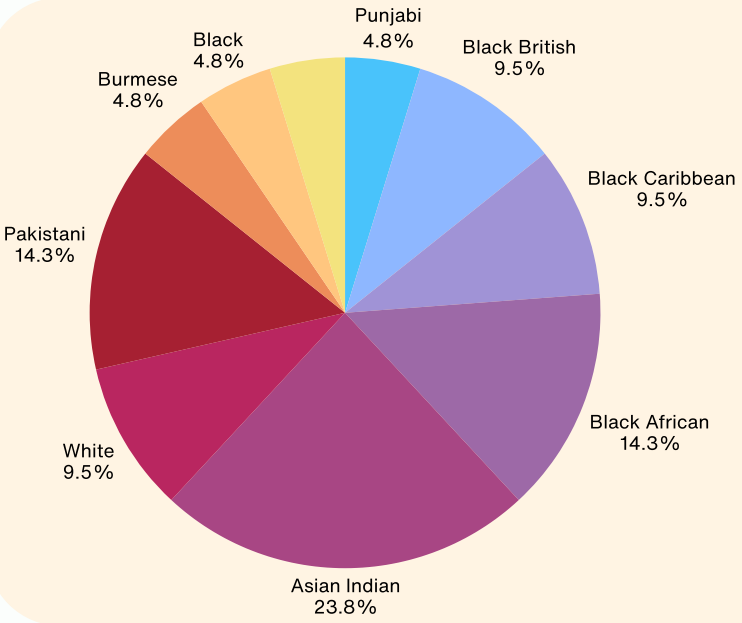












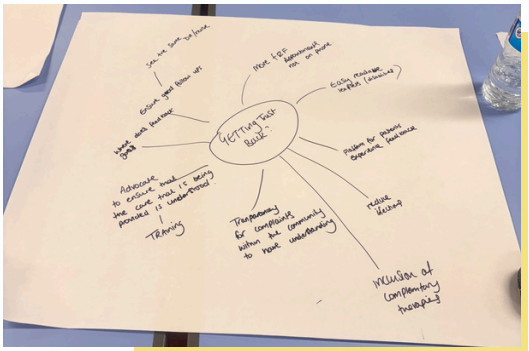
03

KEY SERVICE ENGAGEMENT & EVENTS

Croydon

Bowel Cancer Awareness Event

Trust In the NHS Listening Event



Civic Mayor's Charity Gala

Caring for Hair Conference

Children's Wellbeing Conference

Over the last quarter, we significantly expanded our presence and partnerships across Croydon. We met again with South East Cancer Help Centre and Whitehorse Practice, to initiate collaborative discussions around counselling and community engagement. Key contacts such as Milane, Practice Manager at Whitehorse, expressed interest in partnering further.

We also supported two major public-facing events: The Bowel Cancer Awareness Event at Braithwaite Hall (70 attendees), where we hosted an outreach stall, shared culturally tailored information, and supported early screening messages alongside Croydon GPs and health professionals from St George's Hospital.

The Caring for Hair event at St Mary's Conference Centre (150 attendees), where we engaged with a diverse audience on cancer-related themes including stigma, cultural identity, and the role of hairdressers in awareness. Key speakers included BAFTA-winning producer Rochelle Newman and representatives from Breast Cancer Now and Cancer Don't Let It Win.

Additionally, we visited or connected with over 25 local groups, venues, and practices, including libraries, mosques, care homes, medical centres, and voluntary services, broadening awareness and laying the foundation for future collaboration across the borough.

Merton

BE WELL 4 Merton Connected Event

This quarter in Merton saw a deepening of partnerships and outreach, particularly with organisations serving communities affected by cancer. At the Moat Foundation's Wellbeing Studio, we initiated plans to deliver community sessions supporting individuals living with cancer or in caring roles. These will include focus groups to explore access barriers and tailored signposting services. We also met with Dr Navdeep Singh Alg, Clinical Lead at Grand Drive Surgery, to discuss project alignment, particularly around community awareness and cancer disparities, though our scopes differ, avenues for future collaboration were identified.

At Maggie's, a major cancer support hub, we explored improving BME engagement, following insights that wider service use among BME clients remains low despite higher rates of referrals. We are developing ideas for targeted outreach and culturally tailored support. Engagements at the New Horizon Centre focused on future partnership potential, with a view to offering a regular presence to support staff and service users. We also conducted local outreach at Pollards Hill Library, introducing the project and scoping public event opportunities.

Additionally, we connected with over 20 local venues and community groups in Merton, including libraries, medical practices, support charities, and cultural hubs, laying the groundwork for sustained collaboration and localised cancer support.

Wandsworth

Roehampton Library

Focus Group

Wandsworth continued to be a key area of growth and partnership development this quarter. A highlight was our participation in the Wandsworth Voluntary Sector Forum, where we promoted the Can You C Me? project to a wide network of community organisations and service providers. This meeting created valuable visibility for our work and strengthened links with voluntary and faith-based groups already embedded in local communities.

In addition, we took part in a joint Sutton/Wandsworth stakeholder meeting, allowing us to explore shared challenges and co-design opportunities for outreach. Through this collaboration, we began shaping ideas for culturally tailored cancer awareness activities to better serve underrepresented communities across both boroughs.

With interest building across local networks, and our presence now more established, Wandsworth is positioned as a borough where we can significantly expand impact, through community-led events, support group facilitation, and deeper collaboration with NHS and third-sector partners.

Sutton

Sutton Library

This quarter marked renewed momentum in Sutton, building on our efforts to gain stronger footholds in spaces previously difficult to access. A key milestone was presenting the Can You C Me? project at the Sutton Adult Safeguarding Board (SAB) Community Engagement Meeting, where we introduced our aims and shared information about Macmillan's support services. Additionally, we participated in a joint Sutton/Wandsworth stakeholder meeting, enabling collaboration with cross-borough partners on outreach and equity in cancer support.

We also expanded local relationship-building with various community services and health networks. Key conversations explored partnership opportunities and cultural tailoring of support for underrepresented groups in the borough.

Looking forward, our presence in Sutton is even more established, with growing interest from stakeholders in collaborating on events, focus groups, and culturally appropriate engagement. This foundation offers exciting potential to deepen trust and accessibility of services for BME individuals affected by cancer in Sutton.

Kingston

The past quarter in Kingston was defined by the successful delivery of our third Cancer Conference, held at the Malden Centre. This major event brought together community leaders, grassroots organisations, healthcare professionals, and people with lived experience - all focused on equity in cancer care. With over 150 attendees from across South West London and beyond, the day featured powerful speakers, interactive workshops, and panel discussions addressing culturally competent care, early detection, and patient advocacy. Dignitaries including the Mayor of Kingston, Deputy Mayor, and local councillors joined us in support of the initiative.

A large portion of our time and effort this quarter went into planning and executing the conference. We worked closely with Places Leisure on venue hire and co-design, and collaborated with organisations such as Kingston Reconnect and Sheen Surgery to ensure broad representation and relevance.

In addition to the event itself, we engaged with a range of professionals from the NHS, voluntary sector, and mental health services to discuss community needs and future collaboration. Kingston remains a leading hub for our partnership-building and outreach work.

A full evaluation report for the Kingston Cancer Conference, including participant feedback and key learning, is available separately.

Richmond

While formal engagement activity in Richmond was lighter this quarter, we made meaningful community connections and sustained strategic partnerships. We attended the Kew Gardens Community Open Week, where we engaged with local residents and organisations to promote the Can You C Me? project and explore collaborative support opportunities.

A significant focus this quarter was the Kingston Cancer Conference, which required considerable time and planning across our team. Despite the resource focus on conference delivery, we ensured Richmond partners were actively involved in co-designing the event and had a strong presence on the day. This collaborative approach helped strengthen relationships and laid the groundwork for deeper, localised work in the borough going forward.

Looking ahead, Richmond remains a key area of focus for building sustained engagement through events, support offers, and new partnership development.

Macmillan Trustee & Executive Leadership Away Day

In June 2025, we were honoured to welcome Macmillan Cancer Support's CEO, Gemma Peters, alongside their Trustees and Executive Leadership Team, for a special 2025 Away Day visit. The purpose of the day was to offer Macmillan's senior leadership a direct, immersive view into the Can You C Me? programme, highlighting the lived realities of cancer in underrepresented communities and the transformative work taking place across our six boroughs.

The visit marked a significant milestone, following over 18 months of community-building, outreach, and service innovation. It provided a vital platform for our team to present our journey, sharing our insights, achievements, and the barriers we've faced through powerful narratives, real-world case studies, and examples of culturally responsive best practice.

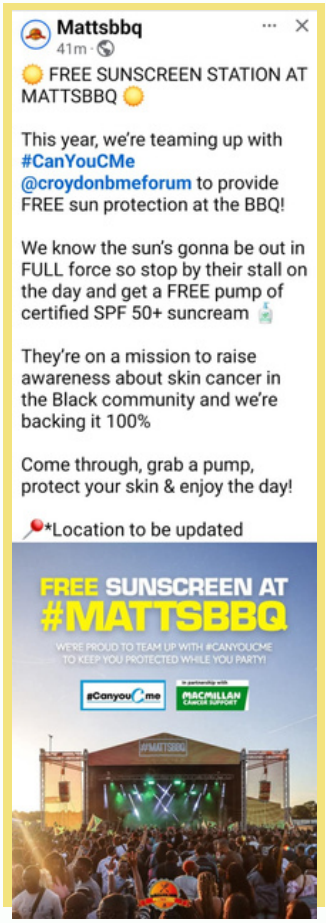
What made the day especially impactful was the leadership role taken by our lived experience advocates, including Sophie Brown and Anslim Pope, who spoke candidly and powerfully about their personal cancer journeys. Their stories shaped the heart of the day, demonstrating exactly what equitable and person-centred cancer care must look like.

The session also aligned closely with Macmillan's evolving strategic priorities, particularly around compassionate, community-led, and culturally competent support. By foregrounding the voices of those most directly affected, the event emphasised the importance of listening, inclusion, and co-production in national cancer policy and service delivery.

Encouragingly, the Trustees expressed a strong interest in further engaging with our community initiatives. They were particularly keen to explore involvement in our upcoming Macmillan Coffee Morning, the Community Gardening Project, and additional outreach activities across the boroughs. As a result, we have arranged a series of follow-up community visits to deepen their connection with the work on the ground.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Macmillan Cancer Support for their presence, openness, and commitment, and to the many community partners and professionals who continue to shape and strengthen the Can You C Me? programme through their collaboration and belief in equity-driven change.

Matts BBQ Festival



At this year's Matt's BBQ Festival on 21st June, our team joined thousands of attendees for a day of music, culture, and community connection under a blazing 31°C sun. Matt's BBQ invited us back for a second year due to the impact of our previous involvement, which led to our project being featured on their official event flyer.

We quickly recognised a major barrier: festival rules prohibited attendees from bringing their own sun cream, leaving many vulnerable to sun damage, particularly those from communities where skin cancer awareness is limited or often overlooked.

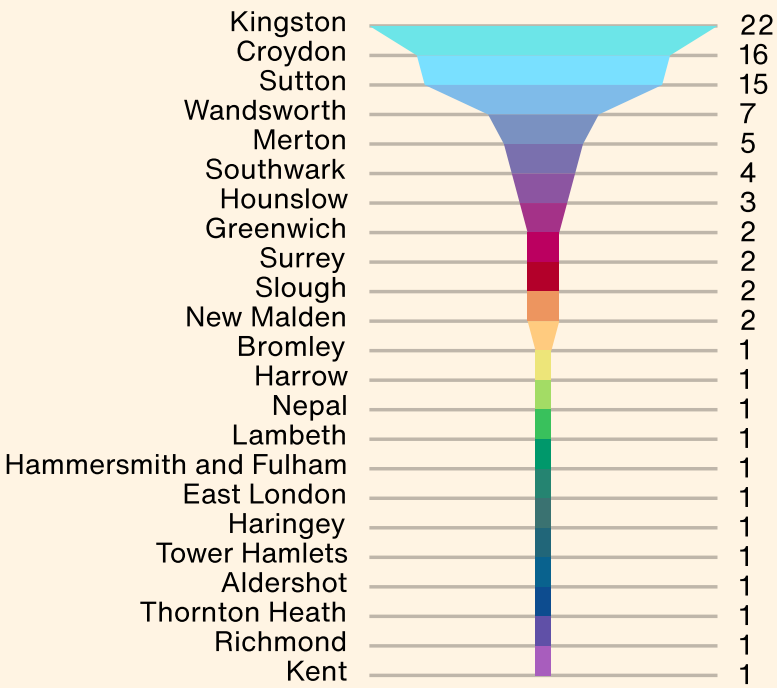
To address this, we set up a free sun cream station, offering safe, inclusive protection for all skin tones, and encouraged attendees to return for top-ups every two hours. This simple yet impactful intervention sparked important conversations about sun safety, skin cancer risk, and health equity. It was a powerful example of how we combine health education with culturally sensitive, real-time solutions by meeting people where they are and removing practical barriers that often go unnoticed.

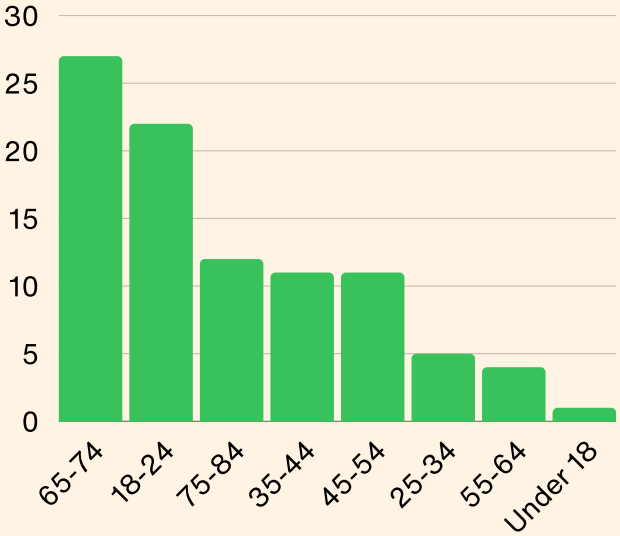
04

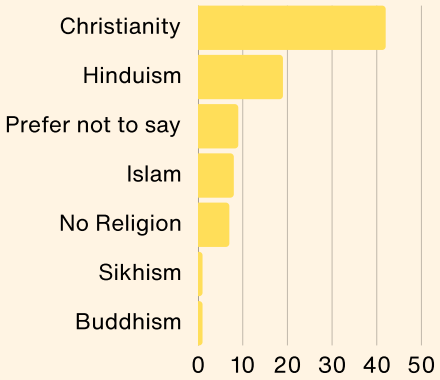
VOICES AND VISIONS FORM DATA

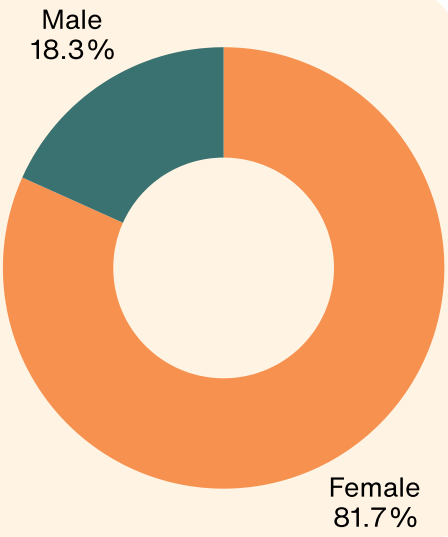
Voices and Visions Forms Data

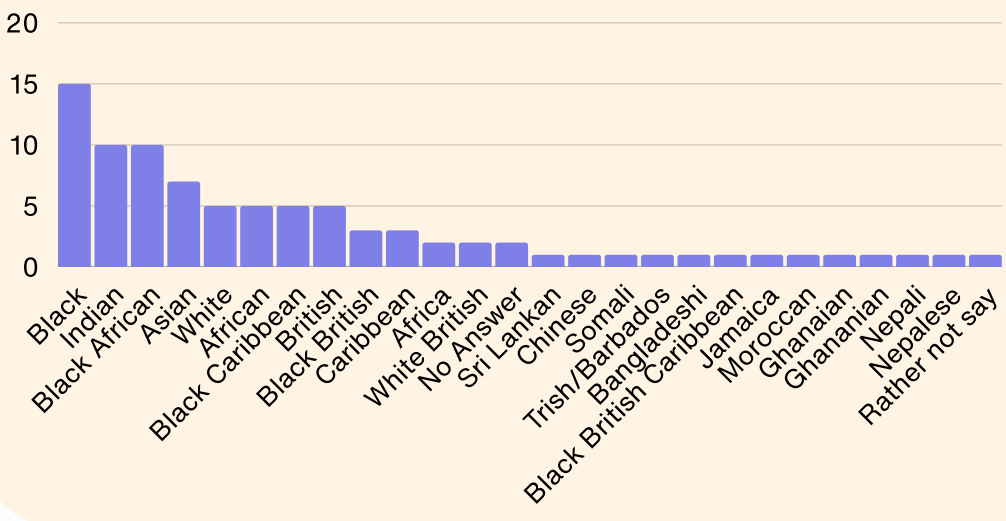
Our Voices and Vision forms capture community experiences and ideas around cancer care, helping us highlight barriers, celebrate good practice, and drive real change based on what matters most to BME communities.











Communication and Support Gaps
Many respondents cited a lack of communication and awareness around cancer support services.
Keywords like “lack,” “services,” “communication,” and “issues” frequently emerged when discussing challenges faced by BME patients.
Comments highlight confusion around where and how to access support.

Desire for Culturally Tailored Information
Respondents expressed a need for “more” local, relevant information, delivered in culturally sensitive ways.
Suggestions included more community-based outreach, improved signposting, and multilingual materials.

Comfort with Healthcare Professionals
Some felt neutral or hesitant when discussing health concerns with professionals, often linked to a lack of trust, unclear language, or feeling unheard.

Resource Suggestions
Participants asked for more emotional support, practical help, and better community presence of services like Macmillan.
The term “comfort” appeared often in comments about what would help people affected by cancer.

Positive Experiences
Fewer responses here, but where they existed, people appreciated compassionate staff, good communication, and useful advice.
Some described feeling reassured and supported during treatment.

Overall Improvement Ideas
Repeated calls for equity-focused service delivery.
Themes of access, understanding, and visibility ran throughout.

05

FOCUS GROUPS DATA

Key Themes Across Focus Groups

Cross-Borough Themes

Information Gaps and Communication Barriers

Many respondents and participants reported feeling left in the dark after diagnosis. People didn't understand key terms like "remission" or "stage," and often received little or no emotional support alongside medical updates. Several were unaware of Macmillan or community-based support services, and information was rarely tailored to cultural or language needs.

"I was told I had cancer but never told what that really meant, or what would happen next."

Digital Exclusion

While digital tools have become more common, they remain a significant barrier. Older residents and those with limited digital skills expressed frustration with app-based booking systems, lack of printed materials, and being "pushed online" without support.

"Everything is on the NHS app now, but no one showed me how to use it."

Low Visibility and Cultural Relevance of Services

Across all boroughs, people wanted services that felt present, visible, and relevant to their communities. This includes outreach in faith centres, events, and community venues, delivered in a way that resonates with local cultural contexts.

"We need someone to come into the mosque or temple, not just hand out leaflets at hospitals."

Emotional and Mental Health Support

People described profound emotional impacts from their cancer experiences; grief, trauma, isolation and noted a lack of culturally sensitive mental health services or bereavement support. For some, even saying the word "cancer" was traumatic due to stigma or past loss.

Empowerment and Co-Production

There's a clear desire for more co-production in services. Communities want to be listened to, not just consulted. This means involving patients in care planning, policy design, and service delivery in meaningful, ongoing ways, not just as a tick-box.

Borough-Specific Insights

Merton

Participants in Merton (mostly men living with prostate cancer) described shock at diagnosis, gaps in understanding terminology, and minimal follow-up or emotional support. Cultural beliefs and financial pressures were also significant. There was low awareness of Macmillan or bereavement services.

Key Recommendation: Provide clearer, culturally sensitive information from the point of diagnosis and increase outreach to raise awareness of support organisations.

Kingston

Refugee participants shared their views on involvement in care. Many spoke about the harm of tokenism and the need for genuine, respectful partnership. There was a strong emphasis on anti-bias training, clear communication, and open conversations between clinicians and patients.

Key Recommendation: Build long-term, trust-based relationships with refugee communities and embed patient voices at every level of service planning.

Richmond

Held during Refugee Week, this session revealed major barriers including immigration fears, language access issues, and mental health trauma linked to displacement. Participants from African and South Asian backgrounds shared experiences of racism, misdiagnosis, and isolation.

Key Recommendation: Establish trauma-informed, immigration-safe cancer care pathways with trained interpreters and targeted outreach.

Sutton

Black and Asian community members shared concerns about invisibility of services, especially for end-of-life care and family support. There was a clear need for campaigns, printed resources, and engagement in schools, universities, and places of worship.

Key Recommendation: Invest in multichannel, multilingual promotion of services, and provide clear, practical support information

Wandsworth

Participants spoke powerfully about being “left behind” after treatment ends. Communication failures, like learning about a diagnosis via the NHS app, compounded this. Others cited rigid GP appointments and a need to challenge medical authority when something felt wrong.

Key Recommendation: Develop structured follow-up care plans and empower patients to question, advocate, and co-lead their care journey.

Recommendations

Improve Communication and Language Access

- Use clear, jargon-free language from the point of diagnosis (e.g, avoid or explain clinical terms like "remission" or "palliative").
- Provide translated materials in key community languages.
- Make interpreters routinely available, not just “on request”, especially for initial diagnosis and treatment planning.
- Offer short videos or infographics explaining common treatment journeys, side effects, and support options.

Increase Visibility and Local Presence

- Take Macmillan and partner services into community spaces, faith settings, markets, libraries, barbershops, etc.
- Create a “presence map” to show where and when people can access face-to-face support in each borough.
- Equip ambassadors and volunteers from local communities to act as peer navigators or champions.

Address Emotional and Mental Health Needs

- Commission or co-design culturally sensitive counselling and grief support, particularly for communities affected by high cancer mortality.
- Partner with local mental health providers to deliver trauma-informed care, especially for refugees and those with compounding health conditions.
- Run regular bereavement cafés, talking circles, or creative healing spaces (e.g., art or music-based wellbeing sessions).

Make Digital More Inclusive

- Offer digital skills training or community drop-in sessions for people who struggle with health apps or online referrals.
- Always provide offline alternatives to digital-first systems (e.g., printed leaflets, phone booking, live drop-ins).
- Test new digital tools with older adults and people from marginalised communities before rolling them out.

Co-Produce, Don't Consult

- Embed lived experience roles in service planning boards, steering groups, and outreach design.
- Pay and train community members to contribute meaningfully, not just for their stories, but for their insight.
- Move away from "one-off listening sessions" and towards long-term, co-led partnerships with community groups.

Focus on Life After Treatment

- Develop structured post-treatment care plans that outline ongoing support, follow-ups, and check-ins.
- Partner with GPs and PCNs to create continuity of care pathways, so patients feel supported once hospital care ends.
- Create a "What Now?" guide for people who finish treatment, outlining next steps, common feelings, and how to access help.

06

LOOKING AHEAD

Looking Ahead

Next quarter
Jul - Sept 2025

As we move into the next quarter, our focus will shift toward building on this momentum through deeper collaboration, skills development, and planning for future impact. We'll begin early-stage planning for our next cancer conference, using feedback from previous events to shape a stronger, more inclusive format.

The team is also scheduled to receive specialist training to further equip us to better upskill both professionals and community leaders in delivering culturally responsive cancer support.

In partnership with St George's Hospital, we will continue developing our video training resources, using real-life insights to educate staff on inclusive language, patient experience, and equity.

These efforts reflect our commitment to sustained, community-led change and to ensuring every person affected by cancer feels seen, heard, and supported.