



#CanyouCme

**JANUARY - MARCH
2025**

Quarterly REPORT

PREPARED BY
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PRESENTED TO
MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT


CROYDON BME FORUM

In partnership with

**MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT**

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KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Key Achievements

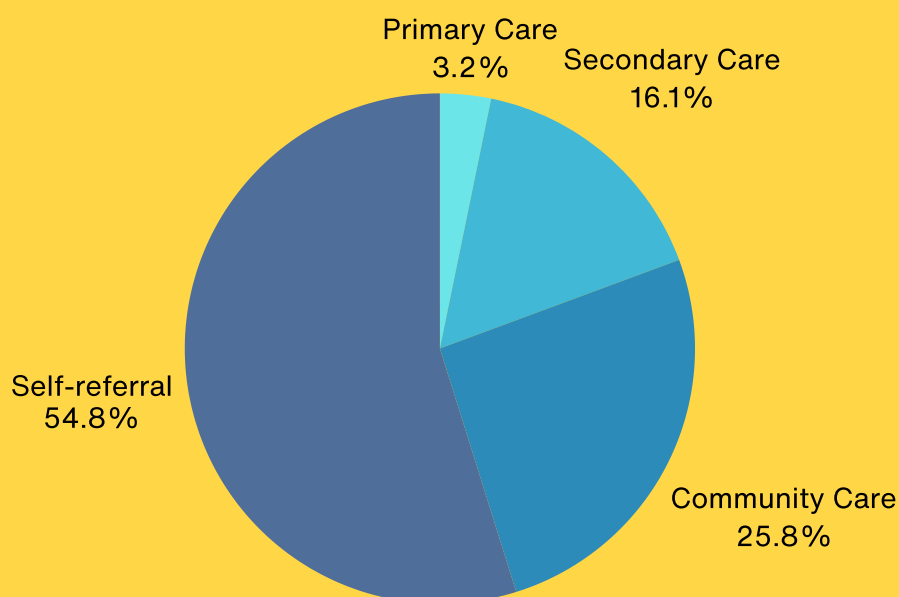
- Presented at a local community event 'Staying Ahead of Cancer' at the ARCC.
- Built a strong relationship with the Wellbeing Studio in Merton who are very keen to work together and host sessions every month with the community.
- Secured a venue and date for Kingston Cancer Conference, 29th May 2025 at The Malden Centre.
- With previous difficulties in the borough of Sutton, we have now managed to get into the right spaces and are actively building on those relationships.
- The short film project we are working on with St George's Hospital is now in process, and filming has commenced.
- We have been invited back to Matts BBQ Festival to host a stall and raise awareness of our project and the support Macmillan Cancer Support offers.
- Supported St George's Hospital and Macmillan Cancer Support at a roundtable meeting with funders, Omaze.

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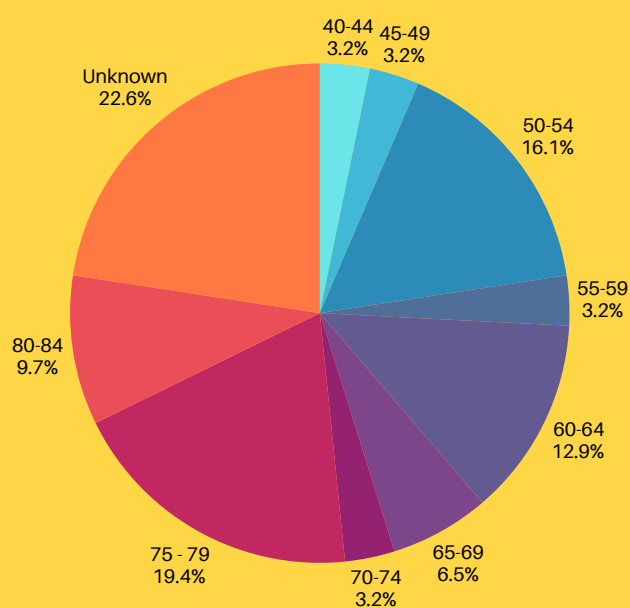
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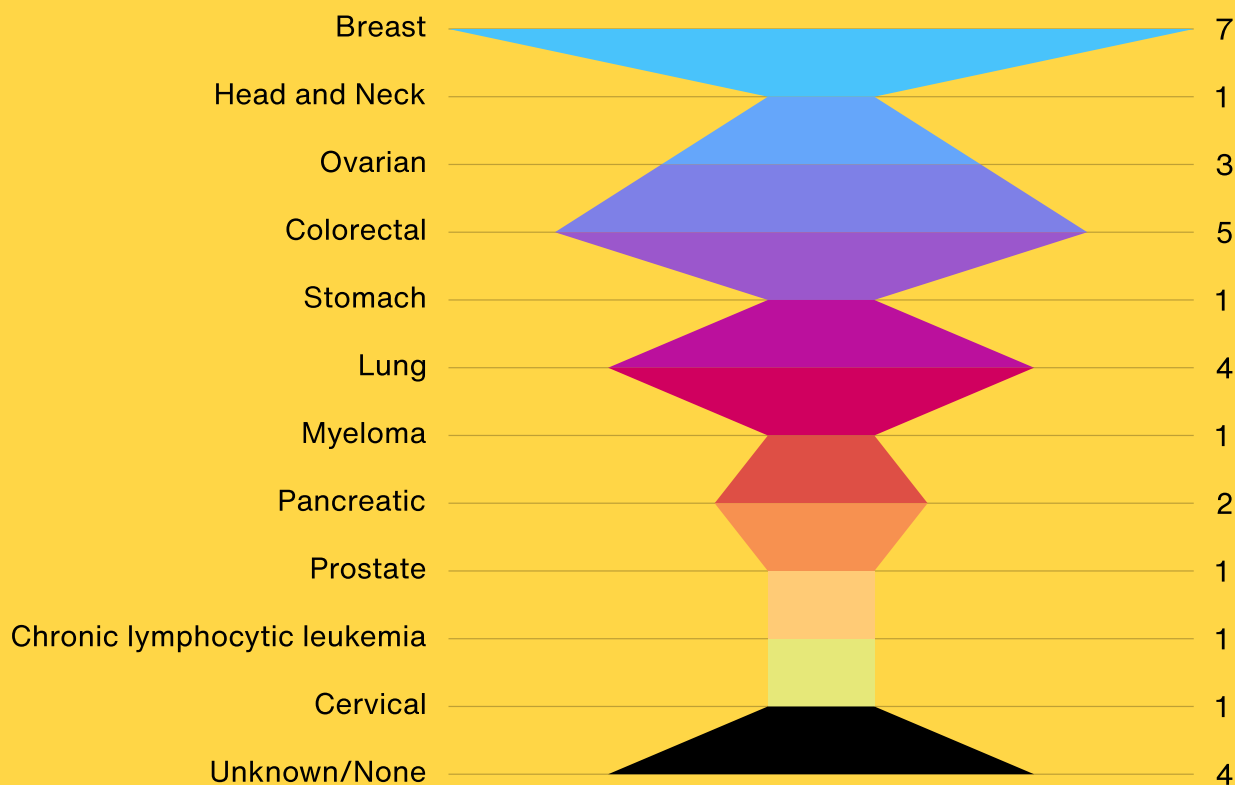
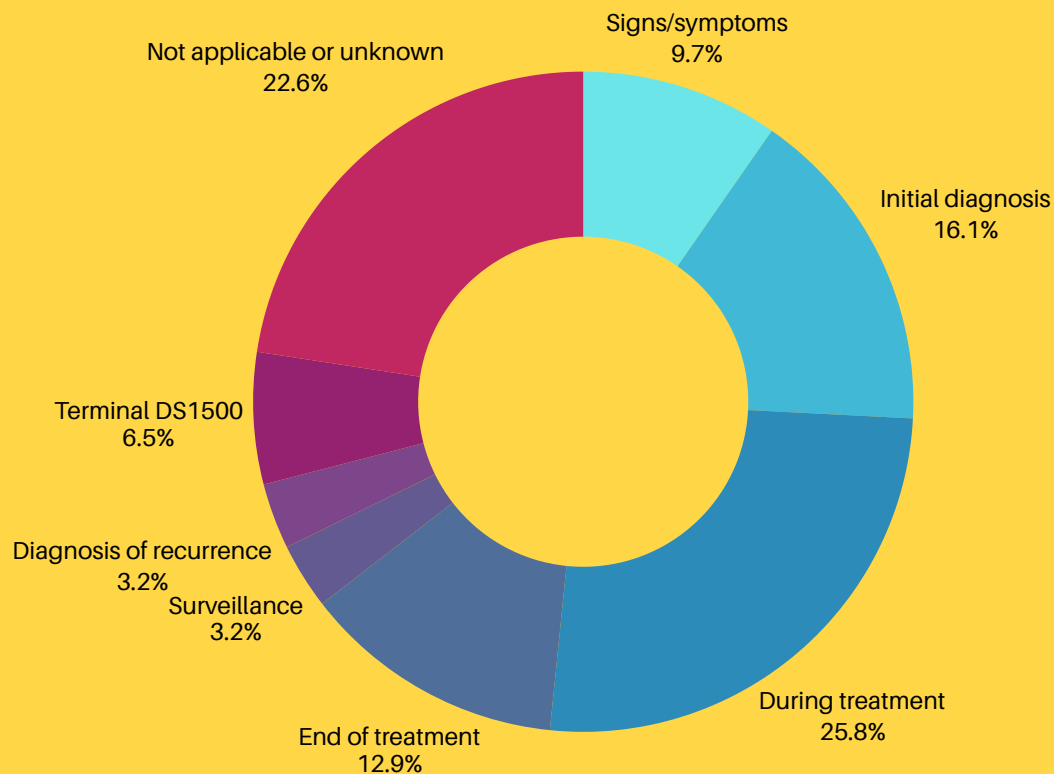
Client referrals

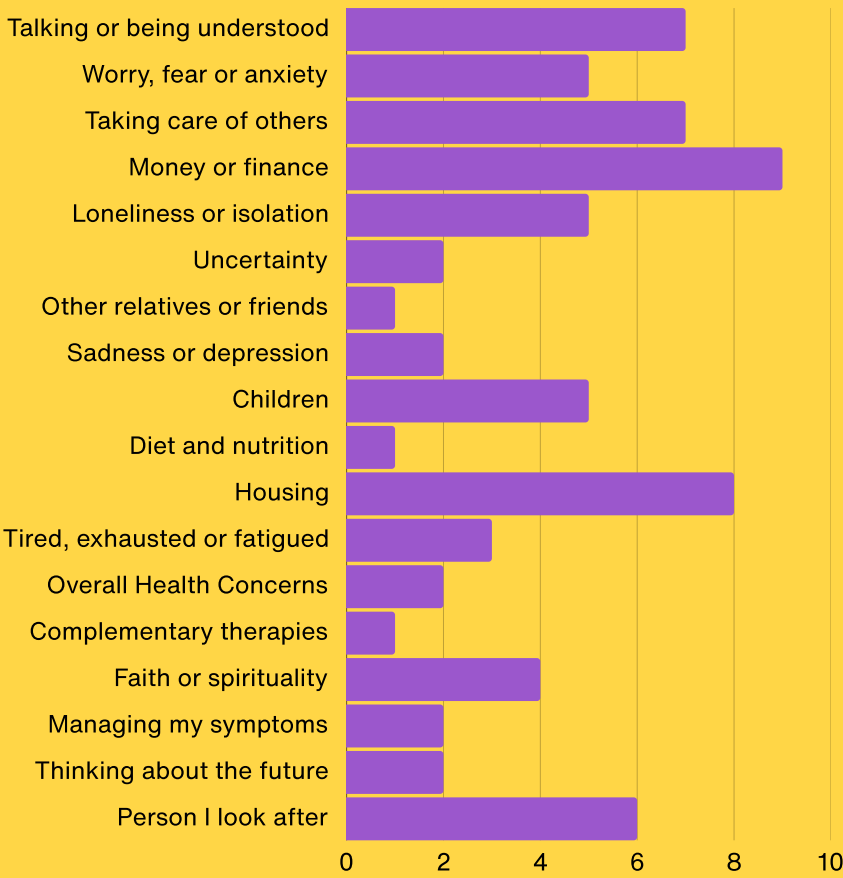
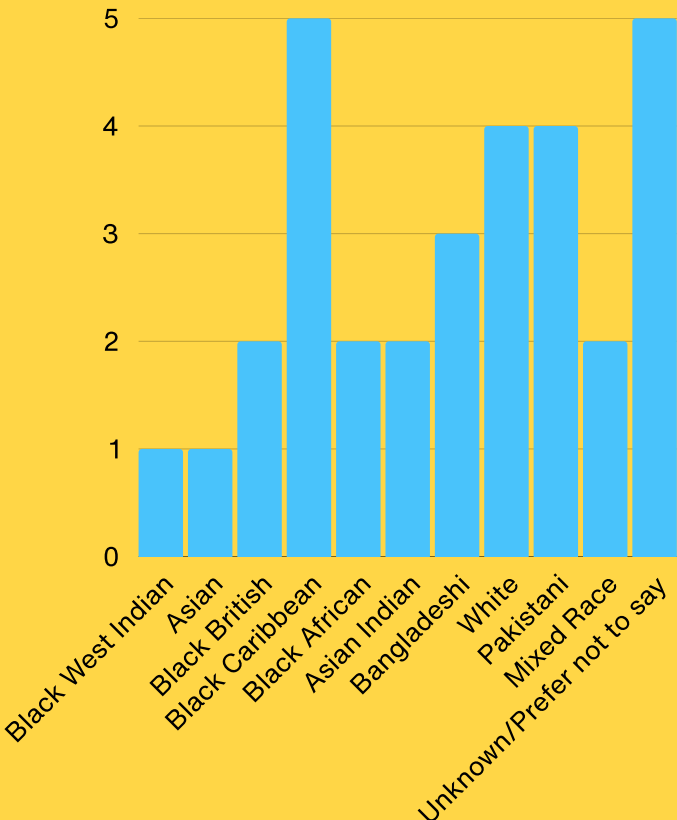
Jan - Mar	Total No. of Contacts			
	Jan 2025	Feb 2025	Mar 2025	Total
Croydon	2	4	4	10
Merton	1	2	0	3
Sutton	0	2	2	4
Wandsworth	2	0	3	5
Richmond	1	0	3	4
Kingston	2	1	2	5
Total	8	9	14	31



	Someone with cancer	Affected by cancer (caring for someone)	Other/Unknown
Croydon	3	5	2
Merton	2	1	0
Sutton	1	3	0
Wandsworth	2	2	1
Richmond	1	1	2
Kingston	2	2	1
Total	11	14	6







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VOICES AND VISIONS FORM DATA

Themes from Voices and Visions Forms

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.

Clearer Information and Support Access

- Respondents wanted simple, clear information about cancer, treatment, and where to get help.
- Many preferred in-person discussions or community-based information events, rather than only leaflets or websites.

Language and Communication

- Many mentioned that language barriers make it hard for BME patients to understand healthcare advice.
- Jargon-free explanations and translated materials were commonly suggested.

Trust and Comfort with Healthcare Providers

- People felt more comfortable discussing health concerns when the healthcare professional showed respect, patience, and understanding of cultural differences.

Challenges for BME Communities

- Common challenges included transportation difficulties, lack of trust, financial struggles, and language barriers.
- Myths about cancer and fear of discrimination still stop people from seeking help early.

Ideas for Improvement

- Local support hubs with multilingual staff.
- More awareness campaigns focused on early screening and debunking myths.
- Greater emotional and financial support services after diagnosis.

Positive Experiences

- Some participants highlighted compassionate nurses, patient explanations, and supportive counselling services as very helpful during their cancer journey.

Community Empowerment

- Many suggested involving more churches, mosques, community centres, and peer advocates to spread cancer information and support networks.



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PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

23.01.2025

Stay Ahead Of Cancer

Attendees: 9

22.01.2025

Wellbeing Studio

Attendees: 10

22.01.2025

Mulberry Centre

Attendees: 4

03.02.2025

Sangam Group Sutton

Attendees: 31

04.02.2025

St Georges Hospital World Cancer Day

Attendees: 150

22.01.2025

Hong Kong Artist Group

Attendees: 25

04.02.2025

Macmillan World Cancer Day

Attendees: 100

06.02.2025

Your Voice Matters

Attendees: 7

20.02.2025

Bereavement Support Event

Attendees: 25



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FOCUS GROUPS
DATA

Key Themes Across Focus Groups

Communication Challenges

- Complex medical jargon made it hard for patients to understand diagnoses and treatment options.
- 40% of participants felt that their concerns were ignored by doctors during initial consultations.
- 60% of participants reported that healthcare professionals used too much medical jargon when explaining diagnoses, and also said they did not know where to turn for support after receiving their diagnosis.

Barriers to Early Diagnosis

- Fear, stigma, and cultural beliefs often delayed seeking medical help.
- Men, especially in BME communities, were particularly reluctant to engage in early screenings.

Trust and Relationship with Healthcare Providers

- Widespread mistrust of the NHS was reported, fueled by perceived discrimination and prior negative experiences.
- Those with medical knowledge or personal NHS connections were perceived to get better care.

Awareness and Accessibility of Services

- Lack of awareness about local healthcare services and how to access them was common.
- Digital barriers limited access to online healthcare and benefit services.

Cultural and Religious Factors

- Misunderstandings about palliative care, belief in herbal remedies, and reliance on religious coping mechanisms shaped patient experiences.

Financial Hardships

- Embarrassment about discussing financial struggles limited access to necessary healthcare.
- Navigating benefits like Universal Credit and ESA was challenging, especially for those with limited digital literacy.

Positive Feedback

- Participants appreciated efforts to highlight racial disparities and culturally competent care in presentations and discussions.
- Advocacy and support systems (like social prescribers) were recognised as highly valuable but underutilised.

Recommendations

We recommend that community groups focus on improving awareness around early detection, dispelling myths about cancer, and strengthening local support networks. Healthcare providers should prioritise using clear, jargon-free language, offer culturally sensitive communication, and actively build trust through transparent, patient-centred care. Both sectors must collaborate to address financial barriers, promote accessible services, and create targeted outreach initiatives that resonate with diverse communities.

Simplify Communication

- Upskill healthcare professionals to use plain language and explain diagnoses clearly.
- Provide translation services and culturally sensitive communication training.

Enhance Community Outreach and Education

- Develop targeted campaigns for BME communities to improve awareness about cancer screening, palliative care, and healthcare services.
- Address myths about cancer cures and herbal remedies through trusted community channels.

Strengthen Support Systems

- Encourage patients to bring advocates or companions to appointments.
- Promote visibility of social prescribers and offer clearer pathways to mental health and financial support.

Tackle Financial and Practical Barriers

- Offer financial counseling and practical help with benefit applications.

Build Trust in Healthcare Services

- Foster transparency, showcase successful interventions, and invest in community-based healthcare initiatives.

Increase Accessibility

- Improve GP appointment availability and reduce hospital appointment cancellations.
- Expand targeted cancer testing and screening efforts for minority communities.

Incorporate Real-Life Experiences

- Include case studies, testimonials, and more real-life examples in training and educational sessions.

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LOOKING AHEAD

Looking ahead

Next quarter
April - June 2025

Expanding monthly well-being sessions on fatigue and neuropathy to Kingston and Richmond via live streams for broader access.

Presenting cancer awareness in Bengali at an ARCC Wellbeing event in November to engage the Bangladeshi community.

Partnering with Kala's non-profit to support Sri Lankan/Tamil cancer patients in New Malden.

Focusing on 'Voices and Vision' forms to gather data directly from the community.

Strengthening partnership with St George's Hospital by providing case studies for training medical teams using real-life patient stories.

Collaborating with Kingston Hospital to create a more inclusive programme for BME cancer patients.

Hosting a focus group with the South Korean Association in December (80+ members).

Preparing for the second Wandsworth conference on 28th November, and beginning planning for the third.

Progressing with booklet design for development and printing.

