

CAN YOU  ME?

MERTON CANCER CONFERENCE

**21ST
APRIL
2026**



Inspired today?
Join us in Sutton



MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 WELCOME & THANK YOU**
- 4 ABOUT THE CONFERENCE**
- 6 AGENDA**
- 7 SPEAKERS**
- 11 MEET THE TEAM**
- 12 PREVIOUS CONFERENCES**
- 14 CONTACT AND GET INVOLVED**



WELCOME TO MERTON CANCER CONFERENCE 2026

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

On behalf of the Can You C Me team, partners, and supporters, we are delighted to welcome you to the 4th Merton Cancer Conference.

The theme, “Advancing Equity: Innovations in Cancer Research and Treatment for BME Individuals,” reflects our continued commitment to addressing disparities in cancer care and outcomes among Black and Minority Ethnic communities. As we gather today, we recognise both the progress that has been made and the work that still lies ahead to ensure equitable access to prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and support for all.

This conference, delivered through the Croydon BME Forum and proudly funded by Macmillan, brings together healthcare professionals, researchers, community leaders, and individuals with lived experience. Together, we aim to share knowledge, explore innovative approaches, and strengthen collaboration to improve cancer outcomes within our communities.

Over the course of the programme, you will hear from expert speakers, engage in meaningful discussions, and learn about pioneering research and community-led initiatives that are shaping a more inclusive future in cancer care.

We encourage you to participate actively, exchange ideas, and build connections that will extend beyond today’s event. Your voice and contribution are vital in driving forward the change we wish to see.

Thank you for joining us and for your ongoing commitment to advancing equity in cancer care.



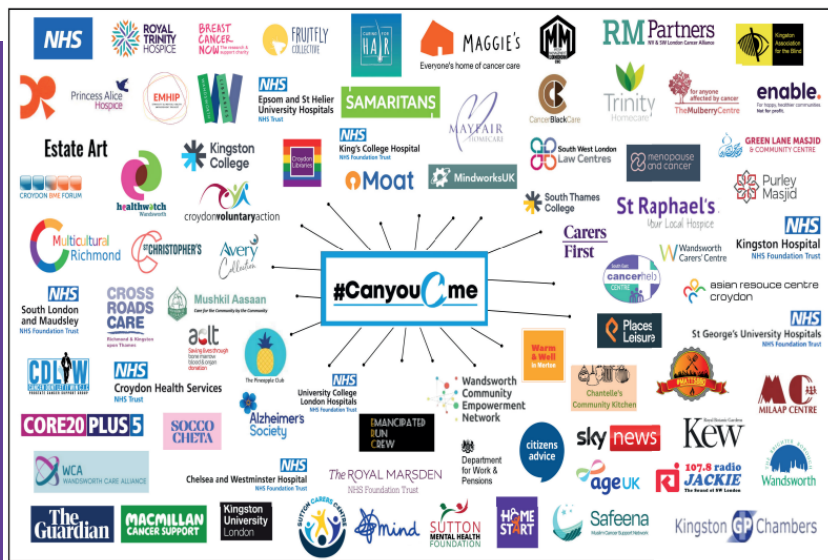
CAN YOU C ME?

About the Can You C Me? Project

The Can You C Me? project is a Macmillan-funded initiative led by Croydon BME Forum, working across six London boroughs to improve cancer care awareness, access, and experiences for Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities. Through a combination of outreach, support, lived experience engagement, and professional collaboration, we are working to reduce inequalities and break down barriers in cancer care.

Our Network

The image below showcases the wide network of partners, organisations, and services we've built strong relationships with. From NHS trusts and hospices to grassroots community groups, each plays a vital role in supporting our shared mission of making cancer care more inclusive, equitable, and culturally responsive.





WELCOME & THANK YOU

A heartfelt **thank you** to everyone who has attended, participated, and helped organise this impactful conference on racial disparities within cancer healthcare and support. A special thanks to our dedicated **Can You C Me?** - Macmillan Team at Croydon BME Forum for their meticulous planning and execution of this event.

In recent years, and particularly in the wake of the pandemic, we have become acutely aware of the severe inequalities affecting our minority ethnic communities. Working on cancer awareness has been an enlightening journey, revealing significant racial disparities in cancer support and care. It has been truly inspiring to see so many remarkable individuals amplify the voices of marginalised communities by sharing their cancer journeys and lived experiences. Your stories have profoundly changed my perspective on life.

Croydon BME Forum remains committed to supporting the community by raising awareness and providing crucial information to our underserved populations. We aim to build sustainable, long-lasting relationships and ensure equality in healthcare. The disparities in cancer treatment and patient experiences are alarming, with many individuals from minority ethnic groups reporting worse outcomes and lower survival rates for certain cancers.

We extend our gratitude to Macmillan for their faith in us, enabling this conference and forging a three-year partnership.

Your enthusiasm and support have been overwhelming, and we eagerly anticipate our next conference later this year. Together, we will continue to address health inequalities and be catalysts for change.

Dr Andrew Brown
CEO, Croydon BME Forum



Unika Cumberbatch-Wynter - Programme Manager

I would like to extend a sincere thanks to all attendees, speakers, and partners for being part of the fourth Can You C Me Cancer Conference. Your presence, engagement, and contributions continue to shape the success and impact of this programme.

Having joined the project just two months ago, it has been incredibly inspiring to witness the dedication, collaboration, and passion that underpins this work. In such a short time, I have seen first-hand the importance of creating spaces like **this** - where voices are heard, experiences are shared, and meaningful progress can be made. of creating spaces like **this** - where voices are heard, experiences are shared, and meaningful progress can be made.

As the fourth in a series of six conferences, this event marks an important milestone in our journey. Each conference has built upon the last, strengthening collaboration, sharing knowledge, and advancing meaningful conversations in cancer care and research.

We are delighted to continue this momentum, with two further conferences scheduled later this year, including our next conference on 14th July, with the final date to be confirmed. Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment - we look forward to welcoming you again as the programme continues.

AGENDA

TIME	ACTIVITY	WHO
9:30	Arrival & Registration	
10:00	Welcome	Kaydian Parris (Host)
	Intro speech	Deputy Mayor of Merton - Shuile Syeda
	Can You C Me team introduction	Unika Cumberbatch-Wynter & Salanh Kromah
10:50	Reducing inequalities with cervical screening	Mary Idowu & Dr Farwa Hasan
11:15	Speech	Deborah Klass - Lived experience
11:35	Breast Cancer	Charmaine Case
12:00	Speech	Kierran Jarrett - Lived experience
12:20	Speech	Pearl Jarrett - Lived experience

12:40 – 13:55 LUNCH, STALLS & NETWORKING

2:05	Keynote Speaker	Gemma Peters - Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
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2:20 – 3:20 BREAKOUT ROOM ACTIVITY

3:20	Q&A panel with healthcare professionals	
3:45	Speech	Chair of Trustees - Paulette Lewis MBE
3:50	Closing speech	Kaydian Parris (Host)

STALLS AND BREAKOUT ROOMS

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**MACMILLAN
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NHS
St George's Healthcare
NHS Trust



UniqueRoots
& Healthy Living Spaces



The **ROYAL MARSDEN**
NHS Foundation Trust



HAPPY DRUMS





**Kingston
University
London**

CONFERENCE HOST



Kaydian Parris

Kaydian Parris, the lady of Legacy, is a woman of presence, purpose, and quiet strength, dedicated to uplifting others and bringing people together in ways that create lasting impact.

With over 20 years of working at the heart of communities, she is known for her compassion, authenticity, and the way she makes people feel—seen, heard, and supported. Born in Jamaica and grounded in values of resilience and unity, she creates spaces where people can connect, share, and find strength in one another.

Alongside her community work, Kaydian is an FCA-regulated consultant who supports families in building strong foundations and lasting legacies—approaching her work with care, integrity, and a deep understanding of what truly matters across generations.

Whether hosting or speaking, she brings a calm, reassuring presence—holding space with both strength and sensitivity, even in life’s most difficult moments.

Her purpose is simple: to leave people better than she found them. She is honoured to support spaces that reflect care, connection, and the reminder that no one has to face life’s challenges alone.

SPEAKERS



Gemma Peters - Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Gemma Peters is Chief Executive of Macmillan Cancer Support, the UK’s leading cancer care charity that reached 2.4 million people in 2024. With over 20 years of leadership experience in charity, health and higher education, Gemma joined Macmillan in January 2023 and has led the development of its new organisational strategy.

Gemma is dedicated to addressing health inequities and involving people with lived experience, especially those from marginalised groups, in determining Macmillan’s impact.

Gemma also sits on the Civil Society Council, to help enable collaboration between Number 10 and voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations. Previously, she served as Chief Executive at Blood Cancer UK and as Executive Director at King’s College London and King’s Health Partners.

In partnership with





Mary Idowu

Deputy Director – Partnerships and Inequalities (Merton and Wandsworth)
NHS South West London Integrated Care Board (ICB)

“An experienced and values-driven transformation leader, Mary Idowu has led large-scale transformation, organisational design and culture change across complex health and care systems. As Deputy Director for Strategy, Partnerships and System Transformation at NHS South West London Integrated Care Board (ICB), she works closely with Boards and executive teams to align strategy, structure, culture and capability,

delivering major programmes. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she worked at national level, leading organisational effectiveness interventions at pace to support the national response, and new ways of working in highly complex and uncertain conditions..

She is particularly passionate about reducing inequalities and improving outcomes for underserved communities. Her work focuses on understanding lived experience, using behavioural insights to identify barriers, and adapting how health and care systems operate to better meet people’s needs. She has led initiatives that embed inclusion, psychological safety and community voice into leadership and decision-making, ensuring that services are shaped not just by strategy, but by the people they serve. She is driven by a belief that meaningful, lasting change comes from aligning systems, leadership and communities to deliver more equitable outcomes.”



The Alton Practice

Dr Farwa Hasan

Biography of Dr Farwa Hasan, GP Partner & Trainer - The Alton Practice,

Clinical Lead, Wandsworth Training Hub, Clinical Director (Joint), West Wandsworth PCN and Honorary Clinical Lecturer, Faculty of Medicine, Imperial College London

“Dr Farwa Hasan is a GP Partner at The Alton Practice and a Clinical Director of West Wandsworth Primary Care Network. She is dedicated to reducing the significant health inequalities faced by the patient population she serves in Roehampton (SW15).

Dr Hasan is also passionate about medical education; teaching medical students from Imperial College, training GP Registrars and is the Clinical Lead for Wandsworth Training Hub.”



Charmaine Case RGN, BSc Cancer Nursing

I started my student Nursing in 1983 in Canterbury. I am currently working as a Clinical Nurse Specialist at the South West London Breast Screening Unit. Our focus includes diagnosing Breast Cancer early, by promoting the National programme of Breast Screening, early diagnosis is key. Health promotion working within communities tackling health inequalities, and promoting access within the community

Previously I worked as a Macmillan Breast Care Nurse for Breast Cancer patients for 15 years.

I have been involved with Macmillan in their “No one faces cancer alone” campaign which covered a national poster campaign and a video for the website.

In 2023 on the 75th Anniversary of the NHS and 75th Anniversary of the Windrush I was invited to No 10. I was also privileged to be honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the NHS Parliamentary Awards 5th July 2023.



Dr Pearl Jarrett

Dr Pearl Jarrett is a multi-award-winning leader, speaker, philanthropist, entrepreneur, and creative visionary whose life and work are rooted in purpose, resilience, and

impact. After being diagnosed with cancer in 2005, she made a defining decision: “When I beat this, I am going to live my life with purpose and make everyday count”.

That conviction has shaped everything she has built since. As Founder and CEO of The Jarrett Foundation, Veranda

Connect Ltd, and Gospel School for the Performing Arts (GSPA), Dr Jarrett has led initiatives including anti-knife crime workshops in 55 schools across London and the delivery of school furniture and resources to 136 schools in Jamaica. She also champions access to the creative industries, having started acting herself at 55 years old, and now helps others step into film, television, and theatre at any stage of life. A recipient of the Power of A Woman - Lifetime Achievement Award and Jamaica’s Governor-General’s Award for Diaspora Excellence, presented by King Charles’ representative, she inspires audiences to live boldly and purposefully.



Kierran Jarrett

Kierran Jarrett is an author, inspirational speaker, and two-time leukaemia survivor whose journey is a remarkable testament to courage, endurance and hope.

Diagnosed while at university between 2015 and 2016, Kierran continued his studies throughout chemotherapy, completing coursework from hospital and even leaving treatment temporarily to sit his exams before returning to continue care.

Despite being told at one stage that he had just one week to live, he not only went on to survive through receiving a stem cell transplant using umbilical cord blood from a baby born in Germany, but he graduated with a 2:1 in International Business and Marketing, and earned a Dean’s Award for his determination to study while seriously ill.

Today, he is an author and a speaker and his book, “What Can I Control – The Crucial Life Lessons of a 2x Cancer Survivor”, is available on Amazon. Kierran inspires others going through their cancer journey with a message of resilience, faith, and focusing on what can still be shaped even in life’s toughest moments.



Deborah Klass

Deborah Klass is a Finance Director at Studio of Art & Commerce and Chair of Trustees for The Windrush Generation Legacy Association Charity, where she brings strong leadership in financial management, strategic growth, and community impact.

In April 2023, Deborah was diagnosed with breast cancer. When she asked her oncologist what to expect from treatment, she was told to prepare for significant changes, hair loss, fatigue, and the possibility of stepping back from work.

She describes feeling completely shell-shocked in that moment. However, she was also told that a small number of patients experience treatment with minimal disruption, and that maintaining a positive mindset could make a meaningful difference.

Deborah chose to hold on to that mindset. Her journey through post-operative treatment became one grounded in resilience, determination, and a conscious decision to continue moving forward. Today, she is cancer-free and looking ahead to October 2026, a milestone that will mark a significant point in reducing the risk of recurrence.

Through sharing her lived experience, Deborah offers a perspective that is both honest and hopeful demonstrating the power of mindset, the importance of perseverance, and the reality that every cancer journey is unique.



Sabina Khan

People living beyond head and neck cancer often face long-term radiotherapy side effects that can significantly impact speech, swallowing and daily life.

Sabina and her colleagues at University College London Hospital recognised this gap and established a pioneering head and neck late effects clinic dedicated to patients treated with radiotherapy, ensuring no one is left to navigate survivorship alone. The service provides personalised, holistic support shaped by patient reported outcomes and the realities of life after treatment. With strong MDT collaboration

and full patient involvement, the service from the ground up - introducing support groups, flexible appointments and individualised care plans that empower people to take back control of their wellbeing.

A core part of Sabina's work is advocating for patients from Black and Minority Ethnic communities, who often face additional barriers to accessing care, navigating the healthcare system and feeling heard. Culturally sensitive practices are embedded throughout the service,

recognising that identity, language and lived experience can strongly influence the survivorship journey. Their service acknowledges the importance of faith and religion for many patients, providing space for these beliefs to be integrated into conversations about recovery, resilience and holistic healing.

“The ethos of this service is to help people live better after cancer treatment, not just to survive”

MEET THE TEAM



Salanh Kromah – Macmillan Cancer Support and Wellbeing Coordinator Croydon and Merton

Salanh joined Macmillan Cancer Support in December as a Wellbeing Coordinator, bringing fresh perspective and a strong commitment to improving cancer outcomes through community engagement and education. Her work focuses on raising awareness of cancer prevention and promoting early diagnosis, particularly within Black and South Asian communities.

She is passionate about building trust and understanding, using community focus groups to explore lived experiences and barriers to care. She uses community focus groups to explore lived experiences and barriers to care, provides tailored professional support pathways and provides tailored professional support pathways

professionals to strengthen support pathways and provides tailored guidance to individuals navigating life after a cancer diagnosis. Sal also plays an active role in community events, helping to share accessible, culturally relevant information.

She is working towards developing an inclusive and comprehensive resource hub to empower individuals with knowledge about cancer risks and to support long-term, community-led improvements in health and wellbeing.



Zak Miah – Macmillan Cancer Support and Wellbeing Coordinator Richmond and Kingston

Thank you for joining us today and for your continued support of the “Can You C Me” project.

In just a short space of time, we have already made meaningful strides in shining a light on the disparities in cancer outcomes faced by Black and minority ethnic communities. This work is about more than awareness - it is about giving a voice to those who are too often unheard and addressing the barriers that create inequality in healthcare. Through shared stories, education, and open dialogue, we are building a deeper understanding of these challenges and working to bridge the gap

between communities and healthcare providers. By challenging mindsets and encouraging new ways of thinking, we aim to help shape a future where equity in cancer care is not an aspiration, but a reality.

We are grateful for your engagement and look forward to continuing this journey together.



Michael Samuel – Macmillan Cancer Support and Wellbeing Coordinator Sutton and Wandsworth

Thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to attend today’s event and support the “Can You C Me” project.

With a strong foundation of experience and a shared commitment to addressing health inequalities, this work continues to grow across South West London and beyond. Today is not only about recognising progress, but also about building connections and exploring how we can expand our impact even further.

Your presence here plays an important role in driving this forward. By working together and learning from one another, we can strengthen our

we can strengthen our collective efforts to create more equitable outcomes in cancer care.

We hope you enjoy the day and encourage you to connect with others - you never know where those conversations might lead.

Thank you for being part of this important work.

PREVIOUS CANCER CONFERENCES





FURTHER SUPPORT INFORMATION

Company Name	Telephone Number	Website	Email address
Marie Curie	0800 716 146	www.mariecurie.org.uk	info@mariecurie.org.uk
African Caribbean Leukaemia Trust (ACLT)	0203 757 7700	www.aclt.org	Info@aclt.org.uk
Macmillan Cancer Support	0808 808 0000	www.macmillan.org.uk	contact@macmillan.org.uk
MAGGIE'S	0300 1231 801	www.maggies.org	enquiries@maggies.org
Race Equality Foundation	020 7428 1880	raceequalityfoundation.org.uk/	admin@racefound.org.uk
Black in Cancer		www.blackincancer.com	blackincancer@gmail.com
Cancer Care Map		www.cancercaremap.org	
Errol McKellar Foundation		www.theerrolmckellar-foundation.com	info@errolmckellar.com
Throat Cancer Foundation	0203 4754 065	www.throatcancerfoundation.org	hello@throatcancerfoundation.org
Melanoma UK	0808 171 2455	melanomauk.org.uk	info@melanomauk.org.uk
Blood Cancer Uk	0808 208 0888	bloodcancer.org.uk	support@bloodcancer.org

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FURTHER SUPPORT INFORMATION

Company Name	Telephone Number	Website	Email address
RM Partners		www.rmpartners.nhs.uk	rmpartners.info@nhs.net
Safeena Cancer Support		www.safeena.org.uk	info@safeena.org
multiculturalrichmond.org.uk	020 8893 9444	multiculturalrichmond.org.uk	hello@multiculturalrichmond.org.uk
Cancer Don't Let It Win	0333 33 55 916	Cancerdontletitwincic.org	Info@cancerdontletitwincic.com
Black women rising		blackwomenrisinguk.org	foundation@leannepero.com
Kingston Voluntary Action	0208 255 3335	kva.org.uk	admin@kva.org.uk
MILAAP Centre	0208 547 2887	www.milaapcentrekington.org.uk	info@milaapcentrekington.org.uk
Korean Community Centre	0741 318 5354	www.newmalden.org	info@newmalden.org
The Kingston Association for The Blind	0208 605 0060	www.kingstonassociationforblind.org	kab@kingstonassociationforblind.org
Tamil Centre	0777 002 9617	www.itc-uk.org	info@itc-uk.org
Kingston Race and Equalities Council	0208 547 2332	kingstonrec.org	info@kingstonrec.org

**PLEASE FILL OUT OUR
FEEDBACK FORM**



ABOUT US

Croydon BME Forum is the umbrella organisation for Croydon's Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) voluntary and community sector, working to engage people, build capacity, and promote equality and cohesion. We are a registered company limited by guarantee.

Our projects focus on various areas, including mental health, general health, family support, financial assistance, and overall well-being. The Forum was established to maximise the engagement of BME communities in all aspects of living and working in Croydon.

We represent Croydon's Black and minority communities to public sector agencies and other statutory and non-statutory organisations.

Get in touch with the Croydon BME Forum by calling us or dropping in:
0208 680 3635 | 0208 684 3719

CONTACT US

Address

The Wellness Centre

1st, Floor Whitgift Centre, Croydon CR0 1LP

Croydon BME Forum

56A Mitcham Road, Croydon, CR0 3RG

Croydon Health And Wellbeing Space

Unit 1101-1102, Whitgift Centre, Croydon CR0 1TY

For more information about the Can You C Me Project or to contact the team, please visit www.canyoucme.org or email macmillanteam@bmeforum.org

You may also contact Macmillan Cancer Support on

0808 808 0000 or visit their website www.macmillan.org.uk

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