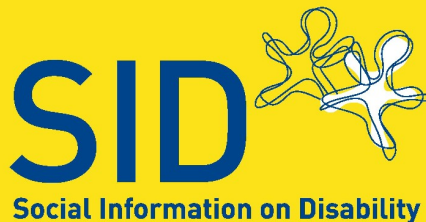


Disability: Black & Minority Ethnic Groups

A Quick Guide to Providing Information



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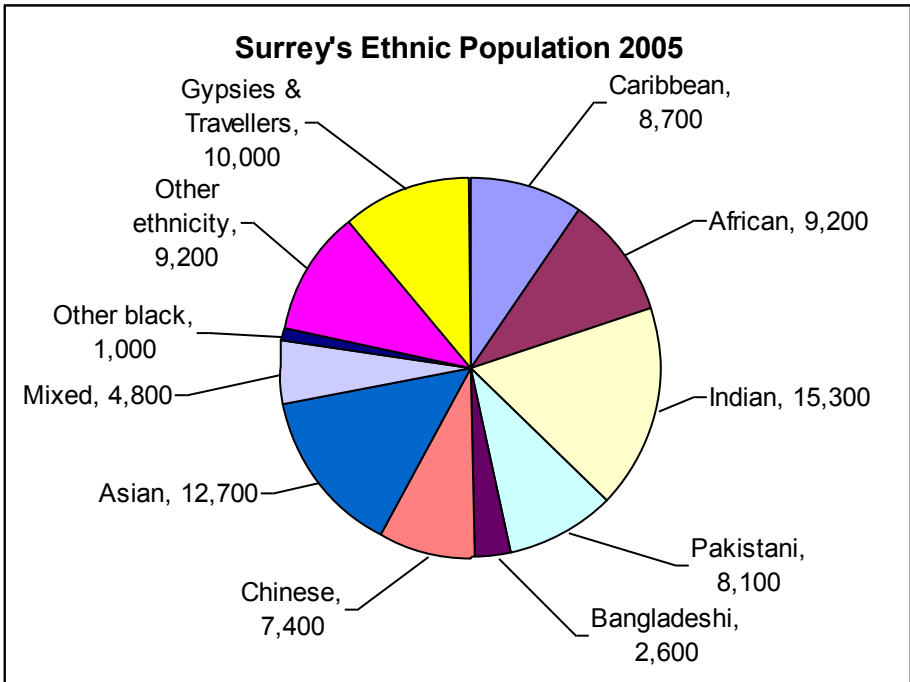
Background

SID works to promote access to information for all disabled people in Surrey. The information in this guide is the result of project work undertaken by SID in 2008/09 as part of an Equality & Human Rights Commission funded project looking at the dual disadvantage of being disabled from an ethnic background.

SID is grateful for all the contributions made by representatives from Surrey's Black & Minority Ethnic Groups and national organisations to this guide and project. Also included are key findings from recent research papers which demonstrate successful ways of working with multi-cultural communities. ¹

Surrey's Ethnic Population

Surrey has an estimated total population of 1,075,500, of which 78,900 are from ethnic minority backgrounds. People from Indian, Asian and African backgrounds having the highest representation. In addition, Surrey has the fourth largest gypsy and traveller population in the UK, with an estimated 10,000 people living on 58 sites across the county.



National research has confirmed that people from BME backgrounds experience dual disadvantage when they have specific disability-related needs and lack access to culturally sensitive information and services. Discriminatory practices and attitudes can add to this, resulting in reduced choices and a poorer quality of life for those individuals. 2

BME Communities & Disability

While achieving independence as a disabled person is generally perceived as the desired goal, the quality of life in BME cultures is frequently assessed in terms of valued relationships. Disability becomes a problem if it prevents a person from maintaining the quality of their relationships or from fulfilling a social role.

Some cultures see disability as a form of failure that should be hidden and not discussed outside the immediate family. A culture of self blame can stem from certain religious beliefs. Service providers therefore, need to engage in specific drives if their services are to be opened up to disabled people from BME communities.

Reaching BME Communities: Practical Issues

Organisations often report difficulties in getting in contact with people from BME groups. The following suggestions may help to overcome this:

Communication

People from some BME groups, but, particularly older people, may be unable to read or write in their own language and may speak little or no English. The use of interpreters can be most helpful, ensuring clarity, encouraging mutual understanding and engendering trust.

In Surrey, Woking Interpretation & Translation Service (WITS) 01483 750970 provides an interpreting and translation service. Working in partnership with representatives from BME groups can encourage members to come to events in community venues if familiar faces will be there to make them feel welcome.

Culture

A strong sense of family interdependency may limit the options available to both disabled individuals and family carers, preventing people from accessing services which could support a fuller and more satisfying life. Older people will often depend on younger family members to find out about services and access them on their behalf.

Cultural awareness training to better equip staff to undertake their roles can be very beneficial. DTE Consultancy www.dtec.org.uk run courses on the Muslim faith & history. Religious festivals are central to the lives of many from BME communities. To find out when these take place visit www.multiculturalfestivals.com



Social Values & Meetings

When contacting representatives from BME groups for the first time, whether your organisation is the host organisation or not, take the opportunity to ask about appropriate clothing, preferences for food and drink and timings for meetings. For example, Friday afternoon is the most important time of the week for prayer for Muslims and the festival of Ramadan restricts food and drink intake to certain times of the day. Many cultures are most comfortable with fish or vegetarian food. Appreciation of these customs shows respect and interest and will help to strengthen working relationships.

A list of Surrey based BME community groups can be found at www.asksid.org.uk/bme. Surrey Community Action www.surreyca.org.uk 01483 459292 is working with partner organisations to develop a BME forum for the county. The Equality & Human Rights Commission can advise on discrimination issues www.equalityhumanrights.com 0845 6046610.

Designing Promotional Materials

If you wish to promote your service using printed materials such as leaflets and posters these pointers may help:

Avoid

- Grouping all BME communities together. Each is unique.
- Assuming that BME communities will understand and act on marketing materials that are designed for the wider population
- Assuming individuals have high levels of literacy in their own language. English is often universally acceptable.
- Printing information on glossy paper or using a decorative font which can make understanding difficult and hard to read

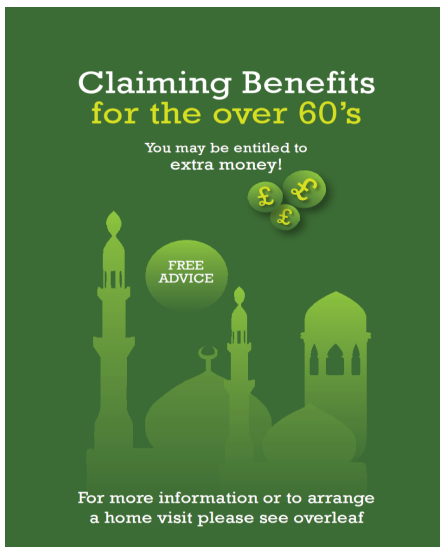
Do

- Be clear about which part of your service you wish to promote and why
 - Ask people from BME backgrounds for any positive or negative experiences they may have of the issues you want to focus on
 - Ask BME community groups for their feedback and help with designing suitable promotional material
 - Research the use of colour. For example, green is the sacred colour of Islam, bright colours such as yellow may appeal more to Caribbean people and red has a religious significance for Hindus.
 - Consider using religious or cultural imagery so your target audience recognises it and feels it relates to them
-

An Example of Joint Working in Surrey

Claiming Benefits Campaign to over 60s Muslims

Below is an example of a campaign flyer that was designed jointly by SID, the Pakistani Muslim Welfare Association in Woking, and the Pension Service in Surrey. Aiming to attract older people to arrange a benefits check up, it is a generic poster that can be used throughout Surrey's Muslim community.



This benefits take up campaign was the result of a workshop which brought together statutory service providers and BME community representatives to discuss barriers to accessing services and ways of overcoming them. A highly focused target audience was chosen for this campaign to enable the design to be piloted before a county wide launch. For copies please contact SID.

For other examples of community led campaigns and materials contact:

- Age Concern England www.ageconcern.org.uk. They produce a free guide - *Healthy Living, Healthy Ageing*.
- Derbyshire Gypsy & Traveller Liaison Group www.dglg.org.uk have copies of their health leaflets available on request .

Meetings & Events Checklist

Take your service to the community instead of expecting them to come to you. When considering a venue it's always a good idea to meet at a place where the community feels most comfortable. This could be a mosque prayer room or a community centre, for example.

Ask these questions first:

- Is the venue accessible to wheelchair users?
- Does it have facilities for deaf and visually impaired people eg. are guide dogs admitted & is there a loop system?
- What languages will be spoken and which faiths and cultures will be represented?
- Is an interpreter required or will a community representative fulfil this role?
- Is there a dress code that needs to be observed?
- What food and drink is acceptable?
- What is the best time of day to meet to accommodate family commitments and/or religious obligations? Men & women may wish to meet separately.
- What are the best methods of providing information about the service being promoted? A talk, leaflets, DVD?
- How does the community perceive the issues to be discussed? Are they topical, controversial, new?



If possible brush up on “welcome”, “thank you” and “goodbye” in the relevant language. Use a relaxed approach, focus on listening and don't use jargon! Create events that are participative and develop understanding. Always deliver information in partnership with a representative from a BME organisation.

Examples of Good Practice

In 2009 RNIB www.rnib.org.uk set out to reduce avoidable sight loss among people from Caribbean, African and South Asian backgrounds. They appointed six new BME workers across the UK and set new eye health targets in conjunction with the government and eye health organisations.

Now working in partnership with Focus on Blindness Birmingham, RNIB promote sight loss information fairs held in community venues. They

recruit local people to be Community Champion volunteers who are trained to give



supporting blind and partially sighted people

talks about sight loss within their own communities and gather feedback on areas of concern. Both organisations promote their work in the community by:

- broadcasting on ethnic minority radio stations
- attending religious festivals and fairs
- visiting community centres
- giving talks at coffee mornings and health centres
- setting up focus groups within local BME forums
- making regular contributions to newsletters

Another approach, taken by Diabetes UK www.diabetes.org.uk is to target specific events.

Diabetes Lifestyle is a quarterly newsletter which focuses on engaging with communities. They have found that providing messages on diabetes at times of religious festivals and running stands at cultural events is a proven method of success.



Useful Reading



- **Thomas Pocklington Trust** www.pocklington-trust.org.uk 020 8995 0880. *People from black & minority ethnic communities and vision services: A good practice guide* December 2008.
 - **Age Concern England** www.ageconcern.org.uk 0800 00 99 66. *Information and advice needs of black and minority ethnic older people in England* July 2008.
 - **Age Concern England** www.ageconcern.org.uk 0800 00 9966. *Communicating with diverse audiences: A practical guide to producing translated materials in appropriate languages and formats for people from minority ethnic communities.*
 - **Metropolitan Support Trust** www.mst-online.org.uk 020 7501 2306. *Supporting disabled refugees and asylum seekers: opportunities for new approaches* November 2008.
 - **SID** www.asksid.org.uk/bme 0800 0439395. *Making disability information across Surrey accessible to individuals from black and minority ethnic groups* June 2008.
 - **Department of Health** *The health status of gypsies and travellers in England* October 2004. University of Sheffield www.shef.ac.uk/scharr/research/publications/travellers.html.
 - **National Information Forum** www.nif.org.uk 0207 7085943 *Find the Help You Need* for disabled refugees and asylum seekers.
 - **RNIB** www.rnib.org.uk 0303 123999 *See it right* guide to making information accessible for vision impaired people
 - **RNID** www.rnid.org.uk 0808 808 9000 factsheet on making information accessible for Deaf/deaf people
-

What's Happening in Surrey?



- Surrey's first countywide BME forum is being established
- More cultural events & festivals are being attended by service providers to raise awareness of their services
- There is an increase in outreach services to BME community centres
- Healthy living classes are being extended to include information and advice sessions in some mosques

Some BME Organisations in Surrey

- British Red Cross Refugee Services 01483 300745
- Epsom & Ewell Race & Community Relations Network 01372 732150
- Surrey Community Action 01483 459292 for Surrey BME Forum
- Woking Community Relations Forum 01483 721444

Disability Information Services in Surrey

DAISE	Elmbridge	01932 248660
DATA	Tandridge	01883 722593
DICE	Epsom & local areas	01372 735243
DisCASS	Guildford & Waverley	01483 860551
WIDE	Woking & Surrey Heath	01483 747400
SID	Countywide	0800 0439395

This booklet is available in
alternative formats on request



0800 0439395



info@asksid.org.uk

Other booklets in this series:

Accessible Surrey

Disability Equipment

Disability Rights & Benefits

Support at Home

More information on living with a disability in
Surrey can be found at www.asksid.org.uk

A list of Surrey contacts is available in the leaf-
let 'Information for You' available from SID

SID - Social Information on Disability

Rentwood, School Lane

Fetcham, Surrey KT22 9JX



01372 372888 (admin)



0800 0439395 (information line)

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