

Better support for black, Asian and minority ethnic people living with Dementia during the Covid-19 pandemic

September 2020

The [projects](#) funded under the DHSC Covid-19 dementia programme have been progressing well. They have been providing a range of support, information, and advice to black, Asian and minority ethnic people living with dementia, their families, and friends.

What support are the projects offering?

Many of the projects are starting to demonstrate their impact. Here is information on some of the projects.

The [Centre of Wellbeing, Training and Culture](#) (CWTC) is a registered charity focused on raising awareness and providing information related to dementia and mental health in Rochdale.



CWTC set up an online [survey](#) in English and Urdu for carers to give feedback about the support provided by the organisation and have input about the services carers receive to fit their needs. A helpline has been created in English, Urdu and Bengali to support local communities during the pandemic by offering advice on accessing

health and social services as well as other useful information. A weekly CWTC Podcast gives organisations and service users a chance to share information and their experiences with dementia and health in different languages. Councillor Rana Faisal (pictured) participated in one podcast. You can hear Councillor Ali Ahmed providing information to the Bangladeshi Community about the covid-19 guidelines speaking in English and then Bengali in another [podcast](#).

Nubian Life Resource Centre Reminiscence in Action project is delivering a range of creative activities to black and minority ethnic people living with dementia. The activities aim to help with memory loss and include the development of a reminiscence online activity platform; the production of cultural folklore tales; weekly health and wellbeing activities to promote emotional and mental wellbeing, as well as the recording of mini concerts so people living with dementia and their families can benefit from the impact of 'singing for the brain'. Preparations are in place for the rehearsals of Hindu and Caribbean stories, and the recording of older people's memories will take place this month.

Europaia is a charity committed to supporting and empowering European nationals living and working in the Greater Manchester area. Dementia, mental health, and ageing problems are often taboo subjects in these communities; and different expectations around healthcare and support are some of the issues Europaia are addressing whilst implementing the project. The project is raising awareness about dementia within the Polish and Lithuanian communities; and using Polish and Lithuanian speaking volunteers to assist people with dementia with welfare and legal advice, and social care support.

Europaia has produced culturally appropriate resources in the relevant languages and placed in Polish shops; and building connections with Polish and Lithuanian doctors and holding webinars to inform, and help people to get a diagnoses and support for those living with dementia. <https://europaia.org.uk/starting-a-conversation-about-dementia/>

Bristol and Avon Chinese Women's Group are working with the Chinese community. Working in remote areas in Devon and Cornwall they are finding that people have not spoken to anyone for ages throughout lockdown and are very happy to be able to speak to the Chinese women's group. BACWG are providing a range of support including cultural food parcels, a telephone helpline, information and advice to carers and increasing knowledge about dementia through training sessions. The second staff training session was held at the beginning of September where they had a care support worker, carer and a dementia "navigator" (a type of advisor) who talked about their individual experiences of looking after somebody with dementia – noticing symptoms, its progress and the stresses and strains. The staff gained a better understanding of how dementia affects the families and workers who look after somebody living with dementia. The session was supported by the Bristol Dementia Wellbeing [Service](#).

Irish in Britain is running a [Cuimhne¹ Carers Project](#) which focuses on creating culturally specific resources for family members caring for Irish people living with dementia to help them with a demanding role for which there is little preparation or external support. The project consists of a large reminiscence resource, a carers online forum and a series of free webinars for carers and family members, which aim to improve quality of life for those affected by dementia. The reminiscence materials suggest topics and questions to help stimulate people of Irish heritage to talk and be more socially engaged. A series of weekly webinars will address different issues faced

¹ Cuimhne is Irish for memory

by carers. The first workshop on 30th September will explore **‘What is dementia and how does it affect the individual’**. Further information on the webinars is located on their website or email champions@irishinbritain.org to join a webinar.

Translated information

Race Equality Foundation have translated some government guidance and other information into the following languages: [Arabic](#), [Bengali](#), [Chinese](#), [Gujarati](#), [Kurdish](#), [Punjabi](#), [Portuguese](#), [Polish](#), [Somali](#), and [Urdu](#). Resources are available in written and audio form and the range of resources is being continually updated. See <https://raceequalityfoundation.org.uk/health-care/covid-19-translated-materials-resources/>

If you have produced translated information or aware of good examples of translated materials about Covid-19 to support people with dementia, please send information to tracey@racefound.org.uk

Coping with living after shielding for those providing care

Shielding ended on 1st August and people who have been shielding (including people with dementia) were advised to follow the general safety [guidance](#) as the general population. However, as you may be aware, infection rates are rising again and this has led to a number of local and regional social restrictions being introduced. National guidance may therefore change as well so watch out for further announcements from Government.

As the lockdown restrictions are lifted, carers and people with dementia may still be feeling anxious; their health might have deteriorated after long periods of isolation and carers could be worried about using when face-to-face services.

The following suggestions might help carers to cope:

- Providing support from a distance – do keep in touch with the person being cared for and take time to explain changes and make information available to them in a simple and accessible way
- Maintaining a routine - gradually re-introducing parts of your old routine to your lockdown routine and keeping active can provide some comfort, stability and improved mental health and wellbeing. See information to [Stay Well](#)
- Keep in touch – get support from friends, family and other networks both face to face or and online
- Post-shielding support – keep in touch with your local authority about what services will remain in place and what you need to take responsibility for.

For further information is available at [Dementia UK and the Alzheimer’s Society](#)

Latest guidance

- The guidance on meeting friends and family changed on 14 September 2020 to the 'rule of six'. Further details on this change can be found on the Race Equality Foundation's [website](#) and the Government website <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing>
- People with dementia may have spent time in hospital. There is advice for carers to provide support when someone leaves hospital [Looking after family or friends after they leave hospital](#) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/looking-after-friends-or-family-when-they-leave-hospital-leaflet> and also on the Race Equality Foundation [website](#)

These resources will be available in translated formats on the Race Equality Foundation [website](#).

Other information

Impact of Covid 19 study

The Race Equality Foundation has been working in collaboration with University College London to gather information on the health impact of COVID-19. A key aspect of the study has been to look at the impact on people from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds. For this to be done effectively we are looking for participants from minority ethnic backgrounds to take part in our study. The hope is that this will allow a more comprehensive and better understanding of the virus and how its impact on health.

For more information about the study and how to join visit: <https://ucl-virus-watch.net/>.

We would really appreciate it if you could share with your network and encourage people to join the study.

Dementia and Diversity is an initiative of Ambacare Solutions <https://www.dementiadiversity.org.uk/about-us>

Friends, Families and Travellers have written guidance to support people living on traveller sites which will include older people who might have dementia <https://www.gypsy-traveller.org/news/covid-19-guidance-for-supporting-people-living-on-traveller-sites-unauthorised-encampments-and-canal-boats/>