

## **Better support for BAME people living with Dementia**

Race Equality Foundation has been awarded a grant by the Department of Health and Social Care to lead a programme with Black South West Network, Caribbean African Health Network and Friends Families and Travellers, to work with 21 voluntary and community organisations to support black, Asian, and minority ethnic people living with dementia and their carers.

### **Background**

Dementia is the most common pre-existing condition for people who are dying from Covid-19, and for the 25,000 people from black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds living with the condition across the UK, the social restrictions imposed during lockdown have made an already challenging time even more difficult.

The pandemic has seen demands on black, Asian, and minority ethnic-led organisations that support these individuals grow severely. These organisations, whilst best placed to provide essential local support services, have faced their own challenges, including immense financial strain, loss of volunteers, and staffing crises due to employees shielding.

### **Where the money will go**

The programme will assist those voluntary and community organisations struggling due to the financial crisis to continue to support BAME individuals and families living with dementia. Some of the organisations supported are providing telephone and online services advice and emotional support. Others are providing culturally appropriate volunteer schemes to offer practical support with everyday tasks, and some are offering enhanced advocacy in appropriate languages, so that BAME people living with dementia can better engage professionals and agencies.

In addition, the Race Equality Foundation are developing a national resource of written, spoken and video translations of the latest guidance and communication (such as shielding letters), as part of the programme.

Jabeer Butt, Chief Executive Officer of Race Equality Foundation said “this funding will enable these immensely important organisations to provide much needed support specifically tailored to the needs of black, Asian and minority ethnic families affected by dementia.”

### **Comments from some recipients of the funding**



Jabeer Butt  
*CEO Race Equality Foundation*



Heather Nelson  
*CEO Black Health Initiative*



Circle Steele  
*CEO Wai Yin Society*



Jazz Browne  
*CEO Nubian Life Resource Centre*

*“Those deemed most vulnerable due to age and ethnicity will be receiving nutritious hot meals twice a week. Many who receive food parcels are living with dementia, memory loss etc and are unable to prepare and cook meals themselves. The funding will support Arts and Crafts which helps with fine motor skills as well as providing them with a focused activity which will keep them connected.”* - Heather Nelson, CEO Black Health Initiative

*“Our services will include culturally-appropriate talks and discussions with Chinese languages to improve understanding of dementia and provide dementia-friendly activities. We will also help them to enjoy their traditional cultural festive celebrations, so that the things they enjoyed in their childhood and throughout their life will continue to be precious moments for them with their loved ones.”* - Circle Steele, CEO, Wai Yin Society

*“Nubian Life are happy to establish Reminiscence in Action an online activity platform for the Black Community. We look forward to working with Serious, Bush Theatre and Off Stage Theatre in delivering this innovative project.”* - Jazz Browne, CEO, Nubian Life Resource Centre

*“This funding will enable us to expand our reach to Asian elders with dementia and their family carers, giving the opportunity to gain support, relieve boredom and isolation, and develop new techniques and hobbies via contact with Subco, as well as advice, information and advocacy.”* - Taskin Saleem, CEO, Subco Trust

*“We are offering them culturally appropriate support to facilitate emotional connections with friends and families, motivate individuals to do physical activities and provide befriending services. Our support to these vulnerable people will alleviate their suffering.”* - Abdullahi Farah, Bristol Somali Resource Centre

## **Notes**

Race Equality Foundation was established in 1987 as part of the National Institute for Social Work (NISW) and was known as the Race Equality Unit. We became an independent charitable organisation in 1995, and in 2006, changed our name to the Race Equality Foundation.

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