



Black Woman's Kindness Initiative

Better Me, Better Life:

engaging with, and empowering Black Women to support the development of fairer, inclusive community services



#ICHOOSEME

healthwatch
Redbridge

Project funding provided by
Healthwatch Redbridge Community Cash Fund



**“Good to see something
representing Black
women at last...”**

Event attendee

**“Black Women
on the agenda; its
time...”**

Introduction



The Black Women’s Kindness Initiative (BWKI) CIC was awarded a grant from the Healthwatch Redbridge Community Grants Fund to identify health inequalities in underrepresented groups within the borough of Redbridge.

The project, called the ‘Better Me, Better Life Campaign’ was created to empower Black Women to have a voice in their local community in developing a more equitable health and community service provision within Redbridge.

Aim

The aim of the Better Me, Better Life campaign is to identify the gaps and inequalities to support the development of a fairer, more inclusive local community and health service. BWKI want to create an holistic approach to physical, mental, and emotional wellness to encourage women from Africa, the Caribbean, and the diaspora to seek the appropriate healthcare, community care, and social engagement to support their wellbeing.

Methodology

A campaign poster was placed in various GP Practices across Redbridge, with the support of Redbridge Social Prescribers.

BWKI created a face-to-face [survey](#) to engage with black women living or working in Redbridge. The survey was completed with individuals attending the Ilford Central Library, and various community groups and networks across Redbridge.

Survey feedback led to the development of the themes for the Community Day held on Saturday 11th March 2023, at Ilford Central Library. The Community Day launched the ‘Better Me, Better Life’ campaign.

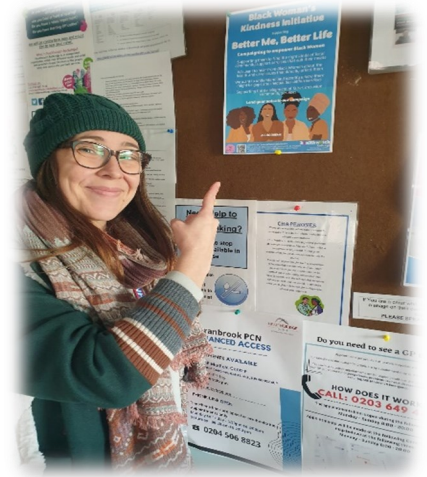


Evaluation & Findings

The initial [survey](#) had responses from 30 women of colour living or working in Redbridge, and indicated that those surveyed felt there was a lack of satisfactory or available services within Redbridge and have not engaged in any provided.

Suggestions were also made of the type of groups/services or activities they would like to see in the borough.

The campaign will also continue to work closely with Social Prescribers who will help to highlight the support for women to engage with available services.



Promoting the campaign

With the help of Social Prescribers, the campaign poster has been placed in 6 GP surgeries noticeboards so far supported by the GPs.

Community Day & Campaign Launch



The Better Me Better Life campaign was launched in March at a Community Day in Ilford Central Library and was attended by approx. 60 people.

The event was a deliberate choice for the launch, as it gave the perfect opportunity to bring together community services, information and advice and local small businesses.

Guest speakers (Redbridge Talking Therapies, Public Health and Mummy's Day Out) contributed with information and signposting for various local services.

This was well received as many of those attending were not aware of these services. Food was served and a raffle was drawn, creating an enjoyable community feel.

People shared experiences of engaging with health services and asked questions relating to Redbridge plan to support the campaign.

The **Better Me, Better Life** campaign has been well received by black women and women of colour who want to be involved and share their experiences of health and care.

Most women we spoke to felt they weren't able to engage with community services as they didn't feel they would meet their needs. They also felt they had clear ideas of the type of community provision they would like to see in the borough.

Video Impact: Campaign Information

It was important to have a visual representation of the work we are doing throughout this campaign. Working with a local talented videographer, Isaac Harvey, we created a film to promote the campaign which focussed on the health inequalities experienced by women of colour.

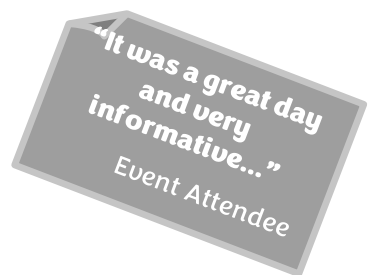


Video Impact: Community Day

Journalism students filmed the Community Day event as part of their coursework, interviewing the organiser and attendees.



The event was also attended and supported, by the Mayor of Redbridge, Cllr Thavathuray Jeyaranjan .



NOTE: (People participating in the videos and photographs have consented for them to be shown and used for promotion)

What have we learnt

Throughout this project, the aim of the Black Woman's Kindness Initiative has been to encourage and empower women of colour to identify how services could meet their needs in a more engaging and inclusive way; and to collaborate with service providers to support the development of future services.

"It was a great day and very informative..."
Event Attendee



Culminating in an afternoon event, the response from the community has been really positive. We can see that health and wellbeing projects that encourage involvement from our diverse communities can, and do encourage involvement.

We have also worked closely with many statutory and community organisations. In particular we have worked closely with our colleagues from social prescribing which has given them an additional opportunity to promote their roles. Our aim is to use this event as a catalyst to raise awareness of the cultural needs of the target group and highlight the gaps in services. The formation of a focus group was suggested at the community day event to help drive the campaign forward.



Black Woman Kindness Initiative and Social Prescribers in Partnership
Invite you to their

Welcome Day

to launch the **Wellbeing Hub**
A programme for Black and Minority Ethnic Women in Redbridge

Tuesday 16 May 2023
12pm to 2pm
Gloucester Room
Ilford Central Library
IG1 1EQ

The programme will include:
• Workshops
• A Yoga class
• Wellbeing practices (Meditation, yoga, etc)
• Health coach
• Nutrition health & Nutrition
And much more...

We want to hear Black and Minority Ethnic women in the borough of Redbridge!
This is an exciting opportunity to find out more about the programme!

Lunch will be served!

This event has been funded through the RedbridgeCVS Community Chest

RedbridgeCVS

Since the Community Day, BWKI have been able to secure additional funding to create a further project aimed at preventing and improving mental health in women from minority ethnic communities.

The Wellbeing Hub aims to reduce isolation through socialisation.

Focusing on self-care and utilising practical tools that create a sense of connection, confidence, self-identity, and wellness.

The service will offer workshops, peer2peer groups, and practical wellbeing sessions including mindfulness and meditation.

What happens next?

The Black Woman's Kindness Initiative was formed to support and empower women of colour to focus on wellbeing initiatives, including their mental and emotional needs.

We do this by delivering workshops online and in person, with themes on self-care, self-acceptance and self-confidence.

"More like this please..."
"We need more community information days like this..."
"Nice food..."

BMBL Event Attendees

Next Steps

- We want to continue to encourage statutory organisations to support community groups such as BWKI to engage with women of colour and to support them to be involved in the co-production of health and care services across the borough; designed with us, for us.
- The Community Day engaged many women who want to form a focus group to help to drive the 'Better Me, Better Life' campaign forward.
- We want to work closely with Healthwatch Redbridge to create additional networking opportunities and influence local health and care services, and respond to consultations that affect us.
- We want to continue to support the statutory sector to hear the voices of women of colour.



Project report written by Cherrill Hutchinson

For further information about the work of BWKI,

please contact:

Name: Cherrill Hutchinson

Telephone: 07939 871667

Email: Bwki2019@outlook.com

Facebook: facebook.com/cherrill.hutchinson.5