

PROGRAMME IMPACT REPORT



The Foundation received
an Award in recognition
for its work during the
pandemic in Oldham

Covid-19 Messaging

March 2025

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Report Type: Combined evaluation of three short Covid-19 messaging programmes

Investment Body: Oldham Council

Town/City: Oldham

Programme Duration: June 2021 - March 2022

Why was the Investment needed?

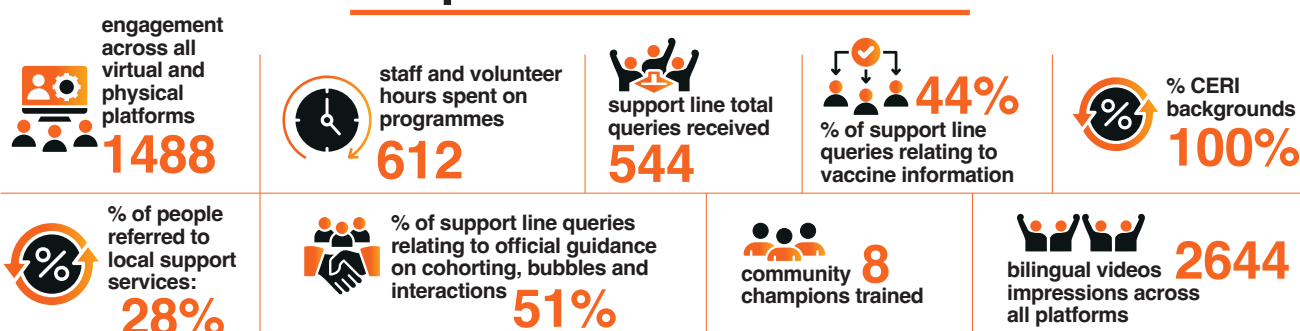
Like many grassroots organisations across Greater Manchester, The Foundation played a crucial role in disseminating key COVID-19 messaging during the pandemic. In Oldham we worked closely with our Portfolio Managers, volunteers and other key staff in selected wards to ensure that the Bangladeshi community received accurate and up-to-date information. This engagement was essential as the virus, government guidelines, and vaccination uptake were constantly evolving, requiring ongoing communication and updates. The situation was further complicated by the spread of misinformation surrounding the virus and vaccines, making it even more critical to provide reliable information. Given the low levels of language and IT literacy within parts of the Bangladeshi diaspora, bilingual engagement became a vital part of our outreach efforts. Many members of the community faced significant barriers in accessing and understanding information, making targeted, culturally sensitive communication more necessary. By providing clear, accessible messaging, we aimed to mitigate confusion, promote safety, and encourage compliance with health measures. This initiative not only helped inform the community but also ensured that they were empowered to protect themselves and others during a time of uncertainty and rapid change.

The proposed investment aimed to establish a robust communication network within the Bangladeshi community in Oldham, leveraging trusted community leaders and partner organisations to disseminate vital information in multiple languages and formats. This would enable the local population to access factual health advice and COVID-19 updates, minimising confusion and promoting compliance with government guidelines. Furthermore, by investing in this tailored programme, the government could build stronger relationships with the community, fostering trust and cooperation during a critical time. Ultimately, such an initiative would not only reduce health risks but also contribute to the broader goal of ensuring no one was left behind during the pandemic's peak.

Expected Outcomes

- Cascade key covid19 messaging in community languages through a variety of virtual, physical methods complying with covid19 regulations.
- Create a suite of targeted bilingual videos addressing key concerns, misinformation regarding the pandemic, vaccination and guidelines to protect the public.
- Provide a dedicated support line for queries and concerns relating to government guidelines, vaccination uptake and related issues.
- Train community champions to further grow the dissemination of factual information and trusted narratives.

Output - Data Dashboard



Impact

These programmes had significant impact on the Bangladeshi community in Oldham by addressing the specific challenges they faced during the pandemic. Many members of this community, particularly older generations, struggled with language barriers and access to health information. The programme focused on delivering crucial public health messages in Bengali and other culturally relevant formats, ensuring that individuals were informed about safety measures, vaccination efforts, and COVID-19 guidelines. The programme leveraged local community centres places of worship, and social media platforms ensuring that accurate information reached the community and dispelled myths or misconceptions that could have hindered public health efforts.

Outcomes



85%

felt that the support line significantly clarified questions that they had regarding covid19 vaccinations, guidance on mixing and interacting.



78%

felt that the bilingual videos gave a good understanding of issues relating to covid19 and the reason for lockdown regulations.



90%

of community champions that were trained felt that they had been given adequate knowledge and ongoing support to deliver key covid19 messaging within their communities.

How has the investment positively impacted community cohesion

The programme helped foster trust and cooperation between the Bangladeshi community and statutory services utilising our organisation as a conduit. It promoted a sense of collective responsibility, encouraging individuals to adhere to safety protocols like mask-wearing and social distancing. By leveraging respected community leaders and cultural influencers, the initiative was able to effectively address vaccine hesitancy and improve the overall response to the pandemic. As a result, the programme contributed not only to public health outcomes but also to enhancing the social cohesion of the community, ultimately helping them navigate the challenges of the pandemic with greater resilience.

Legacy

The covid19 community champions continued to deliver key messaging as and when required after the investment ended.

What worked well?

Using key community leaders, influencers for messaging.

Harnessing the power of social media as a vehicle to cascade key messages.

Given people the opportunity to raise concerns and discuss misinformation that they had received.

What we learnt?

Shorter regular bilingual videos, rather than several long ones to address issues as and when they arose.

Clearer communication from the outset that the support line could not provide letters of reference to avoid covid19 vaccinations or gathering and interaction regulations.

Case Study

Aliha faced challenges navigating health guidelines due to language barriers. With limited English proficiency, she struggled to understand government directives, especially concerning lockdown protocols and vaccination appointments. However, when she discovered the bilingual advice line, she was able to receive crucial information in her native Bengali. The advice line provided her with clear guidance on health precautions, testing centre, and how to book a vaccination appointment, ensuring she could safely follow the necessary steps to protect herself and her family. This service not only empowered Aliha but also strengthened her trust in the public health response, as it bridged the gap caused by language and cultural barriers during the crisis.

‘The helpline worker took her time to clarify everything and let me ask any questions I had. I felt very supported, thank you.’

Aliha, 44, Covid19 Messaging Programme, Beneficiary, Oldham