

**ANSWER  
CANCER**

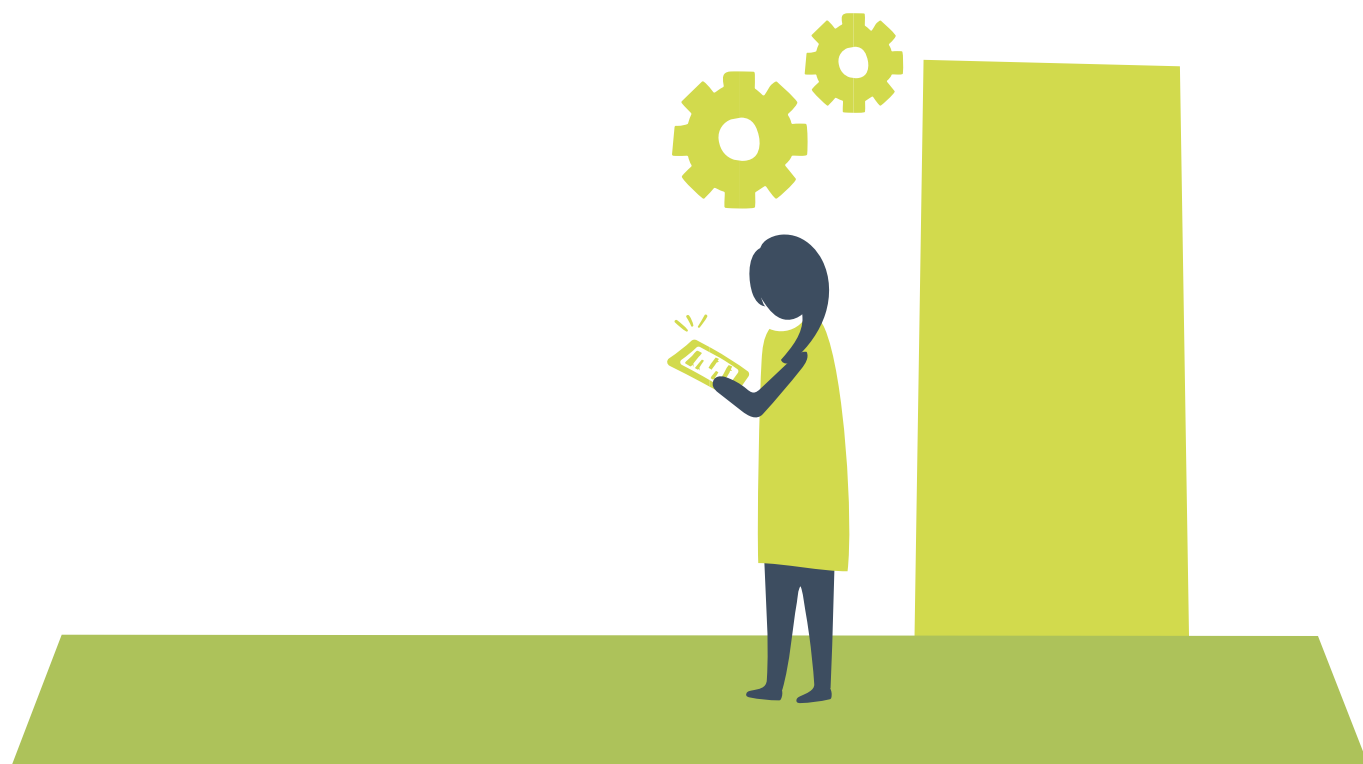


**Year Six  
End of Year Report  
(2024 / 25)**



# Contents

Executive Summary	3
Introduction	10
What we Achieved in Year Six	13
Community Engagement	14
Grants and Spot Purchasing	16
Training	24
Answer Cancer Champions	30
Bee Seen Get Screened	33
Barriers to Screening	36
Champions Stories	40
Conclusion	48
Acknowledgements	50
Appendices	51



# Executive Summary

Answer Cancer is a Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) led programme to improve cancer awareness and increase breast, bowel, and cervical screening uptake across Greater Manchester.

This is done by mobilising the efforts of VCSE organisations, our community residents, workplaces, and service providers.

Four VCSE organisations partner to deliver Answer Cancer: BHA for Equality, Salford Community and Voluntary Services (SCVS), Unique Improvements, and Voluntary Sector North West (VSNW).



This report highlights the incredible benefits of the programme from April 2024 to March 2025 — Answer Cancer's sixth year.

# Year Six Highlights (Achievements)

**Awareness sessions and training courses have increased awareness and understanding of screening programmes.**

**More employers are offering paid time off for screening appointments.**

## Answer Cancer

**Expanded reach of cancer screening messages through Cancer Champions.**

**Strengthened partnerships between Answer Cancer and community organisations.**

# Champions

One way we deliver our message is by enlisting Answer Cancer Champions. These individuals are crucial to raising awareness.

- In Year Six, **194** new Champions signed up, bringing the total to over **4,500**.
- Champions held events and had **6,259** conversations.
- **27%** of people committed to screening after talking to a Champion.

# 4500+

## Answer Cancer Champions



# Answer Cancer Grants

The Answer Cancer grants programme provides funding and support for VCSE organisations based in Greater Manchester to raise cancer awareness and promote NHS cancer screening programmes.

## £93,000

In Year Six , £93,000 funded  
25 grants, leading to

- 192 events.
- 7,054 Conversations around cancer
- 2,983 individuals engaged.
- 1,158 individuals committed to screening appointments.

Over six years, Answer Cancer has  
awarded £325,000 in grants.

## £418,000



# Community Engagement

- **105** awareness sessions, reaching **4,378** people directly.
- Estimated reach of **7,759** through radio and informal conversations.
- **79%** with people from Black, Asian, or minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds.
- **35%** of participants reported a disability.
- **27%** of participants reported caring responsibilities.



# Training

- 59 training sessions with 642 participants.
- 35% of participants were from BAME backgrounds.
- 33% of participants had caring responsibilities.
- 7% of participants identified as part of the LGBTQ+ community.
- 22% of participants reported have some form of disability.

**642**  
**Community**  
**Members Trained**



# Bee Seen Get Screened

This campaign encourages workplaces to offer paid time off or flexible working for screening appointments and to promote cancer awareness.

- 145 organisations have signed the pledge.
- Over 140,000 employees reached.

# 140,000

Employees  
can access  
screening  
appointments  
more easily



# Introduction

The programme operates through seven primary streams.

**1.**

## **Community Engagement**

Delivering cancer screening awareness sessions to underserved communities.

**2.**

## **Cancer Champion Network**

Building and supporting a network of Cancer Champions.

**3.**

## **Training and Capacity Building**

Providing training to individuals and organisations to communicate about Cancer effectively.

**4.**

## **Innovation and Evaluation**

Identify best practices, evaluate interventions, and conduct research.

**5.**

## **Stakeholder Engagement**

Collaborating with key stakeholders to enhance the programme's impact.

**6.**

## **Workplace Engagement**

Encouraging employers to offer paid or flexible time off for employee screenings (Bee Seen Get Screened).

**7.**

## **Grant Distribution**

Providing financial support to community-based screening initiatives.

# Year Six Objectives

- Delivering awareness sessions to priority groups.
- Collaborating with and supporting the work of the Cancer Screening Improvement Leads (CSILs).
- Delivering training sessions.
- Distributing £100,000 worth of grants to communities and organisations who are working to further increase the uptake of screening in their communities.
- Recruiting and supporting Cancer Champions.
- Working with employers to recruit and support workplace Champions.
- Signing up organisations to the Bee Seen Get Screened pledge.

## Reaching Underserved Communities

Answer Cancer focuses on diverse, economically disadvantaged, and often overlooked communities.

To effectively engage these groups, the programme adopts a flexible approach that meets people where they are. By attending community events and building trust, the Answer Cancer team creates opportunities for open conversations about cancer and the importance of screening.

The programme emphasises the benefits of early detection, addresses common concerns, and provides information in accessible formats, including translation services when needed. Answer Cancer aims to reduce stigma and encourage help seeking behaviour through information stalls and community engagement.



## What we Achieved in Year Six



# Community Engagement

Our purpose is to increase awareness and eliminate barriers to screening within our control. We do this by identifying the perceptions around cancer in different communities, and then we act on this by delivering interventions that relate to that community.

These barriers and interventions have been identified from working in targeted communities. We work closely to engage people from backgrounds where they may be less likely to attend screening through smaller awareness sessions specific to their culture, identity, or sexual orientation. This provides a more inviting, safe space to enable the freedom to learn.

We also attend many events where we are not running the session, but other colleagues are also presenting. We value this as shared learning and a place where discussions occur, which may be important to future service improvement.

***“Women don’t go to the appointments as they don’t know the importance of screening and that it’s a ‘very rude area’. She said this should be promoted in the community more, not just at the mosques where the men are.”***

Community Engagement is delivered by a diverse staff team, enabling the delivery of awareness sessions in English, Urdu, Punjabi, and Swahili.

Additionally, with the recruitment of two male engagement leads during Year Five, Answer Cancer was able to attend more male-specific events, as follows:

- men’s mental health event.
- mosques.
- men’s awareness sessions.
- Events targeted at gay men.
- refugee and asylum seekers men-only events.

## During Year Six

The engagement team held **105** awareness raising sessions.

Staffed **104** information stalls.

Had **4,378** meaningful conversations around cancer with members of the public.

Spread messages to approximately **8,000** people through radio shows, online posts, and sharing leaflets at events.

**20%** of people engaged were male.

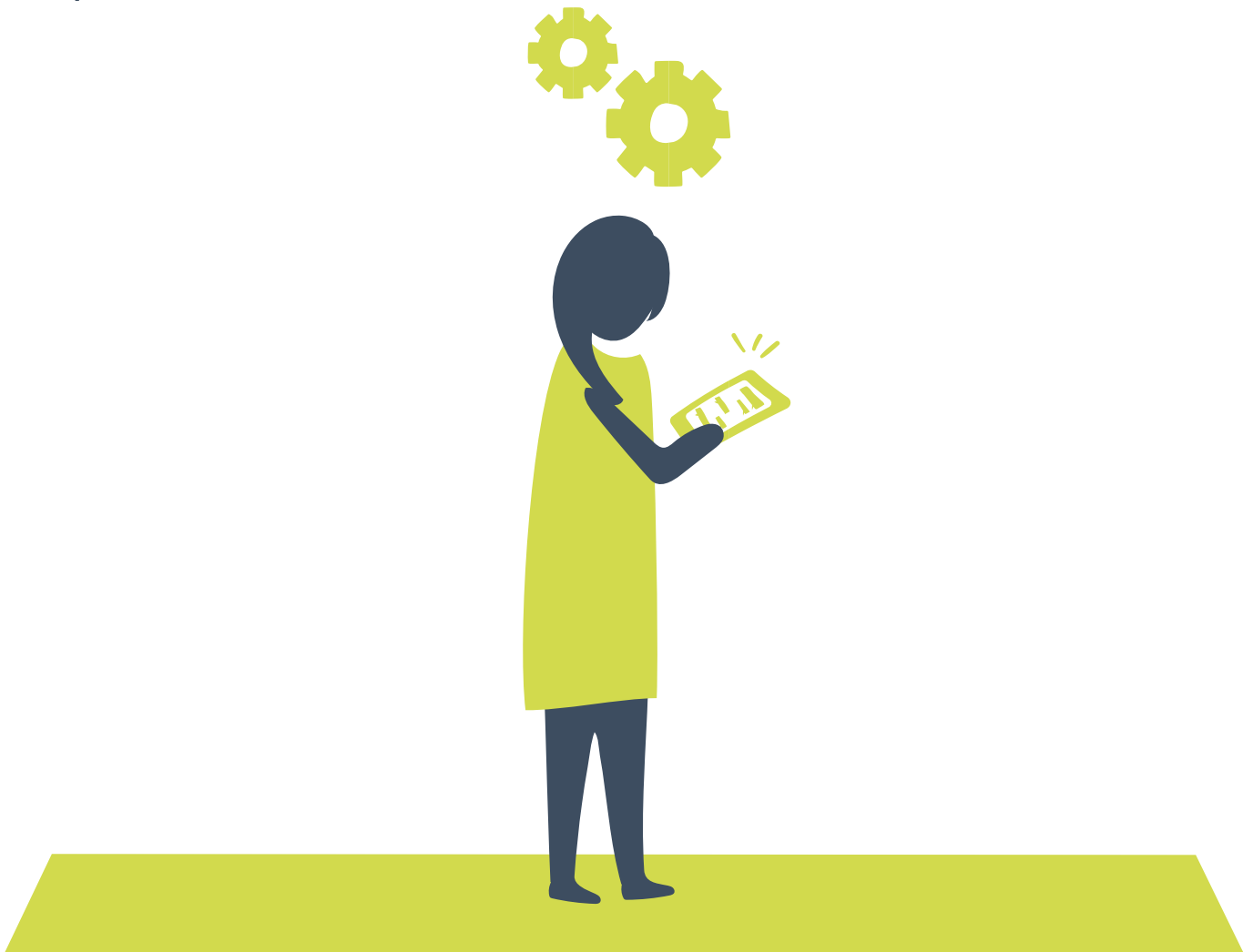
**79%** of people engaged were from a black or minority ethnic background.

**35%** of people identified as having a disability.

# Grants and Spot Purchasing

During Year Six, **£93,000** was awarded in grants and spot purchasing services to raise awareness of cancer signs and symptoms and the importance of cancer screening to community members within Greater Manchester.

Eleven organisations received a grant of **£2,000**, and nine organisations were given **£8,000** as spot purchases.



# Examples of the work carried out by the funded projects included:

- Awareness sessions tailored to the needs of the target community.
- Awareness films and film screening sessions.
- Samba classes with screening messages included.
- Conversations with registered carers to raise awareness of the importance of screening.
- Arts and Craft sessions.
- Training for sign language interpreters in cancer screening awareness so that they can spread the message to their deaf clients.
- Promotion of screening awareness at football matches.
- Social events with awareness raising messages included such as large-scale BBQ events.
- Wellness sessions.
- Transport to appointments to remove the location barrier for some community members.
- Social media campaigns.
- Recruitment and training of Cancer Champions.
- Activity sessions such as sports clubs.
- Production of bookmarks with screening awareness messages to be distributed in the community.
- Telephoning patients of a GP practice



## The eleven organisations that received the grants were:

- Rochdale Connections Trust.
- The Videobox.
- START.
- Signpost Stockport for Carers.
- British Sanatan Doctor's Forum.
- Future Directions CIC.
- Manchester Deaf Centre.
- Stockport County Community Trust.
- Venics TV.
- Faith Network Manchester.
- Caritas Salford – Cornerstone Day Centre.

Between them, these eleven organisations held **43** events.

Engaged with **921** individuals.

With **246** individuals committing to their screening invite because of the engagement.

***“I feel more confident now talking to people about it’ ‘Due to my husband's death I think it's really important to get people to talk and tell a GP if they have any worries.”***

Quote from a Videobox champion.”

***Helping to break down barriers by funding local community groups to deliver screening awareness messages to their community members.***



## The organisations who received funding through Spot Purchasing were:

- NESTAC.
- Wai Yin Society.
- Being There.
- Mustafia Sharif.
- Blackrod Sports and Community Centre.
- Voice of BME Trafford.
- Can-Survive UK.
- GMSAW.

Between them, they held **149** events.

Engaged with **6,133** individuals.

**912** committed to taking up their screening invitations because of the engagement.

**242** individuals signed up as Answer Cancer Champions.

***“I feel I have been able to engage better with clients and understand the difficulties and being able to be sensitive which is a key factor when working people who are suffering or have gone through Cancer. The training provided skills to be more understanding and compassionate and the language that is used which is very useful in this area of work.”***

Quote from Being There.

***“I never thought about getting screened until I heard from someone who caught cancer early thanks to the test. It made me realise how important it is.”***

Evidence of impact from START.

***Community members from Blackrod Sports and Community Centre showing they have taken part in their cancer screening.***



***“I am very proud that I did my bowel screening last year... Now I will tell the people in my block.”***

Quote from The FED.

***“I want to help the community and listen to other people’s comments on cancer knowledge. Some people do not want to listen to bad things, so I will invite them to activities and health talks. I am retired and have not met a lot of new friends. I want to be a cancer champion to share with the community the importance of cancer awareness. My brother went through cancer. I learned from him the difficulties. I will share the experience with others.”***

Quote from Wai Yin Society

***Example of community awareness from Wai Yin Society.***



# Training

During Year Six, Answer Cancer offered eight regular trainer led training courses which were repeated throughout the year.

These courses were a mixture of face-to-face and online training sessions and covered the following topics:

- NHS Cancer Screening Programmes Overview.
- Cervical Screening Awareness.
- Breast Cancer Screening Awareness.
- Prostate and Bowel Cancer Awareness.
- How to run Brilliant Awareness Sessions.
- Workplace Wellbeing.
- How to Have Difficult Conversations.
- how to Plan and measure Success.

Additionally, two bespoke training sessions were delivered to groups across Greater Manchester as requested by the groups themselves, each with a focus on the needs of the community. The two bespoke sessions were:

- Screening Awareness Training. – Sikh Mother's Unit
- Cancer and Screening Awareness Training. – Wai Yin Society.

# During Year Six

Answer Cancer delivered **59** training sessions.

Trained **642** participants.

In addition to the face-to-face and online trainer-led sessions, Answer Cancer also provides a series of online quizzes which participants can complete at their leisure.

These provide further information and learning about specific topics, including Breast Screening, Bowel Screening, Cervical Screening, Cancer Champion Screening, Cancer Champion Workplace, and Cancer Champion Induction.

The quizzes were accessed 180 times during Year Six, with the most popular ones being the Breast Screening and Cervical Screening quizzes.

- **7%** of participants identified as part of the LGBTQ+ Community.
- **35%** were from a Black or minority ethnic background.
- **33%** of participants had a caring responsibility.
- **22%** reporting having a disability.

# Feedback from Training

- during Year Six **370** evaluation forms were completed in full.
- This works out as **58%** of participants completing an evaluation form in full.
- Over **86%** of participants reported an increase in knowledge and confidence around raising awareness in their communities as a result of the training.

# Evaluation

To evaluate the use, retention, and application of training we use a modified version of the Kirkpatrick's 4-tier evaluation process. developed in the 1950s this model enables us to estimate whether the learner has engaged with the training process.

**Acceptance**      did they like the training?

**Learning**      did they learn anything?

**Transfer**      have they used the training in their day-to-day practice?

**Impact**      What has been the impact of the training on 3rd parties such as the public, patients, colleagues, the system?

Each tier requires its own tools to perform the measurement which can be pre and post or a one-off measure.

As part of this approach, training participants are asked four questions at the start of the session.

1. how do you rate your knowledge of the topic of today's training session?
2. how do you rate your knowledge of the NHS Cancer Screening Programmes?
3. How confident do you feel talking to others about the signs and symptoms of cancer?
4. How confident do you feel talking to others about the importance of early detection of cancer?

The participants are asked to score their knowledge and confidence on a scale of 1-10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 the highest. These questions are then repeated at the end of the session to measure if there has been an improvement in people's knowledge and confidence following the training. Additionally, people are asked if they enjoyed the session. This approach covers tier 1 and tier 2 of the Kirkpatrick evaluation process.

# Training Plans

As part of the Answer Cancer putting learning into practice approach, training attendees are encouraged to complete a plan at the end of the training session which describes how they will use their learning to achieve something in the weeks following. This is how we measure Tier 3 and 4 of the Kirkpatrick evaluation process.

- During Year Six, **386** participants completed a plan.
- This equates to **60%** of participants.
- **71%** of participants committed to raising awareness following the training.
- **29%** of participants planned to engage with others about cancer screening.



# Examples of the plans created include:

- This learning session today has given me the knowledge to support the uptake of screening within the GP surgeries I work with; it allows me to encourage patients to attend appointments for screening whilst reassuring them about the process of the procedure.
- Be more active in talking about cancer and the behavioural risk factors for cancer when I'm engaging with the community.
- Run cancer screening awareness sessions with the South Asian community - men and women.
- To inform patients (of) the significance of the tests and to ensure they understand how beneficial it is for their health and encourage them to do the tests on time.
- Share the videos with staff on awareness months as well as awareness displays in the centre.
- Talk to carers about attending screenings.
- Improve our content for cancer workshops based on stats learned today.
- Sharing information with colleagues and friends and family / ensure when I am called up for screening I attend.
- Delivery a cancer awareness session to my social activity group.
- Talk to friends and family about cancer and emphasise early detection saves lives.

- Have conversations with service users around cancer.
- Work with the Federation of Jewish Services to increase awareness and increase screening attendance.
- I intend to share my knowledge with my team members at our regular team meeting. This is for them to be aware personally and to be confident in raising the awareness amongst our clients.
- Share my knowledge and understanding of the importance of attending the screening programmes for early detection. Emphasise its about looking after your own health- this is for you.
- Contact people from other charities and organise an event.
- Continue to raise awareness but link in with the answer cancer champions.



# Answer Cancer Champions

Our Cancer Champions are at the heart of our work. They are drawn from the communities we work with and have the background, understanding, and social tools to start awareness-raising conversations and explain the benefits of early diagnosis. As such, we are continuing to recruit individuals from within groups, workplaces, and communities to offer peer support, promote awareness, and explain the importance of screening.

## During Year Six

**194** new Answer Cancer Champions were signed up which brings the total number of champions signed up to over **4,500**. Not all these Champions are always active as lifestyle changes can impact a Champions ability to take part in any activities. However, they will still be spreading the messages and the information they have learnt to family and friends in a more informal way.

**To monitor the activities carried out by the Cancer Champions, Answer Cancer sends out a quarterly survey for Champions to complete.**

A total of **186** surveys were completed.

These responses reported that **6,259** conversations took place between Cancer Champions and community members with **1,694** people stating they would take up their screening invite following their conversation with the Cancer Champion.

In addition to the Cancer Champions,

Answer Cancer Organisational Champions completed **42** surveys which reported that **3,247** conversations took place within workplaces during Year Six, and as a result **765** employees reported that they would be taking up their screening invitation because of these conversations.

## **Cancer Champions Case Study: Anonymous**

(participant's own words)

“I am a typical woman of faith I never believed in screening or even wanting to hear about cancer, it was when I came to this country I heard talk about cancer, we don't talk about it where I come from, I love Wonderfully Made Woman and for years I was not happy they talk about early detection, I was not comfortable about the topic, I used to think as a Christian you not need to go for screening or even believe one can have cancer if they pray well, but I am so happy I have been listening to this charity and I like the way they simplify things and use language that we understand to tell us the importance.

I have for the first time gone for screening and it wasn't that a big deal, I am no longer afraid, and I am telling my friends and family to do same.”

## Cancer Champions Achievements Awarded

Answer Cancer Champion, David McCallion won an award at the GM Health and Care Champion Awards 2025 on July 10th at The Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester.



David McCallion at the GM Health and Care Champion Awards 2025

David said, “To be nominated, then shortlisted and then actually win is simply overwhelming. I’m very honoured by this and cannot thank you all at Answer Cancer enough. Cancer brings with it many adversities, and strips you of who you once were, but nights like last night reaffirm my reason for doing what I do. It [the award ceremony] for the time it lasted made me feel I’m worth it. This morning, I feel armed and equipped to continue my life in the new me, spreading awareness of all cancers, highlighting the need to early detect, recognise symptoms, and the seek medical advice. I will continue to encourage people to comply with screening programmes and evidence their life saving meaning.”

# Bee Seen Get Screened

Insight shows that only one in five full-time workers were able to get a convenient cervical screening appointment the last time they tried to book.

Source: Jo's Trust 2021.

**Bee Seen Get Screened is an Answer Cancer initiative which encourages employers to pledge to:**

- Guarantee their staff paid time off or provide flexible working to attend NHS cancer screening appointments.
- Raise the profile of health and wellbeing in the workplace.
- Encourage their staff to talk about cancer and the importance of screening.

By signing up for the pledge, employers are encouraging their employees to take up screening invites when they are offered and raising awareness of cancer amongst their workforces with the aim that any instances of cancer will be detected early, which will reduce the need for unpleasant and often traumatic treatment and lifestyle changes.

It is marketed to employers as not only beneficial to the health of their employees, but as also beneficial to the organisation because early detection can reduce the cost of sick leave, and the loss of trained and experienced staff from the workplace.

The pledge is aimed at all organisations and employers within Greater Manchester, regardless of size or sector.



At the end of Year Six, **145** organisations have signed up to the pledge, which means more than **140,000** Greater Manchester employees can now ask for time off for screening and are now encouraged to talk about cancer in their workplace.

Getting organisations to sign the Bee Seen Get Screened pledge is not a simple process as different organisations have their own unique challenges that need to be overcome (persuading hr, organisational/worker resource arrangements, etc.).

The Answer Cancer Bee Seen Project manager has worked hard on helping workplaces to see the positive benefits of creating a healthier work force in the longer term by signing the pledge and enabling workers to actively participate.

## Employer Engagement and Commitment

Employers that have responded most effectively tend to have a personal or professional connection to cancer or have established internal support structures such as HR departments; wellbeing leads and communications teams. These resources facilitate smoother adoption and implementation of the pledge.

## Flexibility and Implementation

Customised implementation plans are often necessary, as employers differ in size, sector, and organisational structure. These factors significantly influence the specific challenges they face in adapting policies and practices.

## Impact and Innovation

Some employers who signed the pledge have developed their own innovative approaches to support staff screening. Examples include the **"Smears Here"** initiative at Manchester Foundation Trust (MFT) sites and cervical smear swaps between Tameside medical practices, helping to reduce staff discomfort about colleagues completing their cervical screening and to minimise time away from work.

## Broader Organisational Benefits

The pledge has raised awareness not only of cancer screening, but also of broader health issues including mental health, diabetes, cardiovascular conditions, and more. However, this wider engagement may raise questions about entitlement to time off for related healthcare needs, which employers need to plan for.



## Barriers to Screening



# Barriers to Screening

National screening programmes have an important role to play in reducing health inequalities. Within the NHS it is acknowledged that variation in participation exists both within and between national screening programmes and, generally, people at higher risk of cancer are less likely to participate. Answer Cancer has always aimed to tackle these issues directly.

Throughout the entire Answer Cancer programme, feedback has proved to be a vital tool for:

- Helping to break down barriers.
- Evaluating our work.
- Gathering the response to methods used so far.
- To making future amendments and plans.

We have consistently received detailed and thoughtful responses to our requests for feedback and through the community groups who are funded from Answer Cancer Grants.

## **Feedback themes include:**

- Best ways to engage people.
- What works and what doesn't for different communities.
- What barriers prevent people accessing screening.

# Working with PCN Networks

Whilst working with Primary Care Networks (PCN's) to increase cervical screening uptake a list of reasons why people didn't attend their cervical screening appointments was compiled.

Many women who were called more than once did not book or attend their cervical screening...

**The main reasons were that they:**

- could not be contacted by phone.
- did not respond to voicemails and/or texts.
- declined.
- were unsure.
- preferred to book later.

**The main reasons given for declining were:**

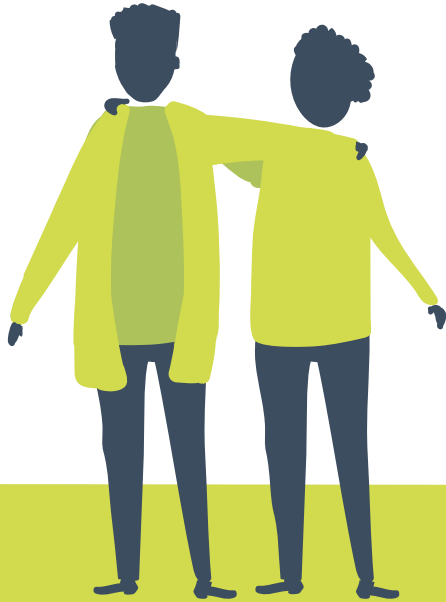
- not being sexually active
- that maybe they would book in future.
- just not wanting a screen
- no reason
- being fearful of the test

Further information can be found in the PCN report on the Answer Cancer Website.

Over the years a recurring theme in the feedback from community members is the belief that cancer isn't relevant to them as only old people get cancer or it's more prevalent in .... community so I don't need to worry about it. As a response to this, Answer Cancer has this year launched the 'Looks Like Us' campaign which emphasises that cancer affects people from all backgrounds. The campaign features real people from a range of backgrounds, ages and communities across Greater Manchester to break down cultural barriers and dispel fears and myths around cancer screening and diagnosis.

As part of the campaign, the 'Looks Like Us' video was produced and a series of images were created to continue to promote the message that cancer can affect anyone.





## Champions Stories



# Champions Stories

Answer Cancer collects personal experiences and quotes from individuals and groups as these are the best way to illustrate the stories of people who have experienced cancer first hand, either as an individual with cancer, a carer or a family member or friend.

Cancer has an enormous impact on the individual and their families, and by sharing their experiences and direct quotes helps to bring alive how our programme has worked for individuals and communities in a way that forges connections, promotes empathy, and gives us insight into the lives, culture and experiences of others. All stories and quotes are presented in the participants own words.



## **Story 1 – Men supporting men to make a change**

I speak to as many friends and colleagues as I can about my experience with Bowel Cancer which was first diagnosed after a screening “poo test” in early 2020 with surgery in August 2020.

Prior to my Cancer experience I used to “lecture” to the smokers in our tennis club. My strap line was “It’s not about cutting down, it’s about stopping!”

We still have some smokers, although reducing in number thankfully. Their reaction is “at least Roger is leaving us alone, for now anyway!”

## **Story 2 – Spreading Messages through experience and story telling**

I’ve been a Cancer Champion for the last few years, and I find it so rewarding. As a professional storyteller I find using my own experience of surviving cancer twice helps me to deliver the messages around the importance of screening whilst also raising awareness of cancer.

I find my life experiences and my upbringing in Glasgow helps me to understand the fears people have when going to the GP to talk about cancer as they don’t want to bother the doctor if it turns out to be nothing. Being able to understand this helps me to tailor the messages to my audience and you can really see the message getting through and people are taking it in.

For my own cancer experience I developed a small black dot on my face. Like many other people I assumed it was nothing, but my daughter insisted I go to get checked, thankfully I did otherwise I may not be here today. I hope that by spreading the messages the way I do through Answer Cancer as a Champion I will be able to do for them what my daughter did for me and hopefully I will save someone else’s life.

### **Story 3 – Using technology to share information**

I work for an Islamic humanitarian charity in Manchester and have set up Cancer Awareness sessions for the people we support. As part of this we decided to spread the messages to as many people as we could, so we set up a WhatsApp group for women and were able to recruit 87 women to spread the cancer awareness messages in their community.

The women were very keen to know about early signs and symptoms of cancers and screening programmes and the WhatsApp group allows them to ask questions and get advice as it is run by a retired gynaecologist who responds to questions relating to other medical issues, besides cancer awareness.

Using this approach has allowed us to reach out to our community and spread the correct messages about cancer awareness and the importance of screening to as many people as possible.

### **Story 4 – Calling non-responders**

As an Answer Cancer Champion I was able to link in with Johnson who is a CSIL in my area and together we worked with Ashton PCN to call patients who haven't completed their bowel screening.

We made around 100 phone calls and requested 93 kits to be sent out and already 24 of these have been returned by the patients.

The screening rate for the practice increased by 26% during the time we were making the calls, so it shows we made an improvement which was great to see.

I enjoy being an Answer Cancer Champion as it makes me feel like I can make a difference to people's lives. I just hope the message gets to everyone, so they don't miss the opportunity to take up their screening offers.

## Story 5 – The journey of a cancer survivor

Shehzadi Humaira's life changed in a moment when she was told she had breast cancer in both breasts. It felt like her world had been turned upside down. Suddenly, her days were filled with doctor's visits, tests, and a fear of what might happen next. Everything she had planned and dreamed about seemed uncertain. As her treatment started, life became much harder - chemotherapy made her weak, surgeries left scars, and even simple tasks felt overwhelming. But even in those tough moments, she found strength she didn't know she had.

Her battle wasn't just about her own survival anymore - it was about becoming a cancer survivor. For her, being a cancer survivor meant turning her pain into purpose. It was about facing her fears and sharing the raw truth of her battle.

Now, as a cancer survivor, Shehzadi Humaira looks back on her journey with a sense of pride. Although the hardest battles are behind her, she still goes to therapy sessions to make sure she stays healthy. Each appointment is a reminder of how far she has come and the journey she continues to walk. Being a cancer survivor has become a big part of her life. It means facing her fears and using her experience to help others who may be going through similar struggles.

Sharing her story wasn't easy. It forced her to think about some of the hardest times in her life. Talking about the fear of losing her hair, the pain from surgeries, and the uncertainty of each treatment brought back difficult memories. But she knows that her words can give hope to those who need it. Every time she shares her story, she aims to connect with others, letting them know they are not alone in their fight.

Surviving cancer has changed how she sees life. She understands what it feels like to be broken, but she also knows how to rise again. Her ongoing therapy serves as a reminder that the journey is not over, but she faces it with a strong sense of purpose. Now, as she lives as a survivor, Shehzadi Humaira shares her story with the hope that it will inspire others to find their own strength. She reminds everyone that even in the darkest times, there is still light to be found, and every small step forward is a step toward healing.

## Story 6 – Small changes make a difference

I've been delivering cancer awareness sessions for many years now and most of the sessions are with people we don't get to see again, i.e., in workplaces, community groups etc, but over the last 12 months I have been delivering infection control sessions to care home staff in the borough and we roll these sessions out every 3 months

I decided to offer, as part of one of the sessions, the cancer awareness training and we have had positive feedback from some of the people taking part such as deciding now to attend their breast screening even though they have been invited previously and never attended as they did not value the importance.

After doing a signs and symptoms quiz as part of one of the sessions we had a care worker who realised that a care home resident had possible symptoms of bowel cancer. This prompted them to raise these concerns with the GP and that resident was later diagnosed with bowel cancer.

I am proud to be a Cancer Champion, delivering important messages to people about the 3 screening programmes, why early diagnosis is important and signs and symptoms to look out for. Hopefully these messages have been useful. If it's unusual for you, see your GP.

## Story 7 – Sharing messages using own experiences

I've been delivering cancer awareness sessions for many years now and most of the sessions are with people we don't get to see again, i.e., in workplaces, community groups etc, but over the last 12 months I have been delivering infection control sessions to care home staff in the borough and we roll these sessions out every 3 months

I decided to offer, as part of one of the sessions, the cancer awareness training and we have had positive feedback from some of the people taking part such as deciding now to attend their breast screening even though they have been invited previously and never attended as they did not value the importance.

After doing a signs and symptoms quiz as part of one of the sessions we had a care worker who realised that a care home resident had possible symptoms of bowel cancer. This prompted them to raise these concerns with the GP and that resident was later diagnosed with bowel cancer.

I am proud to be a Cancer Champion, delivering important messages to people about the 3 screening programmes, why early diagnosis is important and signs and symptoms to look out for. Hopefully these messages have been useful. If it's unusual for you, see your GP.

## Story 8 – Joining up in lockdown

Joined Answer cancer 2020 did online training during covid lockdown personal work with Answer Cancer started then and networked across Tameside and Oldham, set up a large group promoting cancer awareness online.

Group vanished after lockdown easing and networking became difficult until 2022 when joined a charity as a volunteer and then started awareness raising within Indian community even though charities topic wasn't cancer.

Met two ladies who are living with cancer and became a constituted group to raise awareness of cancer screening in 2023 and have been working to raise awareness since.

Deliver Answer Cancer presentations in Gujarati to help break down barriers. Breast and Bowel presentations and has translated Bowel and Breast Cancer Quiz to Gujarati to work with the community to break down language barriers.

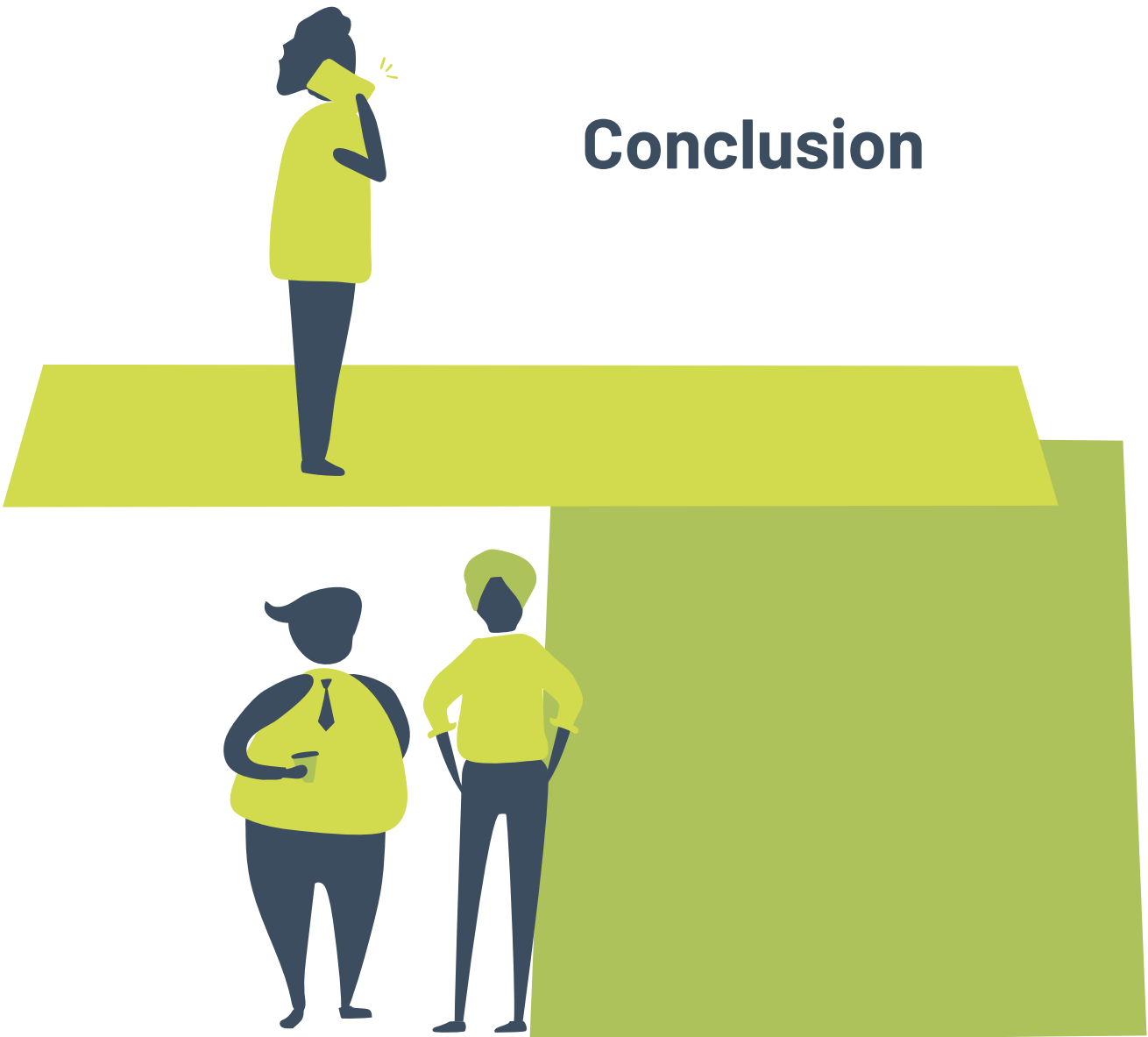
Set up a karaoke night with tea and coffee the hour before the karaoke they did the quiz with the group first which was well received.

Volunteers doing Talk Cancer training.

Communication is difficult as talking about cancer is taboo in the Indian community. 7 volunteers trained and 2 people eager to present sessions. Cancer support group has 11 members. In the process of setting up bespoke training.



## Conclusion



# Conclusion

This report has highlighted the achievements of the Answer Cancer Programme in Year 6 and the importance of working with communities to raise awareness of cancer screening.

It is the intention that the programme will continue to deliver training and awareness sessions throughout Year 7 and will also continue to sign up organisations to the Bee Seen Get Screened pledge. However, there will also be a lot of focus on ensuring that the communities we engage with are geared up towards continuing the work in some way without the oversight of Answer Cancer should the programme come to an end.

The stories shared and plans made during Year 6 and contained within this report highlight the need for communication and they show how community members spreading messages can make a difference to the lives of their peers. For Year 7, Answer Cancer will continue to work with these groups to ensure that the messages continue beyond the end of the Answer Cancer Programme.

Answer Cancer will continue to deliver the VCSE led cancer screening engagement programme in 2025/26 and will remain committed to ensuring that Greater Manchester's VCSE groups and organisations play a key role in ensuring better outcomes for all of the citizens of Greater Manchester.

# Acknowledgements

We would like to thank everyone who has been involved with Answer Cancer. To everyone who has been involved in the programme since the beginning and to everyone who became involved as the programme progressed, your engagement and activities have positively impacted the lives of people living in Greater Manchester.

This report has demonstrated some of the impact you have contributed to and the programme's overall impact.

For more information about this report or Answer Cancer, please contact us:

**Tel: 0161 276 9300**

**Email: [info@answercancergm.org.uk](mailto:info@answercancergm.org.uk)**



**ANSWER  
CANCER**



[www.answercancergm.org.uk](http://www.answercancergm.org.uk)



# Appendices



# Appendix 1

The year six Grants report can be found [here](#)

# Appendix 2

A summary of feedback from organisations working with Answer Cancer can be found [here](#)

# Appendix 3

The Cervical Screening pilot evaluation report can be found [here](#)

