

SAHARA IN PRESTON

Newsletter



Working to improve the life chances of black and minority ethnic women.

Vol 3 Issue 1
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ABOUT US

Sahara is a voluntary women's organisation working predominately for the benefit of black and minority ethnic (BME) women. We provide a free and confidential service in a comfortable and caring environment. We support women in dealing with a range of issues, including domestic abuse, immigration, unemployment and more. We provide a wide selection of training and learning opportunities to upskill women. Our counselling and advocacy services assist women with diverse personal and social issues in their daily lives. Our staff are multi-lingual, speaking Urdu, Gujarati, Punjabi and other languages.



COVID-19 MANAGEMENT

The Covid-19 pandemic, which lasted much longer than anticipated, brought problems for organisations and our users. However, we were able to continue assisting BME women through the crisis. The Sahara Board would like to thank our partners and supporters for putting their trust in us and providing us with the means to deliver bespoke initiatives tailored for BME women. There are exciting times ahead for Sahara as we will be working with families going forward to deliver educational support for school pupils through our new study centre.

NEW STUDY CENTRES AT SAHARA

Sahara in partnership with Lancashire County Council will be running free study sessions for school children from Year 3 to Year 11. These sessions provide targeted support for pupils in their areas of improvement and develop their learning by building their confidence, covering subject areas across the national school curriculum, learning exam preparation and strategy and developing interpersonal skills for the future. Taught by qualified tutors provided by Lancashire County Council, this study centre will help pupils excel in their studies and equip them with the skills for independent learning. Sessions run every Saturday 10am - 12:30pm starting from 24th September 2022.

COMING SOON AT SAHARA

Cycling Classes

Yoga Classes

Zumba Classes

Study Centre (Yrs 3 - 11)

Lancashire Women's
Counselling Sessions

Citizens Advice Surgeries

Community Gateway
Surgeries

Hairdressing course

Courses provided by
Lancashire Adult Learning
and WEA.

📍 48 Fishwick Parade
Preston
PR1 4XQ

☎ 01772 702090
✉ sahara.inpreston@btinternet.com
🌐 www.saharainpreston.org.uk

🐦 [@saharainpreston](https://twitter.com/saharainpreston)
f [saharainpreston](https://www.facebook.com/saharainpreston)
📷 [saharainpreston](https://www.instagram.com/saharainpreston)

HEALTH & WELLBEING



ELDERLY GROUPS

The Coffee Afternoon and Elderly Group both meet weekly for a chat and to take part in various activities including crafts, up-cycling, exercise, and discussions on topics of interest. The Group often work in partnership with other service providers to focus on bespoke issues regarding health and wellbeing in the BME Community. The CA Group: Wednesday afternoon 1:00pm - 3:00pm & Elderly Group: Tuesday 1:00pm - 3:00pm.



WEIGHT MANAGEMENT PROVISION

Sahara in partnership with Preston North End Community and Education Trust (PNECET) delivered a bespoke and culturally sensitive Weight Management programme to our elderly groups which earned commendation from NHS England Director of Healthcare Inequalities Bola Owolabi. The programme addressed the health inequalities that exist within the BME community whilst promoting community engagement between elderly BME women and their local football club by providing free football tickets for Sahara's elderly group to attend a PNE home match.



CHAIR-BASED EXERCISE CLASSES

Sahara in partnership with Mandala Yoga & Wellbeing delivered chair-based yoga classes for our elderly groups. These classes were adapted for our elderly women in order to make yoga and other exercises more accessible and inclusive. This in turn has led to our users practising taught exercises at home to maintain a healthy lifestyle and they have spread this new knowledge to family and friends. Users have claimed that yoga has helped to boost their mental and physical health.



HOME FIRE SAFETY WORKSHOP

Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service delivered a workshop on keeping homes safe and emergency protocol in severe weather conditions. Users learned about fire-safe behaviour, fire hazards to avoid and the different types of detectors e.g. carbon monoxide. This was later supplemented with home visits to conduct fire safety checks by the Lancashire FRS Team.



NI CONTRIBUTIONS

On Tuesday 19th January 2022 Martyn Rowlinson from DWP delivered a talk on National Insurance Contributions, - focusing on the importance of checking your contributions and how it affects State Pension eligibility.



POLICE SAFETY WORKSHOP

On Wednesday 30th March 2022 the Preston Neighbourhood Policing Team gave an informative talk on safety, covering the topics of fraud, scams, home safety, how to report a crime and hate crime.



HEALTH CLINICS

Sahara regularly hosts health clinics to address the bespoke health issues prevalent in the BME community. We have had clinics for high blood pressure, diabetes, asthma, COPD etc. to raise awareness and highlight the importance of attending regular health check ups.



WARM HOMES WORKSHOP

National Energy Action delivered multiple sessions in May 2022 to talk about the importance of staying healthy with a warm home, how to manage energy bills and save on energy costs.

SPORTS

Sahara in partnership with Active Lancashire and Mandala Yoga & Wellbeing run weekly sports sessions throughout the year for women and young girls. Our sessions are aimed not only to improve health and wellbeing through exercise, but also to build confidence and foster a sense of community between women and girls. We work with our partners to deliver sessions in a safe, comfortable and culturally sensitive environment for women to thrive and develop interpersonal skills such as team work, leadership, organisation and communication. To find out more please contact Sahara office.



FEMALE FOOTBALL SESSIONS

Women and young girls meet weekly to train and play football at UCLan playing fields. All abilities welcome. Sessions run every Saturday 1:00pm - 2:00pm.



FEMALE NETBALL SESSIONS

Women and young girls meet weekly to train and play netball at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Sports Hall. All abilities welcome. Sessions run every Saturday 11:00am - 12:30pm.



NHS EVENT

On Thursday 3rd May 2022 Sahara held the NHS Event and invited guest speakers Cllr. Matthew Brown (Leader of Preston City Council), Cllr. Freddie Bailey, Stefanie Johnson (LTH NHS FT), Thomas Gee (Lancashire Adult Learning) and Sue Little (PCC Community Engagement Team) to promote living wage employment, as part of the community wealth building initiative, and the recruitment of the Healthcare Assistant role. They spoke about the role in more depth, working for the NHS and alternate career pathways through the support of Lancashire Adult Learning courses. 30 users signed up for the Healthcare Assistant course which upon successful completion would guarantee them job interviews. This was followed by an NHS Job Fair for general vacancies at Royal Preston Hospital and Chorley and South Ribble Hospital. Thomas Gee (LAL) discussed the various NHS roles, job requirements and application routes for these positions and LAL held English and Maths assessments to determine the user's suitability. The event was a major success with over 80 people in attendance. Through direct access to recruitment managers, users were able to secure employment in roles such as Nursing Assistant, Kitchen Porter, Admin Assistant and more.



FEMALE YOGA SESSIONS

Women and young girls meet weekly to learn yoga and meditation activities to help with mental, physical and spiritual wellbeing. All abilities welcome.



FEMALE ZUMBA SESSIONS

Women and young girls meet weekly to learn zumba and keep fit. Physical sessions are supplemented with group discussions about the economical, social and cultural impact of BME lifestyles on womens' health. All abilities welcome.



SAHARA JOB FAIRS

Sahara has held multiple job fairs over the past year for users to meet local employers under one roof such as Morrisons, M&S, Costa, Lancashire Police, NWAS, The Prince's Trust, NHS, McDonalds, Indeed Flex, KTG Recruitment, Exemplar, CityFibre, SPAR, Delta Care Ltd and more.



BILINGUAL JOB CLUB

Our weekly job club aims to help users every step of the way to find employment. We help them build their confidence and motivation; find their strengths and overcome weaknesses. We support with job searching, completing online application forms, writing CVs, interview techniques, volunteer placements and more. We work in partnership with local employers to provide direct, face-to-face interaction and with Community Gateway to run confidence building sessions for users with complex needs. Job Club runs every Friday 10.00am - 12.00pm.

WHAT WE DO

We aim to provide as many opportunities as possible to ensure all of our beneficiaries are getting the best services available:

- Sahara Wellbeing (Mental Health) Project - working with BME women to improve their emotional health, low level confidence and assist with long term health conditions.
- Bilingual Job Club - every Friday 10.00am - 12.00pm. Helping women search and apply for jobs online, fill out job application forms and create CVs.
- Lone Parents Forum - addressing issues bespoke to single parents and supporting them with different activities.

ADVOCACY SUPPORT SERVICE

We provide an advocacy support service and case work with BME women in the following situations:

- Welfare benefits, housing, immigration, domestic violence, counselling, crime, health and any other personal, social, economic or community matters.
- Self help groups, providing opportunities for peer support and social interaction
- Confidence building activities and training courses to empower women
- Working with women with children on child protection/ child in need plans.
- Bilingual staff to offer help and support for non-native English speakers.

TRAINING COURSES

Sahara offers a wide range of qualifications and courses:

ESOL (Pre-Entry, Entry 1, 2 and 3)
Community Interpreters Level 2
Maths/English Functional Skills
Supporting Teaching & Learning in Schools Level 2
Accredited Pediatric First Aid Course & Food Safety
Computers (Beginners, Functional Skills, Intermediate)
Child Care Level 1
Zumba
Arts & Crafts
Hair & Beauty
Asian Sewing and more.



"When I came to Sahara, I was unemployed, in heaps of debt and on the brink of losing my home. I didn't know any English and needed financial support desperately. Sahara supported me by sorting out all my benefits and applied for emergency funding to help with my arrears. They even made arrangements with my mortgage lenders to make sure I kept my home. My immigration status was a mess as I had lost all my documentation in a fire and held only an Indian passport. With their help, I found out I've been a British national since 1989 and got my British passport. Through Job Club, I found work as a chef and am really happy my finances are back on track. I've been attending English classes at Sahara and feel like my confidence is returning. I feel like a new person and it's all thanks to Sahara."

Ms. BP, August 2022

OPENING HOURS

Sahara Centre is open Monday to Friday 9:00am - 5:00pm.

OTHER SERVICES

RECRUITMENT

We are always seeking new volunteers and welcome women who are passionate about our work. No qualifications are needed as full training is provided.

ROOM HIRE

Sahara offers room hire at modest prices for parties, conferences, weddings etc. For more information contact us via telephone or email.

We would like to thank Lancashire County Councillor Jennifer Main for a member grant towards Sahara's Mental Health Project.

The Sahara Project is currently funded by the following organisations:



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