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Muslim women in Coventry half as likely to be cancer screened



Two patient groups teamed up with the NHS in Coventry and Warwickshire to study why Muslim women in particular and ethnic minorities in general were less likely to take advantage of cancer screening.

The north east of Coventry – with its high ethnic minority population – has a much lower screening uptake than other parts of the region. Figures showed that south east Asian women were 15 per cent less likely to report for breast screening, while Muslim women were 50 per cent less likely to do so. Screening rates for cervical cancer and common male cancers are also much lower in ethnic minority communities.

As a result over 50s from ethnic minorities are likely to present much later to their GPs with cancer symptoms and therefore have a lower chance of survival.

So patient forums Coventry LINK and Warwick LINK have joined forces with the Arden Cancer Network to research why this is the case.

Louise Stratton, project officer at Coventry LINK, said it was important to understand the barriers to screening at a local level and hopefully their results could influence screening programmes nationally.

She said: "Quite a lot of the people we spoke to wanted more community-based services and said they would like a local ambassador system."

Project bosses have also sent a questionnaire to ethnic minority groups. Once the results are collated they will publish a report and possibly some recommendations for service managers. Dawn Turner, from the Arden Cancer Network, said: "We need to encourage people from ethnic communities, especially those aged 50 or over, to present for breast, cervical and bowel screening."

Man in court after Cardiff anti-terror raid



A 21-year-old man appeared in Cardiff Magistrates' Court charged with a public order offence after anti-terror police broke up a meeting at a Cardiff community centre.

Mohammed Abdin, of Grangetown, pleaded guilty to a Section 4 offence under the Public Order Act 1986.

He will next appear in Cardiff Crown Court on February 17.

Officers from the Wales Extremism and Counter Terrorism Unit (WECTU) and South Wales Police stormed the meeting in Canton on Thursday night.

It is understood up to 30

Muslim men had been gathering at Canton Community Hall for the past six to eight months.

Officers raided the building and disrupted the meeting following fears raised by the public that the men were associated with the outlawed organisation Muslims Against Crusades.

Others at the meeting were "spoken to" by officers and handed leaflets and letters advising them that they would no longer be allowed to hold meetings on council premises.

Muslim leaders have condemned the suspected activities and suggested the men

had been "brainwashed" and "radicalised" following stints in prison.

Saleem Kidwai, chairman of the Muslim Council of Wales, said: "Everybody has the right to freedom of expression, but anything that jeopardises the peace of the community is something we all should be concerned about."

He said the fact the men had been holding meetings in a council venue and not in a mosque suggested they might have been marginalised by the rest of the Muslim community.

"All the mosques in Cardiff are very open and accessible, and

they all have spaces available for meetings," he said.

"But there are people in the past who have shown something which is not appealing to the mosques and they have then stopped them using the facilities and they have been forced to go elsewhere.

"For the past few years, we've been very much involved in the prison service, and what we actually think now is that it doesn't happen inside, but when they come out.

"Unfortunately, their family will often exclude them because they've brought shame on the family and they become isolated.

"They're having to deal with the pressures of the outside world, trying to find jobs, accommodation and friends, and this is when they fall into the hands of these people who try and use them for their own extreme ideologies."

South Wales Police Assistant Chief Constable Matt Jukes said Thursday night's operation was part of a "wider strategy to prevent radicalisation within the community and to stop vulnerable people from being drawn into extremism or becoming prey to terrorist ideologies."

He said: "While there is a need for a careful balance in protecting freedom of speech, promoting or glorifying terrorism is unlawful and groups such as Muslims Against Crusades have no place in South Wales.

"Our actions, and that of our partners, represent a proportionate response to this issue."

Iraq kidnap victim's body returned to British Embassy



The British security guard was abducted along with four other men by Shi'ite Muslim militia in 2007 and killed when they tried to escape.

The bodies of three other

bodyguards were handed over to British authorities in 2009, while computer programmer Peter Moore was released alive the same year.

Mr McMenemy's widow

Roseleen said that the return of his body means the family can finally grieve properly.

She added that they will 'draw some comfort from the fact that we have him home at last'.

In a statement released by the Foreign Office, Mrs McMenemy said: 'Our families have suffered terrible uncertainty and distress over the past four years and eight months. We have worried about Alan every single minute of each waking day.

'We now know that we will shortly have Alan home again, this will allow us to properly grieve for him.'

Prime minister David Cameron, who confirmed that Mr McMenemy's body had been handed over, said that he hopes the family can now find some peace.

He added that his thoughts are also with the families of Margaret Hassan and Ken Bigley, who are still waiting for the return of their loved ones.

First course in Islam officially launched

The University of East Anglia developed a course to teach students about women, Islam and the media in a bid to dilute cultural bias.

The 12-week module, which is the first of its kind in the UK, will cover the often controversial topics of veil wearing, arranged marriages and honour killings, as well as look at how these are portrayed in the media.

The course, which launches this week, was developed by Dr Eylem Atakav who says: "Lots of people have written about women and Islam, lots of people have written about Islam and media or women and media, but they haven't been brought together before."