

Al-Abbas Islamic Centre Vaccination Clinic

The
Strategy
Unit.



Overview

Reference: 14

Location: Balsall Heath,
Birmingham

Target Group: Muslim
community

Initiative type:
Vaccination clinic

Contact

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Top Tip

I would encourage all faith leaders to continue to encourage people to take the vaccine. Make vaccine information part and parcel of your sermons. Call the senior citizens in your congregation, and regularly share accurate information on your social media.

Why is this important to us?

The area local to us has a high proportion of people from the Pakistani and Bangladeshi demographic groups. The community has been heavily impacted by COVID-19, with many people having sadly died. The religious leaders are important sources of information for the community and are keen to reassure that the COVID-19 vaccine is safe, effective, and sanctioned in Islam.

What are we doing?

The local pharmacy group, Masters pharmacies, contacted our executive committee at Al-Abbas Islamic Centre and suggested that the mosque be used as a vaccination clinic. This would send a clear message that the vaccine is halal and supported by the community's religious leaders. Our executive committee welcomed this, recognising it would likely increase vaccine uptake and save lives. Our Imam and team have been working hard to dispel fake news, in English, Gujrati and Urdu. This includes sharing social media posts, contacting WhatsApp groups, sharing information in lectures, and directly calling older members of the community who may be digitally excluded. All the people that our Imam has directly contacted have since taken up the offer of the COVID-19 vaccine. The Islamic religious leaders have also been sharing images of them receiving the vaccine, and have attended many webinars sharing the message that the vaccine is safe and effective.

Who is involved?

We have worked with the local CCG and Public Health teams, alongside Masters pharmacies. The mosque's medical taskforce, consisting of several local health professionals, ensure the accuracy of the message conveyed. Masters pharmacies has also been working with other religious centres around Birmingham, to share how they can be approved by the NHS to become vaccine clinics and increase vaccine uptake in their communities.

What works for us?

The mosque's vaccination clinic has resulted in 1,000 to 2,000 people being vaccinated per week. Initially, only one hall in the mosque was being used, but due to high demand, the mosque now uses two halls. Many more people have also been indirectly influenced to take up the offer of the vaccine from their GP. Challenges that the team have had to overcome include language barriers, digital exclusion, and prior to opening the mosque as a vaccination clinic, that vaccination centres were too far away.