

# Breast Screen Awareness Campaign

**Client Background:** City, Sandwell and Walsall Breast Screening Service, part of the NHS National Breast Screening Programme provides free, routine screening once every three years for women aged between 50 and 70 years in North, East and West Birmingham, Sandwell and Walsall.

## **Challenge:**

Since the mid 1990's research literature has recognised that approximately 50% of women with a South Asian background do not attend their breast screening appointment. At the beginning of 2009 the City, Sandwell and Walsall Breast Screening team instigated a project initiative to increase awareness of breast screening to target the non-English communities being invited to their service. The main issue being women were invited for screening via an invitation letter written in English; so any of the ladies who didn't have the ability to read English, did not understand the importance of receiving this health check and therefore did not attend their breast screening appointment. Ladies that can't read English are reliant on a family member or friend who can read English to translate the letter to them.

**Objective:** There needed to be a method where the Breast Screening Service could help increase the likelihood of an informed choice amongst ladies whose first language isn't English.

## **Five Star Steps:**



- 1) With the advice of the Sandwell West Birmingham Hospitals Trust (SWBH), the Breast Screening Team approached Five Star Languages to assist them with their awareness campaign for ladies who are from non-English communities.
- 2) As part of their campaign the Trust developed a first appointment pre-screen letter & a second appointment reminder letter to be translated into 9 different languages, including; Arabic, Somali, Polish and other South Asian languages.
- 3) All letters were GP endorsed by the surgeries.
- 4) The next step was to create and develop bi-lingual /pictorial flyers. Five Star translators went on site and worked with the design team to ensure the text read correctly whilst working with their design specifications.

## **Latest Outcomes:**

Attendance rates for those ladies involved in the initiative have increased by 25% for women with a language barrier that had previously 'Did Not Attend' their screening. The uptake in the Inner City Areas of Birmingham; Salfley, West Bromwich and Smethwick (to name a few) have all increased in uptake over the last 6 years. The baseline second appointment attendance rate increased from 11% to 23%. This has been seen as a huge success with it having a great impact for the local communities as breast cancer has been caught earlier; and ladies lives have been saved. This is a valuable resource that has helped save lives.

**Rose Isaacs, Health Promotion Project Lead** said, "We were recommended and utilised by our Trust (SWBH) in 2009 as Five Star had been supporting us since the late 1990's. The key reasons we chose Five Star are they were very easy to work with, affordable, efficient. Nothing was too much trouble to overcome problems when translations were difficult to transfer into varying documents."

*"Five Star were so grateful to be involved in a project that is so important; encouraging to save lives, we are extremely humbled and overwhelmed to be part of something so vital. We loved going the extra mile to help them achieve a great outcome."* **Ameet Gauher, Five Star Languages**

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