

# Genesis Research

## Awareness

### Our Aim

- To increase the uptake of breast screening in minority ethnic groups.

### Our Objective

- To raise awareness of the disease in minority ethnic communities.
- Recent research from The University Hospital of Leicester has identified that South Asian women have the same incidence of developing breast cancer as White British women. Cancer incidence for South Asian women has been increasing as they are exposed to the lifestyle and environment in the UK.
- In the non-Asian population, three quarters of women invited attend screening. Among members of the South Asian population this dropped to under two thirds, and for members of the Muslim population was just over half.
- As many women are not attending their mammograms they are more likely to be diagnosed with late stage breast cancer and therefore have poorer survival rates.
- 43% of black and ethnic minority (BME) women have never examined their breasts for lumps compared to 11% of the population. For 56 % of these women they said they were unsure what they were looking for in self-examination.
- South Asians are the largest minority ethnic group in the UK, representing 2.7% of the total population.
- The north west of the UK has a higher than average percentage of Pakistani, Bangladeshi and other Asian communities.

In 2010 we hosted an Asian Women's Health Awareness (AWHA) conference, jointly organised by Professor Anil Jain, Consultant Radiologist and Mr. Lester Barr, Breast Surgeon and Chairman of Genesis Breast Cancer Prevention. It highlighted the need to develop effective programmes to raise breast awareness in South Asian women.

Since 2010, Professor Anil Jain has hosted a Cross Cultural Communication Skills Training Workshop every quarter for health care professionals and members of the South Asian women's community.

We are looking at a number of ways to increase awareness about breast cancer and the importance of attending breast screening among South Asian Women and medical professionals across the North West. South Asian women are less likely to be breast aware or attend screening than the national average. One of the Genesis staff is also on secondment to Professor Jain to help with his Cross Cultural Communication Workshops.

### Shazia's Story

Shazia, 42 was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2011. Married with two children her family and friends rallied around her for support throughout her treatment. Born in the UK, Shazia's parents are from Pakistan and she understands firsthand the issues in the Asian community surrounding breast cancer. Shazia says, 'A lot of Asian women are also very private people so having breast cancer is taboo'. She is getting involved in the AWAH project as she believes there are obstacles facing the South Asian community such as language and education that can be overcome. "We need to raise more awareness amongst the Asian community through screening programmes and education. Women need to feel comfortable with getting support."

*"Genesis Breast Cancer Prevention has unique aims - it is the only charity that targets breast cancer prevention. Although research has led to great improvements in breast cancer survival, breast cancer is still too common, affecting one in ten women. Genesis supports or 'pump-primed' novel research ideas, allowing original, scientifically and medically sound ideas to be tested, with the ultimate aim of reducing the number of people affected by breast cancer".*

**Cliona Kirwan, Consultant Breast Surgeon  
& Senior Clinical Research Scientist  
and Genesis Medical Advisory  
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