



SUSSEX INTERPRETING SERVICES

Attitudes towards Cancer Screening from People in Language-based Ethnically Diverse Communities

Researcher/s:

Fares Hadison - Farsi and Sorani Speakers

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Magda Pasuit - Polish Speakers

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Research Questions:

Interviewers asked questions about:

- Background – awareness of cancer and screening
- Systemic barriers – access to screening
- Lifestyle barriers
- Cultural barriers
- Ideas for improvements

Research Approach:

Our team of 5 bilingual community researchers engaged with 82 individuals with whom they had trusted relationships. Each researcher used the same set of questions to explore the issues but applied whatever was the most appropriate methodology for their community and in some cases focused on one type of cancer screening over others. In total they collected data via 49 written surveys, 2 focus groups, 25 in-depth individual interviews.

Research Findings:

- Past experience of cancer, personal or through friends and family, influence attitudes to screening (positively or negatively depending on the individual).
- People find it difficult to talk about cancer without professional help and guidance

- Comparisons between the NHS and health systems in the country of origin were common and differences caused anxiety for patients particularly if they didn't understand why.
- There is a belief that the NHS system, especially going through the GP for everything, puts an unnecessary barrier in the way of effective screening.
- Easily accessible, good quality linguistic support was crucial for people to understand and take up screening invites.
- There are other logistic challenges to taking up screening invites; travel and childcare costs, taking time away from work or domestic responsibilities, distance to a venue etc.
- Covid has had a negative impact on access to cancer screening.

Research Recommendations:

- Accessible and culturally appropriate information; translated, using imagery that people identify with, focused on positive outcomes from screening.
- Reassurance about the training, experience and qualifications of screening practitioners who may not be doctors.
- Consistent language support through the entire process; invitation letter and associated information leaflets, help making appointments, face to face interpreting at appointments, advocacy for individuals who may require additional support to say what they want etc.
- Discussion opportunities with health professionals which incorporate emotional support for participants who are afraid or uncomfortable.
- Flexible and free transport options.