

## ETHNICALLY DIVERSE FAITH PERSPECTIVES ON END-OF-LIFE CARE AND DEATH LITERACY

### A Community-Based Participatory Research Project in Birmingham

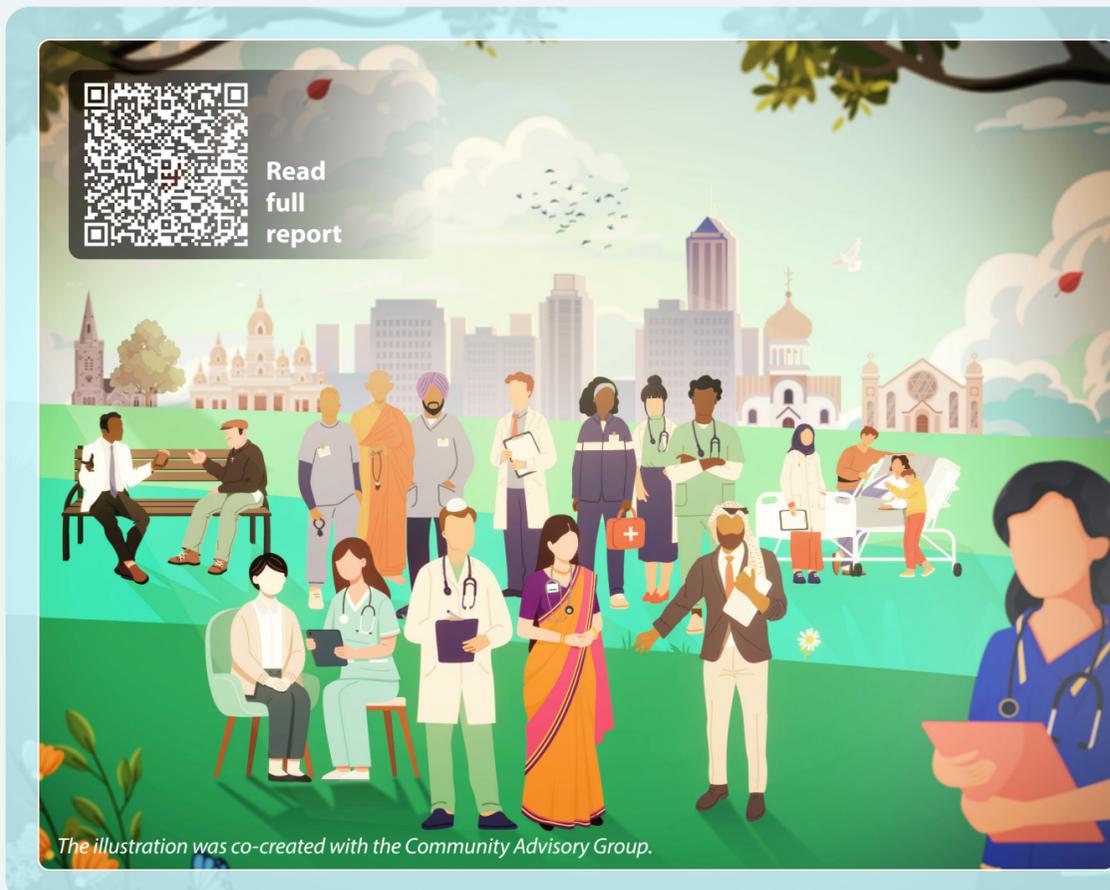
M. Rozario<sup>1</sup>, J. Droney<sup>2</sup>, A. Gadoud<sup>3</sup>, S. Spear<sup>1</sup>, K. Sanders<sup>1</sup>, J. Phillips<sup>1</sup>, J. McManus<sup>4</sup>, J. Verne<sup>1</sup>, P. Whitney<sup>5</sup>, M. Doherty<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>St Mary's University | <sup>2</sup>Royal Marsden | <sup>3</sup>Lancaster University | <sup>4</sup>Public Health Wales | <sup>5</sup>Archdiocese of Birmingham

### INTRODUCTION

Considerable inequity exists in end-of-life care access across the UK, with cultural influences impacting death literacy. Birmingham has one of Europe's largest migrant populations (340,000+ Muslims, plus Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish and Sikh communities) yet these groups remain underserved in end-of-life care. This pilot study addresses healthcare disparities in ethnic minority communities, responding to Lord Darzi's findings and Health & Social Care Committee recommendations.

- AIMS**
1. Co-produce culturally appropriate approaches to discussing death and dying
  2. Identify cultural and faith-specific barriers and facilitators
  3. Develop culturally sensitive recommendations



### METHODS

#### Community-based participatory research was used (Feb-July 2025):

Community Advisory Group was established: 4 members (Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Sikhism) - they were identified through the lead on Interfaith for Birmingham Archdiocese - they were community members and leaders.

#### Focus Groups:

2 focus groups of 9 participants with mixed representation from the following religions: Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Judaism, Buddhism including faith leaders, community workers and faith members.

- KEY TAKEAWAYS**
- Cultural and religious practices matter at end-of-life
  - Death is taboo amongst many ethnically diverse faith communities
  - Two-way knowledge exchange bridges the equity gap
  - Community-based participatory research works

### KEY RECOMMENDATIONS



**Build trust & communication with faith communities.**

**Provide private spaces for prayer & family gathering.**

**Train healthcare staff about different religious practices, possibly using visits to places of worship.**



**Make quick processing after death a priority where religiously required.**

**Provide a 24-hour contact for advice on religious rituals.**

**Invite faith representatives to educate staff & produce clear, simple guidance on different traditions.**

Infographics: Sandwell Council – collaborators in the research project

**Offer workshops on death rituals & bereavement.**

**Provide information bilingually & in visual formats.**

**Encourage open discussions about taboo subjects (e.g., suicide, cancer).**



**Work with healthcare staff to explain faith requirements.**

**Promote understanding of different world views (e.g., karma, moksha, mukti).**

**Advocate for employers to recognise mourning practices.**

### IMPACT & DISSEMINATION

Research highlighted at a knowledge exchange community event to celebrate the anniversary of Nostra Aetate (1965 Vatican Council Declaration on Interfaith Relations) which took place at St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham.



“ A very rare and very valuable set of insights into how each of the faiths approach dying, death, and the mourning period afterwards. ”

**Bishop Patrick McKinney**  
Lead Catholic Bishop for Interreligious Dialogue  
& Key Organiser of the Nostra Aetate Event