



ABALON Trust



“Impact 2020-1”

Impact Report

01 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

Registered charity no. 1167443.



Introduction

In March 2020, COVID-19 arrived in the United Kingdom. This meant a large amount of planned activity was postponed as a result of travel restrictions that lasted beyond the end date of this report.

ABLON Trust needed to pivot its activity to do whatever it could continue our international work, remotely, while also providing support to our network in the United Kingdom that were being adversely affected by COVID-19.

The following report covers that period.

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Overseas Eye Health

Zimbabwe – Eye Care medicines to Zimbabwe (Dec 2020)

In December 2020, Farmigea Ophthalmics Limited Pharmaceuticals donated a consignment of eye-care pharmaceutical products to ABALON Trust for use in their work abroad.

Travel was restricted at the time due to the coronavirus pandemic meaning that ABALON was unable to deliver any eye-camps in 2020. The Trust is committed to providing outreach and support for eye-health to people living in sub-Saharan Africa, The Caribbean and low to middle income counties cross the commonwealth, so we used our embassy contacts and medical network to send these medicines to Zimbabwe for use by their ophthalmologists.

It is incredibly important to the Trustees and volunteers at ABALON Trust that we can continue to support our healthcare work abroad during the pandemic.

Barbados – Ophthalmology trainees (Jan – Dec 2020)

During 2020, ABALON Trust provided diabetic retina training to three ophthalmology trainees during training at the Maria Holder Diabetes Centre in St. Michael, Barbados.

The Barbados Diabetes Foundation (BDF) was formed in 2001 as a mechanism for providing a holistic approach to the management of diabetes in Barbados. To raise the standards of diabetes self-management in Barbados through a holistic and multi-disciplinary approach.

The training was provided by the Gloucestershire Retinal Education Group (GREG).

Two are now serving as graders to the Barbados Diabetic Eye Screening Programme (BDESP) seeing 10 people per day, 3 -5 days per week.

ABALON Trust Medical Director, Dr Charles Pierce, is also Medical Retina Consultant at BDF.

The centre provides diabetes advice and support, as well as footcare and eye-care.

ABALON provides support and training to further development of the eye-care elements of the service, including the Diabetic Retinopathy Screen Service (DRSS).



ABALON Network – Our supporters

U.K. – Living Loss: COVID-19 Bereavement Support (Dec 2020 – Mar 2021)

In October 2020, ABALON Trust secured funding from the M&S charitable foundation to support those who have lost loved ones due to COVID-19 and also have sight loss and illnesses that can lead to problems with sight such as diabetes, as part of the “Behind the Eyes” campaign.

We partnered with the charity Living Loss to deliver a 12-week programme of online group support to 8 people bereaved due to COVID-19. They were also from Black and Asian Minority Ethnic, had Diabetes and other health issues that can affect eye health and as such are communities that are some of the most adversely impacted by COVID-19.

U.K. – National Diabetes Prevention Programme (Nov 2020)

CEO of ABALON Trust, Adam Mapani, was invited to be one of the leaders in the NHS England Healthier You! National Diabetes Prevention Campaign to Black Asian and Minority Ethnic Groups in November 2020.

His message is that: “Everyone should be aware of their diabetes risk”.

If you are black and over 25 years old, you are more at risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes which can lead to serious complications if left untreated.

Adam featured on social media and artwork related to the campaign which was designed to promote use of the Diabetes U.K. Risk Tool to people from BME backgrounds.

This work ties-in well with the ABALON Trust “Know the unknown” campaign, that aims to provide health promotion advice to people from BME communities.

U.K. – World Sight Day 2020 Lecture (Oct 2020)

On 08 October 2020 ABALON Trust delivered an online eye health information session to mark World Sight Day. The session was attended by 60 delegates and included talks on what happens during your eye clinic appointment, the importance of regular eye checks, and general eye conditions, management, and research.

Each of the topics was delivered by a different member of the trustee board with Adam Mapani, Yetunde Obadeyi and Charles Pierce enlisted as speakers. The success of these topics delivered online has led ABALON Trust to explore setting-up similar sessions monthly during 2021.

Ophthalmology topics for lay people interested in their health and wellbeing will be developed into a series of online information sessions delivered during 2021 and saved to the ABALON website for future access.



U.K. – African Men’s Meeting (May – Jun 2020)

ABALON Trust hosted three African men’s meetings in May 2020, and two in June. Each session was attended by 40 men.

We supported the meetings, designed the agendas, and invited experts to speak on a number of topics. The sessions we delivered were on eye-health awareness, the importance of attending scheduled appointments, leading a healthy lifestyle, and knowing your numbers, COVID-19 safety advice and psychological support and advice for African men impacted by COVID-19.

ABALON conducted a survey among attendees and found that there was a lack of understanding of health awareness among BME men. Data showed limited knowledge on lifestyle, healthy-eating, physical fitness, and the importance of attending GP or nurse-led check-ups when they were requested.

The meeting provided 120 contact opportunities with African men regarding with their health and wellbeing and significantly improved knowledge and awareness on the issue.

U.K. – JustBe women’s meeting (October 2020)

ABALON Trust delivered an eye health webinar to 60 women that attended a ‘JustBe’ meeting.

JustBe provides events & activities for women of all backgrounds where they can grow, relax, laugh & learn new skills.

The topics presented were eye-health awareness, the importance of attending scheduled appointments, leading a healthy lifestyle, and knowing your numbers, COVID-19 safety advice and psychological support and advice for Afro Caribbean women impacted by COVID-19.

60 women attended.

U.K. – Weight loss and fitness (Apr 2020 – Mar 2021)

ABALON Trust CEO, Adam Mapani and Mr. Brighton Mumvuri, founder of Hope House Foundation, began an initiative to improve fitness and wellbeing by providing culturally specific support to people of BME backgrounds during COVID-19, called the Sunday Roast.

Both Adam and Brighton belong to a community church group and have BME lived experience both working for the NHS. Brighton is also living with type 2 diabetes.

Both men started a WhatsApp fitness group during the first lockdown with other members of the congregation. The group now has 50 members working towards a number of personal fitness goals, including: improving physical fitness through running, group motivational exercises, sharing lived experience, and running at least 5k per week.

The Sunday Roast Facebook group has more than 600 members.

In September 2020 ABALON Trust delivered an eye health webinar to 60 members of the Sunday Roast Group. ABALON will continue to support Brighton’s work in 2021 by linking exercise to fundraising.

As a result, the Trustees committed to running or walking 150 miles in March 2021.



Grant Activities

U.K. Power to Change (Mar 2021) including:

Know the Unknown – Long term conditions like hypertension and diabetes can be prevented, managed and in some cases brought into remission if people are able to manage their lifestyle and risk appropriately.

The “Know your numbers campaign” encourages people in the BME community to know key information about their currently health and wellbeing like blood pressure, cholesterol, BMI, and blood sugars. They can then use this information to adapt their lifestyle or receive treatment to keep these numbers within safe ranges.

ABALON currently runs health and wellbeing information sessions in several London churches and online. We are currently applying for grant funding to extend this programme during 2021.

Your hair and healthcare – Men visit their barber more often they visit their GP, and this is an opportunity for men to talk about their health and wellbeing. In 2020 ABALON Trust began using this opportunity to reach out to men that use barbers specialising in afro-hair.

By engaging directly with barbers in London and training them to have conversations with men about their health and wellbeing, ABALON hopes to reduce health inequalities and the secondary impact of unidentified and undiagnosed illness.

Adam Mapani visited 11 barbershops in Brent on Thursday, 29th April 2021. He distributed 250 flyers with health education information, spoke to barbers and customers about COVID-19 risk factors, hypertension, and diabetes. 10 customers consented to blood-pressure checks with 3 being sign-posted to their GP for follow-up.

The “Your hair and healthcare” campaign focuses on eye-health, cardiovascular disease risk and mental health all of which can be treated effectively or managed well, if identified early.

Fundraising

100-in-30 (Mar 2021)

ABALON Trustees and supporters raised £3,072 for clinical work overseas by walking, running, and cycling 100 miles in March 2021. The funds provided cataract surgery to 13 people in Kenya that would not ordinarily have had access to eye care.



Table-1: Impact Summary

Project	Type	Date	Activity	Reach
Eye Care medicines to Zimbabwe	Donated medicines to allow Lynett Masiwa and University of Zimbabwe Optometry students to lead an eye camp in Manicaland, Zimbabwe.	December 2020	3 x boxes of HydraMed 0.4% eyedrops (240 units per box) 3 x boxes of HydraMed Night Sensitive eye ointment (100 units per box) 3 x boxes of Intracinol	400 people over two days. Every other child complained about vernal conjunctivitis and adults complained about dry eyes!
Diabetic Retinopathy Screening for Ophthalmology trainees	Funding for three Ophthalmology Trainees.	Jan – Dec 2020	Diabetic Retinopathy training by The Gloucestershire Retinal Education Group (GREG)	Two of the trainees are now serving as graders at the Barbados Diabetic Eye Screening Programme (BDESP) grading almost 3,000 people per year.
Living Loss: COVID-19 bereavement support	M&S charitable foundation grant to support those who have lost loved ones due to COVID-19	Dec 2020 – Mar 2021	partnered with the charity Living Loss to deliver a 12-week programme of online group support to people bereaved due to COVID-19	Support group for 8 people.
National Diabetes Prevention Programme	Adam Mapani led National Diabetes Prevention Campaign to BME Groups.	Nov 2020	social media campaign to promote use of the Diabetes U.K. Risk Tool to people from BME backgrounds.	National NHS audience.
World Sight Day 2020	Online eye health information session.	Oct 2020	What happens during your eye appointment, the importance of regular eye checks, and general eye health conditions	60 delegates
African Men's meetings	Online educational meeting: One in May 2020, and two in June	May – Jun 2020	A survey among attendees and found that there was a lack of understanding of health awareness among BME men	Each meeting attended by 40 men (120 in total).



Project	Type	Date	Activity	Reach
Just Be Eye Health Webinar	Online educational meeting	October 2020	Expert panel and Q&A for BME women	60 women attended.
Weight loss and fitness – Daily BME WhatsApp Exercise Group	Weight-loss and health management.	Apr 2020 – Mar 2021	A. Mapani and B. Mumvuri hosting daily health and fitness motivational WhatsApp group.	30 members. Strava.
Weight loss and fitness – Weekly ‘Sunday-Roast’ BME Exercise Group	Weight-loss and health management.	Apr 2020 – Mar 2021	A. Mapani and B. Mumvuri hosting Sunday training sessions.	600 members. Facebook.
Sunday Roast Eye Health Webinar	Online educational meeting	September 2020	Expert panel discussion and Q&A for BME women	60 members attended.
Know the Unknown	Power to Change grant: campaign on health protection during COVID-19	Mar 2021	Health and wellbeing information sessions in several London churches, media interviews and online.	Reach: 18k people. Educated: 600 people. Media engagements: Audience of 7k people
Your hair and healthcare	Outreach to BME men in London barbershops.	Mar 2021	Focus on eye-health, cardiovascular disease risk and mental health all of which can be treated effectively or managed well, if identified early.	11 barbershops in Brent. 250 flyers with health education information. 10 customers consented to blood-pressure checks with 3 being sign-posted to their GP.
100-in-30	Fundraising activity to walk, run or cycle 100 miles in 30 days.	Mar 2021	Sponsorship and awareness raised through the network.	£3,072 raised 14 cataract surgeries for 13 people.

Treatment impact – 3,431 interventions including an eye-camp (Zimbabwe), Grading for Diabetic Retinal Screening (Barbados), Cataract Surgery (Kenya), Blood Pressure Checks (Brent), Counselling (London).

Education and training – 911 educational contacts via online seminars and barbershop visits,

Public engagement – More than 7,880 awareness contacts using article, interviews, flyers, and national campaigns.

Fundraising – £3,072 raised by 100-in-30.

Grants income – £10,900 including Power to Change and Living Loss (M&S charitable foundation)



Appendix-1: Artwork, flyers, and publications

Click below to read Adam Mapani’s article “Keeping Good Eye Health for People Living with Diabetes”, June 2021, Vol. 27, No. 6, pp. 3 – 6.

<https://flihtml5.com/usud/ximu/basic>

Click below to listen to the Diabetes Research and Wellness Foundation (DRWF) Podcast 11.

Adam Mapani – Focus on Eye Health:

<https://www.drwf.org.uk/content/podcasts>

