



**First Annual Report: October 2003-September 2004 to the  
Thames Valley NHS Strategic Health Authority on the  
Campaign to Attract Nurses/midwives from Diverse Local Ethnic groups in Slough  
The CANDLES Project**

Professor Elizabeth N Anionwu CBE, Head of the Mary Seacole Centre for Nursing Practice, ([www.maryseacole.com](http://www.maryseacole.com)) Faculty of Health & Human Sciences, Thames Valley University (TVU) and CANDLES Project Director. October 2004.



**Launch of CANDLES Project: 8/12/2003  
Photo courtesy Slough Observer**

## **Introduction**

This is the first annual report of the Campaign to Attract Nurses/midwives from Diverse Local Ethnic groups in Slough, otherwise known as the **CANDLES** Project. Funded for 2 years by Thames Valley NHS Strategic Health Authority and lead by Professor Elizabeth Anionwu, the key partners involved are:

- The Mary Seacole Centre for Nursing Practice, Faculty of Health & Human Sciences, TVU
- Slough NHS Primary Care Trust
- Heatherwood and Wexham Park NHS Trust (HWP)
- Slough Race Equality Council
- the recruitment team of the Faculty of Health & Human Sciences and
- the External Liaison & Widening Participation Teams, TVU.

## **The Desired Project Outcomes include:-**

- To raise the profile within the community of local courses and careers in nursing and midwifery measured by use of surveys.
- By the end of the 2 year project to have recruited a minimum of 40 South Asian and Black Caribbean students
- To become a model of good practice and hence to act as consultants on recruitment strategies
- To endeavour to develop more inclusive pathways (within the escalator skills conduit) in partnership with educational institutions which will create further opportunities for disadvantaged groups e.g. basic skills and English language provision as first steps into healthcare careers.
- Embedding successful strategies into mainstream recruitment practice

## **Outline of activities in Year 1**

This has been an extremely productive year and one of the main reasons is that the CANDLES Project has received considerable support from all the Partners both externally and from within TVU. Sincere thanks are due to all the members of both the Steering Group (ably chaired by Sajidah Chaudhary: Director Slough Race Equality Council) and the Project Board (see Appendix 1 for details). The Project Board has met 8 times between July 2003 and July 2004 and the Steering Group 4 times between November 2003 and July 2004. Significant assistance has also been provided by Slough NHS Primary Care Trust that has enabled the CANDLES Project to fulfil the community development approach espoused in the original proposal. Caroline Hope and Hardev Gill, Ward Sisters at Wexham Park Hospital have both spoken at many of the CANDLES events. The widening participation and the FHHS recruitment teams at TVU have also provided Haseen with advice and information packs relevant to courses at the university. Staff at Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority have opened many doors for Haseen as well as providing information to Professor Anionwu about strategic issues of relevance to the project.

The appointment and efforts of Mrs Haseen Mughal as CANDLES Co-ordinator/Outreach Worker in October 2003 has ensured that the momentum of the project has been considerable. Our funding from Thames Valley SHA has enabled Haseen to be seconded for a 2 year period from Slough NHS Primary Care Trust where she was a Health Advocate as well as Chair of Slough NHS PCT Diverse. As a result she has brought to the project her

extensive knowledge of the diverse Slough communities and local NHS staff together with a wealth of contacts. The complex process of incorporating a skills escalator approach into all aspects of the CANDLES Project has been formidable, requiring as it does a grasp of the numerous agencies involved in widening access to nursing and midwifery education as well as employment within the NHS. It has been one of the successes of the first year and this report will assist in demonstrating the progress of many of the 138 people who have contacted Haseen during this period. This includes both those who had the necessary entry requirements to immediately start the application process to enrol on a course and those who did not and were signposted by Haseen to relevant courses in order for them to reach the appropriate level to apply in a year or two. Haseen has been extremely appreciative of the constant support that she has received from two mentors from within TVU; Charlie Asher, Events Manager, Corporate Development and Mala Hall, Head of Subject, Adult Nursing (Berkshire).

The launch of CANDLES Project took place at Baylis House in Slough on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2003 and was attended by approximately 100 people. As noted in the March 2004 report, it received good local coverage as well as being featured in the Nursing Times.

### **Key achievements to date**

- ✓ A 2 year project timescale was developed and there has been no slippage in meeting the targets set.
- ✓ Current FHHS nursing and midwifery recruitment video dubbed into Punjabi (Mirpuri dialect) and Hindi in January 2004 by e-tv Productions of Ealing which have both been extremely well received
- ✓ Completion of Year 1 awareness surveys (257 questionnaires filled in)
- ✓ Production of resources for road show career stalls - this included a portable CANDLES wing stand that has attracted considerable interest at local events
- ✓ 52 CANDLES recruitment events undertaken by Haseen between December 2003 and September 2004
- ✓ Creation of CANDLES Enquiry monitoring database
- ✓ 138 people have contacted Haseen with enquiries about careers in nursing, midwifery or other aspects of healthcare. The overwhelming proportion were from local Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities
- ✓ Skills escalator model utilised for a majority of the contacts
- ✓ Local and national media coverage
- ✓ Contact from other areas of the country seeking advice about adopting a model similar to the CANDLES Project
- ✓ Contact from the Head of NHS Careers who wishes to include on their website a couple of case studies of people who have been helped by the CANDLES Project.

### **Awareness survey concerning careers and courses in nursing and midwifery**

In order to assess current knowledge and perceptions of careers and courses in nursing and midwifery Haseen has requested that people, from a selection of the groups and individuals she has had contact with, complete an awareness form. A total of 257 awareness forms have been filled in during the first year of the CANLES project at 14 venues in Slough and surrounding areas between 22 Jan 2003 and 28 September 2004. Examples include Years 9 to 14 pupils at Baylis Court and Slough & Eton Schools, English classes at various levels, Further Education Health & Social Care classes, groups at Gilliat Memorial Hall, Rochford, Rotunda, Thomas Gray & Chalvey Community Centres, Chalvey Play Centre, Mosques and Hindu Temple as well as individuals visiting either Slough Library or Haseen in her office.

Initially the plan was to administer them for a three month period but they have been found to be a useful tool to assess perceptions, attitudes and levels of knowledge concerning nursing and midwifery careers and courses. It was therefore decided to continue distributing them, where appropriate, at CANDLES recruitment events as well as to individuals directly contacting Haseen. The CANDLES project is particularly targeting Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) communities due to under-representation in some of these groups in current nursing & midwifery courses. It is therefore not surprising that nearly 90% of those who gave their ethnic group are from BME communities, with the majority being of South Asian origin (67.3%).

The findings can therefore provide an insight into predominantly BME views on attitudes and knowledge concerning a career in nursing and midwifery. A detailed analysis will be undertaken over the next few months but EA has put together the following preliminary findings from data analysis using a standard statistical package (SPSS) that was kindly undertaken by Professor Peter Franks, Professor of Health Sciences and Co-Director of the Centre for Research & Implementation of Clinical Practice (CRICP), FHHS.

Of note is that:

- only a small proportion of respondents have relatives who are nurses and midwives (17.9%)
- just under a third (28.5%) have ever considered being a nurse or midwife
- a very small number stated that cultural beliefs would stop them considering a career in nursing or midwifery (9.4%)
- and that 37.8% are aware that payments are made to nursing and midwifery students.

Haseen will continue to administer the questionnaires over Year 2 of the project in order to undertake a comparison to see whether any different responses emerge from those in Year 1.

### **Summary of results of CANDLES nursing and midwifery awareness survey**

**Ethnic group profile of 257 respondents:** White: 23 (8.9%), Mixed: 20 (7.8%), Asian: 173 (67.3%), Black: 33 (12.8%), Other: 4 (1.6%), Not stated: 4 (1.6%)

**Gender:** Female: 198 (77%), Male: 48 (18.7%), Not stated: 11 (4.3%)

**Is anyone in your family a nurse or midwife?** Yes: 46 (17.9%), No: 191 (74.3%), Not stated: 20 (7.8%)

**Have you ever considered a career in nursing or midwifery?** Yes: 73 (28.5%), No: 167 (64.9%), Not stated: 17 (6.6%)

**Do you think that your cultural beliefs would stop you choosing a career in nursing or midwifery?** Yes: 24 (9.4%), No: 215 (83.6%), Not stated: 18 (7%)

**Can men train as:**

**a) nurses?** Yes: 193 (75.1.8%) [correct answer], No: 12 (4.7%), Not sure: 25 (9.7%), Not stated: 27 (10.5%);

**b) midwives?** Yes: 96 (37.4.%) [correct answer], No: 41 (15.9%), Not sure: 76 (29.6%), Not stated: 44 (17.1%)

**What qualifications do you think are needed to be accepted onto a nursing course?** (and choice of appropriate ones to tick) 151 (58.6%) stated they were Not Sure.

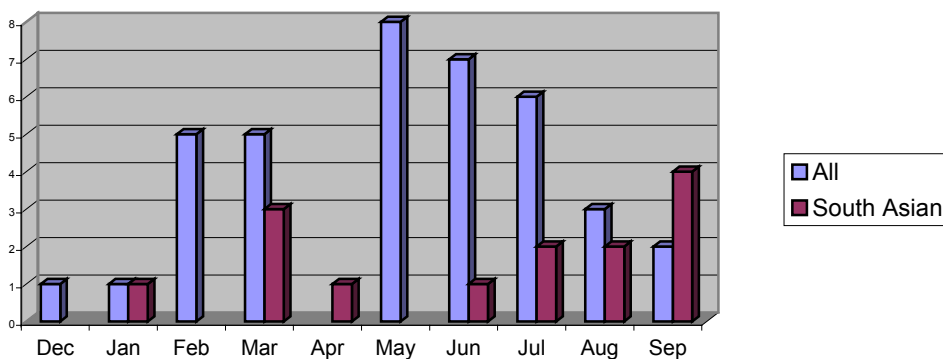
**Do student nurses and midwives get paid whilst training?** Yes: 97 (37.8%) [correct answer], No: 26 (10.1%), Not sure: 118 (45.9%), Not stated: 16 (6.2%)

### **Impact of the CANDLES Project**

In the first year of the project Haseen has initiated a resounding total of 52 events. Problems encountered with the original CANDLES wing stand that required it to be replaced meant that Haseen was only able to start the events from December 2003. Set out below are the venues and organisations where Haseen attended. For the vast majority this was their first opportunity to hear about what is required to become a nurse or midwife as well as the chance to have a detailed discussion and have their questions answered. Haseen has been extremely appreciative of the qualified hospital and community nurses, students and recruitment staff who have been able to assist her with these activities. In addition there is a list of additional agencies who have agreed to display the CANDLES brochures. This is followed by a chart indicating the number of events held each month and whether they were attended by all ethnic groups or those from South Asian communities. The latter included venues such as local Mosques or Temples and on some of these occasions either the Punjabi (Mirpuri dialect) or Hindi version of the FHHS nursing and midwifery recruitment video was shown.

<b>Year 1 CANDLES Recruitment Events (Total = 52) List of venues/events attended by Haseen Mughal between December 2003 to September 2004</b>	
Adult Learner Week Aurat Enterprise Kuch Kaho, Kuch Suno: Careers workshop Baylis Court School x 2 Baylis House Carnival in Britwell Chalvey Carnival Chalvey Community Centre Chalvey Play Centre Charity Bazaar Community School in Mosque CONNEXIONS Dress Making Class East Berkshire College X 3 Empowering Women X 2 ESOL students Healthy Walks Rotunda Hindu Temple x 2 Indian Women's Association Job Fair at Montem Langley Park Carnival Launch of Aurat Enterprise	Launch of CANDLES Project Maidenhead Leisure Centre Manor Park Play Centre Mary Seacole Centre Concert Mosque x 2 Pakistani Welfare Association, Chalvey Positive Steps Reading Peoples Fair Respect Festival, GLA London Rotunda Community Centre x 2 Sikh Temple with Sure Start Slough & Eton School Slough Library x 4 Slough Mela at Upton Court Park Slough Public Sector Diversity Conference Slough Youth Festival Stakeholder Seminar Event STEPS Baylis House The Centre Thomas Gray Centre TVU Slough Summer Schemes Your Future in your Hands
In addition to the above, the following agencies agreed to display CANDLES brochures: Advisor for BME Groups Community Council Berkshire Reading, Britwell Talk Shop, Chalvey Opportunities Shop, Church of God Prophecy in Britwell, Community Nursing Services Osborne St Slough, Cyber Café at TVU, ELIM Pentecostal Church of God, Ghanaian Enterprise Community Trust, GP's surgery, One Stop Shop, Slough Black History Month & Care Promotions, Slough Community College, Slough Refugee Support Group, Stoke Poges Mosque, The Foyer, TVU reception, Walk in Clinic Upton Hospital, Wexham Park Hospital Job Shop, Wonders Church Haymill, Zimbabwe Community Organisation.	

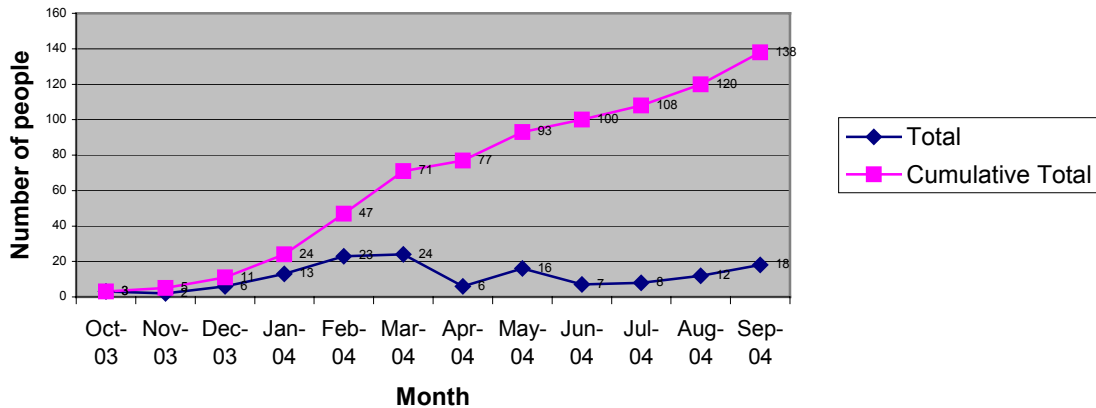
**Year 1 CANDLES Recruitment Events: Dec 2003 to Sept 2004  
(Total = 52) by types of ethnic groups who attended**



**Details of 138 contacts made with CANDLES Project: from 13/10/03 to 30/9/04**

The CANDLES recruitment events and local publicity have resulted in a total of 138 people making direct contact with Haseen during the first year of the project. The following section provides detailed information about the profile of this group together with the nature and outcome of their enquiries.

**Total number of people contacting CANDLES Project in Year 1  
(October 2003 to September 2004) Total = 138**



**Nature of enquiries**

The majority of contacts were interested in a career in nursing, 88 (63%) followed by midwifery 22 (15%) or becoming a Health Care Assistant (HCA), 19 (13%). There were an additional 5 who had queries concerning people who lived overseas and 4 that were not related to the CANDLES Project, although one was from an overseas qualified doctor and he was referred to a relevant project run by Slough NHS PCT.

Of importance, of the 110 interested in nursing and midwifery, 62 (56%) were of South Asian origin, a group that has traditionally been significantly under-represented in nursing and midwifery courses. In contrast there were only 2 (1.5%) contacts from people of Black Caribbean origin compared with 43 (31%) Africans. The following tables set out how people had heard about the CANDLES Project, the nature of their enquiries together with how many cases are now closed.

The latter are where no further contact is being made (51) due mainly to people changing their mind; not being successful in obtaining a HCA post and deciding to pursue an alternative career; are resident overseas; query not related to the CANDLES Project; and those who have not responded to further contact from Haseen and are deemed lost to follow-up.

<b>Source of referrals/information of 138 people contacting CANDLES Project in Year 1 (some mention more than one)</b>	
Local Agency	61
CANDLES Event/Brochure	43
Friend/Family	35
Local Groups	17
Media	6
Faith Group	6
Professional	4

<b>Nature of Enquiry by Ethnic Groups in Year 1 (n=138) and number of cases closed</b>						
	<b>Nature of enquiry</b>					
<b>Ethnic group</b>	Health Care Assistant	Midwifery	Nursing	Overseas enquiry	Non CANDLES related query	Total
African	3	3	36		1	43
White	1	3	3			7
Black Caribbean			2			2
Indian	3	4	16	3	1	27
Other Asian	1	2	6			9
Pakistani	11	10	24	1	3	49
Other			1			1
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>138</b>
Case now closed*	8	10	24	4	5	51

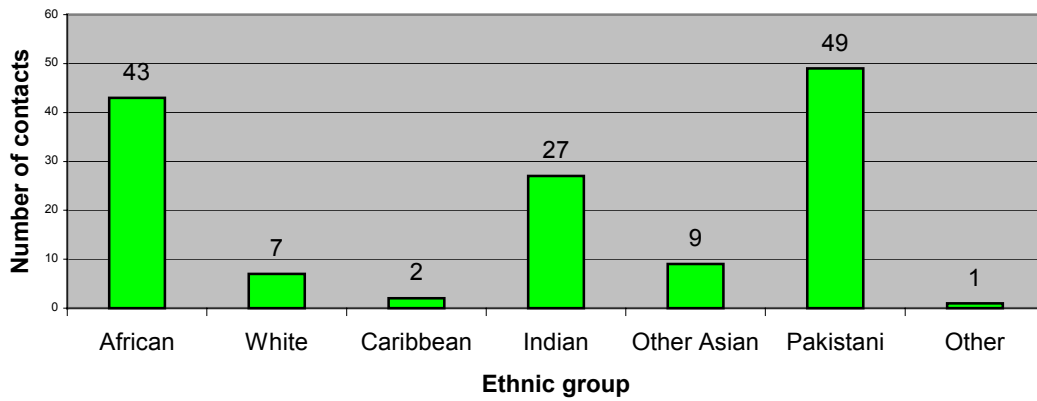
\* Case now closed = where a person has no further contact with the CANDLES Project for reasons that include: is resident overseas, have changed their minds, family reasons, not successful in applying for a HCA post; their query is unrelated to the CANDLES Project or they have been lost to follow-up.

### **Profile of the 138 people contacting the CANDLES Project in Year 1**

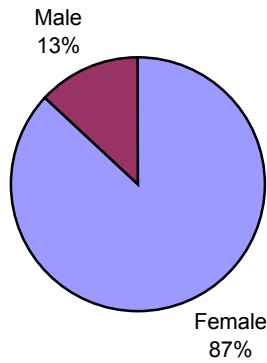
The following section provides information about the profile of those making contact with the CANDLES Project by ethnic group, gender, age, residency status and town of residence. The first group of charts demonstrate the diversity of the group with 87% females, 13% males, a very varied age range and over 90% from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities with the majority (61.5%) from South Asian groups.

As previously noted, whilst 43 (31%) of contacts were African only 2 (1.4%) were Black Caribbean. The latter, unlike the African groups, is already recognised as an under-represented group within the student nursing and midwifery population.

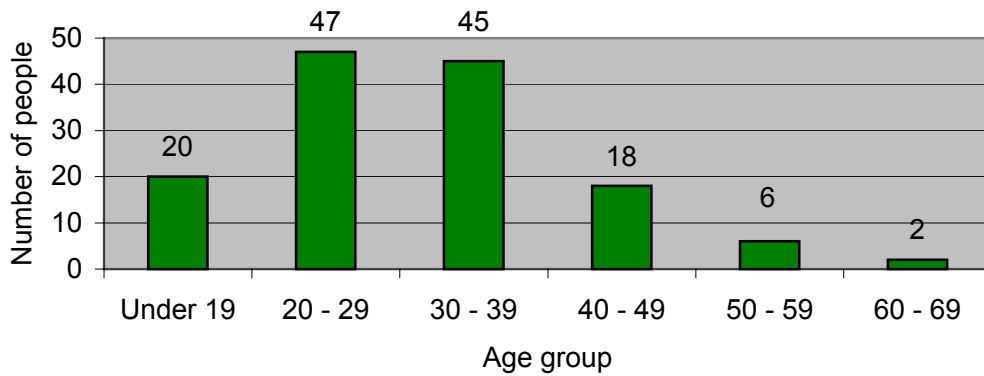
**Total number of contacts with CANDLES Project  
by Ethnic Groups in Year 1 - Total = 138**



**Gender of those contacting CANDLES project in Year 1 N=138**



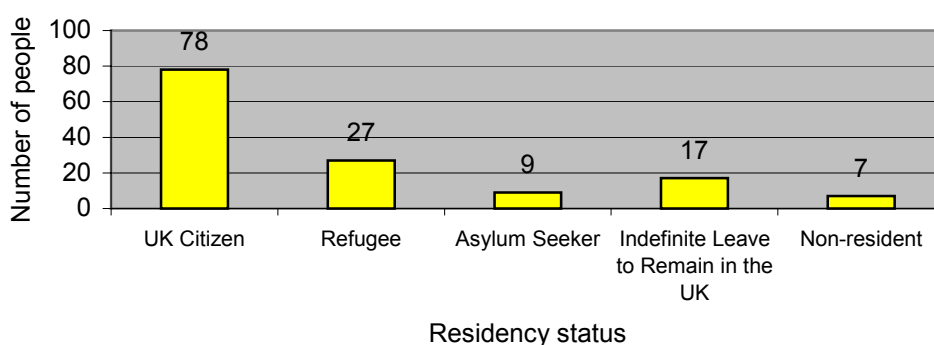
**Age group of those contacting CANDLES Project in Year 1  
n=138**



## Residency information

The following chart illustrates that the majority of contacts (68%) were either UK citizens or had indefinite leave to remain in the UK and that 27 (19%) people were refugees and 9 (6%) people were asylum seekers. Haseen has therefore needed to know where to signpost for various issues e.g. for those who may not have met the 3 year residency criteria to qualify for student nursing and midwifery bursaries, where the nearest Adaptation course is for those who have qualified overseas and details of English classes at various levels. The next chart demonstrates that the overwhelming majority of those contacting Haseen live in Slough i.e. 124 (90%). A further 7 live in either Maidenhead or Reading and the remaining 7 were from outside of Berkshire.

**Residency status of those contacting CANDLES project in Year 1 n=138**



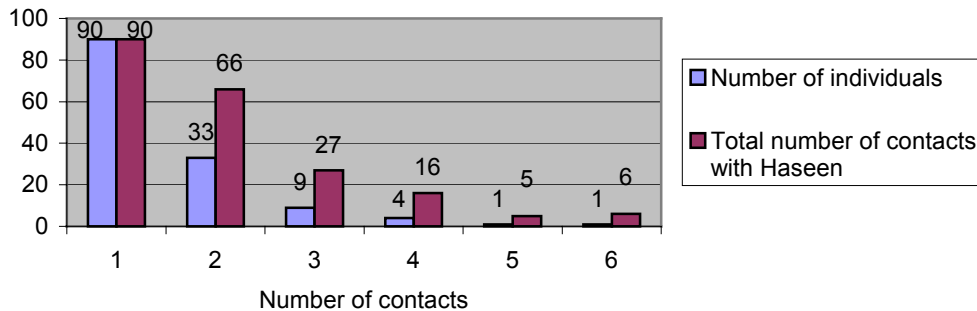
**Town of residence of those contacting CANDLES Project Year 1 n=138**



## Outcomes of 138 contacts

The chart below shows that whilst 90 (55%) people had one contact with Haseen, 33 (24%) had two, 3 had three, 4 had four, 1 had five and 1 had six, bringing the total number of contacts to 210. It indicates the true volume of Haseen's workload and also, that whilst the overwhelming majority have at most had a couple of contacts with her, there are a few who have needed more. It is of interest to note from the cases set out below the very different and complex reasons for the two people having the most contacts with Haseen.

**Number of people having one or more contact with Haseen**  
**Total number of contacts in Year 1 = 210**



**Case 1: Female (Pakistani) 5 contacts with Haseen between April and September 2004**

1) Initially wanted general information about a career in nursing or midwifery. At first she was interested in Adult Nursing. 2) After further discussion decided she wanted to apply for the Child Health Nursing branch. 3) Another visit was to seek guidance from Haseen concerning her application form. 4) This was to discuss her A level results. 5) This contact was initiated by Haseen when she responded to a request for somebody from the CANDLES Project to talk to the media.

**Case 2: Female (Somali) 6 contacts between February and September 2004**

1) Made her original general enquiry about nursing and also discussed the idea of working as a HCA and was given relevant information. In April she sent in her application form for a pre-nursing course and informed that she might be invited for a selection day, date not confirmed. 2) In the same month informed Haseen she had applied for HCA posts and would come in 2 weeks to have an update discussion. 3) At this visit informed Haseen she had received a letter to say that she would be invited to a selection day if short-listed. Contact by Haseen with recruitment 3 days later and was informed that an invite would be sent out that day. 4) Follow-up contact by Haseen in June, message left, no response. 5) Letter sent by Haseen in August due to no response plus contacted recruitment to be informed that person had not turned up for selection day in May 2004. 6) Person contacted Haseen in early September in response to letter and informed her that she had turned up to stated venue in letter (Slough) to be informed it was an error and could she immediately go to correct one (Reading). This was not possible due to the distance. Did not contact Haseen as did not want to appear to be complaining. To be called for selection day in November 2004.

The CANDLES Enquiry database has been redesigned by Mrs Lisa Rodrigues, Administrator (who was appointed to the Mary Seacole Centre for Nursing Practice in August 2004) and now includes many more relevant fields. It also introduces a tracking mechanism to assist Haseen in following up the progress of those who have made previous contact with her.

Whilst this is quite time consuming it allows Haseen to determine which cases to close (51 to-date) for reasons previously set out above. Of the remaining active 87 (63%) contacts:

- 12 have achieved their objectives such as being accepted onto a course or appointed to a HCA post and
- 75 are at various stages of their career pathways. This includes planning to attend a FHHS Nursing and Midwifery Open Afternoon session, in the process of applying for a course in 2005 or a HCA post, waiting to be called to a selection day, have been signposted to a relevant course in order to meet entry requirements or have deferred any action at all until 2005 because of family reasons.

More details about the profile and outcome of the contacts are set out below to illustrate the skills escalator approach that underpins the advice provided by Haseen.

### **Outcomes of those wishing to enrol for a nursing or midwifery course**

The following section provides a profile and the outcomes of a total of 120 people who at the time of contact with Haseen either:

- a) met the entry requirements for entry onto a nursing or midwifery course (32) or
- b) did not meet the entry requirements (98) and where Haseen needed to signpost them in order to facilitate them obtaining the necessary qualifications and/or experience to apply.

### **Outcome of those who met the entry criteria (32)**

Meeting the entry requirement incorporates both having the relevant qualifications and the 3 year residency criteria in order to be eligible for an NHS student bursary. The ethnic profile of the 32 such contacts is set out below.

Four who have met these entry criteria have now successfully completed the application and selection process and have accepted an offer of a place onto a nursing (3) or midwifery course (1), 3 at TVU in Slough. The fourth person lives outside of Berkshire and has commenced a mental health nursing course at a west Midlands university.

Twelve are going through the application process, either awaiting to attend a selection day for 2005 courses (10) or are serious about wishing to apply but not until 2005 when family circumstances permit (2).

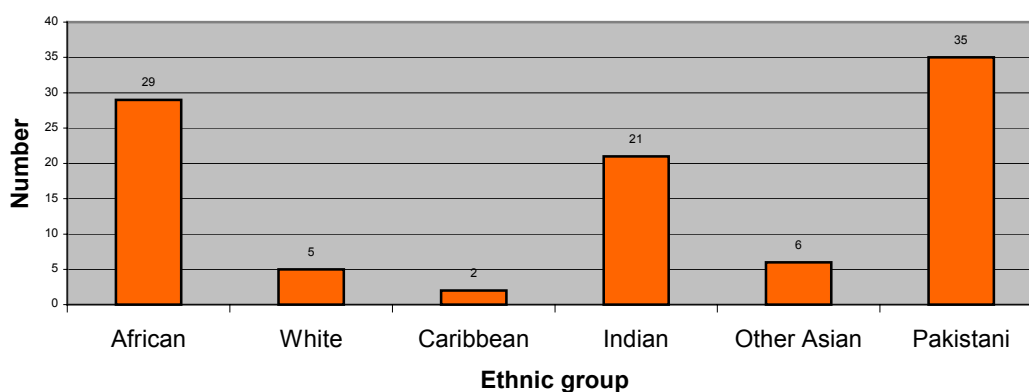
Of the remaining 16 people, some are planning to attend an open afternoon, others still require follow-up or their case has been closed for reasons set out earlier.

Those who met entry requirements by ethnic group n=32	
Ethnic group	Met entry requirements
African	12
White	2
Indian	5
Other Asian	3
Pakistani	9
Other	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>

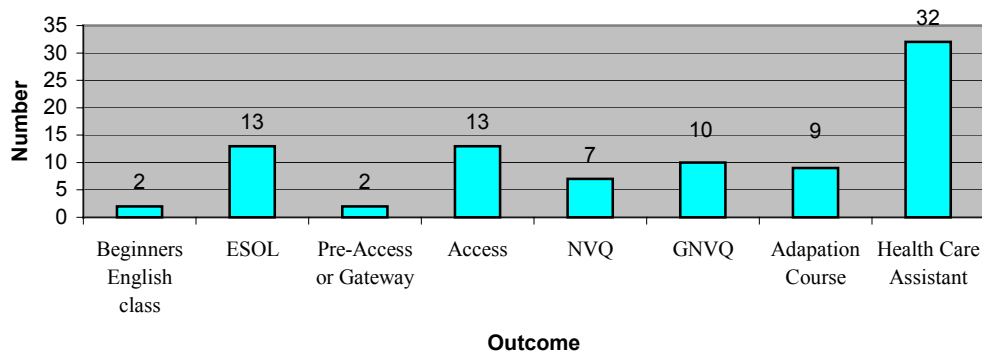
### Outcome of those who did not meet the entry criteria (98)

This is the group for whom Haseen has endeavoured to ensure are adequately signposted to relevant courses and/or apply for an HCA post to start their journey on the skills escalator pathway. This is in order to assist them to meet the entry criteria to apply for a nursing or midwifery course and/or to have the experience of working in the health service. The ethnic group profile of the 98 contacts in this category is shown below. Ten cases were subsequently closed, mainly due to not being short-listed for interview, going overseas, deciding to do voluntary work, or changing their mind. The outcome for the remaining 88 is shown below.

**CANDLES Project contacts in Year 1 who did not meet nursing/midwifery entry requirements by ethnic group n=98**



**CANDLES Project Year 1: Signposting for those who did not meet entry requirements n=88**



**Signposted to courses to acquire relevant entry qualifications**

The above chart shows that of the 138 people who contacted Haseen, 56 (40.5%) needed to obtain relevant qualifications prior to applying for a pre-registration nursing or midwifery programmes and the nature of courses that they were signposted to. Fifteen were signposted to the following locally run courses at appropriate levels: English classes (15), Pre-Access (2), Access (13), NVQ or GNVQ (17). Nine people who had qualified as a nurse and/or midwife overseas were referred to Adaptation courses running in Oxford or London as there were none available locally.

**Health Care Assistant Enquiries**

Whilst 32 people were interested in becoming a Health Care Assistant it will be seen from the table below that, of the 22 who pursued this option, only 4 have been successful to date with 5 not being accepted following an interview and 12 not being initially short listed. Advice will be sought from the Steering Group and Project Board concerning any further advice that can be provided for these individuals.

<b>Outcome of Health Care Assistant enquiries (22)</b>					
<b>Ethnic group</b>	<b>Accepted</b>	<b>Not accepted</b>	<b>Not called for interview</b>	<b>Awaiting response</b>	<b>Total</b>
African	1	1	4		6
Indian	1	1	1	1	4
Other					
Other Asian	1		2		3
Pakistani	1	3	5		9
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>22</b>

**Media coverage**

In addition to the original coverage of the CANDLES Project launch in December 2003 (Nursing Times [16/12/2003] and Slough Observer [8/12/2003]) it has also been featured in the following (see Appendix 2 for recent examples in the Slough Observer and the Guardian):

Nursing Standard 18<sup>th</sup> August 2004, Nursing Times on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2004, telephone interview with EA broadcast on BBC Berks radio on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2004, Slough Observer on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2004, letter from Haseen published in Nursing Standard 8 September 2004 and features in the Slough Observer on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2004 and the Guardian newspaper, Jobs & Money Section, on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2004.

## **Budget**

The funding has paid for:

- Haseen: salary, travel expenses, staff development session and mobile telephone costs
- Dubbing FHHS recruitment videos into Punjabi (Mirpuri dialect) and Hindi
- Launch of CANDLES Project in December 2003
- Office rental costs and some equipment
- Graphic design, photographs, translating, printing and production costs of CANDLES wing stand, posters and brochures
- Administrative overheads and staffing costs of support provided by the Mary Seacole Centre for Nursing Practice

## **Objectives for Year 2**

The priorities for Year 2 will be:

- to organise events aimed at the local Black Caribbean communities and action has already commenced through collaboration with relevant local community organisations (particularly Faith Groups) and members of the Slough PCT Diverse network
- follow-up work by Haseen with all active CANDLES Project contacts
- continue to organise other local CANDLES recruitment events
- undertake Year 2 awareness survey
- focus on those who might be ready to apply for 2005 nursing and midwifery courses
- continue to support individuals onto the skills escalator pathway
- incorporate successful strategies into mainstream recruitment activities
- submit a proposal to TV SHA to fund
  - a) some local administrative support which would also enable the telephone to be answered when Haseen is out undertaking CANDLES recruitment events and
  - b) another Outreach worker in order to widen the CANDLES Project to Berkshire

## **Conclusion**

This has been a very interesting and successful first year and it has been a continuous learning curve for all involved. A rich source of information has been collected concerning the profile of those contacting the CANDLES Project and the nature and outcome of their enquiries. It is clear that there is an interest in a career in nursing or midwifery in groups that have been traditionally under-represented in student populations. The CANDLES Project has been greeted with great enthusiasm by a huge number of Slough agencies. The media have also covered the work undertaken and interviewed some who have contacted Haseen and found it to be beneficial in their future career choice.

The nature of the work has, at times, been complex and it has therefore been extremely useful to have the opportunity to regularly update the members of both the CANDLES Project Board and the Steering Group with various developments, constraints and difficulties. The ideas and advice that emerged have all helped to keep the CANDLES Project properly focused, make the best use of relevant resources and provide positive and constructive feedback to Haseen and the staff of the Mary Seacole Centre for Nursing Practice.

It seems clear that this work should continue for more than 2 years if the foundation that has now been set is to benefit the local population, FHHS, TVU and the local NHS Trusts. Detailed casework has been involved and the skills escalator approach is starting to work but it will still take time for individuals to work their way up it. The local communities, particularly those from minority ethnic groups, seem to be becoming more aware of the CANDLES Project and this should bode well for Year 2. It is also to be hoped that the CANDLES Project might be funded to expand into the whole of Berkshire.

As a result of the national media coverage, the CANDLES Project has generated interest from other areas of the country such as Brighton and the west Midlands together with requests for advice about how to adopt such a model in their area. In addition, the Head of NHS Careers wishes to include on their website a couple of case studies of people who have been helped by the CANDLES Project.

Finally, as Director of the CANDLES Project I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Haseen and Lisa, the staff most actively involved with the CANDLES Project. They are a marvellous team to work with and have often exceeded the call of duty. Immense thanks are also extended to all our Partners together with the numerous people who have assisted us in so many ways.

Professor Elizabeth N Anionwu RN PhD CBE  
Head of the Mary Seacole Centre for Nursing Practice and Candles Project Director  
Thames Valley University  
Faculty of Health & Human Sciences  
Westel House, 32-38 Uxbridge Road  
Ealing, London W5 2BS.  
Tel: +44 (0)20 8280 5109  
Fax: +44 (0)20 8280 5125  
[www.maryseacole.com](http://www.maryseacole.com)

11<sup>th</sup> October 2004

## **Appendix 1:**

### **Members of the CANDLES Project Steering Group**

Chair: Sajidah Chaudhary: Director Slough Race Equality Council

Rafiq Chohan, Economics Development Officer, Slough Borough Council

Angie Doak, Human Resources Officer, Heatherwood & Wexham Park NHS Trust

Jan Goldsmith, Research & Development Lead Slough NHS PCT

Mala Hall, Head of Subject, Adult Nursing, TVU, FHHS

David Holdstock, Head of Communications, Slough Borough Council

Peter Kayes, Director TVU Slough Campus

Diane Lilley, Lead Personal Advisor – Education CfBT Advice and Guidance and Connexions

Inder Matharu, Deputy District Manager, Berkshire District, Jobcentre Plus

Ruth Oliver-Williams, Head of Education & Training (Nursing & Midwifery), Heatherwood & Wexham Park NHS Hospitals Trust

Dr Gail Thomas, Dean of Nursing and Midwifery, FHHS TVU

### **Members of the CANDLES Project Board**

Chair: Prof Elizabeth Anionwu, Head of the Mary Seacole Centre for Nursing Practice, FHHS, TVU

Michael Adigun, Senior Lecturer FHHS

Charlie Asher, Events Manager, Corporate Development TVU

Graeme Baker, Widening Participation Manager TVU

Catherine George, Joint Director of Service Delivery Slough NHS PCT

Caroline Hope, Ward Sister Heatherwood & Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust

Evania Inward, Partnerships Officer Slough Race Equality Council

Caron Keys, Further Education Programme Manager TVU

June Mansfield, Head of Workforce Resources, Berkshire Shared Services Department

Haseen Mughal, CANDLES Project Co-ordinator/outreach worker

Sue Roberts, Slough Campus Development Manager, TVU

Christine Shaw, Team Leader, Recruitment, FHHS Berkshire

Jen Simpson, Human Resources Manager, Heatherwood and Wexham Park NHS Trust

Stan Thompson, Lead, Centre for Workforce Development, TVU

**Appendix 2: CANDLES Project media coverage in September 2004  
in the Slough Observer and the Guardian newspapers**

**Candles light career path for young Asians**

A new project is seeking to employ ethnic talent who hold jaundiced views on nursing as a career, and who may yet slip through the NHS job net. **Colin Cottell** investigates

**M**usab Ahmad is a nurse. She has set her heart on it. But Ms Ahmad, aged 18 from Slough in Berkshire, could not easily have been lured to the nursing profession. "I was between becoming a doctor and a nurse, she was swayed by a project designed to encourage people from south Asian backgrounds to enter nursing. "They showed us the video," she explains. "It was just some of the things the nurses said, their experiences, and how they enjoyed it. And this made me think this was something I really wanted to do."

Ms Ahmad, whose family originates from Pakistan, expects to start her degree course in Child Health Nursing next year. But had she decided against becoming a nurse she would have fallen into line with the rest of Slough's Pakistani community. Although around 25% of the town's population are of south Asian origin, mainly Pakistani or Indian, only 2% of recent students doing nursing and midwifery courses at Thames Valley University's Slough campus came from these communities.

Professor Elizabeth Antonova, head of the Mary Seacole Centre for Nursing Practice at Thames Valley University, explains the background to the project. "In 2001 we recruited about one or two students into nursing and midwifery. There were none coming in, and yet Slough has one of the largest south Asian populations in the country. "There was something going on here in Slough," says Professor Antonova. "And the major thing I realised was that we weren't doing local recruitment, and there was a lack of information on nursing."

The result is the Candles Project, a £300,000 initiative funded by the local health authority. Launched in October 2003, it is scheduled to continue until autumn 2005.

Professor Antonova, who



**Slough:** Ms. Ahmad is now set on nursing as a career. Picture: Niku Mistry

heads the project, says the aim is to raise the profile of local courses and careers in nursing and midwifery, particularly among the south Asian community in Slough. The project employs an outreach worker whose job includes visits to mosques and temples, as well as the use of customised promotional material, such as a recruitment video, dubbed into Punjabi and Hindi.

Ms Ahmad is one of 120 people who have made direct contact with the project during its first 12 months. Of these, three have already been accepted on to Thames Valley University's nursing and midwifery courses starting this autumn.

Slow progress maybe. But as Professor Antonova explains, this is a pioneering work, which she hopes will become a model of good practice elsewhere. Under-representation from among the UK's Pakistani and Indian communities on nursing and midwifery courses is not confined to Slough. According to the Department of Health, people from south Asian backgrounds made up 4% of the UK population in 2003, but they comprised 2.3% of applicants to nursing and midwifery courses.

There are a number of reasons why persuading people from south Asian backgrounds to go into nursing or midwifery is challenging, explains Professor Antonova. "First, there has been no tradition of entering these professions from within these communities, she says. "If you don't know about it and have no relatives in it, then it is not a career you are going to think of automatically."

In the Asian community, there is a lot of influence from the extended family, explains Haaseem Mughal, the Candles Project's outreach worker. "Aunts and uncles and grandparents have a lot of influence over what career path you choose."

Some people in the south Asian community have yet to grasp what being a nurse in the UK entails, and how it differs from their home countries, she says. At one meeting, a Hindu member of the audience, and a strict vegetarian, expressed concern that his daughter would be expected to serve meat, she says. "Most probably that is what they do back home in their own country," says Ms Mughal. She explains the aim of the project is to correct any such misconceptions, and to provide clear accurate information.

For example, those days nursing staff in Slough are allowed to wear both trousers and the high. Ms Mughal says that things have come a long way from the days when her family stopped her going into nursing because trousers were not allowed as part of the uniform. Ms Mughal says she has passed on how, by working as a health care assistant in an NHS Trust, they can get into nursing and receive a bursary without the usual requirement of being resident in the UK for three years. "What I am doing is planting the seed and raising the awareness, giving out the correct information," she says. "Parents do not see nursing as a professional career in the same category as law, medicine or dentistry."

Nursing is regarded as a Cinderella profession in Pakistan, and the Pakistani community in the UK holds much the same view, agrees Wasim Khan, a duty manager in a BUPA nursing home in Slough, and president of the All-Pakistan Nurses Association. "This applies to someone in my position, extremely motivated and proud to be a nurse. But I'm still called a doctor in my community. I don't want to be called doctor. I am proud to be a nurse."

There is a stigma attached to nursing, especially for women, and particularly among first and second generation Pakistanis who came to the UK, says Mr Khan. And from a Muslim perspective, there are particular issues.

When it comes to nursing the opposite sex, "Being a Muslim, there are some restrictions which I can understand. For example, I don't want my wife or sister having to wash a male stranger even though he is a patient," he says.

"There will be questions marks over females having to do intimate nursing tasks for males. And there will be some people who decide that nursing is not for them, that it clashes with their religious values," says Professor Antonova. "Certain people with certain religious values would not see it as respectful for their daughters."

"But," she adds, "that doesn't strike me as odd."

However, she believes it would be a mistake to think that everyone in the south Asian communities holds the same view. It would also be wrong to think that cultural or religious issues are their only concerns. "Until recently the NHS hasn't had the best track record on promotion prospects for black and ethnic minority members."

Professor Antonova is confident that the project will meet its target of recruiting 40 people from South Asian and Caribbean backgrounds on to student nurse and midwifery courses at Thames Valley University by September 2005. "I totally accept that there are issues within people's cultural backgrounds. But I think that we have to acknowledge that for years we haven't been going into the local communities to talk about these professions," she says.

**Choice:** Haaseem Mughal says Asians are influenced by extended family



**The Guardian**  
18.09.04.

GUARDIAN newspaper, Jobs and Money Section: Saturday 18 September 2004: page 27

**Slough Observer 17.9. 2004**

**News**  
**University selected for pioneering ethnic nursing recruitment drive**

**Candles light up route into NHS**

**A** GROUND-BREAKING nursing recruitment campaign being piloted at Thames Valley University (TVU) is already offering a new future for young adults as well as the NHS.

The Slough campus of the 45,000-student university was chosen to pioneer the Candles project for the UK because the NHS in Slough does not exhibit the diversity of its population.

The project, developed and led by Professor Elizabeth Antonova of the Mary Seacole Centre for Nursing Practice in Ealing, puts Slough at the centre of a £300,000 training programme for nurses from ethnic minorities.

Candles - Campaign to Attract Nurses/Innovatives from Diverse Local Ethnic groups in Slough - will lead the way for other regions if its formula for getting its message into minority communities is successful.

The Candles project has been funded by the Thames Valley NHS Workforce Development Confederation, a partnership between Westman Park and Heathwood NHS hospitals, Slough Primary Care Trust (PCT), TVU and Slough Race Equality Council.

Project co-ordinator Haaseem Mughal says the last year visiting sectors of the South Asian community in Slough to tell people about the opportunities of a career in the NHS. She said: "We have been going out into the heart of the community and doing events. So far, we have done 41. And 70 of these have been for the diverse communities and 10 have been for the South Asian."

Janaid Malik, 22, of Stoke Road, Slough, has been accepted on a three-year nursing course at TVU, starting in March 2005. He was told about the course by friends at the Stoke Pugs Lane Mosque, in Slough.

He said: "Slough has a very diverse community. The hospital is one of those



**NURSING AMBITION:** Candles project co-ordinator Haaseem Mughal explains the details to Janaid Malik. 04-22254

**The ASCOT & Finale Racing to the future**  
A truly historic weekend of racing  
Friday 24th - Sunday 26th September



**The Candles project: the facts**

- Slough PCT has 37.7 per cent of its workers from ethnic minorities. But of this figure, only 1.89 per cent are Pakistani, 1.18 per cent are Chinese and 1.56 per cent are Indian.
- In 2000, the NHS received no applications from ethnic minorities for jobs in the NHS in nursing and midwifery.
- Students who enrol on nursing courses through the Candles project will not have to pay university tuition fees.
- In the 1970s, Muslim women were not allowed to wear the Hijab - the head cover that is part of an Islamic religious rule. These days women in the NHS are allowed to do so.

Let us know your views. E-mail us at letters@sloughobserver.co.uk