

# Achievements and Challenges of the CANDLES Project

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Promoting and Tracking Diversity of Students within Nursing and  
Midwifery Education - a national model?  
27 September 2006

Thames Valley University  
London Reading Slough



# My Background

- 2 year secondment from Slough NHS Primary Care Trust
- Formerly a Nursery Nurse then Health Advocate – therefore brought to the CANDLES Project knowledge of multiple local networks from all ethnic groups but particularly those from South Asian backgrounds.



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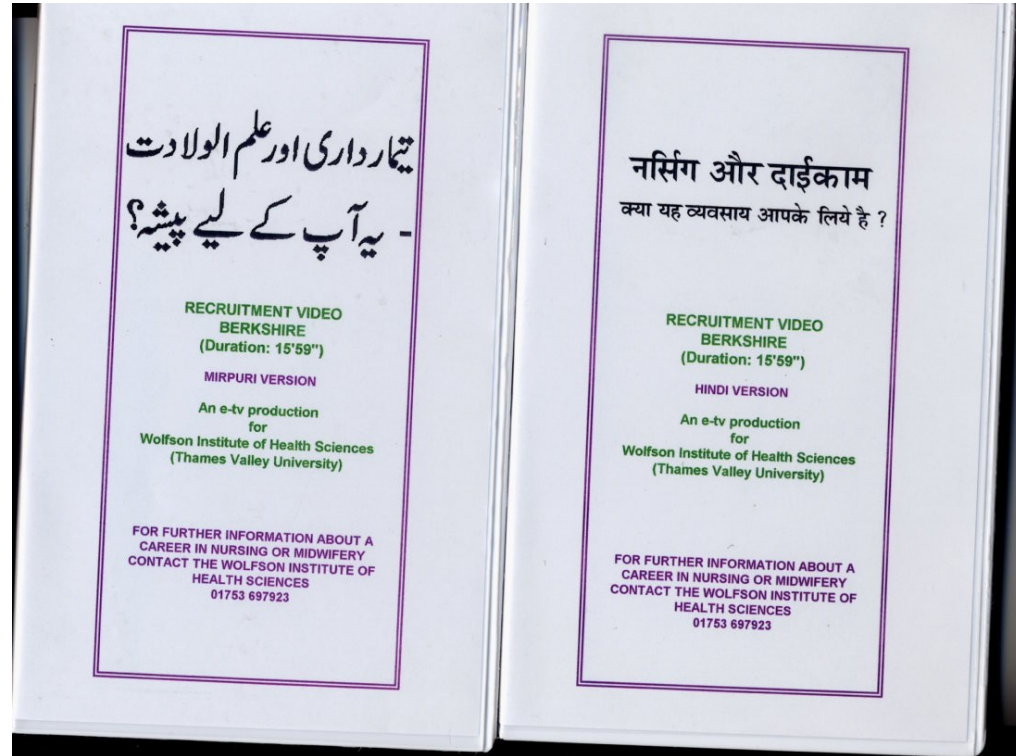
# Slough Mela 2004



# Recruitment materials produced in English and various South Asian languages



CANDLES Project Information Flyers



TVU Nursing/midwifery recruitment video dubbed into Mirpuri and Hindi languages

“I am very impressed that you have a video in my language. It is like watching a TV programme but in my language and it proves how keen the NHS is to recruit our people.”



**Examples of  
CANDLES Events in  
Local Faith Venues**



- **Haseen being introduced at the assembly of Stoke Poges Mosque Saturday Community School**

Photos courtesy of Mr Shaukat Warriach, Head Teacher.

- **Later that morning, Caroline Hope, Ward Sister, Wexham Park NHS Trust preparing pupils prior to them practising resuscitation techniques**



### 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 reflect the diversity of its population.

The project, developed and led by Professor Elizabeth Antonova, head of the Mary Seacole Centre for Nursing Practice at Thames Valley, has been funded by the Thames Valley NHS Workforce Development Collaborator, a partnership

between Wexham Park and Harewood NHS hospitals, Slough Primary Care Trust (PCT), TVU and Slough Race Equality Council.

Project co-ordinator Hasseen Mughal has spent the last year visiting across the South Asian community in Slough to tell people about the benefits of a career in the NHS. She said: "We have been going on one to one visits of community and living events. So far, we have done 41 and 23 of these have been for the NHS commission and 10 have been for the South Asians."

Janet Malik, 22, of Stoke Road, Slough, has been accepted on a three-year nursing course at TVU, starting in March 2004. He was told about the course by friends at the Stoke Park Lane Mosque, where he was visited by Hasseen Mughal.

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



**NURSING AMBITION:** Candles project co-ordinator Hasseen Mughal explains the details to Janet Malik. 04/03/03

**The Candles project: the facts**

- Slough PCT has 37.7 per cent of its workforce from ethnic minorities. But of this figure, only 1.89 per cent are Pakistani, 1.18 per cent are Chinese and 7.56 per cent are Indian.
- In the 1970s, Muslim women were not allowed to work the night shift - the head cover that is part of an Islamic religious rule. These days women in the NHS are allowed to do so.
- Students who attend nursing courses through the Candles project will not have to pay university tuition fees.

Let us know your views. E-mail us at [letters@sloughobserver.co.uk](mailto:letters@sloughobserver.co.uk)



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# Local media coverage Slough Observer

# Ethnic nursing campaign is up and running



**LEADING LIGHTS:** From left, Professor Elizabeth Antonova, head of the Mary Seacole Centre for Nursing Practice; CANDES outreach worker Hasseen Mughal and student nurse Shahla Khan. 04/03/03

A CAMPAIGN to attract more of Slough's ethnic minorities to nursing and midwifery has been launched.

CANDES (Campaign to Attract Nurses from Diverse Local Ethnic groups in Slough) has won £100,000 worth of funding over the next two years to try to encourage people from under represented origins such as South Asian and Black Caribbean to take up the profession.

The project was launched at Bablys House on Monday and is a partnership between Thames Valley University, the NHS and Slough Race Equality Council.

The aims and reasons for launching CANDES were explained to the audience, and guests spoke of the importance of diversity within the nursing profession.

To round off the event, Slough Teachers Choir performed for the audience.

Elizabeth Antonova, head of Thames Valley University's centre for nursing, said: "We hope that CANDES will have a major impact on the recruitment and perceptions of nursing and midwifery in Slough, and indirectly on other areas."

"Due to this funding, it will be possible to act on the ideas, philosophy and commitment of the various community groups whose support we value."



## Project launched to attract minority ethnic nurses

HOSPITAL placements and outreach work are being used in a new diversity campaign in order to attract more people from minority ethnic backgrounds into nursing and midwifery.

The project, known as 'Candles' (Campaign to Attract Nurses/ Midwives from Diverse Local Ethnic Groups in Slough), has won annual funding of £50,000 for two years from the Thames Valley Workforce Development Confederation and Slough Primary Care Trust.

Nurses at Wexham Park Hospital in Slough are involved in the project's

placement initiative to encourage recruitment. This initiative is targeting girls from a local school that is attended predominantly by Asian youngsters.

Ward sister Caroline Hope (pictured above right) said: "At least half of the girls have considered health care but they hadn't thought about nursing."

"It's these minds that we need to turn around and we need to widen their knowledge."

An outreach worker, Hasseen Mughal (pictured above centre), has also been appointed to target community and cultural events and celebrations.

Ms Mughal, who is also the project's coordinator, said: "There is a myth that both nursing and midwifery are menial jobs and there is a lack of knowledge about the fact that through these careers there are many paths people can take."

"It's better if people have a face to put to a name and I want to hold workshops in a variety of venues so that I can tap into and attract people of all ages and genders."

Slough Race Equality Council and the Mary Seacole Centre for Nursing Practice at Thames Valley University are also involved in the project.

# National media coverage Nursing Times

# Guardian

## Candles light career path for young Asians

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

**Colin Cottell investigates**



**M**ost of the young women who are applying to join the ranks of nurses and midwives are from the UK, but a growing number of good practice charities are trying to attract ethnic minorities to the profession.

One such charity is the Candles project, which is based at Thames Valley University in Slough. It is a partnership between the NHS, the Slough Race Equality Council, and the Slough Primary Care Trust.

The project is aimed at attracting young people from ethnic minorities to nursing and midwifery. It is a partnership between the NHS, the Slough Race Equality Council, and the Slough Primary Care Trust.

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When she finally stepped into the room, she was greeted by a group of young women who were waiting for her. They were all smiling and looking at her with interest.

She was told about the project by a friend who had been to a meeting at the hospital. She was told that the project was aimed at attracting young people from ethnic minorities to nursing and midwifery.

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# CHALLENGES

- Changing myths, stereotypes and negative perceptions amongst some, within both the university and the community, re who might be interested in a career in nursing and midwifery
- Developing strategies to engage the local communities of Caribbean origin
- Work overload when momentum built up as more people became aware of the project
- Developing an appropriate database to capture complexity of outcomes

## What helped to overcome some of my difficulties?

- The support of 2 mentors, one in the main university and the other within the Faculty of Health and Human Sciences – **many thanks to both**
- Availability of Elizabeth, Project Manager to act as a trouble shooter!

# Lighting the future

Abigail Bernard reports on a project to increase nurse recruitment from Slough's minority ethnic communities.

**The origins of the CANDLES project (Campaign to Attract Nurses and Midwives from Diverse Local Ethnic Groups in Slough) lie in the fact that only 2 per cent of the students at Thames Valley University's (TVU) Slough campus for nursing and midwifery come from a South Asian background, yet this community makes up over 30 per cent of the town's population.**

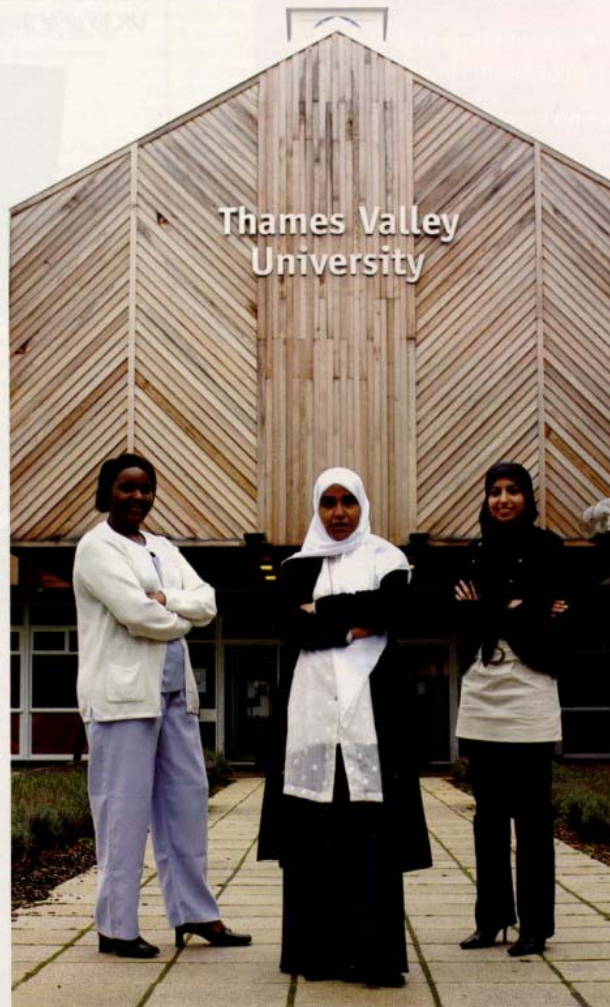
The reasons for this disparity are unclear, but may include:

- a perception of nursing as having a lesser status than other professions.
- communities may not be aware that the National Health Service accommodates cultural and religious customs, such as the wearing of trousers or hijabs as part of the nurse's uniform.

Recognising that action would be needed to increase the representation of minority groups amongst nurse recruits, Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority established the CANDLES project. Funded by the SHA, led by Professor Elizabeth Anionwu and managed by Haseen Mughal (pictured right, middle), who had previously worked as a health advocate at the Slough Primary Care Trust, the project started in October 2003.

The key partners involved are the Mary Seacole Centre for Nursing Practice, Slough NHS Primary Care Trust, Heatherwood and Wexham Park NHS Trust (HWP), Slough Race Equality Council, the recruitment team of the faculty of health and sciences and the external liaison and widening participation teams at TVU.

Ms Mughal quickly realised that far from expecting potential recruits to flock to her door, she would need to go into the local community and meet people face-to-face, in order to raise the profile of nursing. She set four key priorities for the project:



From left: Student nurse Agness Nyanhete, CANDLES project manager Haseen Mughal and student midwife Maeda Choudhry are keen to promote careers in nursing and midwifery.