

National Sikh Chaplaincy Day 18-30 November 2013

An Update Report

Our sincere thanks to all for making this a very special and successful event

The UK Sikh Healthcare Chaplaincy Group organised a day of prayer during the week 18-30 November 2013 in UK hospitals aimed at promoting community links between the NHS and the Sikh community with the help of the Sikh Chaplains and members of the Sikh community from various Gurdwaras. The prayers in hospitals across the country were held for the well-being, recovery of those who are currently in hospital regardless of faith, race or gender and for world peace.

THE PRAYERS/ARDAAS WERE SUCCESSFULLY CONDUCTED AT:

Bedford Hospital by Tirath Singh Bhavra and Dashvider Kaur Sehmbi (Sikh Sewaadar Chaplains) Bedford Hospital NHS and said: **The chaplaincy at Bedford Hospital hosted an Exhibition of Faiths this month, celebrating and exploring religions from across the world, with a number of events.**

Hospital chaplain Nicola McIntosh said: “This is about celebrating faiths from all across our community, both for members of staff at Bedford Hospital, our patients and our visitors. “Over the week we will have people coming in from a wide range of faiths, sharing their beliefs and answering questions.”

The official opening was held in the chapel on Wednesday, November 13th 2013, when Deborah Inskip, The High Sheriff of Bedfordshire opened the exhibition.

Japanese Buddhist drummers were playing at the opening event.



This was then followed by a different event each day:

Thursday	November 14 th , 1pm:	Ask your questions about the Muslim Faith.
Friday	November 15 th , 12.30pm:	Join a Roman Catholic Mass.
Monday	November 18 th , 1pm:	Meditation, led by an experienced Buddhist teacher.
Tuesday	November 19 th , 12.15pm:	A Christian healing service.

Wednesday, November 20th, 1pm: Sikh prayers for healing. By the Bedford Sikh (Sangat) Congregation. (The 10th Guru Ji's Chaupai Sahib Prayers were recited on this day ending with full Ardaas by the community members on behalf of Bedford Hospitals patients).

Nicola added: “There will be a children’s quiz throughout the week with prizes, and lots of information about faiths represented in our Faith Leaders group.”



The full story was covered in the news, by the local paper "Bedford Today", with live video recording.
 Web link. <http://www.bedfordtoday.co.uk/news/local/video-celebration-of-faith-at-bedford-hospital-is-opened-by-the-high-sheriff-1-5681007>.

Birmingham, Sandwell General Hospital by Joga Singh and colleagues and in attendance were Rev Keith Duckett, Rakesh Bhatt, Parkash Kaur Sohal, staff, doctors and nurses and there were nearly 97 people in attendance altogether. After doing the prayer, then there were Diwali celebrations.

Birmingham, City Hospital by Joga Singh, Rakesh Bhatt, Rev Ann Stevenson and staff.

Birmingham, Queen Elizabeth Hospital by Joga Singh, Parkash Kaur Sohal and in attendance were Rakesh Bhatt and Rev'd Susan Shewring. Sweets were distributed to all present after the prayers.

Walsall, Manor Hospital by Parkash Kaur Sohal, and member of the local Gurdwara.

Christina Beardsley said: It went very well and followed a meeting about a multi-faith network for staff which meant it was well attended.

Bradford, St Luke's Hospital by Hoshiar Singh and colleagues.

Dawn Arnison said: Mr Hoshiar Singh led the prayers and it was a good turnout in the hospital.

Cardiff, University Hospital of Wales by Paramjit Singh and colleagues of Sri Dasmaish Singh Sabha Gurdwara.

Paramjit Singh said: The prayer has been done and it went well.

Alan Tyler said: It is a great pleasure to offer you support in this way, please let us know if we can help with anything else? Wishing you peace and blessings for 2014.

Coventry, Coventry University Hospital by Joginder Singh Bhangu and said:

Friday the 15th Nov went quite smoothly, 5 of us from Gurdwara Guru Nanak Parkash, went to the Hospital Chapel, at about 4.00pm. In the main chapel Hall we started our Waheguru Simran for approx 15minutes and then, 5 Paths of Chaupai Sahib and Ardaas for the well-being of all the patients and world peace. No one from the Hospital chaplaincy was available to join us or comment. A patient did join but left after sometime as unable to sit longer. The staff seemed not interested as they referred their Sikh Chaplain a number of times. Perhaps we not are being authorised. Please do not hesitate to contact us if there are any further events/prayers to be performed.

Croydon University Hospital by Nirmal Singh Kalsi and colleagues.

Essex, Goodmayes Mental Health Hospital, on 23 November 2013 - Parminder Kaur, Sikh Chaplain at Mental Health, Goodmayes, helped organise the Prayer Day. Present were a selected few only - Ujagar Singh Bhandal, Cllr Balvinder Kaur Saund, Satwant Kaur Marwa and Parminder Kaur. This hospital provides mental health and community services for people living in the London Boroughs of Waltham Forest, Redbridge, Barking & Dagenham and Havering. They also manage community health services in south west Essex. We chose to recite the Japji Sahib paath, followed by the Ardaas conducted by Ujagar Singh Ji. Juice/Water and biscuits were provided and shared with the Reception Staff on duty.



Essex, King George Hospital & Queen's in Romford on 23 November 2013 –Arvinder Singh and Parminder Kaur arranged the Prayer Days at King George and at Queens and started the day with Japji Sahib. Ardaas at both the Hospitals was conducted by Arvinder Singh Ji and a discussion on a chosen stanza from Jap Ji Sahib at King George was held, while a discussion on Chaupai Sahib was done at Queen's Hospital

Essex – King George Hospital, Goodmayes



Essex – King George & Queen's Hospitals



Ipswich Hospital by Jaspal Singh and Giani Ji from Sikh Temple, Ipswich.

Rev'd Tony Brookes said: We were very pleased with the visit which took place yesterday although due to some other things which were going on at the time and I was unable to stay in Chapel for the prayers and I hope you will be able to express my apologies for this. Also, I do not think anyone else attended these prayers, but that is not unusual and although we hold morning prayer each day there is rarely anyone else with us. However that does not itself diminish the value and worth of prayer.

Thank you once again for arranging this and I apologise for not being able to participate more fully.

Leicester General Hospital by Kartar Singh Bring and colleagues and then after the prayers soft drinks, biscuits and sweets were distributed.

Liverpool, Royal Liverpool University Teaching Hospital by Andor Singh and Giani Ji at Guru Nanak Gurdwara and very kindly arranged by Father Christopher Peter.

Father Christopher Peter said: I visit Gurdwara and Mandir on several occasions and have established good links with some people. If I can be of any assistant please let me know.

London SW10, Chelsea & Westminster Hospital by **Rajinder Singh Bhasin**: all went well and was well attended.

London W6, Charing Cross Hospital. London W12, Hammersmith Hospital, London W10, St Charles Hospital by Avtar Singh and accompanied by Imam Shahid Hussain.

Imam Shahid Hussain said: It has been a great pleasure to host your faith community at our Hospitals this year. Attending the Sikh service was a very blessed and soothing experience for me. We look forward to working with you and your community in meeting their spiritual and religious needs. Please feel free to contact either myself or anyone of my chaplaincy colleagues for any further help or support.

London SE1, Guys and St Thomas Hospitals by Satpal Kaur Panesar, Parminder Kaur Kondral and colleagues. She was accompanied by Kuldip Kaur, Surinder Kaur, Mahinder Kaur, and two ladies of the Sant Sang Group. The Lead Chaplain – Ruth Lambert, and two other chaplains – Abdul Chowdhury & Nana Kyei-Baffour also attended. Satpal Kaur ended the session with the Ardaas and refreshments served to all present.

London SE1, Guys and St Thomas Hospital (photos)



London, St Joseph's Hospice, Hackney – Arranged by Parminder Kaur Kondral: The Hospice exists to help people live life to the full, to the very last. It has been enhancing lives, easing pain and bringing comfort and laughter for over a hundred years to those suffering from life limiting illnesses.

Those present on the Prayer Day here were Satpal Kaur Panesar, Satwant Kaur Marwa, Mahinder Kaur Bilku, Ravinder Kaur Virdee, Kulwant Kaur Sehmbi, Manvir Kaur Sehmbi and Parminder Kaur along with Vivi Voucher, Lead Chaplain of St Joseph's Hospice, two members of staff, and two members of public. We choose to recite the Chaupai Sahib five times and ended with the Ardaas conducted by Mahinder Kaur Ji.

A presentation on what Sikhism is with photographs of visiting the Gurdwara, the 5Ks and Amrit Sanchar and the end of life prayers were displayed via the projector for anyone who wished to ask in-depth questions to wider their knowledge.

Bread pakoray (prepared by Mrs Kulwant Kaur Sehmbi in remembrance of her sister who had recently passed away at this Hospice), Indian sweets and biscuits were provided by the Sangat, while tea/coffee was provided by the Hospice.



London W2, St Mary's Hospital, by Rajinder Singh Bhasin and accompanied by Imam Shahid Hussain.

Imam Shahid Hussain said: It has been a great pleasure to host your faith community at our Hospitals this year. Attending the Sikh service was a very blessed and soothing experience for me. We look forward to working with you and your community in meeting their spiritual and religious needs. Please feel free to contact either myself or anyone of my chaplaincy colleagues for any further help or support.

London SW3, Royal Brompton Hospital by Angad Kaur of Brent Sikh Centre, Kingsbury, London NW9.

Angad Kaur said: During Sikh Chaplaincy National Prayer Day at the Royal Brompton Hospital when I went to say the Ardaas, there was a Sikh member of staff and a Psychiatric Nurse Specialist for the Trust who attended and I also met Sister Clementina, Paeds Chaplain (Catholic), Mairi Lovett, AICU and Heart Chaplain (Church of Scotland), Judith Griffin, Heart Chaplain (Church of England).

My visit was arranged and overseen by the Rev'd Robert Thompson, Lead Chaplain, The Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Foundation Trust, who sent me an email saying "Thanks for coming and for such beautiful prayers."

London NW1, University College London Hospital Keertan Darbar by Harpreet Kaur Dodd and students from the University.

Harpreet Kaur said: The Keertan Darbar was a success, with Waheguru's grace. The chapel and the Quiet room were opened up for us, allowing us to set up the sound system and projector as well as move the seats. The evening started with a student reading Rehraas Sahib with the congregation, followed by Ardaas. This was then followed by 6 sets of kirtanees, representing universities such as UCL, Imperial and City Universities. The turnout was good, with approximately 30 - 40 people attending the event, some of who weren't students!

The Keertan Darbar then finished with Ardaas followed by langar, (yellow dhal and mixed Vegetable subji with chapattis.) The langar was served off site to UCH.

I felt like the event was well responded to. We even managed to get a Sikh patient from the hospital to come to the event! I am forever grateful to both you and Father Peter Harris for all your help in organizing and raising awareness of the event. It would have been nice if we managed to get more people to come from the hospital, including members of staff, but I appreciate that everyone is working, or unfortunately too ill. I personally think this event provided us with the perfect opportunity to share Sikhi with members of the public, and would love the chance again to share the beauty of hymns and langar with members of the public again.

Rev'd Peter Harries said: Many thanks for this message. I understand that everything went well.

London E11, Whipps Cross Hospital on 25 November 2013 – Ujagar Singh and Parminder Kaur took the lead in arranging the prayer day here. Present were ladies from the Sat Sang Group of Karmasar and Seven Kings Goodmayes Gurdwara and the Lead Chaplain - Rev Tristan Alexander-Watts.

After reading Chaupai Sahib, Ardaas was conducted by Benji Surinder Kaur and the topping of the icing on our day's fruitful cake was done by our famous poet - Ujagar Singh Bhandal. Juice/Water and biscuits were provided and shared with all present.



Middlesex, Ealing Hospital by Atma Singh & Harjeet Kaur Sohal and attended by Rev Maggie Davidge-Smith.

Rev'd Maggie Davidge-Smith said: re Ealing ICO NHS Trust. We were grateful to Atma and Harjeet Sohal, volunteer visitors in chaplaincy, for leading our prayers with over a dozen people on December 2nd. A photo of those who gave permission is attached. At this time we give thanks for their prayers this week and also for the patients visiting throughout the year and which also supports staff and relatives. The Sohals attend each week along with Tej Grewal. Thanks to Tej Grewal for her visits throughout the year. We are blessed with regular monthly prayer times, Simran Prayer with the Sohals and for Tej who bring the musicians from the Gurdwara in Southall. Thanks are due for all their splendid efforts'.



Middlesex, West Middlesex University Trust Hospital by Surinder Uppal and Rajinder Dhillon and attended by Rev'd Maggie Davidge-Smith and Chaplaincy Team and 25 staff members.

Rev'd Maggie Davidge-Smith said: 'Prayers were said and chanted with harmonium support by two of the Sikh volunteers at the West Middlesex University Trust Hospital for about an hour on Wednesday 20th November in the Multi - Faith Centre on the ground floor with support of the chaplaincy team . Surinder Uppal and Rajinder Dhillon were thrilled that on this occasion over 25 staff members attended and the chaplaincy team congratulates them on their wonderful work through the year visiting staff and patients and relatives and that this event was a perfect way to be together in prayerful devotion ...'



Middlesex, The Vicarage Farm Care Home [private nursing home] by **Manjit Kaur Kharay** and said: We were not able to get a chaplain for the prayers so one of the resident's visitors offered to do prayers, which he did very well. We held the prayers in a small lounge seated on armchairs as our residents are old and frail, some have dementia. There were about 5 residents 4 visitors /relatives 6 staff me included and the extra visitor who read the Japji Sahib, Chaupai Sahib and Anand Sahib followed by Ardaas. We were allowed to serve karah prashad made by one of the staff members. We all chatted over cups of tea and snacks, everyone agreed this was a very good idea and requested for prayers to be held at regular intervals. Residents and visitors have requested it to be performed more often and management is looking into this request.



Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital by **Ujjal Singh Kular** and colleagues said: It went very well.

Nottingham, Queen's Medical Centre Campus by **Kuldeep Singh** and **Giani Ji** at **Nottingham Gurdwara**
Sue Gibson said: I am pleased to be able to say that special prayers were said in the Gurdwara by Mr Kuldeep Singh (Giani Ji at Nottingham road Gurdwara) on Thursday 29th November. They went very well.

Oxford, John Radcliffe Hospital by **Davinder Singh Gill**, the volunteer Sikh Chaplain and colleagues.

Sheffield, Northern General Hospital by **Surinder S Dhillon** and said:
 I am glad you asked me how it went at children's hospital. There it was done for the first time. The lady Chaplain was a very nice lady. Before I went there I asked her if they wanted the Ardaas to be done for children. She said it should be for the staff as well. So it was done. We talked for about Sikhi for about one hour. She seemed most impressed and asked me if Ardaas could be repeated next year as well. At the Ardaas time she asked if she could join in. She had taken her shoes off and covered her head and stood beside me when I was doing the Ardaas.

When I was talking to her before the Ardaas an Asian lady in her 30's also came and sat in the room. She had a 5/6 year old boy with her. She was just waiting to see the Chaplain. When I finished the Ardaas and opened my eyes and noticed that she had also taken her shoes off and joined in the Ardaas. She seemed very happy. There was a conversation and she said her husband is a Muslim. The I asked her who she was. She said she was a Sikh, which showed her joining the Ardaas. Then she let it be known that she is only living for her son. Her husband's family was very rigid. Her values were different at one time. You might have heard stories like that before.

Incidentally when I did Ardaas in the General Hospital last year the Chaplain had asked me if I could include some of their staff as well in the Ardaas, who were not well. Does it show how Sikh Ardaas is valued by non-Sikhs as well?

Sister Kathy Green at NGH Sheffield said: The memories of attending the Ardaas will stay with me for a long time as will my meeting with Mr Surinder Singh Dhillon. I found it to be a deeply spiritual time and very much appreciated your ministry to our hospital. Please don't hesitate to contact me if we can be of assistance in the future. With every blessing of the season.

Sheffield, Northern General Hospital by Surinder S Dhillon and said: A prayer for all the patients and for some chaplaincy staff was done.

Rev'd Martin Kerry said: Yes, Mr Dhillon is a star. It was good to meet and pray with him.

Southampton General Hospital by Mr Sandhu and colleagues from Singh Sabha Gurdwara, Southampton, Hampshire

Rev'd S. Janice Cowburn said: It was good to have been involved in the prayers and to have been able to facilitate this event on behalf of Southampton General Hospital. I am most grateful to those members of the local Sikh community who attended.

Shropshire, The Redwood Centre by Parkash Singh Dhami and Giani Ji of Guru Nanak Sikh Temple, Hadley, Telford, Shropshire and said it went really well.

Stafford, St George Hospital, St. Chads House by Narinder Singh Mahil and Giani Ji of Nanaksar Gurdwara, Stafford, Staffordshire and said it went really well.

Watford General Hospital by Paramjit Singh Kholi

Rev'd Douglas Loveridge said: We were delighted to meet Paramjit and appreciated his encouragement and spiritual approach. I think this was the first such Prayer Day at Watford General Hospital, and I certainly hope it will not be the last.

Wolverhampton, New Cross Hospital by Shyam Singh, Sikh Chaplain, from Guru Tegh Bahadur Gurdwara said: Both events went very well.

PRAYERS to be performed at the following Hospitals/Institutions next year:

Homerton University Hospital, London E9; Northampton General Hospital; Kettering General Hospital; St James Hospital, Portsmouth; Queen Alexandra Hospital, Portsmouth ; Milton Keynes General Hospital; Gloucestershire Royal Hospital and Cheltenham General Hospital; Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital (Wonford), Devon; Weston General Hospital, Somerset; Yeovil District Hospital, Somerset; St. Ann's Hospital, Poole, Dorset; Warrington Hospital, Cheshire; Northwick Park Hospital, Harrow; Sunderland Royal Hospital; Watford Peace Hospice.

23 January 2014

UK Sikh Healthcare Chaplaincy Group