

Health Fair in Washington D.C



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Hitesh Kalita 7 December 2014 7180 views

The [Health](#) Fair event was coordinated by Mayur Mody and the management of Islamic Center thanked him for providing excellent leadership with efficient and indefatigable energy. The logistics team was coordinated by Dr. Surinder Singh Gill and Dr Alif Manijwala served as coordinator of medical team and Dr Sukhpal headed the team of volunteers. The health fair was open to people of all ethnic, religious and socio-economic backgrounds and over 400 people were able to get medical consultation. Healthcare has been a big issue for new immigrants, especially elderly people. While Medicare is available to virtually all citizens, starting at age 65, immigrants legally present in the [US](#) for less than five years are not eligible and private insurance companies generally do not offer health insurance plans for those over 65.

Although there are health insurance options, but these are usually catastrophic traveler's insurance. They usually have a very high deductible and are very expensive. In view of these harsh realities facing the elderly community members from the Subcontinent, the Masjid Gulzar E Madina of Islamic Center Millford Mill Road, Pikesville, Maryland took a bold initiative to organize the first health fair on Sunday, November 23. A number of area community organizations, such as the Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO)-Metropolitan Washington, Philippines Nurses Association, Chinese Culture and Community Center, Muslim Community Clinic Inc., Silver Spring, Capital Region Telugu Society, Kerala Cultural Organization and Hindu Seva, co-sponsored this event. A large number of physicians, nurses, and healthcare workers volunteered their resources and worked tirelessly to provide healthcare services for a large number of attendees covering a wide range of ages. An easy access to physicians of diverse specialties under one roof provided convenient consultation for wide range of medical issues.

In addition to primary care, the medical specialties available for free consultations in a privacy setting included dentistry, endocrinology, gastroenterology, hematology-oncology, otolaryngology, orthopedics, rheumatology and medical ID cards for the community. Colgate sponsored the dental van provided dental consultation for children ages 1 to 12. Maryland Physicians Care Van made Nutritional healthy food, Amerigroup sponsored Moon Bounce. Columbia Lite House Van did eye sight screenings. The health fair also provided action, where [yoga](#) enthusiasts displayed their skills and love for healthy living. Besides [yoga](#) sessions on site, there were diabetes and cancer prevention education vendors, healthy living demos and advice booths. Mental and behavioral health information, often a taboo topic, was sensitively offered by Counselors Helping South Asians/Indians (Chai). The Samar Group obtained bone marrow [sign](#) ups and the Washington Regional Transplant enrolled organ donor.

“The Metropolitan Washington Chapter of GOPIO is very pleased to be a part of this outstanding health fair, which was made possible by the collaboration of physicians, allied medical personnel, county and state health agencies, dedicated volunteers, and Masjid management,” said Dr Zafar Iqbal President of the GOPIO DC Chapter.

Hitesh Kalita

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BY HITESH KALITA

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