

Hello!

Welcome to the fifteenth newsletter from the Lambeth GP Food Co-operative. There's plenty of exciting news and updates from our latest activities, as well as some personal reflections and a chance to get to know our team.

We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter. If you have any ideas for future stories or want any more information please get in touch with us by email gpfoodcoop@gmail.com, and don't forget to keep up-to-date with our activities through Twitter [@gpfoodcoop](https://twitter.com/gpfoodcoop) and our website <http://lambeth.gpfoodcoop.org.uk/>



NEWSLETTER – DECEMBER 2018

Update from Ed

I spent lunch time on our stall at the Wellspring staff restaurant at King's College Hospital where, along with Greg from the Lambeth Walk and Millicent from Corner Surgery gardening groups, we sold over twenty Lambeth GP Food Co-op recipe books to NHS staff. Some staff did not want to buy our book but instead made generous donations to our work, and these donations will help in some small way in keeping us going in the coming months. Their generosity towards the Lambeth GP Food Co-op is a further expression of the NHS and its people at their best, and is received with deep thanks.

In February 2019 we will celebrate our 6th anniversary having built our first gardens at Paxton Green surgery and Lambeth Walk with a formal launch at Brockwell Park surgery the following month. We will be holding a community party in Stockwell on Thursday February 7th from 12-2 pm. Further details will be on our website early next month. I would be delighted if you were able to join us as you are very welcome.

Dr Michael Hooper, a South London GP and vegan, delivered a talk on 'Improving your health through plant-based eating' which was designed to introduce people to a vegetarian and vegan diet. This talk was arranged by a partnership between Brixton Hill surgery, Katakata (a first class vegetarian/vegan restaurant on Brixton Hill), and Lambeth GP Food Co-op. We are planning further talks at Katakata in the new year.

We are eagerly awaiting a decision on funding to enable us to work with Essentia staff and patients at the Pulross Centre in Brixton where we are planning to build a food growing garden for patients recovering from stroke and amputations. Our proposal has been accepted and if funding is secured we will start on this from late January and formally launch the new food growing garden on NHS Sustainability Day on March 21st 2019.

We welcome new Board members who will contribute their wisdom and good humour to steering the Co-op forward in the future. Dr Liz Williams joins us from Clapham Park Group Practice, Simon Ghartey from Progress, Dr Shou Zhang currently a fabulous Psychiatric trainee from Lewisham Hospital and Greg Baldeosingh, who helps keep the herbs growing at Lambeth Walk surgery.

We say good bye and thanks to departing Board members Dr Mohah Sharaf (who I hope will be rejoining us after the birth of her baby); Bernadette Johnson who was there from the beginning; Dr Raj Mitra, the first Lambeth GP to join the Co-op way back in 2013; and Sofia Bustamante whose enthusiasm and insight was so valuable in Board discussions.

So we say good bye to the old year and welcome the new one, which I am sure will be very interesting for us all.

Thank you for your support and Happy Holidays to you.

Ed Rosen, Project Director, Lambeth GP Food Co-op

Welcome to Michelle!

Having come to London from the U.S. this September to study an MSc in Global Public Health Nutrition, my passions lie in the power of food, all that goes into producing, preparing, and eating it, and how that all ties into the health of both individuals and populations. While now such a big part of my life, this passion was not always clear to me. Immediately after completing my undergraduate degree in Communication in 2013, the only thing I was certain of for my future was that it would include travel and cultural exchange. I therefore quickly packed my bags and set off on a two-year trip that would include volunteering, backpacking, teaching and working full-time throughout Latin America; 18 months of which were spent in an English teaching programme with the Ministry of Education in Colombia. That experience, as well as my most recent work experience in community nutrition, led me on a zig-zagged path to get to this point and I'm lucky to have found a course (and field) that tie together issues of international and sustainable development as well as nutrition and public health.



I am thrilled to be taking on the role of Project Manager for the Lambeth GP Food Co-op, a London co-operative organisation that is truly embodying my previously mentioned interests through the use of vegetable gardens to strengthen people's connection with their own health. In this position, I plan to manage existing partnerships within the NHS in order to optimise GP and hospital gardens and realise their potential for enhanced diet, nutrition, health, and overall well-being of the patients. An objective of this includes the incorporation of produce grown in the gardens into patient menus.

Prior to arriving in London, I was working in my home state of Massachusetts as a Programme Coordinator for a campaign titled Cooking Matters. There, I organised and led healthy and money-saving grocery store tours and cooking classes and also worked to expand our participant reach through partners around the state. I now plan to put the skills gained from that role to widening the presence of the Lambeth GP Food Co-op by collaborating with more of the 60 hospitals in London. In community programming, we're always looking for the 'low hanging fruit,' that is the strategy bringing in the biggest impact with the least effort. That is exactly what these urban gardens transformed from unused space represent. With clear benefits for physical, mental and social health already evident in 12 GP surgeries, the answer from hospitals of whether or not to get involved should be just as clear.

Michelle Gilman, Project Manager

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

We are closing for the Christmas break from Tuesday 18th December and will return to work on Wednesday 9th January 2017.

We wish all the participants and supporters of the Lambeth GP Food Co-op a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



Preventing diabetes

ICS Health & Wellbeing are one of four national providers of the NHS National Diabetes Prevention Programme (NDPP), we are the largest of the four and are now the sole provider in the whole of London! The programme provides an opportunity for people that are at high risk of developing type-2 diabetes to learn about nutrition, physical activity, stress, sleep and how they all play a role in our health.

One of the most important lessons within the programme is empowering individuals to take control of their health, to be creative, to be intuitive and use initiative to discover their own path on their route to good health. That is why I wanted to develop a partnership with the Lambeth GP Food Co-op (LGPFC), the activities of our two programmes may differ, but our values and aims are very much aligned.

The LGPFC is a wonderful project that provides people with an opportunity to escape the confines of their home and access green open space and learn a key life skill, how to grow food. Gardening and food growing has been shown to improve various aspects of health and wellbeing, from reducing social isolation, feelings of self-worth and overall quality of life.

We will be working closely with the LGPFC to ensure all participants on the NDPP have this opportunity, to explore their health and wellbeing and find alternative avenues to improve health outcomes.

I am excited to see this partnership flourish, perhaps as quickly as the co-op's gardens do in springtime!

Robbie Puddick, Service Coordinator, Independent Clinical Services (ICS)



My experience of the Lambeth GP Food Co-op

My Name is Carine Ndiva and I am a receptionist at the Corner Surgery and the link person for the Lambeth GP Food Co-op, which has been fun, interesting and a profound learning experience for me.

I get involved with the food co-op by contacting patients and accompanying them to the Jennie Lee Garden in Kings College Hospital on a weekly basis. We have a session once a week every Wednesday. Patients with an interest in gardening meet up at the Garden to participate in the activities. I also generate awareness in other staff members at the surgery, encouraging everyone to get more patients involved.

The garden project is a great tool for keeping patients in touch with the community. It is an opportunity for them to be around other people, make new friends and learn new gardening skills which they can use in their daily lives.

Frequenting the garden has enabled me to pick up valuable skills. Every so often I help out at the garden with tasks such as watering, pruning and harvesting. It is exciting to be a part of the group. We have had an amazing summer this year; this made our experience at the garden even more pleasant.

The produce from the garden is collected and sold once every month at Kings College Hospital. This is a great way to invest back into the project whilst providing the community with fresh locally grown produce. Seeing the seeds grow into herbs and vegetables brings a sense of achievement among the patients. I also help out with selling the produce from the various gardens at the stall, which gives me the opportunity to interact with some of the Doctors and students at the hospital.

The Lambeth GP Food Co-op participated in the Lambeth Country Show in the summer of 2017. I was a part of the team handing out leaflets, speaking to the general public about Lambeth GP Food Co-op and explaining what the aim and purpose of the cooperative is and what the benefits are for the patients. The Corner Surgery prides itself in being a part of the Lambeth GP Food Co-op and it aims to use the avenue to improve the general health and wellbeing of patients through alternative methods such as gardening. It has proven to be very effective with some patients who do not generally go out to meet new people within the community. It is a calming and relaxing activity for others.

There are a lot of people out there who could benefit from the co-operative. The support and collaborative effort from everyone involved makes it all the better and continued support from the NHS is very much needed to keep the work going!

Carine Ndiva, Receptionist, Corner Surgery

For all the latest news and updates about the Lambeth GP Food Co-operative, do have a look at our website – <http://lambeth.gpfoodcoop.org.uk>

On the website, you can also make a donation to keep the good work going in 2019!
Anything you can spare is greatly appreciated.