

Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

Charity name: Greater Manchester Eczema and Skin Support CIO

Charity registration number: 1189914

Objectives and Activities:

GMESS was set up as a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) on 20th June 2020. GMESS aims to promote and protect the physical and mental health of sufferers of eczema and other inflammatory skin conditions in Greater Manchester through the provision of support, education and practical advice. The CIO also aims to advance the education of the general public in all areas relating to eczema and other inflammatory skin conditions.

Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.

Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	Greater Manchester Eczema & Skin Support CIO
Other name the charity uses	GMESS
Registered charity number	1189914
Charity's principal address	Zion Community Resource Centre 339 Stretford Road Hulme Manchester M15 4ZY

Structure, Governance and Management

Type of governing document:	Constitution – Foundation
How is the charity constituted?	Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

Contribution made by Volunteers

Our volunteer Angela (name change), who is also a service user, took on a key role in the design and delivery of support group sessions. She worked with a number of service users to gather discussion topics that they wanted to discuss during support group meetings. This meant that the group conversations were tailored to the needs and interests of the group, making them more relatable. Angela also supported the delivery of a number of sessions which helped boost her confidence in public speaking and session management skills. Her willingness to share her lived

experience of having psoriasis helped to create a supportive environment where everyone felt comfortable sharing their thoughts during group meetings.

Achievements and Performance

Funding achieved during the period:

- **Culturally Appropriate Services Fund Phase 3:** to tackle health inequalities that marginalised ethnic communities face when trying to get help from mental health services.

Participants Activity

Our main participant cohort reside in Manchester, but we continue to receive enquiries from people with skin conditions from other parts of the country including Preston, Rochdale, Stockport, and Blackburn.

During the period we have supported 101 service users via the following activities:

- **Peer support groups** (Online, In-person, WhatsApp) to connect to other people with similar experiences, reduce isolation and share self-care advice.
- **1-to-1 Support** to support service users in achieving their skin health goals using a psychosocial coaching approach.
- **Wellbeing courses** covering the psychological issues related to skin conditions e.g. support, stress, self-image, and the practical application of lifestyle approaches to managing skin health and wellbeing including diet, nutrition, hydration, exercise.
- **Group challenges** developing positive habits to increase hydration and reduce refined sugar foods and beverages to support skin health.
- **Ad hoc support** less frequent conversation with service users e.g. vent frustrations, inform us of how they are doing, answer any queries.
- **General enquiries** members of the public and organisations making contact for advice and information including skin health, referrals, publicity.

Marketing Plan & Promotion

To raise awareness about our areas of work we have continued to target community stakeholders including community groups and health professionals across Manchester. The main methods that have resulted in engagement have been through, word of mouth, local radio adverts, leafleting, WhatsApp messaging, Facebook and X (formerly known as Twitter) messaging. Our support group listing on the National Eczema Society website has contributed to service user engagement.

Outcomes and Impact

Seema (name change) Case study:

Why did you get in contact with GMESS to attend the Healthy Skin Healthy Me course?

I saw your flyer posted in a WhatsApp group. I was just stuck in a rut with using steroid creams, so the flyer really got my attention. My skin wasn't getting any better, it was getting worse with the steroid creams.

My GP also gave me oral steroids for a couple of weeks, it calmed things down, but then after I stopped the oral steroids, the state of my skin got worse again. So, I just wanted to try a different approach which wasn't steroid cream and GP related to see if it would work to be honest. And like you said at the beginning of the course, it's not

just about the skin condition, it's about my emotions and mood as well, it impacts my skin.

My skin was uncomfortable, dry, cut, and not looking very nice and kept me up at night with scratching. This affected everything else that was going on in my life. I was just stuck in a rut with my skin and because of the stress I have going on, and I just didn't feel that my skin was important, so the state of my skin didn't matter.

Since attending the course how have you benefited?

The course has given me a lot of insight about a couple of different aspects to managing my eczema, like mindset, using affirmations to help how I talk to myself, making lifestyle changes, having better habits, diet, and drinking water. It's made me think about all these things, and having a planned approach to it all. Other than just relying on the GP I wasn't doing anything else like drinking water and moisturising to help my skin improve before the course. After doing what I learnt on the course the difference in my skin is amazing. I think I just needed someone to motivate me and say that I need to put my skin first if I want it to improve my skin.

The course made me a lot more aware of how I need to take responsibility for my skin, and that if I don't look after myself then nobody else will. And if I put a bit of effort into looking after my skin, starting with changing my mindset, I would see a difference in my skin, and I definitely have. The itching and irritation have really calmed down and my skin looks and feels better. My mobility was affected because of the sores and cuts on my feet, but this is now much better.

Mindset is definitely a big part of all this. I believe more now that my skin can improve even more, and seeing my skin where it is now has lifted my mood. My attitude towards me taking care of myself and taking the time out to moisturise my skin has changed. I know it sounds dead simple, but when you're stuck in a rut and your mood is low, because of how things are, you can't be bothered with anything to do with taking care of yourself. Seeing the change in my skin is a big thing for me to be honest with you.

What's been the difference in terms of getting support from GMESS for your skin condition versus getting support from your GP?

It's a big difference. The GPs, they just give you steroid creams. They don't look at improving the skin like your course does. It's looking at other things that help like your diet, your mindset, everything about your lifestyle, the whole picture really, and how to develop good habits that help the skin to heal. The course was an education about improving eczema and self-awareness. All these things that we discussed make a huge difference really. The GP, apart from just giving me steroid creams, didn't offer any emotional support or anything like that, to be able to talk about feelings on the course was a massive help.

It was good to do the course with people who were Black and Asian, we're all similar really and we all got on really well, the support from everyone was amazing. Your knowledge about the things we discussed with your experience of having eczema made the course even better I think.

Service User Comments

The following comments demonstrate service user skin improvements and peer support in action (comments taken from our WhatsApp group):

- “Hiya, I recently saw a nutritionist and got some really helpful handouts around anti-inflammatory foods and some recipes for bone broth etc, happy to share them if anyone would be interested 😊”
- “2 mugs of oolong tea down already today everyone 🍵 doesn’t taste very nice but I find it helpful for reducing inflammation, just in case people haven’t tried it before it might help 😊”
- “Thank you for sharing your knowledge Peter (name changed - group member)! It’s very helpful for a lot of us in the group, especially any of us who have environmental allergies, like myself, It’s very appreciated.”
- “Hi everyone, my routine: I start my morning with 500ml of warm water and lemon. Breakfast - live plain soya yoghurt with goji Berries and granola (sunflower and other seeds, oats...) so far. Plus, a tablespoon of aloe vera juice for gut benefits, before breakfast. It helps me to keep on top of skin.
- “Another helpful tip from the diet session was incorporating 3+ portions of oily fish (salmon, mackerel, anchovies, sardines, herring) per week for anti-inflammation and to support the gut lining.”
- “I use the green aveeno mixed with black seed oil. Works wonders for my skin.”
- “Hi all! Just wanted to share a little victory :) I was struggling with my skin getting worse, so I reached out to Paul for some 1-1 support. Not only did he provide much-needed reassurance, but he also got me tracking potential triggers for 2 weeks, and helped me analyse the results. I’m now on day 10 of my action plan, and actually sticking to good habits (like moisturising, which was a struggle before 😊) The itching has completely stopped, two problem areas cleared, and the last one improving daily without any meds. I’ve also experienced a lot more energy and focus thanks to recommended diet changes. Just wanted to say a massive thanks to Paul, and if any of you are struggling, he’s your guy! 💪🙌”
- “I notice I itch less when I remember to drink more water.”
- “I’m seeing some improvement with the hydration and sugar reduction challenge and only really itch when I fall off the wagon! and I also notice when I introduce too much refined food 🍔🍕 and introduce more veg on plate. Just needing the willpower but feel so much more confident and optimistic now I know. Cheers Paul 🍷🍷”
- “I do morning black salt and squeeze of lemon, will help you absorb the water better and boosts the immune system and balances your PH levels, works really well for me.”
- “Hi everyone, I am also wanting to give the 121 sessions with Paul a shout out! The past month I have been in the worst flare up of my life. With Paul’s support on diet and lifestyle changes I am finally starting to see improvements. Tracking my triggers has been so useful to understand what may be worsening/triggering my flares. I am now in a much better place mentally so I am extremely grateful. If any of you are struggling with your skin and you don’t know where to start I would really recommend chatting to Paul. I know certain lifestyle and diet changes can seem like big task, but they are so worth it to see the results in your skin. Put your skin first!”
- “Great session earlier Paul really interesting thanks for organising it, diet is so important in healing my skin.”

Funding

GMESS secured funding from Culturally Appropriate Services Fund Phase 3 totalling £12,754.39

2024-25 Financial Accounts

This year GMESS secured £12,754.39 in funding from GMCVO. There was £17,771 carried forward from 2023-24, mainly due to the Lottery funding of that year not being spent as the service paused for 6 months due to personal issues and lottery agreeing to extend the deadline for that funding. At end of year, £17,018 will be carried forward to 2025-26, to service the lottery and GMCVO funding agreements. A new consultation agreement with Mr Mattis for £15,654 was agreed in September 2024, to service the funding agreements. It is the trustees priority to secure further funding for 2025-26

Greater Manchester Eczema and Skin support					
Receipts and payments accounts					
For the period from		Apr-24	To	Mar-25	
Section A Receipts and payments					
	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Be Well	-	-	-	-	7,500
CCG	-	-	-	-	-
GMCVO	12,754	-	-	12,754	5,085
MSC	-	-	-	-	-
awards for all (lottery)	-	-	-	-	10,000
GM Sport	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	12,754	-	-	12,754	22,583
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	152
cash	-	-	-	-	152
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	12,754	-	-	12,754	22,735
A3 Payments					
Staffing cost	12,285	-	-	12,285	14,421
ICT / phone	483	-	-	483	461
Publicity	425	-	-	425	-
Insurance	96	-	-	96	96
research consultancy	-	-	-	-	-
session materials	-	-	-	-	355
volunteer costs	8	-	-	8	-
session refreshments	-	-	-	-	129
stationary	210	-	-	210	45
gym pass	-	-	-	-	1,139
Sub total	13,508	-	-	13,508	16,646
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	13,508	-	-	13,508	16,646
Net of receipts/(payments)	-753	-	-	-753	6,089
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	17,772	-	-	17,772	11,606
Cash funds this year end	17,018	-	-	17,018	17,696
Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period					
Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £	
B1 Cash funds	Bank	30,526	-	-	
	Total cash funds	17,018	-	-	
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK	
	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £	
B2 Other monetary assets	none	-	-	-	
	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)	
B3 Investment assets	none	0	-	-	
	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)	
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	none	0	-	-	
	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)	
B5 Liabilities	none	0	-	-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name		Date of approval	
		Simon Kweeday		21/09/2025	
	Muhammed Shaikh	Muhammed Shaikh		21/09/2025	

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

Trustee name	Office	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee
Simon Paul Kweeday	Chair	04/06/2020	Other trustees vote
Marcella Angela Turner		28/08/2020	Other trustees vote
Muhammad Aurangzeb Shaikh		04/06/2020	Other trustees vote

Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved

- There are no corporate Trustees

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

- Trustees do not hold any property or assets for the charity

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

- None

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members

- Paul Mattis CEO

Exemptions from disclosure

- None

Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above. Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees			
Signature			
Full name(s)	Simon Kweeday	Muhammed Shaikh	Marcella Turner

Position	Chair	Trustee	Trustee
Date	06/01/2025	07-01-25	06/01/2025