

Nightingale Mosque – Another function for the mosque in the time of Covid19

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Over the past month I have frequently heard that we are going through ‘unprecedented times’ and you can dispute that. We have been exposed to an invisible enemy who without distinction affects all ages, races and sexes without discrimination and is now a real threat to healthcare workers with many of our colleagues now falling on the front line. As communities struggle with the lock down we find prominent buildings around the country now left abandoned which were until recently the hub of their communities.

At Masjid E Ghosia in Deane, Bolton we have decided to explore how we can still utilise our mosque as the hub of our community. As COVID 19 spreads across the country and the morbidity and mortality rate rises on a daily basis we find ourselves heading for a crisis seen across the world with healthcare services struggling to managing demand. The frail and elderly alongside those with long standing severe chronic conditions will be in competition with those of a younger usually healthier disposition as the ventilator beds become scarcer.

At our mosque with the support of the mosque committee we have decided to explore the possibility of using the premises to support the local community who need healthcare support but may struggle to access main stream NHS services due to their illness, age or likelihood of recovery. The premises possess 12 side rooms to utilise for 22 beds. As a community project with volunteers and donations from interested parties we intend to support the local residents of all faiths where they struggle to manage their ailments at home or may have family complications of family members being quarantined due to a COVID 19 positive patient at home. The project is concentrating on the end of life cohort and with this being a mosque facility we have the necessary wash facilities (Ghusl) for the deceased on site making this more convenient to facilitate the burial process.

As I mentioned at the beginning we are in ‘unprecedented times’ and we have an opportunity when communities for once cannot solely rely on the health and social care system

to meet the needs of all residents of our communities. This is a time for mosques (and other religious dwellings) to show how they can support their communities and abandon segregation to adopt a united approach to a war we are currently engaged in with no imminent sight of a cure.