

RESPECT ME + YOU, IS YOUR SYPHILIS CHECK UP DUE?’ CAMPAIGN (2021): EMPOWERING OUR OWN HEALTH CHOICES THROUGH ART, COLLABORATION AND EDUCATION

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Background/Purpose:

The ‘Respect Me + You, Is Your Syphilis Check Up Due?’ campaign (2021) was developed as a collaboration between Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia (AHCSA) and SHINE SA in response to the ongoing syphilis outbreak in regional and rural communities in South Australia. The main objective of the campaign was to raise awareness of syphilis and encourage young people to reduce the spread of syphilis in three steps: test, treat and notify partners.

Approach:

The campaign was live from May to July 2021 and used a multi-channel approach including the production of campaign materials, digital advertising and distribution of materials and resources. Multiple audiences/priority groups were targeted with a focus on young Aboriginal people in regional and rural South Australia. Campaign messaging focused on sexual health checks and general wellbeing, syphilis testing and the harms of syphilis in pregnancy. Original art design was central to the campaign and took an approach of normalising STI testing as part of a general wellbeing approach – ‘end the cycle, stay connected’.

Outcomes/Impact:

The digital marketing approach enabled messages to reach a broad geographical audience and target a younger audience. Social media users aged 18-34 made up 76.6% of the campaign link engagements. The results were successful with the total landing page views reaching 1,006 users and engagement of 54,251 social media users. This campaign highlighted the effectiveness of multi-channel campaigns and the strengths of collaboration, art and education.

Innovation and Significance:

The campaign is distinct from other recent South Australian campaigns in its focus specifically on syphilis and novel approach to campaign imagery and delivery. The campaign raised awareness that while the focus of health services became centred on COVID-19, it was vitally important that we continued to test, treat and notify partners in response to the outbreak of infectious syphilis in South Australia.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

The Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia declares no known conflicts of interest.