

“IT’S REALLY REFRESHING TO BE INVOLVED IN SOMETHING WHERE OUR PERSPECTIVE AND OPINION WAS RESPECTED AND TAKEN SERIOUSLY” – CO-DESIGNING IT’S YOUR RIGHT, A PEER-LED HEPATITIS C HEALTH PROMOTION CAMPAIGN FOR PEOPLE WHO INJECT DRUGS

Authors:

Walsh L^{1*}, Leyden E^{2*}, Adamson E¹, Combo T^{1,3}, Christensen S¹, Dicka J⁴, Hellard M^{1,5}, Pedrana A^{1,5}, and on behalf of the EC Australia National Reference Group

¹Eliminate Hepatitis C Australia (EC Australia), Burnet Institute; ²Queensland Injectors Health Network; ³Poche Centre for Indigenous Health, The University of Queensland; ⁴Harm Reduction Victoria ⁵Department of Epidemiology and Preventative Medicine, Monash University

*L Walsh and E Leyden are sharing first authorship

Background:

It’s Your Right was the first Australia-wide hepatitis C health promotion campaign to be co-designed with peer workers with living and lived experience of injecting drug use. *It’s Your Right* aimed to increase hepatitis C testing and treatment uptake in people who inject drugs. Between July 2019 – December 2021 the co-design group developed the positive, vibrant, rights-based campaign, which was implemented nationally in 2022. This presentation will share the benefits and challenges of the co-design process, and recommendations for future co-design activities.

Methods:

18 people (10 peer workers, 8 non-peer group members) involved in the co-design of *It’s Your Right* were interviewed about their experiences of being involved. Transcripts were analysed using deductive thematic analysis.

Results:

Participants reported that centering the experiences of people who inject drugs through peer workers being partners in co-design, and by testing designs and messages with intended audiences during the co-design process, led to the campaign being more appropriate for people who inject drugs. Openness, honesty, trust and respect within the co-design group allowed for “frank and fearless” discussions, sharing of expertise and knowledge, and increased links between participating organisations. Peer involvement in the co-design also led to feelings of ownership over the campaign by partner organisations, which increased excitement and motivation around implementation. COVID-19 was a challenge, lengthening the co-design process, and forcing a shift to co-designing online. Online co-design allowed for greater, and more regular, participation from across Australia, however some participants found online activities challenging due to difficulties building rapport, competing work priorities, and “Zoom fatigue”.

Conclusion:

Co-designing *It’s Your Right* with peer workers resulted in a nuanced campaign messaging and design which resonated with people who inject drugs. Recommendations for future co-design activities include shortening the timeline for design, and adopting a hybrid co-design model combining online and face-to-face activities.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

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