

UTILISING SOCIAL MEDIA TO PROMOTE DRIED BLOOD SPOT SELF-SAMPLING HIV TESTING TO DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

Authors:

NATALI SMUD¹, SONAM PALJOR¹, GAI STACKPOOL¹, SHIH-CHI KAO^{2,3}, PHILIP CUNNINGHAM⁴, ANNA MCNULTY⁵, TIM DUCK⁶, CHERIE POWER⁶, JO HOLDEN⁶

¹Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service, Sydney, Australia, ²SLHD HARP Unit, Sydney, Australia, ³Pozhet NSW, Sydney, Australia, ⁴St. Vincent's Centre for Applied Medical Research, Sydney, Australia, ⁵Sydney Sexual Health Centre, Sydney, Australia, ⁶NSW Ministry of Health, Sydney, Australia.

Purpose:

NSW Health launched the NSW Dried Blood Spot (DBS) HIV testing pilot program in 2016 to increase HIV testing in priority populations to reduce late diagnosis, whereby eligible individuals register online to receive a free, self-sampling DBS HIV test kit via post.

As a key promotion strategy the Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service (MHAHS), in partnership with Pozhet, implemented a series of multilingual Facebook campaigns among priority heterosexual and diverse communities.

Approach:

The promotion strategy combined health promotion and social media marketing practices. Key messages were developed in plain English, Chinese, Vietnamese, Indonesian, Thai, Arabic, Spanish, Portuguese and Khmer. Digital animations and other visual assets were designed to further enhance reach to these populations.

Four campaigns were executed between June 2017 and March 2018, with target populations and assets adapted for each campaign. A social media toolkit was developed and distributed to key health, community and culturally and linguistically diverse organisations to increase community engagement.

Impact:

Campaign performance was evaluated through a methodical review of Facebook and website traffic analytics. All campaigns had a high reach with a total of 683,336 impressions and 12,057 link clicks to the DBS website, where eligible people could register for a test kit. The number of HIV DBS tests increased over the campaign period. Campaign analytics provided insights into the level of audience engagement by language, gender, age group, and visual assets, which was used to inform the execution of each subsequent campaign.

Innovation and significance:

The project learnings inform best practice for successfully targeting diverse communities, using an innovative approach involving non-traditional communication channels such as Facebook.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

The Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis service is a NSW statewide service hosted by Sydney Local Health District, NSW Health.