Early detection and awareness of lung cancer

Project details

**Full project title:** Early detection and awareness of lung cancer

**Sponsor:** Avon, Somerset and Wiltshire Cancer Services and NHS Bristol, with funding from the National Awareness and Early Detection Initiative (NAEDI)

**BSMC team:** Alan Tapp and Katie Collins

Project summary

**Background**

Lung cancer is the second most common cancer diagnosed within the UK. Often people present late for investigation, and survival rates in the UK are significantly worse than elsewhere in Europe. While the obvious answer to lung cancer prevention is to target smoking, recent attention has also focused on the value of increasing awareness of cancer symptoms for increasing early detection.

Avon, Somerset and Wiltshire Cancer Services and Bristol PCT, with funding from NAEDI, commissioned BSMC to run a field trial to determine the most effective way to increase early detection of lung cancer.

**The research**

A review of the literature on cancer detection and behaviour change theory allied to learning from social marketing case studies suggested a number of emotional and practical barriers, as well as the opportunity to capitalise on social influences and strong community ties. For clarity, a simple message was chosen: "3 week cough? Get it checked".

Following two pieces of qualitative research among the target market to;

- a) gain insight on attitudes and behaviour surrounding detection of lung cancer, and
- b) test several intervention concepts, different approaches were trialled in four deprived areas.

Selected GP practices in every area received a set of materials developed in collaboration with Secondary Care professionals informing them of our initiative and reinforcing the importance of referral for chest x-ray. One area received the GP awareness materials only, thus functioning as a control for the social marketing interventions.

**Results**

A marketing communications campaign was conceived in collaboration with a creative and media planner. Six concepts were tested in focus groups; the best was developed into a multi-media campaign that appeared on posters, buses and bus shelters, local press, pub media and a leaflet
through the door. A collaborative process facilitated by agency Uscreates brought together community volunteers, members of the target audience and many other stakeholders including nurses, health trainers and smoking cessation advisors.

**Project outputs**

Overall, the social marketing interventions were successful in raising awareness of the message about coughing.

Co-creation has been the most effective in raising awareness and increasing knowledge; it was also the most cost-effective.

Combining communications and co-creation results in greater recall of the communications, but was less effective at increasing awareness and knowledge than the co-created intervention.

**Publications**

- A report of field trials of social marketing interventions for early detection of lung cancer in men
- Press release from NHS Bristol

Watch a film about the project:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=XdATQz3j2zM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=XdATQz3j2zM)