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Cervical Screening Wales: reassurance campaign evaluation

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Purpose and Summary of Document:

This document is an evaluation of the communications campaign that ran from Wednesday 29 June until Monday 22 August 2022. The campaign sought to reassure women and people with a cervix that cervical screening is a safe and effective way to prevent cervical cancer.

This evaluation will use the [Government Communication Service \(GCS\) framework](#), which includes:

- Inputs: *what we put in, our planning*
- Outputs: *what is produced, such as audience reach*
- Outtakes: *subject-oriented stakeholder experiences and communicator-oriented learning about communication practice*
- Outcomes: *stakeholder behaviour, what the impact of communication and engagement activity is, and whether we achieved the desired organisational impact or policy aim and content creation*

1 Overview

1.1 Communications Objectives

In January 2022, Public Health Wales announced that the routine interval between cervical screening tests for women and people with a cervix aged 25-49 was changing from three to five years. Following the highly publicised public response to the announcement on social media, this campaign sought to:

- Rebuild trust in the safety and effectiveness of the cervical screening programme in Wales
- Build understanding of HPV and HPV testing
- Build support from screening participants, professionals, stakeholders and influencers

1.2 Audience

This campaign was targeted primarily at women and people with a cervix aged 24-49 in Wales. A particular focus was given to reaching women in communities where screening uptake is generally lower, specifically:

- Women living in areas with a high C2DE population
- Women from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities

1.3 Key Successes

The campaign succeeded in:

- Developing a series of key messages shaped by four rounds of audience testing
- Achieving a combined reach of 173,215 across organic Facebook posts
- Gaining significantly more positive than negative reactions to organic Facebook posts. (Of the 455 reactions received, 327 were likes or loves.)
- Reaching 223,202 women aged 24-49 in Wales through Facebook and Instagram ads
- Reaching 149,900 women aged 24-49 in C2DE communities through Instagram and Facebook ads (99% of the estimated audience size of 150,800)

- Reaching 8,848 women aged 24-49 from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities through Instagram and Facebook ads (98% of estimated audience size of 9,000)
- Achieving 103,200 impressions and 93,531 video views through TikTok ads

2 Inputs

2.1 Agency spend

- The creative agency cowshed charged £19,374 for their role in the campaign's development and delivery, which included:
 - Creative development
 - Content production
 - Translation
 - Social media scheduling

2.2 Planning

During the planning phase of the campaign, we:

- Developed a comprehensive communications plan
- Produced a PESTLE analysis which captured potential risks and mitigations
- Produced a detailed list of reactive lines against enquiry
- Established a clear signoff process at team, divisional and directorate level
- Created a detailed plan for organic social media content
- Created a detailed plan for the development and delivery of targeted social media ads
- Developed a detailed stakeholder management plan

2.3 Content development

During the content development phase, we:

- Created a list of key messages
- Tested these messages with four community groups:
 - Booby Babies at Westward Community Centre, Bridgend
 - Bounce and Play at Ogmores Vale Life Centre
 - Christchurch Mums and Toddlers Group, Newport
 - Women Connect First, Cardiff
- Solicited feedback from stakeholders in the third sector, including Cancer Research UK and Jo's Trust

2.4 Content creation

A range of digital content was produced for this campaign, including:

- Social media assets:
 - 3 x 2-minute animated videos in English and Welsh, each tailored to a specific priority audience
 - 5 x 30-second animated videos in English and Welsh
 - 5 x 'carousels' of static images in English and Welsh
 - 2 x 'TikTok-style' explainer videos in English and Welsh (not completed and unused)
- Social media posts:
 - 17 organic social media posts across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram in English and Welsh
 - 12 social media ads in English and Welsh across Facebook, Instagram and TikTok
- Stakeholder email for distribution to health boards, third sector stakeholders and the Welsh Government's communications team
- Letter to Members of the Senedd informing them of the campaign
- Public Health Wales intranet story and staff newsletter update

2.5 Community moderation and crisis management

During the course of the campaign, we:

- Managed the response to several negative comments relating to our use of ungendered language in a Twitter post
- Carried out community moderation for 17 social media posts
- Developed and monitored a Brandwatch dashboard that could be used to establish the public response to campaign posts
- Kept track of the reach and engagement of 17 social media posts and 12 social media ads

3 Outputs

3.1 Reach/impressions: organic social media

- Organic Facebook posts achieved a combined reach of 173,215, with each post reaching an average of 21,651 people
- Organic Twitter posts gained 31,723 impressions
- Organic Instagram posts achieved a combined reach of 10,129

3.2 Reach/impressions: paid social media

- Facebook and Instagram ads reached 223,202 women aged 24-49 in Wales (38% of the estimated audience size: 579,900)
- Facebook and Instagram ads reached 8,848 women aged 24-49 in Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities (98% of estimated audience size of 9,000)
- Facebook and Instagram ads reached 149,900 women aged 24-49 in C2DE communities (99% of estimated audience size of 150,800)
- TikTok ads achieved 103,200 impressions
- The story on Public Health Wales' intranet achieved 171 views

3.3 Stakeholder engagement

- 60 Members of the Senedd receive a letter to inform them about the campaign, its purpose and scope
- Campaign materials and messaging were delivered to
 - Heads of communications at all seven health boards
 - The Welsh Government's communications team

3.4 Community moderation

- 10 social media comments were removed as a result of users failing to comply with Public Health Wales' community moderation guidelines

4 Outtakes

4.1 Organic social media engagement

Organic social media posts received below average engagement (likes, shares, post clicks etc). However, the response of users who did choose to engage with and react to campaign posts was overwhelmingly positive.

- Engagement rates for organic Facebook posts ranged from 0.2% (very low engagement) to 1.3% (fair engagement)
- Organic Facebook posts received 455 reactions, an average of 56 per post, of which 327 were likes and loves
- Organic Facebook posts received 352 shares, averaging 44 per post, a large proportion of which were professional stakeholders (see below)

- In contrast to Facebook, the two organic Twitter posts achieved an engagement rate of 5% and 2.7% (extremely high engagement). The 5% figure was the result of some users speaking against and others in defence of our use of ungendered language

4.2 Paid social media engagement

Engagement with the campaign's social media adverts was extremely low. Across all social media ads, there were:

- Four comments
- 85 reactions
- 29 shares

4.3 Video views and actions

- Of the 223,202 women aged 24-49 in Wales who saw Facebook and Instagram ads
 - 4,479 (2%) watched at least 15 seconds of a campaign video
 - 562 (0.25%) clicked on the link to the Cervical Screening Wales website
- Of the 8,848 women from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities that saw Facebook and Instagram ads
 - 286 (3.25%) watched at least 15 seconds of a campaign video
 - 47 (0.5%) clicked on the link to the Cervical Screening Wales website
- Of the 149,900 women from C2DE communities that saw Facebook and Instagram ads
 - 6,812 (4.5%) watched at least 15 seconds of a campaign video
 - 796 (0.5%) clicked on the link to the Cervical Screening Wales website
- Videos on TikTok were viewed 93,531 times by women aged 24-49 in Wales

4.4 Stakeholder engagement

- The campaign's first organic Facebook post was shared 121 times, including by
 - four health boards
 - five community health councils
 - 15 GP practices

- Subsequent organic Facebook posts were also shared widely by key stakeholders
- The campaign's first Twitter post was shared by the Chief Medical Officer for Wales

5 Outcomes

- We can be confident that as a result of the campaign's large reach:
 - Many women aged 24-49 in Wales, including those in communities where uptake is generally low, are more aware of what cervical screening is
 - Many women aged 24-49 have an improved knowledge of HPV and HPV testing than they did prior to the campaign
- The public response (Facebook reactions, comments etc) to the campaign's organic social media posts suggests that many people who objected to the interval change in January have been moved from a negative to a neutral or even a positive stance on the issue
- Similarly, the response from key professional stakeholders, a number of whom shared campaign material, support there remains a high level of trust in Public Health Wales and its screening programmes

6 Lessons learned

- The use of a PESTLE analysis before the campaign launch was a useful way of thinking through risks and mitigations collaboratively; this should be replicated in future campaigns
- Using additive language (i.e. 'women and people with a cervix') is both inclusive and the most effective way to combat negative comments on social media;
- A clear, consistent and evidence-based approach to the use of inclusive language in social media communications should be developed to inform future campaigns
- Future campaigns should make every effort to make the outcomes measurable, e.g. through pre- and post-campaign surveys
- Perhaps surprisingly, the campaign's full 2-minute animations engaged more users than the shorter ones
- Future campaigns should consider a more proactive approach to responding to comments from individual social media users, this would require resourcing

- Ads targeted at smaller audience segments (i.e. women in Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic or C2DE communities) tended to perform better than those targeted more broadly at all women aged 24-49 in Wales