

Title of Intervention and Website: HEBS Walking Campaign (Health Education Board for Scotland)

Intervention Strategies: Campaigns and Promotions, Individual Education

Purpose of the Intervention: To promote walking as a healthy form of exercise

Population: Irregular exercisers aged 30-55

Setting: Scotland, community-based

Partners: Health Education Board for Scotland; TV stations; radio stations; survey companies

Intervention Description:

- Campaigns and Promotions: A national mass media campaign was launched that consisted of a 40-second television commercial with a national sports celebrity promoting walking. Radio stations featured local walking opportunities and interviews with local walkers and professionals.
- Individual Education: The program included a telephone hotline, Fitline, which distributed free information packs to callers and included data about the energy expenditure involved in walking. Two booklets provided general information about exercise and contact names and telephone numbers for local walking groups.

Theory: Stages of Change

Resources Required:

- Staff/Volunteers: not mentioned
- Training: not mentioned
- Technology: media development
- Space: not mentioned
- Budget: not mentioned
- Intervention: commercial air time, commercial development, direct response telephone line, walking information packs including two booklets (Hassle Free Exercise and Walking: where and when), radio airtime,
- Evaluation: Communications Tracking Survey, Baseline and follow-up surveys for Fitline users

Evaluation:

- Design: quasi-experimental, no control
- Methods and Measures: Baseline and follow-up surveys were conducted with those who telephoned.
Fitline
 - Pre- and post-campaign measures included awareness of campaign, impact on knowledge/beliefs about exercise/walking and motivation/intention to exercise/walk via telephone surveys and national population surveys.
 - Communications Tracking Survey was a monitoring survey carried out by the Centre for Social Marketing every 4 months - with added questions regarding the walking campaign.

Outcomes:

- Short term Impact:
 - Awareness of the campaign commercial peaked at 70%. Awareness of the local radio features gradually increased from 8% at the start to 21%. Awareness of Fitline rose 9% to 16% but only 5% used the service.
 - There was a positive impact on knowledge and beliefs about walking as form of exercise but no notable overall impact on intention to walk. Among those who actively responded to the walking campaign there was a positive impact on exercise intentions.
 - No notable evidence of change in walking behavior. Among Fitline callers, roughly half of the respondents in the 1-year follow-up claimed to have increased their physical activity level.
- Long Term Impact: not mentioned

Maintenance: Not mentioned

Lessons Learned: The use of television advertising can help to achieve broad population coverage, but to be effective the messages conveyed must be simple. The message can then be built upon in subsequent advertising campaigns. An important reason why the HEBS (Health Education Board for Scotland) walking TV advertisement attained high awareness levels and had popular appeal was that it presented surprising new information and achievable goals in an encouraging, friendly, conversational tone which helps to draw people in. There is a need to develop other forms of follow-up support to TV advertising (other than the direct response service) that has greater appeal to the lower socio-economic groups. Convincing evidence of change is more likely to be detected if the indicators used are sensitive and specific to the advertising materials.

Citation(s):

Wimbush, E., A. MacGregor, et al. (1998). "Impacts of a national mass media campaign on walking in Scotland." *Health Promotion International* 13(1): 45-53.