

Your Sexual Health Matters.

The brief

Derbyshire Community Health Service (DCHS) asked us to help them increase awareness of NHS sexual health services in Derbyshire. They particularly wanted to raise awareness amongst hard to reach groups, such as the homeless, sex workers, people who use drugs and alcohol, men who have sex with men (MSM) and young people.

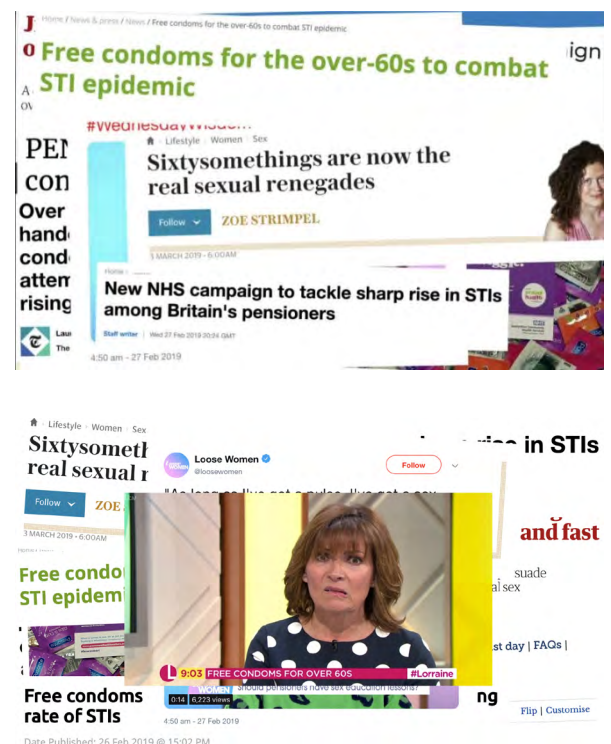
In late 2018, they commissioned us to undertake research with residents and use the insights to design a county- wide campaign for 2019. Our research led to a campaign targeting four population segments: Young people lacking confidence, Over 35's, vulnerable adults and people who fail to show up for NHS appointments (and waste resources).

What we did

As we do with all campaigns, we started with research and scoping, which included a review of the data available. This research focused on understanding the issues and challenges affecting awareness of sexual health services, attendance at those services and the behaviour of not practicing safe sex.

We conducted both quantitative and qualitative research with residents and captured awareness pre-campaign to help us measure the impact after the campaign. Our research explored residents' attitudes and behaviours to safe sex and the 'appeal' of sexual health services. We also used hypothetical scenarios to understand their awareness of a range of sexual health issues.

We discovered that whilst heterosexual residents are accessing services in great numbers, modelling using national data and local population data showed that 64% of the lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) population in Derbyshire are currently accessing services, compared to only 2% of the local heterosexual population. This told us that the LGB community is supported by sexual health services which was great news. We wanted to ensure that this campaign continued to support the LGB population – including reaching out to the transsexual community (LGBT) but decided with this campaign to take a different creative approach. We felt that it was time to ensure that communication and campaign messages did not target people based on sexuality, because the message should be 'sex is sex'. We therefore wanted to design an inclusive campaign where messages and imagery talks to all regardless of sexuality, gender, ethnicity or age.



Talking of age, we found that most residents aged over 35 feel that NHS sexual health services are 'not for them'. In response we created 'Jiggle Wiggle' as many are calling it - which targets people aged over 35 and acknowledges that people of all ages are having sex - and are at risk too if they choose to have unsafe sex.



Other campaign creative

Not excluding young people, we designed #ownthemoment which is aimed at residents under 35 - particularly those lacking confidence to speak up in the 'key moment'. This audience lack confidence to speak up or talk about safe sex either before sex or in the moments before. They either fear this discussion, assume it is covered or feel it will be ok. Some believe it will also ruin the moment. Our '#ownthemoment' concept will aim to normalise the behaviour of just wearing a condom (if you are male) which is putting it on without the need for discussion or demanding it (if you are female). This is a message that will speak to a wider audience – but will resonate with people who are lacking confidence and not currently initiating these behaviours.

The client also asked us to look at how they can support vulnerable populations in Derbyshire and ensure the message of 'safe sex' and sexual health services reaches them too - including people who are homeless, sex workers, men who have sex with men and people with drug or alcohol dependency. We found that many people with no income or low income and living in poverty and hardship will not prioritise safe sex or their sexual health. There are various reasons including a view that condoms are too expensive to buy, food and shelter is a higher priority and their situations make it hard for them to look after their sexual health (and health overall). This group of people could include people who are homeless, living in refuge, accessing support from local charities/ food banks or taking part in risk taking behaviours. Our campaign is targeting this group of people with messages of support and we have made it easier for people to access free condoms, advice and support by promoting safe sex and sexual health services at venues including food banks and outreach centres – the places most likely to be visited by people who might hold views that condoms are too expensive and who might feel that sexual health is low on their priority list.

In relation to service use, we found that there was a low awareness of the different service options available to residents and low awareness of sexual health clinic locations in Derbyshire.

Residents are often confused about where to go for specific sexual health services, with many going to their GP in the first instance before thinking of going to local sexual health services. Those aged 30 and over tend to think that specific sexual health services are not intended for them, believing instead that services are aimed at younger people.

We created a guide to what is available at pharmacies, GP's, NHS sexual health services (face to face and online). We also included the 'self care' message, promoting what people should be doing to look after their sexual health. The campaign is currently running and is due to end in April 2019.

In addition, we created the 'Not coming' concept (which is of course, a bit cheeky for a sexual health campaign) to encourage people to call and cancel if they are not intending to show up to their NHS appointment. Each missed appointment costs the NHS around £120 and thousands are missed each year in Derbyshire alone. Although largely a social media campaign, some print has been distributed to support the online campaign. The campaign was thoroughly tested with residents before launch and is subject to ongoing evaluation.



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