

Boxer mental health campaign evaluation

Summary

In December 2022, the Public Health Agency (PHA) ran 'Boxer', a mental health mass media campaign. The campaign ran over six weeks and was a rerun of an existing campaign that evaluated positively.

The aim of the campaign was to encourage openness and discussion in relation to mental health problems, increase help-seeking behaviour and reinforce the concept of recovery. This campaign preceded a campaign promoting Lifeline, Northern Ireland's crisis response helpline. The Lifeline campaign ran from 16 January 2023 until 31 March 2023.

The primary audience for the campaign was all adults. Consideration was also given to those people at greater risk of suicide – males and those who live in more deprived areas. Family and friends of those most at risk of suicide were a secondary audience.

Reach: Almost three out of five of those surveyed (59%) were aware of at least one element of the campaign.

Positive action: 74% of those exposed to the Boxer campaign prior to taking part in the survey reported doing something to improve their mental wellbeing or tried to get help for someone else as a result of seeing or hearing the campaign.

Background

In Northern Ireland, one in five adults have a potential mental health problem.¹ Mental health is shaped by the wide-ranging characteristics (including inequalities) of the social, economic and physical environments in which people live.

The Department of Health's [Mental Health Strategy 2021-2031](#) sets out what needs to be done to improve people's mental health and wellbeing, and improve services for people with mental health problems.

A key action of the strategy is to increase public awareness of how life can impact upon mental wellbeing and increase public knowledge of the key measures that can be taken to look after mental wellbeing. The action also aims to increase understanding of mental ill health and reduce stigma by encouraging people to talk about their mental health.

Campaign advertising

The mass media campaign ran for six weeks starting on 3 December 2022 across TV, radio, outdoor and digital, including social media advertising. The campaign was exposed over 21 million times. The campaign was supported by engagement with partners and stakeholders.

¹ Health Survey (NI) 2019/2020: www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/health-survey-northern-ireland-first-results-201920



Evaluation method

A population-based survey was conducted with an adult general population sample in Northern Ireland. Fieldwork for the survey ran in February 2023 and was undertaken as part of a wider omnibus survey by a market research company. Quota sampling was applied to ensure a diverse response across a range of demographic groupings. In total, 1,000 adults (aged 18+) in Northern Ireland participated. Data were analysed by the PHA's Health Intelligence Unit.

Results

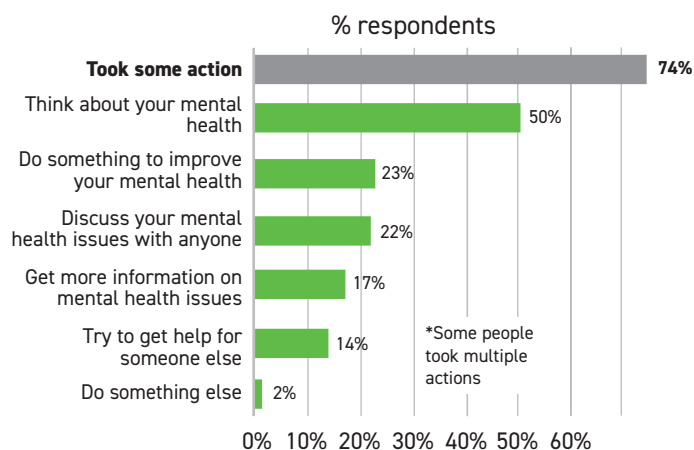
Recognition of the campaign was high

Almost three out of five of all respondents (59%) were aware of at least one element of the campaign prior to taking part in the survey. The TV/video advert was most recognised at 52%, with the majority of these people reporting that they saw it on TV (93%) and 12% saying they saw the advert online. Nearly a quarter (23%) said they had heard the radio advert with the same percentage (23%) reporting they had seen the outdoor poster.

Campaign impact

Of the 59% who saw or heard at least one element of the campaign prior to taking part in the survey, nearly three quarters (74%) reported doing something to improve their mental wellbeing or tried to get help for someone else, as a result. Doing something as a result was more common among those who had experienced a mental health problem (78% vs 69%) or had been exposed to mental health problems via self or others (77% vs 63%).

Action taken following exposure to the campaign*



Talking about mental health problems

An objective of the campaign was to encourage discussion about mental health problems and 22%

discussed their mental health issues with someone as a result of exposure to the campaign.

Reactions to the campaign were very positive

Out of all respondents, 95% thought the campaign was very/somewhat believable. Similarly 94% of all respondents thought the campaign was at least somewhat credible.

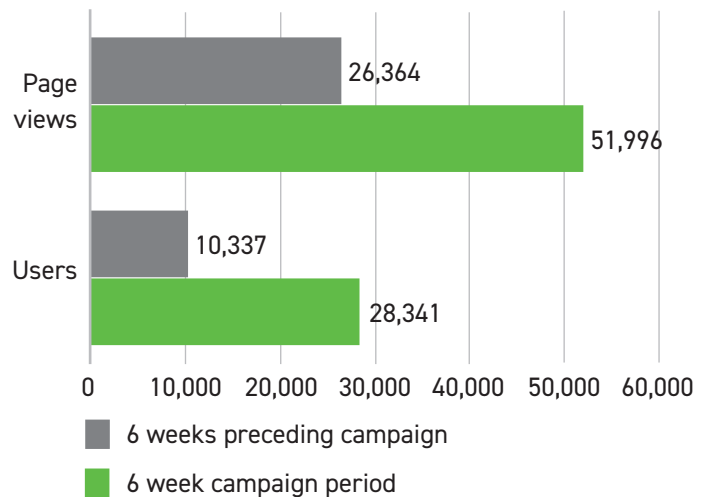
Nearly nine out of 10 of all respondents (87%) said the campaign was very/somewhat thought provoking and nearly three quarters (73%) thought the campaign was at least somewhat relevant.

Of those who were exposed to the campaign prior to taking part in the survey, 100% thought the campaign was clear and easy to understand, 90% said that the Boxer campaign stood out from other campaigns, and 74% said they learned something new.

Online engagement

The campaign signposted to www.mindingyourhead.info for advice and information. Traffic to the website indicates the campaign generated interest in finding out more.

Minding your head website traffic



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