# PROJECT TITLE:
Improving breast awareness in women aged 45 - 54

## Location:
Camden (intervention area) and Kensington & Chelsea (control area), London

## PROJECT DETAILS

**Problem addressed:**
Breast cancer is now the most commonly diagnosed cancer in the UK, accounting for nearly 1 in 3 of all female cancers. Nearly 46,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer every year in the UK and 1,000 women will die every month from this disease.

Although survival rates for the disease are improving, recent research has highlighted that survival rates from breast cancer in the UK were among the lowest in Europe.

Diagnosing and treating breast cancer at the earliest possible opportunity offers the best chances of survival from breast cancer.

Most breast cancers are detected by women who report any unusual changes to their doctor. There is evidence that being ‘breast aware’ (knowing the signs and symptoms of breast cancer and the importance of early presentation and detection) and regularly attending NHS breast screening appointments when invited are two of the three most influential factors on breast cancer survival in the UK (the third being improved treatments).

Research by Breakthrough Breast Cancer had showed that whilst 80% of breast cancers occur in women aged over 50, these women have low breast awareness.

Breakthrough Breast Cancer believed that it was therefore necessary to develop breast awareness messages to target women in this age group through an innovative awareness raising campaign.

The project focussed on women aged 45 – 54 as this is the age at which women’s risk of breast cancer significantly increases. The risk of a woman developing breast cancer at some point in her lifetime is 1 in 9, however, this risk is only 1 in 50 up to the age of 50. It’s therefore critical to reach these women as they approach the menopause when their risk increases. It also includes women approaching the entry age for the NHS Breast Screening Programme and the women who will be invited to their first two breast screening appointments.
Cancer Awareness & Early Diagnosis
Project Examples

Project description:
The aim of this social marketing project was to run and evaluate a pilot breast cancer education and awareness campaign targeting women aged 45 - 54 in two areas in England in order to improve knowledge and awareness of breast cancer, its signs and symptoms, and the importance of early diagnosis via breast awareness and breast screening.

The areas covered by Camden and Kensington & Chelsea PCTs were chosen on the basis of a number of factors, including having a low uptake of NHS breast screening programme invitations, screen-detected breast cancers at a more advanced stage than other parts of the country, and overall low breast awareness. The two areas are in the same geographic location in order that one could act as the intervention (Camden) and the other as the control (Kensington & Chelsea).

A project advisory group was set up to advise on the planning and implementation of the project and to provide support for the project team. This advisory group formed the basis of the partnership with NHS Camden and included external expertise, a healthcare representative and a lay representative.

A social marketing approach was adopted to ensure that the resulting awareness raising campaign would be both targeted and effective. Extensive exploratory research was an integral part of the project to ensure that the views, attitudes and perceptions of the target audience were explored in as much depth as possible.

The exploratory research amongst women aged 45-54 showed that many of the attitudes, barriers and behaviours related to breast awareness and screening attendance did not vary much between socio-economic groups. However, there did appear to be differences between women of pre-screening age (45-49) and women of screening age (50-54).

As a result, the primary target audience of women aged 45-54 was segmented into the two groups, 45-49 and 50-54, and the key messages and any intervention activities were targeted as such:

45 – 49 year old women (who are approaching the age when risk of breast cancer significantly increases)
• Aim: to increase understanding of breast awareness, knowledge of breast cancer signs and symptoms, and the NHS breast screening programme in advance of an initial invitation.

50 – 54 year old women (who are about to receive their first invitation for a breast screening appointment)
• Aim: to build on current breast awareness and knowledge of breast cancer signs and symptoms and encourage women to attend their first screening.
breast screening appointment when invited by showing this as part of being breast aware. To influence an increased uptake of first invitation to screening.

It was also recognised that local primary healthcare professionals would be an important part of the delivery of the intervention and they were therefore included as a secondary target audience.

A number of key partnerships were essential in developing the intervention campaign. Aside from the vital inclusion of NHS Camden, Breakthrough also worked in partnership with two research organisations and a creative agency to ensure that the intervention campaign responded to the insight gained through the exploratory research.

The Screening Co-ordinator at NHS Camden was involved at every stage of the project and this strong working relationship was vital in the planning and delivery of the intervention campaign, *Be Your Own Breast Friend*.

Breakthrough’s collaboration with NHS Camden made it possible for the intervention to combine more traditional PR and marketing activities, such as door drops, outdoor advertising, advertorials and media work, with a more community-based approach, such as visits to GP practices, presentations at community groups and women’s health events. Whilst a number of these were new activities, we also ensured that the campaign fed into existing planned activities, for example the sending of NHS breast screening invitations and local women’s health events. As part of the planning, measures were set for each of the activities.

The main intervention strategy to engage with women about signs and symptoms of breast cancer was the use of a competition. A list of nine possible breast cancer signs and symptoms were listed with tick boxes and, of these, six were correct (three were false). People simply had to correctly identify the signs and symptoms to be entered into a free prize draw. The competition always appeared alongside the signs and symptoms information. The aim was to give women an added incentive to not just read the health information, but to digest it. This mechanism was rolled out across a number of the marketing activities outlined above and it appeared on the *Be Your Own Breast Friend* microsite developed to support the campaign.

The *Be Your Own Breast Friend* campaign ran for three-months, from mid-February to mid-May 2009. A phase of rigorous evaluation followed, in line with the social marketing model used for the project. This included qualitative and quantitative research with women in both Camden and Kensington & Chelsea, a survey of Camden practice nurses and a stakeholder review. This allowed Breakthrough to measure the impact of the project and accompanying campaign.

**EVIDENCE OF SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION**
Cancer Awareness & Early Diagnosis

Project Examples

Details:
As part of planning the intervention campaign, the measures were set for both the overall campaign and the individual activities within it. These were based on the key findings of the baseline data from the quantitative research.

The primary measure for the project was:
- Percentage of the target audience who could correctly name three or more signs and symptoms of breast cancer.

Levels of knowledge of individual signs and symptoms were also measured.

The other measures for the project were:
- Increased understanding of the NHS Screening Service - how frequent the cycle of appointments is, what happens at screening etc
- Improved knowledge and understanding of breast awareness and screening, and understanding of women’s concerns among primary healthcare professionals

As part of the evaluation work around women’s understanding and attitudes toward NHS breast screening, screening data is also being analysed to identify any potential trends.

Breakthrough is currently analysing all the evaluation findings and data, however, initial evaluation shows that knowledge of three or more signs and symptoms increased by 18% amongst women aged 45 – 49, and by 6% amongst women aged 50-54 after the intervention. Interim data also currently suggests the intervention campaign had a positive impact on the up-take of screening by women aged 50-54 in Camden compared to the previous screening round. The final confirmed results, conclusions and key learning points will be available in summer 2010.

CONSIDERING IMPLEMENTING THIS TYPE OF PROPOSAL

Details:
- Be clear about the aims/coverage of the project from the beginning. A clear project plan and timeline covering each stage of the project is essential.
- Ensure that you get buy-in at all levels of your organisation and any partner organisations.
- Be clear about roles and remits of those working on the project, any partners and stakeholders.
- Constant communication is key to making any collaborative work a success and driving the project forward.
- Use the insight from your target audience to drive the development of any intervention. Don’t be tempted to make assumptions or cut corners – if insight or data isn’t already available then invest in some of your own.
- Set clear measures for the project and individual elements of the
intervention, based on existing baseline and evidence.
• Make sure you build in plans and costs for evaluation at the beginning of the project to ensure that it doesn’t get overlooked after the intervention has been delivered.

**Additional costs or resource demands that arose, include staffing and new equipment:**

Costs additional to in-house resource included:

- Exploratory, pre-testing and evaluation research (data required did not exist elsewhere at the time)
- Creative agency costs: campaign creative design, development and production
- Media buying
- Social marketing consultancy costs

Breakthrough Breast Cancer was awarded a two-year grant from the Department of Health’s Section 64 Scheme to contribute towards the operation and evaluation of this pilot breast cancer education and awareness campaign. Other additional costs were covered by Breakthrough.