Bowel Cancer screening campaign: Briefing for GP Practice Staff

Campaign dates: 24th August 2015 to 3rd April 2016

Cancer Research UK will be delivering an advertising campaign that aims to raise awareness of the NHS Bowel Cancer Screening Programme (benefits/eligibility) in 7 regions of England, from 24th August 2015 to end-March 2016. Direct mail is also planned to run alongside advertising, from January to March 16, in selected areas (currently TBC). This campaign is based on a successful pilot that ran in London in 2014 by Cancer Research UK, and is supported by Public Health England and Department of Health.

Why are you running this campaign?
To increase participation of 60 – 74 year olds in the NHS Bowel Cancer Screening programme, by raising awareness of the eligible age range and the benefits of bowel cancer screening, and addressing psychosocial barriers to participation (via direct mail activity). Bowel cancer is the fourth most common cancer in the UK, yet it is estimated the NHS Bowel Cancer Screening programme can cut deaths from the disease by 15% in the target population. By 2025 it is predicted that FOBT will save over 2,000 lives from bowel cancer each year in the UK. If carried out correctly, the FOBT can detect early signs of bowel cancer, when it is often easier to treat successfully. However, overall uptake of the test in England is low at 58% (2012-13), and as low as 42% in some areas. This campaign forms part of Cancer Research UK’s ongoing efforts to beat cancer sooner.

What activity will be taking place and when?
The advertising will consist of posters in bus shelters; posters on telephone kiosks; posters inside and on the outside of buses; adverts on pharmacy bags and regional press articles. To reach as many of the eligible population as possible we’re taking a long-term approach and running advertising in a series of bursts between August 15 and March 16:

- **Burst one**: 24th August to 27th September
- **Burst two**: 5th October to 8th November
- **Burst three**: 18th January to 21st February
- **Burst four**: 7th March to 3rd April

During the above dates, advertising will run across all of the following areas:

1. **Lancashire** (Blackpool and West Lancashire CCGs)
2. **Merseyside** (Knowsley, Liverpool, South Sefton, Halton and St Helens CCGs)
3. **Greater Manchester** (all 12 CCGs)
4. **Yorkshire** (Bradford City, Bradford Districts & Hull CCGs)
5. **North East** (Newcastle West, Newcastle North and East and South Tees CCGs)
6. **Leicester** (Leicester City CCG)
7. **South** (Oxfordshire, South Reading & Slough CCGs)

Direct mail (consisting of a letter communication and provision of a ‘kit enhancement pack’, containing latex free gloves and possibly a poo catcher) will run alongside the advertising in a selection of the target areas from January to March 2016. Target areas are TBC until results from a pilot in Wales are finalised (due Sep 15).

Who is the campaign aimed at?
Men and women who are eligible to participate in the NHS Bowel Cancer Screening Programme, i.e. those aged 60 to 74, regardless of whether they are symptomatic or not.

What evidence is there to support this approach?
- **Advertising**: Evidence indicates that poor knowledge of the benefits and eligibility of the NHS bowel cancer screening programme and being asymptomatic, are contributing factors to poor uptake, resulting in people...

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Programme: a qualitative study

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How can the same campaign been shared with direct mail, on the number of additional test kits and colonoscopies likely to be generated where advertising an Cancer Research UK has been reinforced through advertising campaigns. Please

However, patients may mention the campaign to you as the posters could prompt people to ask questions about bowel screening. Please welcome these questions and be prepared for them, as your conversations could help to reinforce the campaign messages and positively influence a person’s decision to participate.

What impact is the campaign likely to have on the NHS screening centres and hubs?
Cancer Research UK has consulted with all screening hubs and centres where advertising and direct mail activity will run. Data re the estimated impact of advertising, and advertising + direct mail, on the number of additional test kits and colonoscopies likely to be generated by the activity, has also been shared with screening centres. These estimates were calculated based on the impact generated by this same campaign when it was piloted in London, back in early 2014.

Have Public Health England and the National Screening Office been informed about this activity?
Yes. Public Health England, the Department of Health and the National Screening Office have been fully informed about this activity.

What impact is the campaign likely to have on GP practices?
The campaign will not direct patients to their GP practice. The call to action featured on the campaign posters advises people to contact Cancer Research UK’s Nurse Helpline for more information, should they have questions. However, patients may mention the campaign to you as the posters could prompt people to ask questions about bowel screening. Please welcome these questions and be prepared for them, as your conversations could help to reinforce the campaign messages and positively influence a person’s decision to participate.

How can GP Practices support the campaign?
1. Share this briefing with colleagues
2. Acknowledge your awareness of the Cancer Research UK advertising campaign if a patient mentions it to you. Reinforce the key campaign messages detailed on the front of this briefing and further encourage participation in the NHS Bowel Cancer Screening Programme.
3. Make use of the campaign resources available:
   • Download print-ready campaign posters and display them in your GP Practice
     {HYPERLINK "http://publications.cancerresearchuk.org/cancertype/bowel/screening_asian_couple_A4_poster_.html"}
     {HYPERLINK "http://publications.cancerresearchuk.org/cancertype/bowel_screening_male_A4.html"}
     {HYPERLINK "http://publications.cancerresearchuk.org/cancertype/bowel_screening_couple_A4.html"}
   • Order free printed leaflets from Cancer Research UK:
     http://publications.cancerresearchuk.org/publicationformat/formatleaflet/bowelleaflet.html
   • Find out more about Bowel Cancer Screening: http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/type/bowel-cancer/about/screening/about-bowel-cancer-screening
   • Direct the public to the Cancer Research UK Nurse Helpline if they have questions you don’t feel comfortable answering: 0808 800 40 40 (Mon - Fri, 9am - 5pm)
   • Encourage GPs to distribute business card sized information cards to patients following conversations you have with them about bowel cancer screening. These will be made available to GP practices working in the areas where advertising will be running once they are available (like to be Sep/Oct).

5 Annual Report Bowel Cancer Screening Programme, London Programme Hub, April 2011 – March 2012