



Category: Healthcare Campaign

Company: Newcastle City Council

Entry title: Newcastle Can

Brief and objectives:

The country is facing an obesity crisis and the UK is rapidly becoming one of the most overweight countries in Europe, it is estimated that the total cost of obesity on the NHS nationally is £5.1 billion.

Tackling obesity is a complex issue and words such as “fat” and “overweight” are portrayed as negative by members of the public and services, addressing and tackling this stigma is vital to encourage behaviour change.

Driven by the Wellbeing for Life Board, Newcastle takes the approach that creating an environment across the city that promotes healthy, active lifestyle will have a substantial positive effect on the health of residents.

This policy-fronted method led to an approach from Keo Films, who were working on a major BBC Documentary “Britain’s Fat Fight with Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall” and were interested in working with the City Council to deliver an innovative approach to weight loss.

Objectives included:

- Develop a community based, social marketing campaign that supported people to lose weight
- Work closely with local businesses and key employers to embed healthy diet and exercise into their workplaces culture
- Research and focus on key areas of the city that have not engaged with previous healthy weight services to develop a suitable approach

Rationale behind campaign, including research and planning:

Research and planning including engaging with local service providers, local population insights and Public Health data.

Newcastle as a city is just above the national average for the percentage of adults classed as overweight or obese (63.2% NCI – 61.3% Eng) and the data from the National Child

Measurement Programme (NCMP) shows that almost 25% of reception aged children are obese, a figure that increased to 38.4% when the young people reach Year 6.

Key service engagement included face to face sessions with representation from Newcastle City Council, Newcastle Wellbeing for Life board, NHS services, local pharmacists, Active Newcastle and voluntary and community sector.

Key themes included:

- Creating localised campaign materials that resonated with local people
- Encourage community engagement into the campaign
- Simplify knowledge of available services
- Encourage self-help options, including recipes and exercise ideas
- Created “always on” digital platform for support

Significantly it confirmed that terms such as “fat”, “obese” and “overweight” did not resonate with members of the public and were portrayed negatively. Overcoming this, reducing the stigma and creating conversation between communities and residents was a key driver for the campaigns success.

Strategy and tactics, including creativity and innovation:

The research and planning helped to create “Newcastle Can” a community centred campaign that encouraged residents to sign up to the Newcastle Can website, log their weight loss journey and receive updates, free exercise offers and recipes from TV chef Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall.

The designs used colloquial language and terminology such as “Weigh Aye Man” and engaged directly with key community groups and businesses across the city. Utilising already established channels, such as the Better Health at Work Awards, and community organisations such as Food Newcastle to create partnership approaches wherever possible.

By setting an overall goal and challenging the city to achieve this created a city-wide movement and allowed a clear message to be communicated to all demographics and communities across the city. This also resonated with businesses and a Teams section was created on the Newcastle Can website where teams of participants, usually form a work place or community group, could compete against each other.

Implementation of tactics:

The campaign initially ran from January 2017 to April 2018, at which point it featured on the Britain’s Fat Fight Documentary which was broadcast on BBC 1.

The call to action throughout was to visit the Newcastle Can website – www.newcastlecan.com – and encourage residents and businesses to sign up.

Running alongside the main marketing activity were a series of public and business-to-business engagement events, including a launch event at Grey's Monument, free exercise classes on Northumberland Street and cooking classes with businesses.

Tactics utilised included –

- Large platform outdoor advertising, including Digital Screen on Northumberland Street and bus advertising – bus routes where selected to travel through wards with a high prevalence of the target audience
- Social Media – Utilised at Newcastle Can events and to share recipe ideas and updates
- Website – Including live tracker, campaign updates and individual resident's portal
- PR campaign – Specific engagement with Newcastle Chronicle and BBC Look North and focus on case studies to celebrate the community aspect of the campaign
- Internal Communications packs – created and distributed to key organisations, including NE1 and Sage

Measurement and evaluation:

Between January 2017 and March 2018, the campaign had 172,809 unique page views on the Newcastle Can website and has led to 12,310 residents signing up to the campaign. In comparison the Change 4 Life "10 Minute Shake Up" campaign had 24 new registrations from residents in Newcastle during their 2017 campaign*.

The PR campaign has resulted in 23 separate items of positive coverage, many of which focused on the engagement, individual case studies of residents who have successfully engaged with the campaign where also used.

12 Social Media posts from the Newcastle City Council Facebook reached 81.3k people and resulted in 3,559 clicks to the Newcastle Can website.

A separate Newcastle Can Facebook page was established and encouraged residents to share health tips and recipe ideas, creating a further online community. This page has 4,065 likes and has achieved 117,000 video views.

The outdoor advertising was a key direct marketing tool for the campaign, the advert featured on the Digital Screen on Northumberland street for 2 weeks a month from June 2017. The estimated number of residents passing the screen over a fortnight is 1,304,109.

At time of writing the campaign had led to 98,448lbs of weight being lost by residents who had signed up.

Budget and cost effectiveness:

Newcastle City Council's Public Health team allocated a marketing budget of £5,000 to the campaign between January 2017 and January 2018. £4,438 of this was spent in total.

Due to the Council highlighting this as a priority campaign free channels and opportunities were utilised where possible, including City Life covers and the digital screen on Newcastle.

Due to the success of the campaign Newcastle City Council's Public Health Team are continuing to run Newcastle Can as part of their overall Adult Obesity Strategy.

*Figures taken from Public Health England evaluation -
<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/48/resources/2481>