



**Category:** Public Sector Campaign

**Company:** NHS Wakefield CCG & Umpf

**Entry title:** The Twelve Days of Christmas

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**Brief and objectives:**

As part of NHS Wakefield Clinical Commissioning Group's systems resilience strategy over the winter period, the organisation wanted to communicate to the public the serious message that going to A&E unnecessarily puts additional pressure on its already-stretched hospitals. The campaign objectives were to:

1. Raise awareness around unnecessary A&E visits
2. Reduce A&E attendances in the run up to Christmas

**Rationale behind campaign, including research and planning:**

Data shows that, in Wakefield district, under-30s are most likely to attend A&E when they could be more appropriately treated elsewhere. Therefore, efforts were focused on communicating primarily with this cohort to educate them about inappropriate usage of the service in a bid to affect behavioural change.

NHS Wakefield CCG worked with its Urgent Care Lead, Dr Adam Sheppard, and the Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust's Lead Emergency Medicine Consultant, Dr Sarah Robertshaw, to collate a list of the most common reasons for misuse of A&E services in the district. We used this list to inform our planning for the campaign.

**Strategy and tactics, including creativity and innovation:**

The strategy was to create a light-hearted approach with a serious underlying message, using social media as the primary tool to reach a younger demographic which we know to be digitally-savvy.

Over the past decade, the NHS has employed a number of awareness campaigns in response to escalating urgent care pressures, often with limited cut-through. Creativity and innovation in delivery were therefore instrumental in our approach, as the messages we wanted to convey were not new to our audience and required an additional hook to promote them.

As a public sector campaign on a shoestring budget, we had a responsibility to spend every pound wisely. We therefore decided to produce one, single piece of clever social media content with a serious message.

Our intention was to execute the content in such a fun manner that thousands of people would re-share it and increase its reach organically.

**Implementation of tactics:**

We decided to style and rework the list of inappropriate A&E attendances around the carol, The Twelve Days of Christmas:

“Through the twelve days of Christmas we saw in A&E:

Twelve sickness bugs

Eleven chesty coughs

Ten broken nails

Nine repeat prescriptions

Eight pulled a muscle

Seven morning-after pills

Six ears a-aching

Five too much to drink

Four snotty noses

Three sore throats

Two tooth aches

And not one should have come to A&E”

Umpf produced a tongue-in-cheek, sing-along animation to bring the concept to life for use on social and digital channels.

The film includes a serious call-to-action at the end, which details alternative services available for those thinking of attending A&E.

On 4th December 2017, the animation was launched online, on Twitter, Facebook, on screens throughout the CCG’s hospitals and sent to all 38 of its GP practices (to play in waiting rooms across the district).

Digital copies were supplied to partner organisations for use on their own social channels and two local shopping centres (The Ridings Centre and Trinity Walk) also shared the animation.

We issued a press release launching the campaign to local and national media detailing the most surprising reasons why some people choose to go to A&E.

### **Measurement and evaluation:**

To evaluate each objective in turn:

#### 1. Raise awareness around unnecessary A&E visits

The film was shared extensively on both Facebook and Twitter. The CCG's social posts alone generated a combined reach in excess of ¼ million and were shared 1,600+ times.

Additionally, more than 80 other healthcare organisations nationwide, including NHS Choices (218,000 followers) and NHS Confederation (52,159 followers), tweeted about the campaign, with many of these requesting a digital copy of the film for use on websites, in GP surgeries and in hospitals. With permission, several CCGs outside of the district commissioned their own rebadging of the film with their own logos for use in their localities.

The combined national social reach of the content (as of 10 January 2018) is 1,606,777, having been shared by thousands of people.

The campaign was also picked up by The Wakefield Express, and remained the top trending website story for two days. This website has an online readership of 57,351, taking the total, combined reach of the campaign to 1,664,128.

And, because the film has also been played on stand-alone screens at NHS sites across the country, the true reach figure is likely to be many multiples of this.

#### 2. Reduce A&E attendances in the run up to Christmas

The week before the film's launch, there were 4,787 A&E attendances across NHS Wakefield CCG's three sites. In the three weeks after launch, this decreased to 4,589 (-4.1%), 4,598 (-3.9%) and 4,696 (-1.9%), an average weekly decrease of -3.3%.

Moreover, during this period a significant year-on-year reduction in total attendances at Pontefract General Infirmary specifically was identified, despite a forecast 3% increase.

Further, Wakefield underwent a severe cold snap during this period, which would ordinarily lead to a sharp upward spike in A&E attendances. This suggests the potential impact of the animation could in fact be far greater than the data would indicate.

### **Budget and cost effectiveness:**

The campaign cost £2,100 (£1,900 agency fee to produce the animation + £200 Facebook advertising spend) which equates to cost per thousand people reached (CPM) of £1.26.

Assigning a £63 minimum cost for each inappropriate A&E attendance and deducing an overall reduction of approximately 200 attendances per week, these figures could suggest a total local saving of approximately £12,600 per week (£37,800 over the three weeks) following the launch of the campaign.

The film is now a legacy piece for partnership working in the wider healthcare economy, both locally in the district, and on a national level. NHS Wakefield CCG will be able to re-issue the film every year in the run up to Christmas at no additional cost, which will contribute to future financial savings.