

PRIDE AWARDS 2017

Category: Healthcare Campaign

Company: NHS Merseyside

Entry title: #JabDone

Brief and objectives:

Six Merseyside NHS Trusts collaborated in creating a staff engagement campaign to encourage NHS employees to have the seasonal flu vaccine to protect patients.

Free vaccinations are offered to all NHS employees annually, but is not currently mandatory. However, last year tough new Department of Health targets were set for every Trust in England to achieve 75% staff vaccination by 31 December 2016.

With significant pockets of resistance identified in the local workforce, the brief was to create a cost-effective, staff engagement campaign to:

- highlight the benefits of having the flu vaccine
- dispel common staff myths or barriers
- persuade 75%+ of staff in each trust to get vaccinated within deadline.

Rationale behind campaign, including research and planning:

#JabDone was developed from staff insight (focus groups) that highlighted a recurring theme of 'flu-season fatigue'. It also identified some common staff myths/excuses for not having the vaccine, such as:

- "I don't need it, I never get flu"
- "It makes you ill"
- "It doesn't work"
- "I'm too busy"

Research/planning also involved gathering lessons learnt from across the Trusts, combining the best of ideas/tactics employed in previous approaches.

Several local agencies pitched initial concepts/ideas in response to the brief, and three preferred options were pre-tested with staff to help ensure maximum resonance. #JabDone was selected, and imagery/messaging was then further amended/refined based on identified staff feedback.

Strategy and tactics, including creativity and innovation:

A communications strategy was developed by a cross-Trust group of communications professionals, working closely with clinical delivery teams, which aimed to directly address key issues and 'nudge' staff behaviour by:

- removing internal barriers around access, availability, time by improving flexibility/ease of access
- challenge common myths/excuses through a hard-hitting campaign.

The campaign was developed with Liverpool-based agency Kenyons, and used bold/colourful creative, eye-catching typography/graphics, and gentle sarcasm/humour to help address staff excuses head on.

It challenged employees to 'just get the #jabdone' using a direct, no-nonsense tone. Humorous copy executed alongside a striking needle graphic proved popular because it appealed to a local sense of humour, and didn't 'beat around the bush'.

Implementation of tactics:

#JabDone was implemented via a communications toolkit which each NHS Trust could pick/choose elements from, according to local workforce needs, priorities and budget, including:

- A3/A4 posters
- Postcards (attached on employee payslips) featuring flu facts/myths
- Digital graphics for screens, internet/intranet banners
- Template copy for staff emails, e-bulletins, press releases, staff magazines
- Social media planner & fun 'flu-fact' graphics for use on twitter/facebook
- Branded giveaways eg. #jabdone stickers, lollies
- Speech-bubble boards for use at staff vaccination sessions

A series of 'coming soon' teasers which spoofed everything from Game of Thrones ('Winter is Coming') to cult movies ('I know what you did last winter'), were issued to start building demand & advertise vaccination sessions, even before vaccines arrived.

The campaign was launched on 1st October with a 'mass vaccination day' for staff, lots of on-the-ground engagement via staff flu champions, roaming immunisers, and flexible drop-in sessions.

Staff were encouraged to pose for a flu-selfie with #jabdone speech-bubble boards which read "I've had my #jabdone and ..." allowing staff to fill the blank themselves, and share the message with colleagues/family/friends/patients on social media.

The campaign also utilised external channels (PR/media, social media), which reached staff but also provided a strong reassurance message to patients around care quality/safety.

Seasonal refreshes themed around Halloween, Christmas, New Year also helped keep the campaign momentum high.

Measurement and evaluation:

The campaign effectively supporting each trust in achieving 75% staff vaccination by 31st December, equating to the best performing year for NHS staff flu vaccination uptake in Merseyside ever (to date).

Final vaccination figures (winter 2016/17) are as follows:

Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust - 75.5%
 Clatterbridge Cancer Care NHS Foundation Trust - 76.8 %
 Liverpool Community Health NHS Trust - 75.5%
 Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust - 77.2%

Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals Trust - 75.7%
The Walton Centre NHS Foundation Trust - 76.3%

For several of these organisations, this was the first time they had ever achieved the 75% target, and Liverpool Community Health was named the third best performing trust of its kind for staff flu immunisation in the country (NHS Employers figures).

Evaluation activity included a short communications audit and debrief session between different communications teams to help identify any lessons learned and inform future approaches.

It also included an online survey completed by almost 5% of the total workforce from across the Trusts. This highlighted an 88.2% campaign recall rate, demonstrating how the campaign effectively cut through the 'noise' in busy NHS workplaces to successfully engage staff.

Over 65% of respondents also said their main reason for getting the jab was 'to protect family, friends and patients from flu' which closely mirrored the main strapline used on all campaign materials.

Budget and cost effectiveness:

The total cost of developing the campaign was just £3,500, covering agency fees for developing the campaign concepts/toolkit. This figure was split six ways, meaning the overall cost per Trust was approximately £580.

All implementation was delivered by in-house communications teams, and most Trusts also used their own in-house print facilities too, meaning all other elements of campaign delivery were cost-neutral.

As the Department of Health introduced a CQUIN target worth £200,000 per Trust this year (a penalty fee for each Trust in England which failed to deliver the target within deadline), the demonstrable ROI for the campaign was huge.

Having supported six Trusts to achieve the target, it effectively protected £1,200,000 of investment in local health services.

In addition, it also reduced sickness absence rates caused by flu, and helped alleviate winter pressures across the whole local health system by ensuring that more staff/patients in the region were effectively protected against flu this winter than ever before.

Furthermore, by improving NHS staff awareness of the importance of having the vaccine, it should help pave the way for a year-on-year improvement in uptake rates too.