

Excellence Awards - 2021 Entry  
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Entry ID: 9332

### Third Party Authorization

*Are you entering on behalf of, or in association with, any third party?:* Yes

*If yes, please tick here to confirm you have the third party's permission to submit this entry:* Checked

### Basic Information

*Category:* 05. Social Purpose Campaign

### Entry Information

*Entrant company name:* Pic PR

*Client name (for joint entries only):* CHD Living

*Entry title:*

Adopt-a-Grandparent

### Entry

*Brief, objectives and budget:*

Through an ongoing retainer, CHD Living, a care home group, looks to us to raise its brand profile, projecting positivity about its services, while underlining the group's person-centred approach to care.

The Adopt-a-Grandparent campaign centred on positioning CHD Living as a care provider committed to improving residents' wellbeing. It aimed to reduce loneliness in care settings by providing emotional support for residents through meaningful relationships; be that intergenerational friendships, connecting with those with similar interests, or by interacting with someone new.

In addition, we wanted to educate the public about life in care settings, making them more accessible and highlighting their brilliant characters, while also boosting staff morale during a difficult time.

Our budget was £18,000; our £3,000 monthly PR retainer spread over a 6-month campaign.

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*The idea, research and planning:*

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The first conceptualisation of Adopt-a-Grandparent saw it viewed as a localised endeavour to partner CHD Living residents with volunteers face-to-face; helping to form relationships, while generating awareness of and goodwill towards care homes, often hidden at the heart of communities.

Our strategic approach changed dramatically however, as the scale of the pandemic emerged in March 2020. We rapidly upscaled our ambition, seeking to take advantage of the crisis by turning it digital and creating a wide-ranging, highly impactful campaign with a positive message at its centre – aware that journalists would be looking for feel-good news to counteract negative COVID-19 headlines.

Given the pandemic's global nature, with people locked down around the world, we also recognised an international opportunity to introduce residents to colourful and interesting characters worldwide.

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*Strategy, creativity and innovation:*

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Counteracting the coronavirus crisis saw physical care home visits immediately cease, with enforced isolation set to present an enormous mental burden on residents. As an agency though, we realised we could use video calling technology to create vital connections with the outside world – and benefit from the boom in Zoom.

Furthermore, video calls removed geographical shackles, allowing us to spread the search for volunteers far beyond the locality of CHD Living's homes.

First steps saw us outline the pairing process, creating a signup page to gather details about each applicant (such as interests, likes and dislikes) helping us pair residents appropriately based on certain criteria. Each 'adoptee' would be individually vetted via screening calls, with each paired CHD resident accompanied by a staff member throughout for safeguarding.

Having envisaged a few hundred applicants prior to launch, we planned to match make manually.

The launch plan saw us look to put out a call for volunteers to join the scheme, targeting a mix of national, regional and care press from the outset, with social media support.

Further plans were dependent on the number of signups – but were centred on highlighting positive take-up and promoting successful pairings, while we also had a view to facilitating face-to-face meetings once safe to do so.

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*Delivery/implementation of tactics:*

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Upon launch, almost immediately, we were greeted with positivity and interest from journalists keen to know more. With media outlets looking to focus on positive stories amidst pandemic gloom, national media coverage began to flood in, followed by almost blanket UK regional coverage. The number of volunteers who'd signed up to the scheme

grew exponentially, surpassing 28,000 within 2 weeks of launch.

Despite this influx, we continued pushing the campaign, trumpeting the number of signups, while highlighting the benefits of intergenerational relationships.

At this point we also looked to push it globally, targeting international media in the campaign's next stage.

Having been picked up by US media – we saw an explosion of interest, and coverage began to snowball worldwide, with press reaching out to us directly to find out more and request interviews.

Feedback from both press and public was tremendous and the campaign met with almost universal acclaim.

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*Measurement, evaluation and impact:*

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The campaign generated more than 1,200 pieces of coverage, including BBC News, Sky News, ITV News, Reuters, Daily Telegraph, Heart FM, LBC News, Mail Online, The Independent, Metro, Evening Standard and many more, including extensive regional coverage via PA Media.

Internationally, we achieved coverage across Good Morning America, CNN, ABC News, NBC, CTV, People Magazine, iHeartRadio and more.

CHD Living's website traffic increased by 6,306% from February to April 2020, seeing more than 171,000 unique visitors – while average web traffic since has maintained a 125% YOY increase.

More than 82,000 volunteers signed up from countries across the world, with ages ranging from one to 85-years-old. High profile pairings included a Daily Telegraph journalist, and Hollywood actors Bitsie Tulloch and Ruby Rose, who talked about her involvement in interviews with NBC News, Shape Magazine and Vogue Online.

Others, such as actress Amber Tamblyn and author and illustrator Charlie Mackesy voiced support on social media.

The Duke of Edinburgh charity has endorsed the scheme in its volunteering section, while it's been recommended by John Lewis, Capital One, RBS, Natwest, IBM and various universities.

Testimonials include:

"The programme has brought so much joy and happiness. The way it connects people all over the world, allowing them to share knowledge and experiences, and enabling new friendships to be developed, is just wonderful. Our residents always look forward to their weekly phone calls with their new friends, and I'd highly recommend the programme to other care homes, especially having seen how it enriches the lives of those in our care."

- Akua Buabeng, Home Manager at CHD Living's The Summers

"It is a simple idea, executed brilliantly, made easy and very rewarding for both the volunteer and the Adopted Grandparent. It is about connection and friendship which are two invaluable things.

I was very lucky to be paired with Iris, she resides in the UK and has a heart of gold and a wicked sense of humour. We talk about our lives, share stories and I send her DVDs. I sent her some flowers when they were in lockdown and it was a small thing to do but meant so much to her. Iris doesn't have family, she doesn't have kids but she does have friends and I am blessed to call myself one."

- Ruby Rose, Hollywood actor and official patron of Adopt-a-Grandparent.

Following its success, we have active plans to implement Adopt-a-Grandparent as a fully-fledged charity; developing an app to facilitate, streamline and speed up the 'adoption' process, as we look to combat loneliness on a larger scale, providing opportunity for care residents around the world to benefit from the service. As pioneers in this type of activity, this will also provide a huge boost for CHD Living's CQC rating – a core metric within the care sector.

**Supporting Information**

*Additional supporting information (images, artwork, clippings and other media):*

Provided

*Campaign image (if entering individual/team awards, upload headshot/team photo here):*

Provided

*Company logo:*

Provided

*Please write a 30 word entry summary in the third person:*

Pic PR and CHD Living's Adopt-a-Grandparent was a global PR campaign that achieved more than 1,200 pieces of press coverage around the world, generating 82,000 signups to the scheme.