

LGBTQ+ alcohol and cancer risk campaign associated with motivation to reduce alcohol use and message impact: Results from the Be Unapologetic campaign

Authors:

Scott C Walsberger¹, Emily Spencer¹, Matthew Vaughan¹, Rachel Sutherland², Cate King², Mo Hammoud^{2,3}, Aldo Spina⁴, Nikki Woolley⁵

¹ACON, Surry Hills, Australia, ²National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC), Faculty of Medicine and Health, UNSW Sydney, Sydney, Australia, ³Kirby Institute, Faculty of Medicine and Health, UNSW, Sydney, Australia, ⁴Aldo Spina Consulting, Bondi, Australia, ⁵Cancer Institute NSW, St Leonards, Australia

Presenter's email: swalsberger@acon.org.au

Background: Alcohol is a known cause of eight cancers. LGBTQ+ people report higher rates of alcohol consumption compared to the general population, yet public awareness of the alcohol-cancer link remains low. Most health campaigns fail to address LGBTQ+ communities or include inclusive messaging.

Description of Intervention: From 25 July to 8 September 2024, a targeted campaign titled Be Unapologetic was delivered to raise awareness of alcohol-related cancer risk among LGBTQ+ people. The campaign promoted Australia's alcohol consumption guidelines and encouraged behaviour change using supportive, non-judgemental messaging.

An online post-campaign evaluation survey (n=651) measured:

- campaign recall
- audience engagement
- message effectiveness and impact.

Effectiveness/Acceptability/Implementation: The campaign reached 1.2 million video views and 20,687 webpage views. Among survey respondents, 38% of survey respondents recalled the ads, and of these respondents 36% reported taking proactive steps, most commonly by comparing their drinking habits against recommended guidelines.

More than half (57%) of respondents reported the ads made them think about reducing their alcohol consumption. Those who reported drinking above the guidelines were significantly more likely to report the ads made them think about reducing their alcohol consumption, especially those exceeded both daily and weekly guidelines compared to those who drink within the guidelines (p=0.021). Several ad characteristics were also associated with the ads making people think about their alcohol consumption – relevance (p=<0.001), recognition of LGBTQ+ influencer (p=0.041), effectiveness at communicating main message (p=0.021), and increased their awareness of the link between alcohol and cancer (p=<0.001).

Conclusion and Next Steps: Tailored campaigns can effectively prompt LGBTQ+ people to think about reducing their alcohol consumption. Key factors in an effective campaign are recognisable LGBTQ+ community members, effective communication of main messages, and relevance to the audience.

Implications for Practice: Campaigns should prioritise message relevance, credible messengers from within community, and explicit links between alcohol and cancer.

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