

USING LIVER CANCER PREVENTION MESSAGES TO SCALE UP DIAGNOSIS OF PEOPLE WITH HEPATITIS B

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Background

Liver cancer has the fastest increasing incidence rate of all cancers in Australia, and its survival is amongst the lowest. To reduce the burden of liver cancer, more people with chronic hepatitis B (CHB) need to be diagnosed and treated.

The majority of people in Australia with CHB (61%) were born overseas. Research indicates people have low levels of understanding about hepatitis B and its link to liver cancer. In 2017, Cancer Council Victoria launched two communication campaigns to raise awareness about hepatitis B in the Vietnamese and South Sudanese communities. The call to action was to 'talk to your doctor and get tested'.

Method

The campaign strategy was designed to address the knowledge barriers to testing. To inform the strategy, qualitative focus groups and community interviews were used to identify perceptions of hepatitis B and liver cancer, as well as the barriers and motivators to testing. Both communities identified their local doctor as a trusted source of health information. Two media campaigns were developed featuring a known doctor from each community.

Results

Digital metrics and face to face interviews were used to evaluate the campaigns. Results indicated people did visit their doctor. The success in motivating people to see their doctor was attributed to a key message about liver cancer being caused by hepatitis B, and the campaign featuring a known and respected doctor.

Conclusion

Liver cancer prevention messages are effective in increasing awareness about liver cancer and hepatitis B in at risk communities. Key messages for campaigns need to be tailored for each community and carefully assessed by community members to ensure cultural relevance and sensitivity.

Disclosure

There are no current conflicts of interest to declare.