

ABORIGINAL SEXUAL HEALTH: SOCIAL MARKETING CAMPAIGN FOR STI MESSAGES

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Background: In 2015, Aboriginal to non-Aboriginal notification rate ratios were 16.1:1 and 3.7:1 for gonorrhoea and chlamydia respectively. The *WA Aboriginal Sexual Health and Blood-borne Virus Strategy* advocated a new Aboriginal-specific social marketing campaign for STI messages. The key objectives were to:

- educate Aboriginal young people about STI testing and safe sex
- encourage them to visit *couldihaveit.com.au* for a free online STI test.

The WA Department of Health worked with an Aboriginal reference and consumer groups to assess effectiveness of local and international campaigns targeting Indigenous populations and develop recommendations for key messages, tone and visuals.

Analysis: Reference group recommendations:

- key messages:
 - Protect yourself (and others) against STIs, wear a condom
 - Most people don't have any symptoms when they have an STI, so get tested
- Aboriginal young people consume various media, target multiple channels
- use positive, humorous tone
- use "real" Aboriginal people, not cartoons or celebrities
- metaphor not supported, use direct messages
- provide cultural relevance without implying that STIs are a uniquely Aboriginal issue.

Outcome: Recommendations shaped concepts workshopped by four Aboriginal actors from the WA Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA), and their acting mentor. Final adverts were produced by an innovative Western Australian media production company and acted/spoken by the same actors. Television, radio and online advertising through Facebook, YouTube and targeted websites ran in an initial campaign burst in April 2017 and achieved a reach of 1,210,652.

STI tests resulting from the online test facility doubled in the post campaign month.

[Stay Safe You Mob – Wear a Condom](#)

[Stay Safe you Mob – Get an STI Test](#)

Conclusions: Using young Aboriginal actors to develop and deliver strong, culturally sensitive messages about STI prevention and testing to their peers is a Western Australian first and provides a base for future campaigns relevant and acceptable to the target group.

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