Valid Metrics Framework Case Study

Stroke Association

Action on Stroke Month campaign
Case study: Stroke Association, Action on Stroke Month campaign

Preparation and implementation:

Organisation Objectives:
The Stroke Association is a UK charity whose purpose is to prevent strokes and achieve life after stroke through providing services, campaigning, education and research. Stroke is one of the biggest causes of death and disability and yet gets much less attention and funding than comparable health concerns such as heart disease and cancer.

Communication objectives:
The key objectives of the Action on Stroke Month campaign were to raise awareness of Stroke Association, stroke and mini-stroke, to grow and engage the Stroke volunteer community and to get people to contact the Stroke Association.

Target audiences:
As well as raising awareness among the general public, there was a specific focus on key target audiences including business leaders, people who have been affected by stroke, charity supporters and black and minority ethnic groups (BME).

Strategy:
Every year the Stroke Association runs its Action on Stroke Month campaign to raise awareness of the condition and to recruit volunteers to help support victims and their families.

For this campaign the focus was on raising awareness of mini-stroke, which is often a precursor to a major stroke, but frequently go ignored as people think they are ‘just having a funny turn’. Approximately 10,000 recurrent strokes could be prevented every year in the UK if mini-stokes were treated in time.

Analysis of previous campaigns had shown that ethnic groups had not been reached as successfully as other key audiences. This was important as the risk of stroke to black people is significantly higher than white people. There was a strong emphasis on activity and media channels that would reach the BME audience.

Activities:
Media relations was based on mainstream and social media engagement with a big focus on utilising research that the Stroke Association had conducted on mini-strokes as well as celebrity supporters such as Andrew Marr. The campaign would also dovetail with the department of Health’s FAST campaign highlighting the symptoms of stroke and mini-stroke.
Case study: Stroke Association, Action on Stroke Month campaign

Measurement and insights:

Outputs:

• The vast majority of coverage was proactively generated with a lead or significant mention

• Spokespeople were a strong driver of positive content – almost half of the strongly favourable coverage featured a key spokesperson.

• A significant amount of coverage featured a call to action but mentions of the website significantly outnumbered those of the helpline number which helped to focus resource as well as to plan for future campaigns.

• Message delivery was strong - 76% of coverage featured a key message with “thousands of people are dismissing the symptoms of mini-stroke” being the most prominent.

• Coverage reached 80% of UK adults and the focus on black and minority ethnic groups resulted in a 7 percentage point increase in exposure to this audience compared to earlier campaigns.

Out-takes:

• The campaign significantly increased awareness of mini-strokes and the symptoms of mini-strokes.

• There was a stronger engagement on social media with a 96% year on year increase in mentions.

• There were a record 145,000 web visits with a peak on the 1st of May resulting from the campaign launch in mainstream and social coverage.

Outcomes:

• The campaign resulted in an increase in the number of calls to the stroke helpline number and volunteers recruited.

• The organisation received many positive pieces of anecdotal feedback from individuals who had been helped as a result of the campaign.

Impact and learnings:

• The Action on Stroke Month campaign successfully met objectives of increasing awareness of stroke and mini-stroke and in recruiting new volunteers.

• The communications team learned from analysis of previous years, particularly in how to target black and minority ethnic groups.

• The campaign resulted in an increase in charity support and donations and has contributed to the long term decline in stroke mortality which has decreased by 46% since 1990.

• Despite austerity measures affecting the charity, the results of the measurement was used to secure budget for future campaigns.