

Public Health Communications Awards

APPLICATION: MOST INNOVATIVE CAMPAIGN

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Jurisdiction size (Please check one):	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Large (Population exceeds 700,000) <input type="checkbox"/> Medium (Population less than 700,000; more than 200,000) <input type="checkbox"/> Small (Population less than 200,000; more than 50,000) <input type="checkbox"/> Very Small (Population less than 50,000)	

ABOUT THE COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN

Name Of Communications Campaign	San Diego County Prescription Drug Abuse Task Force (PDATF)
Brief Campaign Overview (200 Words Or Less)	<p>This campaign was established in 2010 to address prescription drug related deaths and general medication misuse in San Diego County. The project was implemented by developing a multi-jurisdiction coalition that includes law enforcement, medical personnel, community based organizations and a variety of community stakeholders. This is a policy-focused campaign to encourage and support proper disposal of unused medications by developing a county drop box ordinance and sponsoring annual disposal events. Additional specific policy work includes working with the County Medical Society to develop public information regarding safe use of prescription medications, support for medical personnel to prescribe opiate medicines for the shortest timeframe possible and to use patient pain</p>

	contracts to assure clear communication and understanding of possible risks, including addiction.
Campaign Start Date	June 2010
Campaign End Date	Ongoing

CAMPAIGN PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

What is the purpose of this campaign? Does it address an underlying community need? Please describe why the campaign was developed. You are encouraged to submit evidence of need (e.g., local news stories, internal reports, testimonials, data, community health assessments) as an addendum to this form.

The purpose of the campaign is to address prescription drug related deaths and misuse within the general population, with an emphasis on youth related prescription drug abuse. This project was developed as a result of increased deaths in the county with a pain-medication nexus as documented by the county medical examiner. Additionally, there have been increased drug treatment admissions to county funded drug treatment programs for heroin and other opiate use.

Does your campaign address an issue related to health equity? How?

Assuring residents have appropriate access to medicines to address health issues and/or conditions is important; however, opiate pain medicines have inherent risks from continued use that includes addiction and death if used improperly. Substance abuse treatment for opiate addiction is a critical need to ensure overall wellness for our residents. The intent of this campaign is to partner with the medical community to support the use of prescribed medicines for the shortest timeframe possible, to inform patients about health related risks from the overuse of pain medicines, reinforce the message to only use prescribed medicines as prescribed and discourage medication sharing, and to properly dispose of all unused and or expired medicines in drop boxes made available countywide.

What population was this campaign targeted to reach? How did you plan to reach them?

The efforts of the campaign are intended for the general population, with an emphasis on youth, their parents, and older adults. Outreach and awareness campaigns are conducted in schools. Additional outreach activities also occur at health fairs, community meetings and forums and through targeted earned media campaigns.

Could this campaign be replicated or transferred to other jurisdictions? Please explain.

Yes, this project is replicable. It can and has been shared with other health jurisdictions throughout the state. In recognition of the impact of this work, the PDATF has received two NACo Awards: 2011 for the development of the *Prescription Drug Abuse and Collaborative Action Plan* and in 2013 for the developed a patient handout titled *Safe Pain Medicine Prescribing in Emergency Departments* that has been utilized statewide.

What partners did you work with in planning and implementing this campaign?

Established partnerships continue with local Health Agencies, the San Diego Medical Society, emergency department medical personnel, Drug Enforcement Administration, local law enforcement agencies, prevention coalitions, San Diego County Office of Education, school districts, Parent and Teacher Associations, student organizations, Friday Night Live, community members, and faith based groups. A newly established partnership is with San Diego County Environmental Health to include sharps disposal boxes at select community prescription drug collection events and to include sharps collection information in select campaigns.

To what extent does the campaign leverage existing resources without creating new costs?

The County funds facilitation services at \$45,000 annually to help organize and coordinate the collective efforts of the campaign. Leveraged resources include coordination and design of projects, media advocacy, community education, and medical community education regarding safe prescribing recommendations.

OUTCOMES

Did you test or evaluate your campaign? If so, how?

The campaign tracks nine key indicators via annual Prescription Drug Abuse Task Force Report Card.

What were the outcomes of this campaign? To what extent were your objectives achieved?

Campaign outcomes are as follows: to educate the community to reduce prescription and pain medication abuse and misuse, to only use medicines as prescribed, and to collect and appropriately destroy unused, unneeded medicines without harming the environment. Other campaign outcomes include providing and supporting Safe Prescribing Guidelines for the medical community, and supporting and encouraging drug treatment for those who need it.

To what extent does the campaign shift thinking about health from individual medical care to community / public health / equity issues?

The focus is on environmental prevention to reduce inappropriate access to prescription medicines to minimize harms such as addiction and death for the entire community and increase use of safe disposal practices to protect the environment and watershed.

To what extent were earned media articles, letters to the editor, and op-eds published about this project?

Earned media occurs on a regular basis via collaborative partners. Each new emphasis area includes a media advocacy component. The most recently completed media was to announce the results of a community survey on knowledge of safe disposals.

To what extent does the campaign inform and lead to personal and collective action to improve population health?

Successes of the campaign include a reduction in access to non-prescribed prescription drugs through the collection of unused and excess medication in permanent safe drop boxes, which average 14,000 pounds of unused medication annually. The San Diego County Medical Society supports sub-committees of the Prescription Drug Abuse Task Force to address over prescribing of drugs, in particular opiates. The patient education handout designed in conjunction with the San Diego County Medical Society, County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency and public information officers from local hospitals, available in English and Spanish, entitled: *Safe Pain Medicine Prescribing in Emergency Departments Safe Prescribing* is now used in all County emergency departments, and has been adopted by other jurisdictions, including the counties of Orange and Ventura, and was adopted by the California Association of Emergency Physicians.

How have you used what you have learned from this experience? How will use what you have learned to improve your next communications campaign?

Voluntary collaboration is extremely beneficial; however it is important to engage a facilitator to help keep everyone focused, to ensure that they meet timelines and to promote further collaboration.

INNOVATION

How were youth, disadvantaged populations, and other groups at high risk included in the development and public voice of the campaign?

The teenagers and their parents affected by the misuse of prescription drugs, student organizations, youth alcohol and other drugs prevention youth groups, and Friday Night Live youth groups represent the campaign as spokespersons at health fairs, community events, meetings and forums and targeted media campaigns.

Were social media, mobile phones, and other technology utilized in the campaign?

Facebook and other social media have been utilized and a webpage has been established.
<http://sandiegorxabusetaskforce.org/whox.html>

Can we share this application with other local health officials who are interested in communications best practices?

Yes, this project can be shared with other local health officials and agencies.

Please email your completed application by Friday, May 27, 2016 to:

Kat DeBurgh, Executive Director
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