

Public Health Communications Awards

APPLICATION: MOST INNOVATIVE CAMPAIGN

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Jurisdiction size (Please check one):	
<input type="checkbox"/> Large (Population exceeds 700,000) <input checked="" 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	Know the Facts: The risks of prescription narcotics and their use in Marin County
Brief Campaign Overview (200 Words Or Less)	<p>The prescription drug abuse epidemic has affected Marin County deeply. In 2014, the RxSafe Marin initiative was formed to mobilize the community to address this emerging public health crisis. The “Know the Facts” community awareness campaign has grown out of this initiative, supporting the overarching goal of preventing prescription drug abuse and misuse, and saving lives.</p> <p>“Know the Facts” is designed to empower members of the Marin community to be educated partners in decision-making around prescription opioids—both in the exam room, and the board rooms where public health policy decisions are made. Through on-line and social media ads, the campaign targets residents with data-driven infographics about the risks of</p>

prescription drug misuse and abuse, and its impacts on Marin. To meet the needs of Marin’s growing aging community, RxSafe Marin utilizes traditional print and other media outlets identified through service providers of this population. Materials are also available in Spanish. The RxSafe Marin Community-Based Prevention Action Team routinely collects, analyzes and prioritizes local data to inform all phases of the campaign, tracking progress in real time through online analytics to shift messaging and infographic placement for greater reach.

Campaign Start Date	October 20, 2016
Campaign End Date	In progress

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. [Click here for supplemental data.](#)

“Know the Facts” grew out of the RxSafe Marin initiative, and supports the overarching goal of preventing prescription drug abuse and misuse, and saving lives. The community was driven to action in part by alarming data brought forward by the Health Department in early 2014. While Marin is ranked among the healthiest counties in the state and nation, high substance abuse and drug overdose death rates stand out in contrast to this image of health. Between 2006 and 2013, Marin County saw a more than doubling of the number of narcotic prescriptions, drug overdose deaths, and narcotic-related emergency department visits. One-in-five Marin high school juniors report using prescription pain medicine recreationally. [\(See attached for data developed to describe the scope of the problem in Marin and track progress in key domains.\)](#)

RxSafe Marin is structured to coordinate the actions of diverse sectors through five teams: Law Enforcement; Prescribers and Pharmacists; Community-Based Prevention (CBP); Treatment and Recovery; and Data Collection and Monitoring. Marin County Health and Human Services Department (Marin HHS) serves as the backbone support and convener for this collective effort.

“Know the Facts” was advanced by the Community-Based Prevention team, and specifically supports goals set by two of the action teams: the Prescribers and Pharmacists team goal of reducing narcotic prescriptions county-wide by 15 percent each year from 2014 through 2016, and the Community-Based Prevention team goal of utilizing social media to raise awareness of the burden of prescription drug misuse and abuse and to present public strategies.

The need for this campaign emerged in the second year of RxSafe Marin. Many of the early measures to address prescription drug abuse, in Marin and nationally, have been focused on healthcare providers, and aimed at safe prescribing. In 2015 RxSafe Marin healthcare providers and community members identified a growing need for messaging aimed at the community itself.

A 2015 survey of Marin County prescribers identified that 80% wanted more resources for non-narcotic pain management. It was also determined that shared decision making would be more successful if patients themselves are educated and aware of the risks of opioids and the benefits of alternatives.

To manage patients' expectations, prescribers in the community wanted to make sure that while they were working to reduce supply, the CBP team was working to reduce demand.

This campaign covered four different messages that were created by members of the RxSafe Marin Community-Based Prevention Action Team:

1. KNOW THE RISKS: Prescription narcotics pose significant health risks beyond addiction
2. When it comes to prescription drugs SHARING IS NOT CARING
3. CONSIDER YOUR OPTIONS when addressing pain
4. MEDICATING MARIN: The numbers on prescription drug use in Marin County

RxSafe Marin members recognized the need to use the data collected by the Marin HHS Epidemiology Program to create easy to understand images with the information. Infographics were created for both traditional print media and digital media. The messaging helped to communicate the importance of issues such as safely storing and disposing leftover medications; consequences of sharing medication not prescribed to you; and talking to your doctor about alternatives to opioids to address pain.

Evidence of Need:

RxSafe Marin Data Report Card: <http://bit.ly/RxSafeMarinReportCard>

RxSafe Marin CURES Report: <http://bit.ly/RxSafeMarinCURESReport>

RxSafe Marin Our Community in Action: <http://bit.ly/RxSafeMarin101>

Marin Prescription for Change: <http://bit.ly/RxSafeMarinChange>

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

One of the defining characteristics of the epidemic of prescription drug abuse is that it affects all communities. However, the principle of health equity applies strongly in the methods we employ to address the problem across communities. This campaign is specifically designed to reach residents "where they are" and through various media outlets. The information must be accessible to all. For example, our infographics were printed as posters and are in all Marin Community Clinic (MCC) locations, where lower income populations go to seek medical attention. In the city of Novato, health *Promotoras* are taking our message to a large Spanish speaking community, using materials translated into Spanish. The Marin Prevention Network (MPN) community coalitions are sharing the messaging across a wide geographic area. Additionally, many Marin County seniors still look to printed media for information and infographics were placed in the daily Marin Independent Journal newspaper. The health equity issue we recognize is that there are barriers to accessing information, and our solution is to attempt to work around those barriers. *(See next question for detailed implementation plan.)*

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

The target demographic is all Marin County adults. On October 20th 2015, the CBP Action Team launched a comprehensive Community-Outreach Messaging Campaign, with the following goals:

- Raise awareness of the significant local burden of prescription drug misuse and abuse
- Dispel common misconceptions around prescription drug use
- Present public strategies for preventing prescription drug misuse, including options for safe storage and disposal

The campaign was launched using several formats in order to reach the broadest possible audience and meet the needs of a diverse community:

Infographics were compiled into a booklet with a front/back cover, including RxSafe Marin contact information. The booklets were also translated into Spanish.

Hard copies and PDFs of the booklets were included in media press kits for the October 20th Community Meeting. The meeting was widely covered by the media, including radio, television, and online coverage. Links to earned media can be found on the RxSafe Marin web site (www.RxSafeMarin.org). The web site also houses all RxSafe Marin informational resources, including the infographics. Links to the web site can be found on the web sites of numerous community partners and stakeholders. RxSafe Marin resources and communication tools have also been shared as part of many professional presentations. RxSafe Marin is a mentor coalition within the California HealthCare Foundation network of new community based drug coalitions throughout the state, offering technical assistance in a variety of domains including internal and external communications. This has provided a structure for sharing our resources and materials including the “Know the Facts” campaign statewide.

Printed infographic booklets have been distributed at events such as the Annual Marin County Senior Fair, and are posted within examination rooms in Marin’s federally qualified health center clinics. Individual infographics were placed as ¼-page ads in the daily Marin newspaper (one a week, for four weeks). A supplemental top-page leaderboard ad ran for 40,000 impressions on the newspaper’s web site, linking readers to the RxSafe Marin Facebook page.

Modified versions of the infographics run continuously on the RxSafe Marin Facebook page. These are rotated on a quarterly basis, targeting three specific age groups (13-29, 30-64, and 65+). In combination with daily organic informational posts, the RxSafe Marin Facebook audience has nearly doubled since October 20th, 2015 (from 665 to 1,240 followers).

Coinciding with the April 30th, 2016 National Drug Take-Back Day, the CBP team developed and implemented a messaging campaign via Marin County police and fire stations participating in the take-back program. The infographics and scripted messages promoting safe drug disposal were sent to all Marin Fire and Police Chiefs, asking them to post messages on NextDoor encouraging residents to dispose of their old and unused medications. Some cities took the initiative to also post the information on their web sites, and other social media forums such as Twitter and Facebook. Dissemination and reach were tracked by the CBP team and reported to the RxSafe Marin steering committee.

Additionally, local substance-abuse prevention coalitions and schools have also shared the infographics and messaging with parents, connecting them with RxSafe Marin as a resource to inform themselves, educate their children, and help keep them safe.

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

Yes. Both the method and the messaging of “Know the Facts” are transferable to other jurisdictions. The core messages of safe storage and disposal, knowing the risks of and safe alternatives to opioids are important for any community. The process relies on high yield, inexpensive or free, and widely available technology. Successful messaging and reach relied upon relationships that had been formed within the coalition. Other coalitions can replicate this work by leveraging cross-system collaboration with non-traditional partners within their community.

RxSafe Marin is actively sharing current and past campaign materials with other communities for replication. The materials we make available can be altered by adding local data to customize the messages for a particular community. For example, the Northern Sierra Opioid Safety Coalition (Plumas, Lassen, Sierra, and Modoc Counties) replicated “Know the Facts” infographics booklet with their local data. [*\(See attached photo examples from the Northern Sierra Opioid Safety Coalition.\)*](#) Marin County strongly supports sharing best practices, and borrowing and lending materials with other jurisdictions whenever possible. We can all help each other.

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

Through the RxSafe Marin movement, more than 100 people are engaged each month implementing strategies to decrease the harm of prescription drug misuse and abuse. These strategies are implemented through 5 action teams (outlined above) that meet monthly at a minimum to ensure the work progresses. The “Know the Facts” campaign was led by the Community-Based Prevention Action Team, and engaged the Data Action Team, and Prescribers and Pharmacists Action Team. The RxSafe Marin Community-Based Prevention Action Team (CBP) worked with community members, local police departments, fire departments, MPN (network of community coalitions), and several branches of Marin County government, including the Board of Supervisors, Environmental Health Services, Office of Education, Aging and Adult Services, and Marin HHS – Public Health.

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

As mentioned previously, the many members and sectors of the RxSafe Marin coalition were important resources for successful message development, and amplifying the reach of this messaging.

Many community partners helped RxSafe Marin with discounted and free services to help promote and amplify the campaign. Community partners include:

The Marin Prevention Network (network of community coalitions engaged in substance abuse prevention), Marin County HHS, Marin Sanitary Service and other local waste management companies, police and fire departments, Marin County Senior Information Fair, Marin County Government, and Marin Community Clinics shared messaging among their contacts via social media (Facebook, Twitter, NextDoor), digital newsletters, and printed posters/booklets for free.

The printing and design costs were discounted by community partners providing these services and helped to get our print and digital materials distributed in a timely manner. Translation services were provided by Marin HHS free of charge.

OUTCOMES

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

The “Know the Facts” campaign is ongoing. Evaluation and data are at the core of this campaign and overall initiative. As a method to track data collection in real time, we are using the on-line platform LiveStories that is interactive and easily shareable even on a mobile device. For example, the RxSafe Marin Report Card on LiveStories shows information from multiple datasets to gain a broad perspective of the impact of prescription drug misuse and abuse on our community. The elements displayed here were selected by members of the RxSafe Marin Data Team to describe the scale and scope of prescription drug misuse and abuse in Marin County, inform strategy, and track progress. RxSafe Marin hopes to see this data shift through the multiple strategies to influence decision making.

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

Since the overall campaign is still ongoing, RxSafe Marin is committed to taking our baseline data and continues to track changes in behavior and perception. Initial objectives of wider spread knowledge and awareness of the dangers related to prescription drug misuse and abuse have been achieved.

The ultimate goal of RxSafe Marin is to save lives from drug overdose. While it is too soon to celebrate we did see a significant decline between 2013-2014 with 27 unintentional overdose deaths in 2013 and 10 in 2014. Overdose deaths were lower in 2014 than any point since 2008. While this is likely multifactorial, combined with the decrease in opioid prescribing we are hopeful that this is the beginning of the reversal of this epidemic. The average prescribed dose of opioids decreased by 58% between 2013-2015.

The “Know the Facts” campaign helped garner support to add prescription drugs to existing Social Host Ordinances. In February 2016 Marin County Board of Supervisors approved the Social Host Ordinance amendment for unincorporated Marin and in March 2016 San Rafael, the largest city in Marin, followed suit.

Popularity of the “Know the Fact’s campaign has let to requests for additional information to further describe the epidemic locally. This campaign has served as a model for our method of messaging to solicit support for pending initiatives including wider distribution of naloxone and increased opportunities for treatment for addiction.

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

The members of RxSafe Marin believe that the problem of prescription abuse is a complex social problem that can be solved with innovative solutions and collective effort.

The campaign helps move what has been previously considered a healthcare problem, related primarily to prescribing, into the realm of public health and community well-being. The solutions suggested by

this document operate at both the individual level (e.g. better informed patients) and at the community level (e.g. policies for increased take back locations).

By framing this as an epidemic, and viewing the entire community as being at risk, the problem is connected to the wider social environment.

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

Communication with the public has been an integral part of the RxSafe Marin strategic plan since its inception, and is the specific focus of the CBP team. In addition to the comprehensive “Know the Facts” campaign, regular communications have been developed and disseminated to the public, including a monthly newsletter, press releases, public health advisories, and opinion editorials. As a result of consistent communication with the media, RxSafe Marin has garnered regular earned media in the form of print and online newspaper articles, editorials, radio interviews, and television news coverage. To see a comprehensive media list of RxSafe Marin in the News: <http://www.rxsafemarin.org/news---media.html>.

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

The campaign is based on an assumption that community knowledge can drive system-wide change to reverse the course of an epidemic. Empowering clinicians to prescribe judiciously, and finding ways to treat people with addiction, are only part of the solution. Direct to consumer marketing for pharmaceuticals demonstrates the importance of patient knowledge and behavior in prescribing practice. We imagine a community where patients begin to question prescriber's when opioids are offered--based on an understanding of the public health costs at the community level, and personal risks for people prescribed opioids.

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

RxSafe Marin used a Collective Impact model to engage many sectors of the community to identify and create specific goals and objectives to save lives. Through the implementation of the collective impact model much learning and success was experienced.

Specifically through implementation of the “Know the Facts” campaign several lessons were learned that both improved the final products and delivery of messages and that will have a positive impact on future projects:

-One clinical setting that we approached was unwilling to use our infographics for patient education. Concerns about the “Know the Risks” infographic of narcotic use were cited because of the possible implication that any narcotic prescription could cause harm. Having approached this provider for input on the development may have fostered buy in.

-In the absence of direct community input Public Health messages may be too technical for common understanding. Through this process, we learned about the need for community members to participate in the data translation process and will continue to use this resource.

- Building tools and campaign materials is an iterative process. To have authentic engagement from the community they must be involved in all steps required to get to a final product. We know that this slows the process down and the timelines must be realistic. In future projects this will be considered when developing project timelines.

- When using non-traditional data sources (e.g. - Environmental Health data on weight of disposed medications) subject matter experts must be consulted for interpretation (this is where cross-sector collaboration is key) and may require extensive cleaning for public health use. In future projects subject matter experts will continue to be identified and consulted to verify data quality.

Conclusion:

-Understanding prescription drug abuse requires coordinated efforts from multiple sectors.

-“Know the Facts” campaign is one model to synchronize disparate partners to focus on shared priorities.

-Data can mobilize diverse sectors to work together in new and innovative ways to address public health priorities particularly in a community collaborative.

-Data can reveal trends in controlled substance prescriptions and differences across demographic groups.

INNOVATION

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

Equitable community involvement in RxSafe Marin has been at the heart of the initiative since its inception. The initiative itself was born out of a grassroots campaign championed by a parent and Marin resident who had lost his son to an opioid overdose. Community Meetings informing the strategic plan were open to the public, and attended by community members representing Marin’s diverse population. Agencies such as Aging and Adult Services, Youth Leadership Institute, faith-based organization, schools and coalitions comprised each session. Action Teams continually recruit new members to help ensure equitable community representation in decision-making. The CBP team has been represented by physicians, parents, first responders, educators, government officials, and coalitions. Messages are carefully vetted using simple, common language and a neutral tone to help ensure effective comprehension by the public. Social media and print collaterals have been translated into Spanish, and disseminated within Marin’s large Latino community. Printed collaterals are used by Aging and Adult Services providers and community clinics, to help ensure everyone receives this important information.

Growth of the campaign has relied on community members addressing the Marin County Board of Supervisors, submitting op-eds in our local newspapers, and sharing messaging via social media, on-line community forums and blogs.

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

A mixture of traditional and print media was used during this campaign; however digital media was the center focus. RxSafe Marin used social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to amplify the campaign message—a targeted Facebook paid ad campaign was created. We also harnessed the wide readership of our regional newspaper the Marin Independent Journal by running a print and digital banner ad on its website.

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

RxSafe Marin supports the idea of sharing communications best practices with other local health officials. We have shared our communication materials and learned lessons with local, state, and national community coalitions and initiatives.

Communications messaging and materials can be accessed from the following:

RxSafe Marin website: <http://www.rxsafemarin.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RxSafeMarin>

In Spanish: <http://www.rxsafemarin.org/espa-ol.html>

RxSafe Marin Data Report Card: <http://bit.ly/RxSafeMarinReportCard>

RxSafe Marin CURES Report: <http://bit.ly/RxSafeMarinCURESReport>

For all application supplements: <http://bit.ly/HOACsupplements>

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

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