



## Developing community-level social marketing messages to raise awareness of asthma in older Australians: Preliminary results

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### Background



- While asthma awareness campaigns are generally aimed at children and their parents, asthma affects a similar proportion of older adults, often with more severe health consequences.
- A targeted asthma awareness campaign utilising social marketing techniques could improve the health outcomes and quality of life of this population.

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## Background



- We developed a survey for the community about asthma and health in general, addressing:
  - Asthma-related health beliefs
  - Asthma knowledge
  - Health-related quality of life
  - Use of and perceived reliability of various health information sources

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## Research Objective



- We pilot tested our survey in the older adult population to learn more about their asthma perceptions to guide development of a targeted social marketing campaign.

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## Method



- One-hundred and fifteen adults aged 55 years and over completed a self-report survey about their asthma knowledge, beliefs and perceptions.



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## Results at a Glance



- Asthma Knowledge
  - The majority (89.8%) knew that you could get asthma as an adult without having it as a child
  - Poor knowledge of asthma signs, with many answering incorrectly to the signs “shortness of breath” (32.3%), “tightness in the chest” (39%), and “cough at night” (50%)

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## Results at a Glance



- Use of health information sources
  - The main source was GP/Doctors (93.2%), followed by Friends/Relatives (63.5%) and Pharmacists (59.2%)
  - Between 41%-47% of the sample reported never using the Internet, newspapers, magazines, television or radio to access health information
- Reliability/credibility of sources
  - Only information from GP/Doctors and Pharmacists were perceived as being mostly to completely reliable

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## Results at a Glance



- The majority (64.5%) did not think that they were susceptible to developing asthma.
- Almost all respondents (96.5%) thought that asthma was serious.
- 15.7% of the sample were diagnosed asthmatics
- **The audience was segmented into four groups based on their perceptions of asthma susceptibility and seriousness.**

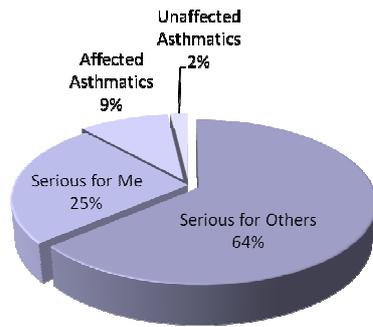
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# Audience Segmentation



## Segmentation by Asthma Beliefs



SEGMENT	Perceived Susceptibility	Perceived Seriousness
Serious for Others	Low	High
Serious for Me	High	High
Affected Asthmatics	Has Asthma	High
Unaffected Asthmatics	Has Asthma	Low

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# Segmentation & Messages



## Key messages for "Serious for Others"

- Publicise prevalence of asthma in older adults (10%) and risk factors
- Respiratory symptoms of asthma can be treated and are not a normal part of ageing

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## Segmentation & Messages



### Key messages for "Serious for Me"

- Raising awareness of the primary asthma symptoms
- Encourage a visit to their doctor upon experiencing the main symptoms of asthma

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## Segmentation & Messages



### Key messages for "Affected Asthmatics"

- Ways to properly self-manage asthma
- Promote behaviours beneficial to good respiratory health e.g. exercise

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## Segmentation & Messages



### Key messages for “Unaffected Asthmatics”

- The consequences of not properly managing their asthma
- Incorporating healthy respiratory behaviours into their daily activities

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## Campaign Implications



- The campaign will...
  - Create targeted messages based on the audience’s perceptions of asthma
  - Address gaps in asthma knowledge
  - Utilise health information sources that are both used and deemed to be credible

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## Next Phase



- This segmentation has been replicated in a larger data set (n = 4,066) from our recent mail-out baseline survey
- Currently designing campaign materials
- Then will pre-test these materials and developed messages with our target audience

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## Questions?



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