

F.A.S.T. stroke campaign evaluation

Summary

In March 2023, the Public Health Agency (PHA) ran a multi-channel advertising campaign for F.A.S.T. This campaign was adapted from the National Health Service (NHS) England's campaign.

The aim of the campaign was to raise awareness of stroke using the Act F.A.S.T. acronym (Face, Arms, Speech, Time), which provides a memorable way of identifying the most common signs of a stroke and emphasises the importance of acting quickly by calling 999.

The primary audience for the campaign was people aged 50+, as this age group are more likely to experience a stroke. The campaign was also relevant to a wider all adult audience of stroke savers who may witness somebody showing one of the stroke signs.

Recognition: 90% reported that they had seen or heard at least one element of the campaign.

Recall: 92% strongly agreed/agreed that the campaign would help them remember the signs of having a stroke.

Positive action: 91% said they would dial 999 if they saw someone having the signs of a stroke.

Background

Stroke is a common cause of death and disability in Northern Ireland. It accounts for around 3,000 hospital admissions each year and there are approximately 39,000 stroke survivors living in our communities. Early treatment after a stroke is vital and effective treatment can prevent long-term disability and save lives. A stroke is a medical emergency, so it is important to recognise the signs and symptoms of stroke and to know what to do should you notice any single one of the signs of a stroke in yourself or another.

Campaign advertising

The mass media campaign advertising ran in March 2023 across TV, radio, outdoor, press and digital, including social media advertising. Some radio extended into the week commencing 10 April 2023. The campaign was exposed over 26 million times.

The campaign was supported by engagement with partners and stakeholders.

When stroke strikes, act F.A.S.T. Call 999

Face

Has their face fallen on one side?
Can they smile?

Arms

Can they raise both arms and
keep them there?

Speech

Is their speech slurred?

Time

To call 999 if you see any
single one of these signs

Evaluation method

Post campaign questions were included on an omnibus survey with a representative sample (1,000 respondents) of the adult general population of Northern Ireland (aged 18+ years). Fieldwork was conducted online in April 2023 and data were analysed by the PHA's Health Intelligence Unit.

Results

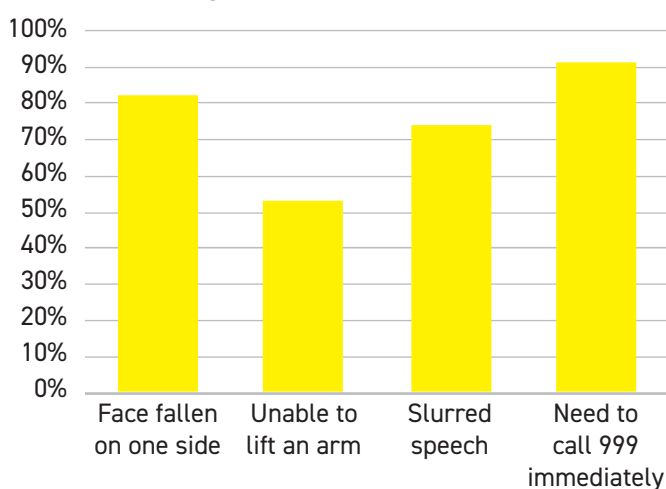
Recognition of the campaign was extremely high

Nine out of 10 respondents (90%) were aware of at least one element of the campaign suggesting that targeting was effective. The TV/video advertisement was most recognised at 86%, with 63% reporting they saw the adverts in press/digital/outdoor. Over half (52%) said they heard the radio ad.

High awareness of campaign messages

There was high awareness of all signs of a stroke and of the need to dial 999 immediately if someone is showing one of the signs.

Awareness of signs of stroke and action needed



The campaign increased knowledge

Almost three quarters of respondents (74%) strongly agreed/agreed that the campaign told them something new.

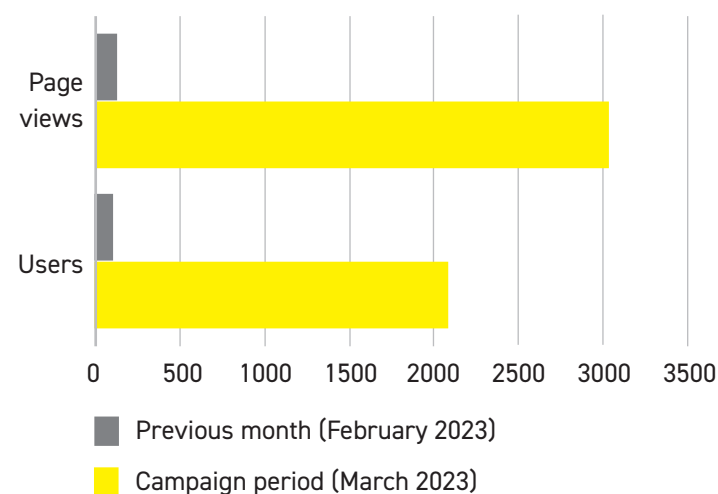
Reactions to the campaign were very positive

Overall, 95% thought the campaign was very/somewhat thought provoking and 99% thought the campaign was clear and easy to understand. More than 9 out of 10 respondents (92%) strongly agreed/agreed that the campaign would help them remember the signs of having a stroke.

Online engagement

Web traffic from nidirect indicates the campaign generated interest in finding out more about stroke/F.A.S.T.

Act F.A.S.T. nidirect website traffic



Within the Health A-Z, the page on stroke moved up the ranking of most visited pages from 284 to 32.

"In 2020, when I was 40, I suffered a stroke. Thankfully, my sister and a friend recognised the signs from the F.A.S.T. campaign and immediately called an ambulance. Their awareness of F.A.S.T. saved my life. I feel so lucky – I've made a great recovery and am back dancing."

Victoria Martin, professional dancer and stroke survivor from Newtownards, County Down