

Five key steps: Engaging Stakeholders for Effective Cancer Interventions

With recent statistics from Macmillan Cancer showing survival times for some cancers are still counted in weeks rather than years, there's no doubt tackling the prevalence of cancer in our communities is still a major concern.

Having worked with numerous NHS Trusts using a 'push and pull' strategy to get both internal and external partners engaged in cancer interventions which really resonate with target groups, here are our five keys steps to driving positive behaviour change in this challenging area:

1. 'Push' bespoke interventions

Work with stakeholders to develop insight-led interventions which meet local communities at a time and place that suits them. This will enable you to engage people at their greatest point of need and 'push' them to make appointments sooner, thus enabling earlier diagnosis and getting higher footfall into secondary care services.

2. 'Pull' stakeholders into the process

Getting sustainable buy-in from all partners is essential to driving people to see their GP and signposting them to secondary care. It's all too easy to lose focus on stakeholder communications, but if they don't sign up to your objectives, hitting your KPIs will be an uphill battle. To keep up the momentum, keep them involved at every stage.

3. Make health professionals integral to the intervention

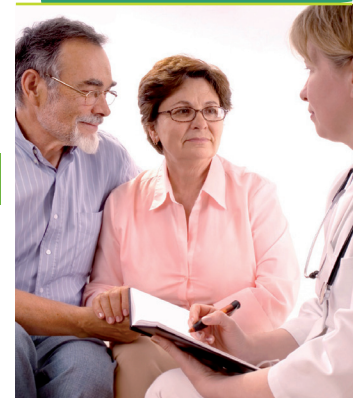
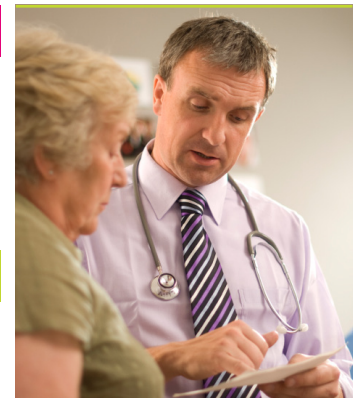
As well as their clinical expertise, health professionals are essential community 'connectors'. For example, pharmacists have a vital role in the engagement – talking to people about the signs and symptoms of cancer and referring patients to their GP.

4. Use demographic profiling

By harnessing demographic profiling in partnership with your stakeholders, you'll focus on the areas of highest prevalence and develop key interventions in cancer 'hotspots'. For instance, our targeted work on lung cancer in the South West has seen us working in key deprived communities with high smoking and drinking levels.

5. Put evaluation at the heart of the process

Think carefully about how you need to evaluate your work and be prepared to adapt your approach, in conjunction with stakeholders, to achieve the outcomes you need. The 'push' aspect might include the number of people engaged and signposted into services, while the 'pull' element may be around the number of people attending GP appointments, referred into x-rays and the outcome of this.



If you'd like to know more about replicating this proven approach and making it work for you, contact our Director of Social Change, Aaron Garside on 0845 5193 423 or aaron.garside@icecreates.com