

90**Diagnosis and management of head and neck cancer**A national clinical guideline • *supplementary material*

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Diagnosis and management of head and neck cancer supplementary material

The West of Scotland Cancer Awareness Project

The West of Scotland Cancer Awareness Project was a Big Lottery funded project developing a high profile public awareness campaign for mouth and bowel cancer. The aim of the project was to encourage the 'at risk' population, living in the West of Scotland to present earlier to the NHS if they have signs and symptoms of mouth or bowel cancer.

Research conducted in the early stages of the project highlighted that public awareness and knowledge about the signs and symptoms of cancer is generally poor. From 1000 people questioned across the West of Scotland, only 6% were aware of mouth cancer and 24% were aware of bowel cancer. These are two cancers where early detection can make a real difference to survival outcomes and quality of life.

The project was supported by the West of Scotland Cancer Advisory Network (WoSCAN) and had strong links with the Managed Clinical Networks (MCNs) for head and neck and colorectal cancer. Expert advisors from a variety of disciplines ensured that the campaign was appropriately developed and the messages within the campaign were accurate.

Local Implementation Teams (LITs) were set up in each NHS Board area to look at the potential impact of the campaign on NHS services along with development and implementation of local campaign initiatives, training and a communications strategy. The LITs consisted of representatives from Primary Care, the Acute Services and other local organisations/groups.

The mouth cancer campaign was developed reflecting the principles of social marketing. It was launched on 27th October 2003 and ran until Spring 2004. A final phase ran from 17th - 30th April 2005. The target group for the mouth cancer campaign was men and women aged 45 and over living in deprived areas. Those who smoked and/or drank heavily were also targeted.

The high profile television and radio advertising, public relations, training of professionals, participation of key clinical stakeholders and community initiatives proved an effective integrated solution which mobilised the target audience into action.¹⁻³

Further information can be found at www.woscap.co.uk (please note the website will no longer be updated as WoSCAP has now closed).

References

1. West of Scotland Cancer Awareness Project. Spreading the word about mouth cancer. *Scottish Dentist* 2005;March-April(73):10-1.
2. Hastings G, McDermott L. Putting social marketing into practice. *BMJ* 2006;332(7551):1210-2.
3. Rodgers J, Macpherson LM. General dental practitioners' perceptions of the West of Scotland Cancer Awareness Programme oral cancer campaign. *Br Dent J* 2006;200(12):693-7; discussion 75.

