

Are you content for the creative agency to be appointed for this campaign?

MS(PH)

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Date: 31 October 2008
Copies: see attached list

✓ GRO-C

Agreed

HEPATITIS C AWARENESS CAMPAIGN IN 2008/2009

Issue

1. In May 2008, you agreed our proposal to re-shape the hepatitis C awareness campaign (see attached). This submission updates you on progress and
 - seeks your agreement to appoint creative agency, VCCP;
 - informs you of the re-appointment of Munro & Forster to manage public relations and
 - asks that you note the appointment of Media Reach to work with both agencies above on the new BME aspects of the campaign.

Recommendation

2. That you agree to the appointment of the creative agency, VCCP. Their initial ideas have been tested through extensive, independent research with ex-intravenous drug users and members of the general public. A summary of the research is available at **Annex A** and samples of VCCP's work are at **Annex B**

Timing

3. A reply is requested by 6 November 2008 so that the successful agencies can start to deliver a programme of work from January 2009.

Background

DH hepatitis C awareness campaign

4. The DH FaCe It awareness campaign in support of the Hepatitis C Action Plan for England (June 2004) has been running since 2004. It aims to raise awareness of hepatitis C among healthcare professionals and the public, to encourage people who may be at risk to be tested and to inform people about avoiding the risks of infection.
5. It is estimated that there are about 200,000 people living in England with chronic hepatitis C, of whom between 100,000 – 140,000 people may be undiagnosed. The largest group estimated to be infected with chronic hepatitis C is former injecting drug users, who make up nearly 60% of the total. A summary of the impact of the campaign to date can be found at **Annex C**. Research indicates that the DH awareness campaign needs to be a sustained effort.

Future direction of the campaign

6. The awareness campaign in 2008/09 will consist of the following:
 - Public Relations – for healthcare professionals and the general public;
 - Advertising – to raise awareness among the general public and to communicate with risk groups such as former injecting drug users through press and radio ads; and
 - BME Communications – to raise awareness among the South Asian community and the health professionals serving that community through PR and advertising.
7. A fuller document on the future direction of the campaign can be found at **Annex D**. We will keep you updated as the campaign is rolled out.

Costs

8. As in previous years, the campaign for 2008/09 will be funded from a central programme budget held by the Health Protection Division. Expenditure in 2008/09 on the *FaCe It* campaign is expected to be around £2.9 million, including related research and evaluation.

Media handling and stakeholder engagement

9. No media handling is necessary at this stage. We will be meeting with the hepatitis C voluntary and community sector to discuss the research findings of the creative ideas as well as inform them of the appointment of Munro & Forster and Media Reach to manage the PR and BME strands of the campaign.

Conclusion

10. We recommend that you agree to the appointment of the creative agency, VCCP in support of the new hepatitis C awareness campaign, to start in January 2009.

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