

Parkinson's UK - public awareness campaign

Why is Parkinson's UK running this campaign?

The campaign has been designed to raise public awareness and understanding of Parkinson's. We're committed to doing this as part of our strategic plan, under our goal to improve life for everyone affected. In a survey of people living with Parkinson's earlier this year, 100% said they wanted the public to have a better understanding of Parkinson's and what it's like to live with the condition. Increasing public awareness of the impact of Parkinson's and the importance of our cause is also crucial to support our fundraising.

Who is the campaign aimed at?

The campaign is aimed at the general public. It's intended to raise their awareness of Parkinson's and increase their understanding of the challenges Parkinson's presents for people affected.

Why isn't the campaign targeting people affected by Parkinson's?

Since September we've been running a separate campaign called 'Turn to us' specifically targeting people living with the condition. The 'Turn to us' campaign has been running in GP surgeries and pharmacies and stresses the all round support Parkinson's UK offers to people affected. Subject to evaluation, we'll continue to roll out the 'Turn to us' campaign to help us make sure that no one has to face Parkinson's alone. The aim is that by 2015 everyone affected will have had the opportunity to see our 'Turn to us' materials.

When does the public awareness campaign start?

The campaign will start on 10th December and runs until the end of the month. You may still see some adverts around in early January – this is an added bonus for us if the sites haven't been filled by someone else.

How was the campaign developed?

We asked some people affected by Parkinson's to brief an award winning advertising agency, The Assembly Network, about the challenges of living with the condition. The agency has given us their time for free as they had personal connections to people with Parkinson's and links to the charity. People with Parkinson's and the public were consulted during the design and copy process to inform the end result.

What is the concept for the campaign?

The concept the agency developed is built around objects associated with everyday tasks, such as making a cup of tea or putting on a pair of socks. The idea is that the images and text are then visually mixed up to communicate the way Parkinson's disrupts messages from the brain. By focusing on everyday activities that the general public can relate to, the campaign aims to make people think about how Parkinson's would impact on their own everyday life, so they empathise with the challenges people affected can face. There are six different images, chosen to reflect stories that people with Parkinson's have shared.

Will the message really get across if the adverts are mixed up?

This approach is intended to get the public to engage with the advert – to stop and decipher it. The adverts will only be put in places where people have time to put the message together. They are specifically designed for environments where people look for ways to engage their mind, for example during boring journeys. The mixed up approach has been developed to make the campaign stand out -sneak previews to influential media figures have received a really positive response.

What's the messaging trying to get across?

The agency developed the messaging for the campaign to explain the effect of Parkinson's on the brain and communicate the impact on people affected. They advised strongly that a powerful message is needed to cut through into the public consciousness and make people take notice.

Won't a hard hitting campaign be upsetting for people affected?

Whilst the campaign isn't aimed at people living with Parkinson's, we've been really mindful that people affected and their families may see the campaign and we've thought a lot about the potential impact on them and the way they see the charity. That's why we've tested and developed the messages with more than 40 people affected, including people who are newly diagnosed. We've also tested the campaign with professionals who work with people with Parkinson's –and of course with the general public, who are the target audience.

So what does the messaging say?

The text that will be used in the adverts is as follows (in italics, followed by the rationale):

- ***Parkinson's mixes up the messages the brain sends to the body, so everyday tasks become incredibly difficult.***

Rationale: The aim of this campaign is to improve public understanding about what Parkinson's is and the impact the condition has. We focus on everyday tasks so that the general public can relate to the campaign. We also wanted to get across that Parkinson's is a degenerative condition.

- ***That's why we're here: parkinsons.org.uk***

Rationale: This is to show people that we're here to support people affected by Parkinson's and to direct the public to our website for more information. We expect people to just put "Parkinson's" into a search engine as they may not remember the website. The Parkinson's UK website comes up top in search engines when you search for 'Parkinson's' so the public will find us easily.

- ***Parkinson's might not kill you. But it can make living hell.***

Rationale: We want to make a bold statement about the impact Parkinson's can have and to leave the public with a clear message that Parkinson's is a condition to take seriously and to care about.

For the majority of people, Parkinson's will not significantly affect their life expectancy. However, some of the more advanced symptoms can make someone more vulnerable.

The copy is intended to highlight that although Parkinson's isn't a terminal condition it can have a huge impact on people affected.

"...can make living hell" is a powerful statement, but is also used colloquially and is how some people with Parkinson's have described the condition to us. Because Parkinson's fluctuates and is different from one person to the next, we know that every day isn't hell for everyone with Parkinson's. But there are times when it can be, and this is what we want the public to understand.

What feedback have you had from the audience testing?

The campaign has tested well with the general public. Many people said it would make them take notice and that they would be motivated to find out more.

People affected by Parkinson's supported a powerful message that reflects the reality of living with the condition. People close to the charity particularly flagged up that the way we present Parkinson's to the outside world can be too positive and that they are keen to see us redress the balance.

People who are newly diagnosed have been very positive and this is typical of the kind of feedback received:

'Mentally coming to terms with a diagnosis is difficult but this sounds quite right - I wouldn't be upset in the slightest if I saw this.'

Professionals have also reacted well to the campaign, and the following is a fairly typical comment:

'Fantastically hard hitting'

'Really good message if you don't know very much about Parkinson's'

Where can I see the campaign?

- 38 large train stations in England and Scotland
- 2 roadside ads in Cardiff (train station opportunities weren't available)
- 3 roadside ads in Belfast (train station opportunities weren't available)
- 4,166 ads in trains across the South East rail network
- 4 national newspapers (The Metro, Daily Telegraph, The Times and Daily Mail)
- 32 websites including thetrainline.com and Orange

How many people will see it?

We will be reaching nearly a third of the UK population with this campaign. Across the railway network and press advertising, there will be over 54 million opportunities for people to see the campaign across the UK.

How will the campaign be picked up on our website and social media?

On our website, we will have several case studies of people talking about how having Parkinson's affects their everyday activities. This gives us an opportunity to talk about what we're doing to raise money, find a cure, campaign for better services and make sure that no one faces Parkinson's alone. Go to parkinsons.org.uk from 10 December to see the case studies. We will also be promoting the campaign through social media activity via Twitter, Facebook and Pinterest to help spread the word online.

Will there be any media coverage?

There will be a big media push to complement the campaign, which will include a radio day, to try to get coverage in local and national media. We are also trying to get some celebrities involved to help promote the campaign.

How much is the campaign costing?

The creative agency we're working with are giving us their time for free. We are however, having to pay for the production costs of printing the adverts. The total cost for this equates to less than 0.7% of our 2011 annual income.

How are you telling local groups about it?

There has been an article November's Network News and there will be a feature going out in the December edition. There was also a feature in The Parkinson.

How are you telling professionals about it?

As well as alerting professionals we directly work with such as Parkinson's nurses, we are telling our Professionals' Network members and professional organisations about the campaign and explaining its purpose.

The campaign doesn't look like Parkinson's UK's usual materials – is that deliberate?

Yes - the campaign has been designed for a very specific purpose but it doesn't mean that we've changed the guidance about how our materials look and feel in any way.

One of Parkinson's UK's values is 'we inspire' – how will this campaign inspire people?

The campaign is designed to inspire the general public to care about Parkinson's and find out more. The audience testing suggests it will achieve that.

How will you measure the impact of the campaign?

We're working with an outside agency to track public understanding of Parkinson's before and after the campaign. We'll also be measuring public awareness of the campaign and whether there's an increase in spontaneous and prompted awareness of the charity. In addition, we'll be able to track engagement in the campaign through our website and social media.

Enquiry handling

Our regional teams will handle local enquiries in their area where appropriate. Calls and emails to national office will be dealt with by the following teams:

Enquiry	Contact
Person affected by Parkinson's needing reassurance	Helpline 0800 808 0303 hello@parkinsons.org.uk
Feedback or questions about the adverts	Brand hotline 0207 963 9347 brand@parkinsons.org.uk
Questions on media activity	Media Team 0207 963 9370 Out of office hours: 07961 460248 pr@parkinsons.org.uk
Donations or membership enquiries	Supporter Services 020 7932 1303
Specific questions on research or mechanics of Parkinson's. e.g. requiring in depth discussion of Parkinson's UK stance on mortality, or explanation of how the messages between the brain and body get disrupted	Research Communications 020 7963 9384 Researchcomms@parkinsons.org.uk
Enquiries about volunteering	Volunteering Coordinator 0207 963 9328 volunteering@parkinsons.org.uk

Over the Christmas period, there will be a limited helpline service and a media out-of-hours contact number for urgent queries.

Who do I speak to for more information?

If you have any questions or feedback, please get in touch with Parkinson's UK's Marketing Team, on 020 7963 9347 or brand@parkinsons.org.uk