STRIDE INITIATIVE

Overcoming digital barriers: Results of beyondblue research into stigma reduction using digital interventions

Together Against Stigma Conference

20 September 2017
The Stigma Reduction Interventions: Digital Environments (STRIDE) Initiative is a beyondblue project funded with donations from the Movember Foundation.
### beyondblue – conceptual framework for stigma reduction

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<td><strong>Structural</strong></td>
<td>Societal-level conditions, cultural norms and institutional practices that limit the opportunities, resources and wellbeing for stigmatised populations</td>
<td>Inequitable access to employment, education and treatment; Legal restrictions.</td>
<td>Advocacy for environmental restructuring, legislative and regulatory change</td>
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<td><strong>Social</strong></td>
<td>Negative social norms which result in individuals and groups to fear, reject or avoid (prejudice) and discriminate against people who are different</td>
<td>Negative stereotypes; Social exclusion; Public support for discrimination</td>
<td>Local, targeted, credible, continuous contact</td>
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<td><strong>Self</strong></td>
<td>Internalised negative stereotypes leading to denial of symptoms, rejection of treatment and self-isolation from potentially valuable social supports</td>
<td>Low self-esteem/efficacy; Shame; Lack of engagement with treatment; ‘Why Try?’, Suicide</td>
<td>Empowerment strategies supported by peer networks</td>
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All people achieve their best possible mental health
Gathering knowledge about what works in stigma reduction

“Can digital interventions, implemented at a local population level, promote change across the knowledge, attitudinal and/or behavioural components of stigma experienced and/or exhibited by men aged 30 to 64 years?”
Unemployed construction workers

Educational content delivered via SMS with link to website with video, podcast, and other user-generated content (moderated).

Men living with HIV & Men in heterosexual relationships who have sex with men

Websites to deliver peer support forums facilitated by peer leaders, education resources and opt-in notification

Men experiencing life transition: AFL Players, Coaches and construction workers

Website inclusive of ambassador stories and user-generated content (moderated), promoted through digital campaign

Men in regional and rural communities affected by suicide

Online education module inclusive of peer stories and user-generated content (moderated)

Refugee men from Arabic, Farsi and Tamil speaking communities

Online education module inclusive of peer stories and personalised action plans

Fly In Fly Out and Drive In Drive Out workers

Mobile application with facilitated peer support, user generated content, links to education and support
The Ripple Effect
THE RIPPLE EFFECT:

- Website optimised for multiple device types
- Tailored pathway responsive to:
  - suicide experience
  - gender
  - farming type
  - questions answered
- Content:
  - Digital stories
  - Video education
  - Postcards (digitised and online)
  - Personal goals
  - Resources
Rural Australians can be engaged to improve mental health.....

60+ Community Champions

466 stakeholders

643 registered participants (growing)

Tailored content

Getting the context right is key.....

Demonstrate understanding of farming work and life

Multiple trusted sources

......and maintaining engagement needs sustained effort

Email reminders

Google/ Facebook retargeting

Multiple trusted sources

Email reminders

Google/ Facebook retargeting
• It is possible to target rural participants nationally
• Women engage as ‘incidental educators’
• Participants had a range of suicide experience
• RE participants had higher level of suicide literacy than community sample
  • Literacy levels difficult to increase
    • Changing mind quickly
    • Alcohol
KEY LEARNINGS ABOUT SUICIDE STIGMA REDUCTION

• No significant reduction in stigma as measured by Stigma of Suicide Scale (SOSS)
• Behavioural indications of suicide stigma from
  • Digital storytelling workshop – improved understanding, empathy and openness
  • Postcard messages – importance of communicating
  • Website participation – improved knowledge and skills
  • Personal goal setting – transferring knowledge/skills into action

Ripple Effect goals set for conversation/support
(N=166 goals set)

- Support others: 36%
- Communicate feelings: 24%
- Socialising: 17%
- Other: 10%
- Healthcare seeking: 8%
- Exercise: 5%
Jen's Story
Steve's Story
YFronts: An iPhone app for FIFO (fly-in, fly out) guys

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\(^{(1)}\) CGA Consulting \(^{(2)}\) University of NSW \(^{(3)}\) Indigenist Consulting
Project overview

**Target population:**
- Male FIFO (fly-in, fly-out) workers working in rural or remote locations.

**Why FIFO workers?**
- FIFO lifestyle puts significant pressure on workers and their families, including increased social isolation that can lead to anxiety, depression, suicidal behaviours.
- Reduced likelihood to access mainstream mental health services when needed.

**Digital intervention:**
- YFronts iPhone app was built ‘by men for men’ in a co-design process including the brand, digital design and app functionality (including a newsfeed, messaging, chat rooms, links to relevant podcasts and support services).
- Delays in app development process caused by change in digital developer, challenges in scoping app functionality and having to re-develop the app for the Apple App store.
Project overview

**Stigma reduction approach**
- Regular targeted positive mental health and wellbeing information through the app
- Encouraging user-driven posts and facilitating social contact among app users.

**Social media/marketing**
- Ongoing promotion through the FIFOMan Facebook page (17,000 followers)
- Marketing through key stakeholders and other relevant social media channels.

**Evaluation**
- Pre/post survey of FIFO workers (e.g. depression literacy, stigma of depression and suicide and 8 dimensions of wellbeing) comparing results for app users and non-users.
- Process evaluation seeking feedback of app design and functionality among app users
Key findings

**App uptake:** (first 6 months) 261 App Store downloads, 117 registered users

**Baseline survey:** N=371 completed (92% male)

- 72% interested in YFronts app and 34% wanted support for their mental health
- Significantly worse depression literacy for men aged <30 years compared to those aged 30+
- Perceived stigma of depression was twice as high as personal stigma (e.g. 47% of men would not tell anyone if they had depression, while 90% believed most people would not tell anyone)

**Follow-up survey:** N=157 completed (46% male)

- No significant differences between app users (N=16) and non-users (N=57) for stigma reduction, depression literacy or wellbeing
- FIFO men under age <30 years had significantly better wellbeing than those aged 30+ for three domains of wellbeing (intellectual, financial and social)
- Issues: small sample size, large female response rate and limited follow-up period.
Lessons learned

1. The target population (FIFO guys) was difficult to reach
   • Impacted on co-design process, marketing and app uptake
   • However, large baseline survey provided excellent information on mental health and wellbeing of target population to use in future intervention development

2. Apps are time-consuming, costly and difficult to develop
   • Large learning curve to app development process
   • Challenges to scope app functionality to most important and useful features
   • A different digital platform may have been more effective

3. Collection of additional outcome measures to stigma scales is needed
   • Collect data on help-seeking behaviours, social support and other correlates
Digital platforms can be effective in reducing prejudice, shame/self-blame and lack of engagement with support and treatment ... but

- Effective co-design is critical
- Content is king; it must be relevant and targeted to produce change
- Learn how to leverage current digital behaviour
- Leverage the non-digital environment
- Remember building trust takes time
- Develop a comprehensive evaluation framework
- Recognise positive behaviour change is the ultimate outcome
- Build trusting collaborative partnerships with different perspectives
- Remember digital might not always be the answer: lead with need
DISCUSSION

More information on the STRIDE Initiative, including detailed results of the research, will soon be available at: beyondblue.org.au/stigma
THANK YOU
TELL YOUR STORY
TELL YOUR STORY: REDUCING MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA IN REFUGEE MEN

- 65 million+ refugees worldwide
- 1/3 has posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Low rates of help-seeking
- Mental health stigma is significant barrier

AIMS
- Increase knowledge regarding mental health stigma in refugee men
- Develop & evaluate “Tell Your Story”, an on-line intervention to reduce mental health stigma and increase help-seeking

Qualitative Interviews → Quantitative Survey → RCT
Mental Health Stigma

- Trust & Fear
- Beliefs about talking
- Shame & guilt
- Cultural beliefs

71% Would seek help from spouse
63% Would seek help from a friend
50% Would seek help from a mental health professional

28% Did seek help from spouse
25% Did seek help from a friend
3% Did seek help from a mental health professional

85% I wouldn’t want people to know I wasn’t coping
38% I should have been stronger
64% I would feel worse about myself if I could not solve my own problems
38% My self-esteem would increase if I talked to a therapist
• 12 session on-line program
  • Available to Arabic, Farsi and Tamil-speaking men with PTSD symptoms

• Participants randomly assigned to intervention or wait-list control group
  • Assessed at baseline, post-treatment & 1 month

• Web intervention offered in-language
  • Employed evidence-based stigma reduction principles

Social Contact
  Videos of refugee men talking about positive help-seeking experiences

Psychoeducation
  Information about potential sources of assistance for psychological symptoms

Reappraisal
  Myth-busting of negative beliefs about mental health
A Smartphone-based program that uses SMS to send videos and digital information to construction workers to reduce stigma around anxiety, depression and suicide.

Note: As a randomised study, roughly 50% of participants received the program while the rest acted as a Control group and did not receive it. Groups were randomly selected and all participants received the surveys.
PROGRAM STRUCTURE

- Program delivered entirely to participants’ Smartphones
- 7 x SMS interventions sent over 6 week period, each addressing different aspect of mental health (via links to web)
- Purpose-built and curated digital content (videos, infographics, podcasts, written info, microsite, other web resources )
- ‘Before’ and ‘after’ surveys enabled us to measure the program’s effectiveness on stigma and suicide ideation
- Messages were personalised (ie Hi John), and content was relevant to construction workers
- Participants could call us or reach out by SMS for support
HOW DID CONTACT+CONNECT WORK?

Message flow (via clickable links)

Baseline survey

Personalised SMS

Contact+Connect website

Interactive Microsite

Follow up survey

Link to Survey Monkey via SMS

Similar questions to baseline
KEY STATS AND LEARNINGS

- 868 signed up (Feb 2016-Mar 2017) with 74% completed 6-week program
- Similar suicide ideation (in the past 6 months) in employed (17%) vs unemployed (18%)
- Slightly higher levels of shame & self-stigma in unemployed vs employed
- Participants with low perceived social support had higher levels of shame and help-seeking stigma than those with high perceived social support
- 4% reduction in help-seeking stigma in intervention group, no change in control group; 8% reduction in suicide ideation in intervention group, 4% in control
- Program had greater impact on reducing stigma in those with high stigma levels at outset than across the board
- Female registrants (20%) expressing interest for male partners or relatives
- Trialling similar programs over different durations and intensity & expanding access to email are recommended
Brent Hedley
Mental Health & Wellbeing Manager
AFL Players’ Association
The Better Out Than In campaign was purposefully directed towards communities where masculine ideologies prevail.

The campaign aimed to reframe the conversation of men’s depression from one of shame, stigma, and secrecy to one of openness, acceptance and hope by focusing on changing both attitude and behaviour.
WEBSITE
1.7 million viewers engaged with project related media communications

- **384+ hours** of story video content viewed
- Website visitors averaged **1min:25sec** session duration
- More than **40,000** Better Out Than In video views (combined Facebook, website, YouTube).
SOCIAL IMPACT

Example: Andrew’s story

• Many current and past players made contact to both congratulate and confide in Andrew
• Hundreds of calls, messages and Facebook comments around his story
• Past players accessed AFLPA’s psychology services
KEY FINDINGS

Men reported that they:

• were motivated to interact with the campaign, primarily to help others
• experienced a high level of satisfaction with campaign (amongst men who accessed it)
• valued all sections of the website, but thought the stories were the most valuable as they were highly relatable and spoke to men in their own language
• felt campaign promotion was subtle but appropriate for a topic like mental health
• believed anti-stigma campaigns like this are required in construction and AFL industries
Men reported that their engagement with Better Out Than In:

- increased the frequency with which they approached others when they perceived them as doing it tough because they now felt better equipped to do so.
- increased the frequency with which they shared their problems with others as a result of feeling more confident and comfortable about doing so.
- had just a small effect on the way they viewed depression, primarily reinforcing what they already knew.
- given them a resource they could use to approach others when they perceived that others were doing it tough.
KEY FINDINGS

Additional findings:

• considerable evidence that campaign had a positive impact on the frequency of providing/offering support to others

• could have been promoted more at both the grassroots level (on construction sites etc.) and through social media.
OUT OF THE BLUE
PETE & DALE

BEYONDBLUE
Depression, Anxiety

A BEYONDBLUE PROJECT FUNDED WITH DONATIONS FROM THE MOVEMBER FOUNDATION
WHAT WE DID?

EDUCATION
- Articles
- Support Directory
- User Mgmt System

CONTACT
- Live Chats
- Forums

PETE & DALE
WHAT WE DID?

Evaluation included:

• Preliminary telephone interviews
• Site analytics
• Online surveys among men visiting the websites
• Peer moderator consultations
What we found?

- High number of visitors PETE (n=6,733) & DALE (n=9,499)
- Low survey participation PETE (n<25) & DALE (n=118)
- DALE baseline survey results:
  - Greater psychological distress (over 30% moderate to severe levels)
  - Internalised stigma related to mental health
    » Association with disclosure of same-sex attraction
  - Risky sexual health behaviours
  - Hazardous alcohol use
What we learned?

- Online community building takes time
- DALE community is in fact experiencing poorer mental health outcomes
- Digital interventions have advantages that require further exploration and evaluation
- Scope of the digital intervention needs to be broader to succeed
- Mobile optimisation is absolutely necessary
- Your online user will have the final say