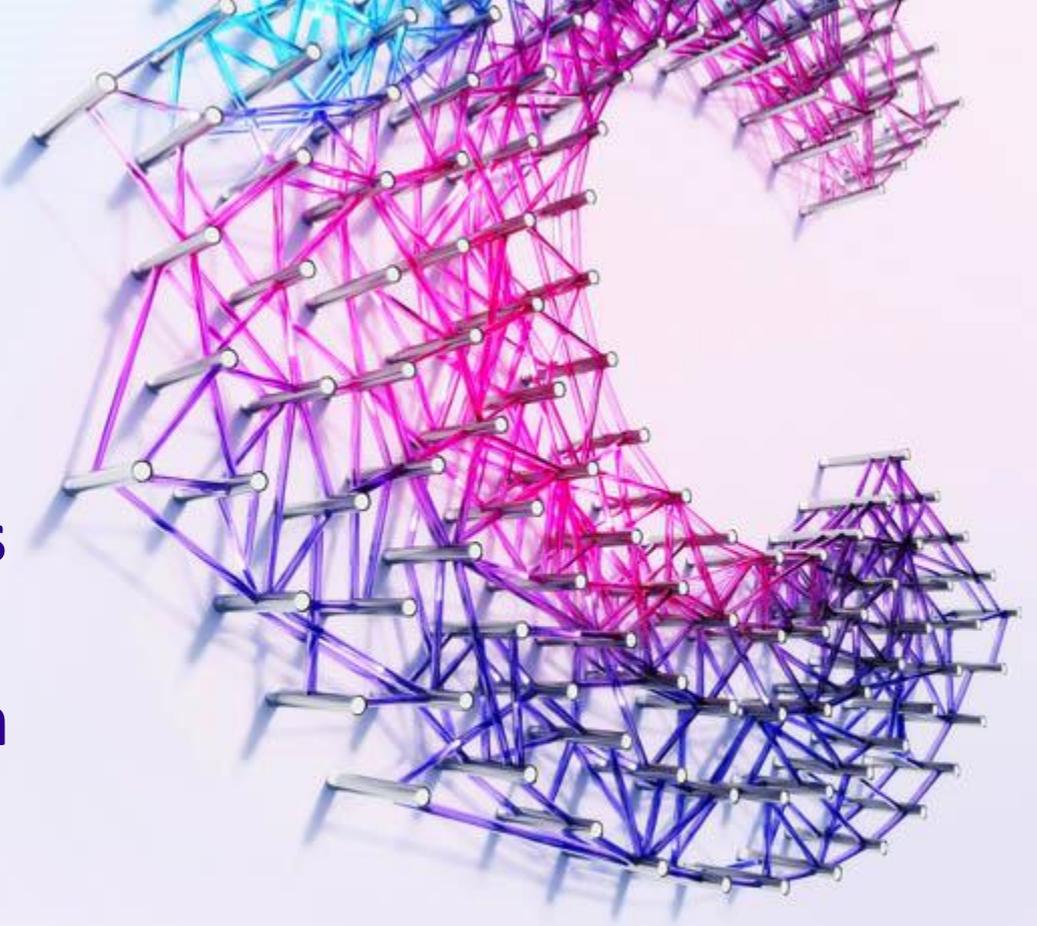


The logo consists of two overlapping speech bubbles. The left bubble is pink and the right bubble is blue. The text 'TALK' is in white on the pink bubble and 'CANCER' is in white on the blue bubble.

TALK CANCER

Talk Cancer for pharmacy staff: results from 3 month follow- up qualitative research

2015-16



RESEARCH AIMS

By following up a sample of pharmacy staff approximately 3 months after attending Talk Cancer training, we hoped to:

- understand more about the **journey** undertaken by pharmacists/counter assistants' who attend Talk Cancer training
- explore the **impact** Talk Cancer is having in a pharmacy setting, in particular:
 - changes in role perception
 - changes in confidence to initiate and manage conversations about cancer
 - changes in propensity to identify opportunities to raise awareness of cancer
 - The type and frequency of cancer-related conversations that Pharmacy trainees have
 - changes in cancer awareness raising or related behaviours made, or planned
 - **examples of conversations** trainees have had with customers and their outcomes

METHOD

- Semi-structured telephone interviews, 3 months post-workshop
- 14 participants who had attended Talk Cancer training in South London (Nov 2015, Jan & March 2016) commissioned by Health Education England – South London
- Mix of Dispensers, Pharmacists and Counter staff
- Interviews analysed using Framework analysis



CANCER
INFORMATION
FOR YOU

ABOUT TODAY

PRODUCE CANCER INTO
CONVERSATIONS

PERSONALIZED MESSAGE

REDUCE FEAR & FATALISM

HELP SEEKING
SUPPORT TO ENABLE
DIAGNOSIS

KEY FINDINGS

KEY FINDINGS

- All respondents spoke very highly of the training. The skill and experience of the trainers, the informal and interactive training style and the positive tone of the workshops were all highly praised.
- The content of the workshops was considered very useful and relevant to the pharmacy setting.
- Prior to the workshops, most pharmacy staff had not considered themselves as having a role in raising cancer awareness. If anything, it was a topic they tended to avoid. After the workshops, most participants spoke of feeling more comfortable, confident, positive, able and motivated to take on a cancer awareness-raising role.
- In the three month period following the workshops, many pharmacy staff were able to identify examples of cancer-related conversations they had had as a direct result of attending the training. One such conversation had led to a cancer diagnosis. Many pharmacy staff also reported that the training had prompted them to have conversations about cancer with relatives, friends and community members.
- In the three month period following the workshops, many pharmacy staff had organised cancer-related displays and ordered further resources from CRUK.
- Looking ahead, pharmacy staff were often particularly interested in bowel cancer campaigns. One participant had already begun to put bowel cancer cards in medicine bags for the over 60s.

RESULTS

TALK CANCER

PRESENTING

CANCER INFORMATION FOR

Cheryl

OVERALL IMPRESSIONS OF THE WORKSHOP

Respondents praised:

- The skill and experience of the trainers
- The friendly, interactive, participatory training style
- Useful information content of the workshop
- The positive, upbeat nature of the workshop content

"I thought it was really good...I actually think it was one of the best I've been to. I really enjoyed it. The ladies were really lovely and they made you feel at ease and they made it fun. You could feel their passion and you could see they were really confident in what they were talking about and that really helped, they really engaged with everybody on the course"

"The training's fantastic, it's an eye opener... So it's [cancer] not a matter that should be dealt with in silence and it should be spoken about a lot more"

"I've been to other trainings before where you do find yourself sort of drifting off after a while of just sort of being lectured to. But it was really interactive and I felt like I learnt loads. But I didn't feel like I'd just been bombarded with information"

"They suggested that if somebody came in and gave across a worrying symptom, rather than us go 'go and see your GP', we'd just go 'what does your GP say about that? Oh, have you not spoken to your GP yet, maybe you should'. Which is a nice softer way of putting it where it doesn't seem like 'I'm scared, you should be scared'. So I feel comfortable with that now and I feel like we can put it in a way that we're not going to scare someone off of going to see their doctor"

PERCEPTIONS OF CANCER AWARENESS RAISING ROLE

- Prior to the workshops:

The majority of pharmacy staff in the sample had never considered their role as agents of cancer awareness raising. Most acknowledged that, prior to attending Talk Cancer, they tended to shy away from conversations about cancer due to feelings of discomfort about the topic.

- 3 months post-workshop:

Almost all participants (13/14) now recognised that they could play an important role in raising awareness of signs and symptoms to look out for, encouraging people with worrying symptoms to go to the doctor, and encouraging customers to participate in screening programmes.

"If someone said 'I've got cancer' ... I wouldn't know what to say and I would always fear the worst...I really didn't feel comfortable at all before. It was something that I would probably actively avoid"

"Before, I never used to raise the subject. After I've been to that workshop now I'm quite confident to talk to people about cancer because they told us that how you approach people, how you disseminate the message, who you like encourage them to go to now"

"I do feel like I can have more in-depth discussions with people without just feeling really scared that I don't know what I'm talking about, or that I'm going to make someone feel uncomfortable"

EXAMPLES OF CANCER-RELATED CONVERSATIONS, POST-TRAINING

Several trainees were able to identify examples of cancer-related conversations they had approached differently as a result of the training.

*“We have, I think helped a couple of people. I'm not sure what the outcome was but we have **directed them to the surgery if they have a cough for more than 3 weeks...** I learnt that at the training...obviously you don't say directly 'you might be suffering from cancer' but we can say 'look. speak to your doctor and they might be able to help you more than buying over the counter medicines”*

*“We've had a lady coming in... what she said was her partner's been bleeding, there's been a bit of **blood in his stools** and it's been going on for about three months now. Obviously, there's bells ringing there definitely, there's something definitely wrong. He doesn't want to see a doctor and I've said to her 'you've got to convince him to see a doctor'. **It may be nothing at all is what I said but its best to get it checked out.** She said 'yeah, that's true', and actually she's come back and said thank you for highlighting that and, unfortunately, he was diagnosed with cancer”*

*“Just last week I had a gentleman who has received a stool test, **in the past I have talked to patients about this but never really looked at what the logistics were in taking the stool sample...** I had quite an elderly gentleman who was a little confused and a bit worried about how he was going to do this. Because I'd been shown and demonstrated the whole thing at the course, **I was very confident in explaining to him and trying to alleviate his fears and he actually popped in the other day to tell me that he'd done it and posted it off”***

EXAMPLES OF CANCER-RELATED CONVERSATIONS, POST-TRAINING

In addition to this professional activity many training participants reported that they had been actively promoting cancer awareness amongst their families, friendship groups and communities.

*“I work with a Nepalese voluntary organisation - older people get letters about bowel cancer screening and don't understand the letters or what to do with the kit. Because of the language barriers they cannot even go for bowel screening, breast screening. So we are **providing interpreters** as well from one of our volunteers, they go and help for this programme as well”*

*“My uncle, he's 64 and he got a test in the post. He was a bit reluctant to do that, he said, I'm not going to do that. I showed him the teaching in the seminar, **how you can do the screening test and that you don't get messy.**”*

FREQUENCY OF CANCER RELATED CONVERSATIONS

- When trainees were asked if they were having conversations about cancer more frequently after the CRUK workshop, responses were varied. The frequency of having such conversations – and respondents' ability to increase this - was often limited by the amount of time they spent 'front of house' in the pharmacy. In addition, some trainees were simply more motivated and proactive than others.
- Further probing revealed that most trainees were *thinking* about cancer much more frequently when having conversations with customers, but not always mentioning cancer overtly for fear of generating alarm. For example, **many trainees reported that they were prompting customers to get unusual signs and symptoms checked by doctors much more frequently than before, without mentioning cancer specifically.**

"I am actively engaging with patients about cancer now...3-4 times a week compared to once or twice a month before the course"

"I'm a lot quicker in actually thinking on the spot and thinking 'this is a bit unusual, you should be seeing your doctor quite quickly' sort of thing. And not actually telling the patient that it could be cancer to scare them... and directing patients to the right healthcare professional if you think there's something wrong there definitely"

ACTIONS TAKEN SINCE TRAINING

- Most frequent reported action was organising a display of CRUK materials given out during the session. Several had also gone to cruk.org to order additional resources.

“We've put some leaflets on the counter and we have a leaflet rack as soon as you get into our door, so we have left some there. We've never done that before”

- One dispenser was actively promoting bowel screening to patients in the relevant age group by putting bowel screening information cards inside their medicine bags

“When we pack up the medications we've put the bowel screening information cards inside for people that are eligible for the screening”



Sarah – Dispensing Assistant, Valley Pharmacy, Coulsden

ACTIONS PLANNED FOR THE FUTURE

- When asked about future plans, the most frequently mentioned were campaigns to promote bowel or breast cancer. **Bowel cancer seems to be of particular interest to pharmacy staff due to the older profile of many of their regular customers.**

OTHER FEEDBACK

- The trainees contacted had attended workshops held in both the daytime and in the evening. There was a general consensus that, particularly in order to secure the attendance of Dispensers and Pharmacists, **evening courses were more appropriate.**
- Course participants all felt that they had benefited enormously from taking part in face-to-face training. But, they **recognised that online training would broaden the reach of Talk Cancer** and would probably be of some value to those who were unable to attend face-to-face events.

“I don’t think it would be a bad idea if people can’t get to training. But I think actually being there and taking part in it actively makes a difference.”

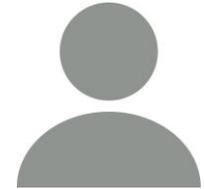
TRAINEE JOURNEY

Before Talk Cancer, the majority of pharmacy staff had never considered their role as agents of cancer awareness raising



"I've been to other trainings before where you do find yourself sort of drifting off after a whole of just sort of being lectured to. But it was really interactive and I felt like I learnt loads..."

After Talk Cancer:



- Recognition of cancer awareness role
- Cancer-related conversations as a result of Talk Cancer
- Actively promoting cancer awareness amongst families, friendship groups and communities
- Prompting customers to get unusual signs and symptoms checked by doctors much more frequently
- Future plans for bowel/breast screening awareness campaigns

Interviews conducted and analysed by...

healthfocus
/ RESEARCH

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