



Health4U: Dissemination Event

Evaluation

- Dr. Catrin Evans, University of Nottingham;
- Katie Turner, University of Nottingham;
- Dr. Helena Webb, University of Nottingham;
- Amdani Juma and Community Research Team, African Institute for Social Development (AISD);
- Dr. Holly Blake, University of Nottingham;
- Dr. Suzanne Suggs, Università della Svizzera Italiana



Evaluation Aims

1. To explore perceptions of meaningfulness, appropriateness and acceptability of the SMS intervention
2. To illuminate possible mechanisms of action of the intervention

Sampling

- Utilised a purposive sampling framework
 - Tested/non-tested
 - Male/female
 - Christian/Muslim

Telephone Interviews, n=21

Thematic content analysis (by an external researcher)



Demographic Characteristics	Total Interview Sample: n=21
Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female=11 • Male = 10
Religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christian =12 • Muslim =8 • Prefer not to say =1
Tested for HIV after or during the intervention?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes = 4 • No = 17
Prior HIV testing history	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tested more than 1 yr ago = 6 • Tested less than 1 yr ago = 11 • Never tested = 4



Themes

1. Positive engagement with the project's aims and content
2. Positive assessment of the text messages
3. Varied impact of the text messages
4. Tensions and complexities around HIV



Positive Engagement with the Project's Aims

“It would provide some more information about how to access or how to give the tests down here in Nottingham and I didn’t have any knowledge about it before, that is why I was motivated to do take part in this project” (P14)

“Every time I read it I would forward it on to a friend because I openly discussed with two other friends” (P15)

Reasons for participation in the research	Interest in HIV or in health, n=11 Desire to help the project, n=5 Importance of becoming more aware of HIV, n=7
Shared text messages with others	n=14
Followed internet links	n=2



Positive Assessment of the Text Messages

“It was a good experience, I think it was informative and it wasn’t difficult to follow. Also some interesting types of proverbs and stuff that came through. There weren’t too many, they came sort of once in a while so you’re not sort of bombarded with.....Content was good, it wasn’t too long, it wasn’t too short. It was precise, to the point texts” (P13)

“I think it was good....I learnt a lot things about you know getting checked for HIV, all kinds of things to do with your health which you probably wouldn’t know” (P4)

“I feel good, well, really the text messages I received were uplifting to me” (P5).

Provided a highly positive assessment of the text messages	n=18
Reported text messages were easy to understand	n=19
Reported a positive personal or emotional response to the messages	n=7
No problems re. confidentiality	n=17



Features that were liked/disliked

Liked (many comments, from many participants)

- Informative content
- New content
- Precise content
- Caring content
- Reassuring content
- Appropriate length
- Liked the proverbs
- Appropriate frequency
- Discreet format
- Good reminder
- Good way of providing information

Disliked (few comments, from limited participants)

- Too general
- Unfair to focus on Africans
- Repetitive
- Unconformable content
- Unpredictable message arrival



Varied Impact of Text Messages

Influence of messages on testing

- Unclear impact on decision to test

Reported future plans to have an HIV test

“Because I remembered every time I received it...A little bit closer every time I received the messages” (P11)

- Yes: Specific, n=7 (included 3 of the 4 who had never tested before)
- Yes: Non-specific, n=7
- Undecided, n=1
- Did not say/unclear, n=5
- No plan, n=1

Reasons given for intending to have an HIV test in the future (n=14)

- n=8 said that the messages HAD influenced their decision

Reasons for not having a test during/after the intervention (n=17)

- Not necessary due to prior testing, n=9
- Did not perceive themselves as at risk, n=5
- Too scared, n=1
- No reason, n=2

Reported that sharing messages had encouraged friends to have a test

- n=2



Varied Impact of Messages

“Yes it did help me, one day when you sent me one of your texts I just started thinking a lot about having this test, but not quite now.....”(P18)

“I haven’t gone and get tested because I personally haven’t decided yet.....as many messages as someone can put out there, none would actually help make the decision.....I will go and get tested when I feel maybe I have put myself at risk, I should go and get tested” (P20)

Reported that they learnt something new	n=11
Reported that messages felt very personally relevant	n=12
Reported that messages were ‘generally’ relevant and topical	n=20



The Contradictions of HIV

- Uncomfortable topic: persistent stigma
- Gap between discussions of personal risk and risk of 'others': maintaining 'moral face' and personal distance
- Getting personal: differing meanings of HIV in relation to testing motivations (e.g. for some, severity is the key incentive for testing; whereas for others, stressing its manageability is key)



Conclusions (1)

Research Methods

- Were able to recruit effectively
- Community researchers effective at recruiting (capacity building)
- Distance methods of data collection less practical

Acceptability & Appropriateness of the Intervention

- HIV health promotion via mobile phone is a well received and acceptable approach
- Messages were shared with others
- Provided new information, support, motivation & helped to allay fears
- No significant negative views or negative consequences
- But – failure to follow internet links meant that information on **specific** testing sites and times was largely not accessed



Conclusions (2)

Indications

- Seemed to influence HIV testing **intentions**
- Less clear impact on HIV testing **uptake**
 - more research needed to explore influence of issues such as:
length of intervention, dosage, frequency, time to follow up
- Stigma and lack of personal risk perception remain key obstacles



Implications for Practice

- Text messaging is feasible and acceptable to promote HIV testing
- More research is needed to understand outcomes, but they are broadly comparable with face to face/other community based HIV testing interventions (but at lower cost/less resource intensive)
- Would be an appropriate adjunct to wider health promotion strategies
- Formative research highlights ongoing issues to be addressed in health promotion, e.g. low risk perception, building better relationships with health providers
- Community/lay health workers can be supported to engage very effectively in HIV research



Acknowledgements

- Funders (Nottingham City Public Health)
- Lead Advisor (Dr. Ahmed, Head of Service, Sexual Health and HIV)
- Participants
- Community Research Team



**Thank you
for listening**

**Any
questions?**

