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**Public Relations Campaign-**

**Opioid Crisis**

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Opioid addiction: It could happen to you too.

**November 2018**

**OVERVIEW**

Massachusetts is currently in the midst of a serious opioid crisis leading to addiction problems and the death of many people. The rise in opioid related deaths has sparked in the past two years and is not looking to get any better. Educating people on how one might get addicted to opioids is the first step in preventing this problem from continuing. Our campaign plans on educating people on the ways you could get addicted without realizing, and then showing some of the problems that result from the start of an addiction. Within this campaign we will give real life examples of how opioids have destroyed people, families, and in some cases have lead to deaths. We will also provide information on how to get help if you or someone you know is forming this addiction or is trying to release themselves from it.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. Educate viewers  on why one may get addicted to opioids (and how easy this addiction can happen) and how to prevent oneself from this addiction. About 8 out of 12 people who die from opioid overdose were once prescribed an opioid from their doctor. Only 1 out of 12 people that died of an opioid overdose were prescribed an opioid in the last month before their death; they were illegally obtaining opioids as a result of their addiction.
2. Educate viewers on how to provide help to people they know with addiction or ways to seek help themselves i.e; rehab clinics, access to Naloxone prescriptions, other non addictive medications or solutions for pain that could replace, how to watch out for family. or friends that may get themselves involved in an addiction.
3. Minimize the stigma associated with opioid addiction, that way less people are ashamed to admit their problem, and more people are willing to get help: adopt the angel program.

**AUDIENCE**

1. Young adults ages 17-25
2. Adults ages 25 + that have an addiction or know someone that does

**TARGET AREA**

Our main focus is the state of Massachusetts. We will be sharing our video series campaign with all of the local hospitals and health care/ treatment centers in the Massachusetts area in hopes that they can share our videos on their social media platforms. We also plan to contact high schools in the state in hopes that they can show our campaign video series to their junior and senior students in their health and wellness classes, as well as share on their social media platforms.

With the power of social media, our platform can easily grow to many people that we did not specifically contact. All it takes is one “share” or “retweet” in order for the campaign to start reaching the public. Many people in my generation are inclined to “share” or “retweet” powerful messages, as it is their way of helping spread more awareness to issues they may not be comfortable talking about in person. The ability to “hide behind your computer” is especially useful in a campaign like this because people will feel more comfortable sharing something on their social media accounts, especially if all of their peers are doing the same.

**MESSAGES**

We plan to educate the community by making a video campaign series. This campaign will be presented on various social media platforms, specifically focusing on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn. These social media platforms get the most viewage with the audience we are targeting, and all four of these platforms have the option to “repost” or “retweet”, so that our campaign can be spread to even more audiences than we specifically targeted. The power of social media is very useful for a campaign such as this one.

We plan to use emotional tactics that draw the viewer in, by showing how an opioid addiction could tarnish a young, growing family or a young student/athlete who once had big dreams for their future. The campaign also will show someone who has been suffering from a opioid addiction and his/her steps on what he/she is doing to get out of it. We believe that showing just one video advertisement that repeats itself over and over will not be as powerful, so we have decided to make a group of 5 or 7 different video campaigns with all different powerful emotional messages that give different examples of how they affect different people.

Our main idea behind the campaign is to have all different people in different lifestyles be able to understand and relate themselves to this issue. In doing so, no one can think to themselves “that is not my life, that could not happen to me.” One of the goals that is very important to the success of this campaign is to really promote the de-stigmatization of opioid addiction.  Similar to the State Without Stigma Campaign, we believe that words like “junkie,” “addict” and “druggie” hurt people that are suffering from addiction and scare them away from seeking help. By educating people that addiction is not a choice, yet a chronic disease, one that similar to diabetes or arthritis, will help people realize that it is OK to ask for help and that it is not an easy process to become clean from this addiction. Everyone deserves a second chance, everyone makes mistakes, we are human. In part of trying to de-stigmatize opioid addiction, we also want to help those struggling to not be ashamed or embarrassed which is why we are showing many different scenarios.

**STRATEGIES**

Our strategy is to reach out to all different demographic groups.  We are planning on de-stigmatizing the opioid addiction by displaying that this crisis can easily happen to a lot of different people. Many people believe that this addiction could not happen to them, but we are here to change that view. We are going to reach out to people of different race, religion, economic standings, and unique interests. We hope that social media provides a platform to spread this message with the share feature on these sites. The more people that share these videos, the more people we will be able to reach.

Seeing how one of our target markets is teens between the age of 17-25, that demographic is majorly on social media sites such as; Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and Linkedin, where we intend on launching our campaign.  By putting the message online, we are allowing everyone to get involved to help prevent this opioid addiction. By sharing a post, you could save a life and also stop the stigma around this addiction crisis. The key part is the ending of all our commercials where we offer the help, our goal is to help end this opioid crisis and if we don’t provide the resources to do so then our campaign won’t be successful like we hope.

**Marketing**

* Meet with schools, hospitals, and health centers. Pitch them the campaign and ask for them to get involved by posting on their social media sites.
* Bi-weekly updates on how many shares the posts get and how many viewers watched until the end of the video. This will tell us how effective the campaign is. Who is viewing them (gender, race, age, etc.)
* Directly post to the campaign social media sites everyday.

**Advertisment**

* Minute long videos, showing the numerous types of people who can be affected by the opioid crisis.
* Five minute long videos on getting deeper into the stories of those affected. This will hopefully allow us to get more people emotionally involved with the campaign.
* Put up campaign signs at the entrance of local hospitals, community centers, and at popular events.
* At the end of every commercial we offer a hotline to call if you need someone to talk to as well as options to get help. Also connect those looking to get rid of their drugs without repercussions, to programs such as the Angel Program.

**Public Relations**

* Attend local events where campaign ads are hung up, make sure someone is there representing the campaign and people are able to come talk about getting involved or getting help.
* Meet with staff from other outreach programs, learning their opinions will allow us to better our campaign.
* News Releases- anyone who has a story about our campaign and how it affected them or someone they know.
* Host gala with big sponsors and vendors to raise money on the fight against opioids, to further benefit and support current and former addicts. Help get them on their feet.

**Primary research**

* Students between the age of 18-22 agreed that producing an array of videos that are relatable to multiple different groups would allow for our campaign to reach as many people as possible on such a large scale.
* We found that having a celebrity within one or more of our commercials and/or someone who publicly overcame their opioid addiction will make the youth pay attention and take it seriously.
* Scare tactics were brought up by college students we talked with, they vividly remember certain commercials they saw when they were young that made them never want to try specific drugs.
* What our research found that was interesting is that it was suggested we show visual if not bring people to those suffering to fully see and grasp the effects of opioids. Visually seeing someone in that state and hearing directly from them would be a wake up call.
* When we asked which social media sites people would like/think would be the best avenue for launching our campaign, we were told: Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn. Linkedin was mentioned due to the age group it encompasses and the promotional aspect our campaign could benefit from. Not only would this campaign be advertised on someone's page but reposted to your connections feeds.

**Secondary Research**

* Targeting the youth has become utmost important with opioids accounting for more than a quarter of fatalities within the age group of 18-24. For people within the age group of 25-34, opioids accounted for more than a third of deaths
* Research shows that opioid related deaths were doubled among the white non-Hispanic ethnicity category
* Expand the use of buprenophine, only 4% of doctors possess the necessary waivers from the drug enforcement agency to prescribe medication for opioid treatment
* Prescription monitoring reforms, help doctors and those prescribing opioids to better monitor and prevent patients from developing an opioid addiction
* One report finds that people who received a three-month prescription for opioids in 2011 were 30 times more likely than the general population to die of an opioid overdose within five years
* Researchers can analyze social media interactions to gain insights into patterns of use, risk factors, and behaviors associated with substance use.

**VIDEO CAMPAIGN SERIES**

**A young father hurts his back doing yard work. His family doctor prescribes him a pain medication. His addiction begins...**

Michael: age 35, father of 2 young children, married to Marie age 34. He got prescribed medication and continued to relied on opioids to help the days go by. Before he knew it, Michael did not have a relationship with any of his family members. He let them down without even realizing it.

**A coach of the school's football team is prescribed an opioid pain medication. His reputation is in question when colleagues notice his constant medication usage after injury is healed...**

Coach John: Age 25, recent graduate of college, assistant coach of his hometown high school football team. Everyone loves and knows Coach John. He is charismatic and charming until his unique personality is overcome by his addiction to opioids. He does not reach out for help, knowing what people will think of his addiction problem as a respected high school mentor, and instead passes away from an overdose.

**A teenager who started his drug abuse problem at a young age, and worked his way up to opioid usage by form of peer pressure…**

This ad will be able to reach out to kids that have not yet been introduced to drugs. Being a teenager is confusing and a lot of people reach out to drugs during these years. People do not believe that other types of drugs (such as marijuana) are in fact gateway drugs and could eventually lead to an opioid addiction.

**Two parents overdose on opioids while in a car with their child crying in the backseat…**

Having a young, helpless child, will reach out to people’s emotionally and achieve our wish of having people want to get involved with the campaign. Not everyone who is affected choose to have this happen to them. The innocent people also need to be protected from the opioid crisis.

**A mother addicted to opioids gives birth to her child with major complications and birth defects due to opioid addiction during pregnancy...**

Nothing is more heart wrenching than an innocent child subjected to such harsh conditions all because of the mother. This will shed light on the serious impact opioids can have on newborns, while also educating mothers and young girls how serious pregnancy is and the choice you make.

**Former addict who kicked their addiction and is now having a normal functioning life shares their story...**

We can show sad stories of how opioids ruin lives for days but hearing from someone who has been down that road and now lives a better life is the type of motivation an addict needs. They need to see it can be done; that you can turn your life around. Having this success story come from someone who has been there makes it more relatable than coming from people who just want to help.

**Ray Lucas, former NFL quarterback shares his story of opioid addiction and how he got help…**

Ray Lucas was a professional athlete that tarnished his career by becoming addicted to opioids. He took up to 800 prescription medicines a month, went broke, and put his family through hell and back. As a professional football player who played on the Pats, Jets and Dolphins, a tough, strong athlete, he felt shameful of his addiction and did not want to ask for help. By sharing his story of recovery, it exemplifies to our age demographic that getting help does not make you less tough, less strong or less athletic.

**Evaluation**

When we evaluate how successful the campaign was, we will begin by checking if we have reached our goal. We plan on minimizing the stigma, people should feel encouraged to get help and no one should be ashamed for having an addiction. After our campaign ends, we can send out surveys to our target audiences. We could focus on students, youth center children and volunteers, and spread our survey across social media platforms encouraging everyone to take part in our results. We can conduct these surveys through google or survey monkey. These surveys will be able to tell us if people understood the message we were sending, if people were receptive to our video campaign, and what age groups were targeted the most and least.

Since our campaign is based off of social media platforms, we will have a multitude of data on how many views, likes, shares, and dislikes we will have on our videos. A media analysis will measure our level of exposure based off of actions, awareness, and attitudes. Our message must be communicated multiple of times, we can measure how frequent our target audience saw the message. If 60% of our audience watched our campaigns more than four times, we believe that is successful.

If we stay focused on these data evaluations, we will be able to decide how successful the campaign was and also what we need to focus on for our next one.

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