"It's really refreshing to be involved in something where our perspective and opinion was respected and taken seriously": Co-designing *It's Your Right*, a peer-led hepatitis C health promotion campaign for people who inject drugs

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WHAT IS *IT'S YOUR RIGHT*?

- First Australia-wide hepatitis C health promotion campaign to be co-designed with peer workers with living and lived experience of injecting drug use
- Aimed to increase hepatitis C testing and treatment uptake in people who inject drugs
- Co-designed from July 2019 – December 2021
- Co-design group included representatives from:
    - Australian Injecting Drug Users' League (AIVL) Peer Network
    - Australian state-based peer-based drug user organisations
    - Burnet Institute and other research settings
    - Clear Horizon Consulting, an agency with expertise in co-design
    - Enigma, an advertising and marketing agency

METHODS

- The experience of being involved in the co-design process was examined as part of the evaluation of the *It's Your Right* campaign
- Eighteen people were interviewed about being part of the co-design process
- Ten interview participants had living or lived experience of injecting drug use
- Documents relating to the co-design workshops (such as workshop plans, artefacts generated by the group, and meeting minutes) were also examined as part of the evaluation

FEEDBACK ON THE CO-DESIGN PROCESS

BENEFITS

- **Living and lived experience at centre of design led to a campaign better tailored towards people who inject drugs**
- **Feeling of ownership over the campaign for co-designers who were also from implementing organisations**
- **Focus testing (Figure 2) allowed the opinions of the broader community of people who use drugs to be integrated into the campaign**

"When we eventually got the posters in our hands …that was just so rewarding … The colours, the slogans, …the whole style of the design of it, … the way we wanted to say it, everything was perfect." Peer worker

CHALLENGES

- **COVID-19 – online working, delays to project**
- **Co-design process sometimes repetitive and took longer than some participants had anticipated**
- **Competing work priorities could lead to participation in the co-design process being de-prioritised**

"We wasted a lot of time initially waiting for COVID to go away and that was … because we didn't want to do it online …" Peer worker

IT'S YOUR RIGHT CO-DESIGN PROCESS

The campaign co-design (and subsequent roll-out) was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. After early face-to-face preparatory work, the pandemic was declared, resulting in a pause in the project before a shift to online working. Figure 1 outlines the timeline of the co-design process and key activities.

- **July 2019 – March 2020**: Preparatory work between Burnet, AIVL, and other project partners to determine the co-design approach
- **March 2020**: First co-design workshop (face-to-face) focused on establishing the process
- **October – December 2020**: Six online co-design workshops determining campaign aims, objectives, audience and key messages, and key ingredients for the strategies
- **May – July 2021**: Development and focus testing of initial campaign concepts
- **July – September 2021**: Six online co-design workshops to refine the campaign strategies
- **October – December 2021**: Finalisation of campaign messages and design through focus-testing and workshops

Figure 1. *It's Your Right* co-design process

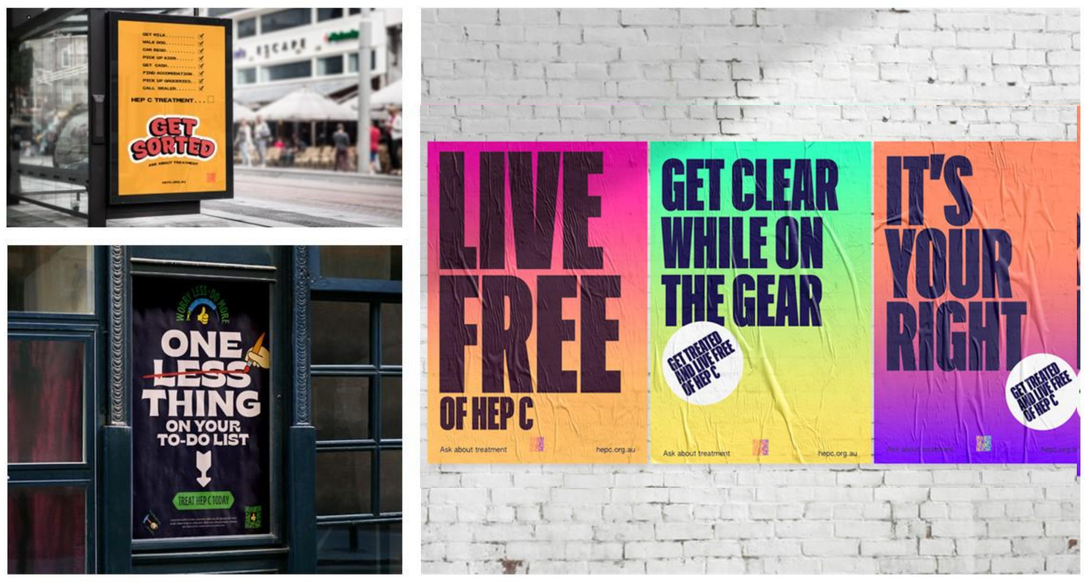

Figure 2. Campaign creative concepts developed through co-design and focus tested with community

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Shorter timelines for future co-design projects**
- **Adopt a hybrid model that utilises both online and face-to-face activities and workshops**
- **Increase diversity of voices and experiences – including more representation from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people**

"I would like to see it more face to face … Happening quicker … I think a hybrid kind of thing because there are some good things that come from the online part of it." Peer worker

CONCLUSION

Co-designing *It's Your Right* with peer workers resulted in nuanced campaign messaging and design which resonated with people who inject drugs. Recommendations for future co-design activities include shortening the timeline for design, and adopting a hybrid co-design model combining online and face-to-face activities.

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