



Using a media campaign to increase knowledge of the signs of stroke

Hilary K. Wall¹ MPH; Kathleen M. Foell¹, RD, MS; Cynthia L. Boddie-Willis¹ MD MPH
¹Massachusetts Department of Public Health



BACKGROUND

In 2003, 80% of MA adults reported that they would call 9-1-1 if they thought someone was having a heart attack or stroke. Only 17.5% of MA adults, however, could recognize all stroke signs and symptoms. The MA Department of Public Health Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention and Control Program developed a 3-minute animation, based on the Cincinnati Pre-hospital Scale, to improve knowledge of observable stroke signs. Using this animation as a basis, a comprehensive media campaign was developed including television and transit advertisements.

OBJECTIVE

To evaluate the effectiveness of the Stroke Heroes Act FAST media campaign.

METHODS

A comprehensive media campaign using public service announcements, transit placards, and newspaper ads was conducted in Massachusetts. A random-digit dial survey was administered to a sample of Massachusetts adults at baseline and after each of four media campaigns.

Figure 1 – “What did the information say or show about stroke?” (Unaided recall)

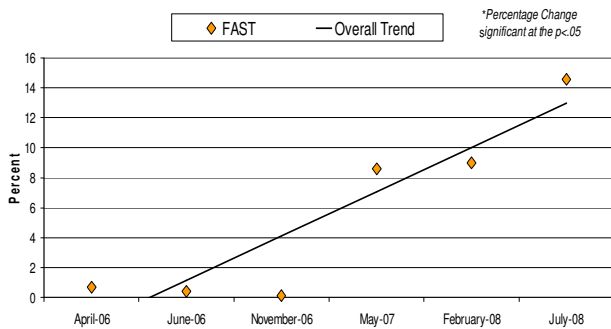


Figure 2 – “Have you ever seen/heard of the word FAST used to help people remember the symptoms of stroke?”

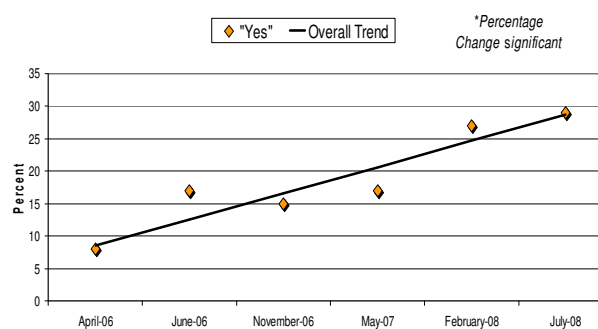


Figure 3

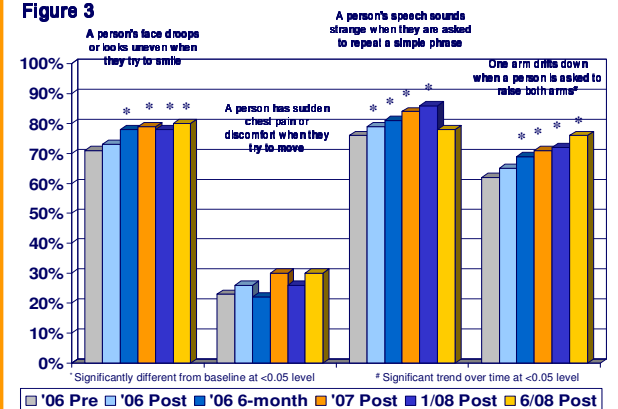


Figure 4 – “If you thought someone was having a stroke, what is the first thing you would do?”

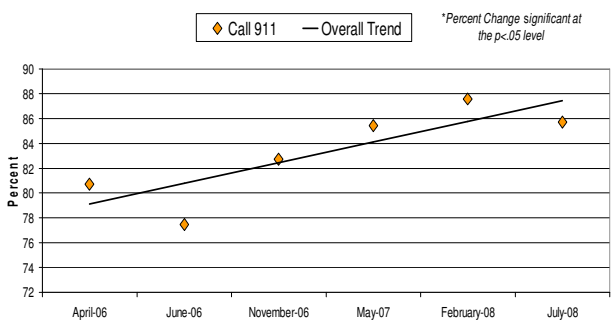
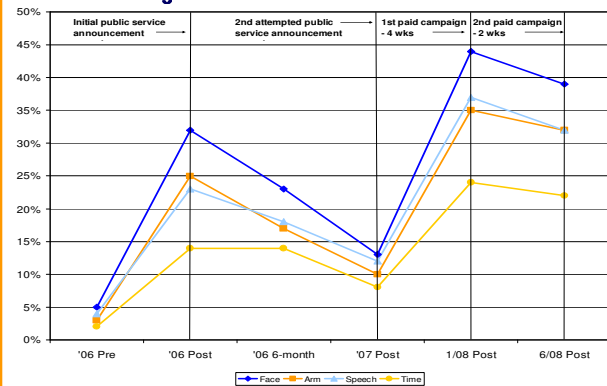


Figure 5 – “What does FAST stand for?”



CONCLUSIONS

- The Stroke Heroes Act FAST media campaign is an effective way to increase stroke signs knowledge
- The term FAST is increasingly recognized for stroke symptoms
- MA residents knowledge of stroke symptoms has increased from baseline
- Further analyses need to be done to correlate knowledge changes with campaign impressions

CONTACT – Hilary Wall, MPH, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, 617-624-5411, hilary.wall@state.ma.us