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Using Facebook to promote the uptake of colorectal cancer screening

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Outline

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- Methods
- Results
- Discussion



Funding Acknowledgements

This work was supported by:

- Canadian Institutes of Health Research: #FDN-148470 & #GSO-157853
- Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute Scholarship
- Peterborough K.M. Hunter Charitable Foundation Award

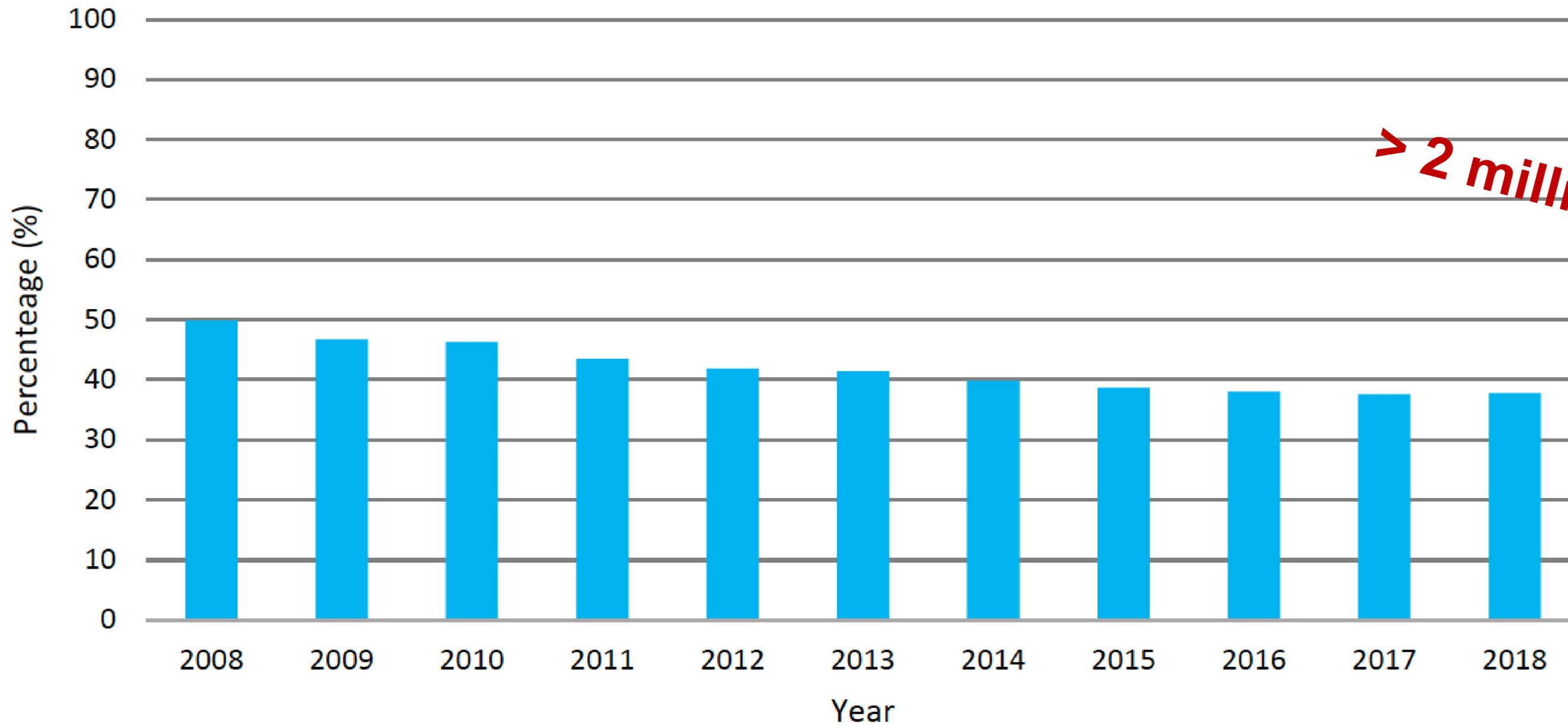


Background

- Colorectal cancer (CRC) is one of the most common cancers with almost 25,000 new cases and 10,000 deaths in Canada in 2021
- Screening is important for early detection and prevention of disease
- Despite having a provincial organized screening program (ColonCancerCheck), screening participation in Ontario is still suboptimal
- Innovative approaches to increase participation are needed



Overdue for CRC screening



> 2 million people!

Ontario Health (Cancer Care Ontario);
2021



Social media

- Some evidence regarding the specific use of social media for cancer screening exists

- ↑ use of social media ↓ use of traditional mass media

- Users can actively engage with content



- \$-\$\$\$\$

Prochaska et al., 2017
Cavallo et al., 2014
Ruco et al., 2021
Han et al., 2018
Plackett et al., 2020



Social media use

- Screen-age individuals are spending time online!
- Canadians 55+

Platform	2017	2020
 Facebook	75%	76%
 YouTube	41%	43%
 Instagram	17%	28%
 LinkedIn	43%	40%
 Twitter	27%	27%
 Pinterest	30%	30%

Gruzd, Jacobson, Mai & Dubois; 2017

Gruzd & Mai;
2020



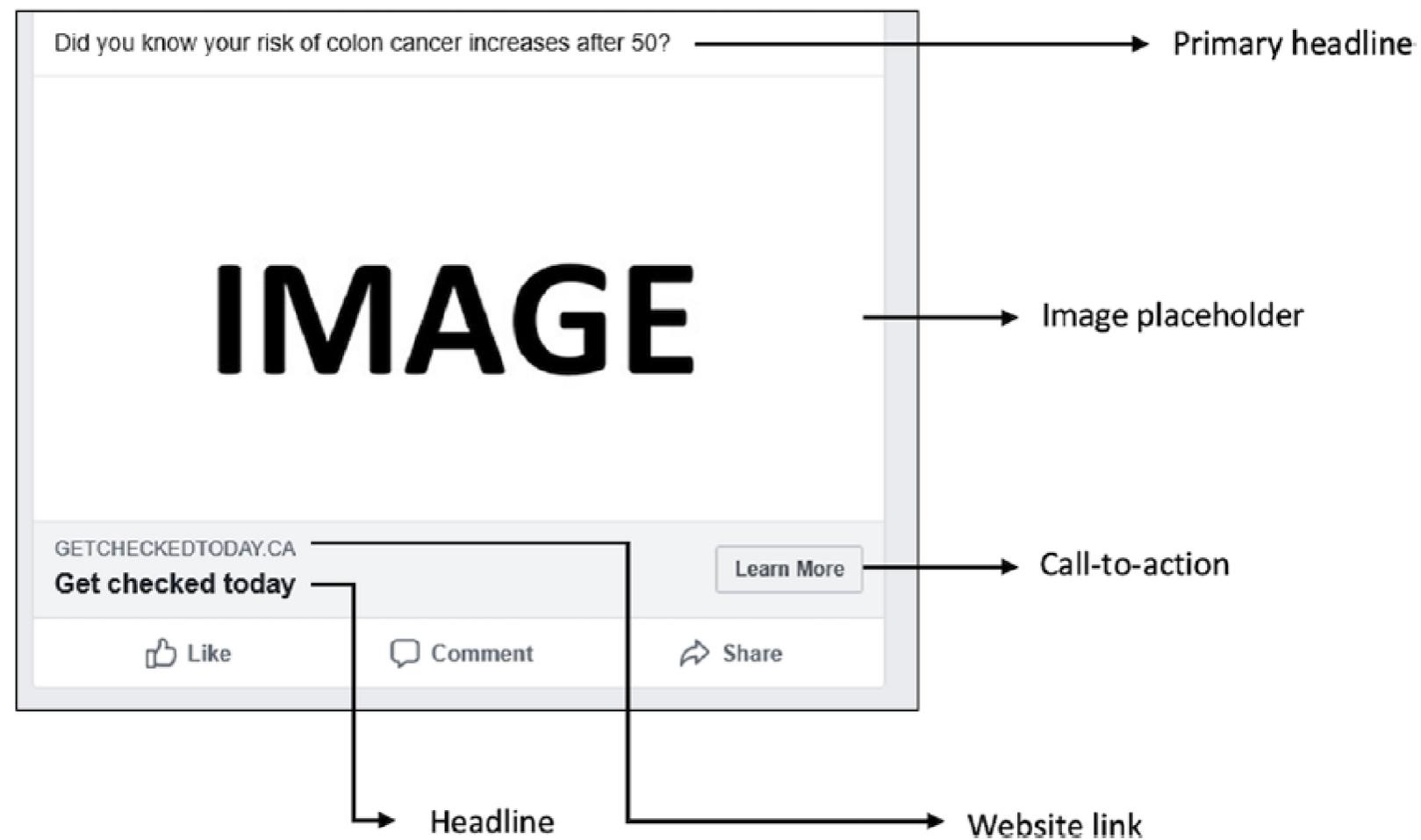
Objective

- Develop social media messages promoting CRC screening uptake
- Identify messages preferred by screen-age Facebook users

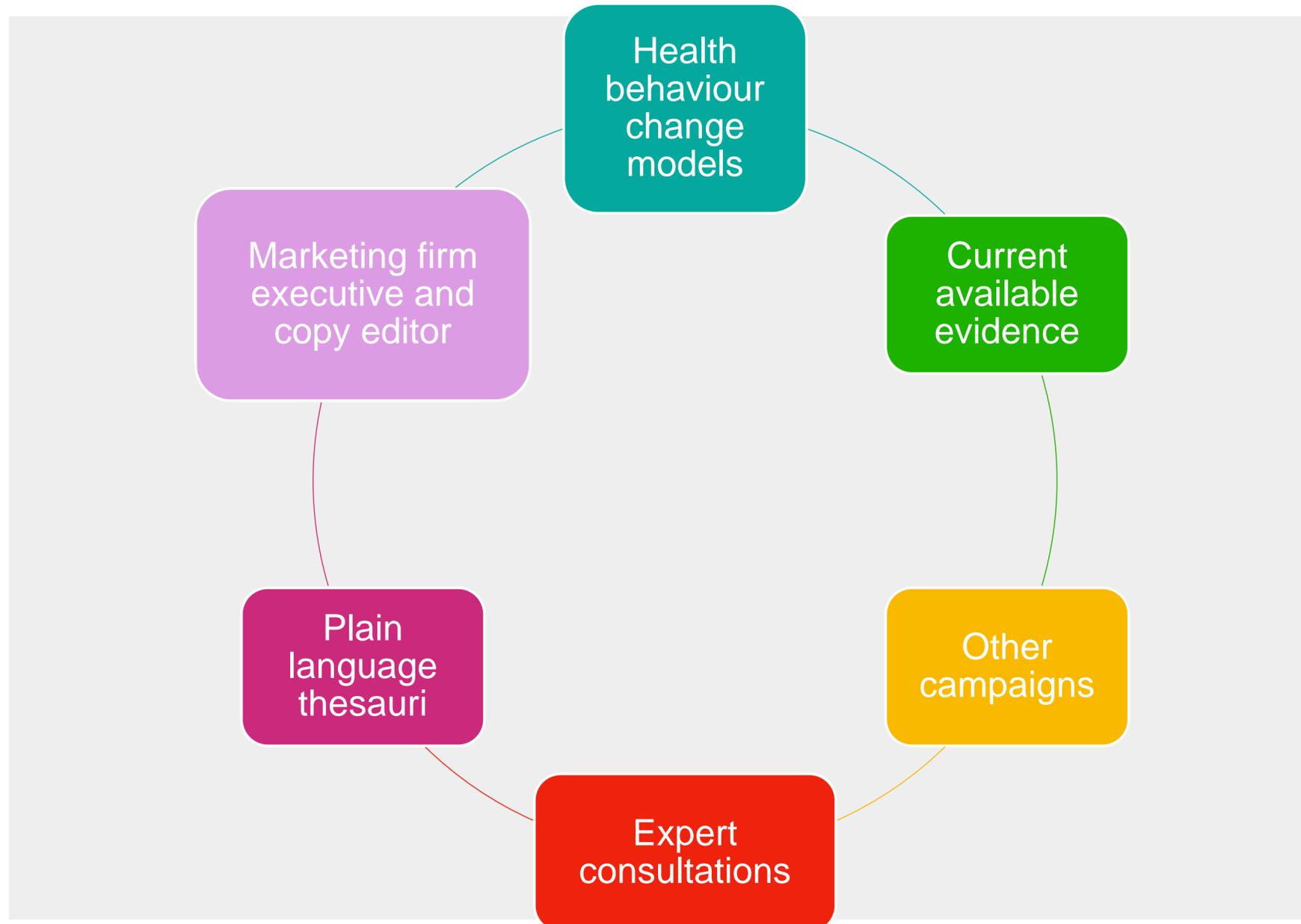


Methods

- Qualitative descriptive study with Facebook users aged 50-74 in Ontario



Methods – Drafting messages



Health Belief Model

- Perceived susceptibility
- Perceived severity
- Perceived benefits
- Perceived barriers
- Self-efficacy
- Cues to action

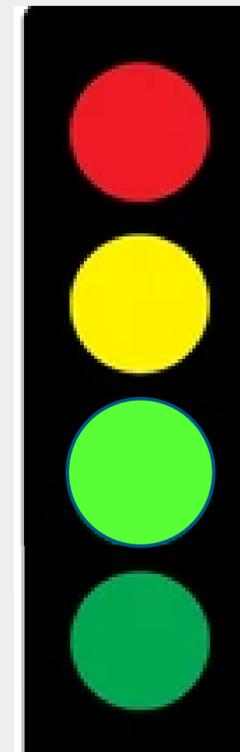


Methods – Recruitment & analysis

- 6 focus groups (3 in-person and 3 virtual)
- Geographic variation within the province
- Recruitment – random digit dialing (inclusive of cell phones and land lines)
- Focus groups were audio-recorded and transcribed
- Magnitude coding → in-vivo coding → recommendation

Saldana, 2009

Message Recommendations



Do not use

Proceed with caution

Consider using this message

Strongly consider using this message



Results

- N=45 participants (56% Female)
- 47% used Facebook daily; almost all (98%) used it at least once a week
- 53% had never screened for CRC

Age	N (%)
50–54	9 (20.0)
55–59	13 (28.9)
60–64	13 (28.9)
65–69	7 (15.6)
70–74	3 (6.6)
Highest level of education completed	N (%)
High school	25 (55.6)
College/University	18 (40)
Graduate school	2 (4.4)

Annual household income before taxes	N (%)
<\$25,000	9 (20)
\$25,000–<\$50,000	13 (28.9)
\$50,000–<\$100,000	15 (33.3)
≥\$100,000	7 (15.6)
Employment status	N (%)
Full-time	16 (35.6)
Part-time	10 (22.2)
Unemployed	4 (8.9)
Retired	15 (33.3)



Results

Message	Behavioural construct	Recommendation
Did you know your risk of colon cancer increases after 50?	Perceived susceptibility	Consider using this message (with revisions)
You could have colon cancer right now – and have no clue.	Perceived susceptibility	Consider using this message
9 out of 10 people can be cured when colon cancer is found early.	Perceived benefits	Consider using this message
Getting checked for colon cancer is easy and can be done in the privacy of your own home.	Perceived barriers	Strongly consider using this message
Don't flush it away. Test your poop for colon cancer today. It's easy and can be done at home.	Perceived barriers	Proceed with caution
Colon cancer kills 9,000+ Canadians every year. Don't be one of them.	Perceived severity	Proceed with caution
Are you 50-74 years old? Healthcare providers recommend you get checked for colon cancer every 2 years.	Cues to action	Consider using this message



Results

Messages that were well received were:

- ✓ Credible
- ✓ Educational
- ✓ Positive/reassuring tone

↑ awareness and prompt questions

“I was reading [the message] about getting tested every two years. I didn’t know that. Every two years it said.” FP3, FG1

“[This message] alleviates some of my concerns. It’s not the most comfortable thing to think about and this is sort of suggesting that ‘it’s easy and can be done at home.’ And I feel less concerned about that.” MP21, FG6

“I think it’s optimistic. It makes you feel a little bit better. It tends to be more positive and hopeful. This one makes you feel better.” FP10, FG2



Results

Messages that were not always well received:

! Humorous

! Distasteful

! Fearful/negative tone

Audience segmentation

Mixed-appeal messages

“Crap and poop and toilets and flushing. It disgusts me.”

MP14, FG5

“...the scare tactics [of this message]...it’s too alarming and it’s not personal enough.” FP14, FG2

“I think for some people [this message] would put you in a depression. Some people may be scared and wouldn’t go for check-up. It may be very scary.”

MP6, FG3



Discussion

- “Stand out” on social media
- How to frame cancer screening as “lighter content”
- Credibility on Facebook
- Limitations: one platform only, Ontario only, increased vs. average risk of disease
- Next steps: pairing with images, split testing and pragmatic RCT on Facebook

“Colon cancer kills 9,000...I can see the ‘kills,’ the ‘9,000,’ the ‘Canadians.’ I understand it’s urgent and I’ll very quickly keep scrolling through so I can find something else that will kill me too.”

MP21, FG6





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