



Case study

Multiple sclerosis



**Spoonful
of Sugar**

Making the most of medicines

Multiple sclerosis

Content review, Behavioural Insights Research™, online magazines, and targeted messaging system

Overview

Enhancing current adherence support by instilling confidence in patients and clinicians to optimise communication and address unmet support needs.

Problem

Multiple sclerosis is a debilitating neurological autoimmune disorder for which there is currently no cure.

While disease modifying therapies are available for minimising the progression of multiple sclerosis and the frequency of relapses, their efficacy is heavily contingent on optimum patient adherence.

Situation

In the absence of acute symptoms, or when the patient doesn't fully understand their treatment, clinically stable patients may not see the need to remain on therapy.

This is all the more likely when the medicine is seen as responsible for a number of troublesome side-effects.

A number of support interventions have been introduced, but failed to have much impact on certain demographics of patients who would otherwise see great benefit from the treatment.

Value

An enhanced intervention using techniques and approaches based on latest research findings in the field of health psychology.

This approach empowers and further educates patients, and promotes self-management by instilling confidence in both patients and their clinicians, while supporting and complementing existing client initiatives.

Our in-depth content review, undertaken by leading health psychologists, ensures the ongoing relevance and efficacy of the materials we create.

We developed and implemented a 'targeted' messaging system, which begins from treatment initiation. All messages are delivered within the framework of an 'opt-out' format for optimum audience reach without being too intrusive.

Our 'vignette' feature addresses perceptual and practical barriers to adherence and focuses on a variety of issues surrounding adherence.

This was all underpinned by a feedback service assessing satisfaction (clinician and patient) and impact (uplift in adherence), which we used to guide further iterations of the materials.

We went further by offering additional support to clinicians, increasing their confidence in the programme and their ability to deliver it. This further optimises the interactions between patients, their clinicians, and the wider healthcare system.

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Implications

Our materials were specifically designed to target the younger demographic. Our Behavioural Insights Research™ was a deep-dive analysis of the ideal content, format, and context of additional patient support materials which would achieve ideal engagement in younger MS patients.

Reaching patients as early as possible in their MS treatment has proved crucial to optimum reach and engagement. Consequently, our intervention promotes adherence and persistence in the longer term than is expected and achieved in 'standard' adherence interventions.

Building on existing support and repurposing existing assets ensured that our intervention integrated easily within the current patient care pathway and augmented the efficacy of what is already available.

By identifying and supporting patients to address their personal barriers to adherence, we've been able to help them continue to benefit from effective treatment.

Offering our support to healthcare professionals alongside patient support ensures that the programme has the greatest possible chance of success.

Educating and empowering clinicians to deliver the programme makes for more positive consultations with patients. When patients are satisfied with the information they receive about treatment, they are more likely to adhere, which makes for better clinical outcomes overall.