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Post - ACET - COVID Public Health Measures Campaign Evaluation

Executive Summary

Prepared for Health Canada

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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. Colledge".

Mike Colledge
President
Ipsos Public Affairs



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This public opinion research report presents the methodology of the COVID Public Health Measures Campaign Post-ACET online survey conducted by Ipsos Public Affairs on behalf of Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada. The research study was conducted with n=2,288 Canadians aged 18+ between February 9th and 22nd, 2021.

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français sous le titre : Évaluation de la campagne de mesures de santé publique contre la COVID – Post OECF.

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Executive Summary

1. Background

In December 2019, a cluster of cases of pneumonia was reported in Wuhan, China; the cause was confirmed as a new coronavirus (COVID-19) that had not previously been identified in humans. The situation quickly evolved into a worldwide pandemic. By March 2021, there were more than 899,000 confirmed cases in Canada and over 22,000 deaths.

To help reduce the spread of COVID-19, Health Canada (HC) and the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) launched a multi-phase \$50 million public education advertising campaign from February 2020 to present. A mix of traditional and digital media has been instrumental to the success of the campaign.

Overall, the campaign has sought to achieve the following objectives:

- Drive mass and segmented audience awareness of government COVID-19 information, resources, and programs.
- Educate and engage Canadians with the latest evidence-based advice on how to protect themselves and others (behaviour change)
- Motivate citizen advocacy and amplification of public health messaging and practices, also helping to limit the spread of misinformation and disinformation

Both phases of this campaign included a number of sub-campaigns with messaging and creatives on the following:

- Public service announcements featuring the Chief Public Officer of Canada (Dr. Tam) and the Deputy Chief Public Health Officer of Canada (Dr. Njoo)
- Youth testimonials of those coming back from COVID-19
- Youth virus outbreak and how to stop the spread
- Wellness Together Canada resources to improve mental health
- ArriveCAN to provide mandatory travel information on entry into Canada
- News on COVID-19 drugs and vaccines on Canada.ca
- Travellers entering Canada from countries with high COVID-19 case numbers needing to quarantine (self-isolate)
- Slowing the second wave of COVID-19 in Canada by following health measures
- Holiday campaign, encouraging Canadians to celebrate the holiday safely by practicing public health measures.

HC and PHAC's campaign have included television, radio, print, digital, social media, out-of-home and mobile advertising using a wide range of graphic, video, and audio formats. Digital efforts alone have generated over 1 billion impressions, 10 million clicks and 122 million completed video views.

The research consisted of online surveys conducted in English and French, taking place between February 9th and 22nd, 2021.



Ipsos programmed, hosted and provided sample management services, while HC and PHAC provided the online questionnaires. Ipsos was responsible for data collection and data storage in Canada, data processing and data weighting. The total contract value of this research was \$33,486.22, including HST.

2. Research Objectives

HC and PHAC is looking to assess the impact of its COVID-19 Public Education campaign to date in raising awareness, motivating interest, and generating engagement with federal information and resources about the virus at Canada.ca/coronavirus through various sub-campaigns.

This research will help to evaluate the impact of this public education campaign, such as:

- Unaided and aided awareness of the ads and their placement
- Assess message recall
- Determine if the messaging and visuals resonated with the target audience
- Understand the influence of the ad, in terms of visiting Canada.ca/coronavirus to access information, resources and/or programs and practice public health measures
- Understand if the campaign motivated audiences to share information, resources, and practices they learned as a result of seeing the ads.

The results of this research will allow PHAC to evaluate the performance of this multi-phase ad campaign, especially in context of public health measures ads by other levels of government across Canada. It will also help PHAC to improve future phases of this ongoing public education campaign.

The Government of Canada's Policy on Communications and Federal Identity requires the evaluation of all advertising campaigns exceeding \$1 million in media through the Advertising Campaign Evaluation Tool (ACET). The campaign launched in April 2020

The specific research objectives were as follows:

- Determine if people have seen the advertisements associated with the campaign
- Determine where the ads have been seen
- Measure recall of specific elements of the campaign
- Identify behavioural changes as a result of the advertising campaign

The target audience of the research was as follows:

- General Canadian population 18 years of age or more
- Young adults 18-24 years of age
- Young adults 25-34 years of age
- At-risk ethnic communities
- Indigenous communities



3. Methodology

3.1 Online Sample

Respondents for the survey samples were drawn from the Ipsos i-Say panel, consisting of over 200,000 Canadians recruited in all provinces and territories. The survey sample of n=2,288 was drawn from Canadians 18+ and included an oversample of n=88 (see detailed below regarding oversampling).

A pre-test was conducted on February 9th on a sample of n=45 respondents (27 in English and 18 in French), to confirm survey length before fully deploying the questionnaire. In the pre-test, an open-ended question was asked at the end of the survey where any problems, questions, or unclear questions could be brought to our attention. No issues were flagged during the pre-test that required revision to the original questionnaire.

The general population sample consisted of n=2,200 respondents. Quotas were set to ensure representation by region, age and gender, according to the latest Census information.

In addition to the natural fallout from the general population sample, oversamples in each of the following four target groups were carried out in order to reach a minimum of n=200 in each of these groups except indigenous communities n=100. In the end, we obtained the following number of completes, including both natural fallout and oversample (note that one person can fall into more than one category):

- Young adults 18-24 years of age (n=216)
- Young adults 25-34 years of age (n=545)
- Ethnic communities (n=573)
- Indigenous communities (n=100)

Interviews were conducted in English and French, with respondents being able to complete the survey in either official language of their choice.

Respondents were invited to participate in the survey via email, with a unique URL link. This link could only be used once, with respondents being allowed to pause during completion and return to complete it at a later time. On average, the online interviews took 8 minutes to complete.