

Lifting The Burden

Communications Strategic Plan

Lifting The Burden has three stages of activity:

1. To acquire knowledge for action
2. Use knowledge to raise awareness
3. Exploit awareness to promote change

Lifting The Burden's partner organisations - WHO, World Headache Alliance (WHA), International Headache Society (IHS) and European Headache Federation (EHF) - need to remain engaged in and excited by the work of the campaign.

The potential audience for *Lifting The Burden* is global and huge. Headache affects 50% of adults in the world and many children. An effective communications plan to reach half the world's population can be achieved only with an extensive network of local delivery agents and significant budgets. It is recognised that reaching the general public on this scale cannot be a primary short-term objective of the communications plan.

Lifting The Burden relies on external funding and sponsorships. For this reason alone, communications are essential to raise awareness of the Campaign and reach potential donors.

The countries where *Lifting The Burden* needs to achieve most include India, China, South America, the Middle East and Russia. To reach the general public in these areas requires expert local knowledge and on-the-ground contacts.

Audiences and desired responses

The following are *Lifting The Burden's* primary audiences and their desired responses to the Campaign.

Partners - WHO, WHA, IHS and EHF:

"We're proud to be involved in this Campaign and excited about what it can achieve."

General public - primarily 50% of the adult population with headache:

"Headache is not a trivial illness"
and potentially:

"I feel strongly enough about this issue to help the Campaign by making a donation."

Potential sponsors - pharmaceutical companies; major employers for whom headache absence is a burden:

"It is worth investing in this Campaign."

GPs and other primary care specialists:

"The work this Campaign is doing has really helped me deliver a better service to my patients with headache."

Governments and health-care policy-makers:

"Headache is a serious health issue. We should make efforts to try to alleviate the burden of headache."

Objectives

in the short term (6 months to 1 year):

- to excite partner organisations about Lifting The Burden;
- to publicise selected activities in relevant countries in order to raise awareness of *Lifting The Burden*;
- to establish contacts in target countries who could undertake local PR work;
- to identify and approach case studies for use in media work;

and in the longer term (beyond the 1st year):

- to establish a global PR campaign with local delivery agents and central control to deliver the desired reach and awareness;
- to continue to deliver an effective internal communications plan that informs, engages and excites all partners and other internal audiences.

Strategy

We will achieve our objectives by focusing on internal audiences in the short term and using selected media relations tactics to begin the process of raising awareness of *Lifting The Burden* externally.

Messages

The overarching message is:

***Lifting The Burden* is a global campaign to bring better health care to people with headache.**

The two key secondary messages and their supporting points are:

- headache is common and disabling the world over:
 - *WHO ranks migraine 19th in the list of world causes of disability;*
 - *an estimated 10-15% of people worldwide have migraine;*
 - *migraine is the cause of an estimated 400,000 lost days from work or school each year per million of the population in developed countries;*
 - *other headache disorders are collectively responsible for even larger losses;*
- effective treatments for headache exist, but do not reach most of the people who need them:
 - *people with headache are unaware of these treatments;*
 - *doctors and healthcare providers do not offer them;*
 - *governments do not support systems to provide them.*

These messages form the core of all communications with all audiences and cannot be repeated too often.