

Opioids Overdose Crisis Brand and Message Focus Testing (HCPOR #23-42)

Final Report

Prepared for Health Canada

Prepared by Narrative Research

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Opioid Overdose Crisis Brand and Message Focus Testing

Final Report

Prepared for Health Canada

Supplier Name: Narrative Research

March 2024

This public opinion research report presents the results of online focus groups conducted by Narrative Research on behalf of Health Canada. A total of 12 online discussion groups were conducted from February 20-26, 2024, specifically two sessions were held with males in physically demanding professions in each of six regions: British Columbia, Alberta/Prairies, Ontario, Quebec, Atlantic, and Territories/North. Groups in Quebec were conducted in French, while all other sessions were in English. In total, 10 people were recruited for each session, to ensure at least eight participated. From 120 recruited individuals, 102 took part across all sessions. Each group discussion lasted approximately 90 minutes and participants received a cash incentive of \$125 in appreciation for their time.

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français sous le titre :
Groupes de discussion sur l'image de marque et le message concernant la crise des surdoses d'opioïdes

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Executive Summary

Narrative Research Inc.

Call-Up No: CW2346055

POR Number: 115-23

Contract Award Date: January 18, 2024

Contract Value: \$76,591.40 (including HST)

Background and Objectives

Health Canada is committed to a multi-year marketing campaign to address the growing opioid overdose crisis, ensuring it continues to build on the recognition of its existing public education efforts, while coming up with fresh creative for its advertisement to avoid fatigue. The campaign is specifically targeted at men in physically demanding occupations, including trades, but also sectors other than construction. In this context, Health Canada was interested in testing different creative concepts developed for this marketing campaign, to determine which concept resonates most with the target audiences and thus should be further developed. This creative testing was part of the re-launch of the Ease the Burden campaign, which will focus on reducing stigma related to seeking help and providing resources for people looking for help or wanting to help others.

The study findings will be used to assist Health Canada in ensuring the campaign messaging and creative branding is on target and resonates with the target audience(s).

Specific research objectives related to the creative testing included:

- Evaluate the advertising campaign's proposed creative concepts and determine if the content is:
 - Clearly understood by the audience(s)
 - Credible, relevant and of value to the audience(s)
 - Appealing and appropriate to the audience(s)
 - Memorable in the minds of the audience(s), and
 - Able to motivate the audience(s) to take intended action(s).
- Elicit suggestions for potential changes to ensure the messages and products resonate with the target audience.
- Identify preferred sources and methods of receiving information on the subject of substance use and addiction from the Government of Canada.

Research Methodology

To achieve these objectives, a qualitative research approach was undertaken. A total of 12 online discussion groups were conducted from February 20-26, 2024, specifically two sessions were held with



males in physically demanding professions in each of six regions: British Columbia, Alberta/Prairies, Ontario, Quebec, Atlantic, and Territories/North. Groups in Quebec were conducted in French, while all other sessions were in English. In total, 10 people were recruited for each session, to ensure at least eight participated. From 120 recruited individuals, 102 took part across all sessions. Each group discussion lasted approximately 90 minutes and participants received a cash incentive of \$125 in appreciation for their time. All participants were recruited in accordance with Government of Canada specifications. Recruitment was conducted through qualitative panels stored on Canadian servers, with follow-up calls to confirm the details provided, and to ensure quotas were met.

During the focus group discussion, participants were shown three concepts for a public education campaign about substance use, with each concept including a video (using animated black and white sketches with voice over), one web banner, and two out-of-home advertisements. The web banner and out-of-home advertisements were presented in draft format, featuring still black and white sketches and graphic elements in colour. Participants were informed that the final material would use real footage and photography. The order of presentation of concepts was changed in each group to avoid any presentation bias, and the approach for each concept review entailed the presentation of the materials, participants completing a short individual poll about the concept shown, and a group discussion.

This report presents the findings from the study. Caution must be exercised when interpreting the results from this study, as qualitative techniques are used in marketing research as a means of developing insight and direction, rather than collecting quantitatively precise data or absolute measures. Results cannot be attributed to the overall population under study, with any degree of statistical confidence.

Key Findings and Conclusions

The following summarizes the key findings and conclusions from the focus groups on the *Opioids Overdose Crisis Brand and Messaging Focus Testing*.

General Perceptions

Many participants appreciated the focus of the campaign on men and on those working in trades, though some felt negatively singled out. Across many groups, participants were pleasantly surprised to find that the campaigns were focussing on men and on those working in heavy trades / labour specifically, given a recognition of an issue with substances in this group, and a perennial stereotype of men 'having to be tough' and not seek help, often to their detriment. Further, many noted that they were not aware of resources and help that would be directed at men, and were appreciative of the idea that this may be available. That said, some also found the approach to be slightly stigmatizing of those working in trades (potentially causing a negative reaction among those outside of the trades) and wondered why women and those working in other industries were not included.

The idea of help being available, particularly free and confidential resources, is highly appreciated. Many participants, across groups, underscored the importance of help being available for those struggling with substance use, and the importance of encouraging others to offer support. They also underscored the



importance of showing support that may be available in a variety of ways, including help from friends, partners at home, coworkers, and management at work, as well as professional help that includes being able to talk to someone directly.

Generational differences were noted in the workforce, often presenting a challenge to speaking up or seeking support. Younger men indicated that they often encounter older coworkers who are ‘old school’ and less likely to want to discuss issues or struggles, perpetuating stereotypes of ‘toughness’ among this group. As such, there were suggestions to ensure that all generations are targeted and represented with these campaigns.

Ensuring scenarios shown are real in the final production will be key. Some scenes were critiqued for not being realistic (particularly the image of two people holding a jackhammer, or a male coworker with a helping hand on someone’s shoulder), and participants underscored the importance of showing real people on the job rather than actors, and realistic behaviours, in the final production, to make it credible. In addition, ensuring representation across a variety of trades/industries will be imperative (both cross country and ensuring relevance in northern communities, such as workers using ATVs).

A serious tone was felt to be important for the topic. Participants repeatedly underscored the severity of addictions in many communities and felt that the facial expressions displayed must show realism of those situations – anger and frustration was often associated with addiction (from those who had experienced struggles with addiction), along with depression. That said, the ads need to be reflective of the fact that many workers hide their negative feelings while on the job, thus not always displaying frustration or depression.

Concept A (Ease the Burden II)

This concept was felt to be realistic in its portrayal of the burden of workplace struggles, though it may be representing mental health broadly more so than addiction. Overall, this concept was felt to be straightforward and clear, and fairly realistic at representing workplace issues and pressures that may be experienced. That being said, it only modestly grabbed attention and it was not felt to be strongly memorable. As with the other two concepts, it lacked the dramatic effect that was felt to be important in grabbing attention. The concept’s use of heavy objects as a parallel for the burden of substance use was well understood.

Concept B (Portraits of Strength)

The concept was felt to be straightforward and easy to understand by many participants. It was believed to perform modestly well at grabbing attention and being memorable, in part due to the appeal and relatability of the statement “It takes strength” (“Il faut être fort”). The concept was generally seen as credible among English-speaking participants, while less so by French-speaking participants.

This concept conveyed a message to participants that it is not easy to ask for help, but that help is available to those who reach out, although the focus was felt to be on mental health more so than exclusively on substance use. It also suggested to participants that men should not be afraid of reaching



out for support – something that was generally appreciated as a novel take for those working in heavy labour.

Concept C (Tough Tasks)

This concept was felt to have a strong and compelling call-to-action, although some felt that a few scenarios lacked credibility by not representing realistic situations. The concept's highlighting of free and confidential help, which was believed to be accessible to many was a definite strong point of this idea, along with conveying a message that those struggling with addiction are not alone, and that help is available. That said, others found this concept to be more forgettable and less impactful likely due to lacking strong word references (e.g., strength, heavy load), and for not effectively representing credible work situations within the scenarios. Further, having a statement about men being more impacted, without a supporting statistic, made the statement less credible to some.

Preferred Concept

None of the three concepts stand out as being the strongest nor the weakest, as all have their own strengths and weaknesses.

Both Concept A (Ease the Burden II) and Concept C (Tough Tasks) were equally seen as easiest to understand, with Concept B (Portraits of Strength) being chosen much less often.

Mixed opinions were offered across concepts in terms of the best liked in English sessions, while both Concept A (Ease the Burden II) and Concept C (Tough Tasks) were slightly preferred by French-speaking participants.

In general, Concept A (Ease the Burden II) was preferred by some for having a direct and relatable message. Others did not choose it because they felt it was 'cheesy' or 'tacky'. Concept B (Portraits of Strength) was chosen also for its realistic and relatable scenarios, particularly the situations of putting on boots and sore back. Concept C (Tough Tasks) was chosen for highlighting confidential and free resources particularly, as well as for being most simple and relatable, and for showing examples of support (e.g. help at work, help with carrying heavy items, help at home).

Concept C (Tough Tasks) was largely viewed as best at encouraging people to seek help for substance use and addiction when needed, most notably because of the compelling nature of the tagline, 'Find free and confidential resources now'. That said, Concept A (Ease the Burden II) was chosen by a few for showing how support can be accessed through various channels (e.g., at home, through coworkers and from government).

In terms of the concept that was deemed most realistic, and representative of the everyday struggles participants or others may experience at work, Concept B (Portraits of Strength) performed better among English-speaking participants, while Concept A (Ease the Burden II) and Concept C (Tough Tasks) were equally chosen by French-speaking participants.



Concept C (Tough Tasks) was consistently chosen as being most likely to encourage participants to look for more information, primarily for the compelling call-to-action and the promise of free and confidential support.

Participants were asked to choose which of two statements was most compelling for the campaign. Overall, both statements performed well, for different reasons. The statement **'Find free and confidential resources now / 'Trouver des ressources gratuites et confidentielles'** was slightly preferred for the confidential and free messaging, with participants thinking that more people would be motivated to visit the site given that it would provide confidential and free help. Those who liked the statement **See how you can help or get help / 'Découvrez comment offrir ou obtenir de l'aide'** better felt that it was more effective for being blatant, straightforward and clear that when they visited the website, the information would be readily available. In the French sessions, some felt that the term 'découvrez' was engaging and implied an invitation to be curious about visiting the website.

Results suggest overall that any of the three concepts could be further developed without issue, depending on the desired outcome of the campaign. That said, if seeking help and looking for more information are the main goals, Concept C would likely be most effective.

Political Neutrality Certification

I hereby certify as a representative of Narrative Research that the deliverables fully comply with the Government of Canada political neutrality requirements outlined in the [Policy on Communications and Federal Identity](#) and the [Directive on the Management of Communications – Appendix C](#).

Specifically, the deliverables do not include information on electoral voting intentions, political party preferences, standings with the electorate, or ratings of the performance of a political party or its leaders.

Signed _____

Margaret Brigley, CEO & Partner | Narrative Research

Date: March 25, 2024



Introduction

Context

Health Canada commissioned Narrative Research to conduct the Opioids Overdose Crisis Brand and Message Focus Testing. The main objective of this research is to determine which advertising materials will best engage the campaign target audiences and be most effective in its call to action. More specifically, the research is intended to assist Health Canada in making a final creative concept selection for production.

Objectives

Specific research objectives included:

- Evaluate the advertising campaign’s proposed creative concepts and determine if the content is:
 - Clearly understood by the audience(s)
 - Credible, relevant and of value to the audience(s)
 - Appealing and appropriate to the audience(s)
 - Memorable in the minds of the audience(s), and
 - Able to motivate the audience(s) to take intended action(s).
- Elicit suggestions for potential changes to ensure the messages and products resonate with the target audience, and
- Identify preferred sources and methods of receiving information on the subject of substance use and addiction from the Government of Canada.

This report presents the research findings. It includes a high-level executive summary, a description of the methodology used, and findings of the online focus group discussions, including recommendations derived from the research. Working documents appended to the report include the recruitment screener (Appendix A), moderator’s guide (Appendix B), and materials tested (Appendix C).



Research Methodology

Target Audience

For the study, the target audiences included males 20-59 years old employed in physically demanding professions, specifically people working in:

- Natural resources,
- Agriculture and related production
- Manufacturing, warehousing, transport and equipment operator (including heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers, material moving machine operators, cargo and freight agents, forklift operator / driver, machine operator, material handler, material mover, heavy equipment operator, backhoe operator, shovel operator, loader operator, bulldozer operator, front end loader operator, forklift operator)
- Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction
- Construction and trades, including electrician, carpentry, plumbing, masonry / stonework, drywalling, roofing, framing, demolition, welding, carpet layer/flooring, millwright, painter, pipefitter, plasterer, insulation installer, scaffolding, and steeplejacking.

Research Approach

The study included a total of 12 online focus groups conducted from February 20 – 26, 2024 with male participants 20-59 years old working in physically-demanding occupations. The sessions were conducted on Zoom and participants were asked to login using a computer, or a computer tablet. The following table provides a breakdown of the number of sessions based on the region and language, including the number of recruited individuals per group, and the number of participants.

Breakdown of focus groups					
Region	Language	Incentive Amount	Group number	Number of Recruits	Number of Participants
BC (Vancouver, Thomspon-Caribou, Fraser)	English	\$125	1	10	9
			2	10	7
Prairies/AB (Medicine Hat Edmonton, Calgary, mix Sask.&AB)	English	\$125	3	10	8
			4	10	9
Ontario (Thunder Bay, Sudbury, Toronto, Guelph, Ottawa)	English	\$125	5	10	10
			6	10	10
Quebec (Montreal, Quebec City)	French	\$125	7	10	8
			8	10	7
Atlantic (Fredericton, Moncton, Halifax)	English	\$125	9	10	10
			10	10	10
Territories/Northern areas of provinces (mix of locations)	English	\$125	11	10	9
			12	10	5



To achieve strong participation, a total of 10 individuals were recruited for each focus group to ensure that between eight (8) and 10 attend each session. Overall, 120 people were recruited across all focus groups, and 102 took part in the sessions. Each focus group lasted approximately 90 minutes and each participant received an incentive of \$125 in appreciation for their time.

Focus groups included a mix of ages between 20 and 59 years and cultural backgrounds, with representation of racialized communities (including Indigenous representation). Each session included 2-4 participants from construction trades and 6-8 participants from other designated professions. All were employed currently or in the past in those sectors or were on-leave from the designated occupations. If unemployed or retired, participants had to have worked at some point in construction trades, long-haul trucking or heavy machinery operation either within the last six months, or for at least two years within the past five years, or for a period of at least ten years at any time in the past. All participants had lived in their respective region for at least two years. Across all focus groups, a mix of locations was included within each region, with rural and urban representation. To participate in the online focus group, access to a desktop or laptop computer, or a computer tablet connected to the internet was requested, along with a computer speaker, microphone and webcam.

All participants were recruited according to the Government of Canada's recruitment specifications. Recruitment was conducted through qualitative panels stored on Canadian servers, with follow up calls to confirm the details provided and to ensure quotas were met. Those with current or past employment in sensitive occupations were excluded from the research, in addition to those who have others in the household in this situation. These sectors included marketing, marketing research, public relations, advertising, media, graphic design, a political party, the federal or provincial government, the field of drug treatment, law enforcement, and the medical and/or pharmaceutical sector. In addition, those who have been to five or more qualitative sessions in the past five years, have attended a focus group or depth interview in the past six months, or have participated in qualitative research during the last round of opioids crisis prevention creative testing were excluded from participation.

During the recruitment process, and at the beginning of each focus group, participants were informed of the video recording of the session for the purpose of analysing the study findings, and of the presence of observers from the Government of Canada. A signed consent form that described the research project and the rights and responsibilities of participants was required of before participants took part in a session. Given the timeline, two moderators were assigned to this study. At the beginning of each focus group, participants were informed that their comments would not be attributed to them in the report, and participants' names would not be listed in the report. Given the sensitive nature of the topic discussed, the moderator posted support resources contact information on the screen at the end of each session, for participants who may be interested in this information.

During the focus group discussion, participants were shown three concepts for a public education campaign about substance use, with each concept including a video (using animated black and white sketches with voice over), one web banner, and two out-of-home advertisements. The web banner and out-of-home advertisements were presented in draft format, featuring still black and white sketches and graphic elements in colour). Participants were informed that the final material would use real footage and



photography. The presentation of concepts was changed in each group to avoid any presentation bias, as per the schedule below. The approach for each concept review entailed the presentation of the materials, participants completing a short individual poll about the concept shown, and a group discussion.

Concept Presentation Order by Focus Group Session					
BC	AB/Prairies	Ontario	Atlantic	North	Quebec
A-B-C	B-A-C	C-B-A	A-B-C	B-A-C	C-B-A
C-B-A	A-B-C	B-A-C	C-B-A	A-B-C	B-A-C

Context of Qualitative Research

Qualitative discussions are intended as moderator-directed, informal, non-threatening discussions with participants whose characteristics, habits and attitudes are considered relevant to the topic of discussion. The primary benefits of individual or group qualitative discussions are that they allow for in-depth probing with qualifying participants on behavioural habits, usage patterns, perceptions and attitudes related to the subject matter. This type of discussion allows for flexibility in exploring other areas that may be pertinent to the investigation. Qualitative research allows for more complete understanding of the segment in that the thoughts or feelings are expressed in the participants' own language and at their own levels of passion. Qualitative techniques are used in marketing research as a means of developing insight and direction, rather than collecting quantitatively precise data or absolute measures. As such, results are directional only and cannot be extrapolated to all Canadians falling within the key groups participating in this project.



Research Findings

This section provides a detailed account of the focus group discussions.

Advertising Recall

Moderate recall of public service announcements regarding substance use was found, notably recall of advertisements promoting responsible drinking of alcohol or drug taking.

Prior to sharing the creative concepts, participants were asked what, if any, public service announcements or advertisements from governments or public sector organizations they had seen or heard in the past few years concerning the use of substances such as drugs and alcohol.

Many recollections were from campaigns from the distant past (such as DARE or the ‘This is your brain on drugs’ ad from the 1980s), and recent recall was minimal. A couple of participants recalled a radio advertisement from government encouraging conversations with youth about using cannabis, along with a few recollections of billboards encouraging drivers not to use cannabis or alcohol while driving, or to avoid driving impaired.

“When I drive in to work, I heard ads about using cannabis and having those uncomfortable conversations and speaking with your children.” – Ontario

“The dry February advertising on TV – stop drinking for the month. From the Government of Canada.” – North/Territories

One participant remembered having seen an ad on YouTube about harmful chemicals in vapes, while another one recalled seeing something about the harms of opioids use, while yet another participant had seen an advertisement making the connection between the weight of objects and the weight of addiction.

“Fentanyl use – the rise of it – on the radio and bus shelters.” – Atlantic

Hearing of the negative severe consequences of substance use in a dramatic manner was the most recalled aspect of any recalled public education messages, with participants often voicing how those types of scenarios most often left a lasting impression on them.

Sponsors of the recalled advertisements were not readily apparent, though some thought they were from the government (e.g., SAAQ in Quebec, Territorial Government in Nunavut) or MADD. Recalled media most often included television, social media, and out-of-home (e.g., transit or billboards)



Concept Testing – Overall Reactions

Participants were presented with three advertising campaign concepts that each included one video (presented as animated black and white drawings with voice over), one web banner and two 'out of home' advertisements. The web banner and out-of-home advertisements were presented in draft format, featuring still black and white sketches and graphic elements in colour). The material was introduced as being draft versions, and participants were invited to envision what the concepts might look like in its final version that would use real footage and photography.

The order of presentation of concepts was changed in each group to avoid any presentation bias. The approach for each concept review entailed the presentation of the materials, participants completing a short individual poll about the concept shown, and a group discussion.

The following provides overall reactions across campaign concepts:

Targeting Men

While many participants appreciated the focus of the campaign on men and on those working in trades, some felt negatively singled out.

Across many groups, many participants were pleasantly surprised to find that the concepts were focussing on men and on those working in heavy trades / labour specifically, given a recognition of an issue with substances in this group, and a perennial stereotype of men 'having to be tough' and not seek help, often to their detriment. Further, many noted that they were not aware of resources and help that would be directed at men and were appreciative of the idea that this may be available, particularly confidentially. Others noted that they appreciated seeing a sign of hope, such as the final scene in the video of Concept B showing an individual with his partner, at home.

"Like that they show people working in trades. There is a lot of substance abuse in the trades. So that is important to show." - Atlantic

"Nice to see the trades. I noticed that the guy has a partner (Concept B) - that's one of the big reasons someone may be asking for help." - Territories/North

"Gets at destigmatizing a bit. Should have more acceptance of mental health issues. In our trades, we are behind on that stuff." - BC

"It's a subtle nudge for someone that is contemplating their addiction and may take the next step and there are resources out there." - Ontario

"The trades thing is perfect. Nice to see an ad that is geared towards male. You hear a lot about mental health and it's families or females. [There is] stigma with men struggling with mental health – you're a man, suck it up." - Territories/North



"Sometimes I would think that an addict might not want to put their name out there and go visit someone in person so confidential resources would be more appealing to them." - Ontario

That said, some also found the approach to be slightly stigmatizing of those working in trades (potentially causing a negative reaction among those outside of the trades) and wondered why women and those working in other industries were not included.

"It says that men are more addicted to drugs than women. I feel as though this is just force-feeding a stigma." – AB/Prairies

"Seems too construction focused." – Ontario

"I don't like this ad. It is an exaggeration to say that it is more men who have more substance abuse and I think that is not true and they only show the construction sector while there are nurses who are also in that situation." (Original quote: Je n'aime pas cette publicité. Elle est exagérée en disant que c'est plus les hommes qui ont davantage d'abus de substance et je pense que ce n'est pas vrai et ils montrent seulement la construction tandis qu'il y a des infirmières aussi qui sont dans cette situation-là.) – about Concept B, Quebec

Generational Differences

Further, generational differences were noted in the workforce, often presenting a challenge to speaking up or seeking support.

There appeared to be a perceived generational divide in how mental health and addiction issues are addressed in the workplace. Younger participants indicated that they often encounter older co-workers who are 'old school' and less likely to want to discuss issues or struggles they are experiencing, perpetuating stereotypes of 'toughness' among this group. As such, there were suggestions to ensure that all generations are targeted and represented with these campaigns.

"Not portraying people in other industries, and no one young. There are lots of other people struggling too." – about Concept B, Atlantic

"In my trade, there is the old timers and then there's the new guys. The younger trades workers grew up in a time when it's more ok to talk about what you're going through. The older guys don't want to hear it. I'm not sure how it can be changed. Important to show different ages. It affects all people. And it's tough to talk about it." - BC

Realistic Scenarios

Ensuring scenarios shown are real in the final production will be key to the campaign message's credibility.



Some scenes were critiqued for not being realistic (particularly the image of two people holding jackhammer, or a male coworker with a helping hand on someone's shoulder), and participants underscored the importance of showing real people on the job rather than actors, and realistic behaviours, in the final production, to make it credible. Some felt that it would be important as well to show the reality of addiction, and what the consequences of addiction could be, in order to have a true impact. In addition, ensuring representation across a variety of trades/industries will be imperative (both cross country and ensuring relevance in northern communities, such as workers using ATVs).

"They're trying to catch it before it gets out of hand. But it should get to you, show how bad it could get." – Prairies

"The body language is off – like someone holding his friend's jackhammer. That would never happen...The jackhammer – you don't hold it for someone else. I do like the one where he's sitting there with his hand on his head. That's relatable." – Territories / North

Serious Tone

A serious tone was felt to be important for the topic.

Participants repeatedly underscored the severity of addictions in many communities and felt that the facial expressions displayed must show realism of those situations – anger and frustration was often associated with addiction (from those who had experienced struggles with addiction), along with depression. That said, the ads need to be reflective of the fact that many workers hide their negative feelings while on the job, thus not always displaying frustration or depression.

"A little light to me. Should be darker. It's very serious." – about Concept C, BC

"They should show the value of the resources and this is not showing that. It's about communicating in a more substantive and innovative way the resources they have. This is too soft. You are dealing with a serious issue." – about Concept C, Ontario

"I've spent my life on big construction sites and discouraged guys like these, you don't see any. It's laughing or it's focused on the job and it's working hard [even those who have addiction]." (Original quote: J'ai passé ma vie sur des gros chantiers et des gars découragés comme eux autres on n'en voit pas. Ça rit ou c'est focussé sur la job et ça travaille fort [même ceux qui sont dépendants].) – about Concept A, Quebec

Campaign Message Appeal

The idea of help being available, particularly free and confidential resources, is highly appreciated.

Many participants, across groups, underscored the importance of help being available for those struggling with substance use, and the importance of encouraging others to offer support. They also underscored the importance of showing support that may be available in a variety of ways, including help from friends,



partners at home, coworkers and management at work, as well as professional help that includes being able to talk to someone directly.

“Free is whatever, but confidential is great. Don’t want to lose your job over substances. A lot of people assume help costs money.” – AB/Prairies

Mention of Addiction

Mention of addiction early in the video helps grab attention and provide message clarity.

Participants generally felt that mentioning addiction early in the video would clarify the campaign topic and ensure that the message is not misunderstood as implying depression or mental health. The addition of visual cues – such as the naloxone poster on the worksite or the images of the bottle, drug bag, and pill, contributes to message clarity.

“Mentioning addiction at the beginning of the video targets the person who needs it. If the first moments of the ads are going to have an impact, it does the job.” (Original quote: De mentionner la dépendance au début de la vidéo, ça cible la personne qui en a de besoin. Si les premiers instants de l’annonce vont avoir un impact, ça fait la job.) – Quebec

“In the video, they immediately mention substance use. It says it right away for addiction and it brings you to the topic of seeking help.” (Original quote: Dans le vidéo, ils embarquent tout de suite avec la consommation. Ça le dit tout de suite pour la dépendance et ça t’amène vers le sujet de chercher de l’aide.) – about concept C, Quebec

The following provides an overview of the reactions specific to each of the three concepts.



Concept A: Ease the Burden II

Concept A (Ease the Burden II) was felt to be realistic in its portrayal of the burden of workplace struggles, though it may be representing mental health broadly more so than addiction.

Overall Reactions

The Ease the Burden II concept was felt to be straightforward and clear, and fairly realistic at representing workplace issues and pressures that may be experienced. That being said, it only modestly grabbed attention and it was not felt to be strongly memorable. As with the other two concepts, it lacked the dramatic effect that was felt to be important in grabbing attention.

“The pictures used are pretty generic. It’s a good message but missing a WOW factor.” – North/Territories

“I need to see more poignant things, accidents, or more of the consequences of [addiction]. More than just the sadness or the blank stare of the guys.” (Original quote: J’ai besoin de voir des choses plus poignantes, des accidents ou plus les conséquences de [la dépendance]. Plus que juste la tristesse ou le regard vide des gars.) – Quebec

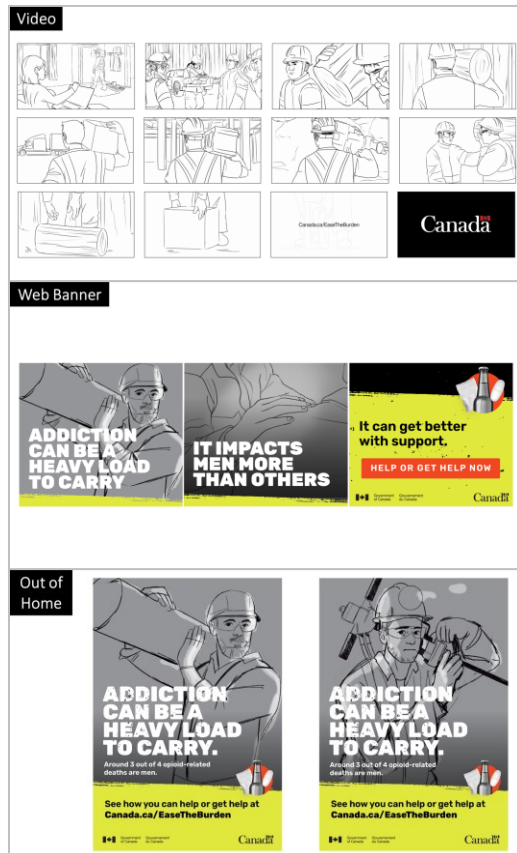
Across regions, participants in the Atlantic region were more likely to say the concept would grab their attention and be memorable, while those in BC and in the

North/Territories were more critical of the approach, while also being the least likely to say that the ads would make them want to do something.

Message/Tone

The message was felt to be that people are not alone, or don’t have to be alone if they are struggling with substance use and addiction, and that help is available if they reach out. The concept also effectively illustrated that addiction can be a burden, and that addiction can affect anyone. Both of those themes were clearly communicated in the statements and headlines used, notably by the terms, “addiction” (“dépendance”), “heavy load” (“lourde à porter”), and “get better with support” (“avec du soutien, c’est possible d’aller mieux”). Participants also clearly understood from the concept that men struggle with the idea of reaching out for help, but that help is available, and that it is not weak to ask for help, but actually a sign of strength.

Concept A (Ease the Burden II)





"... I think these ads do a good job of showcasing men who are stuck working in a tough job who may depend on drugs to keep up instead of reaching out to get help and support." – Ontario

"It says that addiction can be debilitating and is hard to deal with, and that it affects men more than other groups. It can be especially hard for people in the trades or with labor jobs." – Atlantic

*"It says that very high consumption can lead to pressure at work and that men can have a hard time talking about it." (Original quote: *Ça dit qu'une consommation très élevée peut entraîner de la pression au travail et que les hommes peuvent avoir de la difficulté à en discuter.*) – Quebec*

In addition, many clearly understood the link between the heavy objects being carried and the parallel heaviness of substance abuse and its effects. The scenario in the video was successful in conveying the permanency of the burden resulting from addiction, in that it is carried around both at work and at home.

*"The metaphor of the burden is well done; It is clear that the load is heavy." (Original quote: *La métaphore du fardeau est bien utilisée; on voit clairement que la charge est lourde.*) – Quebec*

"I like the message in the fact that it shows the burden being carried home and around with you wherever the person is going." – North/Territories

Despite some clarity in overall messaging, how it is communicated may lead to some confusion. A few participants felt that the concept, notably the video, implied all sort of addictions, rather than being focused on substance use. It was believed that the heavy load shown in the concept could reference depression, anxiety, or mental health issues more broadly, especially at a glance or if watching the video without sound. The image of the bottle, the pill and the drug bag somewhat clarified the intent in the web banner and out-of-home ads.

"I felt like it was too short. No storyline to it. It looks like it could be depression, not addiction, so I thought mental health." – BC

"It tells me that there is more out there for mental health support for men." – North/Territories

*"If you look at the video with no sound, the only thing you see is guys who look 'down' and depressed. Sometimes you'll put the TV in the background or your computer screen without sound so the images will capture your attention." (Original quote: *Si on regarde la vidéo sans son, la seule affaire que tu vois c'est des gars qui ont l'air 'down' et dépressifs. Des fois tu vas mettre la télé en 'background' ou ton écran d'ordi sans son donc les images vont capter ton attention.*) – Quebec*



The tone was felt to be direct and clear, albeit somewhat depressing. Some found the idea to be boring, and others found it to be ‘cheesy’ or ‘tacky’ in its approach by using the metaphor of heavy objects and substance issues. As a result, it was viewed by some as failing to effectively grab viewers’ attention. A few felt that the happy ending (e.g., dropping the load) implied hope.

Approach/Design

The creative approach was felt to convey the heaviness of the burden and clearly pointed to the target audience by showing various worksites and types of work. The objects being carried were relatable for some (most notably in Atlantic and BC) but the log seemed less typical of a workplace object to those in Alberta / Prairies and Northern areas. Those participants said that pipes or other heavy objects should be used in addition.

The colours used were felt to highlight an emergency or ‘caution’, and ‘high visibility’ colours were generally well liked for grabbing attention.

*“Yellow and orange are part of the safety symbols so they attract the eye more.”
(Original quote: Le jaune et l’orange, ça fait partie des symboles de sécurité donc ça attire l’œil plus.) – Quebec*

Target Audience/Relevance

This concept was viewed as holding broad appeal to men in trades or those working in physically demanding jobs affected by substance use as well as those around them.

Use of the statistic was generally felt to be an important inclusion, strengthening the ad and adding power, while also explaining why the campaign specifically targets men. That said, the statistic alienated some participants, who said that opioids weren’t relevant to them, whereas alcohol or other types of drugs were. These participants felt that it would be stronger to talk about other types of addictions as well as opioids.

“The best part was the mention of deaths since it explains why it says men are more impacted because otherwise, we don’t have a clue.” – Ontario

“In my trade, there is the old timers and then there’s the new guys. The younger trade workers grew up in a time when it’s more okay to talk about what you’re going through. The older guys don’t want to hear it. I’m not sure how it can be changed. It’s important to show different ages. It effects all people.” – BC

Many participants found the idea of a heavy personal struggle to resonate with them. That said, those who have experienced addiction, either themselves or with someone close to them, felt that the concept did not effectively convey the hardship and desperation associated with these situations, and thus was not realistically portraying those situations.



“Men spend a lot of time working and the pressure builds. It’s heavy.” – AB/Prairies

“Seems counterintuitive with safe injection sites and safe supply. It’s a mixed message. Not surprising. Not strong or weak.” – Ontario

Further, even among those who embraced the message, there was some skepticism in the types of resources available and if they would be aligned with the needs.

“It’s [what is being shown in the concept] amazing, as long as there is treatment available. It’s no use running ads... which will play heavily on a person suffering if there is not the help available.” – Ontario



Concept B: Portraits of Strength

Concept B (Portraits of Strength) clearly conveys that it is not easy to ask for help, but that help is available to those who reach out, although the focus was felt to be on mental health more so than exclusively on substance use.

Overall Reactions

The concept was felt to be straightforward and easy to understand by many participants. It was believed to perform modestly well at grabbing attention and being memorable, in part due to the appeal and relatability of the statement “It takes strength” (“Il faut être fort”). The concept was generally seen as credible among English-speaking participants, while less so by French-speaking participants.

“I don't find it impactful. This concept focuses on men and depression especially. We are not talking about the problems that drugs can cause in the workplace.” (Original quote: Je ne le trouve pas percutant. Ce concept est axé sur les hommes et la dépression surtout. On ne parle pas des problèmes que la drogue peut causer sur les milieux de travail.) – Quebec

“It takes strength caption grabs you right away. A clever play. Doesn't emasculate you. A lot of people don't want to seek help. Clever ploy to grab attention.” – AB/Prairies

“It's easy to skip over. It's too nice. If I knew a coworker was having addiction issues I don't know if this would start a conversation. It seems easily forgettable. It's too soft. If it's to be directed at men, you want something that is more aggressive.” – Ontario

Message/Tone

The message was felt to be clear and articulating that it takes strength to ask for help, particularly for men. It also suggested to participants that men should not be afraid of reaching out for support.

“The message is to reach out. That it is hard to reach out and that vulnerability does not make you weak; it makes you strong.” – Atlantic

Concept B (Portraits of Strength)





“It takes strength to do blue collar work and it takes strength to ask for help.” – AB/Prairies

“In my opinion the main message would be overcoming the stigma of asking for help. Strength is the biggest word that sticks out to me. Strength to do the job. Strength to ask for the help you seek.” – BC

Some felt it was important and positive that men working in heavy labour were being highlighted in the concept, while others felt that it unnecessarily called out this segment of society. The message of trying to get rid of the male stigma of keeping feelings and problems “bottled up” resonated with many.

“Men are usually taught that asking for help is a weakness. This ad suggests that asking for help is a strength instead. I think this is a pretty powerful message for men.” – Ontario

“I think that’s effective. I do think it’s good. A lot of my staff are young males. I deal with it with my staff. Guys are less likely to talk about it because of the stigma. For them to see something geared towards them... that’s good.” – Territories / North

“I noticed the guy looking up at the trees – and I said ‘there I am’. They are trying to mesh how hard it is to get up... long hours. And giving that equivalent of strength – strength but a different kind of strength.” – Territories / North

A few participants felt that the reference to asking for help, and the video’s last scene where the person struggling appears to be seeking help with their spouse or friend suggest that reaching out for support is a better approach to dealing with stresses than using substances.

“You need to communicate with [reach out to] your loved ones when you have problems instead of taking refuge with substances.” (Original quote: Il faut communiquer avec ses proches lorsqu'on a des problèmes au lieu de se réfugier avec des substances.) – Quebec

The tone was felt to be sympathetic, straightforward and helpful, though some also noted that it was sad, lonely and depressing to see an individual in many images who was clearly struggling. The final image of the video (the man and woman) was felt to offer some hope.

“Depressing. Guy is depressed he has to go to work, go through the pain.” – BC

“Could make people feel like a failure because they don’t have the strength to deal with their addiction.” – Ontario

“Nice to see the trades. Notice that there is the guy has a partner that’s one of the big reasons someone would be asking for help. I like that, seems like maybe there is hope.” Territories / North



Approach/Design

Many of the images and scenarios were felt to be realistic and relatable, particularly the man with the sore neck/back, the man putting his boots on for work and the poster of the naloxone kit, along with the tired look on faces of those struggling. The inclusion of the naloxone poster in the video was positively noted by a few and supported the message that help is available while also act as a reminder of the topic of substance use. In addition, the final scene in the video of the man holding a woman's hand in a home-like backdrop was felt to be important, showing that there is hope and a solution available.

That being said, some felt that the scenarios and images suggested someone who is mentally and physically tired, depressed, or has given up at work, rather than necessarily someone who is struggling with addiction.

"It sounds like they're talking about asking for help on the mental side, not just for drugs. It's mostly the scenes in the video because the guys look depressed." (Original quote: On dirait qu'ils parlent de demander de l'aide du côté mental, pas juste pour la drogue. C'est surtout les scènes du vidéo parce que les gars ont l'air déprimés.) – Quebec

"The images look like people who are tired of working but not necessarily in need of help for using substances. They just look tired." (Original quote: Les images ont l'air du monde qui sont tanné de travailler mais pas nécessairement qui ont besoin d'aide à la consommation. Ils ont juste l'air fatigué.) – Quebec

"The guy putting his work boots on looks depressed. Not wanting to go to work. Saying 'I'll push through.' That's relatable." – Atlantic

The softer blue colours used were felt to be eye catching to some, but too soft to others. Some felt the out of home images were reminiscent of cigarette packages due to their colouring and design. Overall, the colour palette was the least preferred of all three concepts.

"Need more vibrant colours. Too bland. Too dark." – AB/Prairies

Target Audience/Relevance

The targeted audience was felt to be men working in trades and other physically challenging jobs. Further, the message was felt to be directed to those who are affected by substance use, but in the early stages, who are still coping with work and family life, but haven't 'hit rock bottom.' That being said, it was felt that the target audience may not receive the message well, given the perceived focus on depression and mental health more so than substance use. Further, a few participants noted that those with 'mild' substance use may not feel a need for support.

Regardless of the concept's personal appeal, some individuals felt that it was targeted at them because the trades represented were those they worked in (e.g. forestry, transport), while others felt that it



wouldn't be as relatable due to the situations not representing their type of work (particularly those in northern communities who felt that imagery of trees wasn't relevant, and that a more northern landscape should also be shown). That said, depicting familiar situations and mannerisms was relevant to many.

"The sore back; it's relatable." – Atlantic

"Liked the woman at the end – in there as support at the end. But maybe there should have been images of men in there as well. That you can get help from both men at work and women. A broad range." – Atlantic

Some felt skeptical about what type of help might be available at the website, and whether it would be 'worth it' to visit the site.

It should also be noted that despite the reference to the concept of 'strength' which applies to physically-demanding jobs, suggesting that it takes strength to reach out for help may deter some people from doing so if they don't feel they have the capacity required to do so.

"It could make people feel like a failure because they don't have the strength to deal with their addiction." – Ontario



Concept C: Tough Tasks

Concept C (Tough Tasks) has a strong and compelling call-to-action, although it does not effectively grab attention and lacks some credibility in the scenarios represented.

Overall Reactions

This concept was felt to be strong for highlighting free and confidential help, which was believed to be accessible to many. That said, others found this concept to be more forgettable and less impactful likely due to lacking strong word references (e.g., strength, heavy load), and for not effectively representing credible work situations within the scenario.

“I liked it. What grabbed me was when they say free and confidential resources.” – Atlantic

“If you take all of the words away it does not look like an addiction ad. I don’t see anyone that is visibly [addicted] to anything. They just look like normal people around me.” – Ontario

“It’s the most forgettable concept. It does not communicate much.” – Atlantic

Message/Tone

The message was felt to be that you’re not alone, and help is available in all kinds of forms, both at work, though colleagues, at home and from the government.

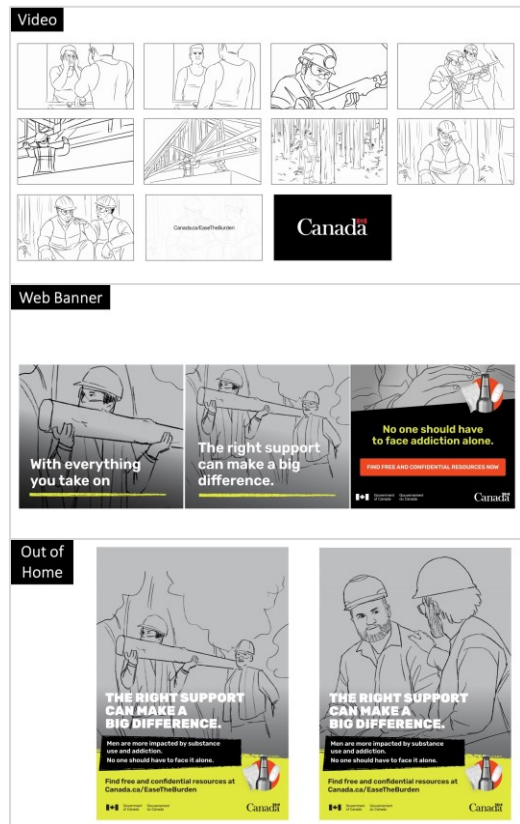
“That there is help available not just personally (friends/family) but also from local government and that it is confidential.” – Atlantic

“They are trying to say you don’t have to face things alone or feel isolated; support and assistance are there.” – Ontario

“The main message is that it is better to face addiction with the proper support and that the government is offering free and confidential support.” – AB/Prairies

This concept also invited people to support those around them and reach out to offer help where needed.

Concept C (Tough Tasks)





"[It says that] reaching out and talking to someone helps, and also that we should support each other with each other's problems." – BC

"Taking action to better yourself is a lot easier with the support of someone who cares. Maybe you don't need the support but that doesn't mean you can't be the supporter." – BC

While the message is clear, it was felt by a few to be too vague to be meaningful, as it does not specify what kind of help is provided, or how it can be of value. Further, while it states that men are more impacted by substance use, it does not specify in what context.

"It says that men are more impacted but more than what? More than it has been? More than women?" – Ontario

The idea of support at work was disliked by some, who felt that many people 'put on a show of strength' at work and would break down or need support more so at home. It was felt to be tacky and unrealistic by some. Others felt that it would be laughable in the workplace, due to the support that is shown, which they felt was unrealistic (workers touching each other, or lack of realism in two people holding a jackhammer at the same time). Yet others appreciated that the concept suggested that support is available at work, at home, or from professional sources.

"This one doesn't reference 'get help', but it does SHOW help and shows help is there. It targets – how can everyone help, not just the person suffering." – AB/Prairies

*"The message is better conveyed and it says that we don't necessarily need to seek help from professionals but we can rely on a friend and it can be the first step to talk to a friend instead of a professional. Friends and family are the first option to consider."
(Original quote: Le message est mieux véhiculé et on dit qu'on n'a pas nécessairement besoin d'aller chercher de l'aide avec les professionnels mais on peut se fier sur un ami et ça peut être la première étape d'en parler à un ami au lieu d'un professionnel. Les amis et la famille c'est l'option qu'on considère en premier.) – Quebec*

"I really like the idea of the ad and the team mentality and working together because you do none of these physical jobs alone so why face addiction alone?" – North/Territories

The tone was felt to be depressing to some, while more uplifting and hopeful to others. Some felt the tone was inviting, soft, and compassionate, though not necessarily representative of the workplace.

"Too politically correct. I would rather see less metaphors and more of the actual addiction in play. I would rather have addiction mentioned at the beginning." – North/Territories



The fact that people shown in the concept who were alone looked to be struggling, whereas those with others were coping was felt to be a strong message, though some critiqued this aspect, as they felt that at work, this kind of support would not be realistic.

“The ad and the message seem alright but there is nobody on a construction site that will come to you and give you a hug. It’s not that kind of atmosphere; out of touch.” – Ontario

Target Audience/Relevance

As with the other concepts, this concept was felt to be targeting men in physically-demanding jobs. It was felt to be a mild reminder that assistance is available, and while this was appreciated by some, many others felt that it is common knowledge. As such, the concept was not felt to be highly motivational or relatable to those with substance use.

“It is a subtle nudge for someone that is contemplating their addiction and they may take the next step and there are resources out there.” – Ontario

It was believed that the types of scenarios where someone is reaching out for help at work would be more realistic for younger men, whereas older men would likely keep their struggles to themselves.

“It speaks to the middle class, but especially the youngest. The older guys, the ones over 50, these guys aren’t going to tell each other about their problems. They’ll tell jokes and silly things but not their problems.” (Original quote: Ça vient toucher la classe sociale moyenne mais surtout les plus jeunes. Les plus vieux, ceux qui ont en haut de 50 ans, ces gars-là ils ne vont pas se raconter leurs problèmes. Ils vont raconter des jokes et des niaiseries mais pas leurs problèmes.) – Quebec

Approach/Design

While the concept did not elicit strong negative reactions, the execution was felt to be bland and lacking a strong hold and call-to-action. Some felt that concept would be stronger if it showed the consequence of addiction, or showed real people who have success stories. This was mentioned most often by participants who had experienced addiction.

“I’ve had problems with substance use and it’s going to take a lot more to get my attention. I need more graphic stuff.” (Original quote: J’ai eu des problèmes avec la consommation et ça va en prendre beaucoup plus pour attirer mon attention. J’ai besoin d’affaires plus graphiques.) – Quebec

Like concept A, the bright yellow and black colours used were felt to highlight an emergency or ‘caution’, though were less impactful than the bright yellow used in concept A.



“The message in black and white on the poster is really small. Those should be highlighted.” – BC

“Body language is off – like someone holding his friends’ jackhammer? Looks more romantic more than what it should be.” – Territories/North



Preferred Concepts

None of the concepts stand out as being the strongest nor the weakest, as all have their own strengths and weaknesses.

Following the discussion of each of the three concepts, participants were asked to choose which one was most effective at achieving different things. The following provides an overview of those choices.

Easiest to Understand

Both Concept A (Ease the Burden II) and Concept C (Tough Tasks) were equally seen as easiest to understand, with Concept B (Portraits of Strength) being chosen much less often.

“Shows a glimpse about what happens at home and the impact.” – about Concept A, C, Atlantic

“I chose C because the language is better and because A is too cheesy. The right support message made a lot of sense to me.” – North/Territories

Best Liked

Mixed opinions were offered across concepts in terms of the best liked in English sessions, while both Concept A (Ease the Burden II) and Concept C (Tough Tasks) were slightly preferred by French-speaking participants over Concept B (Portraits of Strength).

In general, Concept A (Ease the Burden II) was preferred by some for having a direct and relatable message. Others did not choose it because they felt it was ‘cheesy’ or ‘tacky’. Concept B (Portraits of Strength) was chosen also for its realistic and relatable scenarios, particularly the situations of putting on boots and sore back. Concept C (Tough Tasks) was chosen for highlighting confidential and free resources particularly, as well as for being most simple and relatable, and for showing examples of support (e.g. help at work, help with carrying heavy items, help at home).

“More supportive. Touches your heart a bit more. Makes you feel normal.” – about Concept C, Ontario

“Doesn’t show just one type of trade. Better to relate to for all. Not just as work but at home as well.” – about Concept A, Atlantic

Seeking Help

Concept C (Tough Tasks) was largely viewed as best at encouraging people to seek help for substance use and addiction when needed, most notably because of the compelling nature of the tagline, ‘Find free and confidential resources now’.



*“It was the best directed, clearest, most direct, and the message got across better.”
(Original quote: C’est le concept le mieux dirigé, le plus clair, le plus direct, et le message passait mieux.) – Quebec*

That said, Concept A (Ease the Burden II) was chosen by a few for showing how support can be accessed through various channels (e.g., at home, through coworkers and from government).

Most Realistic and Representative

In terms of the concept that was deemed most realistic, and representative of the everyday struggles participants or others may experience at work, Concept B (Portraits of Strength) performed better among English-speaking participants, while Concept A (Ease the Burden II) and Concept C (Tough Tasks) were equally chosen by French-speaking participants.

“Concept B also showed the weight that buddy’s poor wife was feeling too...” – Atlantic

“Concept A shows a glimpse of what happens at home and the impact.” – BC

“I chose B. The expression, the looks on their faces is realistic, and I see that kind of reaction at work. They are frustrated, tired, and mentally exhausted.” – Ontario

Look for Information

Concept C (Tough Tasks) was consistently chosen as being most likely to encourage participants to look for more information, primarily for the compelling call-to-action and the promise of free and confidential support.

Tagline

Participants were asked to choose which of two statements was most compelling for the campaign. Overall, both statements performed well, for different reasons. The statement **‘Find free and confidential resources now / ‘Trouver des ressources gratuites et confidentielles’** was slightly preferred for the confidential and free messaging, with participants thinking that more people would be motivated to visit the site given that it would provide confidential and free help.

*“Sometimes I would think that an addict might not want to put their name out there and go visit someone in person so confidential resources would be more appealing to them.”
– Ontario*

“We target men and most of them are not loudmouths.” (Original quote: On cible des hommes et la plupart ce n’est pas des grandes gueules.) – Quebec



Those who liked the statement **See how you can help or get help / 'Découvrez comment offrir ou obtenir de l'aide'** better felt that it was more effective for being blatant, straightforward and clear that when they visited the website, the information would be readily available.

"It suggests that everyone has a role to play; it empowers other people [than just the person using the substance]." – Ontario

"It's not just about the guy who has issues with substance use , it's also about the guy around him." (Original quote: Ça ne vise pas juste le gars qui a des problèmes [de consommation] mais aussi le gars à côté.) – Quebec

In the French sessions, some felt that the term 'découvrez' was engaging and implied an invitation to be curious about visiting the website.

"If you don't know where to start, you're lost. So, finding out where help is available is important." (Original quote: Si tu ne sais pas par quoi commencer tu es perdu. Donc de découvrir où l'aide est disponible est important.) – Quebec

Media

A multimedia campaign was felt to be best, inclusive of social media, transit, radio and workplace print/poster applications.

Participants expect materials to be on social media, particularly targeted on Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube, and to a lesser extent, Snapchat. Out-of-home advertisements on transit buses or stops or on billboards were felt to be effective at reaching workers when travelling to and from work. Many also felt that advertising on worksites would be of value, specifically through the distribution of pamphlets or posting the information onsite (e.g., in lunchrooms and porta potties). Many also mentioned that radio would be a good medium, since it is used on many worksites.

"Should be posted at job sites and lunchrooms." – AB/Prairies

"Maybe put them up in my workplace. It is a way to start off the conversation even with family members or friends as well." – Ontario

Other mentions less commonly cited included:

- Education in school, particularly in trade schools
- Communications distributed through workers' unions



Website Content

There is an expectation for both information and resources available on the website, notably immediate access to one-on-one resources.

Expectations for what information would be found at the campaign website are varied and include both information that can be referenced to assist someone in dealing with substance use, but also access to resources that can provide immediate, one-on-one resources.

- Local resources / resources listed by location
- Regional supports / support groups
- Therapists
- Links to other people who could help
- Programs
- Detox clinics
- Confidential hotlines / anonymous help
- Advice on how to talk to someone if you want to help
- Positive stories about people who beat addiction
- Financial resources available to support addressing substance use (e.g., replacement income)

“It would require immediate care, a bit like when you go to the emergency room. It will take a team of street workers who will be able to welcome these people and direct them to the right resources” (Original quote: Ça prendrait une prise en charge immédiate, un peu comme quand tu vas à l’urgence. Ça va prendre une équipe de travailleurs de rue qui vont être capable d’accueillir ces personnes-là et les diriger vers les bonnes ressources.) – Quebec

“Support groups for men that need help. Any kind of support, sometimes if they need help if they are using substance abuse it is because something dramatic happened in their life.” – Ontario

“I’d like to know ways I can help guys who would like to find help. How to approach them and also a plan that can help them.” (Original quote: J’aimerais connaître des moyens de pouvoir aider les gars qui voudraient trouver de l’aide. Comment les aborder et aussi un plan qui peut les aider.) – Quebec



Conclusions

The following conclusions are derived from the analysis of research findings:

- ***Moderate recall of public service announcements regarding substance use was found, notably recall of advertisements promoting responsible drinking of alcohol or drug taking.***

There is low recall of public awareness and education campaigns on the topic of substance use. Many recollections are from the distant past, and relate to warnings against driving impaired, either using drugs or alcohol. Only very few recalled something about the harms of opioids use, or vague recollection of the Ease the Burden campaign that aired in recent years. In general, sponsors of the recalled messages were not apparent to participants.

- ***While some of the reactions were unique to each of the concepts tested, a number of items pertain to all three concepts:***

While many participants appreciated the focus of the campaign on men and on those working in trades, some felt negatively singled out. Placing the focus on men also suggests that resources tailored to their specific needs are available. Care must be taken, however, to position the message so as not to stigmatize men working in trades.

Generational differences were noted in the workforce, often presenting a challenge to speaking up or seeking support. Participants mentioned that younger workers are more open about sharing their feelings, while older generations may be more reserved and private, thus pointing to the need to ensure that all generations are targeted and represented in the campaign.

Ensuring scenarios shown are real in the final production will be key to the campaign message's credibility. This was felt to be especially important for scenes representing the workplace and interactions between coworkers, as well as for showing realistic portrayals of addiction.

A serious tone was felt to be important for the topic. More specifically, the tone should represent the frustration and anger often felt by those dealing with addiction, in addition to showing depression. The ads must also be reflective of the fact that many workers who deal with addiction often hide their feelings.

The idea of help being available, particularly free and confidential resources, is highly appreciated. Participants also underscored the importance of showing support that may be available in a variety of ways, including help from friends, partners at home, coworkers and management at work, as well as professional help.



Mention of addiction early in the video helps grab attention and provides message clarity. This is further supported by the addition of verbal reminders – such as the naloxone poster of the image of the bottle, drug bag, and pill.

- ***Concept A (Ease the Burden II) was felt to be realistic in its portrayal of the burden of workplace struggles, though it may be representing mental health broadly more so than exclusively addiction.***

This concept was felt to be straightforward and clearly conveying the message that issues and pressures can be a heavy load to carry, but that men are not alone to deal with those struggles if they reach out. The imagery of objects representing struggles is strong, and the choice of objects was generally felt as representing a variety of industries. The log seemed less relevant to Alberta/Prairies participants and those from northern regions/Territories, who suggested using a pipe. That said, the struggles referenced by the heavy objects is not clearly associated with substance use or addiction, and it was believed that the concept's approach and tone could be speaking more broadly of depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues. The colours (yellow and orange) grab attention as they are high visibility and associated with emergency and caution.

This concept was viewed as holding broad appeal to men in trades or those working in physically demanding jobs affected by substance use as well as those around them. While the use of the statistics was appreciated for explaining the context of targeting men with the message, it makes the message less relevant to those who do not use opioids.

- ***Concept B (Portraits of Strength) clearly conveys that it is not easy to ask for help, but that help is available to those who reach out, although the focus was felt to be on mental health more so than on substance use.***

This concept was felt to be straightforward and easy to understand, in that it is telling me that it is not easy to reach out for help, but that there is help available to those who need it. This concept highlights that professional help is available, but that help can be obtained by reaching out to a partner at home. The approach and tone were most likely associated with being tired or depressed, and relative to other mental health issues more so than clearly speaking of substance use. Apart from the naloxone poster shown in the video, references to substance use or addiction are not sufficiently prominent in the visuals and statements used in this concept to ensure message clarity and grab the target audience's attention. The use of the colour blue was felt to be too soft to grab attention.

- ***Concept C (Tough Tasks) has a strong and compelling call-to-action, although it does not effectively grab attention and lacks some credibility in the scenarios represented.***

The greatest appeal of this concept is the promise of free and confidential help for those with addiction issues. This is a highly compelling promise although there is scepticism in the government's ability to deliver on it. The concept's message was felt to be that you're not alone, and help is available in all kinds of forms, both at work, through colleagues, at home and from the government. That said, the concept's credibility is affected by showing scenes that are not realistic or representative of the



workplace, including having two people holding a jackhammer or coworkers touching each other. The tone is felt to be both depressing and hopeful. As with the other concepts, this one was felt to be targeting men in physically-demanding jobs, in addition to those around them. The bright colours were effective at grabbing attention and suggestive of emergency or caution, though less so than for Concept A.

- ***None of the concepts stand out as being the strongest or weakest, as all have their own strengths and weaknesses.***

When asked to select the best-performing concept based on various factors, no one concept clearly outperformed the others. Both Concept A (Ease the Burden II) and Concept C (Tough Tasks) were seen as easiest to understand. Mixed opinions were offered across concepts in terms of the best liked in English sessions, while both Concept A (Ease the Burden) and Concept C (Tough Tasks) were slightly preferred by French-speaking participants). Concept C (Tough Tasks) was largely viewed as best at encouraging people to seek help for substance use and addiction when needed, notably due to the strength of its tagline. In terms of the concept that was deemed most realistic and representative of workplace struggles, Concept B (Portraits of Strength) performed better among English-speaking participants, while Concept A (Ease the Burden II) and Concept C (Tough Tasks) were equally chosen by French-speaking participants. Finally, Concept C (Tough Tasks) was consistency chosen as most likely to encourage participants to look for more information, again due to its compelling tagline.

In terms of taglines, overall, both statements performed well, for different reasons. The statement **‘Find free and confidential resources now / ‘Trouver des ressources gratuites et confidentielles’** was slightly preferred for the confidential and free messaging, with participants thinking that more people would be motivated to visit the site given that it would provide confidential and free help. Those who liked the statement **‘See how you can help or get help / ‘Découvrez comment offrir ou obtenir de l’aide’** better felt that it was more effective for being blatant, straightforward and clear that when they visited the website, the information would be readily available.

- ***A multimedia campaign was felt to be best, inclusive of social media, transit, radio and workplace print/poster applications.***

It was felt that to reach men in physically-demanding jobs, the campaign should be displayed on social media, as well as on transit advertisement to reach workers while they are travelling to and from work, on radio which is often listened to on workplaces, and on posters displayed at various areas of the work sites.

- ***There is an expectation for both information and resources available on the website, notably immediate access to one-on-one resources.***

While there is an expectation that information will be available on the website, notably in directing both those dealing with substance use and others around them, there is also an expectation that



contacts for local resources will be available. Further, some stressed the importance of offering access to immediate one-on-one resources (e.g., help line) to address urgent needs for assistance.



Direction

The following provides direction for Health Canada based on the analysis of research findings, to guide the final development of its advertising campaign.

1. All three concepts offer potential for further development, with some considerations.

All three concepts performed well at communicating the intended campaign message and were directed to the target audience, although some things should be considered in the development of the final campaign material:

- Care must be taken as to positioning the message so as not to negatively stigmatize men working in trades.
- There is a need to ensure that all generations are represented in the campaign in the way they are interacting with coworkers and dealing with substance use.
- Scenarios presented, especially those from the workplace, need to be realistic situations.
- A serious tone is important, and the frustration and anger felt from dealing with addiction must be effectively represented, in addition to depression and hiding of feelings.
- Showing that help is available in many forms – from home, coworkers, managers, and professionals – is an important message to convey.
- Mention of addiction early in the video helps grab attention and provides message clarity. Supporting statistics will strengthen the campaign. Further, incorporating additional visual cues (e.g., naloxone poster) helps reinforce the topics being discussed.
- The colours yellow and orange should be considered for their ability to grab attention and convey that the message requires immediate attention.

2. Both taglines offer potential as long as they are able to deliver on the promise.

Results suggest that both taglines hold appeal and would result in a relatively good call-to-action. The tagline, **‘Find free and confidential resources now / ‘Trouver des ressources gratuites et confidentielles’** was slightly preferred for its promise, although there is some skepticism that the promise can be realized. That said, the tagline, **‘See how you can help or get help / ‘Découvrez comment offrir ou obtenir de l’aide’** clearly states that information will be available.



3. There is merit in considering a multi-media campaign that reaches the target audience at key points in their daily lives.

While social media and out-of-home offers good reach potential for the campaign, consideration should be given to communicate the message on worksites, either through radio or posters placed in public spaces (e.g., lunchroom or porta potty).

4. The campaign website should include a variety of information and resources based on regional accessibility.

While there is an expectation that information and resources will be available to assist someone dealing with substance use and addiction, there is also an expectation that the website will provide information on how to approach the topic with a close relationship which may need assistance. Further, it is anticipated that the website will provide information to guide decisions, but also readily access to support that can step in immediately (e.g., help line or counsellors).

Appendix A:
Recruitment Screener

Opioid Overdose Crisis Brand and Message Focus Testing (HC POR 23-42) - Recruitment Screener – Final

Name: _____

Home phone: _____ Work phone: _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____

Community: _____ Province: _____

SECTION 1: Schedule & Specifications

NETFOCUS GROUP SCHEDULE

Date (2024)	Group	ADT	EDT	Participant Time	Audience	Language	Moderator
Tuesday, February 20	1	6:00pm	5:00pm	6:30pm NT / 6:00pm AT	Atlantic	EN	MC
	2	7:00pm	6:00pm	6:00pm ET	Ontario	EN	CP
	3	8:30pm	7:30pm	6:30pm CT / 5:30pm MT	AB & Prairies	EN	MC
	4	9:30pm	8:30pm	5:30pm PT	BC	EN	CP
Wednesday, February 21	5	6:30pm	5:30pm	5:30pm ET	Quebec	FR	CP
	6	9:00pm	8:00pm	8:00pm ET	Quebec	FR	CP
Thursday, February 22	7	7:30pm	6:30pm	6:30pm ET / 5:30pm CT / 4:30pm MT	Territories/North	EN	MC
	8	9:30pm	8:30pm	5:30pm PT	BC	EN	MC
Monday, February 26	9	6:00pm	5:00pm	6:30pm NT / 6:00pm AT	Atlantic	EN	MC
	10	6:30pm	5:30pm	5:30pm ET	Ontario	EN	CP
	11	8:30pm	7:30pm	6:30pm CT / 5:30pm MT	AB & Prairies	EN	MC
	12	9:00pm	8:00pm	8:00pm ET / 7:00pm CT / 6:00pm MT	Territories/North	EN	CP

Specification Summary

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twelve (12) online focus groups in total: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ten (10) English groups – two in each of the following regions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BC (Vancouver, Thompson-Caribou, Fraser) ▪ AB & Prairies (Medicine Hat, Edmonton, Calgary, no specification in Saskatchewan/Manitoba) ▪ ON (Thunder Bay, Sudbury, Toronto, Guelph, Ottawa) ▪ Atlantic (Fredericton, Moncton, Halifax) ▪ Northern Territories/northern areas of provinces ○ Two (2) French groups in Quebec (Montreal & Québec City) • In each market, two groups with Males working in physically demanding professions (6-8 from other designated professions and 2-4 from construction trades) • All employed currently or in the past, or on-leave from designated occupations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal mix of locations across identified communities within each region • All males; between the ages of 20-59 years old (mix of ages within range) • Mix of ethnic background. Recruit 1-2 Indigenous people in each group. • Lived in market for at least 2 years • Incentive: \$125 per participant • Access to desktop, laptop or computer tablets. <u>No</u> smartphone use permitted. • 10 recruited per group • Group discussion lasts 90 minutes (but participants commit to 2 hours to account for login & delays) • Exclude sensitive occupations |
|---|---|

RECRUITER NOTE - WHEN TERMINATING AN INTERVIEW, SAY: “Thank you very much for your cooperation. We are unable to invite you to participate because we have enough participants who have a similar profile to yours.”

RECRUITER NOTE: If a respondent wishes to verify the validity of the study, please contact:
Narrative Research: 888-414-1336; focusgroups@narrativeresearch.ca

NOTE THAT THROUGHOUT THE SCREENER, INSTRUCTIONS APPEAR BELOW EACH QUESTION

SECTION G: General Introduction

Hello, my name is _____ and I am calling on behalf of Narrative Research, a national market research company. Let me assure you that we are not trying to sell you anything. As part of a research project that we are conducting on behalf of **the Government of Canada**, we are looking for males aged 20 to 59 years old who currently work or have worked in the past in physically challenging jobs to take part in a small online group discussion the week of **<INSERT DATE>**. Those who qualify and take part in the focus group will receive a **\$125** financial incentive. Is this something you might be interested in?

Yes 1

No 2 **THANK & TERMINATE**

Do you prefer to continue in English or French? / Préférez-vous continuer en français ou anglais?

RECRUITER NOTE - FOR ENGLISH GROUPS, IF PARTICIPANT WOULD PREFER TO CONTINUE IN FRENCH, PLEASE RESPOND WITH: « Malheureusement, nous recherchons des gens qui parlent anglais pour participer à ces groupes de discussion. Désirez-vous que l’on communique avec vous à nouveau afin de vous inviter à participer à un groupe de discussion en français? »

The purpose of this group discussion is to hear people’s views on communications materials currently being developed. Participation in this research is voluntary and completely anonymous and confidential. No attempt will be made to sell you anything or change your point of view.

[IF ONLINE, PROVIDE A LINK TO NARRATIVE RESEARCH’S PRIVACY POLICY AT THE BOTTOM OF EACH PAGE:
<https://narrativeresearch.ca/privacy-policy/#politique-de-confidentialit%C3%A9>]

[IF BY PHONE: Narrative Research’s privacy policy is available upon request. IF ASKED, PROVIDE PRIVACY POLICY LINK BY PHONE OR RECORD EMAIL WHERE IT WILL BE SENT]

This research is registered with the Canadian Research Insights Council Research Verification Service.

[IF NEEDED, SPECIFY: to verify the research, you can visit
<https://canadianresearchinsightscouncil.ca/rvs/home/?lang=en>

The survey registration number is: **20240123-NA697**]

The format of the focus group is an informal online small group discussion led by a professional moderator. May I ask you a few quick questions to see if you have the profile we are looking for? This should take about 6 or 7 minutes.

- Yes 1
- No 2

IF NO, THANK & TERMINATE

SECTION P: Profiling Questions

To begin...

Are you...?

- A man 1
- A woman..... 2
- Prefer to self-identify..... 3
- Prefer not to say 8

P1 INSTRUCTIONS: Consider if code 1 (male); Others, thank & terminate

Into which age group are you? [READ RESPONSES IN ORDER]

- Less than 18..... 1
- 18-19 2
- 20-29 3
- 30-39 4
- 40-49 5
- 50-59 6
- 60 or older 7

P2 INSTRUCTIONS: If less than 20 or 60 and older (code 1, 2 or 7), thank & terminate; Recruit good mix of ages in each session across the 20-59 age groups

In which province or territory do you currently live?

Record name of province/territory: _____

P3 INSTRUCTIONS: Aim for mix within each region where applicable

In which city, town or village do you currently live?

Record name of city/town/village: _____

P4 INSTRUCTIONS: Check against community quotas. Recruit equal mix of designated locations within each region

How long have you lived in <INSERT RESPONSE FROM P4>? [RECORD # of Years: _____]

- Less than 2 years 1
 At least 2 years or more 2

P5 INSTRUCTIONS: Thank & Terminate if less than 2 years

Do you or any member of your household currently work or have ever worked in...? **[READ LIST – ROTATE ORDER]**

- Marketing/Market Research..... 1
 Public relations, advertising, media (TV, Radio, Newspaper), graphic design 2
 A political party..... 3
 Federal or provincial government 4
 The field of drug treatment 5
 Law enforcement..... 6
 The medical and/or pharmaceutical sector 7
 None of these 8

P6 INSTRUCTIONS: If yes to any of code 1-7, thank & terminate. Continue if none of the above (code 8).

What is your current employment status?

- Working full-time (at least 30 hours per week) 1
 Working part-time (less than 30 hours per week) 2
 Self-employed..... 3
 Unemployed 4
 On work leave (including seasonal workers) 5
 Not in the workforce, and not looking for work (e.g., full-time homemaker) 6
 Retired 7
 Student attending school full-time 8
 Other (Specify: _____) 9
 Prefer not to say 10

**P7 INSTRUCTIONS: If WORKING OR SELF-EMPLOYED (codes 1-3), continue to P8. If UNEMPLOYED or ON LEAVE or RETIRED (codes 4, 5 or 7), go to P9.
 Recruit min 6 who are WORKING OR SELF-EMPLOYED (codes 1-3) and max 4 who are UNEMPLOYED, on WORK LEAVE or RETIRED (codes 4, 5 or 7); All others, thank & terminate**

IF EMPLOYED IN P7 (codes 1-3), ASK: In what sector do you work and what is your current occupation?

Sector: _____
 Occupation: _____

P8 INSTRUCTIONS: Exclude sensitive occupations/industries identified at P6; Recruit only physically-demanding occupations in the designated sectors (e.g., no office workers or administrative staff and executives);

Recruit mix of occupations in each group, among the following physically demanding professions/sector:

- Recruit 6-8 participants in the following occupations: people working in natural resources, agriculture and related production, transportation and warehousing; manufacturing; and transportation and warehousing; manufacturing; and transport and equipment operator (including heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers, material moving machine operators, cargo and freight agents, forklift operator / driver, machine operator, material handler, material mover, heavy equipment operator, backhoe operator, shovel operator, loader operator, bulldozer operator, front end loader operator, forklift operator); mining; quarrying; and oil and gas extraction.
- Recruit 2-4 participants in trade and construction (including electrician, carpentry, plumbing, masonry / stone work, drywalling, roofing, framing, demolition, welding, carpet layer/flooring, millwright, painter, pipefitter, plasterer, insulation installer, scaffolding, steeplejacking)

IF UNEMPLOYED OR ON WORK LEAVE OR RETIRED AT P7 (codes 4, 5 OR 7), ASK: Which of the following statements apply to your personal situation.

- Within the last six months, I worked at some point in construction trades, long-haul trucking, or heavy machinery operation..... 1
- Within the last five years, I worked for at least two years in construction trades, long-haul trucking, or heavy machinery operation..... 2
- At any time in the past, I worked for a period of at least ten years in construction trades, long-haul trucking, or heavy machinery operation..... 3
- None of the above 4

P9 INSTRUCTIONS: Recruit min 1 and max 4 who answer code 1-3; if NONE (code 4) thank & terminate

[ASK IF CODE 1-3 AT P7 OR CODE 1-3 AT P9] [IF CODES 1-3 AT P7: Do] [IF CODES 1-3 AT P9: Did] you supervise others in your [IF CODES 1-3 AT P7: current] [IF CODES 1-3 AT P9: most recent] work position?

- Yes 1
- No 2

P10 INSTRUCTIONS: Recruit max 3 who answer yes in each group

What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

- Some high school or less 1
- Completed high school 2
- Some vocational studies 3
- Completed vocational studies (without high school diploma)..... 4
- Completed vocational studies (with high school diploma) 5
- Some CEGEP/college/university 6

Completed CEGEP/college/university.....	7
Postgraduate studies above bachelor's level.....	8
Prefer not to say	9

What was your household's total income last year? That is, the total income of all persons in your household combined, before taxes?

Under \$20,000.....	1
\$20,000 to under \$40,000.....	2
\$40,000 to under \$60,000.....	3
\$60,000 to under \$80,000.....	4
\$80,000 to under \$100,000.....	5
\$100,000 to under \$150,000.....	6
\$150,000 or more.....	7
Prefer not to say	8

To make sure that we speak to a diversity of people, could you tell me what is your ethnic background?

White/European (for example, German, Irish, English, Italian, French, Polish, etc.)	1
Hispanic, Latino, Spanish (for example, Mexican, Cuban, Salvadoran, Columbian, etc.)	2
Black or African Canadian (for example, African Canadian, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, etc.)	3
East Asian (for example, Chinese, Filipino, Vietnamese, Korean, etc.)	4
South Asian (for example, East Indian, Pakistani, etc.)	5
Middle Eastern or North African (for example, Lebanese, Iranian, Syrian, Moroccan, Algerian, etc.) ..	6
Indigenous (e.g. First Nations, Métis, Inuit)	7
Other (Specify: ___)	8
Unsure/Prefer not to say	9

P13 INSTRUCTIONS: Multiple responses allowed. Aim for a mix in each group; Recruit min 1 Indigenous in each group (code 7)

SECTION N: *Netfocus* Questions

The focus groups for this project will be conducted online on the Zoom platform and will require the use of a laptop or desktop computer, or a computer tablet, connected to high-speed Internet and equipped with a webcam, a microphone and speakers. **Note that you cannot use a smartphone to access the online session. The screen of those electronics is simply too small for the purpose of this research project.**

NF1. Do you have access to a laptop or desktop computer, or a computer tablet, with high-speed Internet to take part in this focus group? **[MULTIPLE RESPONSES KEEPING CODE 3 EXCLUSIVE]**

Yes, laptop or desktop computer	1
Yes, computer tablet	2
No	3

INSTRUCTIONS: If no, thank & terminate

NF2. Is the computer or tablet you will use for the focus group equipped with a webcam, a microphone and speakers you will be able to use?

Yes, webcam, microphone, and speakers.....1

Yes, microphone and speakers only2

No3

INSTRUCTIONS: If no, thank & terminate - BUT webcams are not necessary for remote participants

NF3. You will need to be in a place that is quiet and free of distractions for the duration of the session. This includes being on your own, without pets, children or other people nearby, and in a quiet room. ***An outdoor area, a vehicle, or a public place are NOT acceptable locations.*** Are you able to secure a quiet environment without distractions or noises for the duration of the focus group session?

Yes 1

No 2

INSTRUCTIONS: If no, thank & terminate

INSTRUCTIONS FOR NF1-NF3 THANK & TERMINATE: Based on your responses, we are unable to invite you to take part in this online focus group, as you do not meet the technical or logistic requirements. We thank you for your interest in this research.

SECTION R: Previous Focus Group Experience Questions

I just have a few more questions about your past participation in market research...

Have you ever attended a group discussion or interview for which you received a sum of money?

Yes 1

No 2

INSTRUCTIONS: Max 5 per group who answer YES, then continue; If NO, go to SECTION I: INVITATION

When was the last time you attended a group discussion or interview? _____

[ASK IF WITHIN PAST 5 YEARS IN R2] How many groups or interviews have you attended in the past 5 years?

What was the subject(s) of the focus group(s) or interview? _____

THANK AND TERMINATE IF THEY HAVE...

- been to 5 or more groups in the past 5 years (max 4 groups/interviews attended)

- attended a focus group in the past six months

- attended a focus group during the last round of Opioid Crisis Prevention Creative Testing (validate with NR)

SECTION I: Invitation

Based on your responses so far, we would like to invite you to participate in a small group discussion that will be conducted simultaneously over the telephone and online at <INSERT TIME> on <INSERT DATE>. The session will bring together up to 10 people, and it will last between **90 minutes and 2 hours**. We will send you a link to join the online focus group via Zoom. The discussion will be about communications materials, including advertisements, currently being considered by the Government of Canada and you will receive **\$125** in appreciation for your time.

Are you available and interested in taking part in this focus group?

Yes 1

No 2

I1 INSTRUCTIONS: If NO, thank & terminate

The discussion in which you will be participating will be video recorded for research purposes only. Be assured that your comments and responses will not be attributed to you and that your name will not be included in the research report. Are you comfortable with the discussion being video recorded?

Yes 1

No 2

I2 INSTRUCTIONS: If NO, thank & terminate

There may also be employees from the Government of Canada and a marketing company they are working with, who will be listening in on the discussion. They will not be given the last names of participants. Are you comfortable with having observers?

Yes 1

No 2

I3 INSTRUCTIONS: If NO, thank & terminate

Which of the two official languages, English or French, do you speak most often on a regular basis? [SINGLE RESPONSE]

English 1

French..... 2

Both equally..... 3

I4 INSTRUCTIONS: Must answer French (code 2) for Quebec groups

The group discussion will be held [GROUPS 5 & 6: in French] [ALL OTHER GROUPS: in English]. Participants may also be asked to read text, write responses and/or review images during the session. Are you able to take part in these activities [GROUPS 5 & 6: in French] [ALL OTHER GROUPS: in English] on your own, without assistance?

- Yes 1
- No 2
- I am unsure..... 8

I5 INSTRUCTIONS: If NO or UNSURE, thank & terminate

Could we please confirm the email address where we can send you the detailed instructions for logging in to the group?

Record email address (and verify): _____.

We will send you the instructions by email at least 1 day in advance of the group. The group discussion will begin promptly at <INSERT TIME> and will last **up to 2 hours**. Please log in 15 minutes in advance to ensure that the session is not delayed. If you arrive late, we will not be able to include you in the discussion and you will not receive the financial incentive.

As mentioned, we will be pleased to provide everyone who participates with **\$125**, provided by e-Transfer or cheque, as you'd prefer. It takes approximately 5 business days to receive an incentive by e-Transfer or approximately 2-3 weeks following your participation to receive an incentive by cheque.

Would you prefer to receive your incentive by e-Transfer or cheque?

- e-Transfer 1
- Cheque 2

I6 INSTRUCTIONS: If E-TRANSFER, continue to I7; If CHEQUE, skip to I8

[IF PREFER TO RECEIVE INCENTIVE BY E-TRANSFER – CODE 1 IN Q16] Could you please confirm the e-mail address where you would like the e-transfer sent after the focus groups, as well as the proper spelling of your name? Note that the e-transfer password will be provided to you via email following the focus group.

RECORD EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

RECORD FIRST NAME: _____

RECORD LAST NAME: _____

[IF PREFER TO RECEIVE INCENTIVE BY CHEQUE – CODE 2 IN Q16] Could I have the mailing address where you would like the cheque mailed after the focus groups, as well as the proper spelling of your name?

Mailing address: _____

City: _____

Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

First name: _____ Last name: _____

As these are very small groups and with even one person missing, the overall success of the group may be affected, I would ask that once you have decided to attend that you make every effort to do so. If you are

unable to take part in the study, please call _____ (collect) at _____, or email _____ as soon as possible so a replacement may be found. **Please do not arrange for your own replacement.**

So that we can call you to remind you about the focus group or contact you should there be any last-minute changes, can you please confirm your name and contact information for me?

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Email: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Home Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

I9 INSTRUCTIONS: Insert information already collected, for confirmation. If the respondent refuses to give his/her first or last name or phone number please assure them that this information will be kept strictly confidential in accordance with the privacy law and that it is used strictly to contact them to confirm their attendance and to inform them of any changes to the focus group. If they still refuse THANK & TERMINATE.

Thank you for your interest in our study. We look forward to hearing your thoughts and opinions!

Attention Recruiters

Recruit **10 participants per group**

CHECK QUOTAS

Ensure participant has a good speaking (overall responses) ability-If in doubt, DO NOT INVITE

Do not put names on profile sheet unless you have a firm commitment.

Repeat the date, time and verify email before hanging up.

Confirming – DAY BEFORE GROUP

1. Confirm in person with the participant the day prior to the group– do not leave a message unless necessary
2. Confirm all key qualifying questions
3. Confirm date and time
4. Confirm they have received the login instructions

Appendix B: Moderator's Guide

Health Canada - Opioid Overdose Crisis Brand and Message Focus Testing (HC POR 23-42)
Moderator's Guide – Final

Study Goals (Confidential – Not read to participants)

- Evaluate the advertising campaign's proposed creative concepts to determine if the content is:
 - clearly understood by the audience(s)
 - credible, relevant and of value to the audience(s)
 - appealing and appropriate to the audience(s)
 - memorable in the minds of the audience(s)
 - able to motivate the audience(s) to take intended action(s)
- Elicit suggestions for potential changes to ensure the messages and products resonate with the target audience
- Identify preferred sources and methods of receiving information on the subject of substance use and addiction from the Government of Canada.

Introduction

15 minutes

- **Welcome:** Introduce Narrative Research, self and function of a moderator (keep on time/on topic)
- **Topic/Sponsor/Length:** For the next 90 minutes or so, I'd like to explore your thoughts on different concepts that are currently being considered by the Government of Canada for a public education campaign. We don't have a lot of time together, so we are going to try to really focus on this campaign.
- **Participants' Role:** All opinions are important; no right/wrong answers; need to understand agreement/disagreement; interested in hearing from everyone but participation is voluntary.
- **Confidentiality:** Comments will not be attributed in the report; no names in report; ask participants to keep content of discussion in confidence.
- We have sent you a consent form to participate in this research, and will require that sent back to us before we are able to pay you your incentive. The form outlines your agreement to take part, that your participation is voluntary, and details your rights under the privacy act.
- **Logistics:** Session video recording; government employees & marketing firm representatives as observers, will not be taking part in the discussion
- **Platform Tools (Zoom):** Raise hand; chat; mute/unmute; rejoining the audio if necessary
- **Participant Introduction:** In which city or community do you live; who lives in your home; what type of work do you do; how long you've been doing this work.

Advertisement Recall

5 minutes

Before we look at the ideas for a public education campaign...

- Do you remember having seen or heard any public service announcements or advertisements from governments or public sector organizations about the use of substances, such as drugs and alcohol?
 - If so, what do you remember about those ads? Probe for recall of message and what caught their attention
 - Where have you seen or heard those?

Creative Testing

60 minutes (20 minutes per concept)

As I mentioned earlier, I'd like to show you a number of ideas for a public education campaign about substance use being considered by the federal government. We will look at three concepts, each

including a number of advertisements around the same theme. Each concept will include one **video**, one **web banner**, and two **outdoor ads** that could be used in public places, such as billboards or bus shelters. The ads are still in development, and they have not yet been produced. As I am showing you the concepts, you will have to envision what the final ads would look like. For example, I am showing you an animated video, but once finalized, it will use real footage, with real people in real settings. The web banner and outdoor ads use black and white sketches, but once those are finalized, they would use professional full-colour photography or images.

We will watch and discuss each concept one at a time. Hold your thoughts as I show you the ads. Once I am done, I will ask for your individual opinion before we discuss the concept as a group. Please pay attention to both **the message** and **how it is communicated**, as we will be discussing and focusing on those aspects. We also recognize that this may be a sensitive topic for some. Note that at the end of the session, we will provide information on support resources. **MODERATOR PRESENTS EACH CONCEPT ONE AT A TIME – ROTATE ORDER OF CONCEPTS ACROSS GROUPS**

Concept A: Ease the Burden II / Concept B: Portraits of Strength / Concept C: Tough Tasks

Concept Presentation Order					
BC	AB/Prairies	Ontario	Atlantic	North	Quebec
G4: A-B-C	G3: B-A-C	G2: C-B-A	G1: A-B-C	G7: B-A-C	G5: C-B-A
G8: C-B-A	G11: A-B-C	G10: B-A-C	G9: C-B-A	G12: A-B-C	G6: B-A-C

AFTER THE PRESENTATION OF THE CONCEPT: Before we talk about this idea, take a moment to answer, each on your own, the questions you see on the screen. Keep in mind, I can see your responses, but other participants will not.

[POLL A-B-C – OPINIONS CONCEPT A-B-C]

Indicate on a 1-10 scale the extent to which the statement aligns with what you think of this concept (where 1 means “no, not at all” and 10 means “yes, absolutely”):

- [ATTENTION] Q1. These ads grab my attention.
- [MEMORABILITY] Q2. I would remember these ads.
- [MOTIVATIONAL] Q3. These ads make me want to do something.
- [CREDIBILITY] Q4. I believe what these ads are saying.

Then write a short response to answer the following question:

- [MESSAGE CLARITY] Q5. What is the main message communicated by these ads?

AFTER THE EXERCISE: Now let’s talk about your reactions together...

- **Attention/Memorability:** What, if anything, grabs your attention? To what extent will you remember it or not?
- **Message:** What is this campaign as a whole trying to communicate? What does it suggest about substance use? Is anything surprising? Have you learned anything?
 - Concept A referenced that 3 out of 4 opioid-related deaths in Canada are men. How do you feel about mentioning that in the ads? Probe for whether it strengthens or weakens the message

- What works best: mentioning addiction early in the ad (in the ads for concepts A and C), or later (concept B)?
- **Design:** What do you think of the way the message is communicated – the language, the visuals, the settings, the situations? Looking at each piece shown, what element works well and what doesn't work? What are your thoughts on the colour scheme? What would you change?
- **Clarity/Appropriateness:** Is anything unclear, confusing or problematic?
 - Concept A shows people at work carrying heavy objects. What do you think this is trying to communicate? Do you find these scenes to be clear? If needed: [the heavy objects are meant to represent the heavy burden of stress carried around day to day]
 - Would another heavy item or piece of equipment be more related to your job in trades or a more clear representation of the stress carried by men in physically demanding jobs?
- **Tone/Feelings:** How would you describe the tone? What emotions do these ads elicit? Explore, if not mentioned: understood, recognized, connected, supported, empowered, hopeful
- **Personal Relevance/Appeal:** Who is the message intended for: you, or someone different? **IF NOT THEM:** Why not you? What would make it feel (even) more compelling?
- **Call-to-Action:** What impact does the message have on you?
 - Does it change how you feel about anything? How does it make you feel about substance use? About people who are affected by substance use?
 - Does it motivate you to take action? If so, what would you do? Why? What else is this asking of people?
 - What would make the ad feel (even) more compelling to you – in terms of images/message/tone?

Now let's have a look at the next concept. **REPEAT POLL/DISCUSSION FOR THE OTHER CONCEPTS.**

Final Choice & Best Channels

15 minutes

Now that we've seen all three concepts, I'd like to know which one you think is the strongest. Take a moment to complete a poll:

[POLL D – PREFERENCE]

- Q1. Which concept did you find the easiest to understand? A, B or C?
- Q2. Overall, which concept do you like best? A, B or C?
- Q3. Which concept is best at encouraging you, or someone else, to seek help for substance use and addiction (when needed)?
- Q4. Which concept is more realistic and representative of the everyday struggles or stress you or others may experience at work?

AFTER THE EXERCISE: Now let's talk about this together...

- **EXPLORE REASONS FOR CONCEPT CHOICE:** Please explain why you chose this concept as most likely to encourage you or someone else to seek help for substance use and addiction.
- **EXPLORE REASONS FOR CONCEPT CHOICE:** Please explain why you chose this concept as more realistic and representative of the everyday struggles or stress you or others may experience at work.

- Which concept would encourage you to look for more information?
- Were there elements of the other concepts that you liked? If so, what?
- Which call-to-action, or statement, is more motivating: See how you can help or get help (concepts A and B); or find free and confidential resources now (concept C)?
- ***If not mentioned earlier:*** Concept A referenced that 3 out of 4 opioid-related deaths in Canada are men. How do you feel about mentioning that in the ads? Probe for whether it strengthens or weakens the message

Once the campaign material is finalized...

- How would this information be best conveyed to you? Where would you be most likely to see these ads?
- How else would you like to hear about substance use from the Government of Canada?
- If after seeing the ad you visited the GoC website mentioned in the ads, what type of information would you want to find?

Thanks & Closure:

That's all my questions; thank you for taking part in our discussion. We will follow up with you by email regarding the incentive. Note that once finalized, the study report for this project will be available to the public through a government agency called Library and Archives Canada.

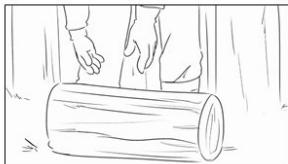
MODERATOR TO PROVIDE LIST OF RESOURCES ON THE SCREEN AND IN THE CHAT:

- Get Help Here: <https://www.canada.ca/mental-health> OR if you are thinking of suicide, call or text 9-8-8
- [Get Help with Substance Use: canada.ca/easetheburden](https://canada.ca/easetheburden)
- The Hope for Wellness Helpline: <https://www.hopeforwellness.ca/> ([Resource for Indigenous People](#))

Appendix C:
Creative Concepts Tested

Concept A

Video



Web Banner

ADDICTION CAN BE A HEAVY LOAD TO CARRY

IT IMPACTS MEN MORE THAN OTHERS

It can get better with support.

HELP OR GET HELP NOW

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada

Canada

Out of Home

ADDICTION CAN BE A HEAVY LOAD TO CARRY.

Around 3 out of 4 opioid-related deaths are men.

See how you can help or get help at Canada.ca/EaseTheBurden

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada

Canada

ADDICTION CAN BE A HEAVY LOAD TO CARRY.

Around 3 out of 4 opioid-related deaths are men.

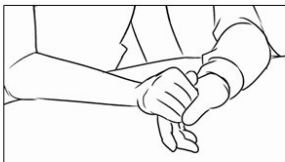
See how you can help or get help at Canada.ca/EaseTheBurden

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada

Canada

Concept B

Video



Web Banner

The web banner is divided into three sections. The left section shows a construction worker in a hard hat and safety vest, standing in a room with a window, holding a tool. Below this is a yellow box with the text: **It takes strength to do what you do.** The middle section is a close-up of hands, one holding a cigarette, with a yellow box containing: **It takes strength to ask for help, too.** The right section has a blue background with the text: **Substance use and addiction impact men more than others.** Below this is a yellow box: **See how you can help or get help now**. At the bottom right, there is a red circle containing icons of a bottle, a pill, and a syringe. The footer includes the Canadian flag, the text "Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada", and the "Canada" logo.

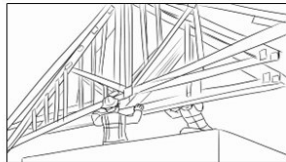
Out of Home

This vertical poster features a construction worker in a hard hat and safety vest, standing in a room with a window, holding a tool. At the top, it says **THIS TAKES STRENGTH.** Below the worker, it says **SO DOES ASKING FOR HELP.** A yellow box contains the text: **Substance use and addiction impact men more than others.** At the bottom, there is a blue box with the text: **See how you can help or get help at Canada.ca/EaseTheBurden**. The footer includes the Canadian flag, the text "Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada", and the "Canada" logo.

This vertical poster features a construction worker in a hard hat and safety vest, standing in a room with a window, holding a large log. At the top, it says **THIS TAKES STRENGTH.** Below the worker, it says **SO DOES ASKING FOR HELP.** A yellow box contains the text: **Substance use and addiction impact men more than others.** At the bottom, there is a blue box with the text: **See how you can help or get help at Canada.ca/EaseTheBurden**. The footer includes the Canadian flag, the text "Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada", and the "Canada" logo.

Concept C

Video



Web Banner



With everything you take on

The right support can make a big difference.

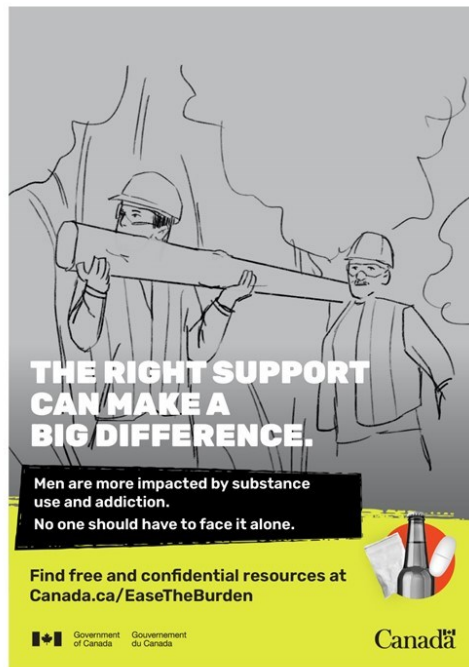
No one should have to face addiction alone.

FIND FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL RESOURCES NOW

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada

Canada

Out of Home



THE RIGHT SUPPORT CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE.

Men are more impacted by substance use and addiction.
No one should have to face it alone.

Find free and confidential resources at Canada.ca/EaseTheBurden

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada

Canada



THE RIGHT SUPPORT CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE.

Men are more impacted by substance use and addiction.
No one should have to face it alone.

Find free and confidential resources at Canada.ca/EaseTheBurden

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Call to Action

See how you can help or get help

Find free and confidential resources now