

Chinese perception of blood donation promotional strategies

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Although blood donation is an altruistic behaviour that the public is in general very supportive, the donors have to be constantly reminded for the donation needs because blood has a limited self life and repeated donation can only be made after a limited time interval. Various approaches including TV, radio, press, emails, donor newsletter, website, public transportation shelters and poster display in community have been used to attract the donors to come back for blood donation. Cost effectiveness of these strategies is seldom measured and behavioral study on donors and public is also rather limited in this area. Here we survey the Chinese blood donors on their attitude towards the promotional strategies adopted in Hong Kong.

Material and Methods

All eligible Chinese donors aged less than 40 with a valid email address are invited to participate an online survey in November 2008. They accounted for 77% of blood donors in Hong Kong. Donors were asked to rate on a 5-points axis against the promotional strategies used by Hong Kong Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service (BTS) and their perceived effectiveness.

Results

2,295 donors responded to the invitation and completed the online survey of whom 1,069 were aged between 16 and 25 and 1,226 between 26 and 40. The male to female ratio was 1.46: 1.

As a whole, most donors indicated that the blood donation messages were received in the order of television (score = 3.295), emails (3.09), posters at public transportation shelters (2.71), radio (2.69), posters at community (2.63), donor newsletter (2.55), newspaper and magazine (2.54) and BTS website (2.39). They considered that television and emails are the most effective in delivering promotional information. 30.8% donors welcomed the traditional way of promotion of “giving souvenirs to the blood donors” and 21.4% preferred to have celebrities participation in the blood donation drive. However, subgroup analysis of the young generation (aged 16-25) revealed that “through the sharing groups on internet” (score = 3.95) to be the most effective way to promote blood donation. Lastly a considerable 16.4% and 13.3% considered the need of blood donation exhibition and educational sessions.

Conclusion

The survey gave an insight of our public and donor perception in the existing promotional strategies and their relative effectiveness. It indicates that a genuine need in adapting the blood donation promotional strategies to different aged groups; in particular for the younger generation of whom the BTS has to adapt to the pace of technology development used in their day to day communication. Although the traditional organizational website is less effective, the growing importance of social networking website should be considered in attracting blood donors.