

# Talking really helps campaign evaluation

## Purpose

In January 2023, the Public Health Agency (PHA) launched 'Talking really helps', a mass media campaign. The campaign ran until 31 March 2023. The aim of the campaign was to encourage openness and discussion in relation to feelings of anxiety, distress or crisis, increase help-seeking behaviour and reinforce the concept of recovery. The campaign promoted Lifeline, Northern Ireland's crisis response helpline. The primary audience for the campaign was all adults. Consideration was also given to those people at greater risk of suicide – males and those who live in more deprived areas. Family and friends of those most at risk of suicide were a secondary audience.

**Reach:** 82% of those surveyed reported that they saw or heard at least one element of the campaign.

**Recognition:** Almost three out of five (59%) of all respondents reported that the campaign message was to 'talk to someone if you're not feeling OK'.

**Positive action:** 90% of respondents, who were exposed to the campaign prior to taking part in the survey, took at least one action as a result of seeing or hearing the campaign.

## Background

Suicide is complex and often occurs as a result of a number of interacting factors. It is therefore a major challenge for public health.

The most recent Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) data is for 2021. In 2021, there were 14.3 deaths by suicide per 100,000 population in Northern Ireland. Around three quarters (74.3%) of the total suicide deaths in 2021 were among males and a quarter (25.7%) were among females. Suicide deaths were highest for men between the ages of 25 and 29, followed by men aged between 45 and 49, while for women the highest number of suicide deaths occurred among those between the ages of 20 and 24, followed by those aged 50–54. Overall in 2021, one in every three suicide deaths was someone under the age of 30.

Northern Ireland's most deprived areas had a suicide rate that was almost twice that of the least deprived areas in 2020. A report for 2021 on suicide rates and deprived areas has not yet been produced.

**Protect Life 2 2019-2024** is a long-term strategy for reducing suicides and the incidence of self-harm in Northern Ireland. Broader population approaches in the strategy include increasing awareness of suicide prevention; reducing stigma associated with suicidal behaviour and mental illness; and promoting help-seeking behaviour.

## Campaign advertising

Radio and Google search advertising went live from 19 December 2022. All campaign advertising ran from 16 January 2023 until 31 March 2023 across TV, radio, outdoor, press and digital, including social media advertising. The campaign was exposed over 48 million times.

The Lifeline website was redeveloped and launched in December 2022. The campaign was supported by PR and engagement with partners and stakeholders.



## Evaluation method

The campaign evaluation was conducted by a market research company via an online survey with an adult general population sample in Northern Ireland. Quota sampling was applied to ensure a diverse response across a range of demographic groupings. In total 1,003 adults (aged 16+ years) in Northern Ireland participated. Data were analysed by the PHA's Health Intelligence Unit.

## Results

### Recognition of the campaign was very high

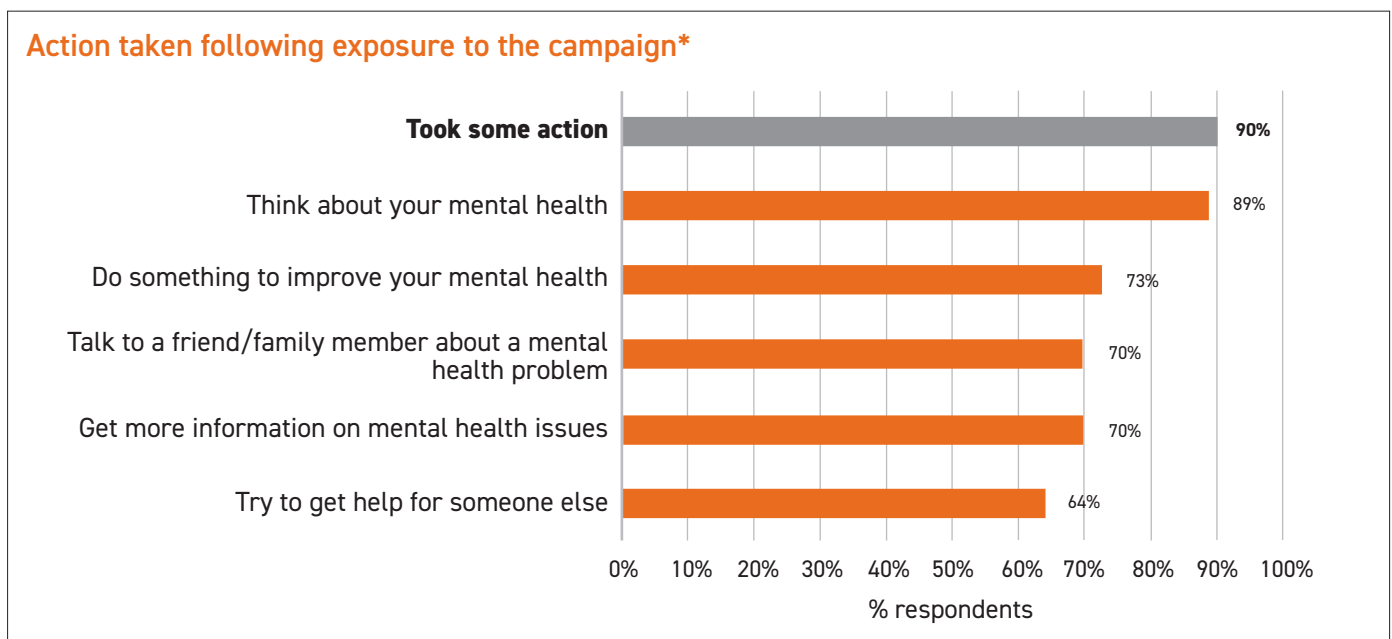
Over four out of five of all respondents (82%) were aware of at least one element of the campaign. The outdoor advertising was most recognised at 64%, followed by the TV/video advertisement at 61%. Around two out of five were aware of the digital advertising (43%), radio advertisement (42%) and website (38%).

### High awareness of the campaign message

'Talking really helps' was the main campaign message. Almost three out of five of all respondents (59%) identified this, reporting that the main message was to 'talk to someone if you're not feeling okay'.

### The campaign prompted action

Of the 82% who were exposed to the campaign prior to taking part in the survey, a large majority (90%) reported doing something as a result of seeing/hearing it.



\*Some people took multiple actions

### The campaign increased knowledge

Out of all respondents, 85% reported that the campaign told them something new.

### Reactions to the campaign were very positive

Out of the full sample, nearly all respondents thought the campaign was believable (99%), credible (98%), and clear and easy to understand (99%). Over nine out of 10 said the campaign was thought provoking (92%) and that it stood out from other campaigns (92%). Respondents were positive about the campaign and reported high levels of likeability of the messages (90%), language (87%) and visuals (83%).

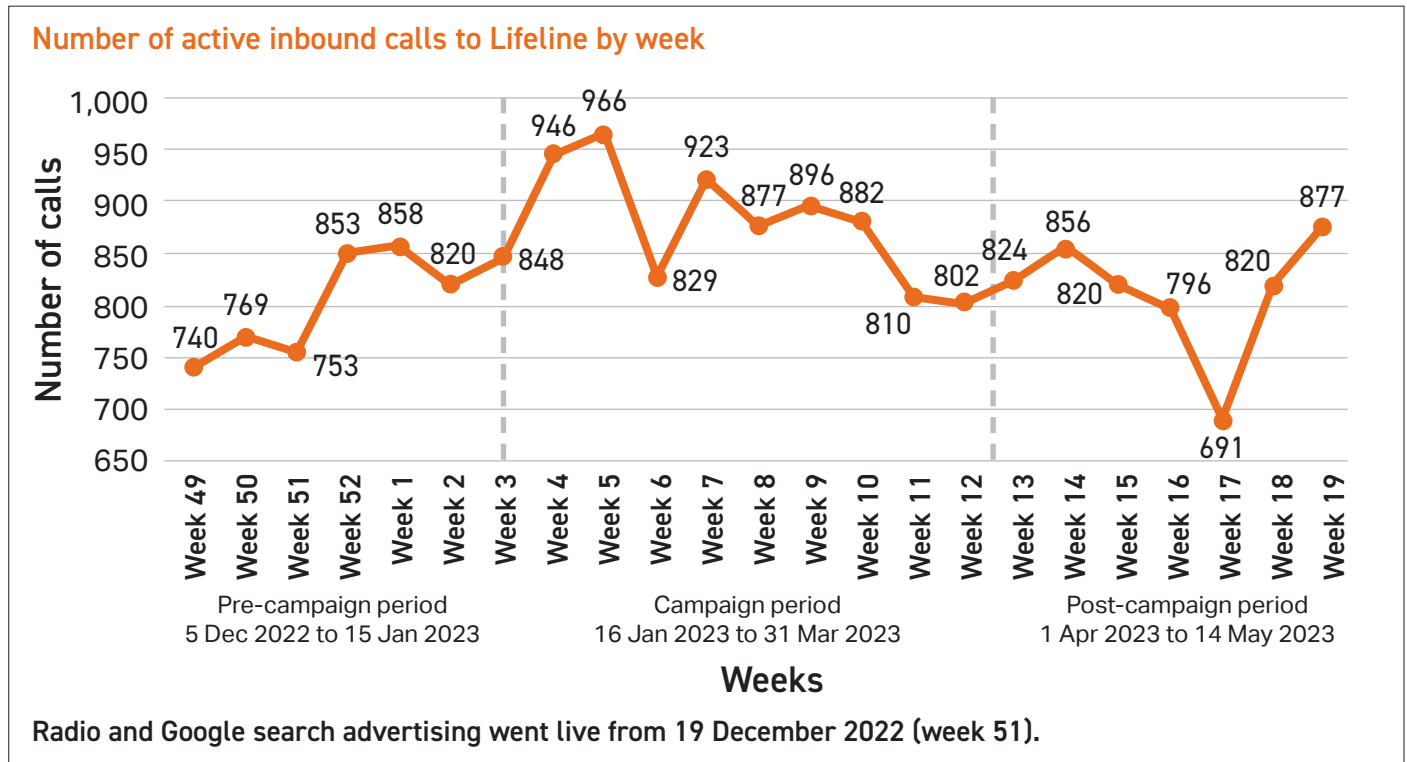
**I'm not feeling ok**  
Talking really helps

**Lifeline 0808 808 8000**  
Textphone 18001 0808 808 8000

HSC Public Health Agency DoH

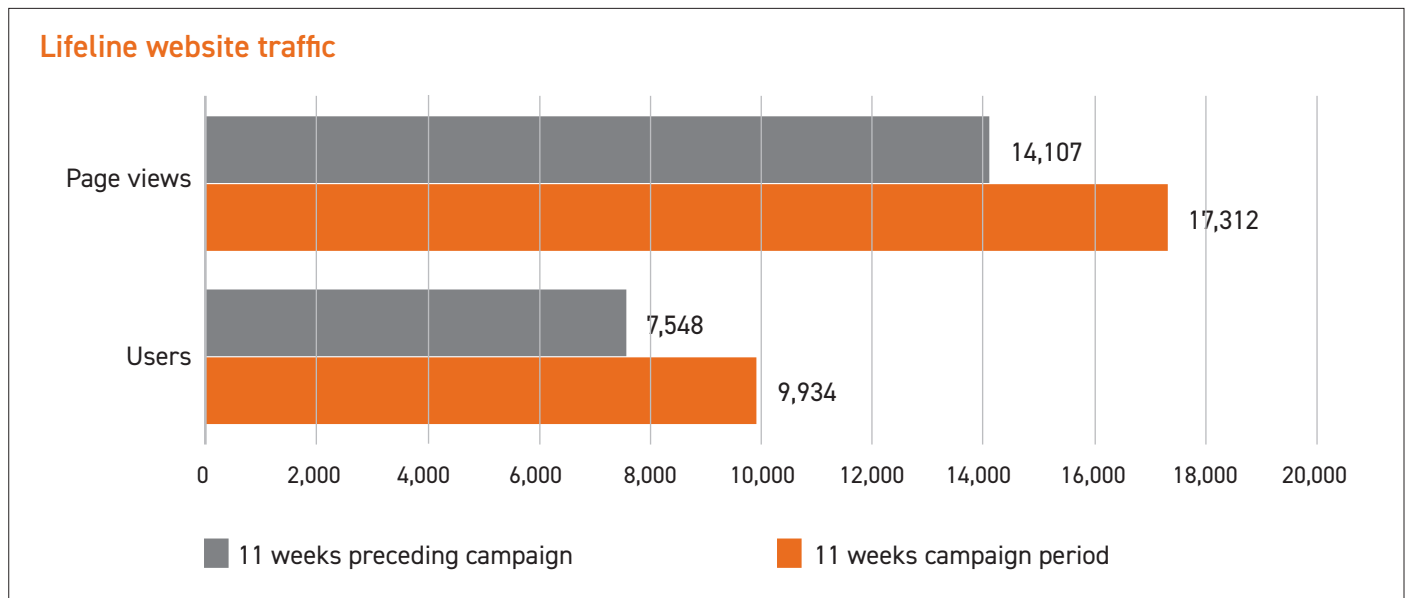
## Calls to Lifeline

Calls to Lifeline increased during the campaign period – 16 January to 31 March 2023.



## Online engagement

Traffic to the Lifeline website indicates the campaign generated interest in finding out more about the service.



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