Health Communication Strategies for Newborn Screening

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Provider Outreach

• Exhibits at multiple medical conferences
• Customized trainings for providers statewide
• GovDelivery for informal communication
• Tools created with provider input to ease sharing of information – Plain Language
Tools for Providers

• Provider Manual
• Website
• Webinars
• Provider folder
• Pocket card
Prenatal Outreach

- Birth and Baby Fairs
- Childbirth Educators
- Prenatal handout
- Billboards
Diverse Photography Project

- Prenatal and new baby photos for our translated materials
  - Somali
  - Hmong
  - Hispanic/Latino
  - Karen
  - Russian
Billboards

• Goal: increase general awareness
• Message: Talk with your provider about NBS
• Metro and outstate
• Over 77 million impressions over approximately 36 week time frame
• Cost: approximately $200k
  – About $0.003 per impression
Feedback on Billboard Campaign

• Some providers were not thrilled
  – Generating conversations
  – Some felt like the message had a negative twist

• Simple, but still too much text

• Waiting for prenatal survey results
Social Media Efforts

• Twitter Team –
  – People from each unit of the NBS program
  – Meet monthly- search for unique days, family stories, and post worthy info
  – Post to MDH Facebook and Twitter an average of 6-8 times per month
  – Approved through me, Program Manager, and MDH Communications
Our Newborn Screening program believes that newborn screening matters because it gives all babies a healthy start. Share why you think #NBSmatters on Twitter or Facebook and mention @BabysFirstTest and @minhealth.

“Thank you so much for saving my baby’s life.” – Samarra, Xavier’s mom

Xavier was born with a heart defect that was found through newborn screening. By performing a simple pulse oximetry test on Xavier shortly after birth, his care team was able to diagnose and treat his heart defect right away. Today Xavier is a very energetic, outgoing, and daring 2-year-old boy.
Social Media Feedback

• Rest of MDH has noticed
• Communications is replicating our process within the Department
• Limited reach but slowly expanding
Minnesota State Fair

- ~1.8 million people attend the 12 day event
- ‘Health Fair 11 building’
  - ~85,000 people visit the building
  - Mostly elderly or young families seeking ‘screening’
- Had just over 30,000 interactions
‘I’m a FAN of Newborn Screening’

• 7 fans with stories/conditions
• Restroom advertising
• Banners with NBS info
• Buttons for providers
• Photo Booth
• Social Media component
• Media coverage
Real stories. Real difference.
Helping babies start life healthy.

Lucia’s story

“With Lucia, everything went right. I had a perfect pregnancy, an easy labor, and a beautiful birth. Then we received a phone call that would change our lives. Her newborn screen detected a problem. Lucia was diagnosed with a condition called congenital hypothyroidism. We learned that this condition can cause mental retardation, deafness, and other developmental problems. But we also learned that most babies can develop normally if the condition is caught and treated early.

When she was born, we had no reason to believe anything was wrong. If we had waited until she showed symptoms, her prognosis would probably not be so good. Now she is under the care of a doctor, taking daily medicine, and is thrilled. She is strong, alert, and incredibly happy.

My husband and I could not be more thankful for newborn screening. Without a doubt, it saved our daughter’s life.”

-Liz, Lucia’s mom

Newborn Screening:
- Blood spot screening
- Hearing screening
- Heart screening

Pregnant?
Ask your doctor about newborn screening!

For more information, visit: www.health.state.mn.us/newbornscreening

Got a smart phone or another device?
Scan here to learn more about newborn screening!
My son's story could have had a very different ending. I initially declined newborn screening. We don't have any genetic diseases in our family history, so I thought that meant that he would be fine. Thankfully, a nurse stopped by my maternity room three different times and lovingly requested that I reconsider. After learning more, I finally agreed to have him screened.

Four days later, in a routine visit to the doctor, I learned that Everett's newborn screening results were positive for a rare disorder called galactosemia. For people with galactosemia, milk is toxic and can cause permanent damage to the brain and other organs.

Everett was admitted to the hospital, but thankfully, his disorder was caught in time. By putting him on a special diet, he has been able to develop into a healthy, vibrant, 7-year-old boy. Without a doubt, newborn screening saved my son's life.

-Korissa, Everett's mom
Fair Overview

• $46,000 not including 420 staff hours (open 12 hrs a day)
• People LOVED and were drawn to the fans
• Surprising number of people commented that they saw and read the restroom ads
• Photo booth was tricky
• Most comments
  – Doesn’t this just happen? Why are you here?
  – What changed that you guys are doing all this advertising???
  – I don’t have newborns – not for me
  – Is this about prenatal screening? Pro-Life? Pro-Choice? Democrat? Republican?
Where are we going from here?

- Will assess results of second prenatal survey
- Digital advertising
- ‘MinneStories’
  - Audio recording project collecting family stories
- Video/online education
  - Parent audience (prenatal and L&D)
  - Provider videos (general, how to’s, etc...)
What have we learned about NBS communication overall?

• It will never be enough
• We will never make everyone happy
• There is no 1 easy or right way

BUT

We WILL have fun trying!
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