

Evaluation of #ReadyforPregnancy Campaign in the South East

Are you
ready for
pregnancy?



#ReadyforPregnancy

Background

“ *Local Maternity Systems have a critical role in leading a collaborative approach between primary care, maternity services, public health and local authorities in the provision for preconception care not only for first pregnancies but also for subsequent pregnancies* ”

**Dr Matthew Jolly,
National Clinical Director for
Maternity and Women’s Health, NHSE¹**

There is a clear link between a mother’s health before pregnancy, the risks she is exposed to or exposes herself to, and her baby’s health. We know that healthy women who have fewer complications in pregnancy are more likely to have healthy babies who grow into healthy children.

However, 45% of pregnancies are unplanned or associated with feelings of ambivalence and even amongst those who do plan their pregnancy, a relatively small proportion of women currently modify behaviours pre-pregnancy.

Women don’t necessarily consult a health professional before becoming pregnant and are therefore not necessarily aware of how to reduce any risks. The #ReadyforPregnancy campaign aimed to address this by raising awareness of all the positive things women can do prior to conception to help improve fertility, pregnancy health and their baby’s future health.

Campaign Aims

To provide the public with information to encourage them to consider the importance of reducing largest modifiable risk factors for poor birth outcomes

- By raising awareness of preconception health
- By explaining the reasons why it’s important for women to be fit and healthy before conception
- By providing women and couples with information and signposting to further support, across a variety of preconception health topics, to help promote a healthy pregnancy.



¹ Making the Case for Preconception Care Planning and preparation for pregnancy to improve maternal and child health outcomes (PHE2018)

Target Audience

- Women of childbearing age and their partners living in the South East

Campaign Delivery

The campaign was led and co-ordinated by NHS South East Clinical Network and NHS Creative and coordinated via a regional steering group with membership and representation from the six Local Maternity and Neonatal Systems (LMNSs) in the South East, Local Authority Public Health, PHE South East and Maternity Voices Partnerships (MVPs).

The campaign was delivered over 12 months from July 2020 to June 2021. Each month explored a different topic, including preconception health and the modifiable risk factors for poor pregnancy outcomes.

Topics included.

1. June 20 - Physical activity
2. July 20 – Healthy eating and healthy weight
3. August 20 - Breastfeeding
4. September 20 – Perinatal mental health
5. October 20 - Smoking
6. November 20 - Immunisations
7. December 20 - Fertility
8. January 21 – Alcohol
9. February 21 – Folic acid and Vitamin D
10. March 21 – Learning more (about pregnancy and parenting)
11. April 21 – Long Term Conditions
12. May 21 – Contraception

The messaging and graphics for each month's campaign were drafted centrally and then shared with the steering group for comment and agreement. Once finalised they were circulated by identified campaign champions and social media or communication leads across the six Local Maternity and Neonatal Systems. There was no central paid-for advertising.

Campaign Creatives

The campaign creatives included,

- A campaign landing page for each Local Maternity System to link users to local services and national resources
- Over 50 bespoke illustrations
- A #ReadyforPregnancy booklet translated into 10 different languages
- An easy read booklet and British Sign Language film
- Five parent advocate films

Each LMNS committed £2,000 in funding to support the creation and production of the campaign creatives.

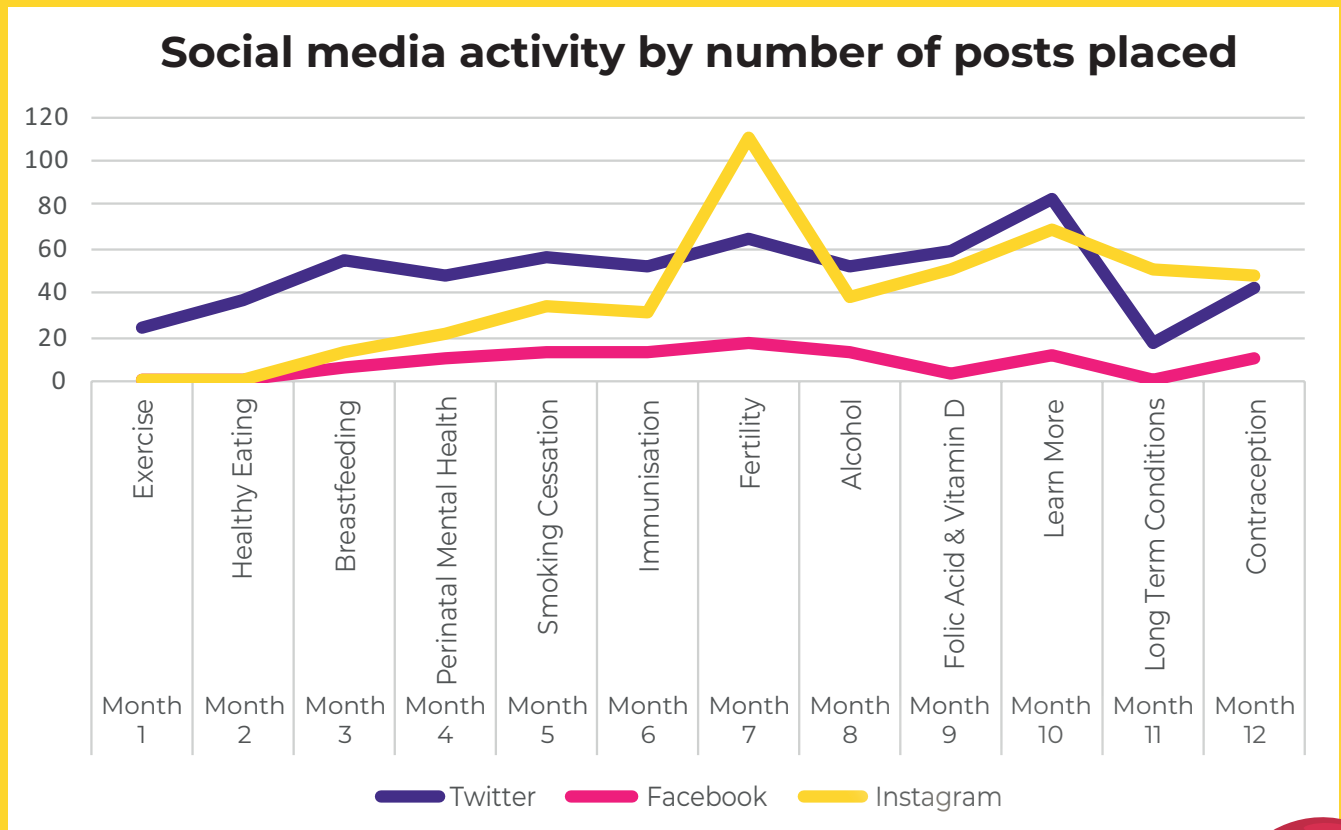
Results/Outcomes

1. Quantitative Measures

The original aim was to collect 'hits' from the six LMNS landing pages in addition to public engagement with the messaging across Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. However, it proved challenging for the NHS Creative team to get the data from each of the landing pages. In part, this may have been because the campaign was run during COVID and communication leads were very stretched, also some systems IT infrastructure not set up to enable the collection of this data.

The campaign was posted to social media by over 70 different organisations from across the South East. In total, there were 1167 posts across Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, with Twitter being the most utilised platform. The posts were shared or retweeted 578 times.

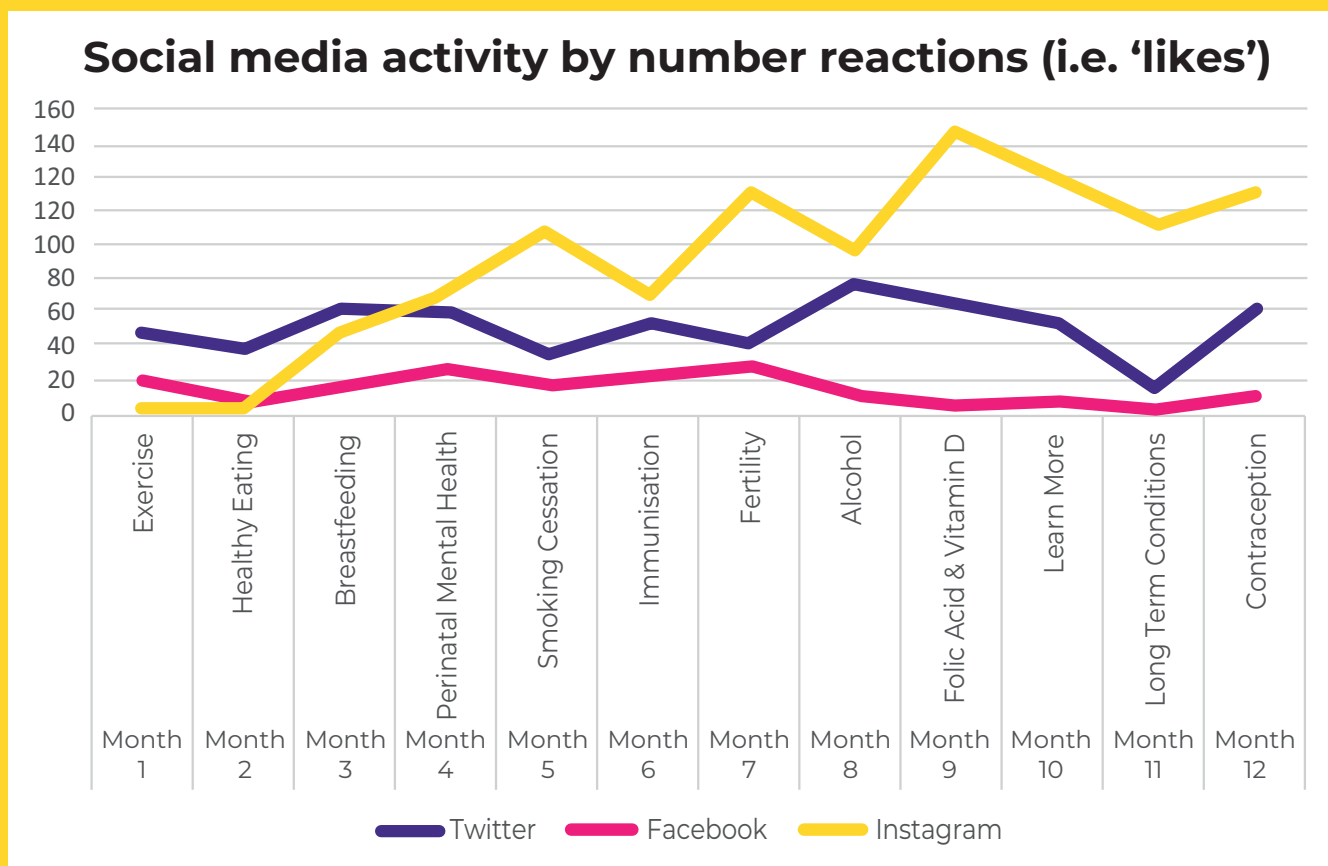
Figure 1: 12 months of #ReadyforPregnancy social media posts by social media platform



The campaign gained momentum as it went on and more organisations got involved. Social media activity by number of reactions and 'likes' ranged between 69 and 240 per month, with the highest number for month 9 – Folic Acid & Vitamin D. Instagram posts received the most social media reactions.



Figure 2: 12 months of #ReadyforPregnancy social media activity and ‘likes’ shown by social media platform



Where data was available for individual landing pages, it demonstrated the campaigns social media posts were responsible for driving many these visits. For example, in Surrey Heartlands there were 2,800 visits to the campaign landing page between June 2020 and May 2021, 1,575 visits (56%) as a direct result of the #ReadyforPregnancy campaign activity.

In February 2021, there was a big spike in activity with 502 views of the page, of which 325 (64%) were because of ReadyforPregnancy social media activity.

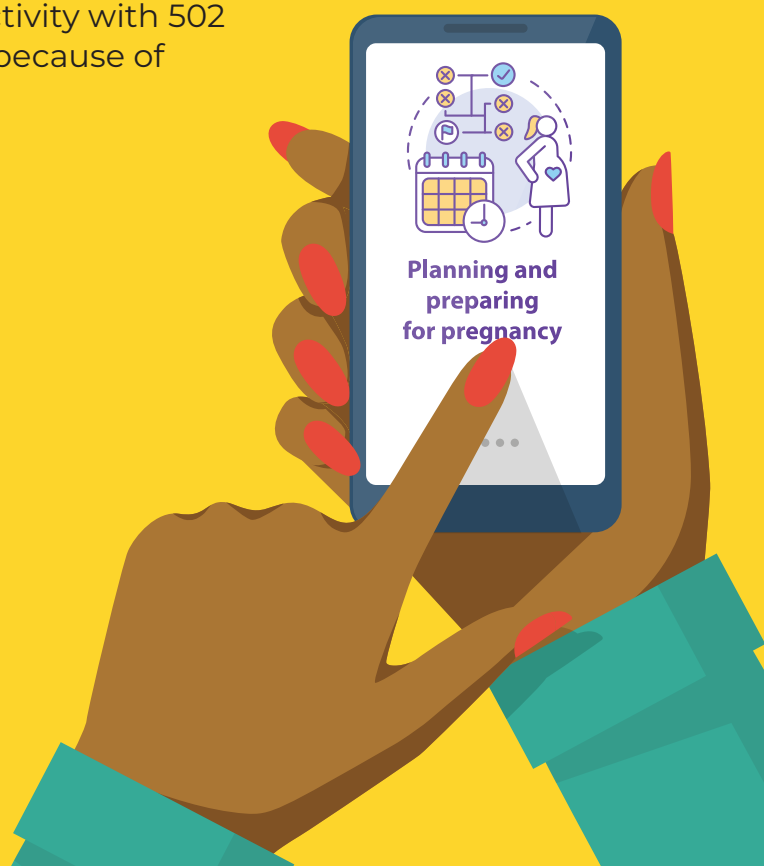
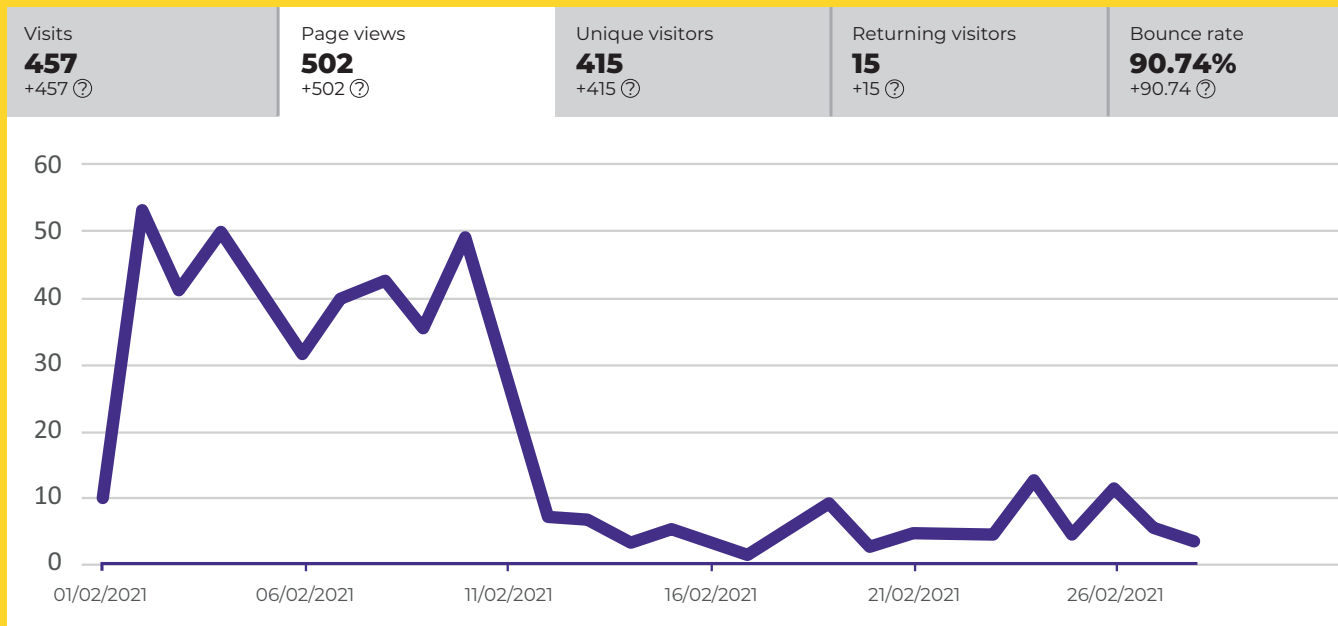


Figure 3: Visits to Surrey Heartlands campaign landing page February 2021



2. Professional and MVP Campaign Feedback

In addition to the campaign analytics, a range of professionals and MVPs across the South East were asked to respond to a series of questions about the campaign processes, outputs, and overall impact.

- 86% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the campaign covered all the key preconception health topic areas
- 76% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the campaign messages were appropriate and engaging
- 76% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the campaign images were appropriate and engaging
- 62% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the system-based campaign landing page was helpful in signposting to local services
- 67% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the campaign was well led and coordinated
- 71% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the campaign was cascaded and shared locally
- 62% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed the information in other languages and British Sign Language made the campaign more accessible
- 71% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed the short films from people sharing their own personal experiences were important.

Professionals were also asked if targeted messaging to specific population groups using other media channels would have more impact and 67% agreed or strongly agreed it would.

When asked “Where did you see the #ReadyforPregnancy campaign?” the most common social media platform was Facebook, followed by Twitter and Instagram. Professional colleagues had also seen the campaign within a range of internal communications channels.

Cascading the campaign in different ways to reach the target audience

- Ensure a range of different channels are used and planned for, with a communications lead to support this
- Engage with a wider range of range of stakeholders who can support us reach a wider audience. Perhaps look at touch points where patients go on their maternity journey and have posters there or have leaflets to go with their info or incorporate the info on any apps utilised by the trust.
- Involving the Local Authority to promote the campaign through the appropriate channels of communication by involving partners, stakeholders & commissioned services
- Provide easy to upload/share social media “feeds” that communications teams could run with on each local media channel
- Messaging in other languages could be helpful
- Liaising with any equity workstream leads within an LMNS so these messages can get out to harder to reach groups via their work (and via MVPs).

Content of the campaign

- Education on understanding where your fertile window falls and support for those who are trying to conceive for longer than average. Focusing on health rather than BMI
- Support for IVF conception as well as ‘natural’ conception
- More emphasis that men need to be healthy too, so the onus isn’t all on the woman. Targeting men more so they understand the pressures on women while preparing to conceive
- Ensure information for partners is provided so they feel included in the pregnancy and parenthood journey - not just a focus on the mother
- Include importance of oral health including free access to dental care during pregnancy and up to the time child is 1 year of age. There is an opportunity to increase understanding of oral health issues
- Parents to receive information on the importance of connecting with their baby (relationship building starting in pregnancy)
- Parents to receive information on responding to their baby’s needs
- Parents to receive information on the importance of skin to skin contact
- Parents to receive information to help them to make informed decisions about feeding choices for their baby
- Pelvic health
- Add links to local support groups / projects, otherwise it can feel very generic.

Other suggestions

Midwives and health visitors to undertake the ‘Being Active in Pregnancy and After’ module. This offers education about supporting women to be active during and after pregnancy.

Summary of findings

The #ReadyforPregnancy campaign is a good example of maximising limited financial resources by working in partnership across a wide range of professional and voluntary organisations.

The campaign was posted to social media by over 70 different organisations from across the South East. In total, there were 1167 posts across Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, with Twitter being the most utilised platform. The posts were shared or retweeted 578 times and liked 1604 times. Where data was available for individual LMNS landing pages, it demonstrated that the campaigns social media posts were responsible for driving visits to these.

The majority (76%-86%) of feedback from professionals and MVPs indicated that the campaign covered the key preconception health topic areas and that the images and messages were appropriate and engaging. The majority (67%-71%) of feedback also indicated that the campaign was well led and coordinated; and was also cascaded and shared locally.

Slightly fewer (62%) respondents agreed the system-based campaign landing pages were helpful in signposting to local services, or that the information in other languages made the campaign more accessible.

Many of the recommendations for the future broadly related to communicating & cascading the campaign in a variety of ways, in addition to social media, to reach a wider audience or more targeted population groups. However, there were examples shared where the campaign had been seen or heard via other media sources including local newsprint and magazines, GP newsletters, a local radio show and other partners website pages.

Other suggestions relating to the campaign content reflected a greater focus on men and partners, in addition to suggestions for other topics that could have been included such as fertility, IVF and oral health.

There were also some helpful examples of content for the #ReadyforParenthood campaign which will run from November 2021 – October 2022.





**Report prepared by Kate King Hicks, Health and Wellbeing Programme Lead
on behalf of the regional #ReadyforPregnancy Social Media Campaign group**