

time to change

let's end mental health discrimination

Time to Change Programme:
October 2011 to March 2015

Summary of impact and learning

Digital

Online platform for the campaign
to end mental health stigma and
discrimination



Funded by



Department
of Health



LOTTERY FUNDED



Run by



What we did

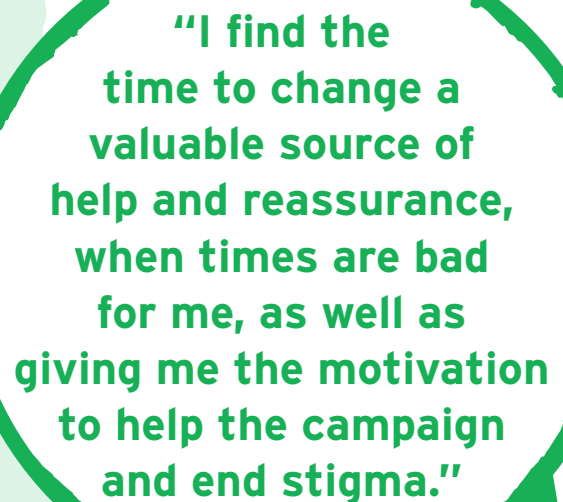
Our digital work involved using the Time to Change website and social media sites, including Facebook and Twitter, to support our campaign to end mental health stigma and discrimination.

This included using digital platforms to support national bursts of social marketing activity and Time to Talk Day. For example, we promoted materials that individuals and organisations could use to run their own anti-stigma campaigns.

We also posted regularly to our social media sites, and commissioned individuals to write blogs or make videos about their experiences of mental health stigma and discrimination.

What we achieved (2011 to 2015)

- 3,549,517 unique visits to the Time to Change website
- 111,156 new supporters on Facebook
- 105,977 new Twitter followers
- 3,671,604 views of Time to Change online films
- 833 blogs published on the Time to Change website



"I find the time to change a valuable source of help and reassurance, when times are bad for me, as well as giving me the motivation to help the campaign and end stigma."

Time to Change
Facebook follower

Our learning

1. Social media enabled us to involve, support and measure impact

We used our social media sites to inspire people to get involved with campaign bursts, through regular posts and by sharing online films. We promoted campaign materials and encouraged individuals and groups to register their own events and activities, for example for Time to Talk Day.

We used social media activity to measure the success of campaign bursts, for example website visitors, new social media supporters, and comments, shares and likes for social media posts. However, we also used our sites to keep supporters 'warm' in between large bursts of activity. Personal stories (blogs) about mental health stigma and discrimination, and regularly posting core messages, such as 'no one should feel ashamed to talk about mental health', were good ways to remind people about the campaign.

3. Online storytelling brought the campaign to life

Online storytelling was a powerful way to show the impact of mental health stigma and discrimination. It brought our campaign to life, and was often empowering for the person telling their story. Most people wrote one-off blogs, which meant we could publish a diverse range of voices and stories.

We commissioned blogs that directly related to campaign messages, for example showing 'small things' that have helped people with experience of mental health problems. We published blogs by individuals involved in anti-stigma campaigning, as well as stories about people's experiences of discrimination in a variety of settings. We also commissioned films of people telling their stories (vlogs) and have worked with well-known YouTube vloggers (eg [doddleodde](#)) to promote our messages to their audiences.

2. Our role was often to amplify the activities of others

Our social media sites enabled people with experience of mental health problems to speak out and challenge unfair behaviour, as well as support one another. 'Time to Change' was seen as a supportive banner under which to campaign.

An example was the response on social media in 2013 to the 'mental patient' Halloween costumes sold by Asda and Tesco. Many people posted photographs of themselves using the hashtags #mentalpatient and #timetochange. As a national campaign, we used social media, and our website and other media, to amplify how people were challenging mental health discrimination for themselves. We also provided some online guidance and support to enable people to take action.

4. A variety of social media sites helped us reach new audiences

Facebook continued to be our biggest social media platform, with around 3,000 new supporters per month. However, Twitter became increasingly important for the campaign, with nearly 106,000 new followers between 2011 and 2015.

It was important to keep up-to-date with social media developments and create a presence on a variety of sites, given their different audiences. We found out that the majority of our Facebook supporters have experience of mental health problems, whereas Twitter enabled us to reach professionals, organisations and individual campaigners. Our YouTube audience was 75% male. Our other sites were much smaller but had the potential to reach specific audiences, for example our Instagram users were mostly females under 30, and our Tumblr users were mainly between 16 and 24.

Our learning

5. We need to review how we measure the impact of digital work

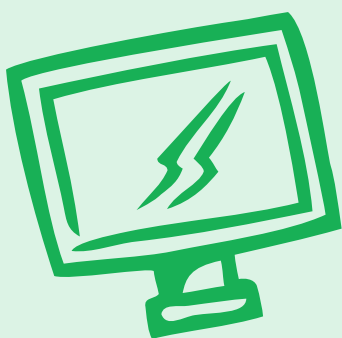
We know that people have engaged with our sites. There were over 3.5 million visitors to the website and over 217,000 new social media supporters between 2011 and 2015. We have used monitoring tools to understand how our sites are used, for example length of time spent on a web page or number of times a post is shared.

However, there is scope to gain a better understanding of the impact of our digital work on audiences. This includes how it impacts on public attitudes and behaviour, as well as on levels of empowerment of those with experience of mental health problems.

"After being touched by people's stories on the Time to Change website, I wrote a blog of my own, and also 'came out' to family and friends. It was one of the hardest things I've ever done - but the amazing love and support I received was overwhelming. It made me wish I'd done it years before."

Time to Change social marketing volunteer

Find out more



Time to Change website:
www.time-to-change.org.uk

Personal stories about mental health (Time to Change blogs):
www.time-to-change.org.uk/personal-stories

Time to Change Facebook page:
www.facebook.com/timetochange

Time to Change Twitter feed:
twitter.com/timetochange

Time to Change YouTube channel:
www.youtube.com/timetochangecampaign

Time to Change Instagram:
[instagram.com/timetochangecampaign](https://www.instagram.com/timetochangecampaign)

Time to Change Tumblr site:
timetochangecampaign.tumblr.com