

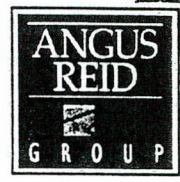
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HEALTH CARE AD TESTING - CANADIAN INFORMATION OFFICE

~~Draft Report~~
Final



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BACKGROUND

On September 11th, 2000, the Government of Canada and all provinces and territories agreed to a plan that will increase federal funding available for health care by \$21.2 billion over the next 5 years. Following this announcement, the Canadian Information Office contracted the Angus Reid Group to conduct focus groups with Canadians in order to test television and print ad concepts that are designed to raise awareness of this new government initiative.

METHODOLOGY

The Angus Reid Group conducted six focus groups in three cities in Ontario, Alberta, and Atlantic Canada. The groups were segmented by age (30 to 45 years old and 46 to 65 years old), and included only those Canadians who are moderately or very concerned about the future of health care in Canada as well as a 50/50 gender split. For each group the Angus Reid Group recruited 10 participants, allowing for two “no-shows” without compromising the size of the groups.

The focus groups were each approximately two hours in length. The groups focussed on evaluating five television ad concepts and one print ad. The focus groups were conducted in the following cities:

- ◆ Two groups in Calgary, AB;
- ◆ Two groups in Mississauga, ON;
- ◆ Two groups in Saint John, NB.

This report contains the results from these six groups. The table below provides a summary of the location, date and composition of these groups.

Mississauga, September 14 th	6pm: 30-45 years of age
Mississauga, September 14 th	8pm: 46-65 years of age
Calgary, September 14 th	6pm: 30-45 years of age
Calgary, September 14 th	8pm: 46-65 years of age
Saint John, September 14 th	6pm: 30-45 years of age
Saint John, September 14 th	8pm: 46-65 year of age

DETAILED FINDINGS

Top-of-Mind Issues

When asked if they were aware of the recent discussions between Federal, Territory and Provincial governments regarding the healthcare system in Canada and their positions on the issue, most participants showed a moderate level of awareness about these issues. They have heard that funding will be given to the provinces, that the government is concerned about keeping the healthcare system intact and that there have been some ads on television and in newspapers about the healthcare agreement.

There is much cynicism throughout the groups about this new initiative. While participants realise that there is a great need for funding, many believe that the government is simply giving back the money it took from the provinces. There is also a perception among some participants that the new agreement is “too good to be real”.

Television Ad Testing

The following sections will provide a description of each television ad, followed by the findings from the focus groups.

Patience

The ad entitled “Patience” opens with a line up of three health professionals (a nurse, a technician and a doctor). Then the camera moves toward the front of the line, revealing more health care professionals. Finally, the camera shows the patient at the front of the line being examined by a doctor. All these health professionals are lined up to take care of this patient. The main message of the ad is that the additional funding of \$21.2 billion from the Government of Canada’s Canadian Health Action Plan will pay for new technology and improved treatments. This will ensure that Canadians and their families will have access to all the medical services they will need. The ad acknowledges that Canadians have been patient long enough and that it’s time for the new Health Action Plan for access to better health care today and in the future. The ad closes with the Canada wordmark, the 1-800 O

CANADA toll-free number and the government of Canada website address
www.canada.gc.ca.

Many participants liked this ad, particularly participants 30 to 45 year old in Mississauga, because they felt:

- ◆ It was visually good;
- ◆ Many people were involved;
- ◆ They liked “you’ve been patient long enough”, it played on emotions;
- ◆ It was people-oriented;
- ◆ The government admitted it made a mistake and is now going to correct it;
- ◆ It showed something of a plan;
- ◆ The line-up was like an army of expertise;
- ◆ The government was on the right track.

However, there were some negative comments about this ad. For instance:

- ◆ Some participants said it was not immediately clear that the medical personnel was lining up for the patient;
- ◆ It seemed unrealistic that there would be that many professionals for one patient: “*I’ll believe it when I see it.*”
- ◆ There wasn’t enough action;
- ◆ The line-up looked like a mug-shot or the doctors lining up to get money;
- ◆ It wasn’t clear which province was getting what.

Prescription

The “Prescription” ad opens with a bird’s eye view of a pill bottle with the maple leaf on the top of the cap. Then there is a close-up of the label with information in point-form about the new plan: “New prescription for Canadian Health”, “Health Action Plan: 21.1 billion dollars funding from the government of Canada”, “Better access to doctors and nurses”, “Improving medical treatments and technology” and “Reducing waiting times”. The camera pulls back to reveal a wide shot of the bottle and loonies inside of it. Then, the viewer can see the whole bottle filled with loonies and the label with the points and the Canada wordmark. The ad closes with the Canada wordmark, the 1-800 O CANADA toll-free number and the government of Canada website address www.canada.gc.ca. While the bottle is being showed, there is a running commentary saying that there is a new prescription for Canadian health care that is called the Health Action Plan which provides \$21.1 billion in added funding from the government of Canada. This money will pay for better access to doctors and nurses, for improving medical treatments and technology and will reduce waiting times to help Canadians when they need it. It is a plan to deliver the best results of all, for better health care today and in the future.

This ad was relatively well received by participants, particularly Calgary and Mississauga participants between 46 and 65 years of age. The participants who liked this ad said that:

- ◆ The pill bottle and the label were attention grabbers;
- ◆ It was a factual ad;
- ◆ They liked the sentence “a new prescription”;
- ◆ The message was that the government was giving money;
- ◆ The information was good, direct and to-the-point;
- ◆ Some liked the idea that a prescription makes you better;
- ◆ Gave the impression of new opportunities, new direction;
- ◆ Moving money into health care was a good thing;
- ◆ Looked like the government had a game plan.

However, there were some aspects of the ad that were criticised:

- ◆ Some participants would have preferred a talking person (human aspect), more credible;
- ◆ There weren't any action scenes;
- ◆ Some felt the ad was sugar-coated (scepticism);
- ◆ The topic was health, not drugs;
- ◆ Reading the label took attention away from the commentary;
- ◆ Too wordy, needed more pictures.
- ◆ Loonies in the pill bottle put too much emphasis on the money.

Work it out

This ad starts with the display of a knot. The camera backs up to reveal that the knot is in a stethoscope. Then, there are two hands working on the knot to untie it. The hands move away and reveal the stethoscope in full frame, without a knot. The ad closes with the Canada wordmark, the 1-800 O CANADA toll-free number, the government of Canada website address www.canada.gc.ca and the tagline "We worked it out. Together." The running commentary during this ad says that the Government of Canada's goal has always been to untangle issues facing health care and that it would work with the provinces and territories to find solutions. The voice-over says that the new Health Action Plan is an agreement that provides \$21.1 billion in added funding from the Government of Canada and this is a new level of funding that will provide better health care today and in the future for all Canadians. The final comment is that they saw the challenge and worked it out together.

This ad was not particularly popular among groups that were tested. Participants had many negative comments about this ad. They felt:

- ◆ It was too graphic, the knot looked like intestines;
- ◆ It wasn't convincing;
- ◆ It conveyed the message that the Government "messed up" and was now fixing the problem;

- ◆ Some were sceptical and thought that the problem was not even close to being fixed, that the government didn't know what it was doing;
- ◆ Some didn't like that there were no people in this ad;
- ◆ Some felt the ad didn't explain the plan;
- ◆ Some wondered who the "we" was, i.e. "we worked it out", should specify;
- ◆ The ad was too simplistic;
- ◆ There was not enough information about who would benefit from the initiative, where the money was going and who was involved;
- ◆ Participants had known for years that there was a problem, they didn't want to be reminded of it.

However, many participants liked the tagline "We worked it out. Together". They also liked the commentary. Participants liked that there was some kind of partnership to work out the problems. A few participants appreciated that the stethoscope was a symbol of the health care system and that the knot represented the complications of the health care system.

A new prescription for health care

The ad opens up with a view of a doctor writing on a clipboard. Then there is a close up behind his shoulder of his hand holding a pen over the clipboard. The camera pans down across the doctor's arm to show him checking off points like he would during an annual check-up (he is talking to a patient that we can't see). Then the camera moves back to reveal the whole clipboard and the doctor writing. The ad closes with the Canada wordmark, the 1-800 O CANADA toll-free number and the government of Canada website address www.canada.gc.ca. The running commentary says that Canadians want a healthy health care system with better access to doctors and nurses, improved medical treatments and more. Here we see the doctor checking off "Better access to doctors and nurses", "Improved medical treatments and Technology" and "Reduced emergency room waiting times". The commentator explains that this is the reason why the Government of Canada, the provinces and the territories have agreed to the Health Action Plan that increases health care funding by \$21.2 billion over 5 years. Then, we see "Increased health care funding by \$21.2 billion" being checked off the list. The commentator says that it's a plan to deliver more health care

services today and ensure that the system stays healthy in the future. Then, we hear the doctor again saying: "This is looking good. Keep up the good work."

Although there were some positive comments about this ad, participants weren't overly enthusiastic about it. Having said this, some of the positive comments should be highlighted:

- ◆ Some said they liked the checklist;
- ◆ They appreciated that the government was doing this;
- ◆ It gave more useful information;
- ◆ It was a sign of relief, new funding available;
- ◆ The wording was good;
- ◆ It was honest and believable;
- ◆ Gave confidence;
- ◆ It was a good context/setting but there was too much reading;

The negative comments about this ad are the following:

- ◆ Lacked graphic appeal/boring;
- ◆ It wasn't an attention-grabber;
- ◆ Didn't say how the money would be spent;
- ◆ It was too general;
- ◆ Some felt that the ad didn't gain their trust;
- ◆ The ad sounded like a lecture;
- ◆ The Government was just giving back what it took from Canadians.

Best in the world

This ad opens with a view from the inside of an ambulance. The doors are pushed open to the outside where we see medical professionals waiting. There is then a close-up of doctors and nurses exchanging medical terms in an urgent voice. The ambulance attendants are running

alongside the gurney giving the patient's medical status. The nurse is telling them that an operation room is ready and the surgeons are scrubbed and also ready to go. The camera focuses on the hospital's emergency reception with other nurses running to assist. The doctors and nurses are at the computer terminal to get information on the patient (name, age, blood type, and medical history). The camera then shows the gurney being pushed down the hall by attendants and into the emergency room. The voice over says that Canadians expect a health care system that runs like a fine-tuned machine. We hear the doctor ordering a MRI, EEG and EKG. The team enters the emergency room with the patient on the gurney. There is a flurry of activity in the emergency room where the medical equipment is being readied for tests. The nurse tells the patient that his wife is on her way. The voice-over says that the Government of Canada has worked out an agreement that increases health care funding by \$21.2 billion dollars to ensure that the health care system remains the best in the world. The last image of the patient shows a nurse with her hand on his shoulder talking to him with a reassuring smile and telling him that everything is going to be okay. The patient appears calm. The ad closes with the Canada wordmark, the 1-800 O CANADA toll-free number and the government of Canada website address www.canada.gc.ca.

This ad was popular among participants, particularly Saint John participants in both groups, as well as Calgary participants between 30 and 45 years of age because:

- ◆ It was an attention-grabber, visually active/appealing;
- ◆ Reminded many of the television show "ER";
- ◆ Reassuring "everything is going to be okay";
- ◆ It showed the system as being efficient;
- ◆ Patient seemed to be in good hands;
- ◆ The staff was working together and the equipment was available;
- ◆ The government was, itself, responding to the emergency (health care crisis);
- ◆ Some liked the hospital setting for the ad;
- ◆ The ad had a more personal feel to it;

- ◆ The ad represented the way participants would like to be treated but they don't feel that it is currently so;
- ◆ The message was clear and easy to understand.

Participants even suggested that the wife should be brought into the picture or even have a child as the patient.

Some participants did show some cynicism about this ad:

- ◆ Some said they didn't believe that the system currently runs like a "fine-tuned machine";
- ◆ The ad didn't show what the money was being used for, or any other details of the plan;
- ◆ Some didn't like the use of expression "the best in the world", they felt it wasn't true;
- ◆ The ad was too Hollywood-ish/soap opera/ "ER";
- ◆ The ad was too focused on the emergency room, perhaps the ad could show a recovery room or just everyday health problems;
- ◆ Some participants believed that it was unrealistic that within the next 5 years, hospital would run as smoothly as the one in the ad with ease of access to staff, equipment and tests, reduced waiting times and on-line access to medical information;
- ◆ The scenario was a fantasy, there wouldn't be all that staff for one person in real life.

Some participants suggested that this ad should keep an emergency room setting but with real situations and people (not actors) and a voice-over offering the necessary information.

Print Ad

One print ad was presented to all participants in the six groups. The ad shows a clipboard which is partially lying on a stethoscope. The clipboard has a checklist of several points:

- ◆ \$21.2 billion increase in funding available for health care from the government of Canada;
- ◆ Better access to doctors and nurses;
- ◆ Improved medical treatments and technology;
- ◆ Reduced waiting time;
- ◆ A plan that ensures the healthcare system stays healthy.

The tagline “A new prescription for Canadian Health Care” features as the title of this ad. Then a text follows indicating that the government, provinces and territories agreed to have a plan ensuring the health care system stays a healthy one today and in the future. It also states that the system will provide better access to doctors and nurses, and improved medical treatments and technology. The plan will increase federal funding available for health care by \$21.1 billion over the next 5 years. It also states that every government agrees to deliver better health care services today and ensures that the system will remain healthy in the future. The bottom of the ad reveals the 1 800 O CANADA toll free number with the numerical equivalent underneath (1 800 622-6232), the website address www.canada.gc.ca, and the Canada wordmark.

Most participants approved of this print ad. They felt that it offered a lot of information. They suggested that this ad should also be placed in drugstores and hospitals. The following are comments that were made by the participants:

- ◆ They liked the checklist;
- ◆ They liked the tagline “Better health care today and tomorrow”;
- ◆ There was some good information;
- ◆ The message was straight to the point;

- ◆ The ad gave the plan, the amount to be spent and the timeframe for the initiative;
- ◆ The format and wording was easy to read.

However some participants shared negative comments regarding this ad:

- ◆ The text at the bottom was repetitious and wordy;
- ◆ The section about the health care system that "*stays healthy*" was puzzling to some participants who said the health care system was not presently healthy;
- ◆ Some participants wanted the ad to contain a breakdown of who will get what, particularly a provincial breakdown;
- ◆ Some wanted to know what is in it for them personally;
- ◆ There were also some participants who thought the ad was self-serving ;
- ◆ Some thought it was boring;
- ◆ There should be colour;
- ◆ Some thought that there was no new information in this ad and that it was a waste of money.

Regardless of some negative comments, most participants said they would read the ad if they came across it.

FINAL COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS

Participants had several final comments about this advertising campaign and the Government in general:

- ◆ Participants agreed that if the Government of Canada is going to go forth with a media campaign, it should “say what it means, and mean what it says”. Canadians want the Government to follow through with its promises;
- ◆ Participants also wanted more information about provincial breakdown of the new funding, i.e. they wanted to know how it will affect them;
- ◆ Participants wanted to see some sort of accountability in these ads, i.e. what the money is doing;
- ◆ Overall, this campaign didn’t change the way participants viewed the Government of Canada;
- ◆ Like in every communications material testing for the Government, there were a few participants who believed this campaign was a waste of money;
- ◆ Other sceptics felt that it would take more than just an influx of money for them to see improvements to the health care system;
- ◆ Some participants said that they would visit the website or call the toll-free number if they wanted more information;
- ◆ Most participants wanted an ad which was both visually appealing and had enough information about the new plan;

APPENDIX I – MODERATOR'S GUIDE

<p>Healthcare Focus Groups MODERATOR'S GUIDE September 14, 2000</p>
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INTRODUCTION (5 MINUTES)

Explain to participants:

- Angus Reid Group
- the length of session (2 hours)
- object is to discuss ideas for a communications campaign related to health
- the Government of Canada is the sponsor of this group and the potential ad/communications campaigns we will be evaluating
- taping of the discussion
- one-way mirror and colleagues viewing in back room
- results are confidential and reported in aggregate/individuals are not identified/participation is voluntary/
- the role of moderator is to ask questions, timekeeper, objective/no vested interest
- role of participants: not expected to be experts, no need to reach consensus, speak openly and frankly about opinions, no right/wrong answers

Get participants to introduce themselves and their occupation/hobbies etc...

WARM UP (10 MINUTES)

1ab Have you heard, seen or read anything about any discussion between the Federal and Provincial governments re: the healthcare system in Canada? What have you heard? *1a* *1b*

2 Have you seen any messages/advertising re: the Government of Canada's position or your provinces position on healthcare?

STORY BOARD EVALUATIONS (20 MINUTES PER CONCEPT (5 concepts))

5 concepts
Each concept to be presented separately (rotate order between groups).

Explain that these are storyboards/rough concepts that will be used to develop the finished ad.

Describe the five concepts (read the script provided by Ginko) separately for:

- 3a → n
4a → n
5a → n
6a → n
7a → n
1. **Check List/Clip Board**
 2. **Patience/Line of Physicians/Medical Professionals**
 3. **Work It Out/Knotted Stethoscope**
 4. **Pill Bottle/Prescription**
 5. **Emergency Room/Demonstrated Impacts**

For each concept allow participants a few minutes to look at the board (up close if necessary) and to think about their application to television advertising.

Then have participants answer the questionnaire (attached) and discuss their responses.

General Probes:

- a → c What are your views overall? Likes? Dislikes?
- d What is the main message?
- e Is the message easy to understand?
- f → h Is the message relevant to you? Why? Why not?
- i Who is the ad aimed at?
- j Do you approve of the message?
- k Does this ad change anything in the way you think about the future of the healthcare system?
- l What do you think of the visuals?
- m What about the words/script?
- n For each of the concepts: Do you have any suggestions to improve this ad?

AFTER SHOWING AND DISCUSSING ALL FIVE CONCEPTS (20 minutes)

Probe:

- 8ab Which ad did you personally like best? Why?
- 9ab Which ad did you personally like least? Why?
- 10a → c Would you call the 1-800#? Which ad would encourage you most to call? What do you think you would receive if you called the 1-800#?
- 11a → c Would you look at the web site? Which ad would encourage you most to look at the website? What do you think you would see on the web site?
- 12 Could we use a combination of elements from more than one concept to make a better/best ad?

13 For 2 best concepts explore the potential for sustainability, the development of a long-term campaign. (i.e. "If this were a series of ads what do you think the next one should be?")

PRINT ADS EVALUATION (10 minutes)

Show participants the planned print ads that will run on Friday the 15th.

- 14a What are your views overall? Likes? Dislikes? 14b
- 15 What is the main message?
- 16 Is the message easy to understand?
- 17abc Is the message relevant to you? Why? Why not? 17a 17b 17c
- 18 Who is the ad aimed at?
- 19 Do you approve of the message?

CONCLUSION (5 MINUTES)

20 Do you have any final comments regarding what we've discussed this evening?

21 If you could give the Government of Canada one piece of advice on this advertising initiative (creative, techniques, messages, etc...) what would it be?