

Introduction

Health research is not useful until it has been communicated to those who use health information for making decisions such as the general public, patients and their caregivers, health care professionals and policy makers. The mass media is a strategic means for communicating health information. Although internet is a popular source of health information, traditional media such as newspapers, radio and television are important and often preferred by people in rural communities and low-and-middle-income countries where many people do not have access to internet or are not computer literate (Nilsson, 2014; Okpoko 2019; Umeano-Enemuoh 2015).

In 2012, Cochrane Nigeria began a collaboration with media organizations (media roundtable discussions) to improve coverage of health information from Cochrane systematic reviews and other important national health issues. This poster presents the outcomes from this collaboration.

Objectives

The aim of this paper is to examine the outcome of Cochrane Nigeria's media outreach sessions between April 2012 and August 2020 in terms of:

- coverage in local and national newspapers
- radio and television broadcast resulting from the media outreach activities

Methodology

Selection of Information for Dissemination

Each Media roundtable was preceded by the careful selection of topical issues for discussion and dissemination.

The topics were selected using the following criteria:

- Topical or critically vital health issue in Nigeria
- Availability of systematic review with clear evidence on effects (benefit or harm) of relevant health care intervention(s)

Selection of Participants

- For each media roundtable, 15-20 participants were invited.
- Included a representative sample of newspaper reporters, radio reporters and television reporters.
- State Chapter of the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) played a key role in mobilizing their members for the outreach.
- Invitations were sent to these participants by email and text messages; with reminders sent by their Union and colleagues.

Media Roundtable sessions

- Each media roundtable event consisted of two presentations on the topic area.
- The first presentation provided a background on the health topic under discussion.
- The second presentation highlighted evidence from the selected Cochrane review(s).
- The evidence was presented in plain (easy to understand) language to the media practitioners.
- This was followed by interactive discussions to field questions and receive feedback from the participants on the topic presented.
- On the average, each programme lasted for 90-120 minutes.



Results

DATE HELD	FOCUS OF ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	MEDIA HOUSES /ORG REPRESENTED	OUTCOMES
3rd April 2012	Guidelines for management of severe malaria	18	2 local Newspapers, 11 national, 2 Television stations, 1 radio station	8 newspaper articles 1 radio broadcast 1 television broadcast
24 th Sept 2012	Malaria in Pregnancy	20	1 local Newspaper, 9 National Newspapers, 3 Television stations, 1 Radio station, 1 International magazine	2 Newspaper articles
23 rd July 2013	Impact of Salt Reduction on Hypertension & Deworming drugs for soil-transmitted Intestinal worms in children	13	9 National Newspapers, 1 Television station and 1 radio station	2 Newspaper articles
21 October 2014	Pneumonia and vaccines for Pneumonia	15	2 local Newspapers, 12 National Newspapers, 1 radio station and 1 Television station.	6 newspaper articles and 1 radio programme
12 January 2016	Chronic kidney disease	20	2 local Newspapers, 12 National Newspapers, 2 Television stations and 1 radio station	8 newspaper articles and 1 Television broadcast and 3 radio broadcasts (on 2 radio stations)
28 June 2016	Viral Haemorrhagic Fevers	27	1 local Newspaper, 16 national Newspapers, 2 Television stations, 4 radio stations	3 Newspaper articles
14 March 2017	Physical fitness training and Self Management Programmes for stroke patients	23	1 local Newspaper, 14 national Newspapers, 1 Television stations, 5 radio stations	2 Newspaper articles
17 October 2017	Hand washing for preventing Diarrhoea	20	1 local Newspaper, 11 national Newspapers, 2 Television stations, 5 radio stations	3 newspaper articles and 1 radio broadcast
30 October 2018	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder	12	1 local Newspaper, 7 national Newspapers, 1 Television stations, 2 radio stations	4 newspaper articles
7 August 2020	Face Masks, social distancing and hand washing for the prevention of COVID-19	13	1 local Newspaper, 11 national Newspapers, 1 radio station	2 Newspapers articles

Conclusion

Media roundtable discussions and partnership with media practitioners can

- Promote evidence-based health care reporting among Nigerian media practitioners.
- Enlighten reporters about evidence-based health care and serve as a source of evidence-based information for their health/news stories.
- Disseminate up-to-date, relevant evidence-based health care information from systematic reviews to the Nigerian public through the media.
- Encourage media practitioners to publish news articles on the effects of health care interventions.



References

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- Okpoko, C. C. (2019). Communicating breast cancer in rural Igbo community of southeast Nigeria. *Media Watch*, 10(1), 133-144