



Be Clear on Cancer: First national oesophago–gastric cancer campaign, 2015

Caveats: This summary presents the results of the metric on proton pump inhibitor prescriptions. This is one of a series of metric summaries that will be produced for this campaign, each focusing on a different metric. A comprehensive interpretation about the campaign is not included here as this requires a full evaluation of all the metrics. The full evaluation will be part of the final campaign report which will be published in due course. These metrics should not be considered in isolation.

Proton pump inhibitor prescriptions

The campaign

The first national oesophago-gastric (OG) cancer campaign ran from 26 January 2015 to 22 February 2015, in England.

The campaign's key message was:

'Having heartburn, most days, for 3 weeks or more could be a sign of cancer – tell your doctor.'

Metric: Number of proton pump inhibitor prescriptions

This metric considers whether the first national oesophago–gastric cancer campaign had an impact on the number of prescribed proton pump inhibitors.

Data on prescriptions for people of all ages was extracted from OpenPrescribing.net, EBM DataLab, University of Oxford, 2017 for the period January 2013 to December 2015. This metric compares the difference in the monthly number of proton pump inhibitors prescribed between the analysis period of February to April 2015 and the comparison period of February to April 2013.

The campaign was considered to have a possible impact if the difference between the two periods was significant¹.

Key message

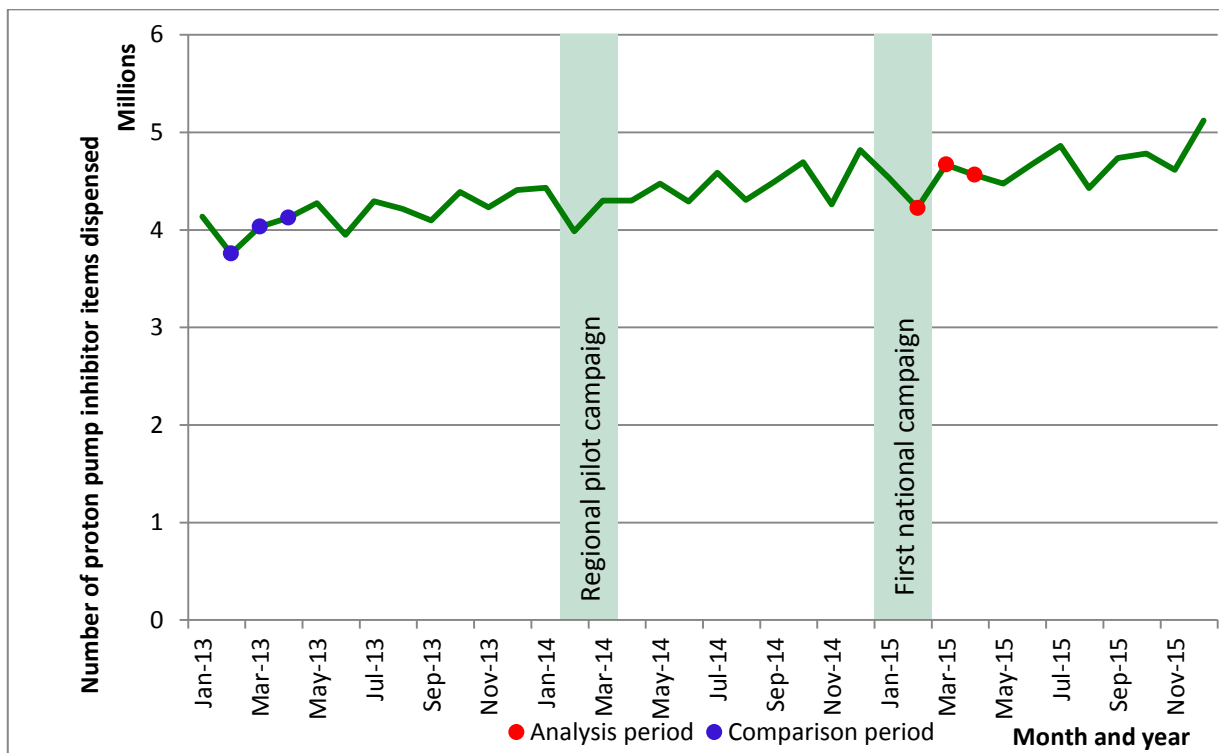
The increase in the number of proton pump inhibitor prescriptions during the first oesophago-gastric national campaign reflects the overall increasing trend in the three year period.

¹ The likelihood ratio test was used to evaluate significance

Results

There was an increasing trend in the number of proton pump inhibitor prescriptions between 2013 and 2015 in England (Figure 1). Comparing the months February to April 2013 with February to April 2015, there was a 13% statistically significant increase in the number of prescriptions, from 11,913,439 to 13,457,603 respectively.

Figure 1: Number of proton pump inhibitors prescribed, England, January 2013 to December 2015



Source: openprescribing.net, December 2017

Conclusions

There was a statistically significant increase in the number of proton pump inhibitor prescriptions between the analysis and comparison periods which reflects the increasing trend over the three years.

Other metrics being evaluated include GP attendance, urgent GP referrals, conversion and detection rate, emergency presentations and one-year survival. A full evaluation report will be published on the campaign metrics when all of the results are available.

Considerations

In general, cancer incidence is increasing which may have an impact on trends over time for this and other metrics, and so the results must be considered with these underlying trends in mind.

Where the results are statistically significant there is some evidence for an impact of the campaign, although underlying trends and other external factors (eg other awareness activities, changing referral guidance) may also affect the results.

Campaigns are more likely to have a greater impact on metrics relating to patient behaviour (eg symptom awareness and GP attendance with relevant symptoms) and use of the healthcare system (eg urgent GP referrals for suspected cancer), compared to disease metrics (eg incidence, stage at diagnosis, and survival).

Find out more about Be Clear on Cancer at:

www.ncin.org.uk/be_clear_on_cancer

www.nhs.uk/be-clear-on-cancer