



This is Parkinson's Disease

BACKGROUND

Statistics published from the Ministry of Health in 2014/2015, show there are over 13,300 British Columbians living with Parkinson's disease (PD), a number that is expected to increase 65% by 2031. With every year that passes, the need to draw attention to the incidence and prevalence of PD grows.

One of the first illustrations of Parkinson's disease was published in 1886, and since then, it has been widely understood as a disease that affects only the senior population, primarily characterized by shaking (tremor). This understanding is inaccurate, as PD does not discriminate based on age, gender, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation. Failure to further educate the public, and change common misperceptions of the disease, may lead to ongoing stigmatization. Furthermore, as the incidence of PD increases, recognition of initial symptoms becomes integral to ensuring a timely diagnosis allowing for one to begin an effective treatment plan.

OBJECTIVES

As a part of Parkinson's Awareness Month, Parkinson Society British Columbia (PSBC) developed a campaign that aimed to reshape the public's understanding of the disease by sharing real-life stories and photos of British Columbians living with PD. The intent was to demonstrate the diversity of the Parkinson's community in the belief that it strengthens the network of support.

In the past, advertisements during the Society's annual awareness campaign primarily targeted the senior population. As the word "awareness" implies a message being disseminated to a "new" audience, the need to reach a younger demographic in addition to that traditionally identified was necessary.

METHODS

In 2015, PSBC learned about Anders M. Leines' exhibit in Norway, titled "This is Parkinson's". A video journalist by profession, Mr. Leines aimed to capture the lives of those who had been diagnosed with Young Onset Parkinson's Disease (YOPD) in a series of photographs. The intent of the exhibit was to increase awareness of a younger generation of individuals being diagnosed with Parkinson's. The powerful imagery successfully captured the attention of an international audience, including PSBC's.

With the objective of promoting the diversity of the disease in mind, PSBC drew inspiration from Mr. Leines' exhibit to develop a provincial campaign set to launch during Parkinson's Awareness Month (April). Rather than focus solely on those with YOPD, the campaign included imagery of a wide range of persons with Parkinson's.

The Society worked with local photographer Noah Asanias and graphic designer Brigitte Stermann to compose a series of posters and advertisements. The photographs were taken in black and white to assist in standing out from other ads. Furthermore, models were asked to bring "props" that visually demonstrated their varying personalities and interests. The finished poster & ad design utilized simple statements to illustrate that one can live well with Parkinson's.

To distribute the posters, PSBC partnered with the following organizations, groups and stakeholders: British Columbia Association of Kinesiologists (BCAK), Physiotherapy Association of British Columbia (PABC), facilitators from our network of over 50 support groups across the province, health authorities, clinics and hospitals and community centres.

The Society also ran a series of ads on public transit in the communities of Vancouver, Kelowna, Victoria and Prince George for the duration of April. By employing the use of transit ads, the Society was able to reach an older demographic that was less likely to be commuting by car or truck, young professionals and school age children.

This is Parkinson's Disease
It doesn't discriminate.

Hope Diamond, 51.
Drag queen.
Corporate management.
Comedian.
Diagnosed with Parkinson's in 2013.

We're in this together

Parkinson Society British Columbia

www.parkinson.bc.ca 1.800.668.3330

This is Parkinson's Disease
It doesn't discriminate.

Dan, 83.
Cross-Canada cyclist.
World traveler.
Diagnosed with Parkinson's in 2007.

We're in this together

Parkinson Society British Columbia

www.parkinson.bc.ca 1.800.668.3330

This is Parkinson's Disease
It doesn't discriminate.

Jim, 42.
Husband.
Motorcycle enthusiast & dog lover.
Diagnosed with Parkinson's at the age of 33.

We're in this together

Parkinson Society British Columbia

www.parkinson.bc.ca 1.800.668.3330

This is Parkinson's Disease
It doesn't discriminate.

Val, 60.
Skier, cyclist and outdoor enthusiast.
Diagnosed with Parkinson's in 2010.

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This is Parkinson's Disease
It doesn't discriminate.

Viola, 66.
Art enthusiast. Mother.
Information technology professional.
Diagnosed with Parkinson's in 1993.

We're in this together

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