Mental Health

ANTI-STIGMA

Community Mobilization Plan

DENVER
PUBLIC HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT
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INTRODUCTION
Mental health conditions and the stigma attached to them are nothing new to the Denver area. In 2019, 16% of Denver residents reported the need for mental health care but did not receive it. Of those who did not receive care, more than a third said they were uncomfortable talking about personal issues as a reason.¹

Knowing that stigma is a major barrier for City & County of Denver residents to seek and access care for mental health conditions, the Denver Department of Health & Environment (DDPHE) has investigated the causes of stigma and how stigma reduction could open pathways to services for residents. In order to narrow the campaign focus and target audiences, key partners and stakeholders including Analytics & Insights Matter (AIM), Arrow Performance Group (APG), Circuit Media (CM), and select Denver Department of Public Health and Environment (DDPHE) staff, developed campaign selection methodologies and recommendations for the campaign’s target audiences.

METHODS
21 interviews, 10 focus groups, and 957 surveys of Denver locals (aged 15 years and older) with diverse backgrounds were used to “measure baselines of knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs that result in stigma associated with specific behavioral health conditions in Denver.”

Qualitative data specific to the following communities were collected:
• Asian Pacific
• Black / African American
• Denver youth
• Friends and family of those with lived experience
• Hispanic / Latino
• Homeless / unhoused
• Indigenous / Native American
• LGBTQ+
• People with lived experience
• Care providers

Existing mental health stigma-reduction efforts, data, sources of stigma, access to services and treatments, and the overall approach to the campaign were all considered and discussed with respondents of the interviews, focus groups, and surveys.

A number of themes resonated during the interviews, focus groups, and surveys, but what was made clear was that people with personal with a mental health condition experienced the highest amount of stigma (as opposed to friends, family members, colleagues, etc.) and that the stigma surrounding serious mental health conditions (SMHCs) would be the easiest to reduce. SMHCs are one or more mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder(s) resulting in serious functional impairment, which substantially interferes with or limits one or more major life activities.

SMHCs include, but are not limited to:
• Major Depression
• Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
• Bipolar Disorder
• Schizophrenia and other Schizoaffective Disorders

¹ Colorado Health Institute: https://www.coloradohealthinstitute.org/research/colorado-health-access-survey-2019
Phase 1 participants indicated a message with an empathetic and educational focus from “people who look like me” would be the most impactful. Additionally, a message that could be spread through multiple avenues was preferred and would be most effective according to participants. Messages were requested to be culturally relevant, positive, hopeful, and community-led.

Participants also said certain community organizations (seen in this Mobilization Plan under Community Engagement) and media vehicles (seen in this Mobilization Plan as Social Media and Traditional Media, respectively) would be most effective in sharing the campaign’s messaging and reducing the stigma around mental health.²

The AIM/APG project team recommended focusing campaign messaging on the stigmatization of serious mental health conditions and changing the behavior and/or attitudes of the six sources of stigma identified through quantitative data collection and analysis – friends, strangers, family, law enforcement, and social and traditional media sources.³

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² Analytics & Insights Matter and Arrow Performance Group, Anti-Stigma Campaign Phase 1 Findings Presentation, April 2022
³ Analytics & Insights Matter and Arrow Performance Group, Anti-Stigma Campaign Phase 1 Findings Final Report, May 2022
HOW TO USE THIS MOBILIZATION PLAN
This mobilization plan is organized into strategies and resources to reach and mobilize community members. Each section provides suggested steps and actions to take as well as toolkits, guides, materials, and other resources that may be helpful in your efforts to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health in the City & County of Denver.

The primary sections included in this mobilization plan are:
• Community Engagement
• Social Media
• Traditional Media
• References

MATERIALS KEY
Located within this mobilization plan are a variety of toolkits and resource items to help spread the campaign’s messaging. Each resource will help you to lower the stigmas surrounding mental health, increase your support for those you care about, and show your communities that What You Say Matters.

Throughout the guide, you will find suggestions on how and when you can use the various resources, materials, and toolkits. The Materials Key below lists each resource item included in this mobilization plan and its location in the appendix. Whenever a resource item is referenced in this plan, it will also be linked to its corresponding listing in the appendix.

Campaign Resource Page
www.DenverGov.org/WhatYouSayMatters
This website is the primary resource page for the mental health stigma reduction campaign. This website contains digital versions of resources, fact sheets, phone numbers, and more for easy sharing and reference.

Anti-Stigma Brochure
This brochure gives community members an overview of mental health stigma and how it affects their friends, family, and neighbors within the City & County of Denver.

Language Guide (Appendix Item A)
This language guide is a helpful start to changing the way we all speak about mental health conditions. The phrases included show a common negative phrase as well as a more supportive alternative.

Mental Health Stigma Fact Sheet (Appendix Item B)
This one-page fact sheet gives providers and authority figures an overview of mental health stigma and how it affects their friends, family, and neighbors within the City & County of Denver.

Community Toolkit (Pages 9-10)
The community toolkit is your guide to engaging with key partners and behavioral health campaigns in the City & County of Denver.

Social Media Toolkit (Appendix Item C)
The social media toolkit includes key social media assets such as images, and sample post copy.

Sample Press Release (Appendix Item D)
A sample press release is included for release to media partners not already included in the campaign. The purpose of the press release is to gain media involvement as they were listed as one of the six primary sources of mental health stigma in the City & County of Denver.
Video Ads (Page 12)
Each of the video advertisements for the campaign are linked here for reference and easy sharing. Each advertisement is only 15 seconds in length and is a great way to start the conversation about fighting mental health stigma by choosing our words more carefully.

Static / Print Ads (Page 12)
A variety of static image advertisements were created for the campaign. These images may be shared on social media, traditional media outlets, or they could even be printed to hang in common areas to highlight the importance of language in fighting mental health stigma.

RISKS & OBSTACLES TO NOTE
Political Period
There will be a period of political ad saturation from the middle of September to early November which may inundate the target audience with political ads. This period may also overwhelm City & County of Denver residents with negative information where mental health support needs may be increased.

Campaign Message Interpretation
As with any public awareness campaign targeted at correcting the negative behaviors, there is always a chance that the messaging, campaign, and the individuals it seeks to help, could be interpreted as “too sensitive.” While message testing indicated that the audience should be accepting of the campaign and its messaging, there are always outliers within each community who may oppose this initiative. It is important to note that this is an important initiative for most individuals living in the City & County of Denver, so a unified front should be presented.

DIGITAL RESOURCES
Campaign Resource Page
The words we use in everyday conversation may hurt people experiencing mental health conditions. This is stigma in action. Stigmatizing words that minimize what someone is feeling or words that make light of someone’s experience can be a big barrier for the person to seek the help they might need. What you say, matters. Reducing stigma around mental health conditions in our communities starts with the words we use. Increasing awareness around stigma can reduce hurtful language and lower barriers to accessing mental health services.

What you say matters. Learn the right thing to say at www.DenverGov.org/WhatYouSayMatters

Language Guide (Appendix Item A)
What you say matters. Your words may hurt people experiencing mental health conditions. Instead of spreading stigma, show your support, love, kindness, and empathy by choosing your words more carefully.

Mental Health Stigma Fact Sheet (Appendix Item B)
Stigma can impact employment opportunities and social dynamics and prevent people with mental health conditions from receiving equitable treatment.

Thinking about the impact your words can have can go far in ensuring that stigma isn’t perpetuated. Try offering words of support, sympathy, and encouragement.

Spread the word with this fact sheet and help us fight stigma in Colorado. Learn more and find additional resources at www.DenverGov.org/WhatYouSayMatters
TARGET AUDIENCE

Circuit Media personified the six primary sources of stigma identified in the Phase 1 research of the campaign (family, friends, strangers, law enforcement personnel, traditional media, and social media). The results also indicated that a focus on internalized stigma both from providers in the field as well as those that are experiencing the serious mental health conditions would be beneficial. These personified sources were further investigated for their motivations, aspirations, and media consumption.

Key Drivers of Stigma: Personal Experiences

![Diagram of Key Drivers of Stigma]

Note: LV-PLS SEM predictive model, based on N = 412 respondent surveys, all standardized beta weight paths significant p < .05.

Q9: “Most days, how stigmatized do you feel about your [mental health / SUD condition]?”

To access the long description of the above chart, click here.
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

PARTNERSHIPS

The importance of grassroots efforts when dealing with a person-centered campaign cannot be understated. Partnering and engaging with partners that believe in the mission of the anti-stigma campaign ensures that it reaches the people the campaign is meant to benefit. Through some of those partnerships, there has been valuable advice shared on best practices for campaign mobilization, as well as a generous sharing of resources and data.

Inviting community-based organizations to participate in sharing the “What You Say Matters” digital toolkit to their respective communities will allow important stigma-reduction information to be delivered from a trusted, organic source. These community partnerships will be an invaluable asset to the campaign as a simple and sustainable way to continue to push the campaign forward.

Through this mobilization plan & the community toolkit, community-based organizations who are interested can serve as allies and influencers for the anti-stigma campaign. The goal is for the intended audiences to hear the messaging through organizations they already connect with and trust.

The community toolkit includes, but is not limited to:
- A partner welcome letter that includes details of the campaign and Phase 1 Findings report or PowerPoint
- A suite of graphics, banner ads, and videos for the organization’s respective social media accounts and web pages
- A language guide for quick references on stigmatizing language
- A fact sheet that includes details for providers and other authorities
- A brochure for community members

Each digital asset from the toolkit directs the audience back to the “What You Say Matters” resource page for additional learning materials. The resource page traffic will be one of the measurements of success for campaign analytics.

The goal for these partnerships is that each respective organization will help to carry the campaign messaging throughout their niche communities and influence their community members to take action.

LOCAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CAMPAIGNS

The health campaigns listed below already work to challenge the perception of various mental health stigmas. To avoid developing repetitive messaging, the resources from the campaigns listed below were reviewed and opportunities for coordinated messaging that filled a gap were noted.

Participating in the Metro Denver Behavioral Health Workgroup provided further insight into the messaging that is already circling the local Denver community. Furthering the partnership with these campaigns by sending outreach packages could introduce anti-stigma campaign messaging to a wider audience.

Let’s Talk Colorado

The Let’s Talk Colorado media campaign strives to initiate an inclusive conversation around mental health. When everyone takes responsibility for having those tougher conversations around mental health, the hope is that there is an increase in people accessing services. (www.LetsTalkCO.org)

Connecting with Let’s Talk Colorado and their ambassador program will allow the campaign’s messaging to be aligned and make sure that the campaign promotes a lot of the same resources and services community members know and trust. The Let’s Talk Colorado ambassadors are community-based organizations that have direct access to the target audience. The focus will be leveraging partnerships with those organizations that are in the City and County of Denver.
Lift the Label
Lift the Label is a public awareness campaign that strives to remove damaging labels and stigmas that prevent those with opioid addiction from seeking effective treatment. All the individuals featured in the Lift the Label campaign are Coloradans sharing their personal stories of overcoming the stigma associated with addiction, proving that there is hope for recovery. (www.LiftTheLabel.org)

See Me Colorado
See Me Colorado seeks to end the stigma for Coloradans living with a behavioral health condition or substance use disorder. The campaign asks people to sign a pledge addressing the stigma associated with mental health and substance use, which often centers around people’s concerns that others might find out they are struggling. (SeeMeColorado.com)

Seeing someone for more than their mental health condition is important and knowing how to speak intentionally will allow the campaign to take the conversation further without offending or triggering those in the target audience.
Hello,

We are inviting well-connected partners to be allies of Denver Department of Public Health and Environment’s “What You Say Matters” campaign by spreading the word to their respective communities that language matters when speaking about mental health. Through community toolkits, we hope to make it easy for partners to get involved. Attached is a mock-up of a sample ad that will be included in the toolkit.

If granted permission, Circuit Media is requesting the inclusion of ________ as a resource on the campaign landing page for residents of the City and County of Denver. We would also like to include any community events that are happening in the remainder of the year in our campaign mobilization plan, so please feel free to share those dates with us as well.

We hope that ____________ will consider being a partner that believes and spreads the idea that the way we speak has the power to support or damage the narrative around serious mental health conditions.

If you’d like more information about the campaign, please reach out and we can schedule a meeting. Thank you for your time and consideration!

Best,

[EMAIL SIGNATURE]
SOCIAL MEDIA

OPTIMIZATION TIPS

To get the most engagement out of our campaign, it is important to monitor key metrics or “impressions” regularly so that we can make the necessary changes that ensure we are reaching the intended audience in an efficient manner.

This involves but isn’t limited to:

• Narrowing our location as specifically to the city of Denver as possible (Location targeting abilities vary from platform to platform)
• Identifying which demographic each platform is more engaging with and playing to the platform’s strengths
• Determining which times of the week and day the ads perform best and developing the ad schedule accordingly
• Identifying the goal when beginning the campaign so the ads have a clear call to action

Please note: Most of these social media accounts will require a page or a channel to be linked to an ad account. This process will make uploading and boosting advertisements simple and seamless. Due to the Denver Department of Public Health and Environment’s limited social media presence, Circuit Media is requesting the use of the City of Denver’s social media channels.

SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

Please follow this link for the full Social Media Toolkit, including and suggested social media post copy to use for your posts on Facebook, Instagram, and more.
CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

Anti-Stigma Brochure
Language Guide
Mental Health Stigma Fact Sheet
Social Media Toolkit
Press Release
Video Ads

TELEVISION ADS
Thank you to our television media partners for spreading the message that What You Say Matters: Fox 31 Denver and 9News Denver.

PRINT & DIGITAL ADS
Thank you to our print and digital media partners for spreading the message that What You Say Matters: Westword Magazine, OUT FRONT Magazine and The Denver Post.

SERVICES

Additional Resources and Community Partners

Colorado Crisis Services
For help with any mental health, substance use or emotional concern, call Colorado Crisis Services at 844-493-TALK (8255), or text TALK to 38255. Visit coloradocrisisservices.org to learn more.

OwnPath
Find behavioral health care in Colorado that’s meaningful for you. ownpath.co

Support Team Assisted Response (STAR) Program
To request support from the STAR team, please call 9-1-1 if in Denver, or call the Denver Police Department’s non-emergency line at 720-913-2000 and an operator will dispatch the most appropriate, available response.

RELEVANT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CAMPAIGNS

Let’s Talk Colorado
Lift The Label
See Me Colorado