



Google analytics of a pilot mass and social media campaign targeting Hispanics about living kidney donation



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ABSTRACT

Background: The number of patients waiting for a kidney transplant surpasses available organs. Living donor kidney transplantation (LDKT) can expand the organ pool. However, Hispanics have lower rates of LDKT than non-Hispanic whites, largely due to a lack of awareness and knowledge about LDKT as a treatment option. To reduce this disparity about LDKT, Northwestern University faculty in partnership with the National Kidney Foundation of Illinois, developed a website culturally targeted to Hispanics about LDKT, called *Infórmate*.

Objective: This paper describes a pilot mass media campaign about LDKT which leveraged *Infórmate* to provide additional education about LDKT targeting the Hispanic public in Chicago, IL. We report the impact of the campaign on visits to *Infórmate*.

Methods: The mass media campaign was conducted in Chicago, IL from July 16, 2015 to January 17, 2016 in two waves. The campaign used traditional media, online media, and community-based venues. The campaign's bilingual (Spanish and English) messaging addressed key topics about kidney disease and LDKT, and included a call to action to visit *Infórmate* to learn more. Google Analytics was used to evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign's call to action by measuring the number of visits to *Infórmate*, visit duration, bounce rate, number of pages visited, pages most often visited, user demographics, and media channel.

Results: *Infórmate* received an average of 1466 sessions per month during the entire campaign period, with a 16.7% return rate. Sessions and visitors increased during the entire campaign period compared to the pre- and post-campaign periods. Visits lasted an average of 1:26 min, with a bounce rate of 73.9% per session. Users visited an average of 1.93 pages, and the pages with the most views were *Immigrant Issues* and *Financial Issues*. Most sessions during this period occurred in the USA (69.57%) out of 100 countries, and in the city of Chicago (13.37%). Sessions were mostly conducted by men (54.1%) and people ages 18–34 (61%). Visitors accessed *Infórmate* primarily through their desktop computer (53.1%), and by typing the website address directly into their browser (32.78%).

Conclusions: Our findings suggest that our pilot mass media campaign's call to action was effective in increasing the Hispanic public's traffic to *Infórmate*. Google Analytics data can help to strategize future campaign messages and outlets. Future research should assess whether a theoretically-driven mass media campaign increases the Hispanic public's knowledge about LDKT, and increases rates of LDKT.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Disparities in living donor kidney transplantation (LDKT)

The shortage of kidneys for transplantation and ethnic disparities in LDKT rates are major public health problems (Levey et al., 2007).

Abbreviations: CTA, Chicago Transit Authority; ESRD, end-stage renal disease; LDKT, living donor kidney transplantation; NKFI, National Kidney Foundation of Illinois; PSA, public service announcement.

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Hispanics need disproportionately more kidney transplants (U.S. Renal Data System, 2014), yet receive fewer LDKTs than non-Hispanic whites (U.S. Renal Data System, 2014). Fewer waitlisted Hispanics received a LDKT than non-Hispanic whites in 2014: 4% versus 10% (United Network for Organ Sharing, n.d.).

Factors contributing to Hispanics' low rates of transplantation and LDKT include: lack of knowledge, cultural beliefs, and negative attitudes about LDKT (Gordon et al., 2014; Alvaro et al., 2008; Siegel et al., 2008; Breitkopf, 2009; Siegel et al., 2011; Siegel et al., 2014). Relatively few culturally sensitive interventions have sought to increase Hispanics' knowledge of LDKT, such as a mass media campaign, (Alvaro et al., 2010) or Internet exposure at transplant centers (Gordon et al., 2015a).

1.2. Need for a mass and social media campaign on LDKT

Education about end-stage renal disease (ESRD) treatment options commonly occurs at the individual level through patients' nephrologists, dialysis facilities, or transplant centers. Some Hispanics maintain that learning about LDKT is unnecessary unless a family member has ESRD (Gordon et al., 2014). Consequently, the public remains largely uninformed of the opportunity for LDKT. No national-level mass or social media campaigns have been conducted to increase public knowledge about LDKT. A population level approach is necessary to inform families, friends, and anonymous others about LDKT as an option, as patients are uncomfortable asking others to donate (Gordon, 2001).

Hispanic ESRD patients seeking information about LDKT commonly encounter language barriers as educational materials are written mostly in English, and few bilingual/bicultural transplant providers are available (Gordon et al., 2010; Gordon et al., 2015b). Additionally, websites about LDKT have literacy levels too high for the general population (Moody et al., 2007; Jaffery and Becker, 2004). The few Spanish websites on transplantation present limited content on LDKT or address Hispanic cultural concerns (Moody et al., 2007).

Mass media campaigns may overcome individual-level barriers to learning about LDKT because they “intend to generate specific outcomes or effects in a relatively large number of individuals, usually within a specified period of time, and through an organized set of communication activities” (Rogers and Storey, 1987). The transplant community recently called for national public campaigns on LDKT to increase donation rates (Tan et al., 2015; Allen and Reese, 2016). Systematic reviews show that mass media campaigns are effective in promoting public health (e.g., reducing smoking) by increasing knowledge and healthy behaviors given their wide reach, appeal, and cost-effectiveness (Noar, 2006; Snyder et al., 2004; Randolph and Viswanath, 2004). Incorporating social media into campaigns can increase access to health information and facilitate health practices (Moorhead et al., 2013; Freeman et al., 2015).

1.3. Mass media campaigns on organ donation

Mass media campaigns focused predominantly on deceased donation in the U.S. and internationally have proven to be effective in increasing deceased donation rates by 4%–7% with traditional mass media (television, radio, print) (Aykas et al., 2015; Callendar and Miles, 2010; Feeley and Moon, 2009), and by a 21-fold increase in donor registrations with social media (e.g., Facebook) (Stefanone et al., 2012; Cameron et al., 2013; Brzeziński and Klikowicz, 2015). Of the three organ donation campaigns that targeted Hispanics (Alvaro et al., 2010; Frates et al., 2006; Salim et al., 2010), only one focused on LDKT in Arizona a decade ago without using social media (Alvaro et al., 2010). Social media can enhance traditional approaches in increasing health knowledge about deceased donation (Stefanone et al., 2012) and campaign effectiveness (Cameron et al., 2013). Most organ donation public awareness campaigns use radio, TV, and community health fairs (Downing and Jones, 2008), but none have leveraged a website to encourage the public to learn more.

This paper describes a pilot mass and social media campaign about LDKT targeting the Hispanic public in Chicago, IL that encouraged visits to the website, *Infórmate*, to learn more. The aim of this study was to describe the impact of the campaign on traffic to *Infórmate* using Google Analytics. Google Analytics have been used to report information about website users and utilization for health interventions (Pakkala et al., 2012; Eng and Noonan, 2014; Crutzen et al., 2013; Young et al., 2015).

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Research team

Northwestern University faculty, in partnership with the National Kidney Foundation of Illinois, developed a bilingual website on LDKT

that is culturally targeted to Hispanics called *Infórmate* (*Inform yourself about living kidney donation*), as described elsewhere (Gordon et al., 2015c). We previously evaluated *Infórmate* and found that it effectively increased Hispanic patients' and families' knowledge about LDKT above and beyond transplant center education alone (Gordon et al., 2015a). *Infórmate* was not actively promoted during the study period to avoid contamination, except for distributing the URL to intervention arm participants. After the study concluded, we promoted *Infórmate* through a pilot multi-faceted media campaign to provide in-depth education about LDKT to the Hispanic public given that traditional mass media messages are brief and cover few points.

2.2. Mass and social media campaign

We conducted a six-month pilot mass and social media campaign in Illinois in two waves: July 16, 2015–October 25, 2015 and November 30, 2015–January 17, 2016. Our expectation was that a second wave could reinforce campaign messaging. The campaign was devised as a pilot study because of the relatively small funds and time available for purchasing media and carrying out the campaign. Media campaigns are more successful in reaching the target audience if they saturate the market through high frequency and wide reach (Noar, 2006; Snyder et al., 2004; Randolph and Viswanath, 2004). To help saturate the market with our modest resources, our campaign involved diverse media including traditional print and digital media, social media, and community-based venues (Table 1).

2.2.1. Traditional mass media

Traditional media included broadcast radio public service announcements (PSAs), print (Spanish and English local newspapers), and outdoor advertisements (in Chicago Transit Authority L trains). The PSAs were produced in English and Spanish, with male and female voice actor equivalent versions that each lasted 15-, 30- or 60-seconds (Fig. 1). We heavily utilized Spanish radio because the Hispanic population commonly spends time throughout the day listening to the radio, and radio is effective in reaching the Hispanic population (Sonderup, 2004). Spanish newspapers are also an optimal medium for reaching the Hispanic population because

Table 1
Dissemination efforts.

	N	# impressions
<i>Traditional Media</i>		
Radio spots	321	Unknown
Newspaper print	9 ads in 9 papers	Circulation of 708,000 papers
Newspaper online	4 ads over 8 weeks	Estimated at 256,333
CTA train lines	87 cards for 12 weeks 125 cards for 8 weeks 260 cards for 4 weeks	Unknown
<i>Social media</i>		
Facebook	2 ads over 4 weeks	91,864
Twitter	2 ads over 1 week	31,263
YouTube	6 videos	163 views
Google AdWords	19 ads	123,774
<i>Community outreach</i>		
Dialysis centers	102	n/a
Transplant centers	Illinois: 5 Non-Illinois: 4	n/a
Nephrology offices	17	n/a
Hospitals – dialysis units	12	n/a
NKFI KidneyMobile health screenings	11	n/a
NKF independent affiliates	5 verbally agreed to disseminate electronic materials we sent, but all 11 received the materials via email	n/a
Health fairs	4	n/a
Community Organizations	35	n/a

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