

INFLUENCING HEALTH BEHAVIOURS FOR GOOD USING MASS MEDIA

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Drawing on international research from the fields of cancer prevention and health communication, this presentation will provide a research update on how the mass media can be harnessed to positively influence health behaviours at the population level. The paper will examine the media's multiple modes of influence, evidence for impact, and the conditions under which mass media campaigns might be expected to perform at their optimum. We will explore factors that can weaken campaign effects, including features of the environment in which campaigns are broadcast and attributes of campaign messages. The presentation will also consider the important but understudied role of news media in driving population-level health behaviour changes. The paper will conclude by outlining implications for policy and practice and identifying priorities for further research.