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Merritt, Rowena K. (2021) *National Social Marketing Centre, UK*. In: Fourali, Chahid and French, Jeff, eds. *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Social Marketing*. Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN 978-3-030-14449-4.

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## **NSMC BOOK CHAPTER**

**Current word count: 1928**

### **1. Name of organisation / site**

The National Social Marketing Centre (NSMC)

[www.thensmc.com](http://www.thensmc.com)

### **2. Contact point for organisation / website**

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### **3. Focus and role of the organisation**

The NSMC is the centre of excellence for social marketing and behaviour change based in the UK, with a sub-office in Slovenia. Their mission is to “*maximise the effectiveness of behaviour change programmes across the globe.*” The main way they achieve this is by working directly with a range of projects for government ministries, charities, health boards and non-government organisations, and by promoting and sharing best practice.

### **4. Structure/governance of the organisation**

In December 2006, the NSMC was officially launched by the then Minister for Public Health, Caroline Flint. The need for the NSMC came out of a review commissioned by the Department of Health England, which was conducted by the United Kingdom’s (UK) National Consumer Council. The findings from the review, published in *'It's our health'* recognised the potential of social marketing to improve behavioural interventions and recommended the setting up of a 'National Social Marketing Centre' to build national and local capacity and skills in social marketing

The NSMC remained with the National Consumer Council (which then became Consumer Focus) until it officially became a Community Interest Company (not-for-profit) in 2012.

### **5. Historical milestones of the organisations (including key past projects/campaigns/programs)**

When the NSMC was established in 2006, there was a lack of evidence on the application and effectiveness of social marketing in the UK. To create an evidence-base, between 2007 and 2010 the

NSMC carried out the National Learning Demonstration Sites programme focusing on ten pilot social marketing projects across England. The project aimed to capture and communicate learning and best practice across a range of health issues and target audiences, including breastfeeding, smoking, healthy eating and sexual health. The findings from the ten sites are available at: [www.thensmc.com/resource/learning-together-evaluation-and-outcomes](http://www.thensmc.com/resource/learning-together-evaluation-and-outcomes)

In 2008, The NSMC also created the first online collection of fully researched case studies covering both health, social and environmental issues. ShowCase as it was named, features projects that have used social marketing to achieve real changes in behaviour, written up against the Benchmark Criteria and planning process. The resource still exists and can be accessed at: [www.thensmc.com/resources/showcase/browse](http://www.thensmc.com/resources/showcase/browse). There are 70 case studies available on ShowCase.

The NSMC offers a wide range of social marketing training courses ranging from the introductory to advanced levels. From 2006 to now, the NSMC has trained over 10,000 people in social marketing.

From 2008, the NSMC started working more internationally, delivering projects for the Department for International Development (DFID; UKAID) in China and Vietnam. Since 2008, the NSMC has continued to work internationally, and in 2012, it was awarded a major contract to deliver a social marketing capacity building project in Jordan under the auspices of the United States Agency for International Development. The NSMC team has now worked in over 20 countries in Europe, East Africa, Central America and the Caribbean, North America, Southern Africa, the Middle East and south-east Asia on a range of topic areas, including domestic and gender-based violence, hand hygiene and sanitation, breastfeeding, school truancy, literacy, non-communicable diseases, and infectious diseases.

In 2011, The NSMC's value for money tools were launched. The NSMC's Value for Money tools will help you calculate the cost-effectiveness of social marketing and behaviour change programmes in five key health areas: smoking, breastfeeding, alcohol, obesity and bowel cancer. Developed in consultation with leading health economists, the tools go beyond costs to the National Health Service, to include wider impacts, for example costs to the local fire service from smoking-related fires, money saved by individuals from stopping smoking, or gains to employers from reduced employee absences.

Other highlights include:

*2015: Development of the obesity stakeholder strategy.* The NSMC worked with the Ministry of Health in the British Virgin Islands to develop an obesity stakeholder strategy titled '*Health is everybody's business*'. The strategy brought together businesses, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and government departments to raise awareness of the rising costs of obesity, its forecasted impact on the island's economy and to develop a cross stakeholder obesity strategy.

*2016-2019: Red Cross refugee anti stigma programme.* The NSMC evaluated the British Red Cross's programme titled 'Open Arms'. The programme aimed to reduce the stigma between refugees and host community groups in North-West England.

*2016-2017. Medecins Sans Frontieres- Rape Crisis Centre project.* The NSMC developed a new social marketing strategy for Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders) in Rustenburg South

Africa. The project's aim was to increase the number of women who had suffered gender-based violence accessing new medical and counselling care centres setup in towns in the mining belt of South Africa.

2016-2017. Abu Dhabi obesity strategy programme. The NSMC supported the development of a national “Healthy Living Strategy” for the Government of Abu Dhabi. The work involved implementing a major secondary and primary research programme, together with extensive stakeholder engagement with the public and private sectors in the Emirate.

2018. Development of life-style brand for St. Helena. The island of St Helena is located in the South Atlantic Ocean and has a population of 4,534. The NSMC were commissioned by the St Helena government to create a healthy community brand and campaign aimed at changing people’s eating and exercise habits and smoking. To do this, a community-based prevention marketing approach was taken. The formative research findings led to the development of the brand *Saints Together*, developed to support the *policy* and service interventions being included in the island’s Health Promotion Strategic Framework. In a 2019 survey, 72 percent of resident respondents said they were aware of the Saints Together campaign, indicating strong brand visibility and awareness among respondents. Of those who were aware, the majority (59 percent) believed that the campaign had helped to increase community awareness regarding health. Notably, community, media and policymaker discussions around aspects of the Health Promotion Strategic Framework that did not themselves directly use or reflect the brand – discussions relating to sugar taxation or tobacco legislation, for example – also referred to Saints Together, suggesting that the campaign was viewed as integral to the wider health strategy.

2018-2019: Development of anti-alcohol campaign for WHO, Ukraine. The NSMC conducted formative research and then developed a national campaign for Ukraine to reduce alcohol consumption among high-risk groups, for example, pregnant women. Research insights informed the development of messages which were pre-tested and refined during a series of co-design events, before the campaign was launched in 2019.

## **6. Current projects/campaigns/programs highlights**

A selection of current projects is detailed below, to show the breadth of the projects currently conducted by the NSMC.

2017 - ongoing: Reducing voluntourism. The NSMC is working with Better Care Network, an international network of organisations who are committed to supporting children without adequate family care, to conduct research among gap year volunteers and short-term missionaries under 25, to gain a more detailed understanding about why people choose to volunteer in an orphanage overseas and what can be done to persuade them not to. Better Care Network and its partners in the Better Volunteering Better Care initiative are working with the volunteer organisations to help them change the opportunities they offer (supply). The initial formative research conducted in the UK and US was used to development a campaign to persuade young people to choose different volunteering opportunities (demand). The campaign, run by a youth-focused marketing company, was then evaluated by the NSMC. The findings are currently being written up for publication.

2019 - ongoing: Hastings School Attendance Campaign. The NSMC was appointed to plan and deliver a school attendance campaign in Hastings on behalf of the Hastings Opportunity Area in South-East England. In January 2020, the NSMC launched a positive social marketing campaign raising awareness of the importance of attendance. The campaign, which was designed in partnership with families and young people, focuses on children missing school for minor illnesses or term time holidays. The NSMC's formative research showed that too many parents are still taking their children out of school for holidays during term times, in the belief that their children aren't missing anything important. Our research amongst young people suggests they don't want to fall behind with class work, miss out on end of term activities, or to be away from their friends. The adverts feature the specially developed character of Percy the Seagull as well as pupils from the local schools.

At the same time, the NSMC is also developing a similar social marketing school attendance campaign for the Stoke-on-Trent Opportunity Area in North-West England, based on bespoke primary research carried out in the city.

2019 – ongoing: Promoting renewable energy in Jordan. The NSMC is working with the King Hussein Foundation in Jordan to develop three community renewable energy programmes. Currently Jordan has to import the vast majority of its energy so there is a real effort going on by all actors in the sector to increase the size of the renewable energy sector. The communities in Beni Kananah, Tafileh and Amman received social marketing and advocacy training in 2019, which has enabled them to develop their own community projects. Funding is being provided by the European Union to implement these new initiatives.

2019 – ongoing: Reducing inappropriate Accident and Emergency (A&E) usage in South-East England. The NSMC completed a primary research project to identify the reasons why people go to A&E rather than other urgent care services that may be more appropriate to their needs. The research is very revealing with many people stating that they judge the waiting time of often over three hours at A&E more favourable than other healthcare alternatives, especially when they believed they would need some form of diagnostic test that would take place in a hospital. There was also a general lack of knowledge of other urgent care services including the 111 service and Walk-In Centres. It was clear that A&E remains a trusted service to many people despite several alternatives being available. The NSMC is now carrying out further research to determine the range of future services to be provided by NHS Walk-in Centres.

2020 – ongoing: Evaluation of HSBC pilot programme 'Rugby Counts'. The NSMC is currently undertaking an outcome and process evaluation for the innovative HSBC 'Rugby Counts' pilot programme.

## **7. Resources, support and other services including training supplied**

The NSMC offers three main services: 1) Research and Project Evaluation, 2) Project Planning and Implementation; and 3) Training and Mentoring Services. The NSMC also offers a range of tools and publications available for free, including ShowCase, the Value for Money tools, and the One-Stop-Shop (a collection of relevant formative research reports).

Training courses are run throughout the year in both the UK and US, as well as other countries on request. Further details of the training programme can be found at: [www.thensmc.com/training-courses](http://www.thensmc.com/training-courses).

The NSMC offers courses at both the introductory and advanced levels, with its Introduction to Social Marketing training course accredited by the UK's Chartered Institute of Marketing. Successful completion of this course means that participants receive a Level 4 qualification in social marketing. This qualification is equivalent to a professional diploma involving detailed analysis of a high level of information and knowledge in social marketing. This introduction to social marketing course is primarily designed for people working in technical and professional jobs, and/or managing and developing others.

As a not-for-profit organisation, the NSMC also ensures that any surplus made by the business is returned into the promotion of social marketing. This has involved the NSMC sponsoring several social marketing conferences and providing prizes for innovative social marketing projects and subsidies for students to attend training courses and conferences.