

## Cognitive testing of bowel cancer screening information leaflets

How to maximise the impact of public documents through cognitive testing



Working with **Kings Health Partners**, BMG Research recruited and delivered a series of depth interviews to cognitively test the content of an information leaflet about bowel cancer screening (colonoscopy). Both male and female residents in two parts of the country discussed in detail the language used, their understanding of the visuals provided and the key messages the leaflet gave them. The findings led to a revised edit of the document which was subsequently re-tested through a fresh round of interviews.

The key findings of the research were:

- The overall response to the booklet was overwhelmingly very positive being described as “well written”, “very friendly” and “very easy to understand”. None of the respondents found the information in the leaflet in any way embarrassing. Most anticipated that any booklet about bowel cancer screening was bound to contain ‘sensitive’ information and given that, respondents found it hard to believe that anyone could be offended by its contents.
- The leaflet layout was judged to be successful in terms of the quantity of text per page, the size and readability of the font and the ratio of illustrations to text. The cartoon illustrations used to communicate key concepts were a major success. They were widely seen as “funny”, “smart” and “tactful”, using a degree of humour to engage the reader in what would happen to them whilst undergoing the screening, whilst at the same time, dissipating the potential fear and embarrassment it would entail.
- Respondents found the language used in the booklet easy to understand, but the terms Bowelscope, used in the title caused confusion, as did sigmoidoscope when it was used after its initial description.
- Further editing of the leaflet was required given that in initial drafts the quantitative representation of benefits and harms was poorly understood and because a decision making flowchart was widely ignored by respondents.

