

INCREASING PATIENT DEMAND FOR HOME MEDICINES REVIEWS: A MARKETING PLAN

White L & Klinner C, *The University of Sydney*; Clark C, *Macquarie University, Sydney*

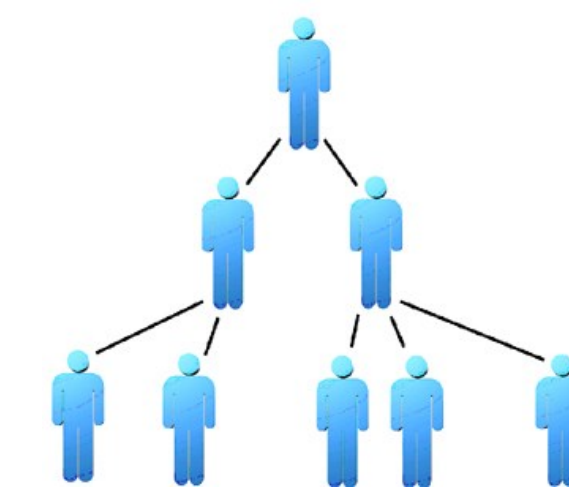
Background

- Campbell (2008)¹ stated that "Consumer awareness of the program is of major concern" and concluded that "all stakeholders agreed that the HMR Program should be promoted more to consumers and carers." Schwartzkoff et al (2004)² recommended the implementation of a "national public awareness campaign to strengthen demand for HMR services from consumers who are likely to benefit".
- Our research study (White & Clark, 2010; see poster 2) found that:
 - There is very low awareness of HMRs amongst eligible non-recipient patients and carers
 - There is an extremely high level of satisfaction amongst those who have experienced an HMR and very positive perceptions amongst those eligible patients and carers who have not had an HMR, after being informed of the service through the study

Goals

The goal of the marketing plan is to increase patient demand for HMRs by:

- overcoming the lack of awareness,
- facilitating patient self identification of eligibility and
- instituting procedures that enhance the uptake of second and subsequent HMRs by HMR recipients where appropriate.



All marketing strategies must be carefully targeted in order to attract only patients who meet the HMR eligibility criteria.

The objective of the marketing plan is to increase patient demand for HMRs, specifically to increase the number of first time HMRs by 25% and the number of repeat HMRs by 50% within 12 months.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths of the HMR service

- Clear and self-explanatory service name ("HMR")
- High level of consumer acceptance and clear expectations of personal benefits
- Overwhelming consumer satisfaction
- Positive consumer views of provider collaboration
- Consumer recognition of pharmacist's counselling role

Weaknesses

- Very low HMR awareness amongst eligible patients
- Perception by some participants that an HMR may signal loss of personal control
- Patient uncertainty regarding the GP's HMR perceptions
- Confusion regarding the role of doctor vs. pharmacist
- Limited knowledge of the HMR process among HMR recipients (e.g. HMR report, eligibility for repeat HMR)
- Diverse and somewhat confusing lists of eligibility criteria

Opportunities

- Large number of potentially eligible patients
- Low HMR awareness can be relatively simply and cost effectively addressed.
- Encouraging repeat HMRs is likely to increase usage.
- Streamlining of HMR eligibility criteria to facilitate patient identification
- Simplification of the service administration to increase user friendliness

Threats

- Possible funding issues
- Possible conflict between health care professionals

Market Segmentation

Analysis of segmentation options

Options	Measurable	Substantial	Accessible	Differentiable	Actionable
Gender	HIGH	HIGH	LOW	MED	MED
Age	HIGH	HIGH	MED	MED	HIGH
HMR Experience	HIGH	MED	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
Geography	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	LOW	MED
Disease state	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
Community vs. hospital context	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
Ethnicity	HIGH	MED	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
Independence	MED	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
Attitude to health care	LOW	LOW	LOW	HIGH	MED

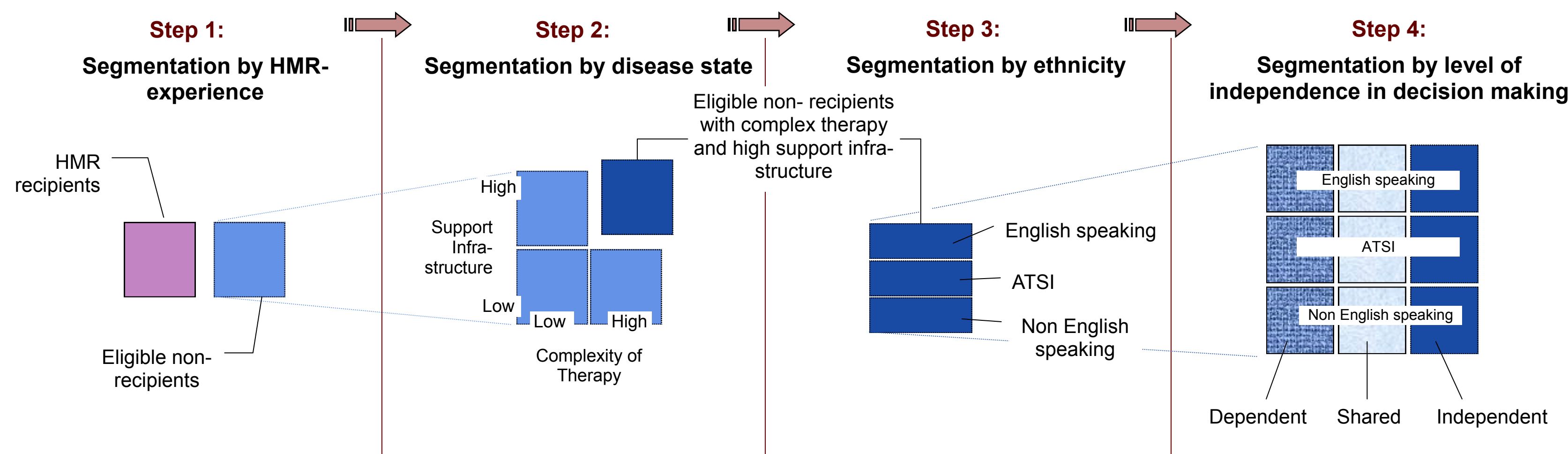
Segmentation options were screened according to Kotler & Keller's³ segmentation criteria (table left). Useful segmentation options are those that best meet the five criteria (i.e. most HIGH ratings). These are:

- HMR Experience
- Disease state
- Ethnicity
- Independence

4 consecutive segmentation steps

(*'Context' excluded from segmentation due to insufficient research data)

Segmentation steps

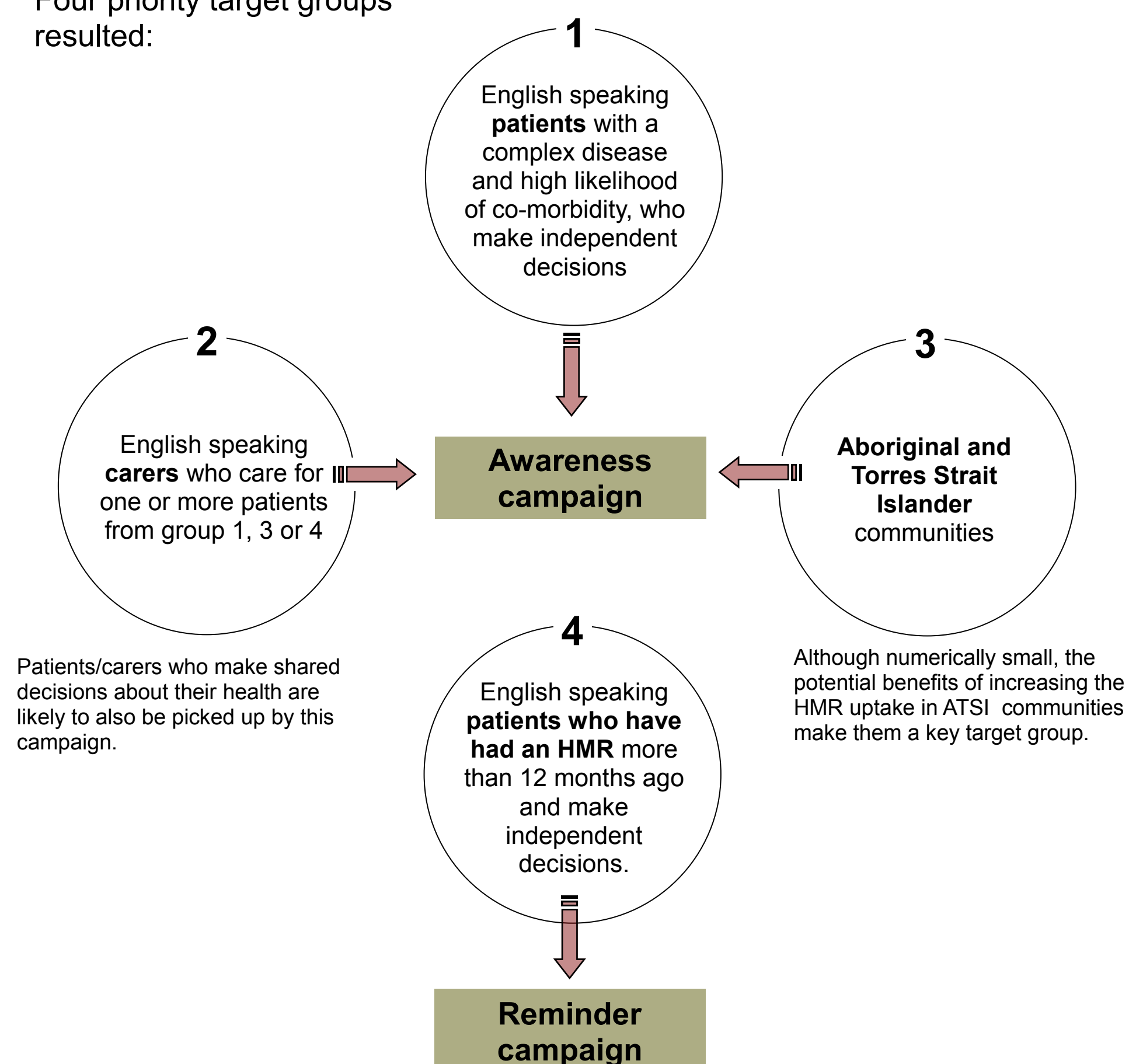


Priority Target Groups

The potential target segments were each assessed against three criteria:

- Potential to generate large response from eligible patients
- Ease and cost efficiency with which a program could be executed
- Potential benefit of increasing HMR uptake

Four priority target groups resulted:



Proposed Positionings

Patient: (Target groups 1, 3 and 4)
"An HMR empowers me. It gives me greater information about my medicines and puts me more in control of managing my health. I am reassured that my therapeutic regime is appropriate."

Carer: (Target group 2)
"An HMR helps to share the load of caring by removing one important issue from the list of things I need to worry about."

Positioning is used to establish the HMR as a service concept in the minds of the priority target groups.

Recommended Strategies

Strategies to increase awareness:

- targeted promotion via specified disease support groups
- preparation and publication of patient case studies
- mainstream media public relations
- pharmacy computer generated information leaflets
- new website
- telephone information line
- speakers at social club meetings
- promotion to other health care providers



Strategies for the identification of eligible patients:

- clarify and standardise the criteria for eligibility
- identify eligibility at point of prescription or point of dispensing
- target specific diseases



Strategies to enhance repeat uptake:

- mail reminders
- outbound call centre



Acknowledgement:

This project has been funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing as part of the fourth Community Pharmacy Agreement Research & Development Program managed by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

References:

- Campbell Research Consulting. Home Medicines Review Program Qualitative Research Project Final Report. Prepared for the Department of Health and Ageing, December 2008
- Schwartzkoff J et al for Urbis, Keys, Young (2004) Investigator Initiated Guild Government Grant 2004-526 Evaluation of HMR Program
- Kotler P and Keller K L (2006) Marketing Management, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey, Pearson Prentice Hall

Contact details:

Professor Lesley White, Chair of Pharmacy Management, Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Sydney, NSW 2006, Australia, e-mail: lesley.white@sydney.edu.au, ph + 61 2 9351 4447
Poster design: Christiane Klinner, University of Sydney, ph +61 2 9036 7679