



Report on the Danish sun safety campaign and volunteers 2010

*Full report published in Danish by the Danish Cancer Society and TrygFonden, February 2011:
Danish title: Solkampagnens frivilligindsats 2010*

Summary

The Danish sun safety campaign draws on the support of many volunteers to spread the sun safety message. This report evaluates the volunteers' work during 2010.

Many volunteers were involved

In 2010 there were almost 1000 volunteers who supplied more than 7000 hours of voluntary work. Volunteers were primarily recruited through the volunteer organisation of the Danish Cancer Society. Volunteers play an important role in the campaign strategy, as they are able to make the sun safety campaign visible in local communities.

Volunteers spread the sun safety message

In 2010 200 volunteers visited kindergartens as sun safety ambassadors. Around 700 volunteers manned sun safety stands at events and were able to talk directly to a large number of people. In spite of the fact that the number of volunteers has increased over the past few years, the number of volunteers remained static in 2010. This could indicate that new concepts are needed to retain existing volunteers and to recruit new volunteers. Almost all volunteers surveyed stated that they would like to take part in the campaign again.

Volunteers create political focus

In 2010 the sun safety campaign involved volunteers in local politics and encouraged them to lobby municipalities to remove sunbeds from municipal buildings. They were able to get the issue on to the local agenda by creating awareness in the local and national media and sparking lively debate. In 2010, a total of six municipalities removed sunbeds from public buildings as a direct result and a further four municipalities are still discussing the issue. The evaluation shows that the volunteers create valuable contacts with the municipal authorities in their work with sun safety in the community.

Tailor-made concepts

A number of different concepts, materials and information packs are available for volunteers to use in different situations with sun safety and skin cancer prevention. These are designed to be easy to use and were provided to volunteers.

Knowledge sharing via the website

The sun safety campaign website plays an important role in ensuring that volunteers have relevant knowledge on skin cancer prevention and on how this knowledge can be spread. The majority of volunteers stated that the website was their most important source of information about sun safety.

Training of volunteers

A new initiative in 2010 was an electronic sun safety ambassador course, which gave volunteers information about sun protection and skin cancer prevention and tested their learning. More than 86% of volunteers who took the course stated that they had learnt something new about the campaign's messages and about skin cancer. 90% of the volunteers found the course motivating for communicating the sun safety message.

Volunteer campaign leaders are central for organisation

Some volunteers took on extra organisational responsibilities and acted as a link between the central campaign office and the other volunteers. These volunteer campaign leaders also worked closely with regional consultants from the Danish Cancer Society with responsibility for skin cancer. The regional consultants adjusted and evaluated all concepts and were responsible for direct contact to volunteers as well as municipal stakeholders.

In the survey, the volunteers stated that the regional consultants were of central importance in helping and supporting the planning of activities, and the regional consultants stated that the cooperation between the volunteers and the sun safety central office had worked well regarding the activities of the sun safety campaign.

The majority of the consultants emphasised that skin cancer prevention activities took up much of their time when compared with the organisation's other preventative initiatives because the sun safety concepts and materials are highly accessible, easy to use and readily available for volunteers and consultants. The regional consultants also stated that the accessibility of the materials made the sun safety campaign a good place to start for new volunteers.

Adjusting the event concept

In 2010 the sun safety campaign used volunteers at local sun safety events instead of using paid student workers, as in previous years. This worked well because the volunteers knew the local area and were generally pleased to be able to help prevent skin cancer at events. However, it was not possible to recruit enough volunteers for all the events. Therefore, in 2011 students will be used if volunteers cannot participate.