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Infographic_Murphy PDF

Overview

I created an informational infographic poster that will serve as a signpost for any Colorado resident in need of professional mental health services. To keep the scope of the project manageable, I relied on the websites of Colorado Crisis Services (http://coloradocrisisservices.org) and Arapahoe/ Douglas Mental Health Network (http://www.admhn.org) for content. The outcome was an infographic that could also function as a poster that can be posted in public places and will be accessible to those who do not have access to a computer. I chose content focused on providing someone in need of mental health assistance the means to connect with the appropriate service. When someone is experiencing a mental health crisis they need to quickly and easily find contact information for the appropriate facility that can provide help and treatment.

My learning objectives were twofold; to provide someone experiencing a mental health crisis with information that would help identify their need for care, and guide them to seek help by using the hot-line number or visiting a walk-in facility. It was essential to the success of the infographic that the information was presented in a clear, easy to understand manner. This poster will serve as a connecting device, linking a client to the Colorado Crisis Services. Evidence of efficacy will be measured by an increase in hot-line calls and walk-in traffic.

This poster will be placed in multiple public locations, such as bus stops, light rail trains and other publically accessible spaces and serve as a PSA (public service announcement). The infographic was created in a vertical orientation, but could also be designed in a horizontal format to accommodate the aspect ratio of a billboard. Further design modification would allow the infographic to be utilized in a variety of media (both print and digital) applications. Final poster placement will be critical, as it needs to be viewed by anyone who may need mental health

services. The scope of mental health needs is broad, encompassing everything from substance abuse to homelessness to physical or emotional abuse. Colorado Crisis Services is equipped to address any mental health need and offers a broad range of services to residents Colorado. Services range from "crisis line, acute emergency treatment (in-patient), supported housing services and victim services to counseling, therapy and group therapy on an outpatient basis to treat individuals and families with a wide range of emotional, social and psychiatric needs using evidence-based therapies" ("Adult therapy and rehabilitation", 2015, para. 1). The person served by the information in this poster would be someone experiencing mental or emotional difficulties that they cannot manage on their own. The critical design element to connect with the viewer was the headline *I Am Not Alone*. Anyone experiencing a mental health challenge would relate to this headline and be drawn to explore the information provided, guiding them to professional assistance.

I used canva.com to create the poster. The infographic utility was fairly straightforward and easy to use. I did have to import elements to Photoshop and use it in conjunction with canva.com (https://www.canva.com). There was a slight learning curve but Canva's support is robust, so I was able to problem-solve without much difficulty. I would use the utility again in the future, it was the ideal tool to use for the purpose of creating an infographic, and it is free to use.

Design Decisions

I focused my design decisions around the three concepts of credibility, unexpectedness, and simplicity. These concepts lend themselves to the creation of an infographic and also function as checkpoints during the design process, and I was forced to stay within the parameters

of each concept. By establishing these guiding principles at the onset of the project, I was able to work more efficiently and with more clarity in regard to the overall design of the final product.

Design Decision 1

To ensure the credibility of my infographic I used statistics and data to support the implied call to action to call the hotline number or locate the walk-in facility ("Finding Statistics", 2015, para. 1). I chose to limit my statistics to four major pieces of information regarding mental illness. The first showed that 1 in 5 of the U.S. population is affected by mental illness (Bekiempis, 2014, para. 1). The second relayed information concerning the prevalence of depression worldwide. ("Mental Health By the Numbers", 2016, para.1). I used the the third piece of data to state the amount of lost wages in America due to mental illness. ("Mental Health By the Numbers", 2016, para. 3). Fourth, I included a statistic regarding the rate of suicide in the U.S. ("Mental Health By the Numbers", 2016, para. 3). I selected these statistics to reinforce the message of the overall piece: *I Am Not Alone.* I chose statistics that indicated the frequency and impact of mental illness on the population. Statistics serve as proof and validation (Heath & Heath, 2008, p.147).

Design Decision 2

I used a font that appeared handwritten to utilize the element of unexpectedness. *I Am Not Alone,* in the font Over The Rainbow, created an emotional connection between the viewer and the overall infographic. This element served as "the hook", grabbing the viewer's attention, creating a human and emotional element, which compelled the viewer to read the information provided by the infographic (Heath & Heath, 2008.p.16). "Writing has always been seen as expressing our personality" (Chemin, 2014, para. 21). By adding this element, a human

connection was made to the piece. The handwriting font was repeated again in the center of the poster to reinforce the connection.

<div align="center">Design Decision 3</div>

I presented the various design elements in an easily understood and visually pleasing way. "You can achieve simplicity in the design of effective charts, graphs and tables by remembering three fundamental principles: restrain, reduce, and emphasize" (Reynolds, 2014, p.151). By simplifying the design, I revealed the essence of the message, which is: Many people experience mental illness, here is how you can get help (Heath & Heath, 2008, p.28). I achieved simplification in design by creating a visual hierarchy that moved the viewer's eye from top to bottom of the infographic. In each area of the piece I created elements which were arranged in such a way that the information could be quickly assimilated and understood. I designed the visual path that started with the handwritten typeface headline, followed by a grid of four data sets. I put the hot line number, map of walk-in facilities, and a list of locations for the walk-in service facilities beneath the data sets. I created a visual path to followwhich allowed my viewer to quickly navigate the infographic to find the information that was most appropriate to them. Reynolds (2010) wrote "… only show what is necessary to convey the essential information without excessive ornamentation, clutter, or anything else that gets in the way of clear, direct attention to what's important" (p. 149).

<div align="center">**PEER REVIEW QUESTIONS:**</div>

1. **What is your first impression of the design?**

Reviewer A: I like the uniformity of color that you chose and the contact information is a main focus which is important. The statistics seem to get your point across, however, I wonder if the

title shouldn't be "You are not alone." I feel like this would be much more fitting with what you've created and your stated goals. With the "I am not alone" title, I feel like the tone would need to be switched to more of a first person presentation and would lose impact. The point should be you (the person reading this infographic), yes YOU are not alone. The current title makes me wonder who this lonely "I" person is, instead of feeling like this could be pertaining to me as the reader. I feel more like a bystander than the intended audience.

Reviewer B: I love this infographic! The color scheme is eye catching but not screaming, the numbers are large, and the styling is on point. My initial reaction was that I have some work to do on my own.

With a critical eye, a few things made me backtrack. The first was that the "1" for "Depression is the leading…" Could there be a "#" symbol added to this? It was not immediately understandable to me. The second thing was that the phone number is a string of numbers. Can you add dashes or slashes to help the viewer separate and memorize the numbers more easily? Third, the text in the bottom mustard colored box is too small compared to the rest of the infographic. Given the whitespace around this box, you could expand this and increase the text size. If someone is sitting on a bus, they may want this information but not be brave enough to get closer to view the smaller text here.

Rationale: Is the overall infographic achieving it's purpose; directing someone in Colorado who needs mental illness treatment to the appropriate resources?

Considerations: Originally, I had *You Are Not Alone* as the headline. Upon research, I found that there is already a mental health awareness campaign going by that name. I switched to "I" as the person reading this would relate more personally to an "I" statement, than "You". I added a "#" sign to the 1 to clarify the statistic that depression is the leading cause of disability

worldwide. Ellipses were added to the phone number to break up the string of numbers. Finally, I decreased the size of the yellow box surrounding the map. This gave me more area to work with so I could increase the size of the location text, increasing readability at a distance.

2. Do you believe the design is successful? Why? If not, what would you change about it to better communicate the message?

Reviewer A: I believe it is partially successful. Again, the contact information is clear and appropriate, however, the message that you are talking to me as the reader isn't coming through. I feel like you could make it feel much more personal by changing it to You are not alone and including graphics that touch the emotions. It has a formal, statistical tone instead of expressing the emotion or the message that someone cares and here is how to reach them. Adding some graphics like one person with their arm around another or something to humanize your statistics would be great.

Reviewer B: I think you achieved success in your design. The separation of space is well done, especially with the top boxes. One thing I would love to see added are quotes around the title of the infographic. I believe they would add a visual indication of your intention to make this relatable to those with mental illness. Right now it seems like the title is coming from you as the author.

Rationale: I followed established design principles to create an infographic I felt was easily understood and communicated. I need feedback as to whether this was successful or not, and what I might need to change.

Considerations: I chose to use simple graphics and text to communicate the message. Additional elements such as decorative figures or photographs would have cluttered the overall

design and made the infographic less effective. I added quotes to the title to make *I am not alone* sound like a more personal statement.

3. **Is anything missing? Conversely, is anything there that shouldn't be?**

Reviewer A: The emotional grab is missing. If I caught a glance at this in a public space, I wouldn't immediately know what it was trying to convey until further inspection. I feel like the title could be your hook, and I do like the font, but perhaps you should pick colors that have more brightness and contrast to draw the eye more quickly to this section. Also, I think that with more personal graphics, you would get more viewers to stop and take a look. If I were in a mental crisis or emotional state, I feel like I would be looking for comfort and reassurance. Your graphics at this point don't say that, although your text does. You need to pull them in to get them to read it.

Reviewer B: This is a hard question to answer since I do not know the results of your background research. I think this is up to you to decide. Overall, I think the infographic meets your overall learning goal. If there is something to add, it would be because you feel the goal is not being met. I think one thing that may make the ideas more concrete is turning 193.2 billion into a more concrete idea. Is there another way to represent 193.2 billion? This is a very hard number for humans to conceptualize. It seems like a large number to me, but really how large is it?

Rationale: I felt that I included the essential information required to communicate the message.

Considerations: I considered a different treatment for the $193.2 billion figure and compromised by bolding the word billion to underscore the size of earning lost.

4. What elements in this infographic are not as effective as they could be?

Reviewer A: I feel like your title section and data section need to be reworked to be more effective. I feel like they are important but not speaking to your intended audience as they are now. The statistics you chose are great and do convey the message that tons of people are affected by mental health issues. The graphics in your statistic section, (bar graphs, dollar amounts) seem to be saying to your reader that they really are just a number in a very large group. I feel like the message you want to give is that you aren't the only one struggling with this, but you as an individual are important. Pictures or graphics that show that you understand my personal struggle because you have been there. Instead of the huge dollar amount that a large number of people are losing in wages, perhaps a picture that portrays one person's common financial struggle.

Reviewer B: I think I got at this in question one. I think you could add quotes to the title, dashes in the phone number, and increase the text size for the box at the bottom. I think you could also add your name to indicate who authored the graphic. Right now it seems like Colorado Crisis Services made the graphic. You don't want them to take credit for your wonderful work.

Rationale: I included elements that I felt were crucial to the overall message. If areas are not effective to the viewer, I need to know so that I may address them.

Considerations: Again, it was a very conscious design decision to use the graphic elements I did. My intent was to present information in an ordered and logical manner through use of the grid, a specific color pallet, and harmoniously styled graphic elements. A graphic designer typically does not sign their work as they are hired by a client. I treated Colorado Crisis Services as the client for this piece, hence the inclusion of their logo at the base of the infographic.

5. My design decisions focused on unexpectedness, credibility and simplicity in design. Are there any areas that you feel are not successfully addressed? If so, why?

Reviewer A: I am not getting a feeling of unexpectedness from the infographic. Unexpectedness in my mind would be something that catches my eye because it's out of the norm. Perhaps playing around with colors, graphics and the type for your title would give it a bit more of this element. Perhaps YOU are not alone, for instance to make the word you pop out, almost like it is calling your viewer personally.

I definitely feel the credibility in your statistics and contact information given. I feel confident that I am getting reliable information from this infographic about the scope of the problem and where to get help for myself or someone else in a crisis situation.

I also feel that you've done well with not over complicating the infographic, which is a big part of simplicity. However, I think that you have worked to keep the graphics so simple that you have lost impact. It should be short and sweet, but also, straight to the point.

Reviewer B: I am an advocate for providing citations for evidence. Where did your statistics come from? Is there room to add a references list at the bottom of this graphic? I would highly recommend this in order to maintain your credibility. You may want to view a view infographics made by government agencies to see how they reference their statistics. Otherwise, you met unexpectedness with the staggering statistics and simplicity with CARP principles, color scheme, and arrangement of information. Nicely done!

Rationale: I need to make sure that the design decisions are apparent to the viewer.

Considerations: I added my sources for the statistics included in the infographic to the bottom of the piece. I used the light blue color used in the piece for the color of the text and significantly reduced the font size to make it less obtrusive to the overall design.

Lessons Learned

My biggest difficulty in this project was the paper. There was so much emphasis on the paper I found myself spending the most amount of time writing, prior to the actual design of the infographic. As a result, I was writing about something I had yet to create, in past tense. The style we used to write the paper (strict APA format) was the first time in my coursework in the program that I'd had to strictly adhere to those standards. Fortunately one of my teammates is very savvy in regard to APA standards and was a huge help. I'm starting to get more comfortable with writing in this way and should be very comfortable by the end of the course.

I was glad I got the chance to work with Canva. I found it fairly user friendly and was able to find help through their support when I got stuck. I've never been comfortable with Illustrator, so this was a nice workaround to get the project done. I can see other applications for the use of Canva.com in the future.

I struggle somewhat with the emphasis on working with others. Coordinating schedules for synchronous meetings is problematic and doesn't seem to accomplish what could be accomplished asynchronously. I feel lucky to have the team members I do. Both have been very proactive, helpful, and supportive. I hope to continue working with them.

I'm happy with the piece I produced, and frankly, it's the first piece I've created in the program I'm happy to include in my portfolio. In retrospect, I'm glad to have the design document supporting my decisions. It really forced me to justify my decisions and do a lot of legwork upfront before diving into the design work. I think the accompanying paper will be an integral part of the whole project.

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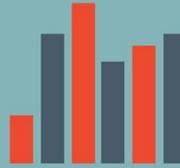https://library.ncu.edu/dw/index/304

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"I am not alone"

1 IN 5 PEOPLE EXPERIENCE MENTAL ILLNESS IN A GIVEN YEAR [1]

SUICIDE IS THE 10TH LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH IN THE US [2]

SERIOUS MENTAL ILLNESS COSTS AMERICANS

$193.2

BILLION IN LOST EARNINGS PER YEAR [2]

DEPRESSION IS THE LEADING CAUSE OF

#1

DISABILITY WORLDWIDE [2]

Help is a call or visit away

24/7 CRISIS INTERVENTION
1·844·493·8255

WALK-IN CRISIS SERVICES LOCATIONS
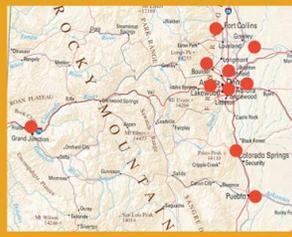
METRO DENVER REGION

- 2551 W 84TH AVENUE, WESTMINSTER, CO 80031
- 6509 S. SANTA FE DRIVE, LITTLETON, CO 80120
- 3180 AIRPORT RD, BOULDER, CO 80301
- 12055 W. 2ND PLACE, LAKEWOOD, CO 80228
- 4353 E. COLFAX AVENUE, DENVER, CO 80220

NORTHEAST REGION

- 1217 RIVERSIDE AVE., FORT COLLINS, CO 80524
- 928 12TH ST., GREELEY, CO 80631

SOUTHEAST REGION

- 1302 CHINOOK LANE, PUEBLO CO 81001
- 115 S. PARKSIDE DRIVE, COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80910

WESTERN SLOPE REGION

- 515 28 3/4 ROAD, GRAND JUNCTION, CO 81501

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