

Tel +27 (0)11 440 4841

Fax +27 (0)866 630 9187

Address 2 Rosebank Rd, Dunkeld, Johannesburg

Postal PO Box 2222, Highlands North, 2037

Website www.flowsa.com

SANBS hyperimmune campaign

PRISM Healthcare campaign category – 2018

PRISA PRISM AWARDS

SANBS

HYPERIMMUNE CAMPAIGN

FLOW
COMMUNICATIONS



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Opening statement

South Africa has a critical shortage of rabies immunoglobulin (RIG) – the key ingredient in the prevention of rabies.

In 2016, the South African National Blood Service (SANBS) collected just over half the amount of the plasma it required and it anticipated a similar shortfall in 2017.

The SANBS Hyperimmune Campaign developed by Flow Communications has completely redressed that shortfall and has ensured a sustainable supply of hyperimmune plasma over the next four years, by developing win-win partnerships and a communications solution that delivers value for all stakeholders.

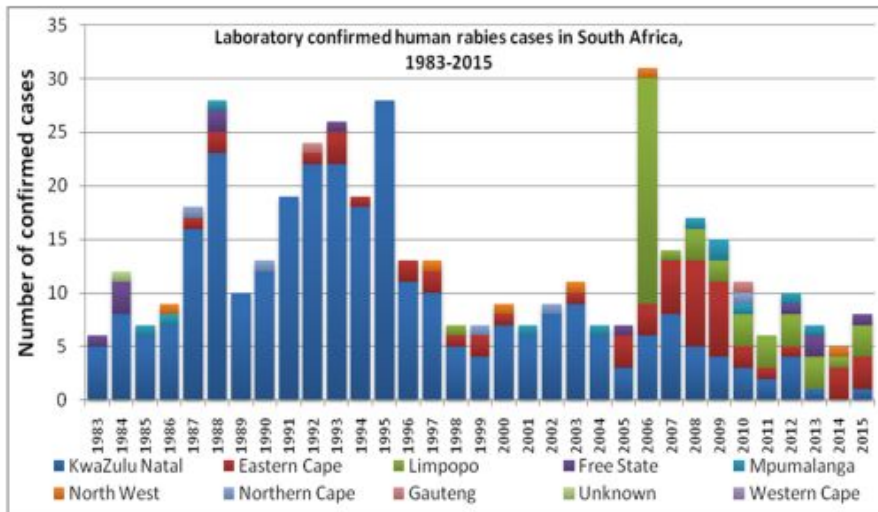
Statement of opportunity/problem

The challenge was to raise awareness and understanding of the issue, and ultimately to increase donations of hyperimmune plasma.

Becoming a hyperimmune plasma donor is a complex process, as donors need to have received a rabies vaccine and their blood must have a high antibody count. It is a difficult process to grasp, and is also a big commitment that a prospective donor is being asked to make. The SANBS request was for a national campaign that helped redress the shortfall in current stocks, and developed a sustainable and ongoing supply.

Research conducted

We conducted desktop research into the incidence of rabies in South Africa (<http://www.nicd.ac.za/assets/files/Rabies-Feb.pdf>), which confirmed that, while untreated exposure to rabies is invariably fatal, it is easily preventable by vaccination or post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).



Source: Centre for Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases, NICD-NHLS; Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute, Gauteng Department of Agriculture and Rural Development; (januszp@nicd.ac.za)

Figure 1. Laboratory-confirmed human rabies in South Africa, 1983-2015

1

We realised from this research that a key source of individuals who had been vaccinated, either pre- or post-exposure, was people who regularly work with animals, as vaccination is a life-saving necessity for them.

We then contacted Pam Larkin of the National Bioproducts Institute (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/pam-larkin-aa36a521/>) and Professor Lucille Blumberg of the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Lucille_Blumberg). Our extensive engagement with them led us to the insight that Onderstepoort Veterinary Hospital (<http://www.up.ac.za/veterinary-hospital>) presented a rich field of potential donors, which a conversation with Professor Dietman Holm confirmed (<http://www.up.ac.za/en/faculty-of-veterinary-science/article/33518/staff>).

Onderstepoort Veterinary College in Pretoria has a cohort of about 600 students, who would be prime candidates to become donors.

Planning the campaign

A broad-based campaign was unlikely to achieve results as the messaging is complex and the threat of rabies very remote for most. It would also be prohibitively expensive.

Thus the approach to people who:

- Stood to gain from the availability of treatments against rabies

- Understood the process, and
- Would be most likely to have the correct antibody count already

This approach would also generate enough “spillover” publicity to achieve the secondary aim of public education and awareness.

Target audience

Potential donors were identified as:

- People with spare time
- People at risk of rabies
- Animal lovers

Key issues

- Complex and multilayered communication
- The process of registration and subsequent donation is arduous and donors need to be committed
- Staff needed to be trained to best deal with potential hyperimmune donors¹

Tactical objectives

- Raise awareness and understanding of the need for hyperimmune plasma
- Grow the number of hyperimmune plasma donations
- Deepen the SANBS/Onderstepoort Veterinary College friendship

Key messages

- Hyperimmune plasma is necessary for the treatment and prevention of rabies
- The SANBS is a vital part of the collection of hyperimmune plasma
- You can and should donate hyperimmune plasma

Approach

We held two events on the Onderstepoort campus where we could speak directly to the students about why they should become hyperimmune donors, as well as initiate the process by having SANBS staff available to start the sign-up and testing process.

We approached the Dean of Onderstepoort directly to get buy-in to the process, as a

¹ A separate internal communications plan is being rolled out to deal with this challenge

collaborative approach was more likely to be successful. The proposed initiative aligns very closely with the school's values of giving back and community consideration. The school was very enthusiastic about the proposal and came on board, providing insights and support to ensure student participation.



The event at Onderstepoort, student sign-ups and testing

Execution

Mechanics

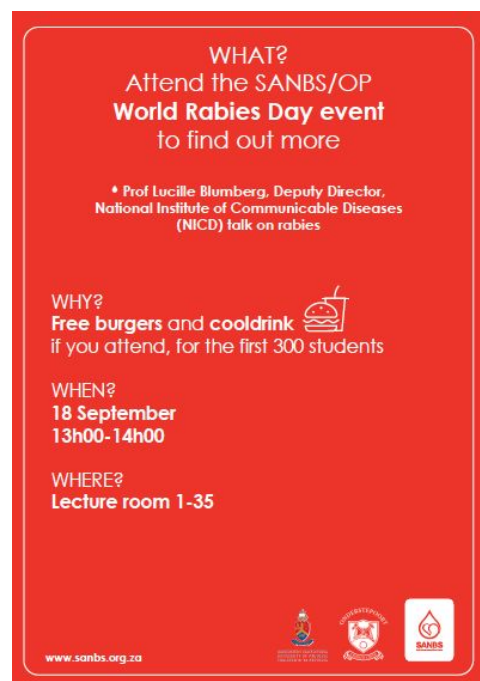
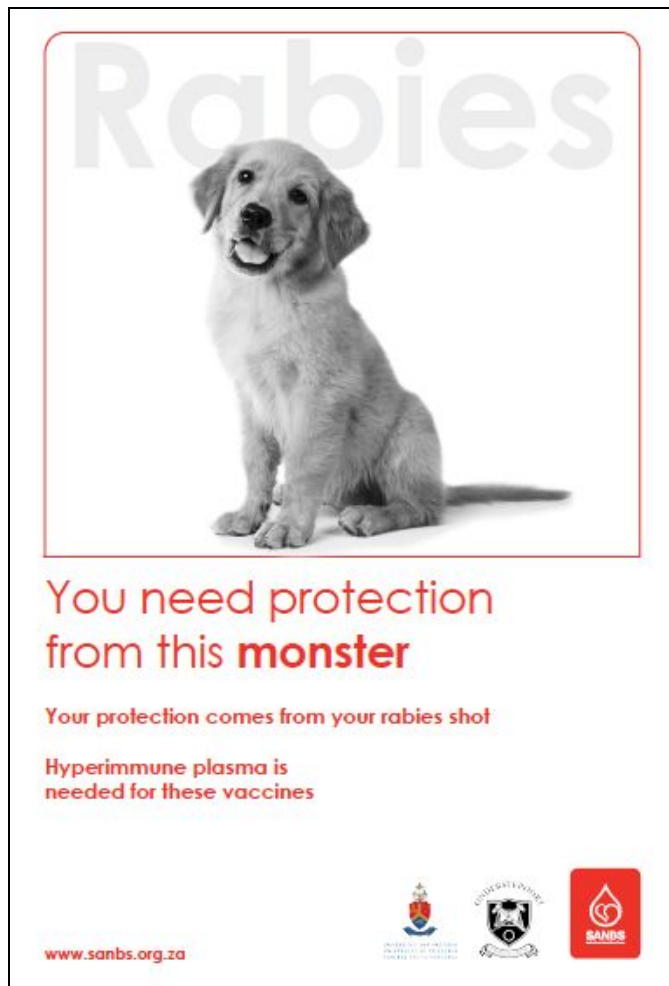
Two events were hosted at Onderstepoort campus, on 18 September 2017, a week before World Rabies Day, and on 31 January 2018, as part of new students' induction week. Awareness was raised via on-site posters, and a targeted SMS and email campaign.

The first event, hosted in a lecture hall on campus, included presentations by the National Institute for Communicable Diseases, the National Bioproducts Institute and the SANBS. A volunteer donated plasma at the event so that students could experience the process first-hand. SANBS phlebotomists were available to sign up students and do

initial testing.

Media were invited, resulting in excellent coverage and spreading of the broad-based message. There was also a good pick-up of the event on social media.

Posters designed and produced by Flow Communications that were put up around campus to announce the event



The first event consisted of a presentation to remind students of what a terrible threat rabies is, specifically to them. It also explained why they were ideal candidates for donation – because they have all been inoculated against rabies.

A highly respected rabies specialist from the National Institute for Communicable Diseases was enlisted to address the students, as did a specialist from the National Bioproducts Institute, both of whom spoke to the students in a relatable way.

The event provided us with an opportunity to create a video that not only can be used to

raise awareness of what hyperimmune plasma donation is, but also as evidence of a group of young, diverse people taking up the call. The video can be viewed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=giy4CeEqpy0&feature=youtu.be>

Evaluation/measurement

- To date, 171 students have signed up to become VIP hyperimmune plasma donors. On a campaign budget of R380 000.00, this represents a cost of R2,222.22 per donor. While we cannot disclose the SANBS price per unit, in the United States 1 unit of hyperimmune plasma retails at \$140.00 (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20598161>)
- The SANBS has provided a permanent facility at Onderstepoort
- A positive relationship has been built between SANBS and Onderstepoort
- An ongoing supply of donors has been developed
- The National Institute for Communicable Diseases is exploring partnering with the SANBS

| Results: Hyperimmune activation | | |
|---|---|---|
| Donors | 171 sign-ups on campus in two activations | ✓ |
| | Permanent set-up at university to facilitate future donations | ✓ |
| | Video produced that educates and recruits additional donors | ✓ |
| Ensure an ongoing source of potential donors | Relationship/friendship secured | ✓ |
| Communication support | Excellent amplification, leverage and ROI | ✓ |




Image from results report to SANBS

Traditional media

The *Pretoria News*, *Beeld* and SABC Radio attended the initial event.

Coverage was received in 16 print publications and seven online publications

Although AVE is not a measure of success, the total AVE was R210 680,32, which indicates the wide breadth of coverage.

Publication: MIDVAAL STER

Title: More plasma needed to protect rabies exposed patients

AVE: 6510.84

Page: 6

Publish Date: 10 October 2017

Author: unspecified

More plasma needed to protect rabies exposed patients

South Africa has a critical shortage of rabies immunoglobulin (RIG) – the key ingredient in the prevention of the disease.

As South Africa marks World Rabies Day (28 September 2017), the South African National Blood Service (SANBS) noted that it had only collected just over half of the amount of the plasma required in South Africa in 2016, and that it is anticipating a shortfall again this year.

RIG is produced from plasma collected from hyper immune donors – the term used to describe donors who have been vaccinated against rabies.

South Africa needs around 295 plasma donors who donate at least 12 times a year to meet demand, but currently there are only between 280 and 320 donors who donate around seven times a year.

That led to the SANBS collecting only 1 450 litres of plasma last year, significantly less than the 2 300 litres required.

The shortage of hyper immune donors forces the National Bioproducts Institute (NBI) to import hyper immune plasma at great cost.

The National Institute for Communicable Diseases estimates that there are, on average, about 10 confirmed cases of ra-

bies in South Africa each year.

But there are often outbreaks, most recently in Ballito, KwaZulu-Natal two weeks ago and in Gauteng last year.

While rabies is preventable, it is a terminal disease – meaning that there is no specific treatment for it.

Once symptoms appear, it's 100% fatal. Sihungile Mlambo, national marketing manager for the SANBS, urged South Africans who have been vaccinated against rabies to donate plasma to alleviate the shortage and ensure that vital health resources are readily available in South Africa.

Even if you have not been vaccinated against rabies you can still become a hyper immune donor.

SANBS will provide the necessary vaccinations to build up your antibodies to the required levels.

"South Africans have it in their hands to make a difference," she says.

"We appeal to South Africans who have been vaccinated against rabies to donate their

plasma.

The more hyper immune plasma donors we have the more plasma we can provide to the NBI, which manufactures RIG, among other essential plasma-derived medicine."

Plasma donors can donate every two weeks and it takes about 45 minutes to donate.

To find out more about donating plasma and to locate your nearest SANBS plasma donor centre, visit sanbs.org.za or call 0800 11 90 31.



Illustration photo: The National Blood Service appeals to South Africans who have been vaccinated against rabies to donate their plasma.



Business development head at the National Bioproducts Institute Pam Larkin speaks about how lethal rabies can be at the University of Pretoria Veterinary Campus at Onderstepoort. PICTURE: THOBILE MATHONSI/ANA

Shock for vet students as they learn how lethal rabies can be

VIRGILATTE GWANGWA
virgilatte.gwangwa@inl.co.za

THERE is no treatment for rabies or a human or animal that develops it; it is the only disease that has 100% mortality rate, if untreated.

It is also preventable.

This is according to Professor Lucille Bloomberg, head of the National Institute of Communicable Diseases, during her talk about rabies at the University of Pretoria's Veterinary Campus in Onderstepoort yesterday.

and people need to know that once they have been bitten by an animal that is behaving strangely or ill, they need to seek care," she said.

Bloomberg presented a scenario where someone died of rabies even after going to the clinic to get checked.

She said it was challenging for health workers to treat someone with rabies as it was not something they dealt with on a daily basis. As a result, they took it upon themselves to hold talks and awareness campaigns on rabies, and its pre-

vention, especially for horses that have been vaccinated. But the human product is really the best one, safe and of excellent quality. But we need donors to be vaccinated and to donate their plasma on an ongoing basis."

Symptoms of rabies include the fear of drinking water, hypersalivation and painful spasms among others. The team said they visited the veterinary campus as students had more understanding of rabies and they too needed to do their part to ensure that dogs were vaccinated. Dogs were the most important source

SA rabies vaccines run low

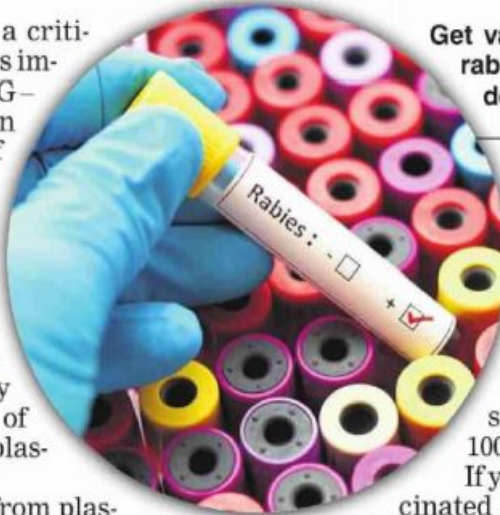
SOUTH Africa has a critical shortage of rabies immunoglobulin or RIG – the key ingredient in the prevention of the disease.

As South Africa marked World Rabies Day last month, the South African National Blood Service (SANBS) said they had just over half of the amount of the plasma needed.

RIG is produced from plasma collected from hyperimmune donors – blood donors who have been vaccinated against rabies.

South Africa needs around 2 300 litres of hyperimmune plasma but last year only 1 450 litres were donated to SANBS. The National Bioproducts Institute imported the shortfall at great cost.

The National Institute for Communi



Get vaccinated against rabies because it is deadly if caught.

Ballito, KwaZulu-Natal two weeks ago and in Gauteng last year.

While rabies is preventable, it is a terminal disease – meaning that once symptoms appear, it's 100% fatal.

If you have not been vaccinated against rabies,

SANBS will provide the needed vaccinations to build up your antibodies to the required levels.

Silungile Mlambo, national marketing manager for SANBS, said: "We appeal to South Africans who have been vaccinated against rabies to donate their plasma every two weeks. It takes about 45 minutes to donate."

Social media

Tweets from the first event achieved a total of 23 743 impressions and 532 engagements, at an average engagement rate of a respectable 2.53%.

Facebook - Promoted Event

South African National Blood Service shared their event. Sponsored · 🌐

Onderstepoort students: Attend the SANBS/OP World Rabies Day event. Prof Lucille Blumberg, Deputy Director, National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) will give a talk on rabies, and lunch is on us.

MON, SEP 18
SANBS / Onderstepoort World Rabies Day Event
10 people interested · 3 going

INTERESTED

👍 🤔 8

- Facebook Event promoted to people aged 18 - 28 within 10 miles of Onderstepoort
- Mobile only
- Seen by over 9 600 people
- R500 budget

Twitter - Top post 1

The SANBS @theSANBS

We're here to give students the regular questionnaire and take some small samples of blood to test both virology and rabies antibody levels

12:55 PM · 18 Sep 2017

5 Retweets 10 Likes

- Impressions 3,990
- Total engagements 79
- Media engagements 57
- Likes 10
- Retweets 5
- Profile clicks 3
- Detail expands 2
- Replies 1
- Link clicks 1

Twitter - Top post 2



- Impressions 3,481
- Total engagements 38
- Media engagements 16
- Detail expands 11
- Retweets 4
- Likes 4
- Link clicks 3



- Impressions 3,284
- Total engagements 46
- Media engagements 21
- Likes 8
- Link clicks 5
- Detail expands 4
- Profile clicks 4
- Retweets 3
- Hashtag clicks 1

Success

This is a simple and cost-effective formula easily replicated for further donor drives, and we have no doubt that we have created a sustainable solution to the challenge

presented by the SANBS.



“There were 33 people who volunteered to become hyperimmune donors and their samples were taken.

**We should have their results back in about 3 weeks from today.
This equates to about 15% of the national supply at a single campus
which is rather remarkable.”**

Ivor
Hobbs

Regional Marketing Manager
t: +27 11 761 9325 c: +27 82 463 9220
ivor.hobbs@sanbs.org.za
sans.org.za
Toll free 0800 11 9031

Message received from client after first event