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MCH Innovations Database Practice Summary & Implementation Guidance

Power Me A2Z

The Power Me A2Z folic acid education and distribution program educates women who may get pregnant about the importance of folic acid consumption and distributes free multivitamins with 400 mcg folic acid to help prevent neural tube defects, regardless of their pregnancy plans, socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, or geographic location in the state.



Location

Arizona



Topic Area

Health Promotion &
Communication



Setting

Community



Population Focus

Women & Maternal Health,
Medical and Public Health
Professionals



Date Added

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Contact Information

Susie Leo, Arizona Department of Health Services, 602-361-2139, Susie.leo@azdhs.gov,
powermea2z@azdhs.gov

Section 1: Practice Summary

PRACTICE DESCRIPTION

Arizona Statute 36-699 directs the Arizona Department of Health Services to distribute folic acid supplements and provide counseling on their proper use. The Power Me A2Z program began in 2013 after thorough research into the priority audience, the public health community and health care providers who serve our audience, and proven strategies to disseminate health messages and vitamins. Formative qualitative and quantitative research was conducted to learn 1) what motivates people who are not planning a pregnancy to take folic acid and 2) effective methods of outreach and vitamin distribution.

The priority audience is women in Arizona who can get pregnant, including non-planners and those who may already have a child/ren, and the public health community and health care providers who serve them.

The Power Me A2Z folic acid education and distribution program educates women who can get pregnant about the importance of folic acid consumption and distributes free multivitamins with 400 mcg folic acid to help prevent neural tube defects, regardless of their pregnancy plans, socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, or geographic location in the state. Power Me A2Z is unique in its approach to educating women who can get pregnant about folic acid consumption throughout their childbearing years. The website and program materials include information on a range of health topics, including active living, reproductive and mental health, and healthy relationships, to name a few. Individuals can sign up to receive a free 100-day supply of multivitamins with folic acid (and reorder in the future), and outreach partners can order program materials, also at no charge, to distribute to their clientele. The program's messages educate people on the additional benefits of folic acid, such as healthy hair, skin, and nails, as well as a call to action to take folic acid to help reduce neural tube defects.

The lifetime cost to care for a child born with a birth defects is substantial. The multivitamins are a cost-effective way to help women who can get pregnant to form a habit of taking folic acid daily to help prevent birth defects.

The original contractor who co-created Power Me A2Z with ADHS, Suma Social Marketing, had previously worked with the State of Utah to create a successful women's health campaign and applied lessons learned to Power Me. Extensive formative qualitative and quantitative research was conducted in Arizona to ensure messages and outreach methods were appropriate for the priority audience. Research findings indicated that women who can get pregnant but are not planning a pregnancy are more motivated to take folic acid when they learn how it benefits their own health. This led to the unique approach of educating women who can get pregnant about folic acid consumption throughout their childbearing years by including information on a range of health topics on the website and in program materials, including active living, reproductive and mental health, and healthy relationships, to name a few. Specifically, the program educates women who can get pregnant on the positive effect folic acid has on hair, skin, and nails with a motivating call to action: folic acid makes your hair shine, nails grow, and skin glow while helping reduce neural tube defects in pregnancy.

CORE COMPONENTS & PRACTICE ACTIVITIES

The campaign is grounded in extensive formative qualitative and quantitative research, including focus groups and surveys. Research findings indicated that women not planning to become pregnant are more motivated to take folic acid when they learn how it benefits their own health. Thus, Power Me A2Z takes the unique approach



of meeting non-planners where they are emotionally and pairs folic acid education with information on physical, reproductive, and mental health behaviors that are unique to our priority audience. Specifically, the campaign educates women who may become pregnant on the positive effect folic acid has on nails, hair, and skin with a motivating call to action: folic acid makes your hair shine, nails grow, and skin glow, and it helps reduce neural tube defects.

The goals of the program are to increase folic acid consumption by women who can get pregnant in order to prevent neural tube defects in pregnancy, and increase awareness of the importance of folic acid consumption among health care providers and community partners so they can educate our priority audience. This is accomplished through the core components:

1. Expansion of key folic acid messages to include the benefits to the person’s health, as well as helping to prevent neural tube defects
2. Design/development/distribution of the PowerPack (a free 100-day supply of multivitamins with folic acid, a life plan, and program materials), other print materials, and audio/video ads
3. Creation of the azdhs.gov/powermea2z website, where individuals complete an interactive quiz that reinforces preconception health messages prior to ordering a PowerPack and outreach partners order program materials in bulk quantities. Periodic website updates are conducted to remain relevant and accurate.
4. Creation of a sustainable statewide infrastructure by establishing innovative community partnerships (e.g., organizations serving indigenous populations, WIC, family resource centers, military-serving organizations) and offering educational presentations to current and future health care providers (e.g., certified nursing assistants, registered dietitians, health clinic staff)
5. Paid and earned media (programmatic, social media, print, radio, television, parenting publications, email newsletters) to promote the website, PowerPacks, and educational materials
6. Refresh the program’s image and creative assets to continue to appeal to our priority audience. Power Me continues to maintain an ongoing network of supporters as a cost-effective way to meet our goals and improve future birth outcomes.
7. Bi-annual evaluation (in English and Spanish) with priority audience to assess various aspects of the program, website, advertising, etc.

Core Components & Practice Activities		
Core Component	Activities	Operational Details
Messaging	Expansion of key folic acid messages to include the benefits to the person’s health as well as helping to prevent neural tube defects	Include messaging in program materials, website, media, email newsletters, etc.
PowerPacks, print materials, audio/video ads	Design/development/distribution of the PowerPack (a free 100-day supply of multivitamins with folic acid, a life plan, and program	Engage a graphic designer (or advertising agency) to design elements of the PowerPack, including a custom label for the multivitamins and print materials. Design



	materials), other print materials, and produce audio/video ads	and produce audio/video ads. Test pieces with priority audience. Secure a warehouse/fulfillment solution and establish close communication to distribute PowerPacks and bulk materials.
Website	Creation of the azdhs.gov/powermea2z website, where individuals complete an interactive quiz that reinforces preconception health messages prior to ordering a PowerPack and outreach partners order program materials in bulk quantities. Periodic website updates are conducted to remain relevant and accurate.	Engage a graphic designer and web developer to create the website. Periodically test site with priority audience and partners. Manage online order forms and domain renewal. Periodically update website content and images. Ensure website is integrity and security are maintained. Conduct periodic testing to ensure website stability.
Sustainable partnership infrastructure	Creation of a sustainable statewide infrastructure by establishing innovative community partnerships (e.g., organizations serving indigenous populations, WIC, family resource centers, military-serving organizations) and offering educational presentations to current and future health care providers (e.g., certified nursing assistants, registered dietitians, health clinic staff)	Create and maintain a spreadsheet of potential outreach partners, including all contact information, outreach notes, and dates. Email and call contacts and note what occurred to ensure personalized follow-up. Conduct periodic follow-up to ensure partners have an adequate supply of Power Me materials. Provide educational presentations to outreach partners and current/future health professionals.
Paid and earned media	Paid and earned media (programmatic, social media, print, radio, television, parenting publications, email newsletters) to promote the website, PowerPacks, and educational materials	Place advertisements (or engage an advertising agency if needed). Conduct A/B testing to determine which ads are most effective at reaching and engaging the priority audience. Monitor analytics to ensure highest return on advertising investment dollars.
Program refresh	Refresh the program's image and creative assets to continue to appeal to our priority audience.	Engage a graphic designer (or advertising agency) to design new name, logo, and color options to conduct periodic focus groups with the priority audience. Based on results, refresh the program's image, website, materials, etc.



<p>Program evaluation</p>	<p>Biannual evaluation (in English and Spanish) with priority audience who has ordered PowerPacks during a specific timeframe.</p>	<p>Design a survey to evaluate engagement with the program: website use and relevance of content, duration of vitamin consumption, knowledge of importance of folic acid and changes in health-related habits as a result of Power Me's educational materials, condition of PowerPack and speed of arrival, advertising reach and effectiveness, demographic information. Offer small incentive if possible.</p>
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COMMUNITY WELLNESS

By making multivitamins with folic acid free of charge to women of reproductive age in Arizona, we removed the barrier of cost that may have deterred someone from taking a multivitamin. For most survey respondents, Power Me A2Z was their first exposure to a folic acid supplement. Seventy-four percent of those who had received their multivitamins were currently taking them. Of those who were currently taking the multivitamins, 87% reported taking them five to seven days per week, and 11% took them three to four days per week. Forty-four percent of respondents who were currently or had taken the multivitamins said they were willing to continue taking multivitamins with folic acid, even if they had to purchase them, and 99% were willing to continue taking them if they were free of charge (participants can reorder multivitamins from Power Me A2Z).

Additionally, since we partner with organizations statewide and ship individual PowerPacks all over Arizona, geographic location is not a barrier to someone receiving free vitamins to help prevent birth defects.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

Evaluation of Power Me A2Z is based on qualitative research with the priority audience and other key stakeholders, quantitative media reach analytics, the number of vitamin bottles distributed, and a participant survey with a sample of people who have ordered PowerPacks in an established timeframe.

The specific program evaluation activities and outcomes include:

- Pre-campaign survey and periodic qualitative research with the priority audience and key stakeholders (e.g., health care and public health program providers)
- In-depth interviews with a sample of numerous community outreach partners
- Field testing program materials and strategies during program development
- Number of attendees and evaluation survey results from educational presentations
- Media reach and analytics
- Number of vitamin bottles sent to individuals and outreach partners
- Biannual survey with a sample of people who have ordered PowerPacks during a specific timeframe

Prior to the creation of Power Me A2Z, women of childbearing age who could become pregnant, as well as a range of health care providers (including public health program providers) participated in focus groups, surveys, and/or in-depth interviews. Focus groups participants were recruited from geographic locations in Arizona with



a high population density or high health-related risk factors; interview participants represented a segment of identified health care providers in the state, scheduled on a voluntary basis.

Prior to the campaign, an additional 403 women (18-30 years old) participated in telephone, online, or mall-intercept surveys regarding health behaviors and health advertising; they were selected on a first-come, voluntary basis. After the major media elements of the program ran, an electronic survey link was sent to 14,638 women who had ordered PowerPacks (8,232 in Year 1 and 6,406 in Year 2), and responses were accepted from the first 500 participants each year. It should be noted that the pre- and post-campaign surveys included different methodologies and segments of the population but had certain questions in common. There was no control group and there is a chance of a self-selection bias among participants. However, trained researchers used standardized questions and approaches that encouraged honest feedback.

Biannual evaluation continues with people who have ordered PowerPacks within a specified timeframe. Findings continue to indicate that the program's call to action is effective and motivates people to go to the website to order a PowerPack. Participants indicate that they read the life plan, that the content is relevant, and they made positive health-related behavior changes as a result of education they received from Power Me A2Z.

The 2025 Power Me A2Z evaluation with people who ordered PowerPacks since the start of the new fiscal year included 573 completed surveys and 55 partial submissions. The survey was available in both English and Spanish. Before ordering a PowerPack, 70% of respondents had never taken a multivitamin with folic acid and 25% reported previous use. For most, Power Me A2Z was their first exposure to a folic acid supplement. Seventy-four percent of those who had received their multivitamins were currently taking them. Of those who were currently taking the multivitamins, 87% reported taking them five to seven days per week, and 11% took them three to four days per week. Forty-four percent of respondents who were currently or had taken the multivitamins said they were willing to continue taking multivitamins with folic acid, even if they had to purchase them, and 99% were willing to continue taking them if they were free of charge (participants can reorder multivitamins from Power Me A2Z).

Based on what they learned from Power Me A2Z, 93% of respondents stated that it is very important for women who may become pregnant to take multivitamins with folic acid. A total of 64% of respondents stated it was best to take multivitamins with folic acid prior to pregnancy, and 74% stated it was best to take them during a person's childbearing years. Two-thirds of respondents believed that health experts recommend 400 mcg of folic acid daily to help prevent birth defects.

Seventy-eight percent of respondents said they read the life plan that is in the PowerPack; sixty-three percent reported that they moved their body more, 55% said they began taking multivitamins with folic acid, and 37% stated they chose different foods as a result of what they learned on the Power Me website. Twenty-eight percent reported an improvement in their ability to cope with stress, 23% said they sought support for depression and/or anxiety, and 21% learned about healthy relationships.

Regarding substance use reduction, 20% reported avoiding alcohol, 15% reported avoiding drugs, 12% drank less alcohol and 5% stopped tobacco use after reading the life plan and/or visiting the Power Me website.

In terms of preventive health behaviors that are included in Power Me's educational materials, 30% of respondents learned about their family's medical history, 8% learned about preventing sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and 9% got vaccinated.

Overall, survey results indicate that Power Me A2Z continues to have a positive effect on its priority audience in several health-related areas of their lives.



Section 2: Implementation Guidance

COLLABORATORS AND PARTNERS

Collaboration for the Power Me A2Z program includes a research collaborator, marketing agency, warehouse and fulfillment partner, vitamin manufacturer, health care providers and public health programs across Arizona, and other Arizona Department of Health Services divisions.

Practice Collaborators and Partners			
Partner/ Collaborator	How are they involved in decision-making throughout practice processes?	How are you partnering with this group?	Does this collaborator have lived experience/come from a community impacted by the practice?
Research collaborator	<p>The researchers planned and conducted the initial focus groups and stakeholder interviews, with extensive input and approval from the State agency.</p> <p>The researchers were also involved in the creation of all educational materials and the website, based on their previous experience with another state.</p> <p>Additionally, they conducted biannual evaluation of the program and shared findings and recommendations for improvement.</p>	<p>They were collaborators for the first nine years of the Power Me A2Z program.</p> <p>Campaign evaluation is still conducted biannually with a state-contracted research firm.</p>	No
Marketing agency	<p>Based on focus group and stakeholder interview findings, the marketing agency created ads. They continue to manage the campaign's annual marketing activities.</p>	<p>We meet biweekly to analyze campaign performance and make adjustments as needed.</p> <p>We also work together to update ads to keep them fresh and engaging.</p>	No



Warehouse and fulfillment partner	We work with a state-contracted warehouse and fulfillment partner. The warehouse manager monitors inventory and ensures that individual and bulk orders are fulfilled in a timely and accurate manner.	<p>Our educational materials and vitamins are stored at room temperature. They assemble the PowerPacks and individual and bulk orders are fulfilled within the week in which they are placed.</p> <p>Monthly meetings are held with the warehouse manager to ensure operations are running smoothly and inventory levels are within acceptable levels.</p>	No
Vitamin manufacturer	We purchase our multivitamins from a vitamin manufacturer located in our state.	We provide the manufacturer with a digital file of our custom vitamin label, which they utilize for our multivitamin orders.	No
Health care providers and public health programs across Arizona	We conduct periodic focus groups to assess knowledge and awareness of Power Me A2Z in Arizona's health care provider and public health program staff population	We utilize focus group data to make informed decisions about website content, messaging, outreach methods, etc.	Health care providers and public health program staff interact with and serve our priority audience and can give experience-based input in our focus groups.
Other Arizona Department of Health Services divisions	We conduct strategic planning every few years to gather input from staff across the agency who promote Power Me A2Z in their programs	They are involved in strategic planning. Additionally, Power Me updates are provided several times a year in agency newsletters to make them aware of any changes to the program as well as remind them to promote Power Me to their program's audience.	No, they are state health department staff who promote our program to their program's audience.



REPLICATION

Since Power Me A2Z is a statewide initiative using state funds, the program can't be expanded beyond Arizona's borders. There are no requirements to receive multivitamins from Power Me other than our audience must be women who may become pregnant.

Replication of this program would require formative research costs to ensure relevance for the specific geographic location, as well as creative costs to ensure that materials are updated appropriately. As of now, this program has not been replicated elsewhere.

INTERNAL CAPACITY

Since it began, Power Me A2Z has been managed by one state health department staff member, who also has other job duties besides Power Me. Partnerships with a research firm, marketing agency, and warehouse/fulfillment partner are vitally important to the program's success.

PRACTICE TIMELINE

The timeline provided below reflects the initial planning, researching, and implementation phase of the program. Subsequent years look very different, with advertising occurring during nine months of the year and multivitamin and bulk orders occurring year-round. Biannual evaluation typically occurs in the spring.

Phase: Planning/Pre-Implementation		
Activity Description	Time Needed	Responsible Party
Meetings with research firm, approval process for all plans, guides, etc.	Month 1	Research firm with state health department input/approval
Stakeholder interview guide, logistical plan for focus groups	Months 2/3	Research firm with state health department input/approval
Focus group guides	Month 4	Research firm with state health department input/approval



Phase: Implementation

Activity Description	Time Needed	Responsible Party
Survey instrument, key word analysis and mining, focus group implementation and report	Months 5/6	Research firm with state health department input/approval
Written report of focus group findings	Month 7	Research firm with state health department input/approval
Draft mock ups, storyboards, scripts, website as directed by research findings, field test questionnaires, logistical plan for field test	Month 8	Research firm and marketing agency with state health department input/approval
Campaign concepts, strategic communications/campaign plan	Month 9	Research firm and marketing agency with state health department input/approval
Development of website, print collateral, training materials for providers, earned media messages, radio/TV spots	Months 10-12	Research firm and marketing agency with state health department input/approval
Proof of performance report, detailed outline of media and match, total number of spots aired, as well as grassroots partnerships	Month 13	Research firm and marketing agency with state health department input/approval



Phase: Sustainability

Activity Description	Time Needed	Responsible Party
Outreach and education, campaign management	Month 14	Marketing agency and state health department
Outreach and education, campaign management/project management	Months 15-22	Marketing agency and state health department
Survey instrument post phone survey, survey instrument website survey, WIC survey instrument, survey instrument Medicaid provider evaluation, analyze partner evaluation of program, digital advance data mining and report	Months 23/24	Research firm

PRACTICE COST

The program cost is \$400,000 annually. The first two years of the program involved initial planning, researching, and implementation of the program. The budget reflected below represents the first year.

The years following implementation have had very different budget distributions. Currently, it is distributed between the marketing agency, the warehouse/fulfillment partner, and the state health department. Contact Power Me staff if more details are desired.

Approximately 30,000 PowerPacks are distributed annually, between individual orders to Arizonans statewide and bulk orders to outreach partners. The marketing agency estimates an average of over 6,100,000 media impressions per year over the last five years, with educational awareness messaging regarding the importance of folic acid being delivered statewide to women who can get pregnant.

Budget

Activity/Item	Brief Description	Quantity	Total
Fulfillment	Vitamin and educational material purchase and storage	30,000	\$190,000



Campaign Outreach	Network building Email and website hosting Stakeholder collaboration		\$40,000
Media/Public Relations	Media promotion	>7,500,000 media impressions	\$88,000
Campaign Evaluation	WIC and home visiting program Evaluation tool development Topline report		\$18,600
Continuing Education for Professionals	Presentations at conferences Grand Rounds presentations		\$63,400
Total Amount:			\$400,000.00

LESSONS LEARNED

We have consistently received feedback from survey respondents that they are thankful for Power Me’s vitamins and materials, that they would not have continued taking multivitamins with folic acid if it weren’t for Power Me providing them for free, that the sign-up process to receive a PowerPack was simple and it arrived in a timely manner, and they are noticing the additional health benefits that come from taking a multivitamin with folic acid.

The website and educational materials are casual in tone in order to appeal to a younger audience. We update the website as needed to reflect changes in preferred language in areas such as gender identity, nutrition, and active living. Although we never received negative feedback about the images on the website or in the educational materials, we ensured that when we refreshed the image of the program, we included a variety of ethnicities, body sizes, gender identities, etc. to appeal to a wide audience.

As a State agency, we needed to find a creative solution to purchasing vitamins, since the manufacturer of the vitamin that best meets our needs is not a state contractor. Our warehouse/fulfillment center purchases the vitamins on our behalf for a small markup fee. Since its inception, Power Me A2Z has been and continues to be a statewide initiative. Our audience is women who may become pregnant, which can’t be expanded upon nor can we serve people outside of state of Arizona. We continue to adhere to the State Statute by providing multivitamins with folic acid and education to people in Arizona who can get pregnant.



NEXT STEPS

Since it is mandated in State Statute that ADHS distribute folic acid supplements and provide counseling on their proper use, the program will continue to distribute multivitamins with folic acid and educational materials while staying within the \$400,000 yearly budget.

We will continue to make minor improvements to the website and educational materials as needs arise.

RESOURCES PROVIDED

PowerMeA2Z features an interactive website filled with health information for women who can get pregnant as well as their partners and families. As noted, women who may become pregnant can order a free PowerPack that includes a 100-day supply of multivitamins with folic acid, a health magazine, and additional campaign materials. Marketing has included 30-second radio and television commercials, social media platforms, programmatic ads (including display, retargeting, over-the-top (OTT), connected TV (CTV), full episode player (FEP), and pre-roll), Google Search (ad words), Arizona parenting publications, flyers and brochures (English/Spanish), and a nail file with a vitamin reminder message. We also entered into a one-time four-month partnership with a statewide media association to reach audiences we had not previously reached. Outreach included broadcast, digital, and newspaper.

Health care provider toolkits, with a sample of all educational materials, and continuing education training events were key outreach strategies in the initial phases of the program's launch. Continuing education webinars continue to be provided periodically.

[Campaign website](#)

[Health resource order form on website \(bulk orders\)](#)

[English ad 2024](#)

[Spanish ad 2024](#)

