

The value of awareness campaigns in the head and neck cancer setting: an evaluation of the European Head and Neck Society's *Make Sense* campaign

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Introduction

In Europe, head and neck cancer (HNC) is the 6th most common type of cancer¹ and poses a significant but widely unknown public health issue, with large discrepancies in the prognosis and quality of care for patients across Europe. Early detection of HNC remains a major challenge in Europe, with approximately 60% of people presenting with locally advanced disease at diagnosis, where outcomes are poor.² Beyond the benefits of screening, awareness campaigns are an effective tool for early detection and encourage those in need to seek medical advice early. The EHNS conducted two pan-European surveys (the 'About Face' series) in 2008 and 2009.

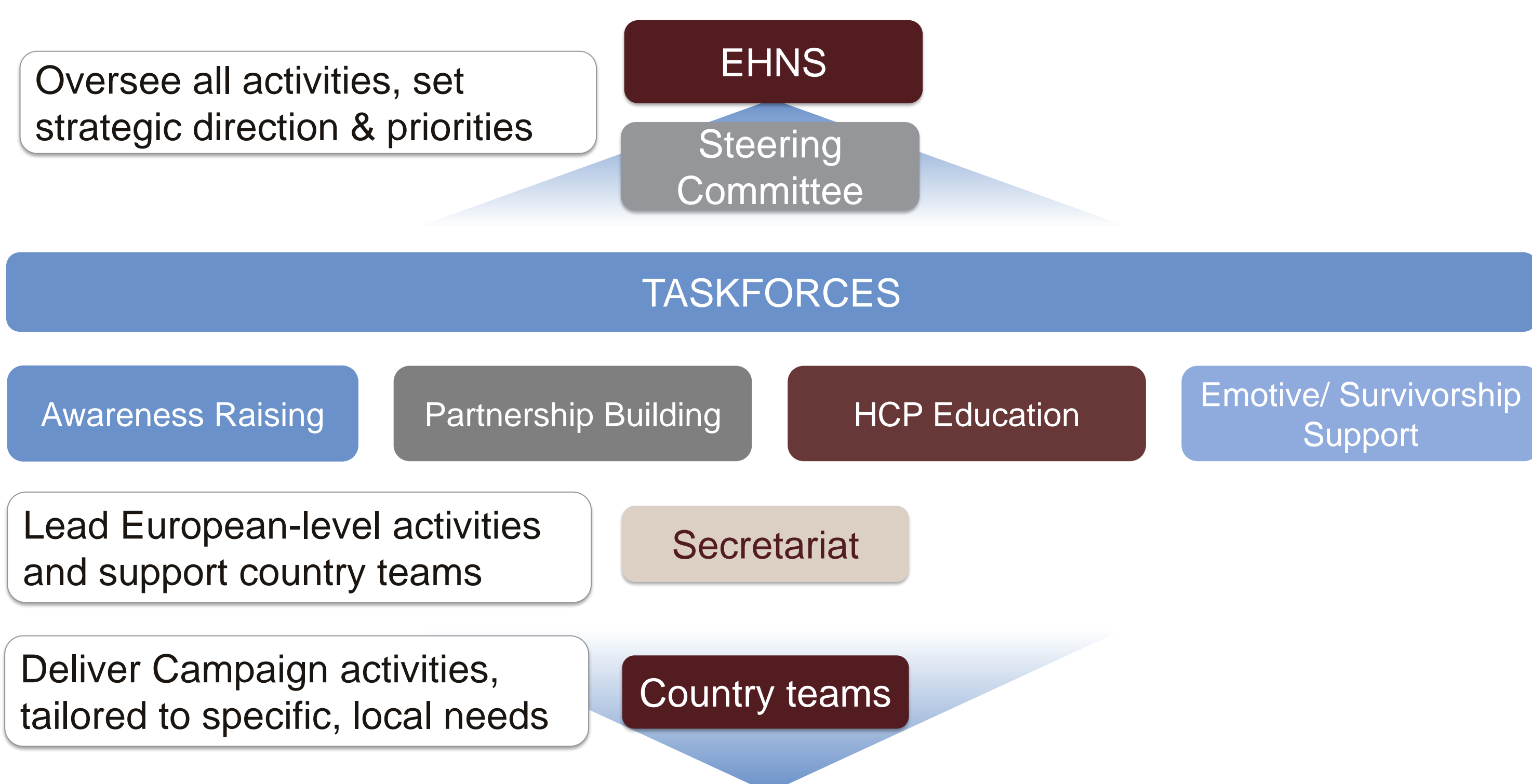
- About Face 1 surveyed 7,000 members of the public from 8 countries and revealed 77% of participants were unaware of the term head and neck cancer.
- About Face 2 surveyed 104 patients with head and neck cancer across 6 countries; unmet needs were identified at key junctures of the patient journey from pre-diagnosis, diagnosis, treatment and post-treatment.
- A follow up survey conducted by *Make Sense* in 2020 revealed ongoing challenges with awareness, with only 45% of respondents stating they would visit a healthcare professional should they experience one HNC symptom for 3 weeks or longer – despite this being the course of action endorsed by medical experts.

Methods

An innovative, multi-channel, global awareness campaign called *Make Sense* was launched by the EHNS in 2013 with the goal of raising awareness of HNC and ultimately improving outcomes for patients.

The EHNS is a multidisciplinary body that brings together medical experts from many disciplines and patient organisations involved in any aspect of HNC. Its *Make Sense* campaign established four taskforces to focus and maximise activities. The Campaign hosts an annual awareness week and aims to encourage earlier presentation, diagnosis and referral by educating patients and doctors, as well as improve patient care by ensuring patients have the right support through every stage of the disease.

Figure 1. *Make Sense* Campaign Structure



Results

The Campaign, spearheaded by an annual awareness week, now in its 10th year, boasts participation from over 30 patient advocacy groups, and leading healthcare professionals and individuals from the HNC community in 20+ countries each year.

Figure 2. *Make Sense* Campaign Participation

Armenia	Denmark	Italy	Serbia
Austria	Finland	Kazakhstan	South Korea
Belarus	France	Netherlands	Slovenia
Belgium	Germany	Norway	Spain
Bulgaria	Greece	Poland	Switzerland
Brazil	Hungary	Portugal	Turkey
Czech Republic	Ireland	Romania	UK
	Israel	Russia	

The Campaign has reached millions of people via the website, traditional and social media, early diagnosis days, educational resource dissemination, policy activities in the EU-parliament and beyond.³

Figure 3. *Make Sense* Campaign 2021 Media Results

>6,140,000 people reached on Facebook
>1,030,000 impressions on Twitter
>8,840,000 total social media reach
+266% increase in reach since 2020

>1,730 pieces of media coverage
>100,000,000 potential media reach*
+33% increase in media pieces since 2020

*Includes organic and promoted content

*Based on total outlet audience figures

Educational Resources

The Campaign has produced more than 30 different materials, including factsheets, infographics, posters, leaflets and videos, aimed at patients, public and HCPs, with more than 365,000 copies adapted and distributed across Europe. Topics of focus have included:

- Signs and symptoms, including the Campaign's foundational 1for3 messaging
- Risk factors, including lifestyle, demographics and HPV

Figure 4. Foundational 1for3 Campaign message

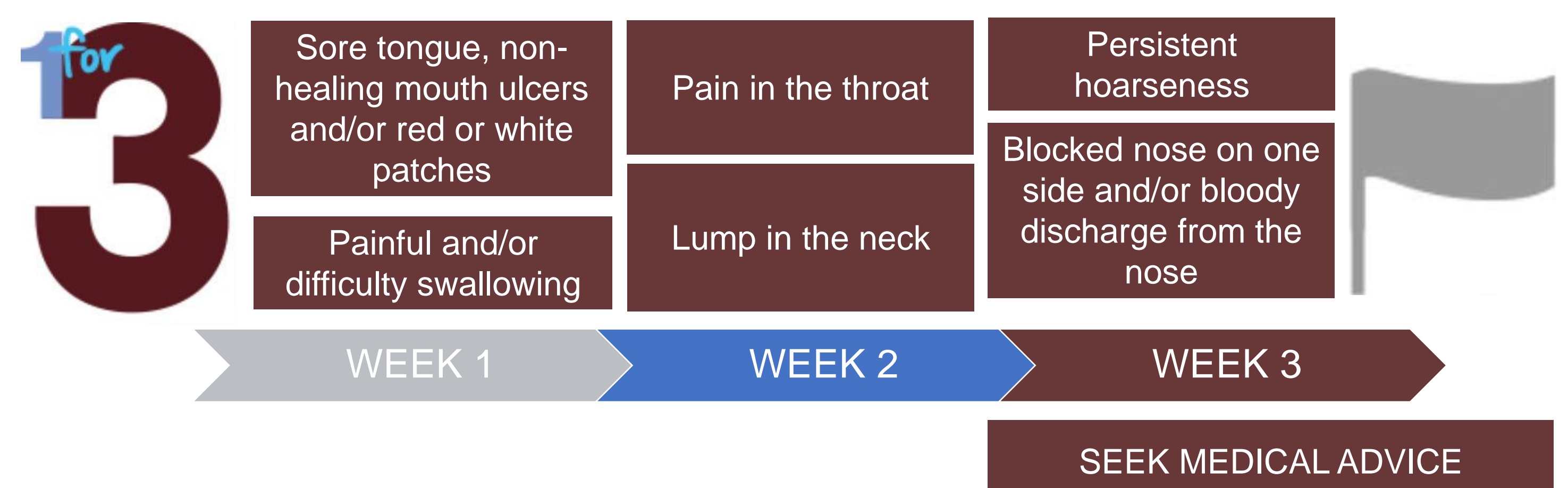


Figure 5. Early Diagnosis Screening Day Participation

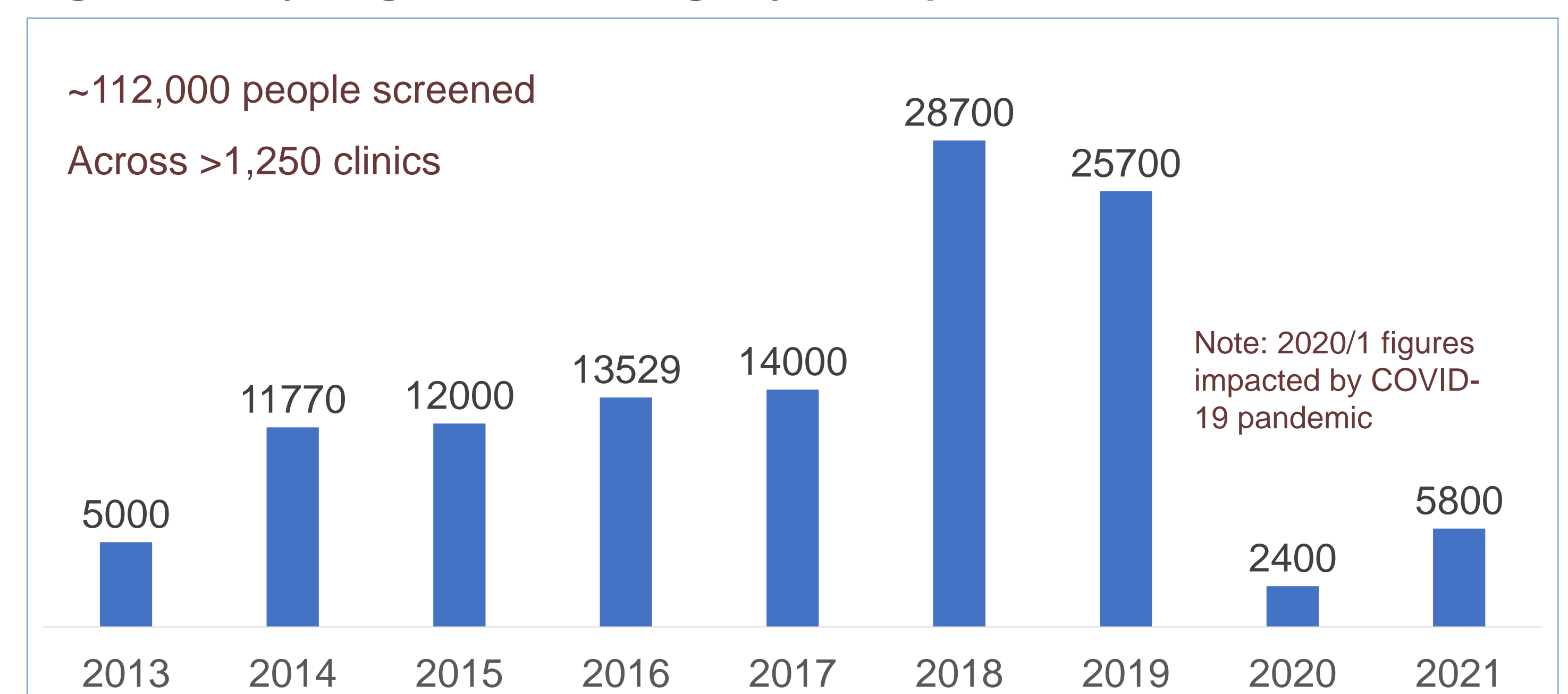


Figure 6. Policy Engagement Activities

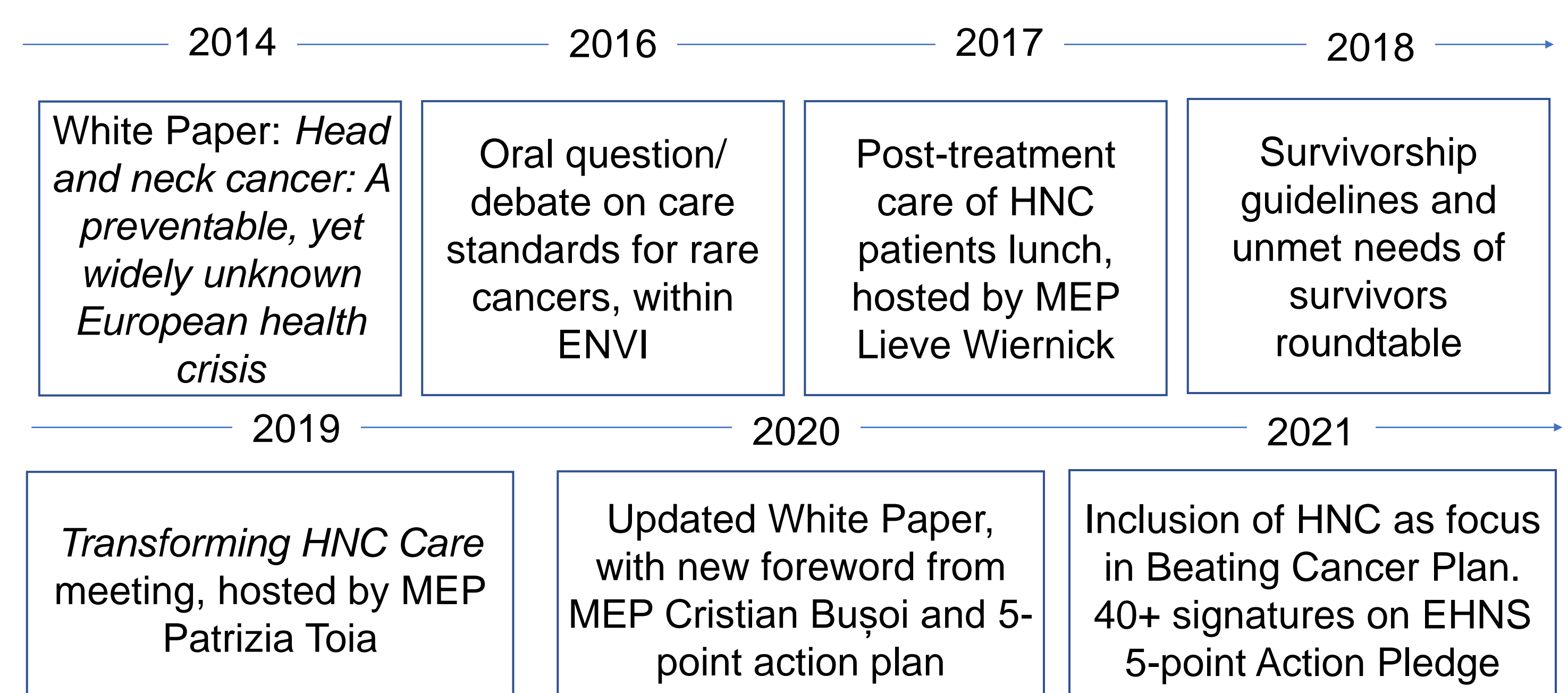


Figure 7. Awareness Raising Activities



Conclusions

The EHNS *Make Sense* campaign is a unique and exciting initiative that proves the value and continued need for awareness raising activity in the HNC setting.

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Acknowledgments

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