



Ad Standards Community Panel
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AdStandards.com.au

Advertising Standards Bureau Limited
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Case Report

1	Case Number	0171/19
2	Advertiser	SA Health
3	Product	Community Awareness
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV - Free to air
5	Date of Determination	12/06/2019
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

- Other Social Values
- 2.3 - Violence Causes alarm and distress
- 2.3 - Violence Causes alarm and distress to Children
- 2.3 - Violence Graphic Depictions

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement features a woman named Terrie. In 'Terrie's voice tip', Terrie encourages anyone who smokes to record their voice in case they suffer the same fate as her. Terrie's grandchildren only ever heard her speak through her artificial voice box; something Terrie regretted. There is a call to action reminding smokers that smoking causes immediate damage to their health and promotes quit smoking support services; besmokefree.com.au, Quitline and the My QuitBuddy app.

THE COMPLAINT

A sample of comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

My young children traumatised... in particular my 7 year old hysterical crying having nightmares. Advertisement on before 8pm on family show. Advertisement needs to be on later time slot targeting teenagers and adults



My children are terrified of this commercial and cry when they see it. Seems to be on more frequently. My children should be able to watch the afl with their family and not be frightened to the point of tears.

This ad is being run in prime time and is run often. I am a reformed smoker and I find this ad offensive. I understand the need to run anti smoking campaigns. The one that helped me was the one that had the line that I could quit one cigarette at a time. This was achievable and did not make me feel sick. Why don't you have reformed smokers in your ads. This woman died and that is sad but she does not say once that she wished she didn't smoke, just that she wished she had recorded her voice. I found her getting ready for the day ad offensive as well and was happy when that disappeared. She is American and not relatable. Show an ad that has someone who has benefited from quitting in real terms. Not someone who did nothing and then died. There have been some excellent anti smoking ads. This is not one of them. I would never use this ad as a reason to give up smoking. I don't want to watch it and I'm sure no one else does either. If you have to show it change the times. Kids should not have to watch this during their tv time. I think it's obvious that you do not understand why people smoke or what works in helping them quit. Not these ads.

I hate this commercial, my wife hates and so do my friends. Every time it comes on we change stations and don't change back in case it comes on again. We are not smokers so we shouldn't be exposed to this type of extreme shock based advertising.

I normally do not complain, in fact this is the first time I have as I feel strongly about this advert. My 12 year old saw this advert and was so distressed she started crying, my husband and I both also found the ad confronting and distressing too. My mother died from terminal brain cancer 3 years ago and she was frail and had no hair from chemo just like this lady. Any person who has or knows someone with cancer or knows someone who has died from cancer would find this ad very distressing. I know the reasoning behind it is to save lives but please have consideration for people who have or know someone going through cancer. There are other cancer ads that give you the message a bit more subtly, there is no need to keep trying to shock people! It is hard enough without being confronted with images on tv of what this terrible disease does to people. My daughter should never have seen this advert, she is a child and has seen enough in real life without being reminded every day. I too do not need a daily reminder of the torture our family went through every day for 7 months as we slowly watched my mum die. At the very least please do not run this ad during the hours children watch tv.

Cancer does not only hit people who smoke. The ad is scary for younger children and adults alike, like something from a horror movie. I feel offended that someone in this condition is used for an advertisement. If this approach applies regarding cigarette



smoking then can we allow other products ie alcohol the same disgusting scenes on our screens.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complainant/s regarding this advertisement include the following:

I am responding to your request for information regarding the 'Terrie's voice tip' smoking cessation advertisement, which commenced airing in South Australia on Tuesday 7 May 2019 and is scheduled to run until Saturday 15 June 2019. 'Terrie's voice tip' is a 30-second television advertisement that has a 'W' rating.

'Terrie's voice tip' is one of a series of smoking cessation advertisements developed by the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) featuring Terrie Hall.

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Terrie was diagnosed with smoking-related oral and throat cancer in 2001 when she was just 40 years old and required surgery to have her larynx (voice box) removed. Terrie quit smoking that same year. She died from smoking-related cancer in 2013 at the age of 53. In 'Terrie's voice tip', Terrie encourages anyone who smokes to record their voice in case they suffer the same fate as her. Terrie's grandchildren only ever heard her speak through her artificial voice box; something Terrie regretted. Terrie's message is powerful and can apply to any smoker and any family of a smoker, regardless of nationality or gender. The main aim of the advertisement is to encourage and motivate all people who smoke to quit now to avoid having to go through what Terrie went through. Terrie wanted to share her story in an effort to prevent others from suffering like she did.

'Terrie's voice tip' was selected for use as part of South Australia's smoking cessation social marketing campaign because negative health effects advertisements using testimonial stories generally result in more quitting attempts than advertisements without these features. Additionally, these types of advertisements have the greatest potential impact on adult smokers. Advertisements that arouse strong negative emotions also receive greater viewer attention and are remembered more readily than those that do not. Messages describing the serious health consequences of smoking have the highest ratings for perceived effectiveness and memorability. Furthermore, recent quitters who felt advertising had contributed to their quit attempt recalled these types of advertisements best.



Researchers in the United States estimate the 'Tips from former smokers' campaign, which includes 'Terrie's voice tips' has prompted 1.64 million Americans to attempt to quit smoking. South Australia aired Terrie's 'Getting ready' advertisement in 2016 and the vast majority of surveyed smokers found it easy to understand and believable. Of all the anti-smoking advertisements aired in South Australia between 1 July and 31 December 2019, the Terrie 'Getting ready' advertisement had the highest recall. It was also perceived by surveyed smokers to be the most effective of the advertisements. As a result of seeing the Terrie 'Getting ready' advertisement, 32% of those surveyed thought about quitting, 18% decreased the number of cigarettes they smoke and 12.5% spoke to their GP about quitting.

'Getting ready' was the subject of an Ad Standards case (case number 0058/14) in 2014 when the advertisement was aired by the Cancer Institute NSW. The Board found the advertisement did not breach section 2.3 of the Code or any other sections of the Code and the complaints were dismissed.

Ad Standards has identified section 2.3 of the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics (Violence) in its initial assessment of the complaint. Terrie's voice and physical disfigurements were caused by smoking-related cancers and resulting surgeries. Her disfigurements were not caused by violence and are not being used to incite or encourage violence. The advertisement supports and encourages smokers to make quit smoking attempts in order to improve their future health and wellbeing. Smokers are encouraged to visit www.besmokefree.com.au where they can find a range of quit smoking information and supports. The advertisement also promotes Cancer Council SA's Quitline and the Commonwealth's My QuitBuddy app.

As requested, a response to each of the other parts of Section 2 has been provided below:

- 2.1 - Discrimination or vilification – The 'Terrie's voice tip' advertisement gave Terrie the opportunity to be heard; leading the way for other people with physical differences to be recognised, acknowledged and respected. As the AANA Code of Ethics: Practice notes, "A realistic depiction of people with a disability can be acceptable, even if the advertisement may be upsetting to some members of the community, where there is an important message being delivered".*
- 2.2 – Exploitative or degrading – Terrie Hall gave full and informed consent to appear in the 'Terrie's voice tip' advertisement. On the CDC website it states that, "Rather than retreat, Terrie shared her struggles with the world". Terrie and her daughter, Dana, gave a number of interviews about how smoking had affected their lives. Since Terrie's death, her family has continued to give permission for the 'Terrie's tips' advertisements to be used to help others worldwide. 'Terrie's voice tip' depicts Terrie's strength and dignity rather than exploiting her vulnerability.*
- 2.4 – Sex, sexuality and nudity – There is no sex, sexuality or nudity suggested or depicted in the 'Terrie's voice tip' advertisement.*



- 2.5 – *Language* – There is no profane language used in the ‘Terrie’s voice tip’ advertisement.
- 2.5 – *Health and safety* – ‘Terrie’s voice tip’ is a public health advertisement with the objective of motivating smokers to make a quit smoking attempt.
- 2.7 – *Clearly distinguishable advertising* – ‘Terrie’s voice tip’ is clearly distinguishable as an advertising or marketing communication. It is clearly branded as an SA Health advertisement and also includes the logos of the Quitline and My QuitBuddy quit smoking initiatives.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the complaints received regarding ‘Terrie’s voice tip’. SA Health is seeking a favourable determination in order to air this effective public health advertisement in the future.

THE DETERMINATION

The Ad Standards Community Panel (Panel) considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the AANA Code of Ethics (the Code).

The Panel noted the complainants’ concerns that the advertisement is confronting, distressing, overly graphic, unnecessary, frightening to children and should not be aired during prime time television.

The Panel viewed the advertisement and the noted advertiser’s response.

The Panel considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.3 of the Code. Section 2.3 states: "Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not present or portray violence unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised".

The Panel noted this television advertisement features a woman named Terrie. In ‘Terrie’s voice tip’, Terrie encourages anyone who smokes to record their voice in case they suffer the same fate as her. Terrie’s grandchildren only ever heard her speak through her artificial voice box; something Terrie regretted. There is a call to action reminding smokers that smoking causes immediate damage to their health and promotes quit smoking support services; besmokefree.com.au, Quitline and the My QuitBuddy app.

The Panel noted that this advertisement received a ‘W’ rating from FreeTV, which means that it may be broadcast at any time except during P and C programs or adjacent to P or C periods. The Panel noted that P and C stands for preschool and children’s.

The Panel noted it had previously considered a similar advertisement featuring



'Terrie's getting ready tips' in case 0058/14, in which:

The Board agreed that the images displayed in the advertisement were confronting, in particular the image of the hole in her neck and then putting her hands free device into her throat. The Board considered however, that the images of the woman are relevant to the important public health and safety message that the advertisement is attempting to convey.

In this case and considering the M classification, the Board considered that the graphic nature of the images was justified by the important public health message...the Board considered in the current case, that the broadcast of this advertisement in a television environment was not inappropriate and was not inappropriately graphic considering the important public health message that the advertiser is endeavouring to communicate."

Consistent with the view above, the Panel considered in the current case, that the broadcast of this advertisement in a television environment was not inappropriate and was not inappropriately graphic considering the important public health message that the advertiser is endeavouring to communicate.

The Panel determined that the advertisement did not breach section 2.3 of the Code.

The Panel noted that some complaints were in reference to non-smokers being subjected to the advertisement and that that was unfair.

The Panel considered that a broad advertising campaign must reach a broad audience, and that this therefore means that the advertisement may be viewed by people outside the target audience which is not of itself a breach of the Code.

Finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on other grounds, the Panel dismissed the complaints.

