



## GOING VIRAL:

# Utilising online advertising in the DEVA trial

Dequalinium versus usual care antibiotics for the treatment of bacterial vaginosis

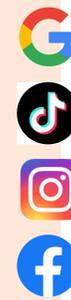
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### Why did we need to advertise?

- To publicise the DEVA trial to women across the UK.
- Direct traffic to the DEVA trial website ([www.devastudy.ac.uk](http://www.devastudy.ac.uk)).
- To remotely screen and recruit women with symptoms of bacterial vaginosis (BV) onto the DEVA trial via the website expression of interest (EOI) form.
- Support UK sexual health services to provide BV care to women unable to be seen at their GP or sexual health clinic.

### Creating the adverts

1. Collaborated with a marketing agency.
2. Established the target population; women in the UK of reproductive age.
3. Chose the advertising platforms: **Google, Facebook, Instagram and TikTok.**
4. Collaborated with PPI and sexual health clinic staff to design adverts.
5. Chose images for social media adverts; split into three age categories (18-23, 24-35, 36-40+) and chose search terms for Google starting with 'Generic' and 'Treatment' terms.



### Results and Insights – how did they do?

- **Two advertising campaigns were run on social media** (campaign 1: 21 August 2021 – 06 October 2021 and campaign 2: 23 February 2022-18 May 2022)
- **Google Ads used from the start of the first advertising campaign throughout the trial** (21 August 2021 to date) with varying daily budgets.
- Banned from TikTok hours after going live, for violating a recently updated policy on clinical trial advertising.
- **Total cost of advertising ~£34,000** (not including NCTU or site staffing costs).

Fig 1: Still of most engaged with social media advert

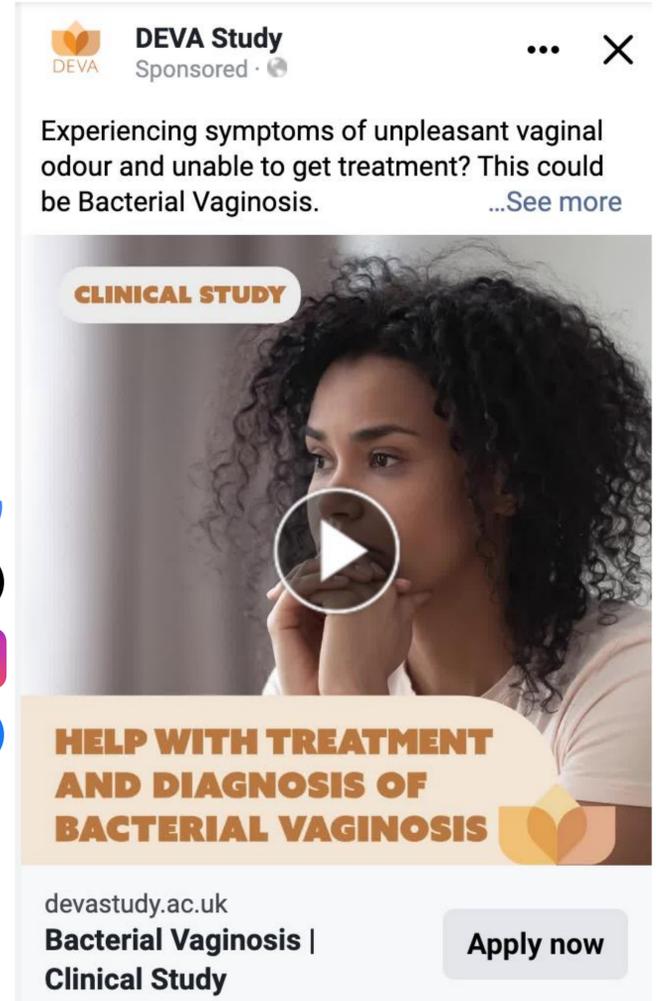
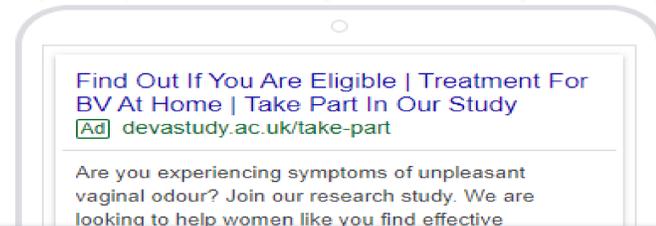


Fig 2: Example of DEVA search engine advert run throughout the study



### TRIAL IMPACT

- ✓ **1721** EOI forms completed
- ✓ **1159** eligible patients
- ✓ **287** completed econsent forms
- ✓ **100** participants recruited
- ✓ **51%** overall trial recruitment

Table 1: DEVA advertising campaign insights

Platform	Most engaged (age group)	Total impressions	Advert clicks* %	EOI completion* %	Cost (£)
Facebook & Instagram	24-35 36-40+	1,017,691	5.89	0.95	£10,025.69
Google	25-34 45-54	90,834	8.29	3.17	£7,302.44

\*Average across entire advertising duration

### Summary – was it worth it?

- Online advertising is essential to publicise trials with remote recruitment to potential patients online.
- Online recruitment for DEVA has improved diversity by recruiting patients from England, Scotland, Wales and N. Ireland (recruiting clinics in England and Wales only).
- Engaged participants with 90% providing primary outcome data.
- Enabled participant recruitment at a time when opening sites was challenging (during and for a period after COVID-19).

### Challenges

Cost	Effective targeting	Google Optimisation	Research Naïve 3 <sup>rd</sup> parties	Advert fatigue
Design and marketing expertise, staffing costs	Social media policy makes effective targeting for health conditions hard	Optimises on engagement; not always most suitable patients	Difficulties with understanding regulatory requirements	Social medias become fatigued if they see adverts more than 2 or 3 times



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