

Could it be bipolar?

Evaluation report –
executive summary

June 2023

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Evaluation
carried out by
Fiveways NP Ltd





Could it be bipolar?

In the UK, the **average diagnosis time** after first telling a healthcare professional about bipolar symptoms is **9.5 years**.

The aim of the campaign was to bring down diagnosis times for those who are living with bipolar symptoms but who are yet to be diagnosed.

The campaign ran between October 2022 and April 2023.

The campaign encouraged people to take an online questionnaire, the **Mood Disorder Questionnaire (MDQ)**. Those whose MDQ result advised further medical assessment for bipolar, and those whose result didn't advise further medical assessment but who remained concerned, were encouraged to take 5 actions:

- 1 Download/use the Bipolar UK Mood Tracker app to track mood, medication, emotions and sleep patterns over time.
- 2 See their GP to show them the results of the questionnaire and data on the app. The GP would then decide whether or not a referral to secondary care for an assessment for bipolar was appropriate.
- 3 Read Bipolar UK web content about:
 - understanding bipolar: www.bipolaruk.org/understanding-bipolar
 - getting a diagnosis of bipolar: www.bipolaruk.org/diagnosing-bipolar
- 4 Access Bipolar UK's peer support services: eCommunity, Peer Support Line and Peer Support Groups.
- 5 Take a survey to help us evaluate the campaign.

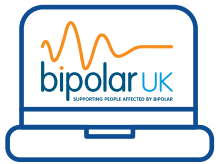


“ I know the steps and what follows after receiving a much-needed diagnosis. I know I am not alone in this boat and that there is support out there.” *(feedback from survey respondent)*



Could it be bipolar? | Key areas of success

1.5 million social media users	IMPRESSIONS	LINK CLICKS	VIDEO VIEWS
Facebook	1,314,093	49,525	417
Instagram	111,069	2,631	30,292
Twitter	68,583	1,389	14,200
TOTAL	1,493,745	53,545	44,909



An estimated 18,305 people engaged with our MDQ*

*Unique page views with an average time of over 3 minutes

The independent evaluation concluded that the Could it be bipolar? campaign:

- Effectively prompted and encouraged people to make progress towards finding out whether or not they have bipolar.
- Developed participants' understanding of bipolar symptoms and the process of getting a diagnosis.
- Enabled people to access other Bipolar UK resources.
- Delivered a positive experience for users.
- Drove a significant number of people to the Bipolar UK website through effective PR and online promotion.



7.7 million people through PR activity



11 pieces of media coverage specifically about the campaign



35 links in the press to the Bipolar UK campaign page on the website

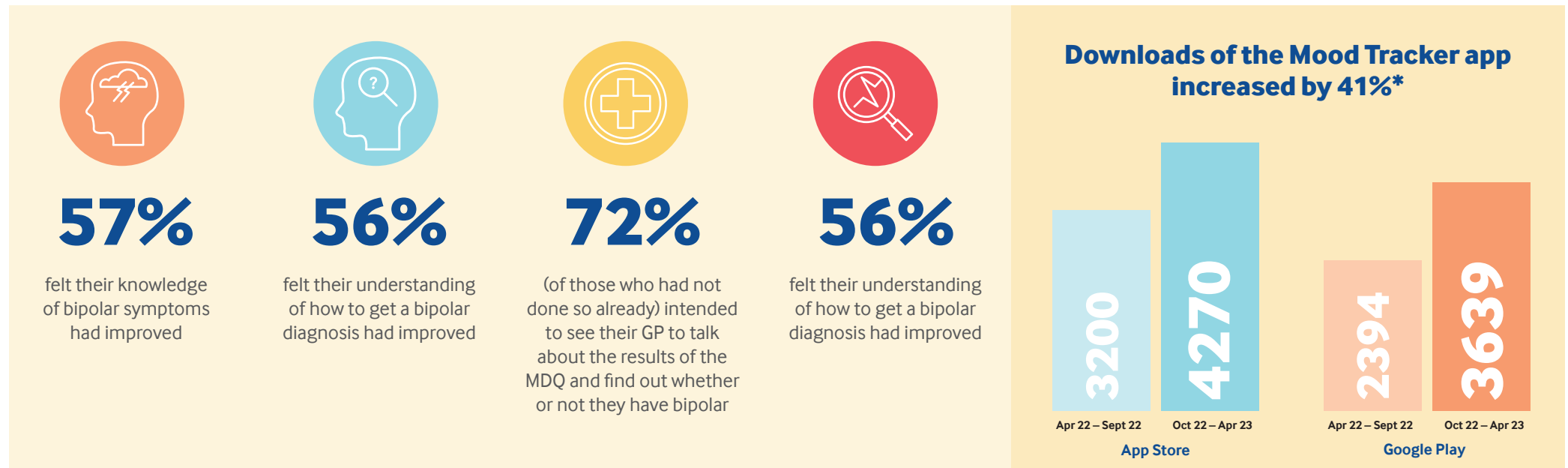
“I’m glad I took it [the MDQ]. It makes things a lot clearer. I feel like I’m not some kind of freak.”

(Feedback from survey respondent)



Could it be bipolar? | Campaign impact

The evaluation found that for many people who did not have a bipolar diagnosis and whose answers to the MDQ advised them to seek further medical treatment, the campaign prompted changes in knowledge, opinions and feelings about bipolar symptoms and getting a diagnosis.



“ [...] having found this site and questionnaire, it feels validating. I will contact my GP with this knowledge and push again for concerns to be taken seriously.”

“ I now understand that my granddaughter’s behaviours could be related to bipolar [...]. I know now that she needs to be assessed for bipolar and hopefully get the proper treatment before it’s too late.”

“ I feel more emboldened to persevere in the work of getting a diagnosis despite the difficulties, knowing I’m not alone in finding it difficult.”



Could it be bipolar? | Campaign 3-month follow-up

Three months later, follow-up research (a second survey and qualitative interviews) revealed that the campaign had prompted people to take actions that might lead to a quicker diagnosis.

Action 1: Make a GP appointment

65% had contacted their GP to make an appointment to discuss the results of the MDQ (a further 13% intended to). Those who hadn't contacted their GP mentioned already having appointments with the mental health team, having difficulty in getting appointments, preferring self-management to medication and lack of confidence that they would be listened to.

"If I hadn't found those [Bipolar UK] resources or the questionnaire I wouldn't have contacted my doctor. I wouldn't have felt as confident or had the same level of conviction."

80% of those agreed that doing the MDQ was a "fairly" or "very" important part of making progress towards finding out if they had bipolar.

"[The MDQ] provided essential, historical evidence for my GP to study and discuss. A great help when it is normally very difficult to explain my day-to-day emotions."

"[The MDQ] helped me understand which symptoms to look out for in [...] hypomania."

Action 2: Download/use the Mood Tracker app

- 71% had downloaded the Mood Tracker app
- 66% of them had used it
- 89% who had used it described using it as "fairly" or "very" important in making progress towards finding out if they had bipolar.

"The most useful advice I was given was to use the Bipolar UK Mood Tracker app and bring the entries as evidence."

"It showed me a clear change in mood and behaviour that I was unaware of at the time."

"It helped me to get closer to understanding myself better and to gain an understanding of bipolar."

Action 3: Read the information on Bipolar UK's website

- 85% had read the information on Bipolar UK's website
- 65% of whom had found it "very" or "extremely" useful
- Survey respondents were asked for three words to describe the Could it be bipolar? resources (see page 7)



“ For the first time in my life, things are starting to make sense. ”
(feedback from survey respondent)

Could it be bipolar? | Areas for consideration

The evaluation also revealed some areas for Bipolar UK to consider when seeking to build on this campaign.



There is an ongoing need for Bipolar UK to work with GPs to build their understanding of bipolar.

“The GP has previously been dismissive of [my] suggestion it could be [bipolar] and I was told to just ask a therapist. After a manic episode with family, and having found this site and questionnaire, it feels validating. I will contact GP with this knowledge and push again for [our] concerns to be taken seriously.”

If the profile of the evaluation participants is reflective of the profile of those interacting with the campaign, then there is a need to ensure Bipolar UK’s messages reach more **men**, more **people from ethnic minority backgrounds** and more **people aged younger than 35**.



“I’ve been blown away by how helpful Bipolar UK has been as a resource. Thank you all.”

(feedback from survey respondent)

Could it be bipolar? | Campaign feedback

Survey respondents were asked for three words to describe the Could it be bipolar? resources:

