

Media, Communication & Advocacy



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What We Are Going to Cover Today

- Building a trustworthy relationship with media
- Benefits of Media
- Public Health Communications Types and Tips
- Advocacy

What Model do You Use to Communicate?

- Oakland County uses a spokesperson model with specific leaders serving in this role.
- Our Communications Officer, Bill Mullan also speaks to the media
- Public Health PIO is primarily behind the scenes leading the Health Division communication team, coordinating asset development and dissemination Media
- Department of Communications leads coordination of communication across county departments. Provides support as needed, e.g. during COVID

What Model do You Use to Communicate?

- Tell us about your agency
- Are any of you spokespersons?
- Are any of you content experts who speak with the media?
- Are any of you a PIO or provide communications support?
- Any roles we missed?

About Today

- Tell us what you would most like to get out of this presentation?



Communications Assets

- Templates
- News Release/Press Release
- Media Advisory
- Media Talk Points
- Hotline Talk Points
- Website Content
- Social Media
- List servs – GOVdelivery



Communications Assets

- Press conference
 - In person
 - Virtual
- Fact Sheets
 - Foundation for web content
- Printed pieces
 - Posters, banners
 - Handouts
 - Mailers
- Advertising
- PSA's



Communications Assets

What impacts when to use an asset:

- What is the purpose?
- How large is your target audience?
- What appeals to the target audience?
- How long will the public need the information?
- What is needed in the near future or as things unfold?



Communications Assets

What impacts when to use an asset:

- What is needed for outreach, if applicable?
- Do you have staffing to support the asset, or do you rely on another department?
- Are partners involved?
 - Are you sharing an asset or creating a communication toolkit for partners use?

Communicating to the Public & Partners

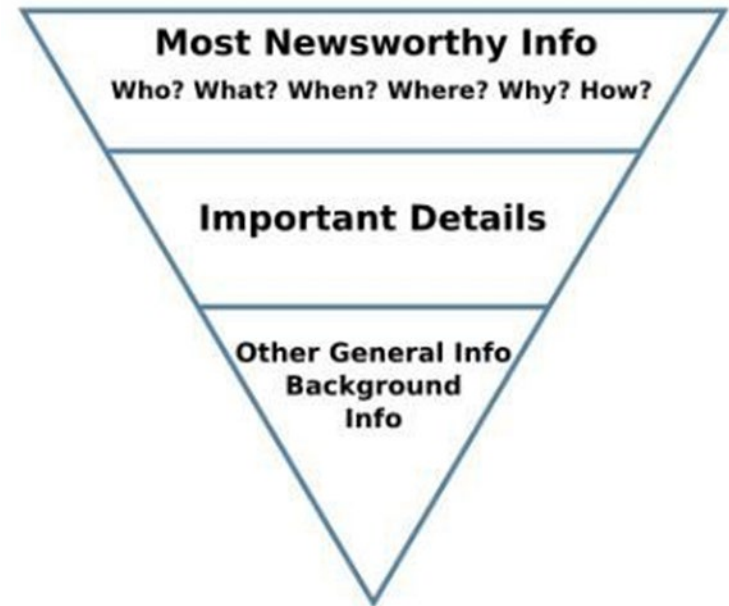
- Identify key messages and content
- Use reputable sources, i.e. “sources of truth”
- Whose story is it to tell
 - MDHHS
 - LHD’s
 - Joint efforts
 - Another agency or organization

Key Messages

- Consider the audience (WIIFM)
- Short and specific (10-15-second sound bite)
- Positive and impactful
- Substance to back them up (stats, photos etc.)
- If you are not the source of truth, use a source of truth to develop messaging
- Pull messaging through all your assets

Press Releases

- Start Strong: Grab Attention
- Stick to the facts
- Concise
- Illustrate with examples, possible
- Answer 5 Ws: who, what, where, why (perhaps how, if appropriate)



Press Releases

- If joint press release with MDHHS or other jurisdiction:
 - Decide who is the lead
 - Ensure messages are consistent Stick to the facts
 - Decide if all participating organizations have a quote in the release
- Provide photos with the press release if available
- Keep media list updated for dissemination

Social Media

- Timely updates
- Provides unfiltered, accurate information
- Engages the public with your organization
- Gauges awareness and reactions to official health communications
- Counters misinformation on social media and traditional media

Social Media

- Plan for 2 – 3 months of posts
- Create process for posting emerging issues
- Decide how your messages might change for different social media platforms or the format
- Keep content relevant and timely
- Use images to reinforce messages and gain attention
- Decide when you will not respond



Advocacy & Public Health

- Identify your issue to target with advocacy
- Establish talking points
 - Create three, key takeaways for policymakers to have after the correspondence or conversation.
- Identify your “ask” or call-to-action
- Get to know your local, state and federal legislators



Advocacy & Public Health

- Identify how will you take action
 - Call
 - Attend townhall hosted by legislator
 - Email campaign
 - Visit legislator/elected official office
 - Host a legislator
- Send a thank you
- Stories make a difference
 - Choose a story that reflects the issue you are addressing and the impact of the change you are proposing



Risk Communication

- The best resources for risk communications is CDC's Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication [website](#).
- CERC manuals – can use for all purposes
 - Messages & audience
 - Community Engagement
 - Crisis Communication Plans
 - Spokesperson
 - Working with the Media
 - Other Communication Channel
 - Social Media and Mobile Devices
 - And more!
- Templates and tools

Risk Communication

- “During an emergency the right message from the right person at the right time can save lives.”
- Adapt message delivery and context for different audiences to address cultural and accessibility needs
- Ensure messages concise, prompt, accurate, delivered with empathy
- Craft messages with readability/processability in mind,
 - how do graphics look, reading level, design to facilitate ease of read.
- In CERC world, community is group of people associated by a common tie or interest

Public Health and the Media

Media Coverage Benefit

- Free
- Boosts name recognition
- Expands audience
- Complements ads/self-generated content
- Enhances credibility
- Targets information sources customers rely on
- Maximizes local coverage.

Drawbacks

- No control over final product
- No guarantees of coverage (at media's discretion)
- Need to know what's newsworthy and how to frame a pitch.

Building Effective Media Relationships

- Proactively develop media relationships
- Become a trusted source
- Expands audience
- Complements ads/self-generated content
- Enhances credibility
- Targets information sources customers rely on
- Maximizes local coverage

Building Effective Media Relationships

- Speed does not trump accuracy
- If you don't know the answer, its ok to say you don't know or cannot answer right now
- One voice + subject matter experts
- Everyone on same page
- Clear, simple messages
- In crisis, regular schedule of updates



What are Your Media Goals

- Become the trusted, expert voice and source of truth on public health stories and issues
- Be the first call they want to make

What are Your Media Goals

- Building confidence between you and the reporters and editors
- Media's perception of you translates to their viewers, your residents, trusting you
- Benefit of the doubt

Accessibility is the Key

- Look for ways to say “Yes”, even when HIPAA applies
- Be accessible, especially during emergencies
- Having a designated person coordinate media is a key part of your emergency plans
- Be available even on busy days

How to Say “No”

- Give them as much background information as you can as to why you are turning down a request.
- What are the alternatives?

Help Media Meet Deadlines

- Manage the timing of an important public health announcement
- Aim to do interviews earlier

Be a Source of News Stories

- Tap into your experts for nuggets to give the news
- Awareness of what's in the news
- Be a trusted source

Making the Pitch

- Right timing
- Right medium/media
- Right person at each outlet
- Right contact method
- Brief: start with the most newsworthy aspect
- Make sure others at department aware/on same page



Newsworthy Qualities

- Timeliness
- Impact
- Human Interest
- Localized
- Proximity
- Prominence

When the Media Calls

- Respond ASAP
- Verify story “angle” If localizing a national story/outside report, confirm the story
- Ask for the deadline
- Develop key messages
- Anticipate some likely questions (5Ws and beyond)
- Identify spokesperson or content expert

When the Media Calls

- If you are not available attempt to negotiate a new time or ask for more time if needed
- If not available or cannot comment on the topic is there another opportunity you can offer such as a photo opportunity
- Offer to provide a written response if spokes person not available

Negative News

- Planning & preparation
- Open & honest
- Share the facts and stick to them
- Prompt/frequent updates
- If you can't share information, say why and assure media you will at first opportunity
- Listen to the public
- Express concern & caring
- Avoid being defensive



Tips for Success

- Back-up plans
- Cross train
- Keep communication assets organized
- Use reputable resources to build messaging and assets
- Utilize electronic tools
- Assign editors
- Include communications in desktop exercises

Questions and Answers



Resources

- Top ten rules of advocacy ([APHA](#))
- NACCHO [Advocacy Toolkit](#)
- Public Health [Communications Collaborative](#)
- CDC's National [Prevention Information Network](#)
- [Plain Language](#)
- [NCI Pink Book](#)



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DAVID COULTER
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