

Talk to Me!

Communicating with Community Partners during a Public Health Emergency



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Public Health Department
 Santa Clara County
 408-299-7000

Welcome

Santa Clara County Advanced Practice Center (APC)

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The Process

Second Step

Getting and Scheduling the Sponsors

- Health Officer sent sponsorship letters asking support for promoting event to their own networks of community organizations
- Gave them a role: guest speakers asked to speak and introduce each main section of training:
 - ♦ Role of Public Health- Health Officer
 - ♦ Understanding Incident Command relationships- OES
 - ♦ Importance of community partnerships- American Red Cross

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Today's Objective

Share strategies and lessons learned from Community Partner Trainings with local health departments:

Provide strategies to engage community partners in risk communication planning and emergency response activities

Develop a training to enhance understanding about the role of Public Health in a health emergency and increase our partner's knowledge about risk communication operations.

Share feedback from training participants and discuss ways to improve/enhance community partner trainings.

The Need

The Need for Community Partner Trainings

- Risk communications is a vital component in preventing fear-driven responses and protecting the health of the community.
- In a medical/health emergency event, local public health departments will not have enough resources, and can't do it alone.
- Community partners understanding of ICS, EOC and JIC will enhance their and our ability to work together and get needed information to the communities we serve.
- Understanding of the relationship with the Joint Information Center/Special Projects Unit can enhance our response and effectiveness in reaching vulnerable and special populations.

The Process

First Step

Identify potential sponsors is key for credibility and promotion of event.

Organizations that are well-know, work and meet regularly with community organizations.

- **Office of Human Relations**
 - ♦ Networks of ethnic community groups, labor groups, etc.
- **Social Services Agency**
 - ♦ Networks of providers for drug/alcohol, mental services, senior citizens, homeless, childcare services, etc.
- **CADRE**
 - ♦ Networks of CBOs, FBOs, non-profits, and other organizations.

The Process

Third Step

Getting the Word Out...

- Provided an invite letter and training flyer so that event sponsors' could send to their network and database
- Wrote news bits and news articles to include in partner e-newsletters promoting the event
- Sent through internal databases and key contacts

The Process

Fourth Step

Getting Logistics in Place...

Outlined agenda, structure of training, training content, and group activities

Developed talking points and PPT slides for guest speakers

Created participant Emergency Contact and Feedback Data forms

Put together participant packets with agenda, PPT slides, pan flu materials, resources for additional trainings, key contact info, evaluation, etc.

The Training

Fifth Step

Talk to Me, Please!

Communicating with Community Partners During a Public Health Emergency Issue



Structure of Community Training

Part I Public Health's role in emergency preparedness

Part II What's different about communicating in an emergency?

Group Activity and Lunch

Part III Introduction to Incident Command relationships and the Joint Information Center

Quiz Activity

Part IV Working together during a medical/health emergency

Group Discussion and Wrap Up

Community Partner Training Objectives

Increase Understanding

1. **Public Health's role as an emergency responder during a medical/health event.**
2. **What's different about communicating during a medical/health emergency.**
3. **Introduction to Incident Command, it's relationships, operations and functions.**
4. **How a Joint Information Center functions and it's key roles.**
5. **How governmental and community organizations can work together to reach and serve special and vulnerable populations.**

Part I of Training

Public Health's Role

Health Officer, Santa Clara County Public Health Dept.

- **Mission of Public Health**
- **Background Public Health Emergency Preparedness**
- **Public Health as a First Responder**
- **Why communications is key?**

Part II of Training

What's Different About Communicating in an Emergency Event

- Role of Public Information- in Medical/Health Emergency
- Public Information Operations- What to expect
- News Media- Their role
- Public Perceptions of Risk- Outrage factors
- Risk Communications- Messaging tips

Role of Public Information in Medical/ Health Emergency

To provide sound and thoughtful information to preserve and protect the public's health in a crisis or emergency risk situation

To provide necessary information to limit ineffective, fear-driven and potentially damaging response to a serious event.

To establish and maintain confidence in the response by providing timely, accurate and consistent information.



Public Information Operations

No one is above a human reaction

No longer business as usual

Working in a Joint Information Center

Centralized, Satellite, Virtual

Postponement of normal reporting/job responsibilities

May never be quick enough, have enough

At first, the information is often inaccurate

News Media

No one is above a human reaction
Journalists are part of the community
Their perspective: what does the public need to know?
Some will be the first to arrive at the scene
Most want to treat victims with dignity and respect
Accuracy does matter, they'll need details
To do their job they need access - to officials, people in the field, victims and their families

Risk Communication

During an Emergency Event...

Start where your audience starts
Don't be afraid to frighten people
Acknowledge uncertainty
Share dilemmas
Give people things to do

Risk Communication

and...

Be willing to speculate - responsibly
Don't get caught in the numbers game
Stress magnitude more than probability
Guide the adjustment reaction
Inform the public early and aim for total candor and transparency

Other Risk Communication Basics

People process information differently, need a variety of ways of presenting the information

Empathy first – a person is more likely to hear what you have to say after a statement of empathy

Different or contradictory information causes confusion and distrust – this can slow or stop a person from taking action

Our mission – protect the health of this community

Group Exercise

Activity One

Split participants into 5 groups of 6-7 people

Provided a Pan Flu Scenario, Press Release, Fact Sheets, Guides, etc.

Each group was instructed to:

- Select a special population/ audience;
- Select communication vehicle;
- Tailor communication to their target audience using information provided;
- Report back to the larger group what their key messages would be.

Part III of Training

Understanding Incident Command Relationship

Emergency Manager-SCC Office of Emergency Services (OES)

- Santa Clara County Emergency Operations
- Incident Command Systems Overview
 - Local Operations and Relationships with other EOCs
- Importance of working with community partners

Joint Information Center (JIC)

A JIC gathers, coordinates, and disseminates information across jurisdictions and agencies effectively and efficiently.

The JIC serves as a "central hub" for information to be coordinated and shared across jurisdictions and agencies and among all government partners, the private sector, and nongovernmental agencies.

A well-organized Joint Information Center increases our capacity to direct the public's response & protect their health.



JOINT INFORMATION CENTER (JIC) FUNCTIONAL ORG CHART



Special Projects Section

Key Partners Role

Works with other JIC units such as Research and Writing to develop content and get translations. Provides this information to Key Partner groups and organizations.

Key Partner groups include community and faith-based, education, government, non-profits, and business organizations.

Key Partners staff will use various communications tools, including E-mail list and servers, phones and faxes, websites and any other communication vehicles.



Activity Two

Jeopardy Quiz

Quiz participants on key risk communication, incident command and JIC principals to make training more interactive and increase understanding

Part IV of Training

Working Together during an Emergency Event

CEO American Red Cross Santa Clara Valley Chapter

Role and priorities for the Red Cross

- ♦ Disaster Preparedness (Disaster Training, CPR/ First Aid)
- ♦ Disaster Response (primary provider of mass care/ shelter)
- ♦ Volunteer Led

Emergency preparedness efforts and activities

- ♦ Community Disaster Education (businesses, employees, ngos)
- ♦ Partnerships (faith based, government agencies, nonprofits, corporations)

Participation in local trainings, drills and exercises

- ♦ Local, regional, state-wide – ARC and non-ARC

Bridging it All Together

The JIC, Public Health & Community Partners

JIC

Provides and distributes overall event information, including information supplied by Public Health

Communicates with news media, elected officials and Key Partners

Public Health

Works in the JIC to produce medical/health information, including instructions for medically vulnerable populations

Communicates with the medical/ health community

Community Partners

Gets information from the JIC, shares what they know, learn, hear

Distributes information to your audiences

Group Discussion Questions

TALK to ME!

Day-to-Day Communications

- Who do you serve?
- Who are your primary external audiences?
- How do you communicate with them now?

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Group Discussion Questions

TALK to ME!

Emergency Communications

- What might be different in communicating during an emergency?
- Does your organization have an emergency communication plan? Where will you be working? Will you have additional resources?
- How will you reach your key audiences during an event?
- What will you need for communications during an event?

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Group Discussion Questions

TALK to ME!

Communications Resources

- How can we reach you?
- How can you reach us?
- Would other trainings or workshops help? What kind?
- What else?

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Lessons Learned Sixth Step

Participant Feedback

Some CBO's don't have a communications role assigned, so need to provide more guidance and resources so they can develop their own communications plans.

Narrow the topics to spend more time on emergency communications.

Talk more about how to meet special needs of vulnerable populations.

Participants enjoyed the group activity.

- Found pan flu scenario and writing activity valuable in helping them think through problems.

Lessons Learned Sixth Step

Summary of Evaluation Results

A number of community partners had little or limited knowledge on the different roles Public Health has and found information valuable.

Some participants had no or limited experience with regular day-to-day communications, much less so with risk communications.

- Need more guidance on how to develop an emergency communications plan for their organizations.

Most participants found the overview of EOC and JIC structures very useful in helping them understand how things would work in an actual emergency.

- Most expressed wanting to know what the best way was to actually reach and communicate with the JIC in an emergency to get information.
- Most expressed need for county-wide drills that included community partner participation in order for them to test how it would actually work in an emergency.

Next Steps Seventh Step

Group Discussion


Participants had varied knowledge and experience.

Consider starting with bigger picture to smaller picture.

EOC Relations → PH Role → Why Communication is Important → JIC → Risk Communications → Talk to Me Discussion

Share new ideas for additional strategies and activities.

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Santa Clara Valley Health & Hospital System



Dedicated to the Health of the Whole Community
