



Supplement G: Communication and Education

Appendix G3—Community Relations/Outreach

Outreach to persons who may have special needs or issues that distinguish them from the general public during an outbreak of SARS will be especially important. First responders and their families, healthcare workers and medical/hospital support personnel, and transportation officials will all have special needs for information -- either to be able to perform their jobs or to ensure that their own concerns about exposure and protection are being addressed.

Local communications staff will need to establish a daily routine for coordinating and communicating with partner organizations regarding community education and outreach activities and needs, with briefings arranged as needed. Cooperation and understanding among all the involved agencies will greatly enhance the success of the community outreach/community relations operation. It will be important to work closely with local health departments' education and community outreach staff members, who can offer valuable insights into issues that are relevant to the community.

Communication staff should make use of the resources of the ECS and JIC to facilitate coordination and management of community relations activities. Community outreach staff, health education, and public health information officers from a wide range of federal, state, and local agencies will need to work side-by-side to appropriately handle community information needs. Suggested community relations activities include the following:

- Develop and maintain a contact list of key community partners, and establish regular briefings, ideally on a daily basis. Include members of healthcare organizations and transportation officials involved in the response.
- Work with healthcare providers and other affected workers (e.g., transportation personnel) to identify and address relevant issues. Staff members are much more likely to feel confident in carrying out their duties if they feel that their risks, and the risks to their families, are being addressed and minimized.
- Establish a community telephone line to respond to the questions and concerns of state and local healthcare providers, pharmacists, transportation personnel, persons under isolation or quarantine, and other special populations as appropriate. Work with partners to implement a resource and referral list for phone line staff.
- Work with local partners and response personnel to coordinate communication and health education activities by identifying needs and reporting on activities that have been planned and executed. Activities may include: 1) information campaigns for affected groups, 2) education campaigns and activities for healthcare providers, including first responders; 3) education and communication with state and community personnel involved in meeting community needs or community actions designed to prevent the spread of the disease, and 4) activities to ensure that persons under isolation or quarantine have access to needed supplies or services.
- Tailor communication and education services and messages to affected communities. This may include meeting with community partners to identify specific community resources that can be utilized and secured.
- Develop a list of healthcare facilities in the community that can be used for information dissemination and health education activities. Coordinate with CDC staff in initiating contact with healthcare workers. Cross-train key partners to assist in education and outreach efforts.

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- In coordination with epidemiologic and medical personnel, obtain and track information daily on the numbers and location of new cases, new quarantined persons, and hospitals with SARS cases. Use these reports to determine priorities among community outreach and education efforts
- Provide feedback to and coordinate with the JIC for distribution of information and identification of information needs.

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars or call the CDC public response hotline at (888) 246-2675 (English), (888) 246-2857 (Español), or (866) 874-2646 (TTY)