CDC and Health Communication

Katherine Lyon Daniel, Ph.D.
Acting Associate Director for Communication
U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

9/21/11
Contagion-like Outbreak ‘Quite Plausible’
CBS Early Show headline
“...the film’s stars share the screen with the work of the CDC...”
Washington Post
“...the heroes are all employees of the federal government and instinctively factual people ...”
New Yorker review

“...after the movie I proceeded straight to the bathroom and washed my hands”– Morning Star film reviewer

“...in the age of air travel, [viruses] can reach a new continent in a day...”
Roger Ebert
Will Contagion Wake Up Our Politicians?
Fox News.com headline

“...in the 1970s, government played the villain while this time it is on the side of right...” New York Times film review

“This film will really really make you want to wash your hands...”
Huffington Post
Providing health information, interventions, and products **WHEN**, **WHERE**, and **HOW** people need them to inform healthy decisions

“Public health within an arm’s reach of need”
Social Marketing Triangle

- Behaviour
  - Behavioural theory
  - Behavioural goals

- 'Insight'

- 'Customer'
  - 'Exchange'
  - 'Competition'
  - Audience segmentation

- Intervention and marketing mix

Source: National Social Marketing Centre
The 4 “P’s”

PRODUCT
What you offer and what you want to happen

PRICE
What it will take to make it happen

PLACE
Where you’ll have to go to make it happen

PROMOTION
The “elbow grease” of your campaign
The desired behavior and associated benefits you are asking the audience to do

Tangible objects or services that support or facilitate behavior change

Product
Product

GUESS WHO’S NOT WORRIED ABOUT DRIVING TONIGHT?

Dave doesn’t have to drive tonight. That makes him happy. Because
when The Road Crew is driving, and Dave is not, he can relax and
simply enjoy a nice time with his friends. For more info on the
totally brand-newest way to get around safely, just call XXX-XXXX. And
remember: safety first, so don’t jump around in the bar. Thanks.

ROAD CREW

Diab XXX-XXXX

ROAD CREW

“Beats driving”
Price

The costs (financial, emotional, psychological, or time) or barriers your audience faces in making the desired behavior change

Plan interventions that reduce costs of the desired behavior or increase costs of competing risk behavior
Place

Where and when your audience:

- performs the desired behavior
- accesses program products/services
- thinks about your health or safety issue
Promotion

The messages, materials, channels and activities that reach your audience to promote the benefits of the behavior change – including Product, Price and Place features of your campaign.
Traditional Media (vertical)  

Most trusted = People Like Me  
- Edelman trust barometer

Aim for the “Sweet Spot”

Social Media (horizontal)
Health Communication Tactics at CDC

CUSTOMER-CENTERED

SCIENCE-BASED

HIGH IMPACT
**Customer-centered**

- Use data on target audience(s)
- Use range of communication tools
- Assess baseline and changing needs
- Culturally appropriate, linguistically correct

- Translation standards (multilingual and plain language)
- Audience segment research
- National polling and surveys
- Usability research

**Where are we going:**
- Apply social media to expand delivery of messages
- Support integrated, strategic communication planning through tailored consultancy
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Science-based</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support health/social marketing, health communication research</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promulgate “state of the science”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put into action</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publish/Publicize</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where we are going:</td>
<td>Strategic communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve our ability to show the value of our work</td>
<td>Brand identity marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigate cost-effective, relevant ways to assess the changing needs of target audiences</td>
<td>Health literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication support</td>
<td>Publication support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
High-impact

- Set specific outcome/impact targets
- Evaluate
- Solicit feedback from target audiences
- Learn from hits and misses
- Improve skills

- Media evaluation
- Create-IT services assessment & evaluation
- Best practices
- Success stories
- Innovation

Where we are going:
- Apply evidence-based practice while looking for the “next big thing”
- Continue to foster a “community of practice”
Coordinated Message Approach

**IDENTIFY**
Core value shared by the public

**DEVELOP**
Overarching public health message frame around core value

**CRAFT**
Public health specific, audience-centric messages that link to frame

**BUILD**
Awareness using coordinated messaging across multiple channels

**INCREASE**
Social and political will

NCIPC, 2008
Message Frames

- **Appeal** to audience’s values
- **Connect** people to issues with new perspective; establish new associations
- **Unify** messages to **persuade** mass shift in paradigms, beliefs, and assumptions
- **Change** how media responds
Communication campaign touts CDC’s value to America’s health and bottom line

Challenge to articulate the need to protect public health funding through CDC

Wide variety of communication deliverables
Barriers to Effective Health Communications
Health Equity

“The toxic combination of bad policies, economics, and politics is, in large measure, responsible for the fact that a majority of people in the world do not enjoy the good health that is biologically possible.”

- former CDC Directors Dr. William Foege and Dr. David Satcher
Some of the groups vulnerable to health disparities:

- Racial and ethnic minorities
- People living in geographically underserved areas (e.g., rural)
- The elderly and people with disabilities
- People with low English proficiency or limited education
- People of low socio-economic status
- People at risk due to gender or sex, such as women, and men who have sex with men
Health Literacy

- Only 12% of US adults have “proficient health literacy”
- 14% of US adults (30 million people) have “below basic health literacy”
  - More likely to report poor health (42%)
  - More likely to lack health insurance (28%)
Addressing Health Literacy

- Improve access to accurate and appropriate health information
  - Use new methods and mechanisms for sharing info
  - Partner with providers, media, service orgs

- Facilitate healthy decision making
  - Use print documents simply and appropriately

- Partner with educators to improve health curricula
  - Focus on real-life examples for adult and young learners
The Digital Divide

Gap between those with “access” and those without

- 49% of people have few technological assets:
  - Many over the age of 70
  - Many with disabilities
  - < high school education
  - Literacy issues
About 50% recommended healthcare practices are implemented

Less than 50% for prevention and behavior change interventions

What percentage of health communication programs use evidence based practice?
Translating Research to Practice

- Completing studies
- Disseminating results
- Knowledge synthesis
- Actionable knowledge
- Transfer and distribution
- Adoption decision
- Practice integration
- Implementation
- Maintenance

Researchers’ job

Whose job is this?

Practitioners’ job
The Future of Health Communication, Marketing and Media

Health-related social media will grow
- Health information will be ubiquitous
- Dynamic, rich, tailored content preferred

Information credibility harder to judge
- Vertical axis: trusted experts
- Horizontal axis: people like me

Barriers – health equity, literacy, research to practice
- Most information isn’t accessible to most people
- Mobile media may help bridge the gap
For more information please contact Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

1600 Clifton Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30333
Telephone, 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)/TTY: 1-888-232-6348
E-mail: cdcinfo@cdc.gov  Web: www.cdc.gov

The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.