

Health Communication and Marketing Toolkit

A Resource for CDC Funded State, City and Organization Type 2 Diabetes Prevention and Management Programs

Download and save the workbook to your computer. You will find links to the workbook throughout the toolkit, but you should always work in the copy saved to your computer. This way you can be sure all of your work is saved in one place. [Click here to download the workbook.](#)

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1. What is the Health Communication and Marketing Toolkit?

What's in This Toolkit?

The purpose of the Health Communication and Marketing Toolkit is to help health departments and organizations develop health communication and marketing plans to address diabetes. Several challenges have been identified by people working in the field and this toolkit is designed to help overcome those challenges.



1. What is the Health Communication and Marketing Toolkit?

How Will It Help Me?

This toolkit will help people new to health communication and marketing develop and act on a plan that links your health communication and marketing goals and objectives with your overall program goals and objectives. In other words, the toolkit will help you use health communication and marketing to achieve your program goals.

For example, you and your team will be able to make better decisions about the communication strategies to choose for your priority audiences. Better communication strategies will make your program more effective and efficient. The toolkit also provides tools, resources, and expert advice. This will help people who are new to diabetes work, and make everyone's job easier and less time consuming. Throughout this toolkit, you will see icons that link to additional resources such as Insider Tip, Quick Resource, Definition, and Quick Learn Videos. You will also be able to build your own plan by following the action steps at the end of each website section.



1. What is the Health Communication and Marketing Toolkit?

How Is This Going to Work?

This toolkit won't make you a health communication expert. It will help you understand how the communication and marketing planning process works, so you can work more effectively with stakeholders, partners or experts, and link you to tools and resources.

For example:

1. We'll help you think through the big picture of what your program is trying to achieve and where your communication opportunities lie.
2. We'll help you focus on your communications opportunities, audiences, and strategies.
3. We'll help you develop SMART objectives that support the goals and objectives of your diabetes efforts.
4. We'll help you identify strategies to meet your goals and measure your success.

Along the way you will work with your team to complete the Health Communication and Marketing Plan Workbook. If you work through all of the sections, you will have a finished plan at the end of the training.

You don't have to go through the whole toolkit in one sitting. The toolkit is designed to help you wherever you are in the planning process.



1. What is the Health Communication and Marketing Toolkit?

What If I Need More Help?

Everyone needs help with planning and implementing health communication programs, even seasoned professionals.

It's always a matter of available time, money, and expertise. There are two key ways you can bring in more help than this toolkit can provide. One is to hire a contractor. You can also partner with an organization that has experience in communication and marketing. We will explore these more in the next section and provide some tools and resources to help you.



1. What is the Health Communication and Marketing Toolkit?

Aren't Health Communication and Health Marketing the Same?

Are you just being picky about terminology? You might be thinking, “marketing and communication sound the same to me”. There is a lot of overlap, they share many of the same strategies, and many people use the terms interchangeably. So why make a big deal about it? We want you to understand the difference because subject matter experts and contractors do make a distinction between communication and marketing. You don’t want to pay for a communication campaign when what you really need is a marketing strategy. You also don’t want to put the time and work into a marketing plan when what you really need is a communication campaign. It’s important for you to understand the difference so you get what you need in order to reach your program goals and objectives. Think of health communication as approaches that will help you “get the word out”. Think of health marketing as approaches that will help you address structural, environmental, and interpersonal issues that affect behavior. Check out the Quick Learn video below for more information.

Do you want an overview of health communication and marketing before you build your plan? [Click here to watch the Quick Learn video.](#) The video will open a new window.

Most behavior change takes more than just a message. For example, people need more than just a DSMES flier to get access to a DSMES education program. People usually need more than a billboard to decide to take join a prediabetes lifestyle change program. We all certainly know we need more than just a message to change what we eat, to keep exercising, or stop smoking. Creating healthier, more pleasant, less costly, more convenient and more supportive environments is how health marketing targets behaviors. Communicating about these choices is what health communication targets. Together it’s a great combination.



1. What is the Health Communication and Marketing Toolkit?

What Do Great Plans Include?

Planning is the first step in effective and efficient health communication. We will show you how to create a Health Communications and Marketing Plan. While individual plans may look different depending on the communication and marketing approaches you are taking, all plans will contain these basic elements:

- 1 Your communication opportunity(ies)
- 2 Descriptions of your audience(s)
- 3 Communication goals and objectives
- 4 Communication strategies
- 5 Evaluation plans



1. What is the Health Communication and Marketing Toolkit?

Action Steps

- How will I know I am ready to move to the next module? If you have read the content of this module and viewed the Quick Learn video you are ready to move on to the next section. Congratulations, you have begun!!
- Which module is next? The next module is Getting Help and Helping My Team. In that module you will learn where you can find help to develop and implement your health communication and/or marketing plan.
- Who should I be thinking about to bring on board for the next module? In the next module you will learn about how you create your team and how partners and contractors can assist you. Consider reviewing this module with your supervisor and other team members who have experience leading health communication and marketing efforts. Their community contacts and knowledge of local health communication and marketing contractors will be vital to your success.



2. Getting Help and Helping My Team

Introduction to Getting Help And Helping My Team

1. How Will This Module Help Me?

Knowing how to determine what help you need and where to find it will enable you to accomplish your health communication and marketing goals.

2. Who Else Do I Need To Work With Me On This Module?

You may find it helpful to ask your boss and colleagues who have worked on health communication and marketing before and/or who have strong community ties to help you with this module

3. What Other Information Do I Need For This Module?

Information about the following will be helpful:

- Existing and potential community partners
- Local health communication and marketing programs at universities and colleges
- Local health communication and marketing contractors and firms



2. Getting Help and Helping My Team

Getting Help And Helping My Team

Everyone needs help with planning and implementing health communication programs, even seasoned professionals. Planning is always a matter of available time, money, and expertise. There are two key ways you can bring in more help. One is to identify key partners with experience in communication and marketing. If you're new to communication and marketing, or even if this is old hat to you, a partner can bring expertise, resources, tools, credibility, and connections to help your team. Another way you and your team can get some help is to hire a contractor.



2. Getting Help and Helping My Team

Think About Partners First

We often think about our partners only after we have developed messages and we want them to help us deliver them. That can be a big mistake. The communication planning process is a great time to identify some existing partners with experience in communication and marketing to help you. It's also a great time to develop new partners. This process saves valuable resources and ensures you are listening to many groups who usually interact with your intended audiences. You can check out the Partner Assets Worksheet in the [workbook](#) for a more detailed partner asset assessment.

Here are some things to think about when you are looking for public or private sector partners with experience in communication or marketing. Does the partner have:

- Experience working on a campaign in public health or nonprofit (very important for a private sector partner)?
- Access to an intended audience for message development or testing?
- Additional resources, either tangible (\$\$) or intangible (volunteers) that can help with message development, message testing, or message delivery?
- Expertise in creative message development, message testing, or delivering messages through any of your most likely message channels (e.g., radio, newspapers, faith-based, clinic materials, bus stops, etc.)?



2. Getting Help and Helping my Team

Finding Internal And External Partners

Partners can share their own expertise and experience as well as provide leads to additional resources.

- Sister departments – check out the sister departments in your organization. Sometimes they have had rich experience in health communication and marketing.
- Community Based Organizations (CBOs) – reach out to the organizations you typically work with at the community level. These organizations sometimes have communication experience or may know of good contractors in your area. They are also likely to have strong relationships with your intended audience.



2. Getting Help and Helping My Team

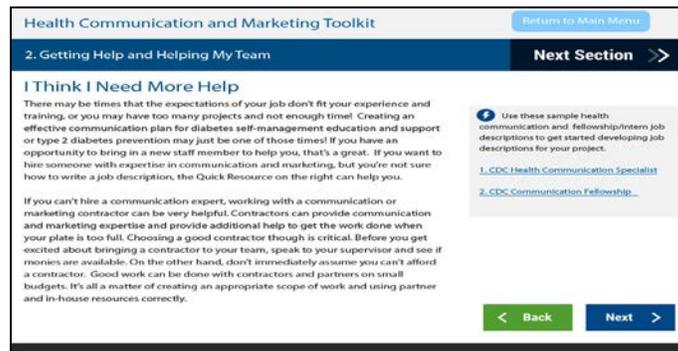
Finding Partners in Academia and Media

- Universities – seek expertise and the help of the communications/social marketing department at the local university. University programs often can offer the assistance of student interns with expertise and experience in communication and evaluation.
- Media Organizations – marketing and communications firms, media outlets (TV, radio, print), and social media all may be a source of free or low cost assistance, such as pro bono message development, or low cost or free message placement.

Many of you already know that partners may expect some compensation for helping with the program. But often a partners' help can be far less costly than hiring a contractor. It's worth some initial conversations, but always check your budget before you start.

Here are links to resources that list universities and colleges that have expertise in health communication or have local expertise you can tap.

1. [National Communication Association](#)
2. [National Public Health Information Coalition](#) (communication experts in every state)



2. Getting Help and Helping My Team

I Think I Need More Help

There may be times that the expectations of your job don't fit your experience and training, or you may have too many projects and not enough time! Creating an effective communication plan for diabetes self-management education and support or type 2 diabetes prevention may just be one of those times! If you have an opportunity to bring in a new staff member to help you, that's a great. If you want to hire someone with expertise in communication and marketing, but you're not sure how to write a job description, the Quick Resource on the right can help you.

If you can't hire a communication expert, working with a communication or marketing contractor can be very helpful. Contractors can provide communication and marketing expertise and provide additional help to get the work done when your plate is too full. Choosing a good contractor though is critical. Before you get excited about bringing a contractor to your team, speak to your supervisor and see if monies are available. On the other hand, don't immediately assume you can't afford a contractor. Good work can be done with contractors and partners on small budgets. It's all a matter of creating an appropriate scope of work and using partner and in-house resources correctly.

Use these sample health communication and fellowship/intern job descriptions to get started developing job descriptions for your project.

1. [CDC Health Communication Specialist](#)
2. [CDC Communication Fellowship](#)



2. Getting Help and Helping My Team

Making The Decision

Here are some things to think about when deciding whether or not to hire a contractor:

1. Do I lack the time, staff, or expertise to do certain parts of the health communication planning or implementation process?
2. Which parts of health communication planning or implementation would be most valuable to have a contractor or partner help with?
3. Are there enough financial resources to bring on a contractor or partner? Is there enough time to conduct the contractor hiring or partner engagement process?
4. How do I go about the contractor hiring process in my state/organization? The Working with a Contractor Quick Resource will help you understand the major points of hiring and working with a contractor before and after an award.

[Click here to learn helpful hints about getting what you need as well as working effectively with contractors.](#) The video will open in a new window.

When you decide you want to consider working with a contractor, it's best to think about two large chunks of time – before and after an award will be made. Before an award you want to do your due diligence to select a good and effective vendor. After the award you want to set up a strong working relationship that will lead to success for both of you. [Advice for Working with Contractors](#) will provide you more advice and a checklist to consider.



2. Getting Help and Helping My Team

Helping Your Team

Creating and implementing an effective health communication or marketing plan often takes a team approach. Teams are valuable because the members can provide a variety of perspectives, resources and expertise. Teams also provide more hands to share the work and more links to the target audience.

Teams may include:

- colleagues from your department
- colleagues from sister departments
- partners from other organizations
- interns, professors or students from local universities
- volunteers from local media outlets
- paid contractors



2. Getting Help and Helping My Team

Managing Your Team

Your boss may or may not be a regular member of your team. Even if your boss doesn't participate in every team meeting be sure to keep them informed about the communication and marketing work you are doing.

Remember to kick off the team's work with a clear description of what you are trying to accomplish and each team member's role in the process. Keep the team on task with an action based timeline that includes tasks, responsible parties, and deadlines. Use an agenda to keep your meetings productive. Be sure to acknowledge contributions. Team members all need a "way to go!" from time to time. Be sure to celebrate the work of individual team members and the work of the team as a whole so that the experience is fun and rewarding.

Be a resource to your team and your management when it comes to health communication and marketing evidence. Help them find it easy to understand and use the research that shows what has worked to develop an effective plan for your diabetes activities. [CDC's Guide to What Works in Health Communication and Marketing](#) briefly explains the combined evidence CDC has reviewed to determine what is effective in communication and marketing initiatives.



2. Getting Help and Helping My Team

What If My Team Or Boss Needs Convincing That We Should Do More Than Basic Promotions?

That's an excellent question! Sometimes, people think simple promotional efforts like a press release, billboards, and a promotional packet with fliers and posters to partners, are enough to achieve your program objectives. They may not understand how comprehensive communication strategies can support broader program goals and objectives. We often hear that people need help so that everyone on the team can understand the importance and key elements of effective health communication and marketing. In the next section we will provide some additional resources on the evidence behind health communication and health marketing.

Any of these initiatives are only as good as the effort you and your team put into the planning and implementation. Planning is very important and this toolkit will help you.

According to CDC's [Community Guide](#) the most effective health communication campaigns use multiple communication channels. One of these channels should be mass media, which could be paid or earned radio, TV, or newspaper, or Internet. The multiple communications should also be combined with the distribution of a free or reduced-price health-related product.

For the prediabetes programs, the health-related product could be the CDC-recognized lifestyle change programs.

For the DSMES programs, the health-related products could be any DSMES educational program that a person with diabetes is referred to by their doctor, ideally one with a cost discount.



2. Getting Help and Helping My Team

Action Steps

- How will I know I am ready to move to the next module? If you have read the content of this module, watched the Quick Learn video, and completed your Partner Assets Worksheet in your workbook then you are ready to move on to the next section. If you are having difficulty completing the Partner Assets Worksheet, consider asking your colleagues for help – particularly those with experience in health communication and marketing, or those with strong ties to the community you are trying to reach.
- Which module is next? The next module is “What is the Situation?” In this module, you will review the goals of your program, verify your understanding of the current situation, and identify what needs to change to accomplish your goals.
- Who should I be thinking about to bring on board for the next module? This is a great time to begin using the experience and expertise of your community partners and colleagues who have been working in the area of diabetes and type 2 diabetes prevention already.



3. What is the Situation?

Introduction to What is the Situation?

1. How Will This Module Help Me?

This module will help you build a better understanding of what is happening in your community or state that is preventing you from achieving your DSMES or National DPP cooperative agreements goals. This module can help you think through why things are happening the way they are and how to move forward.

- Knowing more about why things are happening the way they are can help build a plan of action, and determine who are the audiences best suited to help you make change happen.
- Having a plan of action can also help you determine if communication is all you need to address your situation or if you need additional strategies that health marketing or health promotion can provide. This will be addressed in future modules.

2. Who Else Do I Need To Work With Me On This Module?

A lot of this module is about human behavior, behavior change, and health systems. It would be helpful to have some team members that know about those areas. This may also be a good opportunity to engage your University or nonprofit partners with this expertise.

3. What Other Information Do I Need For This Module?

Any existing research about what is currently happening related to the goals of your cooperative agreement will be helpful, especially if it's specific to your community or state. That research might be a literature review or recent survey research. Research that summarizes or explains why progress is not being made on goals you have set will also be helpful in your planning.



3. What is the Situation?

Identifying Your Communication Opportunities

“I’m just getting started with my plan to support my DSMES or type 2 diabetes prevention goals. Where do I start?”

“Me too, I’m just starting my plan to support reaching the goals of my states’ National DPP activities and I’m not sure where to start either.”

Both of those are great questions and you’ve actually already started by asking about supporting your DSMES or National DPP goals. So let’s start there.

First, review the goals that have already been written. These can be located in your state’s performance indicators for your CDC cooperative agreement and are most likely goals similar to those on the right.

Text Box

Likely Goals

- Increase participation in recognized DSMES programs.
- Increase use of lifestyle intervention programs in community settings for the primary prevention of type 2 diabetes. □
- Increase number of persons with prediabetes or at high risk for type 2 diabetes who enroll in a CDC-recognized lifestyle change program.
- Increase the number of people (with prediabetes or at risk for type 2 diabetes) reached through marketing and communication activities focused on the National DPP.



3. What is the Situation?

What Is Happening Now?

First, for each of the goals you will need to think about what is happening now to prevent your cooperative agreement goals from being met. That can seem like a big job. Start by looking at what we already know about achieving these goals. This is a good task for bringing in University partners and contractors to help you.

- Use the [Diabetes Prevention Impact Toolkit](#) to project the health and economic effects of a National DPP or similar program on your population at risk for diabetes.
- Use the [Diabetes State Burden Toolkit](#) for data on the health and economic burden of diabetes in your state.
- Use the [Diabetes Atlas](#) to look at trends in diabetes at the national, state, and county levels.

Next, find a recent review of the research on underlying causes related to your goals. A literature search database like [PubMed](#) is usually a good place to start. Usually you will find the causes will be due to how people think and/or act, how organizations do things, how systems do things, or how social systems function.

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Possible Actions to Achieve Your Goals

Now what?

What behaviors need to change?

What do systems or organizations need to do differently?

Once you have a sense of what is happening, you also need to know what you want to happen to get to your goal.

For example, if your research shows that doctors in your state are not referring people with diabetes to approved DSMES programs, then ask yourself what you would like to see happen to achieve your goal? Hmm.....

Right! You would want to increase the number of referrals that doctors give - but, nurses for instance, might also be able to help, by reminding doctors to make the referral. You can find that kind of information using literature reviews, surveys, and working with partners who work in the diabetes field.



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3. What is the Situation?

Possible Actions to Achieve Your Goals

- Now what?
- What behaviors need to change?
- What do systems or organizations need to do differently?

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What Needs To Happen To Achieve Goals?

Sometimes, mapping or drawing out possible actions is a helpful way to visualize what needs to happen. This map can also be useful for engaging your team or partners in discussion about possible solutions.

Use the Plan Workbook to list each cooperative agreement goal, list what is happening now, and list what should be happening to get you to your goal. These are perfect team activities.



Complete Activities A, B, C and D in the Plan Workbook.

- In Activity A, list the goals from your Cooperative Agreement.
- In Activity B, list what is happening now related to this goal.
- In Activity C, list what needs to happen related to this goal.
- In Activity D, you will list the audiences that need to be involved to reach your goals.

[Use your saved workbook or click here to open a blank copy.](#) [Back](#) [Next](#)

3. What is the Situation?

What Needs To Happen To Achieve Goals?

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- In Activity A, list the goals from your Cooperative Agreement.
- In Activity B, list what is happening now related to this goal.
- In Activity C, list what needs to happen related to this goal.
- In Activity D, you will list the audiences that need to be involved to reach your goals.



3. What is the Situation?

Action Steps

- How will I know I am ready to move to the next module? In this module you are really starting to get a good understanding of the current situation and what needs to change to accomplish your program goals. All your health communication and marketing efforts will be related to changing the behaviors you have identified as barriers to success. Be sure you have completed Plan Workbook Activities A, B, C, and D before you move on.
- Which module is next? The next module is Identify Your Health Communication and Marketing Plan Objectives. This is you beginning to plan! In this module you will begin to identify the communication and marketing actions needed to achieve your goals.
- Who should I be thinking about to bring on board for the next module? This is another great time to begin using the experience and expertise of your community partners and colleagues who have been working in the area of diabetes and type 2 diabetes prevention already. People with health communication and marketing experience will be particularly helpful.



4. Identify Your Health Communication and Marketing Plan Objectives

Introduction to Identify Your Health Communication and Marketing Plan Objectives

1. How Will This Module Help Me?

This module will help you see how your cooperative agreement goals and the gaps you identified in the last module can be linked to what you will be doing in your Health Communication and Marketing Plan. You will also develop your Plan Objectives.

2. Who Else Do I Need To Work With Me On This Module?

A group similar to those who helped you work on the last module will be the best group for your team for this module.

3. What Other Information Do I Need For This Module?

It will be useful to have some information about how communication, marketing, and health promotion/education tools can help bridge those gaps you identified in the last module. You will still be working at a broad level. Having some research on all of the audiences who can act to fix what is not happening in your situation will be helpful too.



4. Identify Your Health Communication and Marketing Plan Objectives

How Do We Start To Link Goals, Gaps, And Activities?

“This is all starting to make my head swim, where do I start?”

“How can communication activities help me address the gap between what is happening now and what needs to happen?”

Good questions.

Let's start with the big picture – with your team review Activity C - “What Needs to Happen” - column in your Plan Workbook. These are the current gaps that are keeping you from achieving your program goals.



4. Identify Your Health Communication and Marketing Plan Objectives

How Do We Start To Link Goals, Gaps, And Activities?

Communication strategies alone may not be enough to bridge the gap and achieve your goals. You may need to use Health Marketing strategies together with communication strategies to achieve your goals. Use the Quick Resource: [What Health Communication and Health Marketing Can Do](#) to learn more about strategies to consider.

To get started, just list some ideas for how communication, marketing, health promotion, education, or policy may help you change each gap and help you reach your goals.



4. Identify Your Health Communication and Marketing Plan Objectives

Hmmm... What's A Good Example?

In this example, we are focusing on the goal of enrolling more people in prediabetes lifestyle change programs (LCPs). Your research shows that one reason people at-risk for type 2 diabetes aren't enrolling is that they don't know the LCP classes will help prevent type 2 diabetes. In this case, health communication can contribute by increasing knowledge that the LCP classes will benefit them by preventing type 2 diabetes. Now you know that developing communication strategies, materials, and messages to help change that knowledge will move you toward your goal. You'll notice in our example we did not say how much we would increase awareness or by when. This objective is just to set a direction for your activities and make sure they align with the gaps and goals.



4. Identify Your Health Communication and Marketing Plan Objectives

Multiple Challenges, Multiple Interventions

Sometimes the gaps identified in your Plan Workbook, Activity C cannot be solved by health communication efforts alone. For example, if participants do not attend LCP programs because there are no programs available in their community, this situation will not be solved with health communication. Instead, health marketing efforts may be used in the community to build support for new partnerships and new sites.

[This graphic](#) shows you how health communication, health marketing, health promotion, education, and policy efforts can all play a role in helping meet your goals. Public health programs too frequently rely on health communication alone and set unrealistic expectations for what it can accomplish. That seldom works well. Be smart and use multiple health intervention approaches and multiple health communication tactics.

[The Multiple Intervention Approaches to Address Prediabetes Infographic](#) provides an example of the multiple factors that play into what needs to be done to create change. This tool was adapted from "Making Health Communication Programs Work".



4. Identify Your Health Communication and Marketing Plan Objectives

Set Plan Objectives That Link To Gaps And Goals

By this point you should have a sense of how health communication, health marketing, health promotion, education, and perhaps policy might be needed to help reach your goals. You will need to set some broad objectives for your plan and ensure they link back to your goals. Gather your team and complete Plan Workbook Activity E.

Review the list of gaps you listed in Activity E. Verify with your group that addressing these issues will fill gaps that keep you from achieving the program goals outlined in your cooperative agreement. This will take some time. It is important to ask yourself and your team these questions about each objective:

- "How can communication activities help me address the gap between what is happening now and what needs to happen?"
- "If communication alone cannot address the gap or solve the problem, then which health marketing, health promotion, education, or policy activities or tools do I need?"

Use your saved workbook or [click here](#) to open a blank copy.



4. Identify Your Health Communication and Marketing Plan Objectives

Select Your Communication And Marketing Audiences

This step will help you determine which of your possible audiences will be the best for you to focus on. You started by linking your plan objectives to what you are trying to achieve in your cooperative agreement. In Plan Workbook Activity F, you will review your audience list in Activity D and narrow it down. Here are some good questions to ask your team:

- Who will be good targets for your efforts?
- Who do you already have relationships with?
- Which audiences seem to be high priority for making a shift in the gap you identified?
- Which audiences absolutely must act to make a difference in the gap?
- Why would they make a big difference in the gap you identified?

Document these audience decisions in Plan Workbook Activity E.

Use your saved workbook or [click here](#) to open a blank copy.



4. Identify Your Health Communication and Marketing Plan Objectives

Action Steps

- How will I know if I'm ready to move to the next module?
If you feel you need more time to complete the action objectives for this section, now is a good time to do it. These objectives set the foundation for your plan and help keep you going in the right direction. While they are not SMART objectives right now, these broad objectives are directional, and very helpful for leading your program down the right path and communicating to others what you are doing.
- Which module is next? The next module will cover learning more about your audiences in-depth.
This module listed audiences at a very broad level. Now it's time to really get to know them.
- Who should I be thinking about to bring on board for the next module?
It will be very important to have team members on board for the next module who know about the audiences you have listed in Activity F. These are the audiences you plan to work with for communication, marketing, health promotion activities. It will also be important to have experts available who are familiar with the at-risk populations for your area.



5. Understand Your Communication Audiences

Introduction to Understand Your Communication Audiences

1. How Will This Module Help Me?

This module will help you understand the barriers and benefits your audiences experience while they are trying to do the behaviors you identified in your Plan. The module will help you understand how to best help your audiences overcome barriers, motivate them and reinforce the benefits of behavior change.

2. Who Else Do I Need To Work With Me On This Module?

Team members who have a deep understanding of the action audiences you identified in the last step of the last module will be most helpful. As a reminder this may include organizational members who understand medical professionals as well as at-risk audiences. You may also want to include people on your team who have a strong understanding of mass media and your audiences. This is not to say the media are an audience but to say having some expertise about media who know your audience's media preferences will be helpful, especially social media.

3. What Other Information Do I Need For This Module?

It will be helpful to have some information on all the audiences that you identified in Activity F. These will be the audiences who can help you fill your gaps and achieve your goals.

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5. Understand Your Communication Audiences [Next Section >>](#)

I Thought We Had Data On Them

You may wonder why you need to know more about your audiences. Knowing your audiences' age, ethnicity, or diabetes status is not enough information to design effective health communication action strategies and activities. We are all so much more complicated than our age, ethnicity, income, education, or health condition!

Understanding your audiences' attitudes, awareness, beliefs, knowledge, and perceptions related to your diabetes goals and gaps, can help you create materials and action strategies that are meaningful and effective. Knowing who they trust, and places they go or media channels they listen to or watch, can help make sure you deliver your materials in the right places and at the right times.



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5. Understand Your Communication Audiences

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5. Understand Your Communication Audiences

Gather More Knowledge About Your Audiences

Understanding your audiences begins by gathering more knowledge about them. You need to be able to describe the characteristics of your audience related to your objectives. We have developed some tools and tips to help you along the way. Don't worry you won't have to do this alone! And remember, these tasks may be a good opportunity to work with your community partners, or hire a contractor.

Gathering more information about your audiences will help you:

- Better understand the benefits and barriers your audiences face in taking action related to your program goals. This can be a powerful tool in your toolbox.
- Better understand the attitudes, awareness, knowledge, beliefs, and perceptions of your audiences related to diabetes behaviors, program goals, and communication objectives. Knowing what needs to change can help you create materials, messages, and other tools.
- Identify potential partners to help you understand the community and implement your Health Communication Plan. Knowing more about the community can help you be more effective in distributing messages and other tools.
- More accurately define metrics to measure the success of your program. For example, if you gather information about the current level of attitude or awareness of your audience, you may be able to use that as part of your program improvement metrics.



5. Understand Your Communication Audiences

Figure Out What Is Already Known About Your Audience

TALK TO PEOPLE ...

One of the ways to begin gathering formative research about your audiences is to talk to people. Below are some examples of the types of people to talk to. Talking with people in your community will also create a group of people invested in your success. This group can give you feedback on your Health Communication Plan and specific elements of your campaign. Nothing can substitute for strong community buy-in!

- Health care professionals who treat people with type 2 diabetes
- Leaders or organizations active in type 2 diabetes efforts
- People with type 2 diabetes or prediabetes

Formative research looks at the community in which an intervention activity is focused to understand the interests, attributes, and needs of different populations and persons in the community. Formative research occurs before you complete your plan.

Two of the most common approaches used in formative research are focus group discussions and in-depth interviews.



5. Understand Your Communication Audiences

Figure Out What Is Already Known About Your Audience

GATHER REPORTS ...

Another information gathering tool that is often overlooked is to ask your community-based partners to share technical reports about your audiences. Reports like this are often available on the Internet through foundations and other nonprofits. You can also conduct secondary research through published sources using Google Scholar or PubMed.

Secondary Research is defined as an analysis and interpretation of primary research. Secondary research collects primary research that is relevant to the topic and interprets what the primary research found. For instance, secondary research often takes the form of the results from two or more primary research articles and explains what the two separate findings reveal.



5. Understand Your Communication Audiences

Fill In Audience Knowledge Gaps

You can also do your own research using methods like interviews, focus groups, or online surveys. These types of research can take time, expertise, and money to conduct. Unless you are working with a highly unusual audience group or a new diabetes health behavior, (or health systems behavior), we recommend looking to existing knowledge. Of course, you can always work with a partner or hire a contractor to help conduct original audience research if you feel the existing knowledge is not providing the information you need. Please keep in mind, research with health professionals requires experienced researchers.

If you decide to conduct some of your own information gathering, you may want to dig deeper into the topic. The National Cancer Institute's "Making Health Communication Work" publication, typically known as the Pink Book, has some excellent guidance on types of research tools that can be used for research.

[Access the most recent version of the tool.](#)



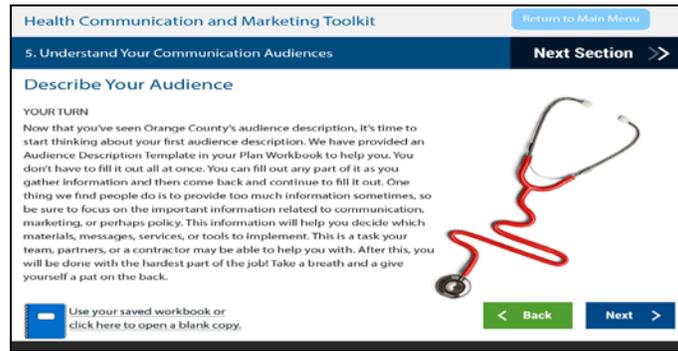
5. Understand Your Communication Audiences

Describe Your Audience

The audience description helps determine which characteristics you choose to include in materials or messages. The description can also help your team choose existing materials and messages that best match the audience description. This description is very helpful for working across teams and with creative agencies. [Let's look at an example.](#)

For Example

Orange County decided that one of their target audiences is Korean Americans because there are a high proportion of them in their county, are at high risk of developing prediabetes, and many already have type 2 diabetes. For this example, we will be focusing on this audience for the DSMES program. Orange County developed more information about the Asian-American population in their county. They developed this brief audience description to help them with their overall Health Communication Plan.



5. Understand Your Communication Audiences

Describe Your Audience

YOUR TURN

Now that you've seen Orange County's audience description, it's time to start thinking about your first audience description. We have provided an Audience Description Template in your Plan Workbook to help you. You don't have to fill it out all at once. You can fill out any part of it as you gather information and then come back and continue to fill it out. One thing we find people do is to provide too much information sometimes, so be sure to focus on the important information related to communication, marketing, or perhaps policy. This information will help you decide which materials, messages, services, or tools to implement. This is a task your team, partners, or a contractor may be able to help you with. After this, you will be done with the hardest part of the job! Take a breath and give yourself a pat on the back.

Use your saved workbook or [click here](#) to open a blank copy.



5. Understand Your Communication Audiences

Action Steps

- How will I know if I'm ready to move to the next module?
Understanding your action audiences' motivations, barriers to action, and benefits to action, is important to developing effective messages, materials, and other marketing tools. Without that information, you may relay the wrong information, at the wrong time, to the wrong people – a waste of your resources. So be sure you have this section complete before you move on.
- Which module is next?
The next module will cover developing SMART objectives for your activities.
- Who should I be thinking about to bring on board for the next module?
It will be important to have team members on board for the next module who know about evaluation and the metrics of measurement.



6. Developing Communication and Marketing SMART Objectives

Introduction to Developing Communication and Marketing SMART Objectives

1. How Will This Module Help Me?

This module will help you get more specific about your health communication and promotion strategies so that you can achieve your goals. Previously you set broad objectives, like increase awareness or skills. This module will help set more detailed SMART objectives. These will help your team be more accountable, effective, and efficient.

2. Who Else Do I Need To Work With Me On This Module?

Professionals with evaluation experience are often helpful team members for support in setting SMART objectives. It is also crucial to engage your community partners during this step because they can help you determine if certain objectives are truly achievable or not, especially within certain time periods.

3. What Other Information Do I Need For This Module?

Collect existing data on past performance of similar community-based programs. This data will help you set actionable objectives.



6. Developing Communication and Marketing SMART Objectives

Broad Objectives, SMART Objectives, What's the Difference?

Health communication and marketing SMART objectives are milestones that your program reaches along the way to accomplishing your program goals. SMART objectives should be written from the perspective of what you want your audience to know, think, feel, believe, demonstrate, do, act, advocate, etc. Do these sound familiar? They are the same as your broad objectives, but now we will get more detailed.



6. Developing Communication and Marketing SMART Objectives

SMART Objectives – Your Program’s GPS

SMART objectives help you know when a program is going in the right direction and sometimes help you know how to make improvements along the way. Think of it as having a roadmap. Objectives help you know which road to take and if there might be a better route. Knowing how a program is doing is important for addressing issues before the program activities get too far “off the road.” It’s a good idea to think of creating and measuring objectives as your program’s “GPS”!

What are some good ways to make sure you have a SMART set of objectives?

Take a look at Activity E in your workbook. You will need to determine if your objectives are SMART. The best way to determine if your proposed objectives will help you stay on the right road is to ask yourself and your team how well the objective meets the SMART criteria at the right. You can do this as a team activity, or ask your team to rate draft objectives alone and then discuss as a group.

S - How Specific is the objective related to your diabetes activities?

M - How Measurable is the objective related to what you are trying to achieve?

A - How Achievable is the objective (reasonable given available resources)?

R - How Relevant is the objective - related to the program goal?

T - Is objective Time-specific (and reasonable)?



6. Developing Communication and Marketing SMART Objectives

SMART Objectives – Your Program's GPS Examples

Here are examples of SMART, and not SMART, objective examples that you can build into your Action Plan Worksheet.

Worksheet Communication Objective

Increase physician awareness and knowledge of local CDC-recognized lifestyle change programs convenient for target audience.

SMART Communication Objective

Increase physician awareness of local CDC-recognized prediabetes lifestyle change programs that are convenient for target audience from 35% to 60% within 2 years of implementation.

Not SMART Communication Objective

Increase physician awareness of lifestyle change programs after implementation begins.



6. Developing Communication and Marketing SMART Objectives

Reach, Exposure, Awareness - What's The Difference?

If you want your target audiences to be aware of the type 2 diabetes support services in your state, you need to reach them with your messages and ensure they see or hear it. A SMART objective helps you plan how many people in your target audience you need to reach with your messages in order to increase exposure and awareness. This is how they are linked together. A similar process occurs for any communication or marketing objective, such as increasing a skill or shifting a social norm.

If you use mass media communication strategies, media companies can help you find out how many people were reached with your messages. But, you may decide to use other communication strategies, like faith-based outreach. In those cases, determining how many people were reached with your message will be different. In this case you may want to conduct an awareness survey. This will give you a sense of how well your message is reaching your target audience without having overall "reach" statistics.

Reach - the number of people exposed to the communication activity who have an opportunity to see or hear it.

Exposure - the extent to which audience members have encountered specific messages, sometimes referred to as the frequency that messages have been seen or heard.

Awareness - the extent to which you audience knows about your campaign or its messages.



6. Developing Communication and Marketing SMART Objectives

Reach, Exposure, Awareness - Putting It All Together

Objectives for reach and/or awareness for each of your audiences are usually the minimal objectives you will find in a communication or marketing plan.

Set Reach Objective

Reach Audience with Messages

Increase Exposure

Increase Awareness

Reach, Frequency, and Awareness Objectives Examples

- Reach 35% of physicians who serve our target audience population with prediabetes lifestyle change program messages and materials at least 7 times in year one.
- Increase awareness of prediabetes lifestyle change programs among physicians by 25% within 1 year of program start.



6. Developing Communication and Marketing SMART Objectives

Frequency Of Messages – Why Bother?

Frequency, or exposure, is how many times an audience sees, hears, or experiences your message. Why do I need to worry about frequency? isn't hearing a message about diabetes once enough? Well, that's a good question. Take a look at the [Community Guide](#) findings on Health Communication and Social Marketing. You'll see that the scientific evidence shows that messages need to be repeated by multiple sources, in multiple channels, multiple times in order to be effective. You don't see a message about a new car just once, right? Health messages need to be repeated too.

For Example

Let's say 5,000 people take a bus once every weekday that has your poster on the inside. Your program pays for the poster for one month. Riders were exposed to your poster 20 times, therefore, your frequency is 20 times. Research suggests that message frequency should be between three and 12 times to be effective. This number can vary a lot depending on the audience, the message context, and the behaviors.



6. Developing Communication and Marketing SMART Objectives

Which SMART Objectives Should My Program Focus On?

If your program is just getting started and working with communication only efforts, then you will probably focus on reach and awareness objectives. If you've been working on these issues for a while, you should be moving towards more expanded objectives, like frequency, and working to integrate more health marketing or health promotion objectives. These might include increasing skills, social norms, health-seeking behaviors, social support, etc. Learn more about these concepts with the Health Marketing/Health Promotions [Terms and Definitions](#).

Why bring this up now? We're humans. If we don't set objectives to do things, we tend to ignore them. Going back to our GPS analogy, our objectives help us to stay on track and get where we want to go.



6. Developing Communication and Marketing SMART Objectives

Should I have Social Media Objectives?

What about social media objectives? Should I be writing objectives for that? Everybody is doing Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, etc. First, please be sure your target audience is using those social media platforms before you decide to use them for your Plan. You still want to increase reach, awareness, and frequency. Many programs use social media to distribute messages and engage audiences in two-way communication.

Writing objectives for social media is much the same as for any other communication channel. If you're advanced, you can increase audience engagement in two-way communication, which is optimal. A key difference is in the technical language that social media experts use for measurement. CDC created a useful tool for helping people learn all about social media and how to use it. When you're ready to include social media objectives in your plan, use the [SocialMediaWorks Quick Resource](#) to learn more. CDC also created the [Social Media Toolkit](#), a downloadable PDF.

Two-way communication is when one person is the sender and they transmit a message to another person, who is the receiver. When the receiver gets the message, they send back a response, acknowledging the message was received.



6. Developing Communication and Marketing SMART Objectives

How Much Is Enough?

How do we know if we've planned enough message placements? How much is enough?

Here are some simple rules about when the frequency of messages needs to be increased. Ask yourself and your team how true the following conditions are. If they are true, you may need more frequent messages.

- The type of behavior we are promoting is complex or requires repeating frequently.
- The audience is unfamiliar with the behavior(s).
- The media environment where you will place messages is very cluttered.
- The audience's health, family, work, and or social environment is cluttered
- The audience is unfamiliar with your organization or the organization sponsoring the messages.
- The audience attention will likely be low and uninterested in the topic.
- The messages are new or the campaign is new.
- The message are complex and will use difficult language.
- The editorial (earned media) coverage you will likely get will be very neutral – almost always true of public health messages.

YOU NEED LOTS OF MESSAGE REPETITION!!!



6. Developing Communication and Marketing SMART Objectives

How Much Is Enough? Continued

Don't be too concerned if you answered yes to a lot of these questions. Most of us in public health will do that. That means you need to bring your frequency game to your Plan. This information may help explain to your management team why you need more messages in more places!

THE NUMBERS ...

Let's get down to some good hard numbers for your plan. The following will help guide your planning, but we encourage you to meet with your partners who have done similar work in your state, talk with media contractors if you have hired one, consult with media academic partners in your state, and look at past programs in diabetes that may have documented media buying data.



6. Developing Communication and Marketing SMART Objectives

How Much Is Enough? Continued

Determining Your Reach or Awareness Objectives

- High reach or awareness for public health programs is considered reaching 60% of the target audience.
- Moderate reach or awareness is considered reaching 40-50% of the target audience.
- Low reach or awareness is considered reaching 20-30% of the target audience.
- Very low reach or awareness is considered reaching less than 20% of the target audience.
- You should aim for at least a moderate reach, unless your program is brand new, the issue is new, or the target audience has never heard of the health issue.



6. Developing Communication and Marketing SMART Objectives

How Much Is Enough? Continued

Determining Your Frequency Objectives

The numbers below are based on the Ostrow Model, which is commonly used for communication planning, and are averages. Check with your team and local experts for help in validating these numbers for your project.

- Highest average frequency for effectiveness tends to be about 12 times over the course of your activities, depending on the creativeness of the message and materials. More than that and you can run the risk of “audience fatigue”.
- Medium average frequency for effectiveness tends to be about 7-9 times over the course of your activities.
- Lowest average frequency for effectiveness tends to be about 2-3 times over the course of your activities.

Audience fatigue happens when your audience becomes bored with your message and stops listening.



6. Developing Communication and Marketing SMART Objectives

Let's Get Started Writing Your SMART Objectives

Start by reviewing Activities E and F in the Plan Workbook. For each broad objective, you need to write a more detailed objective using the SMART principles we discussed above. SMART objectives will help you determine if you are on the right road, and help you measure whether you have arrived at your goal. Record these SMART objectives in Plan Workbook Activity G.

Use your saved workbook or [click here](#) to open a blank copy.



6. Developing Communication and Marketing SMART Objectives

Action Steps

- How do we know if we're ready to move to the next module?

Like the other modules, it is important to be sure that you have completed the work required. Be sure that you have completed Plan Workbook Activity G.

- Who should I be thinking about to bring on board for the next module?

Team members that are helpful in the next module are those who are experienced in communication outreach, such as mass media, public relations, and social media. You will probably also find that community health workers, social marketers, and policy professionals will be valuable members of your team. And as always, if your time is short, and if you have the money, you may choose to bring in a contractor or partners to help you. Don't forget the Quick Learn on Getting Help.

- Which module is next?

Identifying and describing your action strategies and activities will be your next module. This will likely include communication tools, but may also include health marketing, health promotion, education, or policy.□



7. Communication and Marketing Strategies

Introduction to Communication and Marketing Strategies

1. How Will This Module Help Me?

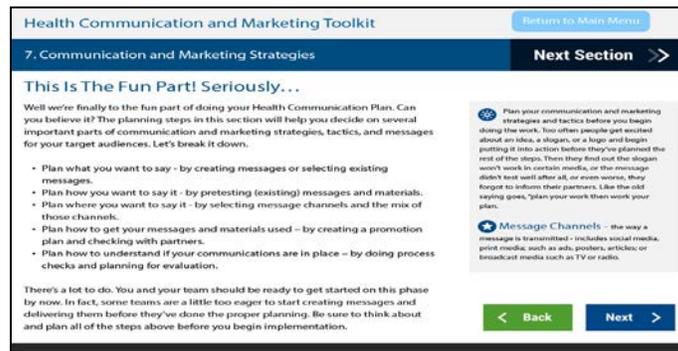
This module will help you select your action strategies and activities, make sure they are linked to your objectives and goals, and ensure you choose ones that are effective and efficient. Sounds great right?

2. Who Else Do I Need To Work With Me On This Module?

People who have experience with mass media, public relations, community outreach, social media, social/health marketing, and policy strategies and tools will all be great additions to your team.

3. What Other Information Do I Need For This Module?

It is always a good idea to meet with other public health programs that have addressed similar problems or with similar audiences. It's helpful to find out what communication and marketing strategies and tools they used and what led them to those decisions. If you are working with the prediabetes cooperative agreement, then it's important to become familiar with the resources on the National Diabetes Prevention Program website.



7. Communication and Marketing Strategies

This Is The Fun Part! Seriously...

Well we're finally to the fun part of doing your Health Communication Plan. Can you believe it? The planning steps in this section will help you decide on several important parts of communication and marketing strategies, tactics, and messages for your target audiences. Let's break it down.

- Plan what you want to say - by creating messages or selecting existing messages.
- Plan how you want to say it - by pretesting (existing) messages and materials.
- Plan where you want to say it - by selecting message channels and the mix of those channels.
- Plan how to get your messages and materials used – by creating a promotion plan and checking with partners.
- Plan how to understand if your communications are in place – by doing process checks and planning for evaluation. □

There's a lot to do. You and your team should be ready to get started on this phase by now. In fact, some teams are a little too eager to start creating messages and delivering them before they've done the proper planning. Be sure to think about and plan all of the steps above before you begin implementation.

Plan your communication and marketing strategies and tactics before you begin doing the work. Too often people get excited about an idea, a slogan, or a logo and begin putting it into action before they've planned the rest of the steps. Then they find out the slogan won't work in certain media, or the message didn't test well after all, or even worse, they forgot to inform their partners. Like the old saying goes, "plan your work then work your plan."

Message Channels - the way a message is transmitted - includes social media, print media; such as ads, posters, articles; or broadcast media such as TV or radio.



7. Communication and Marketing Strategies

Plan What You Want To Say

If you are working on the National Diabetes Prevention program, you have access to existing messages developed by CDC and its partners. The messages are focused on changing the misperception that many people believe they can't possibly have prediabetes.

[The website](#) includes a quiz, messages, and information about the diabetes lifestyle change program. If you are working on prediabetes, you have a head start on messaging. You can work with these messages, and even use them in social media to point your audiences to this amazing English and Spanish resource.

If you are working with recognized or accredited DSMES programs, start with the resources developed by 1) [the American Diabetes Association](#) and 2) [American Association of Diabetes Educators](#) to promote DSMES. The National Diabetes Education Program also has resources promoting the importance of DSMES and managing diabetes. Check them out at [What is NDEP promoting this Quarter?](#)



7. Communication and Marketing Strategies

But I'm Not The Creative Type ... Am I?

Do I have to be a creative genius?

What if there's a lot to say?

How do I know what to say?

All of these are perfectly legitimate questions we deal with every day in health communication. Most importantly, think back to your communication objectives to begin creating your messages.

If your communication objective is to increase awareness about prediabetes lifestyle change programs among Asian Americans in your state, then it follows that your messages should talk about that availability. Your messages should also be crafted visually, graphically, with audio, and in language to appeal to Asian Americans. If you've done audience research, then messages should be culturally aligned with Asian Americans. The National DPP providers' programs should also be culturally appropriate with benefit messages and recipes in their language, and classes held at convenient times.



7. Communication and Marketing Strategies

But I'm Not The Creative Type ... Am I? Continued

So that's a good start and not so hard to do, right?

A lot of people worry about being creative when it comes to health messaging. This is a good time to remember you have partners, and possibly contractors, that can help with this task. An important inside tip is to keep a close eye on contractors if they have little experience working with public health. They need strong supervision to stay on message, and keep science in any messages.

If you and your team want to develop messages, you can find tips for effective and creative messages in the [How-To Design SBCC Messages Resource](#).



7. Communication and Marketing Strategies

But I'm Not The Creative Type ... Am I? Continued

- Make sure what you are telling the audience is 100% clear and doable.
- Focus your messages on something the audience cares about, a benefit to them.
- Make it short and easy to understand.
- Use questions or prompts instead of nagging people.
- Use messages that are personal.
- Use messages with vivid imagery and concrete ideas.
- Use appropriate emotion to make your message more memorable.
- Use a story to make your message more memorable.
- Use humor, when you can, and if it is appropriate for the topic.
- Avoid scare tactics and fear messages. However, if you do use one, include a solution. □

And most importantly, try to tailor your messages to your audience. □ Tailoring can include age, heritage, local community concerns, historical issues, and many other factors. This is why some audience input is critical for creating messages and during pretesting. More on that in the next section.



7. Communication and Marketing Strategies

Pretest And Plan How You Want To Say It

Testing messages sounds very technical and time-consuming. Is it really necessary? My boss is probably just going to pick the best ones anyway. Can't I just go with that and save some time and money? How does it benefit me? These are good questions that almost every planner has asked at one time. Here are the key points to keep in mind.

- Message pretesting can help make sure that you don't launch messages with mistakes. Pretesting with your audiences ensures you have input from them (and partners), and your management has heard their input
- Pretesting can help make sure you don't use language that is offensive, neutral, boring, annoying, or even inflammatory.
- Message pretesting can help you explain and provide data to science-oriented professionals in your organization as to why certain messages are better than more text heavy messages.



7. Communication and Marketing Strategies

Pretest And Plan How You Want To Say It Continued

- Pretesting can ensure your messages are accurate and easily understood.
- Pretesting is critical if you are assessing health literacy. CDC has developed a tool called the [Clear Communication Index](#) that can help you determine how clear your messages are and provides guidance for making messages and materials simpler.
- If you are developing a website, usability testing is critical. This federal government website provides more [information about the basics of usability testing](#). This is likely a task you will hire a contractor for if you don't have resources in your organization to conduct usability tests.

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Pretesting With Partners, Management, And Science Professionals

While you are pretesting messages with your target audiences, it is a good idea to include your partners, and appropriate science or program professionals in the review of your draft messages or materials. Getting buy-in and input at this time can save you a lot of revision time in the future. Be sure to provide a checklist or a guide for reviewing. This will prevent getting a returned document that is full of red ink! We usually tell reviewers we are looking for a high-level review, not proofing comments. We are looking for a science-review or comments about the messages that would suit them as partners.



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7. Communication and Marketing Strategies

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Putting Messages Into Materials

Finally, you will want to consider how these messages will be used in materials. This step will have to be considered in conjunction with your decisions about channels. Now is a good time to think about how, and in what medium, your messages will appear. Go back to your target audience information and think about places your audience spends their time and list the kinds of materials you might find in those places. Will your messages work well with those kinds of materials? Let's look at a good and bad example of messages and materials.



Audience: African American Women over 50 who are active in their faith community.

Message: [Choose to Live: Sisters Strong Together](#), a campaign by the American Diabetes Association focuses on women supporting each other to improve their health and manage their diabetes. The Choose to Live: Sisters Strong Together message is delivered where ever women gather, ladies fellowship at church, beauty shop, etc.

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7. Communication and Marketing Strategies

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7. Communication and Marketing Strategies

Putting Messages Into Materials Continued

Good Example of Materials – a simple tear-off sheet printed in a notebook with diabetes prevention and management messages – half of a page for each. The tear off includes a message about the National DPP lifestyle change program and the importance of diabetes self-management education. The tear off sheet can be used at worship sites, beauty salons, pharmacies, etc. The tear off page should include the National Diabetes Prevention Program and National Diabetes Education Program websites as a source of additional information. (This example shows how materials and channel are intertwined).

Bad Example of Materials – A simple badge or button handed out in the various venues that says “Choose to Live: Sisters Strong Together”. This is a long phrase for a button. The phrase could also be confusing. Women support each other in many causes. A button does not give the space to develop the message or learn more. Using the tear off handout allows an opportunity to talk about this with a pharmacist, parish nurse or health care provider.



7. Communication and Marketing Strategies

Plan Where You Want To Say It

I have several messages and materials for audiences. How do I decide where and what channels to place the messages and materials? That's another really good question. Let's start with looking at a range of message channels you could use and the pros and cons of those. The [Profiles of Major Media Types](#) can help you and your team discuss these issues and talk about the best channels for your messages and materials to most effectively reach your target audiences.

My team and I need some help coming up with low cost ideas for channels. Do you have any resources for that? There are so many places to put messages these days. We are surrounded by messages. It can seem daunting to try to figure out the best channels for placing your messages. Our thanks to authors Nancy Lee and Phil Kotler for this [List of Message Channels](#).



7. Communication and Marketing Strategies

Plan Where You Want To Say It Continued

Once you've made initial decisions reevaluate the key reasons that make the channels you've chosen effective. We created a [Message Channels Assessment Worksheet](#) for you to use with your team to discuss and record these ideas. In the Assessment Worksheet, we also added a place for you to consider how measurable each channel is for your program.

Most public health programs need to work with the local media as one of their channels. If you do not have a department that manages media relations or if you just want to know more about [working with the media](#), the National Association of City and County Health Officials (NACCHO) has a web site link about working with the media. Also be sure you connect to your state's [National Public Health information Coalition \(NPHIC\)](#) contact. Each state has at least one contact and their web site provides valuable information.



7. Communication and Marketing Strategies

Plan How To Get Your Messages And Materials Used

Now that you have a plan for creating messages, materials, and channels, you need to write a promotion and distribution plan. Of course you won't actually be doing any promotion or distribution activities until your entire Health Communication Plan is complete.

What is in a promotion and distribution plan?

It is simply a to-do list for your communication products. It is a matter of stating who will produce and deliver your product, and when, where, how often, to use it. You may want to organize this plan by audience and include details such as what proportion of your audience you plan to reach with each material or message. This will be helpful for your later evaluation planning.



7. Communication and Marketing Strategies

Plan How To Get Your Messages And Materials Used Continued

An additional detail you should describe is how you will get these materials displayed, used, on-air, etc. For example, if some are paid, then you should have some detail about the budget you have set aside for each material. If you plan to work with a partner to help you distribute materials to women's hair salons, then you should detail the name of the partner and, hopefully, have an agreement in place.

This [Promotion Distribution Worksheet Quick Resource](#) can be used to help you plan.



7. Communication and Marketing Strategies

Pulling Together Your Messages, Materials, And Distribution Plan

- Review your Plan Workbook activities so far. Pay particular attention to your SMART objectives and specific target audiences.
- Work with your team to develop messages, materials, and a distribution plan for each objective. Be sure to consider your audience, and what you know now about developing communication or marketing strategies and tools.
- Consider the resources needed for your various strategies. What will it take to implement each strategy? Do you have the right partners or contractors to help you?
- Assess the potential impact of your strategies with your target audiences. Will the strategy work well with the channels preferred by your audience? Will the strategy help you achieve your program objectives?
- Document your team's ideas in the Plan Workbook Activity H.



7. Communication and Marketing Strategies

Are Your Communications And Marketing Activities In Place?

How will you know if your communication and marketing activities are going as planned? Well, that is an important part of your planning too. Most people call this monitoring your messages, materials, and activities. In some evaluation plans, it is called monitoring the outputs of your program. Either way is fine. You want to know if program activities conducted have influenced your audiences' awareness, knowledge, beliefs, skills, perceptions, norms, behaviors, etc. We will go into more detail about monitoring in the evaluation section. But it is important to remember that planning for evaluation is a key part of your Health Communication plan development.

Another reason it is important to monitor activities is to ensure the program is progressing as expected, and to make changes to improve it, if needed. For example, if your team has not been able to place National DPP quiz sheets in hair salons, and you know that because of your monitoring, then it is good idea to revise your plan.



7. Communication and Marketing Strategies

Preparing For Implementation Of Your Health Communication Plan

Most public health communication and marketing plans include a logic model. Logic models help you to think about what you need to put into your implementation (INPUTS) and what you hope to deliver to achieve your objectives (OUTPUTS). Logic models also include fields to record intended for outcomes and impact.

Don't get too concerned about creating an elaborate logic model. Logic models can be very simple. The key is to get an at-a-glance visual of how all the pieces of your Health Communication and Marketing Plan fit together.

In this [Logic Model Worksheet Quick Resource](#), we have highlighted the Outputs section so you can see some examples of output items. In the next section, we will begin to complete the other sections of this worksheet as we work through it.

Remember in planning your communication and marketing strategies you need to plan for reach and frequency, and use the evidence-based information we have provided.



7. Communication and Marketing Strategies

Action Steps

- How will I know if I'm prepared to move to the next step?

This module is a lot of work, but it is the most exciting for a lot of people. It requires a lot of coordination, not just in the planning stages, but also in the execution. Be sure you have linked your activities and strategies back to your objectives and goals first. Then think about your resources and if you have adequately described activities and strategies you can do within your budgets and time constraints. If you can answer yes to both of these questions, you are ready to move forward.

- Which module is next?

The final module is about measuring your progress and success. So gear up and let's get ready to go.

- Who should I be thinking about to bring on board for the next module?

Evaluation professionals will be very helpful in building the final phase of your plan, but community partners are very important too. We often need community partners to help collect information for evaluation purposes. Including them in the development of the plan will avoid problems down the road and make the evaluation experience more successful for everyone.



8. Measuring Success

Introduction to Measuring Success

1. How Will This Module Help Me?

This module will help you develop a plan to see how well your strategies and activities are doing to help you reach your SMART objectives and cooperative agreement goals.

This module can also help you develop a plan to determine if your communication activities are on track, and what course corrections you may need to make.

2. Who Else Do I Need To Work With Me On This Module?

Generally people with a strong background in communication evaluation, statistics, measurement, and metrics are helpful to have on your team. Please remember to involve you community members and others from your organization who may have or process data that can be very important to your plan.

3. What Other Information Do I Need For This Module?

Any existing evaluation plans from similar public health efforts can give you and your team insights and possible starting data to build your evaluation plan. Meet with other programs and ask them how they identified their data sources and created data collection agreements. These are often stumbling blocks.

Health Communication and Marketing Toolkit [Return to Main Menu](#)

8. Measuring Success [Next Section >>](#)

Gathering Proof And Improvement Information

It can be a little scary to evaluate your own activities and messages. People develop a lot of ownership in their materials and messages over time. Having outside help with your evaluation plan and execution can help your team remain objective. This is one of the best times to consider bringing in an academic institution, contractor, or partner to assist you. It's also important to remember to bring in your stakeholders early to the evaluation process. They can be a valuable resource and have great insights to evaluation and to data collection barriers.



Remember CDC grantees must report their progress toward established goals. Although you are developing the evaluation plan as the last step, you should be conducting evaluation and monitoring activities throughout your communication and marketing implementation activities. Ongoing evaluation will make your required reporting tasks easier and you to make mid-course corrections, as needed.

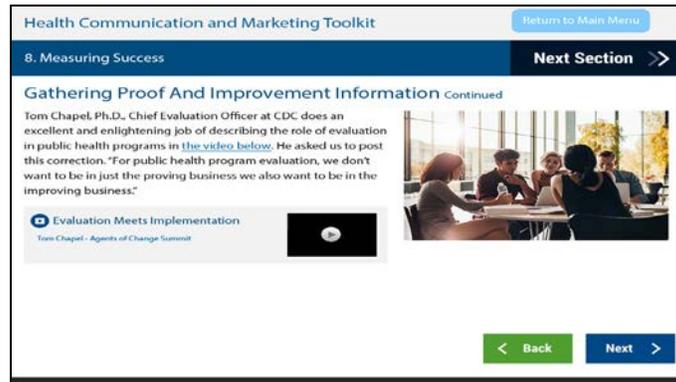
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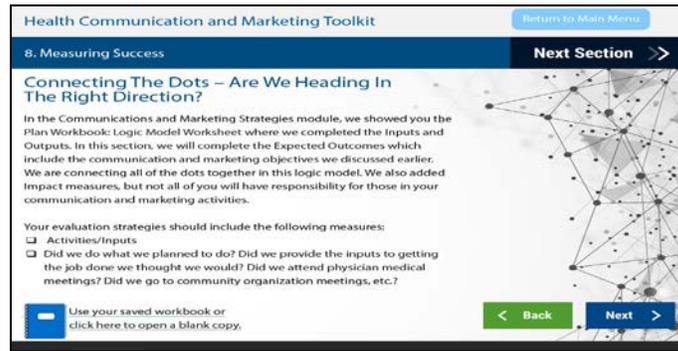


8. Measuring Success

Gathering Proof And Improvement Information Continued

Tom Chapel, Ph.D., Chief Evaluation Officer at CDC does an excellent and enlightening job of describing the role of evaluation in public health programs in the video below. He asked us to post this correction. "For public health program evaluation, we don't want to be in just the proving business we also want to be in the improving business."

[Click here to view Evaluation Meets Implementation, Tom Chapel - Agents of Change Summit](#)



8. Measuring Success

Connecting The Dots – Are We Heading In The Right Direction?

In the Communications and Marketing Strategies module, we showed you the

Plan Workbook: Logic Model Worksheet where we completed the Inputs and Outputs. In this section, we will complete the Expected Outcomes which include the communication and marketing objectives we discussed earlier. We are connecting all of the dots together in this logic model. We also added Impact measures, but not all of you will have responsibility for those in your communication and marketing activities.

Your evaluation strategies should include the following measures:

- Activities/Inputs
- Did we do what we planned to do? Did we provide the inputs to getting the job done we thought we would? Did we attend physician medical meetings? Did we go to community organization meetings, etc.?



8. Measuring Success

Connecting The Dots – Are We Heading In The Right Direction? Continued

Outputs/Short-term

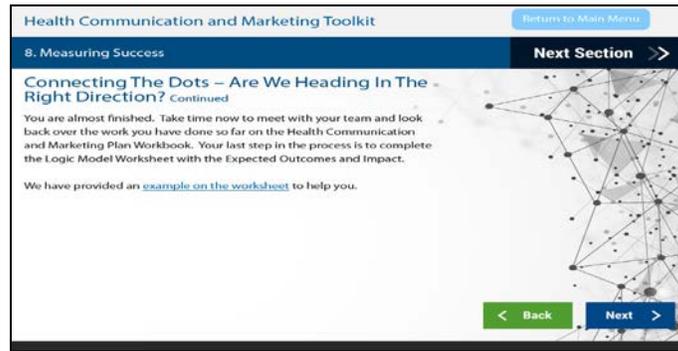
How many people, organizations, health care providers were reached or engaged? How many medical society meetings did we attend? How many materials and messages were disseminated? How many tweets were posted, re-tweeted, text messages sent, etc.?

Expected Outcomes/Medium-term

What changed (or do you expect to change) in the level of knowledge, attitude, beliefs, perceptions, skills, behavior, how many physicians' skills did we change, how much self-efficacy did we change among what percentage of doctors, etc.?

Impact/Long-term

What health indicators changed at the population level– e.g., statewide changes in diabetes rates, A1C, hypertension rates, etc.? CAUTION: The Impact level may be measured by your Diabetes State Program and not your communication or marketing strategies and activities.



8. Measuring Success

Connecting The Dots – Are We Heading In The Right Direction? Continued

You are almost finished. Take time now to meet with your team and look back over the work you have done so far on the Health Communication and Marketing Plan Workbook. Your last step in the process is to complete the Logic Model Worksheet with the Expected Outcomes and Impact.

We have provided an [example on the worksheet](#) to help you.



8. Measuring Success

Information Gathering Tools

There are four main types of information gathering tools we often use in public health programs.

- Records review or archival data (vital health statistics or content analysis)
- Key informant interviews (one-on-one, dyads, or triads)
- Focus groups
- Surveys (in-person and online)

In the [Quick Resource: Data Collection Methods: Pros and Cons](#) page, the pros and cons of primary types of information gathering techniques we use in public health programs are described. The pros and cons are good factors to consider when discussing which kind of measure or tool to use to assess each objective you have set. Keeping this list handy might be helpful to your team.



8. Measuring Success

Qualitative AND Quantitative Information Gathering

Is it better to collect qualitative or quantitative data? When you're working with communication and marketing activities it's not really a matter of which one of these is better. Both of these techniques are useful for evaluation purposes.

Qualitative research focuses on information that is not in numerical form. Things like open-ended answers from surveys, unstructured interviews, diary entries, and unstructured observations are some examples. Quantitative data includes things like temperature and barometer readings or social science measures like the Likert scale of "tell me how much you like this on a scale of one to five." Each kind of data will give you a different, but important, perspective on your program activities.

For example, it's always helpful to know that there was an increase in enrollment to DSME classes at a certain location. But, a manager will want to know why that location and not others, so s/he can duplicate that success in other places. This requires that there is qualitative data that explains/supports the reasons behind the quantitative data. There should always be "why" data to explain the "what" data. The Quick Resource: Qualitative and Quantitative Summary of Differences provides more information.

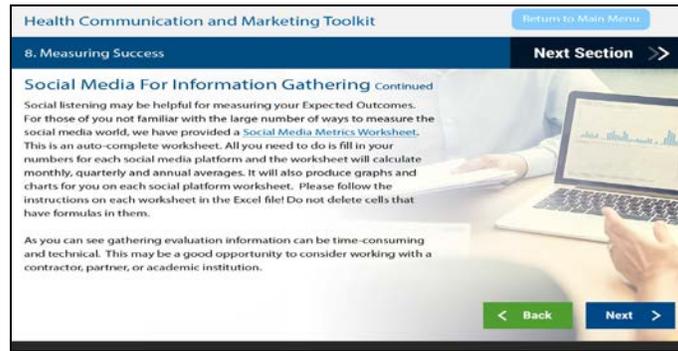


8. Measuring Success

Social Media For Information Gathering

One of the new ways we have of measuring or gathering information is through social media listening. If you have already explored the [SocialMediaWorks](#) tool from CDC, then you have learned a little about social listening. Social listening allows us to better understanding what an audience is saying about a topic in the online social world by monitoring and measuring social media content.

For instance, you might be interested in listening to what a specific audience group is saying about National DPP lifestyle change programs that are offered in your state. This would give you an idea of what barriers and benefits this audience associates with them. This could be accomplished by using a social media listening service that monitors all social media platforms. A brief summary of these plans and the metrics they provide can be found at this link under the "[Selecting the Appropriate Analytic Services](#)." section.



8. Measuring Success

Social Media For Information Gathering Continued

Social listening may be helpful for measuring your Expected Outcomes. For those of you not familiar with the large number of ways to measure the social media world, we have provided a [Social Media Metrics Worksheet](#). This is an auto-complete worksheet. All you need to do is fill in your numbers for each social media platform and the worksheet will calculate monthly, quarterly and annual averages. It will also produce graphs and charts for you on each social platform worksheet. Please follow the instructions on each worksheet in the Excel file! Do not delete cells that have formulas in them.

As you can see gathering evaluation information can be time-consuming and technical. This may be a good opportunity to consider working with a contractor, partner, or academic institution.



8. Measuring Success

Are We There Yet?

We're almost there. This final process will help you determine which specific tools to use to measure your Expected Outcomes (and Impacts). Let's use two examples of tools.

Objective: Increase ice cream quality by 50% by end of August 2016. (It is currently May 2016) at one ice cream store.

Measuring tool 1: Survey random 100 customers May 15, 2016 and ask about ice cream quality using 5 questions, repeat same process August 31, 2016. Determine if customers rate quality increase at 50%.

Measuring tool 2: Once a month leave a paper survey at the order counter asking customers if they think our quality has improved. Customers drop the paper survey in a fish bowl. We collect three months of surveys and tabulate results at the end of August, comparing increases in results month over month.



8. Measuring Success

Are We There Yet? Continued

In this yummy example, you might choose measuring tool 1. It seems the best candidate, but if it was very expensive and time consuming, you might have to opt for measuring tool 2 due to resource constraints. Keep in mind you will always need to consider options and backup plans to accommodate budgetary and time constraints. Be sure to include those as factors in your evaluation plan decision making.

Now is a good time to look at how your Expected Outcomes (and Impacts if applicable) can be measured. We have provided a template for lining up each of these against some typical measurement tools.

You may also want to spend more time with a tool CDC developed called [ProofWorks](#). ProofWorks will help you build a tailored evaluation strategy based on information you provide about your program, your stakeholders, and your resources. You have to create a free account first.



8. Measuring Success

Are We There Yet? Continued

Let's get started now with building your evaluation strategy by connecting your [Connecting Outcomes to Information Gathering Tools](#) using the Plan Workbook Activity I: Evaluation Strategies and working with your team. This planning will help your communication and marketing efforts get started on a strong foundation and have both forward thinking and a mid-course correction lighthouse working for you.



Congratulations!

Your complete Health Communication and Marketing Plan Workbook provides all you need to develop and implement effective and efficient communication and marketing strategies, and measure your success in achieving your cooperative agreement goals.

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