

STEP 3: PLAN ACTIVITIES

Now that you have selected activities for a Get Smart event, it is time to begin planning. Planning for an event can be broken down into the following components:

- Draft a program/agenda
- Logistics
- Publicity
- Fundraising
- Evaluation

Draft a Program/Agenda

Now that you have a date, time, and venue it is time to create the content of the event. This involves:

- Creating a slogan and a “take-away” message
- Identifying and recruiting speakers
- Developing the agenda

Below are some guidelines for each of these tasks.

Slogan

- Get Smart About Antibiotics Week
- Snort Sniffle Sneeze, No Antibiotics Please!
- The Power to Prevent Resistance is in Your Hands
- Antibiotics Aren’t Always the Answer

Recruiting Speakers

Some events require speakers, such as luncheons, awards seminars, and educational workshops. The speakers may make opening remarks, give a keynote address, or facilitate training sessions, depending on the type of event.

Choose a speaker who will draw people to your event. This is especially important when you are targeting a busy audience like physicians. Look for a speaker who:

- Is a recognized expert on your subject
- Has name recognition (e.g., local politicians, celebrities)
- Is dynamic and funny
- Is reliable (i.e., not likely to back out at the last minute)

Some speakers may be willing to speak for free, but others may charge a fee. Some may be willing to speak for free if you cover their travel costs.

Given that appropriate antibiotic use coalitions are non-profit entities with limited funds, it is worth the effort to negotiate with speakers about their fees. Also be sure to discuss transportation and lodging arrangements if the speaker has to travel to your event.

Developing the Agenda

A draft agenda for your event(s) should be developed no later than a month before the event. Here are some tips for developing a realistic agenda:

- Allow enough “wiggle room” in your agenda to account for late starts and unanticipated delays. For example, assume that your first session will start at least 15 minutes late and allow enough time before the second session to compensate for this.
- If your event is a seminar, training or workshop, plan for coffee or meal breaks every 2-2½ hours.
- When listing speakers and presenters on the agenda, put “tentative” or “confirmed” next to their names.
- If activities/sessions will be taking place in different rooms, be sure to list the room next to each item.
- Mark each version of the agenda with “draft” and the date that it was revised. This will help to avoid confusions when multiple copies are circulating. Do not mark it “final” until you are absolutely sure that nothing will change.
- Assume that there will be last minute changes to your agenda and plan accordingly. For example, in your timeline, you may want to plan to print the agenda the evening before the event or even the morning of the event. Make sure that someone is available to do this at the last minute.

Logistics

The “nuts and bolts” of event planning involves thinking through all aspects of your GSW activity. Visualize how the days leading up to the event will go, what the day of your event looks like, and try to identify places where difficulties may arise and have a back up plan prepared.

A checklist of key tasks is available on page 19.

Publicity

Now that you’ve planned your event, you need to let others know about it. Partner organizations and the media can play a big role in publicizing your efforts. Some key steps to publicity are:

- Identifying event spokespeople
- Creating promotional materials
- Conducting media outreach

Identifying Event Spokespeople

Identify one or more spokespersons from your coalition who can talk about the event with the media and others. Ideally, the spokespersons should:

- Be knowledgeable about the appropriate antibiotic use issue you are addressing and also knowledgeable about the event.
- Have prior experience interacting with the media. If your spokesperson does not have this experience, see if a local public relations firm would be willing to do “pro bono” media training.

Prepare a biosketch of your spokesperson to share with the media and other interested parties.

Creating Promotional Materials

Creating promotional materials for your event helps reinforce your messages and sets the tone for your event. These may be adapted from Get Smart print ads, graphic buttons, etc. These may include:

- “Save the Date” cards
- Invitations
- Flyers
- Posters (hold a design contest in schools)
- Fact sheets
- Collateral materials – buttons, caps, t-shirts
- Banner to hang behind the podium
- Signs to direct participants on the day of the event

To get professional quality materials, it is helpful to work with a graphic designer.

Send out “Save the Date” cards prior to the invitations. Invitations should be sent 4 weeks prior to the event. An event announcement and promotional materials can be posted on your website, as well as partner websites.

Whenever sending correspondence about your event to the media or state organizations, be sure to use the same letterhead. This is important for events being organized by coalitions, which consist of many different organizations. If your coalition does not have its own letterhead, then decide on one of the organizational letterheads to be used, and use it consistently.

Conducting Media Outreach

Media outreach is another way to publicize your event. More information on media outreach can be found in the Press Materials section of the Get Smart About Antibiotics Week website: www.cdc.gov/getsmart/week/promotional-materials/press-materials.html.

Fundraising

Tips on Fund Raising

Once you have determined your budget and figured out how much of a “funding gap” you are facing, the next step is to analyze your existing and potential funding sources. Consider the following sources of financial support:

Potential Sources of Financial Support

- Funding from appropriate antibiotic use or children’s health coalition members
- State and local health departments
- Discretionary funds from your town/city/county council or board of supervisors
- Local hospitals and large provider groups
- Insurers and managed care organizations (e.g., Blue Cross/Blue Shield distributes small grants for health events in California)
- Local businesses
- Local universities, colleges and technical schools
- Local civic groups (e.g. Rotary and Kiwanis clubs)

You can also ask for in-kind support to supplement your financial support. Many businesses find it easier to offer free goods or services instead of donating money.

Potential Sources of In-Kind Support

- Local printing companies may be able to print flyers at no or reduced cost.
- Local food establishments, such as pizza parlors, sandwich shops, restaurants, and orchards may be able to donate food for the event participants or snacks for volunteers.
- Local community groups may be able to supply volunteers for stuffing envelopes.
- Hotels or conference centers may be able to provide meeting space at reduced or no cost.
- Public relations consultants may be willing to do “pro bono” media training for your spokespeople.

Approaching Potential Supporters

Here are some helpful tips for approaching and recognizing your supporters:

- Decide on a specific amount of money or a specific good or service that you will ask for from each organization.
- Develop two telephone scripts approaching potential supporters - one for the solicitation of money and the other for the solicitation of in-kind support. Be sure to mention the benefits that the funder will receive by supporting your event. For example:
 - Increased state and media visibility

- Recognition as a supporter of health and well being
- More clients/customers (i.e., for a baby store, pharmacy or health system)
- Make your initial contact via phone – this is more personal than an e-mail or a letter, and you will be more likely to get the attention of your potential supporter. Offer to mail supporting materials after your phone call, and then follow-up to make sure that they were received.

Be sure to recognize all event supporters by putting their names in the event program and by sending them a thank you letter afterwards.

Evaluation

It is important to know if your event was successful or not, especially if you plan on replicating it in the future. More information on evaluation can be found on the Get Smart website: <http://www.cdc.gov/getsmart/community/improving-prescribing/program-development/evaluation/index.html>

.

Sample Checklist of Key Tasks

Before the Event

- Reserve the venue. If your event will take place outside, make sure that you have back-up plan in case of rain.
- Make travel and lodging arrangements for out-of-town speakers. If you are using government funds, make sure that your speaker is aware of per diem limits.
- Arrange for food and beverages. (Don't forget to feed volunteers!)
- Arrange for audio visual (AV) equipment.
- Purchase office supplies that will be needed during the event (e.g., flipcharts, markers, folders, pens, notebooks).
- Arrange for the production of a banner to hang behind the speaker's podium.
- Arrange for signs to guide participants to the event room/site.
- Coordinate event registration.
- Create name badges for participants and speakers.

Day of the Event

- Set up the rooms and registration tables (one table for participants and another one for the media).
- Hand out packets/materials to participants. It is preferable to distribute them as people register so that you can point out any important documents, such as evaluation forms.
- Ensure that AV equipment is set up and functioning in advance.
- Supervise food distribution.
- Ensure that there is water for speakers.
- Staff the media table and coordinate interviews.
- Escort guests/speakers to all of the events. If you are escorting them to multiple venues, bring snacks and water for them in case they do not have time to eat.

Tips for Room Set-Up

- Reserve seats for speakers, dignitaries and other guests near the podium.
- Set aside space for the media. If radio or TV reporters will be coming, create space for video cameras and microphones near the podium.
- If print journalists are coming, reserve a row of seats near the podium.