



CERC Communication Channels

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Purpose

CERC principles can help you provide the public with information to make the **best decisions** within incredibly **challenging time constraints** and to accept the **imperfect nature of choice**.

The **right message** at the **right time** from the **right person** can save lives.

Introduction to Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication

What is CERC?

CDC's Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication (CERC) manual was first published in 2002 to provide an approach to health communications during emergencies based on experience and psychological and communication sciences.

Six Principles of CERC

Fully integrated CERC helps ensure that limited resources are managed well and can do the most good at every phase of an emergency response.

- 1**  **Be First:**
Crises are time-sensitive. Communicating information quickly is crucial. For members of the public, the first source of information often becomes the preferred source.
- 2**  **Be Right:**
Accuracy establishes credibility. Information can include what is known, what is not known, and what is being done to fill in the gaps.
- 3**  **Be Credible:**
Honesty and truthfulness should not be compromised during crises.
- 4**  **Express Empathy:**
Crises create harm, and the suffering should be acknowledged in words. Addressing what people are feeling and the challenges they face builds trust and rapport.
- 5**  **Promote Action:**
Giving people meaningful things to do calms anxiety, helps restore order, and promotes some sense of control.³
- 6**  **Show Respect:**
Respectful communication is particularly important when people feel vulnerable. Respectful communication promotes cooperation and rapport.

The CERC Rhythm

Engage Community • Empower Decision-Making • Evaluate

Preparation

- Draft and test messages
- Develop partnerships
- Create plans
- Determine approval process

Initial

- Express empathy
- Explain risks
- Promote action
- Describe response efforts

Maintenance

- Explain ongoing risks
- Segment audiences
- Provide background information
- Address rumors

Resolution

- Motivate vigilance
- Discuss lessons learned
- Revise plan

Working with Media, Social Media, and Mobile Devices

Lesson Overview

- The media's role in a crisis, disaster, or emergency
- Using social media in a crisis
- Using mobile media in a crisis

Disasters are Media Events

The media needs to be there to:

- Give important protective actions for the public.
- Know how to reach their audience and know their audiences needs.

How Social Media Helps in a Crisis



Ability for rapid, authoritative, direct communication

Be right. Be first. Be credible.



Ability to join the conversation & listen to the conversation

Express empathy



Opportunities to address fears and misinformation

Well suited to simple messages & actionable items needed in a crisis



Promote action

Provides quick opportunities to shift dialogue

Public Concerns Addressed by Social Media

1. Gain wanted facts
2. Empower decision-making
3. Involved as a participant, not spectator
4. Monitor resource allocation
5. Recover or preserve well-being and normalcy

Importance of Social Media

- Often provides the first publicly available information
- Can increase transparency
- Allows the public to receive and send valuable information
- Informs or misinforms
- Used by media as information sources



Responding to Errors and Rumors

Consider:

- Protective actions for the public.
- How to reach audiences with what they need.
- The level of harm to the public and problems to your organization when responding.
- Information or misinformation can go viral in seconds.
- News stories can spread faster on social media.
- Negative online comments can damage your reputation.

Remember: You can't control every message being sent or every response to your messages.

How Do We Measure Social Media



Awareness: have people noticed that we're out there?

Social media mentions, positive reviews (from other influencers, Twitter followers)



Message: are we saying the right things? Are the messages being shared?

Quotes/key messages in social media, content analyses



Reach: are we reaching more people?

Increase in Twitter followers, potential/actual reach (impressions)

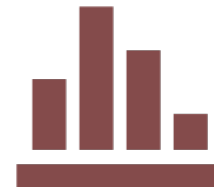


Influence: are we driving the conversation?



Engagement: are we having more conversations?

Retweets and shares, Twitter chat metrics, comments, and questions received on social media profiles, responses sent



Reporting: weekly, monthly reports, quarterly reports to identify trends

Mobile Media's Role During a Crisis

Mobile Media: mobile handheld communication devices including mobile phones, smartphones, and tablets.

- Information-sharing and alerts
- Real-time coverage of events
- Updates of family members and other loved ones
- Geographically targeted guidance
- Supports community cohesion



Mobile Media Challenges

- Infrastructure damage
- Limited access
- Information overload
- Investment of time
- Lack of knowledge among response staff

CERC Closing

Resources

- CERC Website
 - <http://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/>
- Additional Inquiries
 - cercrequest@cdc.gov



Questions?