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Crisis Communication Planning
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New Year's Resolutions

In 2019, we want to…

1. Eat healthier.
2. Exercise more.
3. Be better prepared to communicate in emergencies.

Introduction to Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication (CERC)

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.

What is CERC?

CDC's Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication (CERC) manual was first published in 2002 to provide an approach to health communication 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

Crisis Communication Plan

Why plan crisis communication?

- Understand best practices for engaging stakeholders through communication during an emergency.

- Identify the types of messages each audience needs.

- Quickly access available resources at the start of emergency responses.

Developing the Plan

- Be realistic.

- Account for worst-case scenarios.

- Know what to include.

- Use the plan as a resource for necessary information.

- Keep plan current.

What to Consider

- Scenario
- Communication Goals
- Key Assumptions and Considerations
- Messages
- Spokespersons

What to Consider (cont)

- ## Audiences

   Identify target audiences. Disseminate messages to audiences with both distinct and common concerns and issues.

Audience	Examples
General Public	• Communities directly affected by the hazard
Healthcare Providers	• Clinicians and other healthcare providers • Hospitals
Public Health Community	• Public health officials, including local, national, and international contacts
Travelers	• Travelers to and from the affected area
Travel Industry	• Airlines • Airports
Partners	• Emergency Medical Services • Humanitarian aid groups
Community organizations	• Schools • Faith-based organizations • Businesses • Nongovernmental organizations

What to Consider (cont)

- Primary Communication Channels

  The plan should identify the variety of channels that will be used to distribute emergency information and messages.

Channel	Audiences Reached through this Channel
Social Media	• Twitter • Facebook
Websites	• Blogs
News Media	• Press Briefings • Radio PSAs
Doctors' and Nurses' Organizations and Networks	• Healthcare providers • Public health community
National Hotline	• Public
Partners	• For-profit organizations • Nonprofit organizations • Faith-based organizations
Email Alerts or Blasts	• PIOs • Hospitals/health clinics • Schools

CERC Closing

Questions?

Resources

- CERC Website

  http://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/

- Additional Inquiries

  cercrequest@cdc.gov

For more information, contact CDC
1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)
TTY: 1-888-232-6348   www.cdc.gov

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