
Questions the Media and the Public May Ask in an Influenza Outbreak

Individuals want your message to answer:

- Is my family safe? Am I safe?
- What can I do to protect my family and myself?
- Can you fix it?
- Who/What caused this problem?

The media and communities want your message to answer:

- Who is in charge?
- How are those who are sick getting help?
- Is this problem being solved?
- What can we expect?
- What should we do?
- Why did this happen?
- Did you have forewarning this might happen?
- Why wasn't this prevented?
- What else can go wrong?
- What bad things aren't you telling us about?

Message Development for Emergency Communication

Step 1: Consider the following general factors

1. Target Audience(s) (e.g., general public, immediately community partners) _____

2. Purpose of Messages (e.g., give facts/update, respond to media) _____

3. Method of Delivery (e.g., TV interview, press release meeting) _____

Step 2: Consider the six basic emergency message components

1. Expression of empathy: _____

2. Clarifying facts
Who _____
What _____
Where _____
When _____
Why _____
How _____
3. What we don't know: _____
4. Process to get answers: _____
5. Statement of commitment: _____
6. Referrals - For more information _____
7. Next scheduled update _____

Step 3: Decide what the 3 most important message topics are for you to cover

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Message Development for Emergency Communication

Step 4: Develop a complete key message for each of your message topics

TOPIC 1: _____

Complete message: _____

Additional supporting facts (if any): _____

Soundbite: _____

TOPIC 2: _____

Complete message: _____

Additional supporting facts (if any): _____

Soundbite: _____

TOPIC 3: _____

Complete message: _____

Additional supporting facts (if any): _____

Soundbite: _____

Step 5: Check your messages for the following and revise, if needed

<input type="checkbox"/> Positive action steps	<input type="checkbox"/> Test for clarity	<input type="checkbox"/> Avoid humor
<input type="checkbox"/> Honest/open tone	<input type="checkbox"/> Use simple words, short sentences	<input type="checkbox"/> Avoid extreme speculation
<input type="checkbox"/> Applied risk communication principles	<input type="checkbox"/> Avoid jargon	<input type="checkbox"/> Avoid judgmental phrases

Resource List

Communication and Message Development

Communicating in a Crisis: Risk Communication Guidelines for Public Officials

<http://www.hhs.gov/od/documents/RiskCommunication.pdf>

ERC CDCynergy

<http://www.orau.gov/cdcynergy/erc/>

CERC by Leaders for Leaders

<http://www.cdc.gov/communication/emergency/leaders.pdf>

Self Instruction Course: Risk Communication

<http://www.cepis.ops-oms.org/tutorial6/i/index.html>

Pandemic Influenza

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov> or <http://www.avianflu.gov>

Pandemic Influenza Public Health – Seattle and King County

<http://www.metrokc.gov/health/pandemicflu/jeff-duchin-businessforum.ppt>

Preparing for Pandemic Influenza

<http://www.metrokc.gov/health/pandemicflu/multimedia/KCECC-meeting.ppt>