

Health Communication At a Glance

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Definitions of Health Communication

- *The process of promoting health by disseminating messages through mass media, interpersonal channels and events.*
 - May include diverse activities such as clinician-patient interactions, classes, self-help groups, mailings, hotlines, mass media campaigns, events
 - Efforts can be directed toward individuals, networks, small groups, organizations, communities or entire nations

THCU's definition of health communication

Where good health promotion and good communication practice meet.

From Rootman and Hershfield, "Health Communication Research: Broadening the Scope". *Health Communication*. 6(1), 69-72. (1996)

Types of health communication

- Persuasive or Behavioural Communications (which may employ social marketing strategies)
- Risk Communication
- Media Advocacy
- Entertainment Education
- Interactive Health Communication
- Communication for Social Change

Comprehensive Health Communication Campaigns

- goal-oriented attempts to inform, persuade or motivate behaviour change;
- ideally aimed at the individual, network, organizational and community/societal levels;
- aimed at a relatively large, well-defined audience (i.e., they are not interpersonal persuasion);
- provide non-commercial benefits to the individual and/or society;

Comprehensive Health Communication Campaigns (2)

- occur during a given time period, which may range from a few weeks to many years;
- are most effective when they include a combination of media, interpersonal and community events; and,
- involve an organized set of communication activities.

Based on Everett M. Rogers, and J. Douglas Storey, "Communication Campaigns," in Charles R. Berger and Steven H. Chaffee (eds.), *Handbook of Communication Science*, Sage: Newbury Park, CA, (1988).

12 Steps to Developing a Health Communication Campaign

PROJECT MANAGEMENT	Step 1. Project Management
PRE-PLANNING	Step 2. Revisit Your Health Promotion Strategy Step 3. Analyze and Segment Audiences Step 4. Develop Inventory of Communication Resources
PLANNING	Step 5. Set Communication Objectives Step 6. Select Channels and Vehicles Step 7. Combine and Sequence Communication Activities
MESSAGE PRODUCTION	Step 8. Develop the Message Strategy Step 9. Develop Project Identity Step 10. Develop Materials
IMPLEMENTATION	Step 11. Implement Your Campaign
EVALUATION	Step 12. Complete the Campaign Evaluation

Step One: Project Management

- Plan to meaningfully engage stakeholders.
- Establish a clear decision-making process.
- Establish a timeline for creating the work plan.
- Establish a timeline for the campaign.
- Plan how you will allocate financial, material, and human resources.
- Consider what data will be required to make decisions at each step. Include adequate time in work plan for data collection and interpretation.

Step Two: Health Promotion Strategy

- Consider measurable objectives at all four levels (individuals, networks, organizations, and communities/societies) and ensure they are realistic, clear, specific, a strategic priority, measurable, attainable, and time-limited.
- Ensure your project team is aware and supportive of your health promotion strategy.
- Use logic models as well as narratives to review and describe the strategy.

Step Three: Audience Analysis

- Where possible, segment your audience.
- Use existing and new qualitative and quantitative data.
- Use a combination of less and more expensive means.
- Ensure that multiple data sources confirm your audience conclusions.
- Ensure you have a complete and compelling understanding of your audience.

What Do We Need to Know?

- There are many things we need to find out about our audience, if we want to change their behaviour:
 - Demographics
 - Psychographics
 - Behaviours and factors related to these

Demographic	Behavioural	Psychographic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gender • age ranges • typical occupation • income range • Education • family situation • location home and work • cultural characteristics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • current behaviour • benefits from behaviour • readiness for change • current social or medical consequences • Feelings of susceptibility • Skill level • Knowledge • Attitudes • Intentions • Self-efficacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • values and beliefs • key personal characteristics • where they get their health-related information • organizations and social networks they belong • how they spend their time and money • Role models

Audience Analysis Techniques

Qualitative

- focus groups
- consultations
- observation
- cyber tours
- lurking
- diaries and journals
- collages
- bedroom tours
- interviews
- media outlet profiles

Quantitative

- questionnaires (mail, telephone, on-line)
- Web search patterns

When Do We Have Enough?

- When our picture is relatively complete.
- When our picture is valid (triangulate)
- When our picture is compelling

Segmentation

- The process of breaking down a large audience into a smaller number of subgroups that are as homogenous as possible, and as different from each other group as possible.
- Helps to:
 - better describe and understand a segment
 - predict behaviour
 - formulate tailored messages and programs to meet specific needs
 - set objectives that will reflect your overall goal.

The Segmentation Process

- Identify variables.
- Prioritize variables.
- Map out possibilities.
- Choose segments from possibilities:
 - Eliminate
 - Rank order
 - Combine where necessary/appropriate.

Step Four: Communication Inventory

- Modify existing inventories and directories, e.g., media lists from partner organizations.
- When listing your resources, consider a mix of communication strategies, including media, interpersonal, and events.

Step Five: Outcome Objectives

- Consider all four levels (individuals, networks, organizations, and communities/societies).
- Limit yourself to two to three objectives per level.
- Describe a change rather than an action step.
- Ensure objectives are SMART
- Ensure objectives address a strategic priority.
- Ensure objectives are aligned with overall strategy (Step Two)

Step Five: Outcome Objectives

Level	Bottom line target for change (objective)	Factors affecting bottom line	Principle audiences
Individual	Maintaining a personal behavior change.	An individual's: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -knowledge -beliefs -attitudes -skills -self efficacy 	Segments most in need of change (based on demographics, psychographics, etc.) Such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -men -children -low income groups -smokers -homeless people
Network	State of the social environment.	-Views of network opinion leaders -Frequency and content of conversations about a health issue within a network.	Opinion leaders of networks such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -families -groups of friends -colleagues -team mates

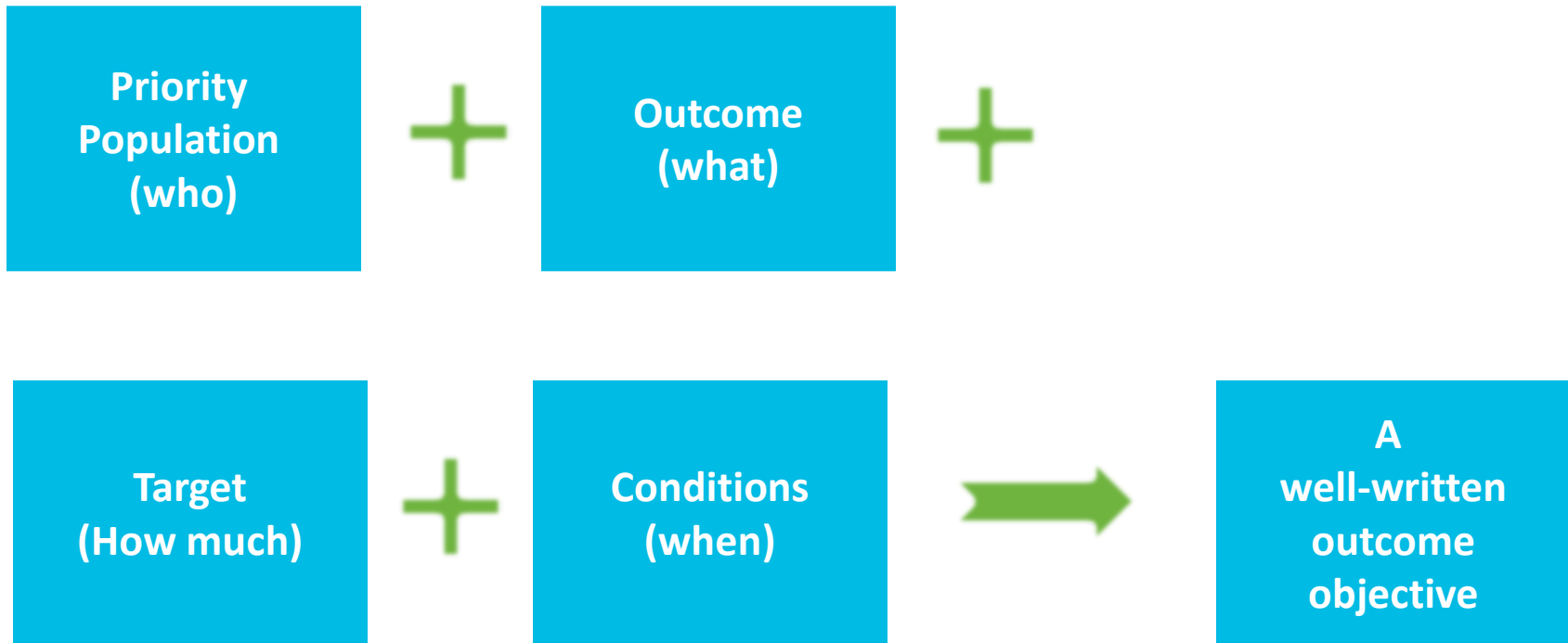
Step Five: Outcome Objectives

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Organization	Policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -cost/benefits to industry. -general industry trends. 	<p>Decision makers (primary) or employees, unions, customers (secondary) of organizations such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Schools, -Worksites -Places of worship -Primary health care settings
Society	Formal Laws.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Actions of special interest groups -Media coverage -Public opinion 	<p>Elected officials (primary) or the public, special interest groups, media (secondary) of a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Town -Region -Province -Country

Characteristics of Good Objectives

- Specific
- Measurable
- Appropriate
- Realistic with resources available
- Time-bound
- (SMART)
- compatible with goal, mission/vision, other objectives
- credible to key stakeholder groups

Elements of a well-written outcome objective



Triple the
number of

Teenagers

Who visited
the school
sexual health
clinic

By the end
of 2012

Step Six: Channels and Vehicles

- Choose the best channels and vehicles for the situation based on reach, cost, and effectiveness,(i.e., fit to situation, audience, and objectives).
- Use a mix of short- and long lived channels and vehicles.
- Consider a mix of communication strategies, including media, interpersonal and events.

Channels

- Channel refers to the means by which a message is sent. It is the communication medium or path. There are direct interpersonal channels such as doctor to patient, friend to friend, mother to child, teacher to class, and so forth. There are also indirect channels which are mediated.
 - Television
 - Radio
 - Newspaper
 - Social Media

Vehicles

- Vehicles are specific formats used to deliver messages through channels.
 - Commercial (Channel: Television)
 - Spokesperson profile and interview (Channel: Radio)
 - Print ad (Channel: Newspaper)
 - Facebook page (Channel: Social Media)

Step Seven: Combining and Sequencing

- Hold a big event first or build to a grand finale .
- Include activities with both high and low visibility.
- Mix the shelf life.
- Be aware of special events and holidays, friend or foe.
- Try to fit activities with the season.

Step Seven: Combining and Sequencing

- Build in existing events but be ready for the unexpected.
- Balance your timing so that you get repetition but avoid message fatigue.
- Apply the rule: 3 messages, 3 times, 3 different ways.
- Link with larger issues that are capturing the public agenda.
- Opportunities to integrate activities are important. That is, a single activity can be designed and delivered to have an impact at all 4 levels.

Step Eight: Message Development

- Ensure each message includes:
 - What (a clear indication of what the message is about)
 - So What (reasons the audience should care)
 - Now What (next steps for the audience)

Step Eight: Message Development

- This is a key part of creating the specs of any communication product to guide production.
- Build upon information and decisions in steps 1–7, particularly Audience Analysis and Objectives.
- To generate ideas, review materials from a variety of sources and assess what you like and don't like.



Second-hand smoke is the third leading preventable cause of death.

Ask a smoker to take it outside.



COMMUNITY PARTNERS FOR SMOKE-FREE HOMES

For more information, please contact your public health department.

Leading 10: A program that has been granted in part by the British Columbia Strategic Ministry of Health and Long Term Care. An advertisement by the Ministry is intended to inform the public.

Step Nine: Identity Development

- Use examples from a wide variety of sources to help determine your preferences.
- Produce materials that "carry the identity" – name, position statement, logo, and images, as required.
- Manage your identity, by ensuring all connections with your audience (e.g., print, verbal, online) are consistent with your identity.



**It would save even more lives
if it responded to second-hand smoke.**

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Funding for this program has been provided in part by the Ontario Tobacco Strategy, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. No endorsement by the Ministry is intended or should be inferred.



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breathing
space

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Step Ten: Production

- Aim to produce the best materials within budget and on time.
- Manage reviews and sign-offs very carefully.
- Pre-test all material with intended audience.

Step Eleven: Implementation

Step Twelve: Evaluation

- Throughout all steps, pay attention to clearly identifying stakeholder expectations, finding resources for the evaluation, and being sure your efforts are evaluable.

Message Review Tool

Message Review Tool

- It is a check list to develop persuasive health communication messages
- Based on McGuire's hierarchy theory
- Used in conjunction with audience analysis, message pre-testing and campaign evaluation

Health Communication Message Review Tool

		Excellent	Very good	Fair	Fail
1.	The message will get and maintain the attention of the audience.				
2.	The strongest points are given at the beginning of the message.				
3.	The message is clear (i.e. it should be easy for the audience to point out the actions you are asking them to take Now What, the incentives or reasons for taking those actions as well as the evidence for the incentives and any background information or definitions).				
4.	The action you are asking the audience to take is reasonably easy.				
5.	The message uses incentives effectively (more than one type of incentive is used, the audience cares about the incentives presented and the audience thinks the incentives are serious and likely).				
6.	Good evidence for threats and benefits is provided.				
7.	The messenger is seen as a credible source of information.				
8.	Messages are believable.				
9.	The message uses an appropriate tone for the audience (for example, funny, cheery, serious, dramatic).				
10.	The message uses an appeal that is appropriate for the audience (i.e. rational or emotional). If fear appeals are used, the audience is provided with an easy solution).				
11.	The message will not harm or be offensive to people who see it. This includes avoiding 'victim blaming'.				
12.	Identity is displayed throughout.				

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

- Use
- Lose
- Adapt

Comments:

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Comments: _____

Questions?

Resources

THCU on Health Communication

- Map of all health communication resources
http://www.thcu.ca/infoandresources/health_comm_map.cfm
- Health communication campaigns toolkit
http://www.thcu.ca/infoandresources/resource_display.cfm?resourceID=1008
- Health communication message review criteria
- http://www.thcu.ca/infoandresources/resource_display.cfm?resourceID=56
- Interactive online campaign planner
<http://www.thcu.ca/infoandresources/ohc/myworkbook/login/login.asp>

THCU on Health Communication (2)

- Use of social media in health promotion
 - [Guest facilitator Craig Lefebvre](#)
 - [Social Media in Public Health 1-Day Workshop](#)
 - [http://www.thcu.ca/videos/new media webinar.htm](http://www.thcu.ca/videos/new_media_webinar.htm)
- Webcast: Identify your audience
 - <http://www.thcu.ca/videos/webcasts.htm>