

Title: Introduction to risk and crisis communication

Background:

The emergence of new diseases and the re-emergence of existing diseases pose an ever-present threat to global health security. The COVID-19 pandemic has emphasized the need for public health officials to communicate effectively and provide accurate and timely information to the public and the media in times of crisis. Risk communication is an effective tool to communicate in times of crisis.

During a public health emergency people want information and guidance. They want to know the magnitude of the issue, what risks they face, and what they need to do to protect themselves. Public health officials need to communicate with the public early, often, be truthful and transparent, and use language they will understand. The messages must inform the public without frightening them and educate them so they can make informed decisions.

Workshop goal:

The purpose of this workshop is to provide a resource on the basic tenets of risk communication and behavior change communication. The workshop will address the challenges and opportunities that arise during public health emergencies and provides techniques to deal with both. The workshop will focus on how to apply risk communication to develop and deliver the right messages to target audiences, specifically the general public, the media, community leaders, and government officials.

Workshop objectives:

- Understand and apply the principles of risk communication
- Understand how people react in times of crisis
- Know how to interact with different audiences in times of crisis
- Learn to create effective public health messages and craft communication messages

Duration of workshop: (Half or full day): full day

Target Participants(Any Specific Considerations):

FETP residents, resident advisors, mentors, and MOH officials

Number of participants: 30.

Facilitators & Sponsor:

Pascale KRUMM, Health communications specialist, US CDC

Pascale Krumm has been with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta for 23 years. For most of these years, she has been a health communications specialist in the Global Health Center. From 2010 to 2015, she was the speechwriter for Dr. Thomas Frieden, a former CDC director.

She was deployed to francophone West Africa and to DRC on numerous occasions as CDC team lead for health communication in the Ebola responses. In 2020, she was also deployed domestically to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. For the past 8 years Pascale has also been the technical lead for scientific communication activities for the Data Impact Program, a project funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies and implemented by CDC and the CDC Foundation.

Her areas of expertise include crisis and risk communication as well as scientific communication. She trains epidemiologists and other scientists on how to research, write, and publish scientific manuscripts. She has developed and taught courses on these topics, both in English and in French. Before joining CDC, she was a college professor for 10 years.