



Project on Risk Communication Training, Message Testing and Focus Group Evaluation in China 2007

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October 2006

- Meeting with experts to share U.S. and Chinese
 - emergency risk communication principles
 - emergency communication operations
 - public health emergency experiences
 - 11 Chinese provinces represented
 - ◆ China CDC
 - ◆ MOH provincial “HERO” unites



November-January 2006

- Compilation of principles and operations
November
- Outline from U.S. CDC of Draft Guidelines for
Emergency Risk: November
- Draft Document produced: January

TESTING AND TRAINING OF EFFECTIVE RISK COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES

In January 2007 activities in Fujian Province to test

- 1) If training on the risk communication principles in the guidelines was effective?
- 2) Whether the risk communication principles in the guidelines were effective for Chinese public audiences.

#1 Was training risk communication principles in the guidelines effective?

- Did the training enable local health officials to write messages that included the risk communication principles?
- Message development and risk communication training January 22 and 23, 2007
 - 19 Sanming City and Zhangzhou City officials
 - ◆ Hospital administrators
 - ◆ Local Health Emergency Response Office (HERO) officials
 - ◆ Local China CDC officials



#1 Was training risk communication principles in the guidelines effective in helping local health authorities to better communicate with the public during an emergency?

- Pre-training Message Development
- The health officials participated in a hypothetical case study involving a 3 stage scenario involving an outbreak of H5N1.
 - Stage 1 a large outbreak of human H5N1 was discovered in Indonesia.
 - Stage 2 the outbreak spreads to China, Thailand, Malaysia, but not yet to Fujian Province.
 - ◆ At this stage of the scenario it is confirmed that the virus is spreading from human to human.
 - Stage 3 of the outbreak reaches Fujian Province.



#1 Was training risk communication principles in the guidelines effective in helping local health authorities to better communicate with the public during an emergency?

- After each stage they wrote messages they thought would best meet public need for information based on the scenario.



#1 Was training risk communication principles in the guidelines effective in helping local health authorities to better communicate with the public during an emergency?

- Following pre-training message writing, health officials participated in training on selected risk communication principles.
- Received a copy of the draft *Guidelines on Risk Communication Principles*.
- Opportunity to change any of their messages based upon what they had learned about risk communication principles.

#1 Was training risk communication principles in the guidelines effective? Outcomes:

– The risk communication training was effective. Post-training messages included

- ◆ More examples of risk communication principles
- ◆ More different types of principles. The press statement, bulletin and daily reports written following the training better addressed 3 psychological needs:
 - Decrease feelings of uncertainty.
 - Increase feelings of control.
 - Increased trust in health authority.



Outcomes: Post-Training Messages Included More Messages Designed to

- Decrease feelings of uncertainty.
 - ◆ Where the public can go for more information
 - ◆ How the virus was transmitted
 - ◆ What actions the government was taking to control the outbreak
 - ◆ What agencies were in charge of activities to control the outbreak
 - ◆ What the public should expect in days to come from health authorities and the outbreak

Outcomes Post-Training Messages Included More Messages Designed to

- Increase feelings of control.
 - ◆ Prevention steps that the public and communities should take to prevent the spread of the disease
 - ◆ Steps the health authorities were taking to prevent the spread of the disease

Outcomes: Post-Training Messages Included More Messages Designed to:

- Increased trust in health authority.
 - ◆ Demonstrating concern for public's worries about the outbreak
 - ◆ Acknowledging the need for partnership with the public to protect people's health.

2: Would Chinese audiences be more satisfied with messages that included more risk communication principles?

- Message Testing January 24-26, 2007
- Hypothetical scenario: Human-to-human transmission of avian influenza
- Testing messages with Sanming City and Zhanghou residents
- Comparison of pre and post-training messages

Were Risk Communication Principles Effective with Chinese Audiences?

- All 6 groups of citizens who participated in message testing were more satisfied by messages that included more risk communication principles.



Were Risk Communication Principles Effective with Chinese Audiences?

- Only 3 votes out of 174 cast by participants chose messages with fewer risk communication principles



What the Public Wants to Know

Topics from US Audiences

- What is the health threat?
How does it harm people?
- How will I know if I've been exposed?
- Signs and symptoms (long/short term)
- How can I protect myself/my family
- How is it treated
- Where can I get more information?

Feedback from Fujian Province Audiences

- How can I prevent getting the disease?*
- How is the disease transmitted ?
- Is what I'm hearing about the disease true?
- What is the disease? And how serious?
- What is the government doing to prevent the spread of disease?
- Where can we go for more information?
- Is there a vaccine available?

Where are people going for information?

- Television news
 - CCTV
- Newspapers
- Website
 - Health bureau, News Website,
 - ◆ Sina.com, Xinhua.com, MSNBC.com, Baidu search engine
 - Local health bureau
- Community residents' committee
- Telephone line for public inquiries (hotline)
- Local health department, national hotline
- CDC
- Local hospital
- Emergency Center
- Neighbors



Channels Used by The Public to Seek Emergency Information

- Distant threat: passive channels
 - TV news, newspaper
- Threat is close by, but not in our community: more active information seeking, but impersonal channels
 - Internet, Website, Search engines
- Threat is here: pro-active search through interpersonal channels
 - Hotlines
 - Visit local health bureau
 - Call hospital
 - Visit or call local community residents center and committee
 - Call CDC



Possible Next Steps

- Finish comprehensive final version of guidelines then create a set of checklists, pocket guides, and summary documents for fast reading to guide action for local health authorities
- Increase types of audiences for message testing
- Increase training to focus on more elements in the guidelines