UNIVERSITY OF
South Carolina
Arnold School of Public Health

HEALTH COMMUNICATIONS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AND PARTNERS

__FREE__ Training & Education Module

6 hours of Continuing Education

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SERIES

ARNOLD SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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INTRODUCTION

- This FREE course is a part of the Arnold School of Public Health's Workforce Development Series.
- This course equips public health professionals with essential skills to effectively communicate health information to diverse audiences. Participants will learn to craft clear and persuasive messages, identify and utilize community-specific data and resources, and apply culturally sensitive communication strategies. The course also covers techniques for evaluating the effectiveness of health materials and leveraging technology to enhance outreach. By the end, learners will be able to develop impactful messages, engage their communities, and promote lifelong learning through professional development resources. Designed for professionals in public health, this course ensures practical, actionable insights for real-world application.
- It is completely self-paced and you can work at your own speed. To complete it you must watch all module videos and complete the quizzes. At the end, you will be asked to provide feedback on the course.
- This course offers 6 hours of continuing education credits.
- This Module addresses the following Council on Linkages' Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals (2021):
  - Domain 3: Communication Skills

    3.1. Determines communication strategies
    3.2. Communicates with internal and external audiences
    3.3. Responds to information, misinformation, and disinformation
    3.4. Facilitates communication among individuals, groups, and organizations

  - Domain 4: Health Equity Skills

    4.1. Applies principles of ethics, diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice
    4.3. Recognizes the diversity of individuals and populations
    4.4. Reduces systemic and structural barriers that perpetuate health inequities
    4.6. Contributes to achieving and sustaining a diverse, inclusive, and competent public health workforce
    4.7. Advocates for health equity and social and environmental justice

  - Domain 5: Community Partnership Skills

    5.1. Describes conditions, systems, and policies affecting community health and resilience
    5.2. Establishes relationships to improve community health and resilience

- Domain 6: Public Health Sciences Skills

  6.1. Describes systems, policies, and events impacting public health
  6.2. Applies public health sciences in delivering the 10 Essential Public Health Services

- Domain 8: Leadership and Systems Thinking Skills

  8.1. Creates opportunities to achieve cross-sector alignment
  8.2. Implements a vision for a healthy community
  8.3. Addresses facilitators and barriers impacting delivery of the 10 Essential Public Health Services
  8.4. Creates opportunities for creativity and innovation
  8.5. Responds to emerging needs
  8.6. Manages organizational change
  8.7. Engages politicians, policymakers, and the public to support public health infrastructure
  8.8. Advocates for public health

PUBLIC HEALTH APPLIED PRACTICE ACTIVITY-CRAFTING A PERSUASIVE PUBLIC HEALTH MESSAGE ACTIVITY

Learning Objectives: By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- Define a clear target audience for their message (i.e. population served through your organization).
- Identify a specific public health challenge relevant to their population.
- Articulate the desired behavior change or action.
- Craft a concise, persuasive, and actionable public health message.
- Consider appropriate communication channels for their message.
- This example will incorporate examples using Orangeburg, SC.

Upon completing the course, participants will be prompted to submit responses to the following prompts:

PART 1-TARGET AUDIENCE

- Who *specifically* are we trying to reach? (e.g., Parents of young children, college students, seniors living alone, construction workers)
- What are their key demographics? (Age, location within Orangeburg, SC, education, income level, etc.)
- What are their values, beliefs, and trusted sources of information?
- What are their common daily routines or "moments of influence"?

PART 2- DESIRED ACTION/BEHAVIOR CHANGE:

What *exactly* do we want them to *do* after seeing/hearing our message? (Be specific and measurable!)

- *Example:* "Call the Orangeburg County Health Department's flu shot hotline to schedule an appointment."
- *Example:* "Visit the 'Healthy Eating' section of the Orangeburg MUSC hospital website."
- *Example:* "Take the free online mental health screening within 24 hours."

PART 3-KEY BARRIER(S) & MOTIVATION(S)

- **Barrier(s):** What prevents them from taking the desired action *now*? (e.g., lack of awareness, fear, cost, time, misinformation, cultural norms, perceived low risk)
- **Motivation(s):** What deeply held values, aspirations, or concerns could *spur* them to take action? (e.g., protecting family, saving money, community pride, personal well-being, avoiding illness, social connection)
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PART 4-CORE MESSAGE STATEMENT (THE ELEVATOR PITCH)

In **one clear and concise sentence**, what is the single most important thing you want your audience to know or feel, that will lead to the desired action? Make it clear, compelling, and actionable.

PART 5- SUPPORTING POINTS (WHY SHOULD THEY CARE/BELIEVE?)

What 2-3 pieces of evidence, benefits, or emotional appeals support your core message?

- *Example:* "Flu shots are safe and protect your loved ones."
- *Example:* "Early screening saves lives and is often covered by insurance."

PART 6- CALL TO ACTION (HOW DO THEY DO IT?)

What is the explicit next step? Provide clear instructions and contact information.

- *Example:* "Visit [Insert Website URL] or call [Insert Phone Number] today!"
- *Example:* "Join the walking group at South Carolina State University's track every Tuesday at 6 PM!"

PART 7- TONE AND VOICE

What emotional or authoritative tone should the message convey? (e.g., Urgent, Empathetic, Empowering, Informative, Reassuring, Authoritative, Community-focused)

PART 8- KEY COMMUNICATION CHANNELS (WHERE WILL THEY SEE/HEAR THIS?)

Where is your target audience most likely to encounter this message? (e.g., Social media platforms, local news, community centers, faith-based organizations, primary care clinics, bus ads, local events, specific online forums/groups, local radio stations, trusted community leaders.)

SUMMARY

This activity encourages critical thinking about the audience's perspective, which is paramount in developing effective public health communication. By focusing on a local context like Orangeburg, SC, the exercise becomes highly relevant and practical for the public health professionals involved.

FOR QUESTIONS

Please contact:

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