Translating Health Communications

Establishing a programme for dissemination of evidence based health communication activities and innovations on communicable diseases for country support in the EU and EEA/EFTA 2009-12.

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Project Consortium

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Project Funding

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**Duration of Project:** 3 years

**Start Date:** December 2009

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**Overall Programme Aim (2009-2012)**

To systematically map and gather information on current activity in health communication and to develop, in cooperation with the ECDC, a Virtual Knowledge Resource Centre for Health Communication in Europe
Objective 1: Mapping

To collect information on the status of implementation of health communication activities, focusing on communicable diseases in the EU and EFTA countries

E-survey
An E-survey of the scope and extent of health communication activities was undertaken in all EU countries in collaboration with the ECDC Competent Bodies’ Directors.

Telephone interviews
A series of telephone interviews were also undertaken with a supplemental sample of key country informants.

Objective 2: Literature Reviews

To make available summary information and examples of national public health information campaigns and public literacy programmes on communicable diseases from the EU and EFTA countries.

Literature Review Series (x4)
1. Health information seeking behaviour on the web
2. Trust & reputation management in communicable disease public health
3. Health communication and campaign evaluation
4. Effective risk communication for communicable diseases.

Systematic Reviews (x2)
1. Effective health communication towards immunisation uptake
2. Health communication for behaviour change; towards prevention and control of communicable diseases.
Objective 3: Consultation

To bring together national EU public health associations, academic experts and practitioners interested in health communication research focusing on communicable diseases via expert meetings, seminars and on-line forums

Expert meeting
Consultation with key stakeholders via a group interview.

Objective 4: Evidence Reviews

To develop a set of tools for dissemination of health communications projects, activities and evidence as to promote good practices and innovations focusing on communicable diseases.

Rapid Reviews of Evidence (x3)
1. Health literacy
2. Health advocacy
3. Interactive information technologies e.g. social media, blogs, SMS.

The reviews of evidence will form the basis of the development of an online toolkit including elements on needs assessment, planning and evaluation of health communication for public health.
**E-survey Study Design**

**Quantitative cross sectional e-survey**
Comprised of 22 questions and covered the following domains:

- Health communication areas
- National health plans and health communication
- Planning
- Stakeholders and partners on health communication
- Capacity building health communication
- Evaluation of health communication
- Sustainability of health communication activities
- Health communication examples.

**Sample Frame (E-Survey)**

**Sample**
ECDC Communication Competent Bodies(CB) Directors.
Additional contacts provided via snowball sampling

**Total Countries that participated:** 30 countries

**Total Respondents across the EU:** 49 Participants

**Dissemination tool:** SurveyMonkey
Preliminary Findings

Aggregated EU E-survey & Telephone Interviews

Respondents - Areas of Expertise

The majority of participants were experts from:
- Public health
- Communication
- Epidemiology
- Infectious Diseases

Other areas of expertise included:
- Pneumology Risk Assessment
- Health Protection International Relations
- Microbiology Vaccinations
- Health Promotion Sexuality & Reproductive Health
Q. Is health communication used in the following NON-communicable disease groups in your country?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>87% (41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifestyles Factors (e.g., alcohol, smoking)</td>
<td>87% (41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiovascular Disease</td>
<td>87% (41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>77% (39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health Disorders</td>
<td>22% (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injuries</td>
<td>57% (26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Respiratory Disease</td>
<td>37% (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>7% (3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q. Is health communication used in the following specific communicable disease groups in your country?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Influenza</td>
<td>60% (29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS, STI and Blood-Borne Viruses</td>
<td>57% (26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaccine Preventable Diseases and Bacterial Infections</td>
<td>29% (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuberculosis</td>
<td>73% (34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antimicrobial Resistance/Health Care-Associated Infections</td>
<td>70% (32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Water Born Diseases and Zoonoses</td>
<td>60% (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing and Vector Born Diseases</td>
<td>63% (29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>8.7% (4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q. Which of the following areas of health communication are used for communicable diseases?

- Health Communication: 87% (47)
- Crisis Communication: 77% (37)
- Health Advocacy: 71% (4)
- Health Promotion: 71% (4)
- Plan and develop communication efforts in response to emergencies: 40% (29)
- Patient Education/communication: 38% (24)
- Health Education: 38% (24)
- Health communication education & training: 32% (22)
- Health Literacy: 62% (23)
- Risk Communication: 49% (23)
- Media Monitoring: 42% (24)
- None of the above: 8% (7)

Q. Are communication activities for communicable diseases included in national health plans, programmes and policies?

- Yes: 50% (24)
- For some communicable activities/diseases: 37% (19)
- No: 12% (8)
- Not sure: 3% (19)
Q. Which of the following areas are reflected in national health plans, programmes and policies?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health communication (communicable diseases)</td>
<td>81% (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis Communication</td>
<td>73% (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health communication</td>
<td>69% (23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Advocacy</td>
<td>61% (26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Education</td>
<td>61% (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Communication</td>
<td>58% (29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Communication advocates &amp; training</td>
<td>31% (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient Education</td>
<td>49% (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Marketing</td>
<td>48% (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Literacy</td>
<td>20% (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>3% (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q. Who are the target audience for health communication activities in relation to communicable diseases?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health Professionals</td>
<td>85% (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General public</td>
<td>47% (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific priority task groups</td>
<td>75% (19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders and the media</td>
<td>70% (29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policymakers</td>
<td>64% (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politicians</td>
<td>53% (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialists and/or leaders</td>
<td>69% (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientists</td>
<td>40% (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researchers</td>
<td>34% (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>18% (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>4% (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q. Which groups/organisations are involved in the development and delivery of health communications activities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group/ Organisation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare staff</td>
<td>80% (40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public sector organisations or agencies</td>
<td>70% (35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific patient/ population groups</td>
<td>77% (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local authorities</td>
<td>62% (30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-governmental organisations</td>
<td>53% (30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional societies</td>
<td>50% (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universities, etc. engaged in research</td>
<td>41% (25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International organisations or agencies</td>
<td>41% (25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Union organisations</td>
<td>41% (25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community groups</td>
<td>37% (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic institutions</td>
<td>37% (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>27% (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General public</td>
<td>13% (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We do not work in this area</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q. Education and training programmes to develop leadership, planning, management and/or evaluation in health communication?

- 41% (25) Yes, there are specific courses dedicated to health communications
- 53% (27) There are courses in which health communications are included as a subject or part
- 37% (18) There is no specific training in health communication
- 22% (10) Don't know
Q. Are health communication activities evaluated in your country?

- Yes: 33% (15)
- Sometimes: 27% (12)
- No: 40% (18)

Q. What do you consider a priority to improve health communication in the EU?

- Changing behaviour patterns: 60% (27)
- Advocacy: 50% (23)
- Community participation and mobilization: 50% (23)
- Communication-focused events: 50% (23)
- Grandfathered content: 40% (20)
- Promoting service provider: 20% (23)
- Media-focused activity: 20% (23)
- Dividing the population into target groups: 40% (21)
- Communication with community leaders: 40% (21)
- Branding communication campaigns: 35% (19)
- Education through entertainment: 25% (19)
- Focus on individuals: 35% (19)
- Focus on product: 35% (19)
- Service delivery: 35% (19)
- Particular need in one area: 30% (13)
- Healthy mortality: 30% (13)
- Focus on groups of services: 30% (13)
Priorities (telephone interviews)

- Improve communication, networks and partnerships across the EU in order to share information and ideas

- Develop toolkit resources for health communication activities e.g. what to do and how to do it.

- Expand education and training for health communication

Additional Information

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