

Public Health Communications Awards

APPLICATION: MOST INNOVATIVE CAMPAIGN

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Jurisdiction size (Please check one):	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X Large (Population exceeds 700,000) <input type="checkbox"/> Medium (Population less than 700,000; more than 200,000) <input type="checkbox"/> Small (Population less than 200,000; more than 50,000) <input type="checkbox"/> Very Small (Population less than 50,000)	

ABOUT THE COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN

Name Of Communications Campaign	Building Resilient Communities: Creating a partner relay to share information with limited English speaking communities during emergencies
Brief Campaign Overview (200 Words Or Less)	In support of the <i>Live Well San Diego</i> strategic vision, the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency, Public Health Services (HHS-PPH) and Office of Emergency Services (OES) have partnered since 2012 on a project to improve communication with non-English speaking communities during emergencies. The communities include those who speak Spanish, Tagalog, Chinese, Korean, Arabic, Vietnamese, Somali, and Karen. Initial activities included community forums, presentations, and meetings with agencies servicing the selected language communities. The purpose was to request help with disseminating critical information during emergencies in various languages, through a “partner relay” online communication platform. From 2013 to present, over

	<p>300 community leaders have agreed to partner with the County.</p> <p>In an effort to strengthen these relationships and maintain regular communication, HHSa-PHS and OES organize quarterly emergency preparedness trainings to share resources and discuss information dissemination strategies. Since September 2015, 7 trainings have taken place and over 200 individuals have attended representing government, clinical, educational, community-based, faith-based, and relief organizations. Three drills testing the online communication platform have taken place since May 2015. In addition, 9 respected leaders, "Community Champions," representing different communities have been selected to serve as liaisons and key contacts during emergencies.</p>
Campaign Start Date	May 2013
Campaign End Date	N/A Ongoing project

CAMPAIGN PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

What is the purpose of this campaign? Does it address an underlying community need? Please describe why the campaign was developed. You are encouraged to submit evidence of need (e.g., local news stories, internal reports, testimonials, data, community health assessments) as an addendum to this form.

More than 400,000 San Diegans speak a language other than English at home and report that they speak English less than very well. Data from the California Health Interview Survey also illustrates that many non-native English speakers in San Diego are not prepared for an emergency. For example, the County of San Diego reports that during the 2011 San Diego County blackout, many residents with limited English language skills were left unprepared to deal with the event, did not get word through traditional media that schools were closed, and may not have had access to information in their native languages. In order to address this concern, on May 28, 2013, HHSa-PHS and OES hosted a one-day forum with local stakeholders, community leaders, and community members to seek input on how to better share preventive and emergency information to residents with limited English language skills. Through the use of interpreters, several focus groups were conducted at the forum and the communities' recommendations were compiled into a report that has been utilized to develop the present communications project. *See attached report*

Does your campaign address an issue related to health equity? How?

Over 400,000 San Diegans speak a language other than English and report speaking English less than very well. In the event of a natural disaster or public health emergency, communicating with non-English speaking communities is paramount. Linguistically-isolated communities that do not have access to media in their native languages may not receive critical, life-saving information.

What population was this campaign targeted to reach? How did you plan to reach them?

Due to the great diversity in culture, socioeconomics, and language needs in San Diego County, the present project utilized the San Diego Association of Governments data to identify the top six languages spoken in San Diego following English (Spanish, Vietnamese, Filipino, Chinese, Korean and Arabic) and chose to begin working with these language groups. The County also included two high-need refugee communities (Karen and Somali) based on their vulnerability and lack of media resources.

Could this campaign be replicated or transferred to other jurisdictions? Please explain.

This is a grassroots risk communication system that could be replicated in any jurisdiction. It is a partnership that enables public health and emergency management practitioners to involve faith-based, community-based, and business organizations that serve various communities, many of whom may be limited English proficient and vulnerable in terms of accessing life-saving information. A grassroots risk communication system requires little cost and the benefits are enormous. The County of San Diego welcomes the opportunity to share the process for developing this project, helpful suggestions and lessons learned.

What partners did you work with in planning and implementing this campaign?

This project is an ongoing collaborative effort among the San Diego County Public Health Services, the Office of Emergency Services and its many community leaders representing government, clinical, educational, community-based, faith-based, and relief organizations.

To what extent does the campaign leverage existing resources without creating new costs?

The members of the “Partner Relay” have agreed to assist the County by translating and disseminating critical disaster, safety and health information to residents who are limited English proficient or monolingual. No money is exchanged – this partner relay system will facilitate the delivery of potentially lifesaving information to vulnerable residents by mobilizing trusted community leader volunteers. This program provides a valuable service through partnerships rather than paid contractors.

OUTCOMES

Did you test or evaluate your campaign? If so, how?

This project has utilized process evaluation in terms of documenting the number of partners who have joined the “Partner Relay” and the number of participants at the initial forum and subsequent trainings and drills. Qualitative data has been collected through focus groups (see attached report of findings) and training evaluations.

What were the outcomes of this campaign? To what extent were your objectives achieved?

Over 300 individuals have signed up for the “Partner Relay” and over 200 individuals have attended the quarterly trainings. Three emergency communication drills have taken place using the partner relay since May 2015 and over 40 partners have participated in those drills. This project is ongoing and will require long term relationship building and engagement with community leaders and agencies. Efforts to improve participation in drills are underway and one strategy includes the recent selection of “Community Champions,” who represent the 8 language communities and who have agreed to provide feedback on the project, make recommendations for new partnerships and serve as key contacts during actual emergencies.

To what extent does the campaign shift thinking about health from individual medical care to community / public health / equity issues?

N/A

To what extent were earned media articles, letters to the editor, and op-eds published about this project?

N/A

To what extent does the campaign inform and lead to personal and collective action to improve population health?

The need to improve communication with limited English speaking communities during emergencies is an important issue to all sectors of society. Beginning with the forum and following with one-on-one meetings and trainings, leadership representing government, non-profit, community-based, educational and clinical organizations all support this project. Since 2013, over 300 community leaders have agreed to partner with the County to relay information in various languages to their communities.

How have you used what you have learned from this experience? How will use what you have learned to improve your next communications campaign?

This is a constantly evolving project that relies fundamentally on strong relationships with the community. Building these relationships requires patience, time and a high level of cultural sensitivity. Since approaching these communities in 2013, the County has welcomed ongoing feedback from community leaders on how to engage with vulnerable populations. For instance, there are varying levels

of trust among community members toward governmental agencies. Understanding that community members may prefer to receive risk communication from trusted sources, such as community leaders, rather than the County, is the core of this project.

INNOVATION

How were youth, disadvantaged populations, and other groups at high risk included in the development and public voice of the campaign?

The present project utilized the San Diego Association of Governments data to identify the top six languages spoken in San Diego following English and also considered limited English proficiency groups (Spanish, Vietnamese, Filipino, Chinese, Korean and Arabic). The County also included two high-need refugee communities (Karen and Somali) based on their vulnerability and lack of media resources.

Were social media, mobile phones, and other technology utilized in the campaign?

At each individual meeting with an agency and during every training, County social media tools are shared with the community members and leaders. These include websites, smart phone applications and the main information sharing platform for this project, the social media site, Ready San Diego Partner Connection. These tools provide the community with trusted emergency and health information. The Ready San Diego Partner Connection is a communication platform hosted by the Office of Emergency Services that serves as a central two-way communication forum for organizations to interact with the Emergency Operations Center during an emergency. This site will be updated throughout the duration of an emergency and partner relay system members will translate this information into various languages and share it with their community members, thereby facilitating the delivery of potentially lifesaving information to vulnerable residents.

Can we share this application with other local health officials who are interested in communications best practices?

Yes

Please email your completed application by Friday, May 27, 2016 to:

Kat DeBurgh, Executive Director
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