

Team/Function
Master Assignment Checklist:

LEADERSHIP (Command and Control)

Assigned To:

Tasks:

Done

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. Meet with decision-making team (science, administrative, communication). Within less than two hours, determine known information, what more will be coming in, and what can be said based on what you know now. | _____ |
| 2. Activate the plan based on careful assessment of the situation and the expected demands for information by the public, media and partners. | _____ |
| 3. Bring in needed resources (human, technical and mechanical supplies as specified in your pre-planning activities.) Activate added personnel and contractors. | _____ |
| 4. Bring together communication team ; brief them on event, advise on what can be communicated now, and delegate assignments. | _____ |
| 5. Meet with upper management to advise on what communications are being done, and when you anticipate releasing information in accordance with the organization's role in the response. | _____ |
| 6. Make telephone contact with other governmental agencies involved to learn what communication they are planning, and coordinate response, and timing of release of information. | _____ |
| 7. Line up your designated spokesperson or get ready to be the spokesperson. Let them know that you will need them available to the media in two hours, and that you want to brief them on the messages prior to that time. Let them know what background material on the event you can provide to update them, and when they can expect it. | _____ |
| 8. Prepare your clearance team as well as review and approve materials yourself for release. | _____ |
| 9. Determine the operational hours/days for the communication team throughout the emergency response.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reassess after 12 hours• Reassess after 24 hours• Reassess after 36 hours• Reassess after 48 hours | _____ |
| 10. Make certain to fully communicate and update your staff decision-making team and other agency communicators several times during the first 24 hours. | _____ |

CONTENT AND CLEARANCE

Assigned To:

Tasks:

Done

1. Determine your **key messages** and information based only what is currently known about the event. Use these as the basis for all communication materials. _____
2. Express **empathy and caring** in the first lines or first 30 seconds of your communications. _____
3. **Answer what the public wants to know:** magnitude, immediacy duration, control/management of emergency, timely/accurate information _____

- Are my family and I safe?
- What have you found that will affect my family and me?
- What can I do to protect my family and me?
- Who (what) caused this problem?
- Can you fix it?

4. **Prepare to answer** what media and communities want answered: _____

- Who is in charge here?
- How are those who got hurt getting help?
- Is this thing being contained?
- What can we expect?
- What should we do?
- Why did this happen? (Don't speculate. Repeat facts of the situation, describe data collection effort, and describe treatment from fact sheets).
- Did you have forewarning this might happen?
- Why wasn't this prevented from happening (again)?
- What else can go wrong?
- When did you begin working on this (e.g. were notified of this, determined this had occurred)?
- What does this data/information mean?
- What bad things aren't you telling us? (Don't forget to tell them the good things.)

5. **Create an information sheet** on the event that can be used for public, public health partners and stakeholders. _____

Have it ready within the hour. It doesn't always have to be a press release. If it's quicker issue a press statement of facts and what's currently being done.

6. **Line up your clearance personnel** and give everyone the ground _____

rules.

If you are the main clearance officer, be sure that you are set up to get clearance from your higher authority if that is required. But, be certain that they know you must release within a set period of time (usually if the event is critical, you have a one to two hour time frame before you should have information released).

7. **Prioritize incoming information** for clearance and dissemination. _____
Activate your three people to clear information. Clear simultaneously and in person when possible.

It is best if you can get the primary clearance authorities in one room with the door closed and no interruptions allowed. This allows for questions/comments about the information, discussions, and resolutions quickly. Make sure everyone would be comfortable seeing this information as the headline of the local paper the next day or on CNN within the hour. Remind everyone that the information you've compiled and are attempting to clear either: (1) answers important questions from the public, media, and partners; or (2) is in response to troubling trends from your own analysis about where the event is heading and that you are trying to mitigate effects.

8. Develop a **quick fact sheet** or Q&A sheet on the event based on what is currently known. _____

You will update this constantly in the next 48 hours. Pull any fact sheets on the incident that have been prepared in advance and are in your database (e.g. on the disease, on the type of crisis, etc.).

9. Make sure all **communications functions** (e.g. web team, hotline personnel) have the communication material and key messages. _____

10. **Get information out** as soon as possible. _____

Explain to responsible authorities that "no release" is worse than an "incomplete" release. Get "need to know" information out the door fast. Get "want to know" information released as soon as possible without straining relationships with authorities who must clear new information.

CLINICIAN COMMUNICATION

Assigned To:

Tasks:	Done
1. Identify critical groups and channels to reach them.	_____
2. Arrange for routine briefings to key clinician networks.	_____
3. Prepare information in appropriate formats for clinicians.	_____
4. Coordinate information dissemination with PHCT and FGCT.	_____

COMMUNICATION MONITORING AND RESEARCH

Assigned To:

Tasks:	Done
1. Activate enhanced media monitoring systems . This could be through overnight clipping service, people assigned to watch TV news, an online surveillance to survey media several times daily or other means.	_____
2. Determine which media are most important to monitor and be sure to assess coverage several times during the first 48 hours. Messages about the event on radio news, or television news, or daily newspapers' online editions can change quickly.	_____
3. Analyze what messages are appearing on the event.	_____
○ Determine what messages are needed,	
○ Determine what misinformation needs correcting.	
○ Identify concerns, interests and needs arising from the crisis as it is being reported.	
4. Prepare short analysis of this for the triage decision-making team. This should not be more than a page or two. Update it as frequently as needed during the first 48 hours.	_____
5. Research whether there have been similar events to the one you have, and whether there is anything in the communication to be used from it.	_____
6. Set up daily mechanisms to capture and do short analysis reports of	_____

information needs from hotline reports and Web site or special Web page hits.

7. Determine whether you can bring together representatives from the affected populations **quickly to test messages**. Identify whether the event is of such magnitude that attitudes need to be measured quickly. If so, mount a quick survey. _____
8. Monitor public inquiries and media contact logs to **look for information gaps** and needs. _____

COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATION

Assigned To:

Tasks:

- | | Done |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Monitor potential areas of confusion and lack of information. | _____ |
| 2. Work with CMRT team to develop materials to address gaps in knowledge of audiences. | _____ |
| 3. Develop programs for public information campaigns. | _____ |
| 4. Speak with affected communities to educate and inform. | _____ |
| 5. Coordinate dissemination with CCT and FGCT. | _____ |

GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION

Assigned To:

Tasks:

Done

1. Activate the **legislator/special interest group log** and identify those in the affected event area, or with oversight responsibility for your organization. Make certain they are contacted first. Then, contact the others on your list. _____
2. **Distribute** all communication developed to legislator/special interest group list via fax or e-mail. _____
3. Offer to conduct **special briefings** for the legislative and special interest groups. _____
4. Determine whether **legislative/special interest group** will be **actively involved** in the event and provide recommendations for involvement. _____

HOTLINE

Assigned To:

Tasks:

Done

1. **Obtain all communication being developed** and brief hotline operators on the content, and how to respond. _____
2. **Obtain FAQ's** and use them as scripts for operators in responding to public calls. _____
3. Provide the **public** with the Web site or special Web page information if they want to have frequent updates. _____
4. **Report all information** about the event coming from the public to the communication team. This lets them know the concerns of the public about the event and will assist in message development. _____
5. **Update the communication team** frequently on callers' questions that do not have answers and work up a suitable response. _____

Assigned To:

Tasks:

Done

1. **Assess media needs** and organize mechanisms to fulfill media needs during crisis (e.g. determine whether you will do daily briefings in person, how you will handle media that are camped out there, and when might you use web site updates for media). _____
2. **Develop triage** for response to media requests and inquiries. Make sure that this team knows what you will do and won't do with the media. _____
3. Activate **media contact lists** and call logs. _____
4. Begin **logging all media calls** and types of inquiries. _____
5. Produce and distribute **immediate information materials** (e.g. press releases, media alerts, press statements, fact sheets, and Q&As). _____
6. **Prepare B-roll** or slides, if possible, for television use. _____
7. **Prepare graphics** to illustrate the incident or what is being done. _____
8. **Translate and test messages** for cultural and language requirements of special populations. _____
9. **Review with spokesperson**, tips for personal demeanor and message content, prior to media contact. (Refer to Spokesperson's checklist.) _____
10. **Get with director for frequent updates** of the information coming in about the event. Prepare further communication materials as new information comes in (it may be that in the first 48 hours, depending on the severity of the event and media response, that you will need to produce and release new information many times). _____

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMUNICATION / PARTNERS

Assigned To:

Tasks:	Done
1. Identify critical groups and channels to reach them. Use Stakeholder/Partner Reaction Assessment Worksheet to assist you in framing your responses.	_____
2. Work on message dissemination through HAN and EPI-X.	_____
3. Provide specific background materials .	_____
4. Coordinate dissemination with CCT and FGCT.	_____

SPOKESPERSON

Assigned To:

Tasks:	Done
1. Be the organization , act like the organization. Embody its identity, especially if your organization is about caring and protecting health and people's lives. Be real.	_____
2. Express empathy and caring about the situation immediately.	_____
3. Describe the health and safety impact on individuals and communities – what is the risk.	_____
4. Describe the incident and its magnitude – what happened:	_____
o What	
o Where	
o When	
o Why	
o How	
5. Describe the process in place to respond to the incident – what we are doing.	_____
6. Give anticipatory guidance (e.g. side effects of antibiotics).	_____
7. Be regretful , not defensive. Say "We feel terrible about..." or "We are very sorry that..." to acknowledge the incident.	_____
8. Acknowledge the shared misery (people are frightened, feeling a lack of control) from the event. Give them the actions your organization is taking or that they can take themselves.	_____
9. Express wishes . "I wish we knew more right now." " I wish our answers were more definitive about..."	_____

10. Be willing to **answer the questions** everyone wants to know: _____

- What has happened?
- What is the impact?
- What is being done?
- Are my family and I safe? What will affect us?
- What can I do to protect my family and me?
- Who (what) caused this problem? Can you fix it?
- Who is in charge here?
- How are those who got hurt getting help?
- Is this thing being contained?
- Why did this happen (Don't speculate. Repeat facts of the situation, describe data collection effort, and describe treatment from fact sheets)?
- Why wasn't this prevented from happening (again)?
- What else can go wrong?
- When did you begin working on this (e.g. were notified of this, determined this had occurred)?
- What does this data/information mean?
- What bad things aren't you telling us (Don't forget to tell them the good things)?

11. **Ask people to share the risk** with you. Show your caring and determination as a role model for them. _____

12. **Don't over reassure.** Reassurance can backfire. Acknowledging to people how scary the situation is, even though the actual numbers affected are small, can make them calmer about the situation. _____

Assigned To:

Tasks:

Done

1. **Format content** materials developed by the communication team and publish on the organization's Web site. _____

Expect to start publishing information within one to two hours of activating the crisis action plan for the event. **Make sure everything published has been released first.**
2. Create links to other **governmental agency Web sites** that also will have information about the event. _____
3. Prepare to **update your Web site** as frequently as information changes. This could be hourly. _____
4. **Release information** to other partner Web site operators as you have it. _____
5. Begin developing **special Web pages** for the event, if the emergency warrants it. _____