



## South Central Public Health Partnership

### TRAINING PROFESSIONALS TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC

<http://lms.southcentralpartnership.org/scphp>

## **Health Risk Communication & Media Relations Course Series Understanding Emergency Public Health Risk Communication: Resources & Relationships within the Public Health System**

**Instructor:** Nancy Kay Sullivan Wessman, MPH

Upon completion of this course, the learner will be able to explain public health risk communication principles; discover resources for developing and using a health risk communication plan; identify risk communication stakeholders and their functional roles of responsibility within the public health organization; and discover or write an interim risk communication plan. The topics covered in this course include:

### **Learning Objectives**

#### Module 1: Define Risk Communication

- Introduction to the course and topics
- Learners will be able to list resources fundamental to understanding health risk communication. These resources must include both Internet sites and traditional printed and videotaped materials
- Learners will be able to define health risk communication.
- Learners will be able to describe the public health role in the emergency response and the need and process for applying health risk communication strategies to understand and solve the public health problem

#### Module 2: Recognize and describe health risk communication stakeholders and detail strategies for preparedness

- Learners will be able to identify roles and responsibilities within the public health organization and the contributions individuals/functional positions would offer toward developing a risk communication plan.
- Learners will be able to describe their personal role and responsibilities and in responding to the public health emergency.
- Learners will be able to recognize emergency preparedness core competencies for all public health workers and explain the communication role(s) in emergency response.
- Learners will be able to describe the “psychology” of crisis and emergency health risk communication.
- Learners will determine the audience and the messages for the organization’s health risk communication effort; each learner will describe his/her contribution to this portion of the plan’s development.
- Learners will be able to explain risk communication preparedness and planning, response, and recovery.

#### Module 3: Write an interim risk communication plan

- Learners will review latest recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention regarding the written risk communication plan.
- Learners will review the CDC publication *Crisis + Emergency Risk Communication* with particular emphasis on Module 4, “Crisis Communication Plan,” to list crisis communication phases.
- Each learner will discover and submit or write his/her organization’s protocol for risk communication and health information dissemination. The plan must include, but not be limited to, the goal statement, a description of the chain of command, identification of staff assignments for message development and release of information to specific audiences, description of the communication channels to be used, description of the monitoring plan, and assessment of the perceived capacity to achieve the goal.
- List and explain five ways to fail in delivering an effective risk communication during a crisis

## **Competencies**

- Describe the public health role in emergency response in a range of emergencies that might arise. (For example: “This department provides surveillance, investigation and public information in disease outbreaks, and collaborates with other agencies in biological, environmental and weather emergencies.”)
- Describe the agency chain of command in emergency response
- Identify and locate the agency emergency response plan (or in large agencies, the pertinent portion of the plan)
- Describe his/her functional role(s) and responsibilities in emergency response and demonstrate his/her role(s) in regular drills
- Describe communication role(s) in emergency response: within the agency; with the media; with the general public; and personal (with family, neighbors)
- Identify limits to own knowledge, skills and authority and identify key system resources for referring matters that exceed these limits

\* *Bioterrorism and Emergency Readiness*

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