Crisis Communications

The Cardinal "C"s of Emergency Management

- **Communication**
- **Coordination**
- **Capacity building**
- **Contingency planning**

- Who will you communicate?
- What would you communicate?
- How would you communicate ?
- With whom you would communicate?
- How would you maintain flow of information?
- Who is responsible for documentation?
- Who is responsible to interface with stakeholders(govt., media, ngos, suppliers, patients, families, staff)

Crisis can happen to anyone

- Just when you think "it can't happen here..."

  ...it does.

- And most aren't prepared when it happens.

"Problem" or "Crisis"?

- **Problems:** commonplace; predictable; quickly resolved; and may go unnoticed.

- **Crisis:** less predictable; time- consuming; costly; and bring unwanted public attention.

Crisis

- Is a major event that has potentially negative results.

- May cause life loss and damage assets

- Internal – when the facility is affected- **SOPs**

- External – when the facility has to respond to an external emergency /disaster **- SOPs**

Crisis

Urgent

Unfolding/ Unpredictable

Create anxiety

Socially/ economically disruptive

strong political dimensions

Newsworthy!

Mummy Mummy, this is great:
There's a nit-outbreak at school!

Behaviour plays role in transmission of info.

Hence Crisis Communication is the need.

Communications - challenges

- Public expects <u>access</u> to information

- **Demand for information increases**

- **Coordination is crucial**

- **Workload increases**

Objectives

- **Maintain connectivity**
- **Be readily accessible to the news media**
- **Show empathy for the people involved**
- **Allow distributed access**
- **Streamline communication processes**
- **Maintain information security**
- **Ensure uninterrupted audit trails**
- **Deliver high volume communications**
- **Support multi-channel communications**
- **Remove dependencies on paper based processes**

Steps to Develop a Crisis Communication Plan

- **Establish the Crisis Team**
- **Identify and Prepare the Spokespeople**
- **Develop processes and protocols**
- **Media management**
- **Brainstorm Possible Scenarios & Responses. Role Play. Repeat.**

Communication needs to be continuous and integral

Warning Stage → Point of No Return → Cleanup Phase → Things Return to Normal → Warning Stage
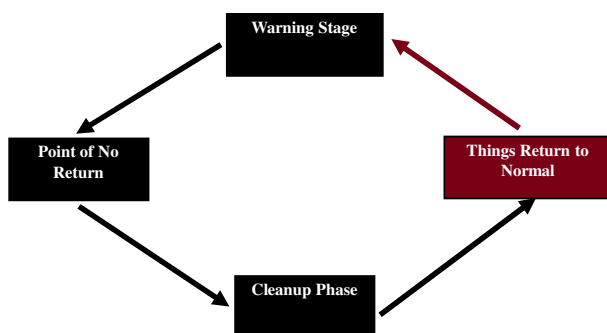
Step One: Risk Assessment

- Involves identification of threats under which an organization operates.

Step Two:
Developing The Plan

- Develop a Stakeholder Communication Strategy:
  - Providers
  - The Media
  - Board of Directors, Major Shareholders, Public Officials, and Community Leaders
  - The Curious Public

Stakeholders

Step Two:
Developing The Plan

- Identify where the response will be coordinated.
- Identify where reporters can go for information (media handling)
- The Role of the Internet
- Staff designate training.

Step Three:
Response

- This is the stage in which the crisis plan is executed.

- Like any other plan, a crisis communications plan must be flexible to address any changes in the environment.

Step Four:
Recovery

- Were our actions consistent with our values?
- What aspects of the crisis did we anticipate?
- What aspects of the crisis did we fail to anticipate?
- How well did our employees perform?

Step Four:
Recovery

- What are the lingering effects of the crisis?
- Have stakeholders' views of us changed?
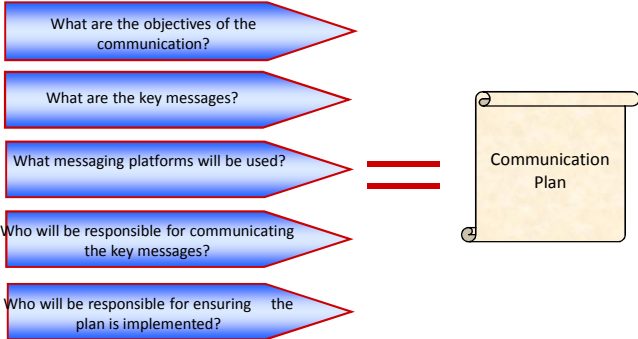- What actions should we take next?

Crisis Planning Ethics

- Organizations have an ethical responsibility to plan for the worst.
- Solving the crisis isn't enough -- organizations must <u>communicate</u> with public during crisis. If not the long-term effects could be devastating.

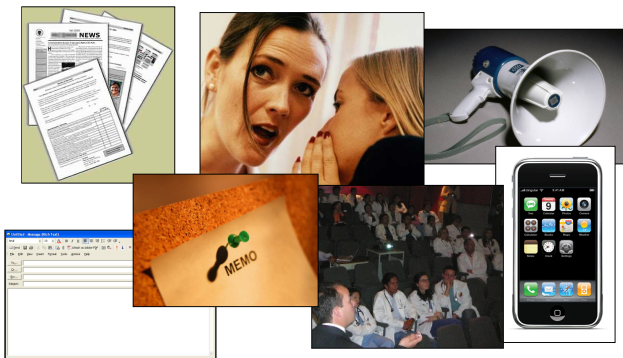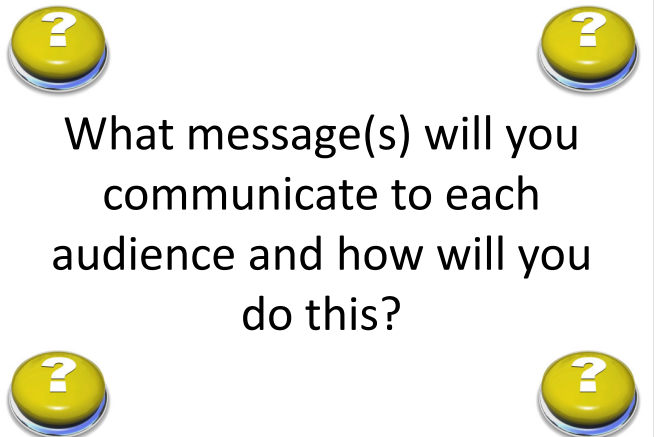## DEVELOP COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNICATION PLANS FOR EACH PHASE OF AN EVENT
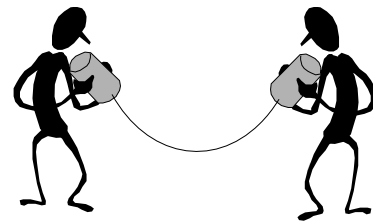
Providers

What are the objectives of the communication?

What are the key messages?

What messaging platforms will be used?

Who will be responsible for communicating the key messages?

Who will be responsible for ensuring   the plan is implemented?

Patients

What are the objectives of the communication?

What are the key messages?

What messaging platforms will be used?

Who will be responsible for communicating the key messages?

Who will be responsible for ensuring   the plan is implemented?

Partners

What are the objectives of the communication?

What are the key messages?

What messaging platforms will be used?

Who will be responsible for communicating the key messages?

Who will be responsible for ensuring   the plan is implemented?

Public

What are the objectives of the communication?

What are the key messages?

What messaging platforms will be used?

Who will be responsible for communicating the key messages?

Who will be responsible for ensuring   the plan is implemented?

Press

What are the objectives of the communication?

What are the key messages?

What messaging platforms will be used?

Who will be responsible for communicating the key messages?

Who will be responsible for ensuring   the plan is implemented?

Politicians

What are the objectives of the communication?

What are the key messages?

What messaging platforms will be used?

Who will be responsible for communicating the key messages?

Who will be responsible for ensuring   the plan is implemented?

Manual

- ☐ Emergency contact lists (with home and cell phone numbers) for senior management, Board, outside consultants, key support staff and others who may be called upon during a crisis (see Appendix for sample Contact List form).
- ☐ Instructions on how to access the database for key audiences such as staff, physicians, donors, community leaders, media, etc. Include information on who is the keeper of the database and how the Crisis Team could access it after hours. Also note whatever back-up provisions are in place for this information (i.e. if your administrative office was destroyed in a fire, where is a back-up disk of your staff list kept?)
- ☐ Basic information on how to generate communications during off-hours without the assistance of the regular support staff, e.g.:
  - Procedure to issue an e-mail alert to all staff.
  - Procedure to generate labels for a mailing, if necessary.
  - Procedure to issue a press release to media.

INCIDENT INFORMATION SHEET				
Notes	Date	Time	Initial Report	Update
Describe the incident				
Indicate when the incident occurred and when crisis personnel first responded				
Describe which crisis groups are responding				
Indicate where the incident occurred				
Estimate the number of patients and employees evacuated or affected				

MEDIA INQUIRY TELEPHONE/E-MAIL LOG SHEET

Call/E-mail received from:

Contact name, phone/cell number, email

Media Publication or Outlet/Location

Deadline for Response

Message

Return Call/E-mail:

Date

Time

Notes

Notes

Notes

Notes

- What if all the traditional and available means of communication fail……………………….

THANK YOU