

*Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication in a
Pandemic: A Model for Building Capacity and
Resilience of Minority Communities*

SOPHE/Health Promotion Practice
Webinar on Emergency Risk Communication
Dec. 4, 2008

Special Populations

- Reynolds defines “a special population as any group that cannot be reached effectively during the initial phases of a public safety emergency with general public health messages delivered through mass communication channels”

(2007, p. 97).

Questions for CERC

1. “For which population during a crisis is a specialized message or communication product required, if any?”
2. Are cultural differences among non-dominant group members of the US significant when attempting to communicate health and safety information during a public health emergency?
3. Are communication messages from government authorities involved in the disaster response received differently by non-dominant groups?”

Questions for CERC

1. Are cultural differences among non-dominant group members of the US significant when attempting to communicate health and safety information during a public health emergency?
2. Are communication messages from government authorities involved in the disaster response received differently by non-dominant groups?"

(Reynolds, 2007, p. 88)

High Mistrust

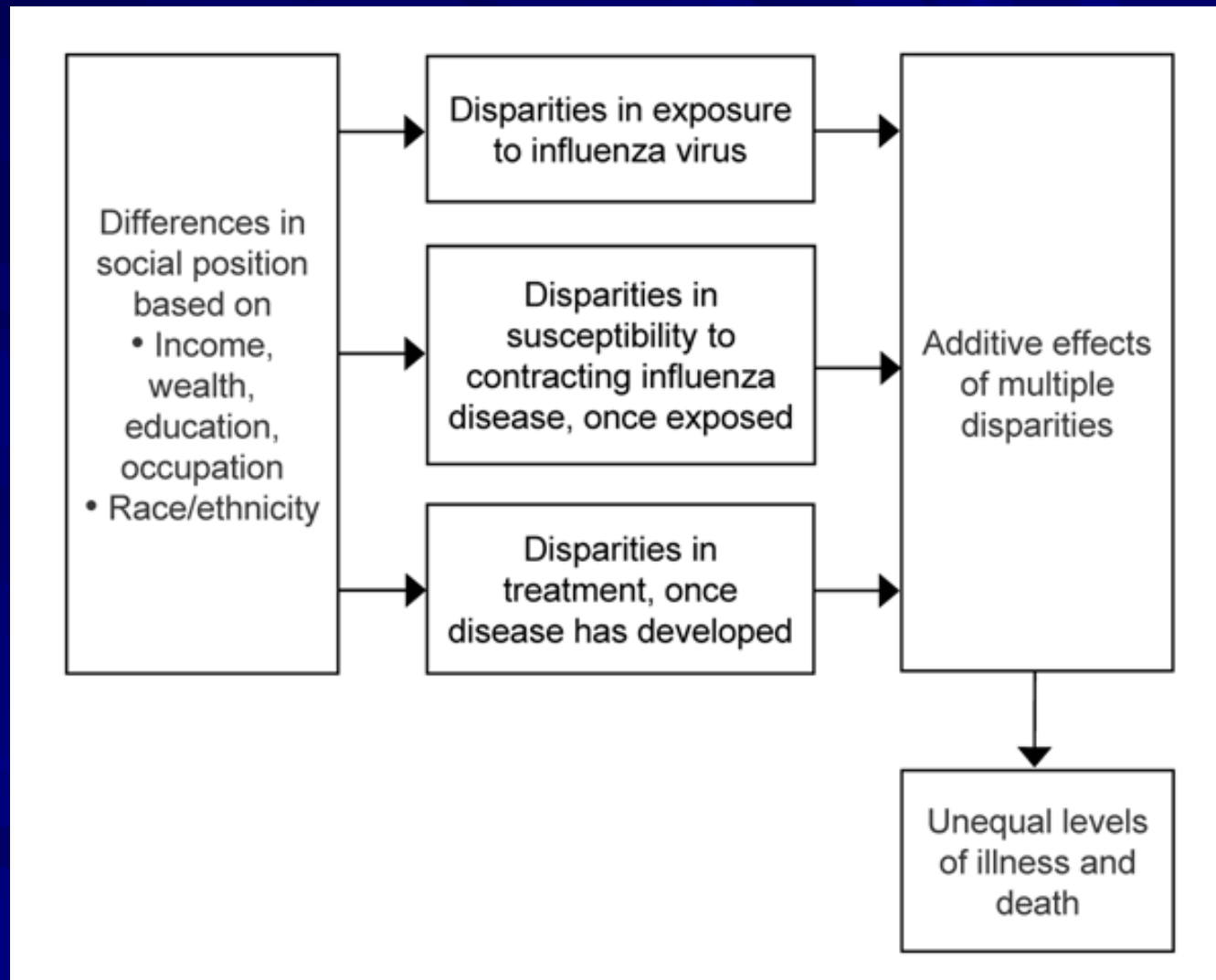
- Katrina
- Anthrax
- Perceived fairness of government response in emergencies



Social Vulnerability & Social Determinants

- *“Social vulnerability is a measure of both the sensitivity of a population to natural hazards and its ability to respond to and recover from the impact of hazards.”*
(Cutter & Finch, 2008, p. 2301)
- Race and ethnicity
- SES
- Housing
- Age
- Gender

Factors Contributing to Health Disparities During an Influenza Pandemic



Blumenshine P, Reingold A, Egerter S, Mockenhaupt R, Braveman P, Marks J. Pandemic influenza planning in the United States from a health disparities perspective. *Emerg Infect Diseases*. 2008 May.

Building Community Capacity and Fostering Resilience for Disasters and Pandemics

Pre-disaster phase
Ongoing risk education
Partnership formation
Community Engagement
Opportunity for
deliberation on
difficult policies and
procedures

During an Emergency
More one way, Emergency
Risk Communication
More need for immediate
action
Community partners'
engagement in response

**Increased capacity
and resilience of
communities at times
of emergencies and
disasters**



What principles can guide us in our efforts with vulnerable populations?

Warning and vulnerability

- Message must reach intended recipient
- Credibility of sender influences message and behavioral response.
- Social networks are critical for message confirmation.
- Messages must be personalized.

- Prior experience impacts decision to act.
- Protective actions must be feasible.
- Taking action may be shaped by structural and situational variables.

Strategies in the Pre-Event Phase

1. Use a community-based participatory research approach
2. Form partnerships with organizations that can successfully reach particularly vulnerable communities
3. Work with community partners to conduct a community hardiness assessment

Pre-Event Phase cont.

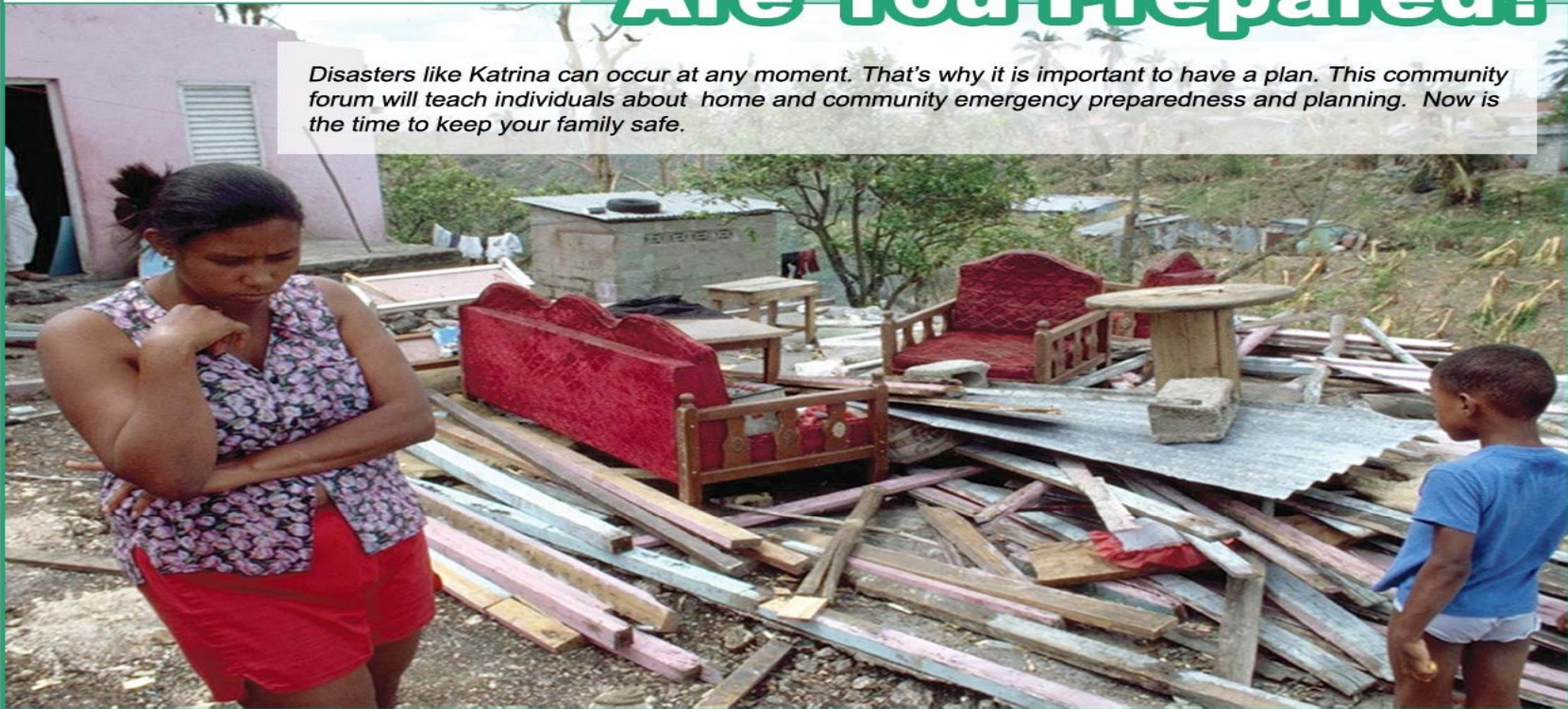
4. Conduct formative research
5. Prior to the event, consider, if appropriate, the use of lay health advisors and natural leaders
6. Work with the American Red Cross and other organizations on offering basic preparedness training-first aid, CPR, CERT, etc.
7. Build staff capacity to create culturally appropriate messages

Pre-Event Phase cont.

8. Work with partners to develop a complete communications plan tailored to vulnerable communities including identifying appropriate channels and spokespersons
9. Engage community members in open forums to explain public health law that may be relevant in an emergency or pandemic and develop strategies for addressing difficult policies

Are You Prepared?

Disasters like Katrina can occur at any moment. That's why it is important to have a plan. This community forum will teach individuals about home and community emergency preparedness and planning. Now is the time to keep your family safe.



Friday November 18, 2005 - 5:00pm-8:30pm
The Kingsley Association Center, 6435 Frankstown Ave. Pittsburgh, PA

Featuring:

- * Video presentation
- * Disaster relief & Emergency Preparedness panel presentation
- * Gospel choir and African folk music
- * Emergency Preparedness kit display
- * Refreshments and hors d' oeuvres will be served at the conclusion of the forum

For more information visit our website at: www.cmh.pitt.edu

Sponsored by Allegheny County Health Department - Allegheny County Department of Emergency Services
American Red Cross (Invited) - Department of Human Services (Allegheny County) - Center for Public Health Preparedness
Center for Minority Health, Graduate School of Public Health, University of Pittsburgh
Funded By: Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Neiman Group

Event Phase

- Conduct formative research as possible
- Deploy lay health advisors
- Work with community partners to disseminate necessary risk communication messages
- Utilize channels trusted by communities
- Highlight positive models of coping

Post-Event Phase

- Evaluate with your community and agency partners.
- Engage in communication focused on successful grieving and resilience
- Evaluate new training needs for LHAs, spokespersons, community partners and staff

Post-Event Phase cont.

- Examine evaluation results with partners
- Conduct community forums to discuss lessons learned
- Develop new plans and partners as needed.

Conclusions

- Building capacity now lays foundation of trust and collaboration.
- This approach utilizes an assets based model.
- It strengthens public health agencies' capacity to address mistrust and effectively reach audiences.