



SHARE AND MOVE TO FACE NASTY BUGS

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Friday, July 24, 2015 - 16:53

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Gesser-Edelsburg A, Shir-Raz Y, Walter N, Mordini E, Dimitriou D, James JJ. Disaster Med Public Health Prep. 2015 Aug;9(4):447-58.

Objective: Recent years have seen advances in theories and models of risk and crisis communication, with a focus on emerging epidemic infection. Nevertheless, information flow remains unilateral in many countries and does not take into account the public's polyvocality and the fact that its opinions and knowledge often compete with those of health authorities. This article addresses the challenges organizations face in communicating with the public sphere.

Methods: Our theoretical approach is

conceptualized through a framework that focuses on the public sphere and that builds upon existing guidelines and studies in the context of health and pandemics. We examine how health organizations cope with the public's transformation from recipients to an active and vocal entity, ie, how and to what extent health organizations address the public's anxiety and concerns arising in the social media during outbreaks.

Results: Although international organizations have aspired to relate to the public as a partner, this article identifies notable gaps.

Conclusions: Organizations must involve the public throughout the crisis and conduct dialogues free of prejudices, paternalism, and preconceptions. Thereby, they can impart precise and updated information reflecting uncertainty and considering cultural differences to build trust and facilitate cooperation with the public sphere.

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European Commission

This project has received funding from the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration under grant agreement no 612236.

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