How to Talk About Your Work
So People Listen

Wednesday, March 27, 2013
10:30 AM to 12:00 PM Pacific

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Polling Feature

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1. Choose your **answer**, then
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Ann Whidden is Director of Communications at the Public Health Institute, where she leads communications strategy, messaging and framing development and media outreach efforts. She has twenty years’ experience as a health and communications professional, working with progressive corporate and non-profit clients to create compelling strategies that amplify best practices, capture media attention, and inspire action.

Website: www.phi.org
Anne Sunderland, MPH, has 13 years of experience in health care and public health, with special expertise in developing effective communications strategies and products. She has helped diverse clientele, including clinicians, researchers, advocates and health care organizations, gain exposure in the press, increase funding and educate lay audiences on important health topics. Her articles have appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle, Social Science and Medicine* and other news outlets and trade journals.

**Website:**  [www.phi.org](http://www.phi.org)
Former journalist Carolyn Newbergh encourages PHI researchers to share their scientific findings with the media – in language non-researchers can understand. Carolyn was an editor and reporter at the Oakland Tribune and Contra Costa Times, reporting on health, public health and government, and was an investigative reporter for two years. She has been a freelance writer for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Kaiser Permanente. Carolyn is a graduate of the UC Berkeley master’s program in journalism and interned in the White House Press Office.

Website: www.phi.org
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Communications Goals

- greater visibility and engagement with current stakeholders and audiences
- amplify the work of PHI’s programs and projects
- bring PHI’s work and impacts to new audiences, including funders, decision makers and public health leaders
- stronger internal communications
How to talk about your work so people listen

Part 1: Reflecting impact

Anne Sunderland, MPH
March 27, 2013
Poll

What is the biggest barrier to communicating the impact of your work at PHI?

• I’m not sure what is meant by impact
• I’m not sure my project produces concrete impacts
• I don’t have the time or resources to track and measure impact
• I don’t know how to effectively articulate the impact of my project
• I don’t think it’s important
Goals

• Understand what we mean by “impact” – and why it’s important

• Learn how to hone in on your program’s impacts

• Talk about those impacts in a compelling way
Why focus on “impact”?

• Increased scrutiny on concrete results, ROI
• Attract funders and partners
• Increase credibility and raise profile
What do we mean by....?

Impact

?
“Impact” is…

• Not a description of what you do… but what difference your work makes.

• Not activities… but concrete and specific changes that resulted from those activities.
“Impact” is…(Continued)

• Some “gold standard” impacts include:
  – Changes in health behaviors or indicators
  – Reductions in health care costs
  – New policies implemented
  – Increased skills or capacities of partners
Challenges

• In public health “impact” can be hard to measure, and change can be slow.

• Limited evaluation and data tracking.

• Research might not appear to have an immediate “impact.”
Example #1:

The Pacific ADA Center is dedicated to extending capacity in civil rights for people with disabilities under the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) through the provision of technical assistance, training, information dissemination, capacity building, and public awareness. This is demonstrated by our activities, effective ADA resources and materials, strong professional staff, and resilient network of affiliates throughout federal Region IX.
Key Questions

• How has this work improved the lives of people with disabilities?

• Are there concrete examples of practices or policies that have changed after partners received TA or training?

• How many trained? Geographic scope? Reach through information dissemination?
The impact of PHI’s work in disabilities

Ensuring ADA Compliance  The Pacific ADA Center provides over 37,000 technical assistance consultations annually to public and private stakeholders in the western U.S. on ADA compliance. After consulting with the Pacific ADA Center, a corporation that operates tens of thousands of chain restaurants across the U.S. changed its national policy so that customers with disabilities no longer encountered accessibility barriers such as narrow doorways and restricted space in dining areas.
Key characteristics

• Specific
• Concrete examples
• Quantifiable
• Simple language
Key Questions (Cont.)

• Leadership programs: How many trained? What have those leaders gone on to accomplish?
• Research: How are findings used? Did they inform specific policies, programs or clinical guidelines?
• Healthy communities: How many corner stores converted, parks revamped, farmers markets started? How many community members engaged?
Example #2:
AGALI has strengthened the capacity of 89 Latin American and African leaders to improve the laws, policies, and government funding that impact adolescent girls.
The impact of PHI’s work in global health

Protecting the rights of girls and youth
African and Latin American leaders trained by PHI’s Adolescent Girls’ Advocacy and Leadership Initiative have become powerful policy advocates and contributed to important victories, including passage of the national Children’s Law in Liberia, ratification of a national treatment protocol for sexual violence survivors in Guatemala and creation of a national advocacy network to eliminate child marriage in Malawi.
Tell us:
What was your project’s biggest impact in 2012?
Moving Health Research Off the Shelf; Communicating with the Media

Presentation to Principal Investigators and Project Directors

March 27, 2013
Poll

I would communicate my newsworthy work more often if:

• I had a better idea what the media is interested in
• I understood the value of having my work in the media
• Reporters didn’t get the story wrong so often
• I had the time to talk to reporters
• I had more practice/training talking to reporters, especially on air, and being quoted
Miracle foods
myths and the media
Doctors develop a cure for the common cold

Drug undergoing testing also cures viral meningitis, polio

BY DANIEL Q. HANEY
Associated Press

EXTON, Pa. - Certainly a cure for the common cold would be a big story all by itself. But how about a medicine that also stops viral meningitis? The summer flu? Deadly newborn infections? Even polio?

One drug that does all this is surprisingly close. It is called pleconaril, and if large-scale testing turns out well, it could be in drugstores within a year.

Pleconaril (pronounced plah-CONN-ah-rihl) is the latest in a short list of medicines that kill viruses. This drug, in fact, blocks an entire category of them, a collection of 169 distinctly different nasties that together cause more human disease than any other.

Kiss that cold goodbye

By Daniel Q. Haney
The Associated Press

EXTON, Pa. - Certainly a cure for the common cold would be a big story all by itself. But how about a medicine that also stops viral meningitis? The summer flu? Deadly newborn infections? Even polio?

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Almost as remarkable as what pleconaril does, however, is how it came to be. This drug was not so much discovered as designed.
Drug Offers Hope in War on Colds—and More

Research: Antiviral shows great promise against rhinovirus and more serious ailments.

January 21, 2000  DANIEL Q. HANDEY  ASSOCIATED PRESS

Exton, Pa. — Certainly a cure for the common cold would be a big story all by itself. But how about a medicine that also stops viral meningitis? The summer flu? Deadly newborn infections? Even polio?

One drug that holds enormous promise for all of this is surprisingly close. It is called pleconaril, and if large-scale testing turns out well, it could be in drugstores within a year.

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Cure for the Common Cold ... The Elusive Search

By: Denise Mann
WebMD Health News

Jan 27, 2000 (New York) -- It's coming.

Although a cure for the common cold has eluded the nation's top scientists for decades, some research shows investigators are getting closer -- and it's about time.

Each year, Americans suffer through one billion colds, according to the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases in Bethesda, Md. Children catch up to 10 colds a year, while adults average up to four; the yearly economic burden through lost work days is around $5 billion.

"The main reason that our search for a cure is still going on is because there are at least 200 different viruses that cause colds, so to come up with a single drug or vaccine that attacks them all is extremely difficult," Michael MacManus, MD, chairman of general pediatrics at the Cleveland Clinic, tells WebMD. "But the concept of a generalized antiviral is promising. Generalized antivirals will be the way to go when they come out, especially the broad-based antivirals that are effective against multi-viruses," he says.

In theory, generalized antiviral drugs would attack entire families of viruses.

One such drug, Pleconaril, may be on the market to treat viral meningitis by the end of the year. Preliminary studies suggest that Pleconaril fights a whole family of viruses called picornaviruses, including those that cause the common cold.

Another family of viruses, known as rhinoviruses, causes an estimated 35% of colds. Cold viruses enter the body through any mucous membrane such as the eyes, nose, or mouth. The virus then attaches itself to cells, where it sends out signals to emit a wide range of often-gruesome cold symptoms.

Some other promising research has shown that rhinoviruses attach to a receptor before gaining entry into nasal cells. Researchers are currently developing a nasal spray that prevents the virus from attaching to the receptors, but it's not on the market yet.

"Every year we have a breakthrough and everyone gets excited and then it cools off, but within the next two or three years we will have the first of something that may be helpful in preventing the common cold virus," Linda B. Ford, MD, an allergist/immunologist in Omaha, Neb., and past
RETRACTED: Ileal-lymphoid-nodular hyperplasia, non-specific colitis, and pervasive developmental disorder in children

Dr AJ Wakefield FRCS ©, SH Murch MB BChir, A Anthony MB BChir, J Linnell PhD ©, DM Casson MRCP ©, M Malik MRCP ©, M Berelowitz FRCPsyCh ©, AP Dhillon MRCPath ©, MA Thompson FRCP ©, P Harvey FRCP ©, A Valentine FRCP ©, SE Davies MRCPath ©, JA Walker-Smith FRCP ©

Summary

Background
We investigated a consecutive series of children with chronic enterocolitis and regressive developmental disorder.

Methods
12 children (mean age 6 years [range 3–10], 11 boys) were referred to a paediatric gastroenterology unit with a history of normal development followed by loss of acquired skills, including language, together with diarrhoea and abdominal pain. Children underwent gastroenterological, neurological, and developmental assessment and review of developmental records. Ileocolonoscopy and biopsy sampling, magnetic-resonance imaging (MRI), electroencephalography (EEG), and lumbar puncture were done under sedation. Barium follow-through radiography was done where possible. Biochemical, haematological, and immunological profiles were examined.

Findings
Onset of behavioural symptoms was associated, by the parents, with measles, mumps, and rubella vaccination in eight of the 12 children, with measles infection in one child, and otitis media in another. All 12 children had intestinal abnormalities, ranging from lymphoid nodular hyperplasia to aphthoid ulceration. Histology showed patchy chronic inflammation in the colon in 11 children and reactive ileal lymphoid hyperplasia in seven, but no granulomas. Behavioural disorders included autism (nine), disintegrative psychosis (one), and possible postviral or vaccinal encephalitis (two). There were no focal neurological abnormalities and MRI and EEG tests were normal. Abnormal laboratory results were significantly raised urinary methylmalonic acid compared with agematched controls (p=0.003), low haemoglobin in four children, and a low serum Iga in four children.
“Scientists are talking but mostly to each other.”

- Julie Suleski, paper in Public Understanding of Science
Research that isn’t identified and understood isn’t used
Research that isn’t used isn’t valued
Research that isn’t valued isn’t funded

Source: Academy Health
Media looks for what’s surprising, advances our knowledge, is exciting, mysterious, confusing, important …
How to talk to the media

• Explain your subject clearly and simplify
  – Overcome the “curse of knowledge”
• State what is most important or relevant
• Use plain, conversational English
• Eliminate or explain jargon
• Stay focused on your key points
• Be timely – give advance notice when possible
Can you explain your jargon?

- Health in all policies
- Social determinants of health
- Environmental approach
- Multi-sectoral
- Recall bias
- Longitudinal study
- Meta-analysis
- Prospective observational study
- Selection bias
- Statistical significance
Abstract
Background: Elevated levels of the pesticide DDT have been positively associated with blood pressure and hypertension in studies among adults. Accumulating epidemiologic and toxicologic evidence suggests that hypertension during adulthood may also be affected by earlier life, and possibly the prenatal environment.

Objectives: To assess whether prenatal exposure to the pesticide DDT increases risk of adult hypertension.

Results: Prenatal p,p'DDT exposure was associated with hypertension [adjusted hazard ratio (aHR) = 3.6; 95% CI: 1.8, 7.2 and aHR = 2.5; 95% CI: 1.2, 5.3 for middle and high tertiles of p,p'DDT relative to the lowest tertile, respectively]. These associations between p,p'DDT and hypertension were robust to adjustment for independent hypertension risk factors as well as sensitivity analyses.
A new PHI study finds for the first time that a woman exposed to the pesticide DDT in the womb has a threefold higher risk of developing hypertension before age 50. Other studies have correlated high blood pressure to DDT exposure in adults – in farmworkers exposed to DDT, for example – but it has never been linked to exposure in the uterus. These findings suggest that the association between DDT exposure and hypertension may have its origin in the earliest stages of human development.
DDT exposure in womb tied to hypertension
Stephanie M. Lee

March 12, 2013, page 1

Women who were exposed in the womb to a pesticide that pervaded the United States until it was banned four decades ago were found in a new study to have an increased risk of developing high blood pressure before age 50.

The pesticide, known as DDT, was widely used for insect control nationwide starting in the 1940s. It was banned in 1972 when scientific evidence showed it was a likely carcinogen that damages the liver, the nervous system and the reproductive system.
Alcohol-Attributable Cancer Deaths and Years of Potential Life Lost in the United States


ABSTRACT

Objectives. Our goal was to provide current estimates of alcohol-attributable cancer mortality and years of potential life lost (YPLL) in the United States.

Results. Alcohol consumption resulted in an estimated 18,200 to 21,300 cancer deaths, or 3.2% to 3.7% of all US cancer deaths. The majority of alcohol-attributable female cancer deaths were from breast cancer (56% to 66%), whereas upper airway and esophageal cancer deaths were more common among men (53% to 71%).

Conclusions. Alcohol remains a major contributor to cancer mortality and YPLL. Higher consumption increases risk but there is no safe threshold for alcohol and cancer risk. Reducing alcohol consumption is an important and underemphasized cancer prevention strategy.
A new study sounds the alert that the risk of dying from a cancer caused by drinking any amount of alcohol should be taken just as seriously as the risk of dying from melanoma and ovarian cancers – but it’s not.

The study, by researchers from the Public Health Institute’s Alcohol Research Group (ARG), the National Cancer Institute, the Boston University Medical Center and the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, finds that an estimated 19,500 Americans died from alcohol-attributable cancers in 2009, accounting for approximately 3.5 percent of all cancer deaths. More people died from alcohol-related cancers than from melanoma and ovarian cancer in 2009 – and the number of alcohol-caused cancer deaths represented two-thirds of the deaths from prostate cancer.
Alcohol said to have big role in cancer
Victoria Colliver
February 14, 2013, page 1

Even moderate alcohol use may substantially raise the risk of dying from cancer, according to a study released Thursday offering the first comprehensive update of alcohol-related cancer deaths in decades.

"People don't talk about the issue of alcohol and cancer risk," said Dr. David Nelson, director of the Cancer Prevention Fellowship Program at the National Cancer Institute and lead author of the study.

Alcohol use accounts for about 3.5 percent of all U.S. cancer deaths annually, according to the study. The majority of deaths seemed to occur among people who consumed more than three alcoholic drinks a day, but those who consumed 1.5 beverages daily may account for up to a third of those deaths, the researchers found.
CAMI provides a platform for product developers, researchers, advocates, and clinicians working in reproductive health to coordinate their efforts. By facilitating interdisciplinary collaboration, we advance a holistic approach to reproductive health.
Put women's health in women's hands
Bethany Young Holt and Mary A. Pittman
July 23, 2012, Op-Ed

At this week’s International AIDS Conference, activists and leaders will debate "what's next" in the battle against HIV/AIDS. They should consider Alicia, a young woman in Alameda County, where AIDS is now the leading cause of death among African American females age 20 to 40.

Alicia's boyfriend doesn't like wearing condoms, so they don't always use them. She doesn't want to get pregnant, but even if she goes on the pill, she'll remain at risk for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. Her health, even her life, will be jeopardy.

The need for HIV prevention and contraception go hand in hand for many women. This is not only true for African American women in Alameda County, but for women across the globe. AIDS is now the leading cause of death among women of reproductive age.
What Communications can do for you:

- Support for press releases, op-eds, posts on blogs, Facebook and tweets
- Post your news on PHI website
- Outreach to media when appropriate with pitch and/or release
- When able: support on messaging, strategy and media outreach
What you can do for Communications:

• When you believe you have news, send to communications@phi.org

• Let us know any media outlets – or individual journalists – that have written or broadcast on you before or in your area of work that might be interested in your paper or report

• Take advantage of opportunities to write and post a blog for us

• Send us press releases you have written or that a journal has written for you

• Ask journals for public access to your article so reporters will be able to reach source documents
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