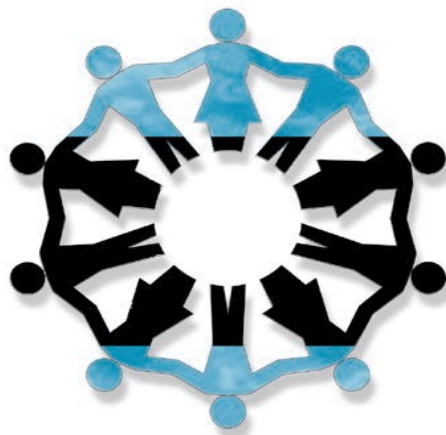


APPENDIX G-COMMUNICATIONS

**Hertford County Public Health Authority
Crisis Communication Plan**



**Hertford County
January 2008**

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Hertford County Public Health Authority (HCPHA) Crisis Communication Plan

I. Purpose and Scope

This plan outlines the procedures for the health department to successfully inform the public regarding the risks associated with potential disease outbreaks, natural or chemical disasters, and bioterrorism threats in order to protect the health and safety of the public during a public health crisis. This plan will also help incorporate professional and guiding principles needed to communicate during a crisis to the media, stakeholders, and the public with confidence and credibility.

The scope of this plan includes outlined operation procedures for crisis communication within the HCPHA in Hertford County, North Carolina.

II. Situation

In larger context, the HCPHA Emergency Response Plan details roles and responsibilities for Health Department staff in the event of an emergency. Contact and phone tree information is outlined in that plan, as well as actions to be taken by those responsible for Crisis Communication. However, this Crisis Communication Plan, which is integrated into the Public Health Emergency Response Plan, will ensure that those responding to the communication needs in the time of an emergency have further resources, contact information, and outlined actions at their disposal. See the Crisis Communication section of the County Emergency Response Plan

III. Assumptions

- A. This plan is integrated in the HCPHA Emergency Response Plan.
- B. The HCPHA Emergency Response Plan is a part of the County Emergency Response Plan, including operations of the Emergency Operations Center and Joint Information Center.
- C. The Local Health Department point of contact for crisis communications in the HCPHA Emergency Response Plan is the Health Department's Public Information Officer (PIO) or media coordinator(s).
- D. In managing public health crises, the PIO will consider requesting the need for crisis and risk communication management through a functioning Local Health Information Team/Crisis Public Information Team. This decision will be based on the size, magnitude, duration and the impact the crisis has on the community/county and the need for multi-agency involvement an outside resources. The Emergency Operations Center will decide if the Local Health Information Team/Crisis Public Information Team will need to be activated.

IV. Direction and Control

- 1. The ultimate policy decisions regarding the Crisis Communication Plan will lie within the Health Director's responsibility.
- 2. All crisis and risk information will be verified, cleared, and approved by designated staff/subject matter experts or spokespersons (Appendix B).
- 3. Emergencies which affect other agencies will require the activation of the Local Health Information Team/Crisis Public Information Team by the Emergency Operations Center.

IV. Operations

- A. The Local Health Department Public Information Officers (PIO) (Appendix A) will be designated for the responsibility of ensuring rapid dissemination of uniform messages and information regarding suspected exposure to both primary/inside and secondary/outside audiences.

PIO Responsibilities

The designated PIO/media coordinator(s) is responsible for:

- 1) Crisis communication planning and response, including
 - a) Preparing messages that are: positive action, clear, consistent, repeats guidance, corrects misinformation, and acknowledges public concern.
 - b) Training spokespersons on communicating the message with each audience type
 - c) Reviewing questions to answer for the general public
 - 2) Coordinating information updates (outside official response coordination) before, during, and after an emergency
 - 3) Creating/obtaining local public information products (press releases, web pages, Q/As for hotlines, letters to partners/stakeholders, etc.) before, during and after an event
- B. Once messages have been developed and approved; the PIO will be responsible for contacting primary, secondary, and Mutual Aid Agreement partners.

Primary Contacts

Crisis and risk communication messages will be delivered to primary or “inside” audiences first by the designated dissemination format (depending on the crisis):

- 1) Federal Level
 - a) Health Officials
 - b) Elected Officials
- 2) State Level
 - a) Health Officials
 - b) Elected Officials
 - c) State Public Information Officer
- 3) Local Level
 - a) Media
 - b) Local Officials
 - c) Information Partners / Local Health Information Team (LHIT) or Crisis Public Information Team (CPIT)
 - d) Health and Emergency Response
 - e) Medical association chapters
 - f) Large municipalities
 - g) Schools

Information updates will be provided to the primary contacts by different formats, including phone, blast fax, email or press releases. The contacts and mode of message are outlined in Appendix C.

Media

The media will also be contacted by the PIO Appendix D outlines media contact lists, when to call the media, modes of information dissemination, and a template first statement. The media contact list should be updated on a biannual basis.

Secondary Contacts

The next step for the designated PIO, with help of the Local Health Information Team, is to contact secondary or “outside” audiences (Appendix E):

- 1) Media
- 2) General Public
 - a. Special Populations: illiterate, non-English speaking, no radio or television, persons living with disabilities
- 3) Secondary Agencies and Businesses

Mutual Aid Agreement partners

Mutual aid agreement partners will also be informed via phone, fax, and email. Mutual Aid Agreement Partners include:

- Local Health Information Team/Crisis Public Information Team members (Appendix F)
- Public Health Regional Surveillance Team members (Appendix G)
- Other Health Education Staff
- Other County Health Department Staff

Resources

- A. Internet Resources for drafting crisis messages are listed in Appendix H.
- B. The Health Director is responsible for making sure the PIO/media coordinator has the appropriate resources to execute his/her operation plan. The following resources and equipment will be needed to execute information during an event:

- Contact information for federal, state, and local level audiences
- Fax, phone, and pagers
- Broadcast fax server access (for blast faxing)
- Laptop computer and server access for website updates, email, and website access
- Two-way radios
- Information specialist
- Spokesperson (if needed)
- Official approvers
- Health Education staff (if needed)

Other possible channels of communication are listed in Appendix I.

V. Communication Plan Development

1. Annual review of the Crisis Communication Plan is the responsibility of the Health Department PIO, including updates on primary, secondary, and Mutual Aid Agreement partner contact lists.
2. The media contact list should be updated on a biannual basis by the PIO.

VI. Authorities and Reference

- A. County Emergency Operations Plan
- B. Incident Command System
- C. Health Director
- D. Health Education Supervisor

VII. Approval

The following Health Department staff endorses and approves of the Crisis Communications Plan.

Director, County Health Department : Ramona Bowser/Diane McLawhorn (Interim)

PIO, County: Loria Williams

HCPHA Board of Health

Health Education Supervisor, County Health Dept.: Crystal Dempsey

Appendices

Appendix A: Health Department PIO/Media Coordinators

Name	Title	Contact information
(Primary PIO)	Crystal Dempsey, Health Promotion Supervisor	Work: 252-358-7833 Ext. 5163 Home: 252-209-6080 Pager: Cell: 252-287-6648 Text Message: Email: crystal.dempsey@ncmail.net Home email: cdempsey_he@yahoo.com
(alternate I)	Kathryn Sellers Youth Tobacco Prevention Coordinator	Work: 252-358-7833 Ext. 5161 Home: 252-398-5826 Pager: Cell: 252-287-9095 Email: Kathryn.sellers@ncmail.net Home email:
(alternate II)		Work: Home: Pager: Cell: Email: Home email:

Appendix B: Communication Materials Clearance and Spokespersons

Communication Material Verifiers	Title	Relevant Topics
Name Diane McLawhorn Phone: 252-332-6650 Fax: 252-332-6654 Email: diane.mclawhorn@ncmail.net Pager:	Interim Director, Health Department	
Name: Ramona Bowser Phone: 252-358-7833 Fax: 252-358-7869 Email: Ramona.bowser@ncmail.net Pager:	Interim Director, Health Department	
Name Dr. Simon Phone: 252-862-4054 Fax: 252-862-4263 Email: Pager: (Alternate – Name)	Medical Director	Medical/clinical issues
Name Easter Watford Phone: 252-862-4054 Fax: 252-862-4263 Email: diane.mclawhorn@ncmail.net (Alternate – Name)	Disease Control Supervisor	Communicable diseases Medical/clinical issues if Medical Director is not available
Name Ed Evans Phone: 252-358-7833 Fax: 252-358-7869 Email: Edward.evans@ncmail.net (Alternate – Name)	Director, Environmental Health Environmental Health Specialist	Any environmental health issues Food-related issues West Nile Virus Vector control
Name Crystal Dempsey Phone: 252-358-7833 Fax: 252-358-7869 Email: crystal.dempsey@ncmail.net Name (alt I) Name (alt II)	Health Education	
Name Barbara Earley Phone: 252-358-7833 Fax: 252-358-7869 Email: Barbara.earley@ncmail.net	Emergency Preparedness	Bioterrorism, terrorist event

Appendix C: Primary Contacts and Dissemination Formats

Federal Level Contacts	Mode of sending message:
Leah Devlin Tele: 919-707-5000 Fax: 919-870-4829	State Health Director via phone
State Level Contacts	Mode of sending message:
Dempsey Benton, Secretary NC Department of Health and Human Services Phone: 919-733-4534 Fax: 919-715-4645 Email: 2001 Mail Service Center Raleigh, NC 27699-2001 Location: Adams Building, 101 Blair Drive, Raleigh	County Health Director via phone
Local Level Contacts	Mode of sending message:
Local Officials and County Commissioners	Broadcast fax, press releases, email
<p>Name: Loria Williams – County Manager Number: 252-358-7805 Fax: 252-358-7806 Email: loria.willimas@ncmail.net</p> <p>Name: Howard Hunter III – County Commissioner/Chairman Number: 252-332-3130 Fax: 252-358-7806</p> <p>Name: John Pierce – County Commissioner/Vice Chair Number: 252-358-7701 Fax: 252-358-7806</p> <p>Name: Curtis Freeman – County Commissioner Number: 252-358-7805 Fax: 252-358-7806</p> <p>Name: Dupont Davis – County Commissioner Number: 252-358-7805 Fax: 252-358-7806</p> <p>Name: Johnny Farmer – County Commissioner Number: 252-358-7805 Fax: 252-358-7806</p>	
Local Health Information Team Partners	Mode of sending message:
Emergency Operations Official: Name: Charles Jones Phone: 252-358-7861 Fax: 252-358-7899 Email: charles.jones@ncmail.net	Health Director via phone

<p>Law Enforcement: County Sheriff's Department Phone: 252-385-7800 Fax: 252-358-7870 City Police Department, Non-emergency Communications Phone: 252-332-5011 Fax: Emergency: 911</p>	<p>Email, phone, fax via Health Department Public Information Officers</p>
<p>Fire Department/ Haz Mat Name: Charles Jones (Contact) Phone: 252-356-3651</p>	
<p>Emergency Medical Services Name: Kelvin Davidson Phone: 252-358-7861/252-209-7726 (cell) Fax: 252-358-7899 Email: Kelvin.Davidson@ncmail.net</p>	
<p>Hospital(s) Roanoke Chowan Hospital Name: Lisa Newsome Phone: 252-209-3151 Fax: 252-209-3499 Email: lnewsome@uhseast.com</p>	
<p>Social Services Name: Gwen Burns Phone: 252-358-7817 Fax: 252-358-0597 Email: gwen.burns@ncmail.net</p>	

Appendix D: Media Contact List and Template First Statement

Media	Contact	When to call
WDLZ	Earl Telliga Tele:252-398-4111 Fax: 252-398-3581 e-mail: etelliga@eartlike.net	Better to Fax all information.
WRCS 970 AM	Bishop JC Watford Tele: 252-398-3101 Fax: 252-332-3103 e-mail:wrcs@gate811.net	Call early in am or at 12 noon.
Max Radio of the Carolinas Ahoskie	252-332-7993	
Roanoke-Chowan News Herald	Cal Bryant Tele: 252-332-2123 Fax: 252-332-3940 e-mail: cal.bryant@roanoke- chowannewsheal.com	
Tri-County News	Jim Waller Tele:252-332-2779 Fax: 252-332-0599 e-mail: Money.saver@yahoo.co m	
Channel 13 News	Andrew Haag Tele:757-628-5802	
FOX 21 news	1-888-396-2100	They broadcast at 10 p.m.; give them as much lead time as possible
WYFF-4	1-800-453-9933	They may or may not cover story, but go ahead and call.
WSPA-7	1-800-207-6397	They may or may not cover story, but go ahead and call.

Appendix E: Secondary Contacts and Dissemination Formats

Secondary Contacts	
Media	Mode of sending message:
See Media contact list attached	Broadcast fax/press releases/phone as needed
General Public	Mode of sending message:
Public inquiries by phone	Phone center directs calls to PIO who redirects them to appropriate subject matter expert
Public information on the Internet Health Department Webmaster Phone: Email:	Information from PIO to Health Department Webmaster for posting
Secondary Agencies and Businesses	Mode of sending message:
Major businesses: See attachment Name: Phone: Fax: Email:	Email, phone, fax via Health Department Public Information Officers
School System: Hertford County Public Schools Phone: 252-358-1761 Fax: 252-358-4745	
Home Health: Hertford-Gates Home Health Agency Phone: 252-332-6747 Fax: 252-332-5089	
Hospice: Roanoke Chowan Hospital Phone: 252-332-3392 Fax: 252-332-5705	
Department of Agriculture: Steve Troxier (Raleigh) Phone: 919-733-7125 Fax: Email: steve.troxier@ncmail.net	

Appendix F: Local Health Information Team/Crisis Public Information Team Contact List

<p>Name: Crystal Dempsey Title: PIO Organization: HCPHA Address: PO Box 246 Winton, NC 27986 (w) 252-358-7833 (h) 252-209-0925 Pager: Cell: 252-287-9748 Fax: 252-358-7869 Email: crystal.dempsey@ncmail.net</p>	<p>Name: Eunice Ward Title: PIO/Hertford County Schools Organization: Hertford County Public Schools Address: PO Box 54 Winton, NC (w) 252-358-1761 Ex. 250 (h) Pager: Cell: Fax: Email: Eunice.ward@hertfordk12.nc.us</p>
<p>Name Kathryn Sellers Title PIO II Organization: HCPHA Address: 714 Evans St. Ahoskie, NC 27910 (w) 252-358-7833 (h) Pager: Cell: 252-2879295 Fax: 252-358-7869 Email: renee.davenport@ncmail.net</p>	<p>Name: Kim Schwartz Title: PIO Organization : RCCHC Address: (w)252-209-0237 (h) Pager: Cell: Fax: Email: kschwartz@uhseast.com</p>
<p>Name Lisa Newsome Title: PIO/Director of Marketing Organization: Roanoke-Chowan Hospital Address: 500 S. Academy St. Ahoskie, NC 27910 (w) 252-332-3151 (h) Pager: Cell: Fax: Email: lnewsome@uhseast.com</p>	<p>Name: Justin McKeithan Title: PIO Organization: Roanoke-Chowan Community College Address: 109 Community College Rd. Ahoskie (w) 252-862-1200 (h) Pager: Cell: Fax: Email:</p>
<p>Name Gay Sumner Title: County PIO Organization : Hertford County Address: 704 N. King St. (w) 252-358-7867 (h) Pager: Cell: Fax: Email: gay.sumner@ncmail.net</p>	<p>Name: Sara Ward Title: PIO Organization : Chowan University Address: (w) 252-398-6319 (h) Pager: Cell: Fax: Email: wards@chowan.edu</p>
<p>Name Debra Lane Title: County PIO Organization : Mental Health Address: (w) (h) Pager: Cell: Fax: Email:</p>	

Appendix G: Public Health Regional Surveillance Team Contact List

Name Team Leader: Kim McDonald (w): 252-902-2339 Pager: Email: kwmcdonald@co.pitt.nc.us	Name Disease Investigation Specialist (w) : Pager: Cell: Email:
Name Industrial Hygienist (w) : Pager: Cell: Email:	Name Laboratory Medical Specialist (w) : Pager: Cell: Email:
Name Administrative Assistant (w) : Pager: Cell: Email:	

Appendix H: Internet Resources for Crisis Messages

Internet sources or prepared official public information on emergency health topics:

- www.cdc.gov
- www.bt.cdc.gov
- www.dhs.gov
- www.dhhs.gov
- www.epa.gov
- www.redcross.org

Appendix I: Channels of Communication

Possible options for selecting channels of communication to deliver crisis messages:

Channels of communication	Source to get information out
Press releases	Health Department Public Information Officer
Broadcast fax	
County television channel	
Fliers	
Police scanner channels	
Reverse 911	

Annex

Hertford County Local Health Information Team (or Crisis Public Information Team) Section I: Plan and Procedures:

The role of the Local Health Information Team (LHIT)

In response to an emergency disaster or crisis that threatens the health and safety of the public, the LHIT team will perform tasks as assigned by the Emergency Operations Center PIO to support the ability of the Incident Commander to communicate timely and effectively with the media and public in order to:

- Assure that the public receives accurate, consistent, uniform, and proactive information that originates from the EOC
- Minimize disruption of the unified command's emergency response by both the media and public
- And determine additional crisis communication goals and needs specific to the county

Important: It is NOT our function to provide information to the media beyond what comes from the EOC

Preparation

All members of the Hertford County LHIT should be ready at all times to assume their most likely roles if an emergency crisis occurs, and should be available 24 hours, 7 days a week for emergency contact.

Activation

Any Local Health Information Team member who learns of a potentially serious community crisis should ensure notification of all other LHIT members by email (listserv), phone, fax or pager. The pager code for a possible crisis is _____.

LHIT members may choose a place to gather and await activation. One designated place is _____.

The Emergency Command Center Public Information Officer decides whether to activate LHIT, selects a location for it's function, and appoints the LHIT Lead Coordinator to serve as liaison between the Emergency Command Center and the LHIT Center.

Once appointed, the LHIT Lead Coordinator makes Job Action Sheet Assignments and directs the LHIT function.

Note: the EOC or Incident Commander and PIO must approve all released information...but they can authorize LHIT to release general, non-sensitive information such as background facts, types of casualties, assurance that an Emergency Command Center has been established. A template statement may be used. See Section III.

Key First Steps: (Note: these are also outlined in Job Action Sheets; this is a cross check)

Head PIO

- **Calls the media**-to establish control and reduce the chance of media just showing up or calling the command center.
- **Sets up log sheets**- to document and display key information. Log every development in sequence, noting time of each. Note new information as it arrives and who you called to tell.
- **Decides whether to activate LHIT**
- **Determines if Public Call Line is needed and set up and publicize if so**

How information about the crisis is gathered:

1. Those agencies involved in the unified command response report information to the EOC of Incident Commander periodically.
2. The Incident Commander and PIO determine what is to be released and how it is to be communicated to the media.

LHIT members may be asked to:

- Act as media liaisons to the head PIO relaying any media concerns or requests
- Monitor news reports and report rumors or inaccuracies
- Research and locate experts on pertinent subjects for media interviews
- Escort media to minimize disruptions
- Assist in arrangements if out-of-town media arrive
- Provide and research related story ideas that may be used in the later stages of the crisis
- Assist head PIO in setting up formal news conferences as needed

During the Crisis, LHIT members:

- Carry out assigned Job Action Sheets
- Rotate duties as needed and desired
- Watch for problems and address them quickly
- Watch for anecdotes that will help showcase the work of public safety personnel; consider photos/video opportunities and inform Lead LHIT Coordinator

After the “ALL CLEAR”:

- LHIT members may assist with media during wrap-up and help provide follow-up stories
- Make sure all team members know the “ALL CLEAR” has been called
- Look for opportunities for additional favorable coverage
- As quickly as possible, all team members hold brief critique to identify successes, identify opportunities for improvement, update and improve this plan
- Serve on overall debriefing if requested
- Identify need for thanks and follow-up

Section II: Job Action Sheets to Assign for a Code Triage

Note: one person can assume several Job Action Sheets. Not all may be needed.

Job	Duties	Reporting
Head Public Information Officer (PIO)	<i>To be determined by nature of the event and its location.</i> Strategic leadership and coordination. Supervises PIO function in command center, and overall LHIT coordination. Gets information from Incident Commander and relays it to the media and LHIT Lead Coordinator.	Reports to EOC or Incident Commander
Lead LHIT Coordinator, <i>appointed by Head PIO</i>	Receives instructions from Head PIO and assigns duties accordingly. Serves as liaison between Head PIO and LHIT. Oversees the LHIT function and is responsible for assuring its efficiency. Records and posts ongoing information about casualties in log form. Informs other team members.	Reports to Head PIO
Scene Media Liaison(s)	Meets and manages media that show up. Tries to have one person for each media at scene. May be authorized through Head PIO to release approved information to media at scene.	Report to Lead LHIT Coordinator
News Report Monitor(s)	Sets up system to monitor news on all forms of media including newspapers, radio, television, scanners, and Internet.	Report to Lead LHIT Coordinator
Logistics Coordinator(s)	Assists in making necessary arrangements to accommodate needs of media, especially if they arrive from out-of-town. Assist Head PIO with formal press conferences arrangements as requested.	Report to Lead LHIT Coordinator
Researcher(s)	Provides information as requested such as names of experts or other citizens for media interviews.	Report to Lead LHIT Coordinator
Office Coordinator	Provides office management function such as maintaining office supplies, sending and receiving faxes and overseeing runners.	Report to Lead LHIT Coordinator
Runner(s)	Helps as needed. Runner, messenger, getting supplies	Reports to Office Coordinator
Volunteer(s)	<i>See Guide for LHIT Volunteers</i>	

Attachment 1

Business/Industry

Communication Plan

Employer	Contact	Work	Cell	home
HCPS	Mark Sandberg		252-642-3620	794-1794
Hertford County	Charles Jones		252-	
Town of Ahoskie	Tony Hammond	332-5146	919-672-3654	
Town of Murfreesboro	Cathy Davison		396-1811	
CRMP	Jane Newsome		287-9637	358-7441
Rose Bros.	Reid Clark		287-7828	
Chowan Univ.	Chief Derek Burke	398-6369	862-5675	in contact with M'boro PD
RCCC				
NUCOR	Mitch Harris	356-3929		
Rivers Correctional	Colleen Schultz			
Perdue (Cofield)	Wayne Black	348-4326		
Metal Tech		252398-4041		
Indalux		252-358-5811		