

# Appendix C - Health Communications Guidance

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## Introduction

The Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention program invests in health communications infrastructure as a part of a comprehensive approach to prevent and reduce health harms.

The purpose of health communications for alcohol, tobacco and other drugs is to:

- Shift cultural narratives to prepare communities for policies, systems, and environmental change
- Engage community members, especially those most impacted, in the development of tools, educational resources, and policy, systems, and environmental change to create healthy communities
- Leverage health communications practices and research to further community goals

Tobacco and Alcohol companies spend billions annually on advertising to keep products front and center where people will see them every day. Advertising and promotions make products like tobacco more affordable, attractive, and appealing while also making it more difficult for people to quit. Health communications can help counter these efforts by elevating community counter-narratives and accelerating environmental, systems and policy changes.

As part of a comprehensive approach, communications initiatives should be strategic by having specific goals, audiences, and integrating communications into larger system-wide strategies.

## TPEP Guidance

TPEP grantees are **required** to create strategic communications plans and leverage Smokefree Oregon cessation campaigns.

Leveraging statewide communications initiatives such as Smokefree Oregon or Rethink the Drink can be a low-cost way for counties to support their long-term goals. In addition, utilizing these campaigns can help ensure that a specific community experiences the reach and repetition needed to achieve statewide, long-term counter marketing goals.

These are tips for communications planning whether you are utilizing already created materials, or creating them from scratch:

- **Define the goal and objectives for your communications plan.** Communication efforts should be purposeful and working toward larger community goals. Communications alone cannot solve complex problems such as preventing addiction but solving these problems cannot happen without *deliberate* communication. Your communication plan should be embedded in a plan to achieve a larger community level goal (ex. Passing a law, increasing access to treatment, etc).
- **Define your audience.** Everything about your communication planning should be tailored to your audience. What might be an effective message or mode of delivery may be effective for one audience but not for another. For example, a message that is tailored to seniors won't be effective for youth. Everything from the words and imagery, to where you place ads should be specific to your audience.
  - If you are creating a new campaign, consider formative audience assessments and testing your messages with your primary audience. Consider using both quantitative (survey) and qualitative (focus group, interviews) methods.
  - Always think about language access *before* you begin creating new communications campaigns. How will you make your campaign accessible to people who speak languages other than English? Will you transcreate the campaign or create it from the beginning in other languages? How will you ensure that the pictures and imagery reflect the diversity within the audience you are trying to reach?
- **Utilize research and campaigns that already exist (see below for resources).** Research and campaigns exist for many audiences and subject areas. Before starting from scratch, assess whether a campaign that already exists might meet your needs. This can also be a great way to start the conversation with community partners and assess what you do or don't like about current campaigns to narrow down what you want to do. Research communications best practices, lessons learned, and framing recommendations to reduce health inequities, improve effectiveness, and support your implementation.
- **Think long-term.** Changing community norms, counter marketing, and systems changes are all long-term goals. Communications initiatives working toward these types of goals require sufficient dose and repetition to be effective. Think about your communication goals as multi-year goals and plan for sustainability early.
- **Co-create the campaign with community members and partners.** Communities experiencing the issue you are addressing have deep knowledge on how to reach the population, what messages are effective or harmful, and how to best represent the community. Working with communities to co-create campaigns is a great way to build community power, lift up community strengths, invest resources back into the community and counter systemic harms. Think about your communication plan not as a one-way information dissemination, but as a two-way relationship with your

community, with all partners learning and growing together to ensure healthy, community driven narratives are abundant.

## Glossary of Communication Terms

**Audiences** are the people, either individuals or groups, you are hoping to reach through any given communication strategy. Try to have as much understanding of your audience as possible such as their motivations, interests, and beliefs. You can even involve your audience in creating your content. For example, by working with a culturally specific organization to create a campaign for their community. This can help you not only decide the look and feel of your campaign but ensure that you are using effective ways of reaching that audience. Audiences can include key leaders, decision-makers, youth, specific groups of community members, retailers, CCOs, parents, social justice groups, people who speak a specific language etc.

- **Primary Audiences** are those individuals with the direct authority to make the desired change.
- **Secondary Audiences** are the people who can *influence* the decisions of the primary audience.

**Health communication** is the study and use of communication strategies to inform and influence individual and community decisions that enhance health. Health communication considers a variety of channels to deliver its targeted or tailored messages to specific segments among varied audiences, including individuals, communities, health professionals, special groups, and decision makers<sup>1</sup>.

**Social Marketing** seeks to develop and integrate marketing concepts with other approaches to influence behaviors that benefit individuals and communities for the greater social good<sup>2</sup>.

**Mass-reach health communication** refers to the various means by which public health information reaches large numbers of people. Evidence suggests that the use of mass reach vehicles, in particular television, is required to make meaningful changes in population-level awareness, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors<sup>3</sup>.

**Counter Marketing** refers to marketing and communications efforts aimed at countering the marketing efforts (including but not limited to advertising) of, for example, tobacco or alcohol industry and other pro-tobacco/alcohol influences. Counter-marketing can include such efforts as media advocacy, media relations, sponsorships and promotions, as well as paid counter-advertising.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/topics/health-communication-and-health-information-technology.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.pnsma.org/socialmarketing>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/stateandcommunity/guides/pdfs/2014/sectionA-II.pdf>

**Framing** is the choices we make in what we say, how we say it, what we emphasize, and what we leave unsaid, and how these choices shape how people think, feel, and act. Related, 'reframing an issue' means creating widespread change in the way people think and talk about it<sup>4</sup>.

**Earned Media** - Generating free coverage in the press and through public service announcement

**Owned Media** - Sharing messages through channels under your organization's direct control such as websites, newsletters, and blogs

**Social Media** - Sharing messages and engaging audiences on social networking sites like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter

**Paid Media** - Paying to place ads on TV, radio, billboards, transit, online platforms, or in print media

**Campaigns** - An advertising effort on behalf of a particular product, service, or issue that lasts for a specified period of time; is intended to generate specific outcomes or effects; and targets a relatively large number of people. A single campaign generally is based around a common theme and target audience and often includes ads in several media types. "Campaign" can also refer to the set of materials used in a specific advertising effort and convey the message across several media types.

## Technical Assistance

HPCDP offers a variety of communication technical assistance for partners. These opportunities are provided to *any* community partner, even if they have no grant funding relationship with HPCDP but opportunities may fluctuate with funding and staffing capacity.

Here are examples of the types of technical assistance services that have been provided in the past to partners (in multiple languages):

- ✧ Monthly Social Media Calendars
  - ✧ Every month, HPCDP staff send out a social media calendar email that details the upcoming month's social media content on SFO and RTD social channels. Partners are welcome to utilize this content for their own purposes, provide input, or be prepared to engage with content online.
  - ✧ This email also contains announcements about all HPCDP brands including campaign information and new resources.
  - ✧ All partners are encouraged to send in any stories or requests for HPCDP staff to post or share on social media

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.frameworksinstitute.org/article/five-questions-about-framing/>

■ Example: <https://www.rethinkthedrink.com/share-your-story>

- ⊘ Toolkits for partners to leverage mass media campaigns
  - ⊘ 'Plug and play' flyers, infographics, social media images, newsletter templates, and more
- ⊘ Communications plan development:
  - ⊘ Identifying key audiences (what they care about, who influences them, how to reach them, etc.)
  - ⊘ Developing communications strategies and activities
  - ⊘ Developing key messages
- ⊘ Developing communication strategies for specific opportunities (like proposing new policy)
- ⊘ Coming up with strategies to reach out and engage with key audiences, to motivate them to take action
- ⊘ News media support and training:
  - ⊘ Developing news releases, op-eds and letters to the editor
  - ⊘ Developing a media pitch (angle, story, people for interview, etc.)
  - ⊘ Preparing spokespeople for media interviews
  - ⊘ Yearly earned media training
- ⊘ Social media support and training:
  - ⊘ How to use social media
  - ⊘ How to build a following and engage with followers
  - ⊘ Canva templates
- ⊘ Coaching and training on presenting and public speaking
- ⊘ Coaching and/or collaboration to solve challenges
- ⊘ Graphic design support

In addition, OHA invests in several mass-reach health communications brands that are designed as long-term infrastructure to support the public and partners. These brands utilize owned, social, earned and paid media strategies to achieve their goals. Each brand has specific audiences, goals, frames, and subject matters. The majority of these brands are not created to disseminate information one-way. Rather, they work with partners and communities to build community power and reframe health issues in order to achieve long-term community health goals, such as creating healthier environments.

Grantees are encouraged to utilize the tools and support provided by any brand that is applicable to their work.

For technical assistance requests, contact [hpcdp.media@dhsosha.state.or.us](mailto:hpcdp.media@dhsosha.state.or.us) or your Liaison.

Brand	Description
<a href="#">Smokefree Oregon</a> (SFO) *Managed by HPCDP	Overarching brand and communications infrastructure to address commercial tobacco prevention and cessation in Oregon.  <b>Smokefree Oregon Resource Portal – All ADPEP grantees can request access to the Resource Portal located on the Smokefree Oregon website. Sign up <a href="#">here</a>.</b>
<a href="#">Vive Sin Fumar (VSF)</a> *Managed by HPCDP	Spanish-language prevention and cessation campaign for Spanish-speaking Latinx community members in Oregon. This is a sub-brand of Smokefree Oregon
<a href="#">Native Quit Line</a> (NQL) *Managed by HPCDP	Culturally-specific commercial tobacco prevention and cessation sub-brand for American Indian and Alaska Native people in Oregon.
<a href="#">Rethink the Drink</a> (RTD) *Managed by HPCDP	Communications infrastructure to prevent and reduce excessive alcohol use in Oregon.
<a href="#">Place Matters Oregon</a> (PMO) *Managed by HPCDP	Communications brand that brings together social determinants of health, social connectedness, justice, place and health.
<a href="#">HEAL Safely</a>	Heal Safely is a campaign to empower people to heal safely after injury or surgery. The website includes the Opioid Prevention Toolkit which includes in-depth research, messaging recommendations and examples from the Heal Safely campaign.
<a href="#">End HIV</a>	End HIV Oregon is Oregon’s initiative to end new HIV infections in our state. Social media calendars are available monthly, email Rebecca at <a href="mailto:rebecca.garza@dhsosha.state.or.us">rebecca.garza@dhsosha.state.or.us</a> to join
<a href="#">Reverse Overdose Oregon</a>	This website includes training and tools on how to save lives with naloxone. It also provides resources for the media.

## Other Resources

- ❖ [Frameworks Institute](#)
- ❖ [Justice in the Air – Framing Tobacco Disparities](#)
- ❖ [Reporting on Addiction](#)
- ❖ [Webinar: Telling a New Story About Alcohol and Other Drugs](#)
- ❖ CDC
  - [Drink Less Be Your Best Campaign](#)
  - [Media Campaign Resource Center](#)
- ❖ [FDA Tobacco Public Health Education Resources](#)
- ❖ [Community Tool Box - Social Marketing](#)
- ❖ [SAMHSA](#)
- ❖ [Society for Health Communication](#)
- ❖ [Conference on Health Communication, Media, and Marketing](#)
- ❖ [Making Health Communication Programs Work – Pink Book](#)
- ❖ [Berkeley Media Studies Group](#)
- ❖ Equity Considerations from the OHA Writing Style Guide
  - Equity is a guiding model for language and action. Terms may change over time, and practices should be updated as needed.
    - Ensure information is written in plain language, is culturally responsive and is readily available in languages that represent the communities.
    - Use gender-inclusive language.
    - Be aware of ableism and how it enters the language we use when referring to people with and without disabilities.
    - Write to empower the individual when making decisions about what terms to use.
    - Work with community partners to identify priorities and communication strategies. This includes the need to build awareness and acceptance, and to rectify historical and contemporary injustices.