Communicating with Policymakers about Credentialing Research in Nursing

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Presentation to the IOM Standing Committee on Credentialing Research in Nursing
The Committee’s Objectives

- IOM Standing Committee on Credentialing Research in Nursing provides guidance and serves as focal point for policy discussions
  - Health professionals need new competencies
  - Credentialing establishes credibility

- Need to identify external drivers for credentialing
  - Who wants it?
  - Who needs it?
  - How should information be communicated?
Today’s Objectives

- Provide background on translation theory and practice
- Discuss strategic communications approaches to policy discussions about credentialing research
  - Identify key audiences
  - Develop key messages
- Discuss dissemination strategies
Translating Knowledge to Policy and Practice

- Knowledge translation (KT) is a multidisciplinary field with roots in cognitive science, information science, implementation science
- Same principles as health literacy
- You’re not really communicating unless the audience understands you
Know your audience

→ Audience or market segmentation is key to strategic communications
  – Researchers to researchers
  – Researchers to credentialing organizations
  – Researchers to clinical nurses and nurse executives
  – Researchers to policy-makers and regulators
  – Researchers to consumers
Why use plain language?

→ Regulatory guidance:
  – Clinton Administration memo on plain language in government writing to make the government “more responsible, accessible, and understandable” (1998)
  – American Bar Association resolution urged use of plain language in writing government regulations to promote the understanding of legal obligations (1999)
Plain Language: It’s the law

→ Plain Writing Act of 2010 requires “clear Government communication that the public can understand and use”
  – Promote efficiency and effectiveness
  – Promote transparency and accountability
  – Promote public engagement, which enhances Government effectiveness and improves the quality of decisions

» http://www.plainlanguage.gov
How to Use Plain Language

Before
- Anticipate
- Approximate
- A number of
- Consequently
- Constitutes
- Discontinue

After
- Expect
- About
- Some
- So
- Is
- Stop
Language Frames
Show Values

→ Affordable Care Act
→ Obamacare

→ Soda tax to reduce obesity
→ Freedom of choice

→ Quit smoking
→ Become smoke-free

→ Climate change
→ Climate hoax

→ Sound science
→ Junk science

→ Gun violence
→ Gun rights

→ Risk assessment
→ Scare tactics
A young man walks through chest deep flood water after **looting** a grocery store in New Orleans on Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2005. Flood waters continue to rise in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina did extensive damage when it

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Two residents wade through chest-deep water after **finding** bread and soda from a local grocery store after Hurricane Katrina came through the area in New Orleans, Louisiana. (AFP/Getty Images/Chris Graythen)
Why Try Data Visualization?

- When images are well-designed, it’s easier and faster to process information and get key messages compared with text.
- Includes tables, figures, infographics, icons.
Geographic Adjustment in Medicare Payment

Under the Current Medicare Payment System

- MULTIPLE SETS OF PAYMENT AREAS
  - Hospitals: 441 MSAs
  - Physicians: 89 payment areas

- INCONSISTENT DATA SOURCES
  - Multiple sources of wage, rent, and commuting data, including data from providers and outdated sources

- LIMITED SELECTION OF OCCUPATIONS
  - Physician practice expense and the hospital wage index include a narrow range of occupations

Under the Medicare Payment System with Committee Recommendations Implemented

- A SINGLE SET OF PAYMENT AREAS
  - Both hospitals and physicians use MSAs

- ACCURATE, INDEPENDENT DATA SOURCES
  - BLS wage data and new source for commercial office rent

- A WIDE RANGE OF OCCUPATIONS FROM A SINGLE SOURCE
  - BLS data from all occupations in the healthcare workforce

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Accuracy
- Evidence for Adjustment
- Local Labor Markets
- Consistent Criteria
- Sound Rationale
- Transparency
- Separate Policy Adjustments
Strategic communications: Building relationships to affect change

→ What are you trying to accomplish?
→ Who are you trying to reach?
→ What messages are likely to work?
→ When and how will you engage and follow up?
Who do you need to reach?

→ Who are the decision makers who can use your research?
  – National credentialing organizations
  – State licensing boards and regulators
  – Medical and nursing directors and administrators
  – Consumers

→ Who influences the decision makers? Audiences can be broad:
  – Constituents/general public
  – Staff
  – Media
Goals: Effort increases with desired action

- **Awareness**: Policy leaders have heard of our organization/research/work
- **Engagement**: Leaders and Intermediaries seek our assistance with policy problems/questions
- **Action**: Our work influences the proposal, passage and implementation of policies

Diagram:

Low touch/high reach  |  High touch/low reach
## Many Ways to Engage

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Involvement</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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| Broad reach, Low engagement         | • Peer reviewed publication  
• Publish editorial in local paper or commentary in a trade publication  
• Speak at conferences/events     |
| Variable reach and engagement       | • Social media: blogs, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube  
• Letters, emails to elected officials  
• Attend town halls, committee meetings, and conferences  
• Educate your friends, family; encourage action |
| Highly targeted, one-on-one         | • Meet with elected officials, decision-makers  
• Lobbying/advocacy               |
Delivery: Invert the Abstract

- Headline
- Conclusion
- Description and methods
I’m here today to talk to you about _______
It’s important because_________________
My research shows___________________
Let me give you an example____________
That’s why I’m asking you to____________
Refer to “Figure 1: Model for Credentialing Research.”

Summary

- Know your audience and the purpose of your information
- Organize the information from your readers’ or listeners’ perspectives
- Choose your words carefully:
  - Active voice, short sentences, everyday words and personal pronouns
  - Use graphics and design elements to improve readability and reinforce key points
For More Information

→ www.plainlanguage.gov

→ Federal Plain Language Guidelines, March 2011
www.plainlanguage.gov/howto/guidelines/FederalPLGuidelines/TOC.cfm

→ Clear It Up: Plain Language in Government Health Information.
www.cdc.gov/features/features/plainlanguage/
Additional Information

- Frameworks Institute
  http://www.frameworksinstitute.org/
- Gavin Bennett and Nasreen Jessani. The Knowledge Translation Toolkit
  http://www.idrc.ca/EN/Resources/Publications/Pages/IDRCBookDetails.aspx?PublicationID=851
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