

Navigating Infodemics and Building Trust during Public Health Emergencies: A Workshop

Agenda

Day 1: Monday, April 10, 2023, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. ET

Day 2: Tuesday, April 11, 2023, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. ET

Background:

A planning committee of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (National Academies) was tasked by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to plan and conduct a workshop to examine the history of public health infodemics, the COVID-19 infodemic, the impact of infodemics on trust in the public health enterprise, and tools and practices used to address infodemics. This workshop builds upon a previous National Academies workshop on [Building Trust in Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Science](#), and will go beyond what is known about risk and crisis communications to generate actionable, targeted insights that state, local, territorial, and tribal agencies and officials can take to prevent and respond to the negative health effects of an infodemic.

The Planning Committee's working definition of *infodemic* is:

The rapid spread of large amounts of sometimes conflicting or inaccurate information that can impede the ability of individuals, communities, and authorities to protect health and effectively respond in a crisis.

Infodemics can also include a deluge of accurate information which overwhelms the public. In times of emergency, there could also be situations in which people do not have access to information.

In addition to this workshop, the National Academies have launched several new efforts to leverage the best available science to help public health leaders at all levels navigate the challenges of communication and building trust with a diverse nation to improve health and wellbeing. A recent [National Academies workshop examined the roles of federal agencies](#) within the health information environment and identified the capacities needed across the U.S. government to support effective health communication moving forward. A [National Academies consensus study](#) currently underway seeks to characterize the nature and scope of science misinformation and its impact on different communities and identify solutions to limit its spread.

Workshop Objectives:

1. Develop a shared understanding of the modern health information ecosystem and examine the impact of infodemics during a public health emergency (PHE).
2. Examine the public health capacities and capabilities that are needed to manage infodemics during a PHE and throughout the disaster management cycle.
3. Identify the roles, responsibilities, and partnerships among relevant organizations and agencies in managing infodemics during a PHE.
4. Examine interventions to prevent and mitigate the harmful effects of infodemics and identify research gaps.

DAY 1: MONDAY, APRIL 10, 2023

Day 1 will set the foundation of the workshop by examining information environments during public health emergencies and explore the relevant capabilities, capacities, research, and disciplines needed for infodemic preparedness and response.

SESSION I WELCOME AND OVERVIEW OF THE WORKSHOP

10:00 a.m. Welcome and Opening Remarks from the Chair

Howard Koh, Workshop Chair

Harvey V. Fineberg Professor of the Practice of Public Health Leadership
Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health | Harvard Kennedy School

10:15 a.m. Welcome and Opening from the Sponsor

Kevin Griffis

Director, Office of Communications
U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

SESSION II WHAT IS AN INFODEMIC?

This session will lay the foundation of the workshop by examining the modern health information ecosystem and how the information ecosystem evolves in public health emergencies, like COVID-19 or a natural disaster. This session will examine what defines an infodemic, the impact infodemics can have on the health of communities as well as their impact on trust in the public health system's ability to effectively manage a public health emergency, and the key disciplines and stakeholders that need to be involved in addressing infodemics.

10:30 a.m. Understanding the Complexity of Infodemics in Public Health Emergencies

Seema Yasmin, Moderator

Director, Stanford Health Communication Initiative
Stanford University
Visiting Assistant Professor of Crisis Communications, Anderson School of Management
UCLA

Nancy Tomes, Distinguished Professor, Department of History, Stony Brook University

Tina Purnat, Team Lead, Infodemic Management in the Unit for High Impact Events Preparedness, Department of Epidemic and Pandemic Preparedness and Prevention, World Health Organization (WHO)

Dietram A. Scheufele, Taylor-Bascom Chair in Science Communication, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Umair Shah, Secretary of Health, Washington State Department of Health

SESSION III

PREPARING FOR AND RESPONDING TO INFODEMICS

This session will examine what the U.S. public health system must do to prepare for and respond to infodemics. It will discuss current approaches to monitoring the localized information environment before and during a public health emergency and the influence of information quality and access and social determinants of health on information spread and behavior change. It will explore the trigger points at which public health interventions should be considered as well as the risks and benefits of a response and how to manage the information environment after response has been carried out.

12:00 p.m.

Forecasting and Social Listening Approaches

Elisabeth Wilhelm, *Moderator*
Fellow, Information Futures Lab
Brown University

Neil Johnson, Professor of Physics, Department of Physics, The George Washington University

Alejandro Posada, Lead Social Scientist, Internews

Maddie Perlman-Gabel, Communication, Engagement, and Research Specialist, Office of Vector Surveillance and Control, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Christopher Voegeli, Acting Vaccine Confidence and Demand Lead, Division of the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

12:45 p.m.

Infodemic Preparedness – Public Health Actions and Plans Before an Infodemic Occurs

Hilary Karasz, *Moderator*
Deputy Communications Director
Public Health Seattle & King County

Ian Brooks, Director, Center for Health Informatics, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Lisa Cox, Communications Director, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services

M. Norman Oliver, Former Deputy Commissioner, Virginia Department of Health

1:30 p.m.

30-MINUTE Break

2:00 p.m.

Infodemic Response – Public Health Actions While the Infodemic Evolves

Allison Arwady, *Moderator*

Commissioner

Chicago Department of Public Health

Kate Starbird, Associate Professor, Department of Human Centered Design & Engineering, Director of the Emerging Capacities of Mass Participation (emCOMP) Laboratory, University of Washington

Anne Zink, Chief Medical Officer, Alaska Department of Health

Thomas Wilkinson, Chief Medical Information Officer, U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

Mysheika Roberts, Health Commissioner, Columbus Public Health

SESSION IV

SYSTEM CAPACITIES, CAPABILITIES, AND COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

Building on previous discussions around defining infodemic preparedness and response, this session will explore the overall infodemic management system, including infrastructure and workforce considerations. It will identify the roles, responsibilities, and means of accountability governmental and nongovernmental actors when preparing for and responding to an infodemic. It will ask how health agencies and departments should preposition their resources to effectively respond to a crisis.

2:45 p.m.

Systems, Capacities, Responsibilities, and Partnerships for Infodemic Preparedness and Response

Elena Savoia, *Moderator*

Principal Scientist

Department of Biostatistics

Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

Scott Burris, Professor of Law and Public Health, Center for Public Health Law Research, Temple University

David Scales, Assistant Professor of Medicine, Weill Cornell Medical College; Chief Medical Officer, Critica

Eve Shapiro, Senior Director of Programs and Evaluation, West Side United

Richard Legault, Senior Advisor for Social and Behavioral Science in the Science and Technology Directorate, U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

SESSION V DAY 1 CLOSING REMARKS

3:45 p.m. Chair's Reflection and Preview of Day 2

Howard Koh, *Workshop Chair*

Harvey V. Fineberg Professor of the Practice of Public Health Leadership
Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health | Harvard Kennedy School

4:00 p.m. End Day 1

DAY 2: TUESDAY, APRIL 11, 2023

Day 2 will explore interventions at the information, individual, institutional, and community levels for infodemic management. The workshop will conclude with a roundtable discussion to envision the future of infodemic preparedness and response.

SESSION VI WELCOME TO DAY 2 AND PLENARY SESSION

10:00 a.m. Welcome and Opening

Howard Koh, *Workshop Chair*

Harvey V. Fineberg Professor of the Practice of Public Health Leadership
Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health | Harvard Kennedy School

10:10 a.m. Plenary Session

Presentation of the discussions from the 2022 workshop: Building Public Trust in Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response (PHEPR) Science

Sandra Quinn

Professor and Chair, Department of Family Science
Senior Associate Director, Maryland Center for Health Equity
University of Maryland School of Public Health

Presentation of the workshop's commissioned paper findings: Infodemic Management Approaches Leading up to, During, and Following the COVID-19 Pandemic

Tara Kirk Sell

Senior Scholar, Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security
Associate Professor, Department of Environmental Health and Engineering
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Annie Sundelson

Doctoral Student
Department of Environmental Health and Engineering
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

SESSION VII STRATEGIES AND INTERVENTIONS AT THE PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEM LEVEL

This session will discuss strategies and interventions that have been or could be implemented at the institutional and structural levels to prepare for and respond to infodemics.

10:45 a.m.

Interventions at the Institutional and Structural Levels

Gretchen Michael, *Moderator*

Director of Communications

Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Sue Curry, Distinguished Professor, Department of Health Management and Policy,
Former Dean, University of Iowa College of Public Health

Tricia Corrin, Epidemiologist, Public Health Risk Sciences Division, National Microbiology
Laboratory, Public Health Agency of Canada

Phil Maytubby, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Oklahoma City County Health Department

SESSION VIII

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND TRUST BUILDING ACTIVITIES

This session will examine the experience of infodemics at the local and community levels, specifically exploring how infodemics impact different communities including but not limited to ANAI, AAPI, Black, Hispanic, immigrant, and LGBTQI communities. It will explore strategies and interventions to strengthen resilience against mis- and disinformation, support the public during a public health emergency, and build trust in the U.S. public health system.

11:30 a.m.

Understanding and Supporting the Public as a Key Element in Infodemic Preparedness and Response

Jewel Mullen, *Moderator*

Associate Dean for Health Equity

University of Texas at Austin, Dell Medical School

Teresa Wagner, Assistant Professor, The School of Health Professions, The University of
North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth

Susan Kansagra, Director for the NC Division of Public Health, North Carolina
Department of Health and Human Services

Claudia Regalado-Cattouse, Director of Community Innovations and Impact, Chicago
Cook Workforce Partnership

Monica Schoch-Spana, Senior Scholar, Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security, Senior
Scientist, Department of Environmental Health and Engineering, Johns Hopkins
Bloomberg School of Public Health

12:15 p.m.

30-MINUTE BREAK

12:45 p.m.

Preparing for and Responding to Infodemics in Diverse Communities

Vish Viswanath, *Moderator*

Lee Kum Kee Professor of Health Communication
Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health

Amanda Boyd, Associate Professor, Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine, Co-Director for the Institute for Research and Education to Advance Community Health
Washington State University

Jill Jim, Public Health Infrastructure & Accreditation Programs Director, National Indian Health Board (NIHB)

Juliet K. Choi, President and CEO, Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum

Dorothy Oliver, Community Advocate, Panola, Alabama

SESSION IX

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AND INNOVATIVE INTERVENTIONS AT THE INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT LEVEL

This session will discuss strategies and interventions that have been or could be implemented at the information and individual levels to prepare for and respond to infodemics.

1:30 p.m.

Interventions at the Informational and Individual Levels

Tim Collins, *Moderator*

Senior Epidemiologist
Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

Rachael Pilitch-Loeb, Research Scientist, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

Joe Smyser, CEO, The Public Good Projects

Jessica Castner, President and Principal Investigator/ Consultant, Castner Incorporated
Editor-in-Chief, Journal of Emergency Nursing

Adam Dunn, Professor of Biomedical Informatics, University of Sydney; Head of Biomedical Informatics and Digital Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health

SESSION X **WORKSHOP CLOSING REMARKS**

This closing session will envision a public health preparedness and response system that can equitably manage infodemics while also building trust in the system's response to a public health emergency. A process for testing and continually improving this system will also be discussed.

2:30 p.m.

Roundtable Discussion – A Vision for Future Public Health Emergencies

Howard Koh, *Moderator*

Harvey V. Fineberg Professor of the Practice of Public Health Leadership
Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health | Harvard Kennedy School

Demetre Daskalakis, Deputy Coordinator, White House National Mpox Response

Michael Fraser, CEO, Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO)

William Hallman, Professor and Chair, Department of Human Ecology, Rutgers Global Health Institute

Bruce Y. Lee, Executive Director, Center for Advanced Technology and Communication in Health (CATCH), City University of New York (CUNY) Graduate School of Public Health; Senior Contributor, *Forbes*

Jewel Mullen, Associate Dean for Health Equity, University of Texas at Austin, Dell Medical School

3:30 p.m.

Final Words from the Sponsor

Kevin Griffis

Director, Office of Communications
U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

3:45 p.m.

Closing Remarks

Howard Koh, *Workshop Chair*

Harvey V. Fineberg Professor of the Practice of Public Health Leadership
Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health | Harvard Kennedy School

4:00 p.m.

Adjourn Workshop
