

Communication Surveillance During Emergencies

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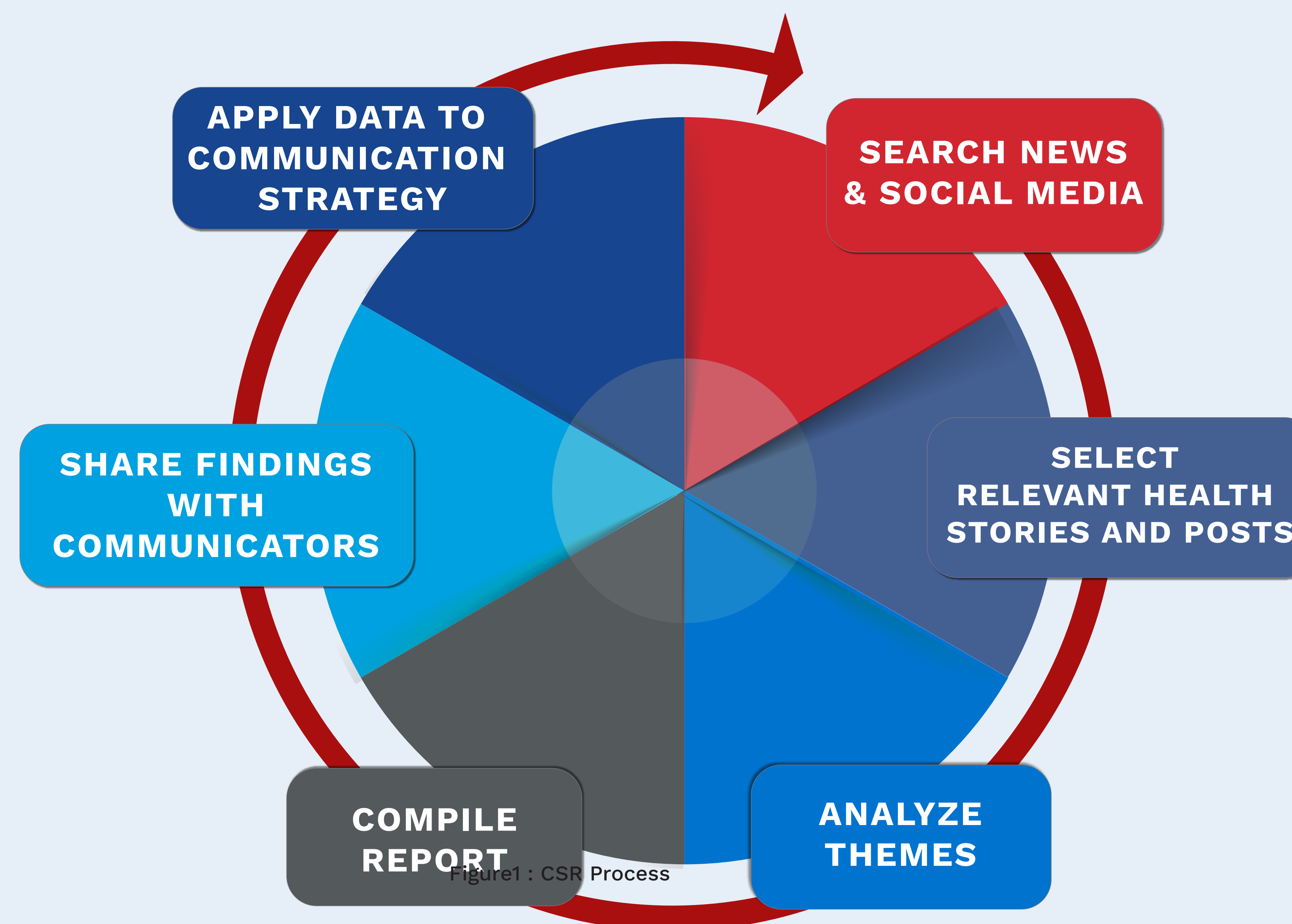
Why is communication critical in a public health emergency?

- Effective public health communication requires an engaged population during an emergency; messaging and information affect people's understanding of guidance and willingness to engage in behaviors to protect themselves, their families, and their communities
- Common communication challenges during an emergency:
 - Individuals' inability to accurately assess risk
 - Public health's inability to effectively communicate risk
 - Uncertainty about the threat and perceived control over ways to stay safe
 - Tailoring language, format, and content for specific audiences
 - Trust and source credibility
 - Communication strategy and the analysis of the media environment

What is the Communication Surveillance Report (CSR)?

- Concise, daily report for communicators
- Thematic analysis of relevant news stories and social media posts used to identify existing narratives
- What at-risk and affected groups are hearing/saying about a specific threat, including potential health protection advice
- Critical input to agency communication strategy for providing accurate health protection information based on current scientific knowledge and risk communication principles (e.g., CERC)

Communication Surveillance Report Process:



CSR translated into action:

Input to CDC's emergency communication strategy
Addresses gaps, confusion, and issues that require additional clarification

- Provides groundwork for applying scientifically grounded principles of emergency risk communication (e.g., transparency, scientific accuracy, actionability of messages)
- Recommends potential actions for agency messages

Quotes from CDC responders on the utility of the CSR:

“
The fact that recipients pick it up and use it in ways not originally designed speaks to [the] value of the report. It's a hot ticket item.”

“
We should be influenced by what's happening around us and responsive to that. So, I feel like it [the CSR] was a lifeline and a way to summarize themes of what was in the news, themes of misinformation, social media chatter, recommendations about what to do.”

Core sections

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action-oriented guidance for messaging strategy emerging from the data analysis.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major public health themes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This section summarizes thematic analysis of major news and social media stories. It is often the most robust section and the driver of the “recommendations” for communication strategy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Points of confusion/misinformation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A critical part of communication surveillance highlights topics and themes circulating in our target audience. These topics and themes may be creating confusion or spreading false information. This section collates instances of confusion/misinformation in a single place.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Seeking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lists key themes among audience feedback. This section largely relies on data generated from CDC-INFO, the agency's question-and-answer hotline. The analysis of this data provides a snapshot into persistent communication gaps among the public.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USG/CDC Mentions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News and social media coverage about U.S. elected officials or agencies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emerging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stories that are not yet prominent but are likely to become major themes once they gain more mainstream momentum. They may include new claims that have not yet been substantiated or dismissed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metrics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This section includes a graph of news (U.S. TV and radio stories) and social media (Twitter) metrics, along with a description of overall trends in news and social media.

Criteria for identifying stories

- Prominent news media outlets (could be local/national/international)
- Repeated across outlets/stories
- Public health concern or implications
- Relevancy to CDC messaging and activities

Data inputs:

- Digital newspapers
- Social Media: The Big Three (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram)
- CDC-INFO Inquiries
- CDC website traffic
- Broadcast television
- Radio

