

2014

# Disseminating Research Findings

A GUIDE TO SHARE FINDINGS

# Disseminating Research Findings

## A Guide to Share Findings

---

Research findings have contributed to many advances in medicine and public health initiatives. Often, however, improved health care practices and more effective prevention efforts based on new research knowledge are delayed by incomplete communication of research results. Researchers are often quite good at communicating with other researchers through scientific publications, presentations and news releases. Key findings should be disseminated appropriately among all relevant community groups, including those who have collaborated in research, may be affected by new practices and programs and need to invest in or implement the findings. In fact, many



people view the appropriate distribution of research findings as an ethical obligation of researchers and research institutes.

Developing a dissemination plan is a step-by-step process that starts with identifying the message and audience. Specific goals and objectives for dissemination must be determined and carefully described for each component. There are several things that need to be addressed. First of all, specific goals and objectives for dissemination must be determined and carefully described.

Appropriate channels of communication must also be identified for target audiences. These audiences that need to be considered can include study participants, other researchers, media outlets, health departments, community groups and members, government/policymakers. Messages and informational materials must be tailored for each audience. Various types of dissemination channels need to be used in order for the information to reach different types of people through different types of venues. It is also essential to utilize the existing resources within an area or group.

Planning and preparation can lead to dissemination efforts accomplished easily and smoothly. If resources are available, the dissemination effort should be evaluated to determine what worked and what did not work in order to improve on future efforts.

The dissemination plan allows a well thought-out structure to guide the timing and delivery style for each message.

When planning a dissemination strategy and preparing messages, there are several additional considerations for an effective dissemination plan.

1. Consider all potential of audiences, their informational needs and relevant channels for reaching them
2. Keep the information short, and to-the-point
3. Use clear, non-technical language for all audiences
4. Highlight the principal points to clearly organize the findings
5. Make information attractive to the viewers, using graphics, easy to read font, and reasonable spacing
6. Provide information that is captivating to the viewer
7. Provide conclusions and suggestions on incorporating findings into practices

There are many different channels and methods of disseminating to the target audiences and general population. The most popular and broad strategy is mass media, including TV, radio, social media outlets, etc. These methods reach a large number of people in a fast and efficient way. Similarly, information can be placed in publications and websites of community organizations/partners. Policy briefs and press releases are also beneficial ways to dispense information widely.

Local methods of dissemination can include hosting or presenting at community events, seminars and health fairs to spread information through the community. Flyers and brochures can be displayed and distributed in the community.

On an individual level, personal letters can be sent out to all of the participants and interested community members that describe and summarize the project and express appreciation to participants and sponsors.

Sharing research findings can open the door to many possibilities for research findings to make improvements in practice and develop prevention measures and programs that ultimately lead to improved health and well-being for members of communities.