

Emerging Communication Responsibilities of Epidemiologists

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1. Tell the people who are most affected what you have found – and tell them first.
 2. Make sure people understand what you are telling them, and what you think its implications are.
 - a. Simplification
 - b. Interpretation
 3. Develop mechanisms to bolster the credibility of your study and your findings.
 4. Acknowledge uncertainty promptly and thoroughly.
 5. Apply epidemiological expertise where it is called for, and do not misapply it where it is unlikely to help.
 6. Show respect for public concerns even when they are not “scientific.”
 - a. Anecdotal evidence
 - b. Statistical significance
 - c. Outrage
 7. Involve people in the design, implementation, and interpretation of the study.
 8. Decide that communication is part of your job, and learn the rudiments – it’s easier than epidemiology.
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Consulting, Training, and Research in Risk Communication