

Guiding Principles and Tips for Emergency Preparedness Efforts Targeting Persons with Limited English Proficiency and Other Special Populations

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Presentation Outline

1. Effective emergency preparedness and response requires capacity to reach and assist *everyone* in a community.
2. It's important to keep in mind that racial and ethnic minorities suffer disproportionately in and post emergency events.
 - a. Before: they are under prepared
 - b. During: they are prone to greater injury and loss due to confusion and lack of timely accessible information
 - c. After: take longer for recovery due to less resources
3. Necessary to have proactive measures to foster LEP access to critical public services and information
4. In most public emergencies, local gov't and systems play the most important role in addressing the needs of vulnerable populations. But gov't can't do it alone—a diverse array of community members must be involved and gov't must work with them in defining, locating, and reaching vulnerable individuals.
5. Emergency preparedness for LEPs is not just about translating documents- there needs to be a larger, more proactive strategy in place

TIPS FOR DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS STRATEGY

1. Define the LEP/special/vulnerable population – understanding the languages and cultures of the target communities
 - a. Who are they?
 - b. What language do they speak and read?
 - c. What are their preparedness concerns and challenges?
 - d. What are their perceptions of, and response to, risk?
2. Locate these populations and what resources they have (community mapping, updated directory of services)
3. Determine own organizational capacity to provide language access
4. Build a planning network, which includes active community involvement to:
 - a. Refine the understanding of the target communities and resources available
 - b. Identify cultural perceptions and challenges to successful emergency preparedness and recovery efforts
 - c. Develop/test/dissemination information messages
 - d. Conduct outreach and training on preparedness topics
 - e. Develop front line procedures for during the emergency

**there needs to be funding/resource support for all that are involved in the planning network, particularly for recovery efforts*

5. Develop a Community Outreach/Information Network (COIN) and collectively answer these questions to inform dissemination strategy:
 - a. Where do you get information about health and public services?
 - b. What is your preferred method of communication?
 - c. What is your second preference for communication?
 - d. Which radio and/or TV station do you listen/watch?
 - e. When in the day/week do you typically listen/watch?
 - f. Who in your community do you trust for information?
 - g. Where would you go to access information or assistance during an emergency?
6. Develop and test all messages for accuracy, relevance, and cultural competency with the community through focus groups, interviews, and roundtables; all should include a diverse mix of the target populations (by gender, age, ethnicity, language, immigration history, religion, sexual orientation)
7. Select stakeholders to disseminate the information; there must be multiple messengers for the community

TIPS ON DEVELOPING MESSAGES FOR LEP POPULATIONS

1. Keep the message simple (less than 6th grade reading level)
2. Use large fonts (at least 12 point)
3. Consider translating documents so that English is on one side
 - a. Easy for monolingual English speakers to identify the document
 - b. Allows for all members of bilingual households to read the information
4. Tri-fold documents may be difficult to reproduce and may not be easy to read for all. Include visual aids and maps (pilot with target community for cultural competence)
5. Repeat key information more than once
6. Include directions and phone numbers (only include phone numbers in translated materials if someone speaking the language will answer the phone)

PROMISING PRACTICES/RESOURCES

National

- National Resource Center on Advancing Emergency Preparedness for Culturally Diverse Communities: www.diversitypreparedness.org
- Centers for Disease Control Emergency Preparedness and Response Toolkit: <http://emergency.cdc.gov>
- National Health Law Program's Online Library on Language Access Resources: www.healthlaw.org
- Prepare Now: www.preparenow.org

Local

- Emergency Community Health Outreach (ECHO), Minnesota: www.echominnesota.org
- Collaborating Agencies on Responding to Disasters (CARD): www.firstvictims.org
- Texas Department of Health

International

- Emergency Management Australia