

Risk (and Benefit) Communication: Challenges and Resources

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Risk Communication Advisory Committee

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Context

Under FDAAA (2007)

- permanent committee

- specific charges (recalls, DTC ...)

- general consultation resource

Effectiveness will depend on

- our usefulness to staff

- strength of science that we bring

- resources committed to science

Strong Citizen Support for Trustworthy Communication

Provide Americans with honest,
accurate information about the situation,
even if the information worries people.

(mean=3.6; 1=strongly disagree, 4=strongly agree)
(National samples: Nov 2001; N=973; Nov-Dec 2002; N=591)

One Official Endorsement “DHHS Communication Plan for First Case of H5N1 in US”

Keep the public fully informed -- tell what we know, tell what we don't know, and tell it often...Maintain credibility and public trust, by providing accurate, science-based information.

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Communication Leadership Requires

Strategic processes, integrating
communication with analysis and
regulation

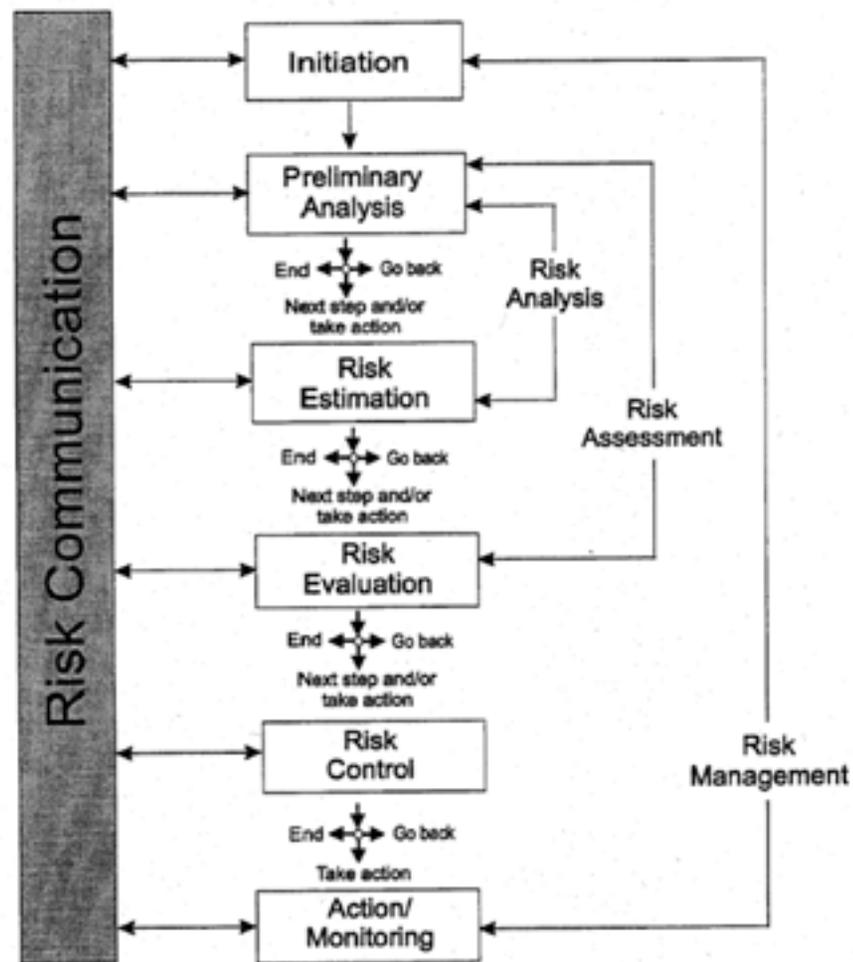
Strategic staffing, with requisite
expertise and coordination



CAN/CSA-Q850-97
***Risk Management:
Guideline for
Decision-Makers***

*A National Standard of
Canada*





Note: Risk communication with stakeholders is an important part of each step in the decision process.

Figure 2
Steps in the Q850 Risk Management Decision-Making
Process — Simple Model

Strategic Staffing Requires

Domain specialists, for representing the science of the risks (and benefits)

Risk and decision analysts, for identifying the information critical to choices

Behavioral scientists, for designing and evaluating messages

System specialists, for creating and using communication channels

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All working on their own tasks

So, No...

Psychologists inventing medicine ...

Physicians, pharmacologists ... pushing pet theories of citizen competence

Public affairs staff spinning the facts

Analysts independently defining value-laden terms (risk, benefit, equity...)

Definitely Not

Bio ... 0.101

with “basic facts that everyone should know”

“Messaging” sessions

with “experts” determining content by fiat

Guidance without supporting evidence

“so people have a feeling of control”

Universal guidance

when values and circumstances vary

Charisma per se

Meeting Agenda

FDA staff:

programs and needs

Non-persuasive communication:

facilitating decision making

Persuasive communication:

motivating protective action

Emergency communication:

preparation and mobilization