



The role of social media in risk communication for healthcare professionals

Alexander Talbott, 5th December 2014

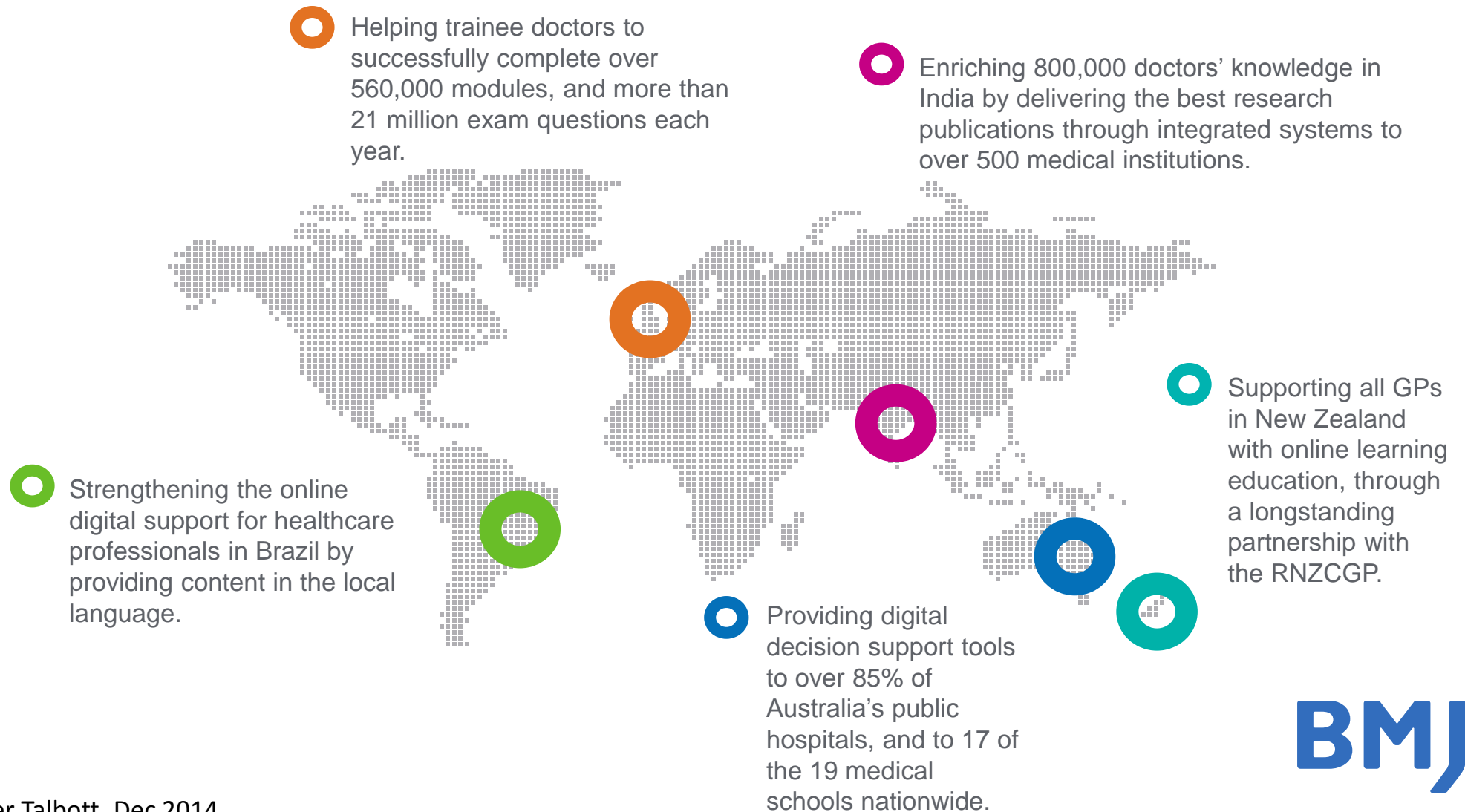


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Impacting healthcare worldwide



Learning points from the H1N1 and Ebola outbreaks

- Target audiences are using social media
- Healthcare agencies and professionals should use social media
- Create draft content prior to a confirmed outbreak
- Practice – who in your teams is able to monitor social media platforms?
- Develop a social media personality
- Share quickly and often
- People are looking for information online – fill the void before misinformation does.

Setting the context

Setting the context

What is social media?

- Network-based online platforms that enable two-way communication, independent of position, location, gender, age or education.
- Popular (in the UK) examples of such platforms are:



Figures correct as of March 2014. Source: Ofcom's Communications Market Report 2014.

Setting the context

What is so important about social media?

- Flattens hierarchies
- It can drive the news agenda
- Changes peoples' information consumption habits
- Can directly compete with healthcare agencies information releases and promotions.

Setting the context

What is risk communication?

- An attempt to align perceived risks with actual risks.

Examples of using social media for risk communication

Examples of using social media for risk communication

Twitter

CDC @CDCgov

#Ebola is spread by direct contact w/bodily fluids of a sick person or exposure to contaminated objects, like needles

Facts about Ebola

- You can't get Ebola through air
- You can't get Ebola through water
- You can't get Ebola through food

You can only get Ebola from:

- Touching the blood or body fluids of a person who is sick with or has died from Ebola.
- Touching contaminated objects, like needles.
- Touching infected animals, their blood or other body fluids, or their meat.

Ebola poses no significant risk to the United States.

RETWEETS: 4,256 FAVORITES: 1,104

12:23 AM - 1 Oct 2014



Tweet Like A Girl @TweetLikeAGirl

To everybody who is freaking out about Ebola

Facts about Ebola

- You can't get Ebola through air
- You can't get Ebola through water
- You can't get Ebola through food

You can only get Ebola from:

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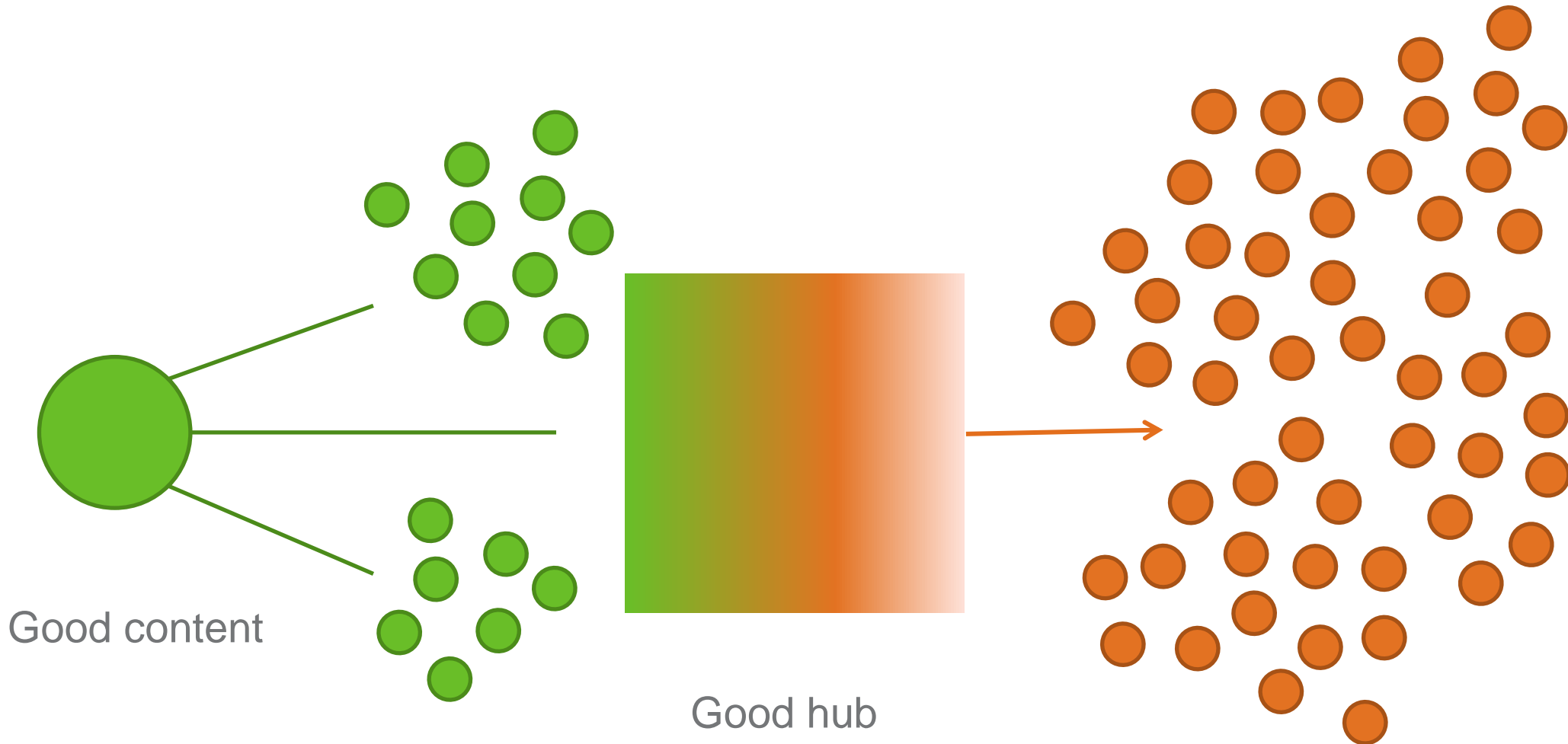
Ebola poses no significant risk to the United States.

RETWEETS: 12,008 FAVORITES: 9,055

7:08 pm - 1 Oct 2014

Getting to know your hubs

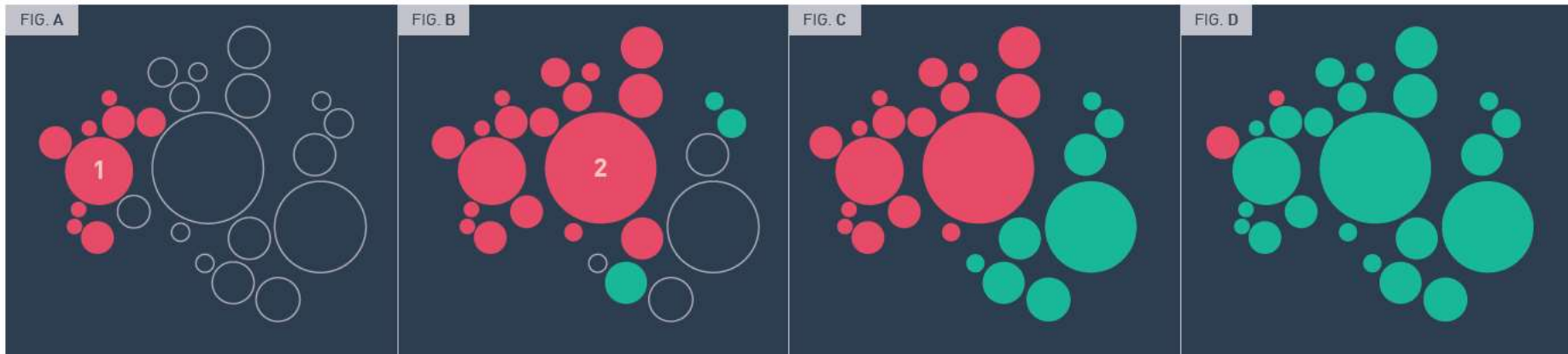
Social media royalty: content and networks



TELL ME risk communication poster

The power of social media poster

 **Case study:** How does Twitter deal with misinformation?



Misinformation



Associated Networks



Discreditors

Examples of using social media for risk communication

Twitter



Examples of using social media for risk communication

Facebook

BBC
EBOLA
COMMUNITY

BBC Ebola
Community

Like Follow Message

Timeline About Photos Likes More

PEOPLE >

8,582 likes

Invite your friends to like this Page

ABOUT >

This a platform for Members to share experiences on Ebola.
Members should Always treat other members with respect

Post Photo / Video

Write something on this Page...

BBC **EBOLA COMMUNITY** **BBC Ebola** shared a link.
5 hours ago

Volunteer Ebola health worker: 'I'm not crazy, just brave enough'

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-29965637>

Examples of using social media for risk communication

Facebook



The image shows a screenshot of the BBC Africa Facebook page. The page header features a large photo of a man in a suit holding a trophy, with the BBC Africa logo and name to the left. Below the header are navigation tabs for 'Timeline', 'About', 'Photos', 'Likes', and 'More'. On the left side, there is a 'PEOPLE' section with a red circle around the text '1,419,059 likes'. Below this is an 'ABOUT' section with a right-pointing arrow. The main content area shows a post from BBC Africa, 57 minutes ago, with a text update about a minister's resignation. The post includes interaction options like 'Like · Comment · Share' and '36 Shares'. At the bottom of the post, it says '91 people like this.' and 'Top Comments'.

BBC Africa Media/News/Publishing

1,419,059 likes

BBC Africa 57 minutes ago

President Uhuru Kenyatta has fired internal security minister Joseph Ole Lenku and appointed Joseph Nkaisery as the new Internal security minister. Opposition politicians and civil societies have been calling for his resignation following a spate of terror attacks in Mandera and other parts of the country.

Like · Comment · Share 36 Shares

91 people like this. Top Comments

Communication considerations when using social media

Communication considerations when using social media

Monitoring

- Who will do the work?
- Ignore? Release counter-information? Directly rebuff?
- Privacy issues?

Communication considerations when using social media

Monitoring is local work too

NEWS

NHS issues statement after Cheltenham Ebola hoax



NHS issues statement after Cheltenham ebola hoax

First published Wednesday 29 October 2014 in News

Last updated 17:45 Wednesday 29 October 2014

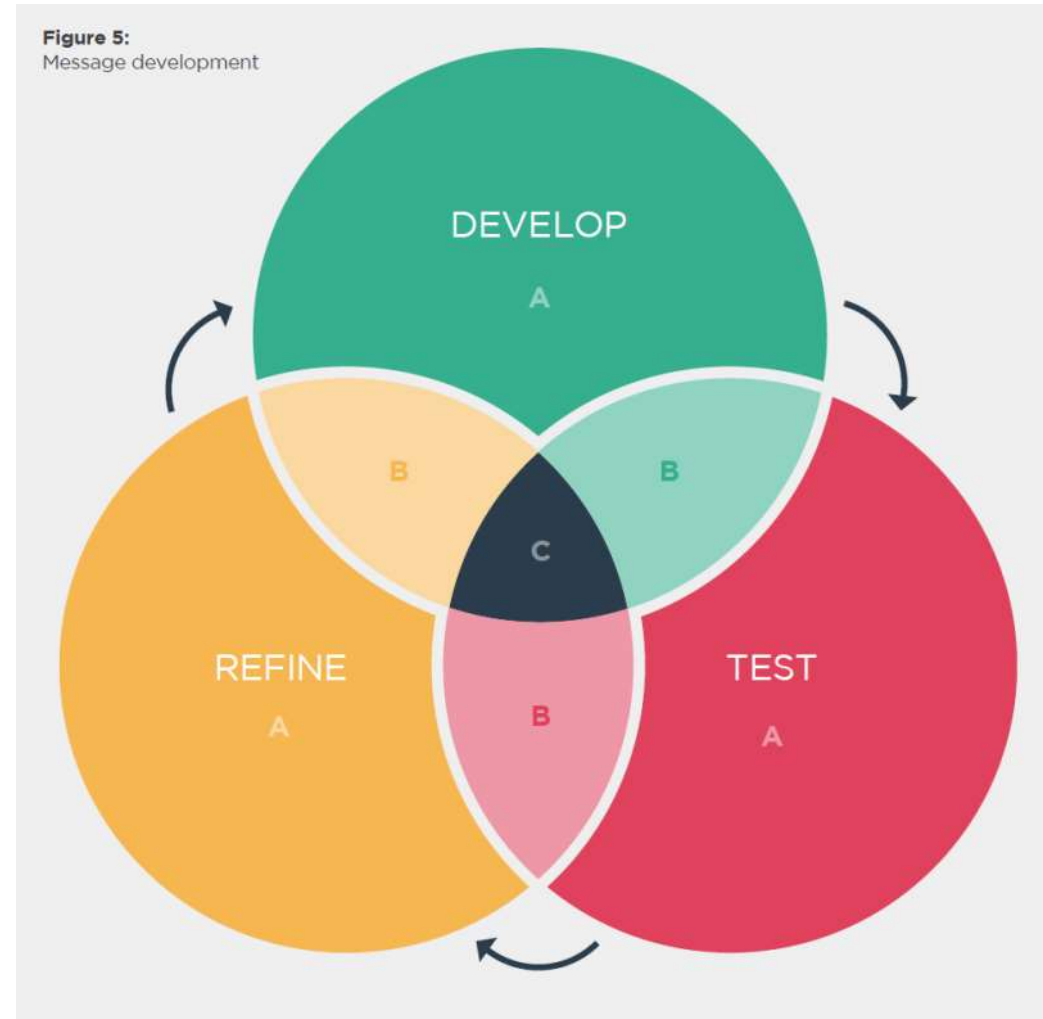
NHS bosses have issued a statement after bogus rumours have circulating on social media claiming an Ebola case had been confirmed in Cheltenham.

Stroud News
& Journal

Communication considerations when using social media

Monitoring and message development

- Monitoring feeds into this cycle



Future knowledge and skills requirements for healthcare professionals and public health staff

Future knowledge and skills requirements

Social media skills

- Monitoring (software, processes)
- Social media etiquette
- Content creation
- Working via advocacy (not top-down control)
- Network analysis
- Maintaining consistency across all platforms
- Horizon scanning
- Flexibility
- Quick fire research and decisions
- Personable online

Knowledge of the complex and interwoven nature of regional, national and international healthcare systems.

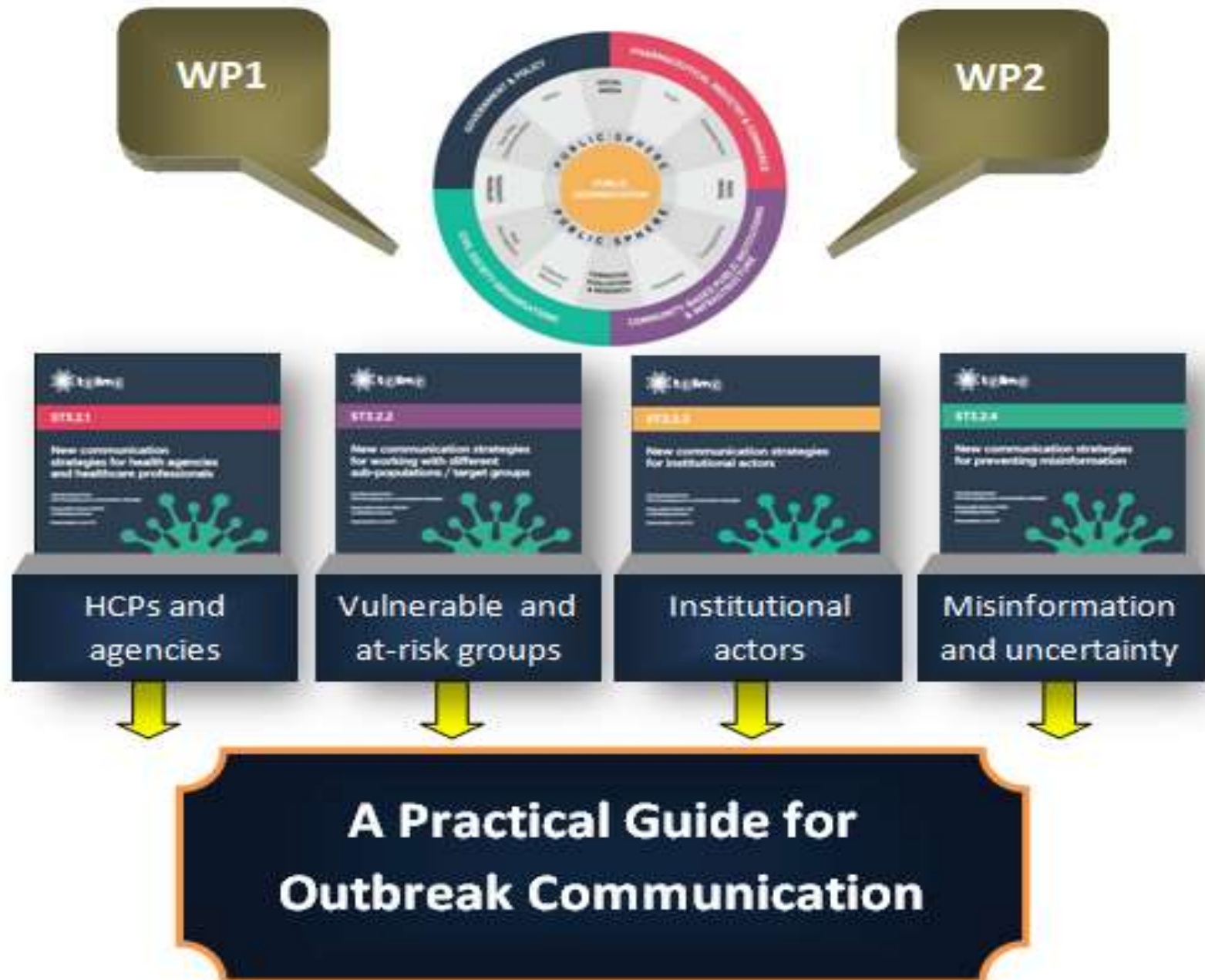
Six top tips for using social media in risk communication

Six top tips for using social media in risk communication

Top tips

1. Build a presence before an outbreak occurs.
2. Go to where your audiences are.
3. Monitor and observe what is said, shared and popular – learn from it.
4. Create excellent sharable content and an online personality.
5. Answer your audiences' questions.
6. Feed in perceptions and knowledge gained from social media to message development cycles.

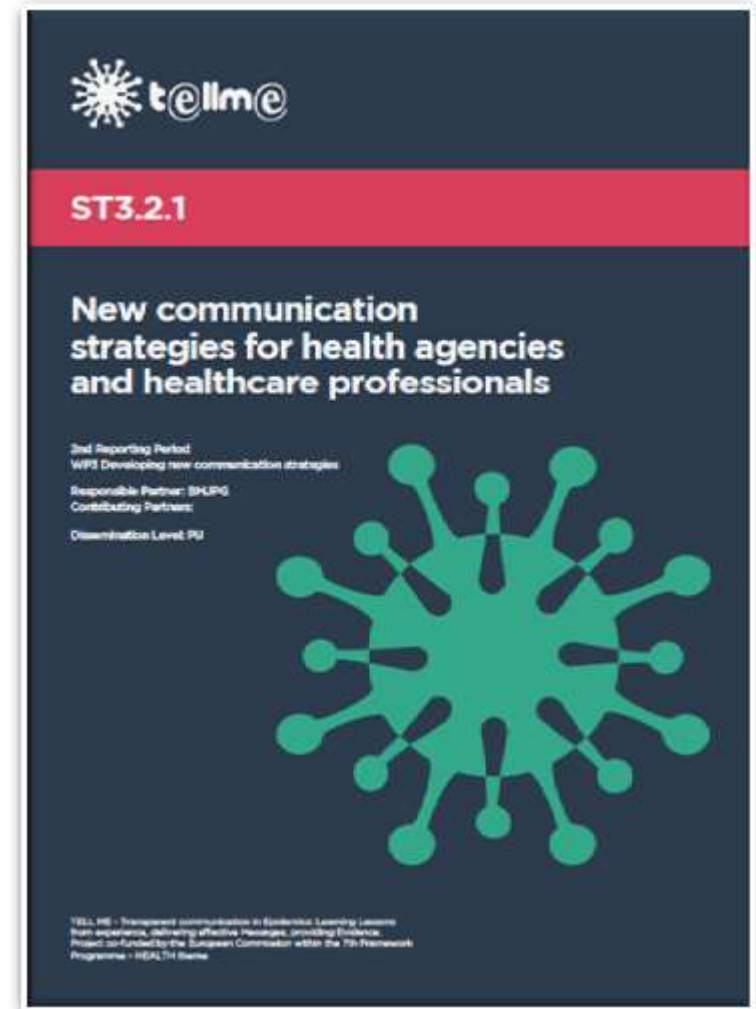
A distillation process...



Guidance document #1

Healthcare professionals and agencies

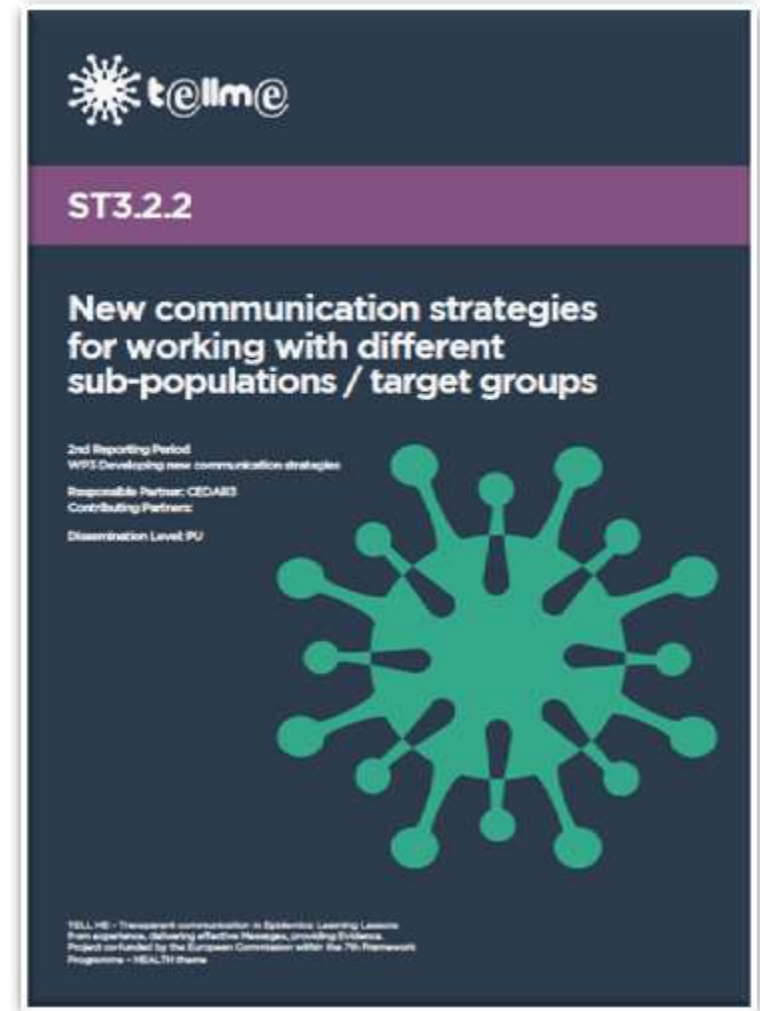
Strategies for increasing vaccine uptake among healthcare professionals and engaging with vaccine-resistant groups during infectious disease outbreaks.



Guidance document #2

At-risk groups / vulnerable populations

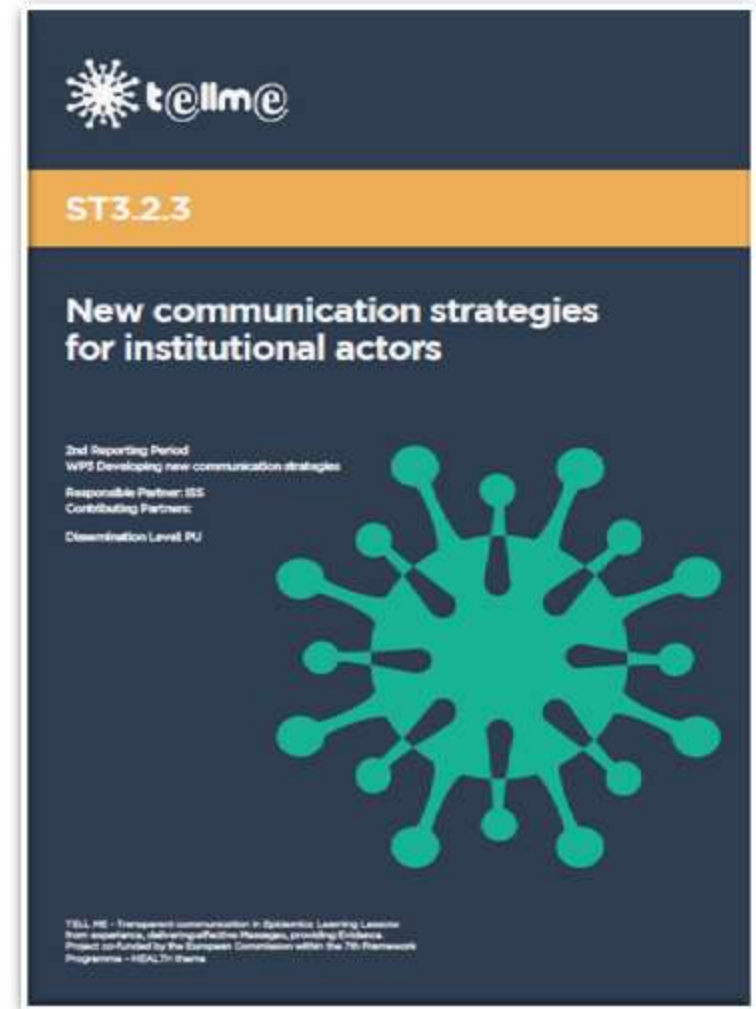
Strategies for communicating with vulnerable populations and at-risk groups recommended for immunisation in EU countries.



Guidance document #3

Institutional actors

Strategies for institutional actors to engage more effectively with populations' behavioural responses in times of an outbreak.



Guidance document #4

Misinformation and uncertainty

Strategies for preventing the emergence and spread of misinformation and rumours in the course of an outbreak.



Practical Guide for Outbreak Communication

Principal aims:

- Present communication strategies with a participatory approach in mind, building on concepts presented in the Framework Model.
- Highlight key aspects for effective risk and outbreak communications.
- Suggest communication strategies to meet different population segments' information needs in the course of an outbreak.
- Offer communication tools and templates to support the development of messages for communication of risk or achieve better compliance with suggested public health measures.

Thank You

Web: bmj.com

Twitter: [@a_double_tt](https://twitter.com/a_double_tt)

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Alexander Talbott, Dec 2014

