

MCH EPI Conference

**EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS AND TOOLS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH PROMOTION:
WORKING TO INCREASE AWARENESS OF PRAMS AND IMPROVE PROGRAM
SUSTAINABILITY**

December 8 – 11, 2008

DEMETRIUS PARKER: Good morning, everyone. Welcome to frigid Atlanta, where it's winter for the first time in a long time. I'm happy for that. My name is Demetrius. And this is Angie, of course. And Angie and I have a history together. We have been working together since 1990 --

ANGIE RYAN: A long time.

DEMETRIUS PARKER: And so and our paths seem to keep following each other. So we're happy to be able to work with Hollie and Leticia and all of you here to talk about PRAMS.

Now, I've done marketing in many different sectors. When I came to the CDC and started practicing health marketing, then that was altogether a different animal. It was a different

practice and a different approach. And I think what made it really different is the focus on science.

In the private sector, you can play around with facts and figures a little bit more and you can use anecdotal information a little more, even though research is very important. And getting to the heart of the matter, using that research is very important, data and statistics.

But in health marketing, it's absolutely crucial. It's absolutely essential. We have all of you to hold us, how old our feet to the fire and make sure that what we're saying is backed up by science. And that makes it a little bit challenging.

And it's apparent in our definition what is health marketing and we'll talk about that in a moment and we'll also talk about promoting the PRAMS program by identifying your customer, who are they. And that was a challenge for us as well. Because you have at least three distinct customers.

And each of your customers requires a different approach, a different focus, a different intention, for the communication, for the set of communication strategies.

And then the elements of success. The four Ps of marketing. Product, price, place and promotion. And then what can you do on a limited budget? All of us want to know how to get more for less.

And if you have your -- you should have your, a copy of the presentation with you if you'd like to look at that and make some notes. So health marketing is creating, communicating and delivering health information and interventions using customer-centered science-based strategies to protect and promote the health of diverse populations. And this is perfectly in alignment with the CDC's mission as well.

ANGIE RYAN: Okay. We're going to be kind of tag teaming this presentation so we can both speak to you throughout the course of our presentation. First of all, I'd like to say it's really great to be here this morning to speak to all of you.

The work you do for CDC and for your states is so critical to gaining a better understanding of maternal issues, and I just wanted to say it's really our pleasure and our honor to be here this morning to talk with you.

Now, Demetrius went over the definition of health marketing. This is actually a schematic that kind of shows the ebb and flow of information. This is actually the CDC's model for health marketing. And it focuses on the exchange of products with customers.

The CDC's products include health oriented programs and interventions that are based on science, research and evidence, and the customers include consumers of these products and can also include individuals, communities and institutions in the U.S. and across the world.

I'd like to just take a time-out and just kind of get a little scan of the room. How many of you feel that it's your responsibility to promote the PRAMS program? So that's pretty much everybody. And I'm sure that this is just one of many things that you're charged with.

For today what we'd like for you to take away, one idea that you can go back to your states and your city, who is the representative here from the one city that's in the program? Who is that? New York City? Because really when Hollie asked us to present at your meeting, we all know that resources are getting tighter and tighter. So we brain

stormed and came up with some ideas that we hope you'll be able to utilize that are virtually free of cost.

So we'll get to that a little later in the presentation. But just to get back to this diagram. The exchange of CDC products with customers can be accomplished directly or through health marketing intermediaries, such as public health organizations, state and local public health departments. Health professionals and academia.

Demetrius and I have had kind of had both feet in the commercial area of marketing as well as now in public health. So I think we bring an interesting perspective because we've lived in both sides of the street.

Like commercial marketing organizations, CDC collects valuable marketing insight and information from its customers to better inform the decisions that go into the development of CDC products. And CDC blends traditional marketing analysis, techniques and tools with health-specific approaches, audience research, formative and partner public engagement. We develop, maintain and market our products through decisions that are similar to the commercial marketing mode.

And these decisions provide the direction needed to create customer-centered or customer-centric products. Develop health communication and marketing for consumers and translate research to practice for the professional audiences.

DEMETRIUS PARKER: I'd also like to know, how many of you have communications experience? Have you practiced communications work? PR, marketing, advertising, raise your hands high. Don't be ashamed. It's a wonderful thing. Good. So most of you are programmatic folks; is that right, who have taken on communications responsibilities.

Okay. I came from the Georgia Division of Public Health, and I worked with the PRAMS program there. Is Georgia in the house? Very good. So I know that that's the case in many public health departments, that you wear so many different hats and you take on so many different roles and responsibilities that are brand new to you.

So we hope that this will serve as an undergirding for you when you go back to the office and have to do more work in communications.

So what does this mean for PRAMS? We took the health marketing model and adapted it to the PRAMS to give you a PRAMS marketing model. You can take a look at that.

First, let's look at the products. Of course, you can expand on this. Angie and I are coming to this outside of your programs so you're more intimately involved with this. You know you can add more products to this if it's required.

This is a good template for you to build out on and expand on.

So products on the CDC's PRAMS program, we're looking at the internal products and professional health oriented products. We're talking about state-specific population-based surveillance program. That's PRAMS. It provides data on maternal behaviors and experiences.

Provides data on 60 percent of U.S. births, unwanted pregnancy and contraception use. So those are your products. That's what you own and have to offer.

Now, your customers are the CDC programs, healthcare professionals, state and local health departments, and your barrage of partners.

And then on the other side we're looking at the public as your customer. And that's broken down into anyone -- this is what made it so interesting. You have so many different customers that you really do have to decide where you want to spend your money, prioritize your customers and put your efforts there and then use partnerships to kind of, to get out the other messages that you need to save money.

And then have you the individuals. You have institutions and industries, organizations and policymakers, all requiring so many different approaches.

ANGIE RYAN: Another thing I wanted to bring up that's not on the slide presentation is the importance of your brand. Brand identity is critical for the identification of all of your end users or your partners. So I strongly encourage you to become very brand sensitive so that when you have any kinds of pieces of public information, when you do press releases, whenever you do anything that communicates with your end users or your customers, be sure to brand your products.

That would include a logo, all of your contact information and your websites. It's so critical. Because when you leave, say, for example, you go to -- you're asked to be interviewed on a radio talk show. Be sure to bring a leaflet behind that gives the details of

the PRAMS program and how it can relate to that radio station in case they want to get back to you to bring you back on the air.

Be brand conscious and slap it on anything and everything that you have that goes out to any of your customers.

DEMETRIUS PARKER: I'd like to piggyback on that just a minute, Angie. It's very important. The brand, in addition to the visual part, also includes the emotional part. So you know your customer. You have research on your customer. Mostly the moms, for this particular segment of women who are about to be pregnant or who are.

So understand the emotional side of this. Even the political side, the physician side, understand what's the emotional attachment that each of your audiences has to the PRAMS program, and include that in the branding.

ANGIE RYAN: Okay. We're going to move on a little bit to talk more about promoting the PRAMS program. And here's a slide who talks about who are your customers and target audiences.

In the commercial side of marketing, most end users are referred to as customers. And in the public health world we talk about target audiences. So it's kind of an interchangeable handle.

But your primary audience is the women who recently gave birth and those that you would like to have complete the PRAMS survey, because without the data you can't create the reports that are so critical to those interested in maternal health.

So that's really your primary audience. And your secondary audience, as we see it, are those institutions or organizations that utilize the data. And that would be your healthcare professionals who treat women and children, your state and local health departments. And one really critical one is policymakers involved in public health decision making.

I did have an opportunity to look very closely at the publication that was produced that showed how the data information is used on the state level. And I noted that quite a bit of it is in the area of legislation.

So kudos to you guys. That really -- public policy, for those that I've had the opportunity to do a little work in public policy, and most people don't understand or appreciate the

importance and the value of creating relationships with your decision makers and your politicians or policymakers.

They can do a lot to help advance the PRAMS program. So I really encourage you to get to know those folks. Maybe invite them to your office or take -- put that on your to-do list for next year, to really get to know a legislator who may have particular interest in maternal health and cultivate them as a partner, because they can really be influential when it comes to any legislation that has a bearing on mothers and children.

DEMETRIUS PARKER: Absolutely. All right. So what to do, what do you want to do, what do you want them to do? You want them to complete a PRAMS survey. You want them to utilize the PRAMS data. You want them to develop policy statements. And we're talking about your audiences, the action that you want them to take.

You want to inform the policymakers. You want to encourage -- you want to educate the policymakers so that they can make better informed policy decisions. And that's a tightrope that we walk in public health as being employees with the government. We can't lobby. We can't walk into their office and say, look, that was a bad policy, you need to correct that, you need to do this, you need to do this. We can't do that.

And even inviting them to come to our office takes quite a bit of orchestration as well. And so I'd like to encourage you to get to know your government communications person inside your health department or your communications director, or the person who has as their official role and responsibility to reach out to these policymakers and educate them on the PRAMS program.

Because as Angie said so well, it's very important to have them educated on what you're doing and the challenges that are particularly relevant to their constituency. When you can go in with data and say the folks in your health district are suffering from particular diseases, and it has a burden of cost on your health district, your county or your area, and you can point that out to them, they'll listen.

Then when you can arm them or empower them with a brief card so that when they're on the floor of the Legislature they can use this card and say: Did you know, and they will educate the rest of their politic body on what PRAMS offers, the benefit that PRAM has on helping their constituents to be healthier and children to be healthier, that makes a big difference.

So we also -- you also monitor prenatal care. You want them to monitor prenatal care. You want them to inform healthcare providers and you want to track trends such as folic acid use.

ANGIE RYAN: I don't know where everyone is in their planning cycle. I know we're all on different fiscal years. But I would encourage you, when you get back to your office, look at your annual plan and make a concerted effort to insert some action items or tactics that deal with communication and marketing.

Many times folks that work in public health are so incredibly busy with other things that marketing sometimes becomes an afterthought. But I would encourage you to be more intentional and think about developing smart objectives.

You may have seen this information before, but smart objectives are smart, measurable, achievable, realistic, relevant and time specific. For example, let's say by the end of fiscal year you will have scheduled appearances on two local community talk shows and decide who does it and decide what your outcomes would be.

I imagine you work very closely with your PIOs, working in the State Health Department. Sometimes they have access to a lot of your local media representations. So don't forget to put marketing and health marketing and communications on your to do list when you're doing your annual planning, because if you don't take the time to call it out and have something on there with someone responsible for it, it's one of those things that could very well fall off your game plan. But it's so important to what you're doing.

DEMETRIUS PARKER: Now, the elements of success, the use of the four Ps, we talked about the product, price, place and promotion, that was one of the challenges I had with public health. Looking at programs and services and figuring out what those products are.

It's good that the CDC is excellent at giving definition to and transferring definitions from the private sector to the public health sector. This is what we've done in our case. A product includes in our case new behavior. We're looking at the behavior, offering you what's the target audience, what we want them to adopt. We want them to complete the PRAMS survey. We want them to use the PRAMS data to support a public health program, smoking cessation, particularly smoking cessation and pregnant women. That's how can you look at the PRAMS program. The services that you offer and then translate into a product.

Then we looked at price. Oftentimes the services we provide our customers have no price as we consider price. Money, a monetary exchange. So we have to look at an expanded way of price. What does it actually cost our customer to engage with PRAMS? And this time, in this case it involves time, effort and even getting rid of old habits.

The time to complete the PRAMS survey. The effort to obtain PRAMS data and probably it's not very much of a monetary cost in there, but sometimes you have to consider the cost of travel. That's a cost.

Maybe they already have children getting -- I see some heads nodding.

So you know there is a cost to actually getting to the office sometimes or actually filling out the form.

Place, you know, where and how the customers get, are going to get the product. This is one of the challenges I had with understanding the PRAMS program. So if you are going to work internally at the health department with other communications folks to help you promote PRAMS, do your very best to explain to them the complexity of what the PRAMS

program is, because to a communications person outside of your program, it takes a minute to understand what your products are, how you operate your programs.

So do a good job of that. And then you want to think about the locations or places, where it will be easy for the customer to access or obtain the product. That's what we mean when we talk about place.

And in your case we're talking about community-based organizations, television news programs, radio talk shows, doctors' offices and waiting rooms. And, of course, websites. And, of course, you can expand on any of these.

Then how will you promote your product. Get very creative here. And this involves marketing communication, the categories of marketing communication. It falls into two distinct categories, the personal and nonpersonal.

The personal can be reaching one person at a time. It can also be peer to peer. It's nonpersonal reaching large groups of people. This is when we bring in the mass media. And it also includes health fairs and special events and, of course, public relations.

ANGIE RYAN: This is probably why you're all at this presentation. What can you do with a limited budget? As I mentioned, money is getting tighter and tighter so we really were intentional in looking for ideas of how you can promote your program with little resources.

The first one is developing a speakers' bureau for health, civic, community, social, business, policy organizations and leverage their networks.

What we mean by that is look for opportunities in your community where you can insert yourself into the agenda of a like-minded organization. I don't know if you've ever been involved with being a member of an organization and you've been asked to recruit speakers for lunches or programs. Just a phone call sometimes, someone welcomes an opportunity to identify someone new to come in and speak to their organization, like rotary. Just so many.

Just think of in your community what organizations could really benefit from hearing about PRAMS in the work that you do. The next one is distribute prepared talking points to other relevant programs for inclusion in their presentations.

And we picked out -- there's that national calendar of health observances. Go through that and see if there are any dates that resonate with your program, such as Mothers Day. For example, on Mothers Day, you could take your PRAMS data and put together a letter to the auditor of a newspaper talking about maternal and child health and why that's important to you or your state or community. And just bring in the work that your program does and how critical it is to getting that data that nobody is out there, no one else is collecting.

So just consider that. There are lots of national health observations. Another one is January, which is right around the corner, Birth Defects Prevention Month. If you work within the context of a State Health Department, you might want to talk to the PIO and see if they're doing a press release about birth defects, prevention, and have them put in a plug for PRAMS.

Sometimes you just have to insert yourself and take advantage of the work that others are doing in the area of public relations, where you have a synergy or where you have common goals and common audiences.

DEMETRIUS PARKER: Yeah, that's a great opportunity for you. Other national commemorations (Spanish) the day of the woman. Any event that focuses on women, on families, look for creative ways to insert your communications requirements.

Market PRAMS subject matter experts. Those folks inside the health department in your organization, look for opportunities for them to go out and speak, whether it's community-based organizations, whether it's a TV or radio program that focuses on health.

Get them out there and get them some training as well while you're at it. And professional health and hospital associations, market this to their publications as well.

They're always looking for content. Market your subject matter experts across the public health and related social services spectrum. Maternal and child health, wellness clinics, university and health services, anywhere you can find a niche for yourself where someone is of like mind with your subject matter, find a way to get in there and say this is would be a great opportunity for you to expand on your topic and include some new information for your audience base.

ANGIE RYAN: This is another idea that doesn't cost a tremendous amount of money, and maybe some of you already do this, but create a tabletop display on the PRAMS program that you can use at meetings and conferences and presentations.

It's really an inexpensive way to promote your program in a visual way. So those can be amended with handouts or buttons or some way, some take-away that people who come and look at the display can go away with information on your program.

I know we have someone coming this morning to talk about the value of partnerships. But we also think that's a very critical piece to your marketing and promotion and are into partnerships.

Look for win-win relationships that could be in your local and state health departments, other voluntary organizations such as the March of Dimes.

That seems the way -- that is the way that we're now having to do -- our work is through partnerships and involving others with like-minded goals.

This is another one. Look for local employers who have high numbers of female employees. That's another area, another target audience to get to a large number of women at one time, and also approach foundations in your area that deal with health and wellness issues and see if there's any opportunity for collaboration with them and sometimes they have money, which is nice.

DEMETRIUS PARKER: You brought up the subject of visual branding, anywhere and any time you can get your name and your image in front of people, do that as much as possible. Make it top of mind of people. That's what the branding initiative is all about. Even create something for a podium so when you go speak you can put the PRAMS brand on the top of the podium. It's top of mind. Our society the U.S. is sound bite oriented, we want it quick and succinct and we want it to be visual, to be able to remember things by looking at it.

Be as popular as the Nike solution.

ANGIE RYAN: We talked a little bit about like minded organizations. If you have a website always provide that to your partner groups or ask them to provide a hyperlink on

their website to your website, vice versa. That can be a symbiotic thing there of information sharing.

I think I hit on this one, too. Use your PRAMS data to develop letters to the editor of local newspapers. And identify and cultivate a state policymaker to be the champion for the PRAMS program and communicate with them on a regular basis. Make them aware of new data and just keep them in mind, because you really need to have a champion when it comes to legislation.

So really make sure that you've identified someone and cultivate that relationship and friendship.

DEMETRIUS PARKER: Any questions?

ANGIE RYAN: I think the procedure for this morning is just to handle all the questions at the end. So if you have any, and I hope you do, just save them and we'll get to them after the next two presentations. And thank you very much.

DEMETRIUS PARKER: Thank you.

