

## Enabling New Models for Effective Health and Risk Communication (Carmel)

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### Background

Health communication has developed over the last fifty years, since health officials began to understand the increasing need for effective communication with the audience. In turn, the audience began to voice its own concerns, to become more confident and aware of its rights, and more critical of the way it is treated by the health system and its representatives.

On an everyday basis, government agencies and organizations communicate information about health and environmental risks to the public - such as epidemiological crises, new vaccinations, and health promotion issues (e.g., drinking and driving, smoking prevention, nutrition) and environment-related health topics (e.g., air pollution, climate change, genetically engineered food, and water fluoridation). Organizations do not have the theoretical and professional knowledge to communicate effectively with their audiences, and as a result, health programs and campaigns have failed due to problematic communication.

### **Bridging the Gap between Health Campaigns and Communication**

Dr. Anat Gesser-Edelsburg is founder and director of the University of Haifa's Health and Risk Communication Research Center, and head of the Department of Health Promotion at the University. She is leading a team of researchers focusing on models from risk communication theories to establish a connection between theoretical/methodological knowledge and actual programs being carried out.

The multidisciplinary Health and Risk Communication Research Center is creating an infrastructure based on scientific research, in order to inform and empower the public and to enable the development, support and implementation of programs, position papers and health and risk communication campaigns for corporations, healthcare organizations and government offices.

### Research Status

The research team is conducting activities with stakeholders to develop strategies for health and risk communication. They include workshops with public health officials (doctors, nurses) and with the public to assist in the design, planning and evaluation of health and risk communication programs and campaigns to help create effective collaboration.

Knowledge and data that the team is gathering and analyzing is being used to develop information resources and professional materials in the field of risk communication on health topics.

A key target is the development of models for risk communication in order to integrate new technological and communication channels, and cultural adaptation of those channels for community subgroups.

### **The Health and Risk Communication Research Center Website**

#### Potential Applications

Research for health and risk communication promotion campaign programs and management for government health and environment ministries, NGOs and industrial companies throughout the

world

Developing models for health and risk communication, and risk indices for risk communication  
Applications for cellular phones for health, risk and environmental communication  
Computerized systems for predicting health outbreaks and environmental hazards  
Computerized systems for health and risk communication during crisis situations  
Counseling services on health and risk communication

Contact us for further information.

Related pages

[Anat Gesser-Edelsburg, Dr.](#), Researcher page

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