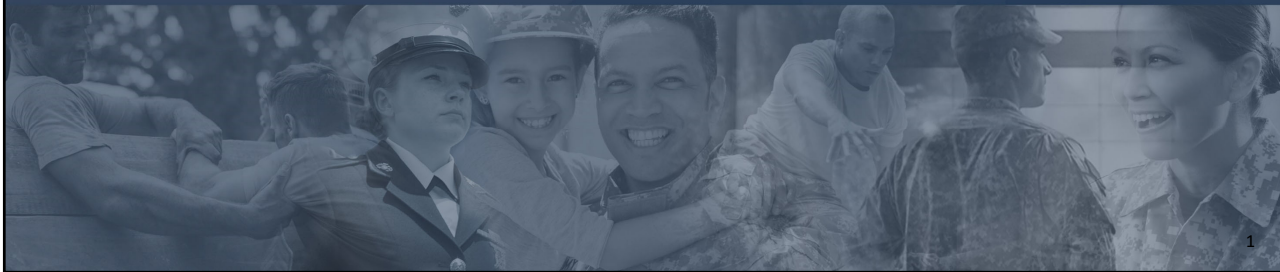


Effective Public Health Communications Strategies with Department of Defense Personnel



Wilsie Bishop, DPA
Chair, Public Health Subcommittee
June 28, 2023



Overview



- Membership
- Tasking
- Background
- Objectives and Scope
- Way Forward

Membership



CHAIR
Wilsie Bishop DPA, MPA*



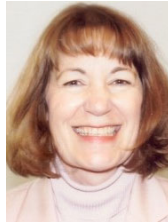
Georges Benjamin, MD



John Clements, PHD



Marion Ehrich, PhD, MS



Ruth Etzel, MD, PHD



Christopher Johnson, PHD

*Board Member

Defense Health Board

Tasking



On May 12, 2023, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs directed the Defense Health Board (DHB) to **provide recommendations on how the DoD could better deliver health information within an environment of misinformation.**

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Background



- Inaccurate information about health harms public health and undermines trust in public health professionals.
- Inaccuracies can be characterized as *misinformation* (good faith errors) and *disinformation* (intentional spread of falsehoods).
- The information landscape during the COVID-19 Pandemic was exceptionally complex and influenced by multiple factors.
- Tension between freedom of expression and protecting the public good permeates efforts to mitigate the impacts of mis- and disinformation.

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Objectives and Scope



- Identify lessons learned about DoD's vulnerabilities and capabilities in disseminating health information during the COVID pandemic.
- Review DoD/DHA policies and processes used for health communications.
- Review academic, commercial, and government research on best practices for health communications.
- Provide recommendations for how the DoD could better deliver health information within an environment of misinformation and threats to credibility.

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Emerging Themes



- Public health officials are charged with protecting the public. They operate according to specific legal authorities. Compliance is impacted by trust.
- Misinformation and disinformation are different and require different mitigation strategies.
- Scientists and the lay public may attribute different meanings to changes in public health guidance.
- It is essential to understand the social and cultural context, and the official and unofficial communication channels, to which Service members are exposed.
- Artificial Intelligence magnifies the challenges of mis- and disinformation.

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Way Forward



- June 14: Virtual Kick Off Meeting
- June 28: Introductory Brief to the DHB
- July 25: Virtual Meeting
- August 25: In-Person Meeting
- September 11-12: Tasker Update at DHB Meeting
- November 29-30: Tasker Update at DHB Meeting

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Questions

