

Cover The Uninsured Week and Beyond
Developing Effective CIC Communication Strategies

Communities in Charge Cluster Meeting
Washington, DC
November 6-7, 2002

Overview:

On November 6 and 7, 2002, *Communities in Charge* (CIC) project directors and community leaders convened in Washington, DC for the CIC cluster meeting, “***Cover The Uninsured Week and Beyond; Developing Effective CIC Communications Strategies.***” The meeting was designed in anticipation of The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s “Cover the Uninsured Week” (March 10-16, 2003), a series of grassroots events designed to draw national attention to the problem of the uninsured. The National Program Office (NPO) invited representatives from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and its partners – GMMB, a strategic communications firm; Public Opinion Strategies, a national political and public affairs research firm, and Wirthlin Worldwide, a global research firm – to clarify the goals and activities planned for Cover The Uninsured Week and discuss the marketing research and messaging tactics that were used in developing the Foundations’ Covering Kids and Covering The Uninsured campaigns.

The meeting gave CIC project directors and community leaders an opportunity to discuss CIC participation in Cover The Uninsured Week and strategies for using the week’s events to advance CIC project goals. Communities were encouraged to think about effective messaging, i.e., how to develop values-based messages to spur action from different constituencies. Presenters also introduced creative marketing strategies, tools for capturing media attention, and ways for communities to use these tactics in planning for CTUW and Beyond. Regardless of the communities’ decisions to participate in Cover The Uninsured Week, they will be able to use the messaging tactics and marketing skills to strengthen local and/or state support for their respective health coverage initiatives. In working toward project sustainability, effective communications strategies are essential.

Presentations :

This section provides a brief summary of each presentation followed by a link to the full presentation. (Adobe Reader may be needed to view the presentations). To view the full cluster meeting agenda please click [here](#).

?? Maury Giles, Senior Research Executive, Wirthlin Worldwide

From Research to Outreach: Communicating Values Based Messages. Maury Giles has conducted extensive research for The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Covering Kids Campaign. Through his research, Maury has identified the most effective messaging strategies for persuading working families to purchase low-cost or no-cost health coverage for their children. The presentation identifies the key components of an effective message and outlines research-based messaging tactics for motivating target audience.

?? Bill McInturff, Partner, Public Opinion Strategies,

Turning Questions into Answers. Bill McInturff conducted the research for The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Covering the Uninsured Campaign. The nationwide campaign, targeted at key opinion leaders, is designed to generate awareness around the extent of the uninsured problem and encourage participating organizations to find

solutions. Bill conducted focus groups in December 2001 among high-end opinion elites in order to understand attitudes about the uninsured to identify the messages that might persuade this group to support a health coverage proposal. The results of this research were used to develop the Covering The Uninsured “OR” campaign and are summarized in his presentation.

- ?? **Pearse Edwards, Vice President, GMMB**
- ?? **David Smith, Partner, GMMB**

Cover The Uninsured Week & Communities in Charge Planning & Conducting an Effective Communications Strategy for Cover The Uninsured Week

Pearse Edwards and David Smith are responsible for coordinating and managing Cover The Uninsured Week (CTUW), a series of grassroots events (March 10-16, 2003) designed to draw national attention to the problem of the uninsured and encourage organizations to find solutions. Pearse and David outline the goal of CTUW, i.e., “to provide a single rallying point for diverse groups – individuals and organizations – to voice their support seeking solutions to the problem of the uninsured.” They identified CTUW partner organizations and sponsors, laid out the structure of the week’s activities and identified multiple ways for the CIC communities to get involved in CTUW. Pearse and David encouraged CIC communities to take advantage of the heightened level of awareness that CTUW will spawn to harness support for specific, community initiatives.

- ?? **Community Spotlight**

Deborah Zahn, *Project Director, Communities in Charge – Alameda County Constructing a Communication Plan and Manipulating the Media*
Deborah Zahn spoke candidly about lessons learned from her program’s experience developing an effective, countywide communications plan. The presentation outlines steps for developing a communications plan, strategies for delivering a unified message to different target audiences, key elements of media advocacy, and suggestions for organizing a media advocacy campaign.

- ?? **Mark Marosits, Principal, Worldways Social Marketing**
Marketing on a Shoestring

Mark Marosits presented a checklist of shoestring marketing tactics that communities might use to “leverage the communications power of a limited budget.” The presentation outlines six prerequisites of shoestring marketing and enumerates several tactical strategies.

- ?? **Karen Kirchgasser, Vice President, GMMB**
Media Outreach: Tools of the Trade

Karen Kirchgasser provided more practical recommendations and tools for engaging the media in a local health coverage campaign. The presentation helps communities to understand and access the media and how to get the media’s attention. It outlines specific media outlets, lists suggestions for preparing a press list, and lays out important considerations for pitching an event.

CTUW Contact Information

Individuals and/or communities interested in learning more about Cover The Uninsured Week or
Covering The Uninsured Campaign can contact:
info@CoveringTheUninsured.org