

SARS Community Outreach

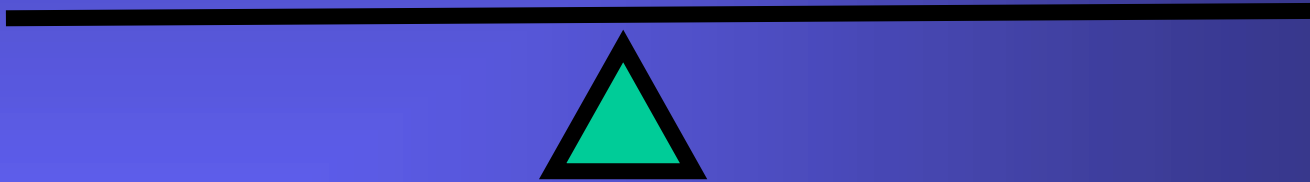
Arthur P. Liang, MD, MPH
National Center for Infectious Diseases
Centers for Disease Control & Prevention



Every medication has 2 effects. . .

1. The one you want

2. The one you don't want



Quarantine/Isolation

Limit transmission

**Individual liberties
Economic loss
Social isolation
Social Stigma...**



Quarantine/Isolation

...unintended consequences?

Limiting transmission

Maintaining transmission



e.g., HIV, leprosy



Quotations from Callers



- "Has CDC recommended staying away from Chinese markets/restaurants/etc.? That might help."
- "Is it safe to go to Niagara Falls because I know alot of Canadians go there?"



Data: Is there a problem? How big?

- **Seven discussion groups with:**
 - over 60 Key API Opinion Leaders
 - National, State Local Community Based Organizations
 - Governmental Agencies
 - Chambers of Commerce
 - Trade Associations
 - Airline and Health care workers
- **CDC Hotline**
- **HSPH Survey**



CDC Hotline Calls by Categories, April 29- May 14

N = 2111 calls

# of calls	Category of concern
2111	ALL
133	Asian business & products (e.g., grocery, restaurants, etc.)
101	Living near, work, school with Asians
58	Public Places (e.g., church, school, work, shopping/movie theaters, theme parks)
53	Being on cruise ship/airplane
28	Quarantine /close borders against Asia
12	Quarantine /close borders against Canada
12	Quarantine all suspects
7	Fear of getting SARS from healthcare worker
6	Fear/ quarantine airline workers
27	Other Fears/Stigma



Harvard School of Public Health Telephone Survey

Preliminary Results

April 11 – April 15, 2003

- **78% think being on airplane with SARS case is risk.**
- **73% think eating food that has been prepared by someone who was infected with or had been exposed to SARS**
- **45% think SARS is very easily spread**
- **32% (16% are very concerned) may get SARS during the next 12 months.**



Results:

- **Fear in general population mild to moderate**
- **Fear within API Community, HCW, Travel industry**
- **Risk? Transmission? Prevention practice?**
- **Look to public health to provide leadership and coordination**



What to do?

Health problem: SARS

- Public health strategies to control disease
- Early recognition, treatment, and prevention

Control Tendency to Stigmatize

- Health education and prevention messages
- Communication to enhance compassion/reduce blame
- Dispel myths and correct perceptions of risk

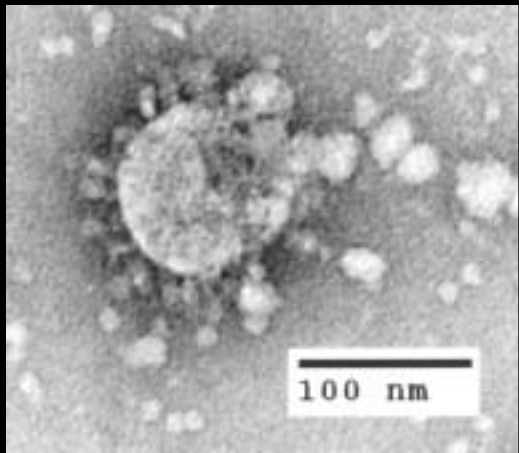
Support the Stigmatized

- Partnerships with affected populations
- Peer Support Groups
- Community Support

**Adapted from Weiss & Ramakrishna, "Stigma & Global Health," 2001*



Control Tendency to Stigmatize



The Virus

A new, severe respiratory illness has been reported worldwide.
Etiology: Coronavirus, SARS-CoV

The Behavior

“Travel from a SARS affected area & having exposure to a person infected with SARS”



Control Tendency to Stigmatize

Recommendations and Guidelines for People Who May be Affected by the SARS Outbreak.

- For individuals considering travel to areas with SARS
- For individuals who must travel to an area with SARS
- For individuals who think they might have SARS
- For family members caring for someone with SARS:
- For health-care workers
- For institutions or organizations hosting persons arriving in the US from areas with SARS
- For schools



Control Tendency to Stigmatize within API Community

- Develop simple and specific SARS prevention messages
 - *We have developed simple messages, definitions, FAQs, fact sheets, MATT articles, sample letters
- Develop translated SARS information materials in various Asian languages
 - *In-language FAQs, fact sheets, guidelines, on-line materials, translation of reports and support to other teams



Support the stigmatized groups

- Disseminate SARS information to API community through multiple and culturally appropriate channels of communication
 - *Community visits, stakeholders, listserv, panels, town hall meetings, Chinese TV program, articles
- Partner with local API CBOs to educate the community
 - *Discussion groups, community visits, information sharing
- SARS infection control and occupational teams conferenced with Clinicians and Airline workers



Balancing acts. . .

- Must be honest that understanding of the epidemic, it's nature, and cause still evolving
- “The lady doth protest too much, methinks”
 - Shakespeare’s Hamlet



Conclusion

- **Targeting versus stigmatizing**
- **Care in all communications**
- **Minority with fear out of proportion to current threat.**
- **Leading to episodes of over reaction.**
- **Public health officials, clinicians & the community must combat fear, stigma and discrimination through health education and communication.**

