

Area Public Information Specialist

Information Services

Methods current

Currently the Information Services Office is in Room 338, in Second Corridor, and where Area Public Information Specialist is headquartered. Information Services Clerk is headquartered in office of Pharmacy Branch, fifteen doors west of Information Services. Her schedule is set up to provide on-premise duties from 8:15 to 9:15 each morning with the balance of the morning working for Information Services in the Pharmacy Branch. Her afternoon is given entirely to Pharmacy activities.

Costs for these services are outlined in attached sheet.

First we will describe the various aspects of the work in their rightful order of importance to public information in Indian Health. Since the Area newsletter is something people can see (and occasionally even see their own photo in it) "Talking Leaves" becomes in the average employee and even public mind as the most important aspect of the work in Information Services. The Area newsletter is in fact the sixth most important activity and consumes about 35% of Information Services time.

1. Plan with Indian Health Area Director the areas of need of news on Indian Health. This is in order to achieve particular objectives, and also to take advantage of developing activity prior to the activity. Facts are news only if prior to or concurrent with the activity. The best about Indian Health has to be woven into what is "news" as the news develops.
2. Orientation of Key Personnel to public information responsibility in Public Health Service.
 - (a) When this is possible, each new person is given at least half an hour in which their scope of freedom in talks for public groups is emphasized; methods of clearing new materials for speeches and for professional writing; and Public Health Service's need of informed key personnel in its public information program.
 - (b) A take-home folder is provided new personnel. It is mailed to to key personnel who do not have benefit of the personal orientation. The public information folder contains simple guides to make reporting of program activities easy for busy professionals. It also contains the past year's public

information furnished by DII headquarters and by Area. This is a handy reference source for background information for talks to clubs. As news releases, news letters, and booklets are developed, the file is ready for collection of these.

- (c) Branch Chiefs, setting up conferences at Area Office for their field counterparts, include Public Information Specialist on program for a visual aid type presentation. This is designed to make coping with the press a satisfactory experience and to make the planning of public information an accepted part of their regular work activity.
3. Contact key publishers in Service Units to maintain continuity.
- (a) As new administrators arrive, Area Public Information Specialist introduces them to the newspaper people with whom they will deal. Ideally, this is done in person, but frequently by phone and by letter.
 - (b) Once a year SUDs are provided a listing of their key newspapers with names of publishers and reporters and free-lance writers. (This list is also used for two-way check for continuity)
 - (c) Area Public Information Specialist attends three annual meetings with Oklahoma Press Association. One is usually a mid-winter clinic in Oklahoma City; one a public affairs roundup at one of the State Lodges; and one during Press Day at Oklahoma State Fair in September.
4. Promote Service Unit news of value to newspapers
- (a) Above described in-service education program (through orientation, conference presentation, and field visits) makes it possible for Service Unit personnel to function on their own. Clippings of newspaper publicity are sent Information Services for reporting newspaper response to headquarters.
 - (b) Upon request, Area Public Information Specialist, appears on Service Unit Staff programs to explain simple ways to make news and to report Indian Health through program activities.
5. Provide Area-wide and Oklahoma news to 250 key publishers and radio stations.
- (a) An average of two good news stories develops each month. An average release nets ten good clippings. These are studied for patterns of interest as this varies with different programs.

- (b) More important to PHS than the ten clippings is prompt distribution of copies of news releases to administration, branch chiefs, and key personnel in Service Units. Copy serves as a valuable aid in case newspaper rewrite misrepresents DIN. If prompt enough, the copy gives SUD an opportunity to call the local newspaper in case he has a good news angle to include with Area's story. A local name makes the Area story more valuable to the newspaper. These reference copies are used by Service Unit and Area personnel when they give talks to organizations.
 - (c) Some stories are of promotional value and sent officials of Indian tribes. For instance, recent release of Ponca-Otoe cooperation in furnishing clinic space and utilities while PHS provides dental equipment, supplies and personnel at White Eagle in the Pawnee Service Unit. This is a story which should have gone to tribal leaders with the announcement of the appointment of Calvin Seamen as Executive Officer. It illustrates concretely how Indian tribes may participate, not only in planning, but in support of PHS materially.
6. Provide Area Administration with its own dramatic communications media to Indian tribal organizations; officials of cooperating Federal, State and local agencies; and interested PHS personnel.
- (a) For ten years "Talking Leaves" has served as this media. (Objectives for this newsletter are the same as for all public information. They follow in separate sheet.)
 - (b) As a courtesy "Talking Leaves" should be sent to key publishers as "inside-the-agency" background information on policies, objectives, progress, etc. Such inside comprehension of Indian Health makes the news copy they receive relevant, credible, and therefore valuable to them.
7. Plan with Chief, Office of Tribal Affairs, ways to show Indian leaders how to make the most of DIN public information to inform their people.
- (a) More planned sharing of the copy received.
 - (b) Better the distribution of "Talking Leaves" through churches. (Currently Dr. B. Frank Belvin, Choctaw missionary to the Creeks and Seminoles, a high official in the Baptist Church organization, has requested 60 copies for the ministers of Indian congregations in Oklahoma. If this request is granted, there are two other organizations -- Methodist and Presbyterian

who will want the same extension of Indian Health information. Area Public Information Specialist has recommended for ten years that public information be extended in this manner.)

- (c) Plan cooperative news. Some DIN stories are best released by an Indian leader involved in the cooperative endeavor. The news is written with him, and distribution made for him.
 - (d) Elected statesmen. It must be realized that the same courtesy should be extended Congressmen, whether Indian or not, when Indian affairs involves their constituents in serious manner. However, these people also need to be taught how to work with an agency. This is a field which needs more careful study, for it borders on lobbying. The Area Public Information Specialist should always be consulted on such matters. The offer to the Congressman will go through proper headquarters liaison. If necessary, the Congressman may then contact the Indian Health Area Director or his Public Information Specialist.
8. Plan with Service Unit Directors and Branch Chiefs ways for staff and counterparts to make the most of each public information offering.
- (a) Area and headquarters publications make good visual aids and can be used with exhibits, in talks.
 - (b) Professional magazines and alumni publications appreciate receiving them in connection with the particular person involved, and such use of publications is good recruitment procedure.