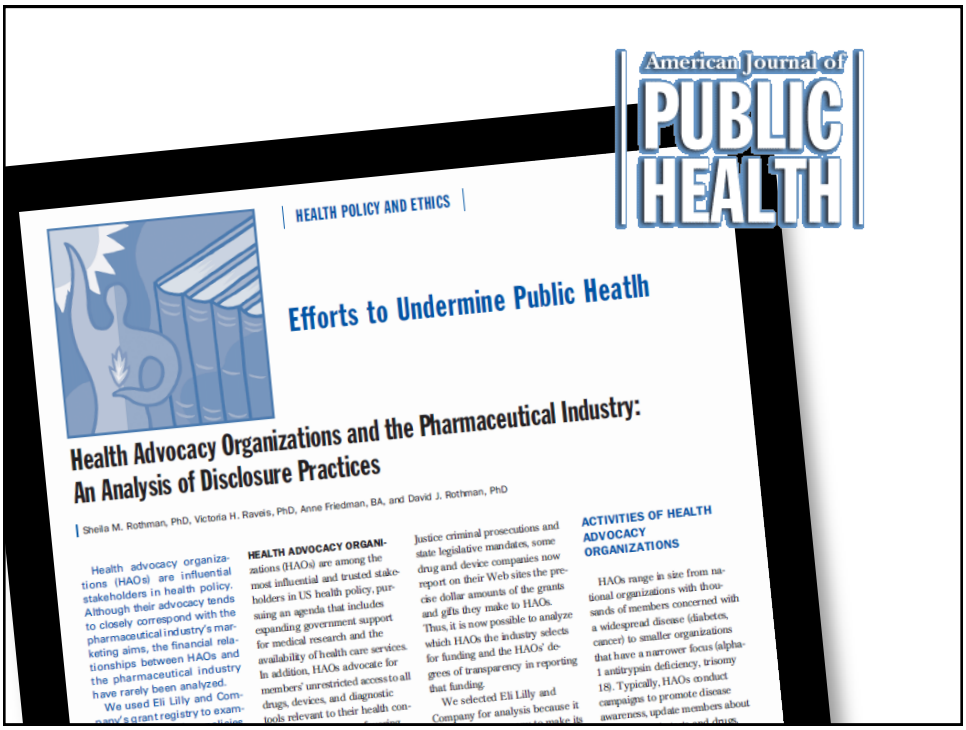
NATIONAL HEALTH COUNCIL

SPECTRUM

Where health, science and communications meet

How to prepare for a

Media Crisis



American Journal of PUBLIC HEALTH

HEALTH POLICY AND ETHICS

Efforts to Undermine Public Heatlh

Health Advocacy Organizations and the Pharmaceutical Industry: An Analysis of Disclosure Practices

Sheila M. Rothman, PhD, Victoria H. Raveis, PhD, Anne Friedman, BA, and David J. Rothman, PhD

Health advocacy organizations (HAOs) are influential stakeholders in health policy. Although their advocacy tends to closely correspond with the pharmaceutical industry's marketing aims, the financial relationships between HAOs and the pharmaceutical industry have rarely been analyzed.

We used Eli Lilly and Company's grant registry to exam-

HEALTH ADVOCACY ORGANI-zations (HAOs) are among the most influential and trusted stakeholders in US health policy, pursuing an agenda that includes expanding government support for medical research and the availability of health care services. In addition, HAOs advocate for members' unrestricted access to all drugs, devices, and diagnostic tools relevant to their health con-

Justice criminal prosecutions and state legislative mandates, some drug and device companies now report on their Web sites the precise dollar amounts of the grants and gifts they make to HAOs. Thus, it is now possible to analyze which HAOs the industry selects for funding and the HAOs' degrees of transparency in reporting that funding.

We selected Eli Lilly and Company for analysis because it

ACTIVITIES OF HEALTH ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS

HAOs range in size from national organizations with thousands of members concerned with a widespread disease (diabetes, cancer) to smaller organizations that have a narrower focus (alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency, trisomy 18). Typically, HAOs conduct campaigns to promote disease awareness, update members about

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"Since you have already been convicted by the media, I imagine we can wrap this up pretty quickly."

AJPH Issue

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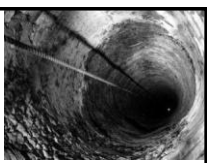
- Is it a media crisis, really?
- What's at risk?
  - Our image, reputation
  - Our funding
  - Our very being
- Health Advocacy Organizations – pharma funding transparency
  - Accusations that public health at risk, ethics & motives questioned

"Media" Crisis?



- If matters are "out of control," a crisis is perceived, real…or not
- There really is no such thing as a "media" crisis. It's a bit of a misnomer:
  1. Perception of a problem that is real, at least to some significant extent
  2. Misperception of a (non-existent or insignificant) problem
- In either case, you have a crisis, because the media perceive there may be a problem, and they are only too happy to inflame it
  - *But are you effectively addressing the problem?*

What is an organizational crisis?

- Unforeseen
  - Minor events can lead to crisis
- Threatens your viability
  - Scope, depth, complexity
- Can be acute or chronic
- Can result from issues management challenge, can escalate

Everything old is new again

– Peter Allen, Carole Bayer Sager

Prince William Sound, March 24, 1989

Gulf of Mexico, April 20, 2010

Cause & Prevention

Contributing Factors

- Poor supervision
- Poor information-sharing
- Non-working technology
- Operator errors, mistakes
- Dated equipment
- Unplanned deviation from normal practice
- Overworked personnel
- Inadequate resources to fix problem

Prevent/Manage

- Consistent, strong leadership
- Listen, communicate well
- Maintain, upgrade systems
- Proactive training
- Invest in technology, innovate
- Protocols for anything
- Adequate staff
- Adequate resources

Keys To Preventing Crises

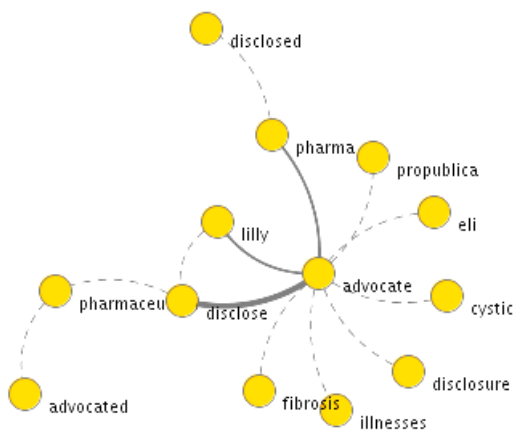
- Listen well, anticipate potential problems
- Know and dialog with your all stakeholders
- Evolve your organization, people and strategies to prepare for and stem crises
- Look at big picture: Does the potential or evolving crisis present an opportunity?
- Find the facts
- Pool and apply adequate resources
- Act early, with effective responses or outreach

What's The HAO Buzz?

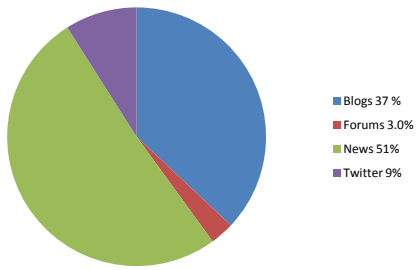
HAO Word Cloud OK, But Vulnerable

Affordable health care nurses **grass roots health advocacy** state consumer health advocates conduct advocacy community health Health Lobby Groups Mum Health Research critical health care coverage Public Health Mental Health Awareness Week **health care policy issues** Mental Health Services Administration **home health care practices** Health Education largest mental health advocacy organizations Health Insurance Providers America's Health Insurance Plans Health Reform Implementation Board Diabetes Health Health Association Tucker Health Care **national mental health groups** **health care justice work** health people new health care law firms fund health advocacy groups Health Insurance Program affordable health care managers **mental health care system** **national health care reform** **statewide consumer health advocacy**

Conversations Surrounding "Health Advocacy Organizations" in past 6 months



Lack Of "In-The-Moment" Talk



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Author: thenewschoolnyc

Key to Successful Management

- Balance multiple stakeholder interests
- Focus on the long-term while dealing with the near-term
- Focus on impact (internal, external), not cause
- Involve and engage top-level executives, active participation

For NHC Members on AJPH or *any* issue

- Listening?
- If you're totally surprised, you probably haven't been listening
- Is it real?
  - Yes…
  - No…
- *Any* issue is an opportunity

HAO Crisis Prevention/Management Worksheet

- ❑ How are you and your organization listening?
  - ➢ Expect the unexpected…install "listening device"
- ❑ Strategic communications plan in place?
  - ➢ Does it support your organizational objectives?
  - ➢ Does it include crisis component?
    - – Is your core team pre-selected and prepared?
  - ➢ Are your spokespersons trained and available?
  - ➢ Does the plan include your key messages?
- ❑ Take advantage of the opportunity presented
  - ➢ Inform, defuse, persuade, recruit

☑ **Achieve your health advocacy mission!**

Thank you!

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