

# How We Communicate Matters: CDC's Project Firstline Uses Formative Research to Inform Accessible Educational Resources for a Diverse Healthcare Workforce

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## Abstract

To address longstanding gaps in infection control knowledge and practice in healthcare settings, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) launched Project Firstline (PFL), a national training and education collaborative. PFL works with a diverse partner network that includes national organizations, academic institutions and state and local health departments to develop training products and programming that empower and enable healthcare workers to think critically about infection control so they can protect patients, their families, and themselves.

## Objectives

- Describe elements of PFL's formative research methods, the resulting educational resources, and the audience impact of these efforts.
- Explain how formative research can help build successful infection control educational resources tailored to healthcare workers' learning needs and preferences.
- Identify strategies for conducting meaningful research to create effective infection control resources and dissemination channels.

## Study Design

Through multiple rounds of formative research beginning in February 2021, PFL engaged with nurses, allied health workers, and environmental service technicians to learn how to effectively target, reach, and educate on infection control. Research activities included focus groups and in-depth interviews and were divided by audience characteristics, including professional role and language spoken. This data was utilized to inform product development and channel distribution strategies.

## Results

PFL developed innovative and accessible resources, in multiple languages, that are engaging and aligned with healthcare workers' preferred learning formats, including:

- printable job aids and posters
- short explainer videos
- training toolkits
- interactive scenarios
- educational web and social media content

As of May 2023, PFL and its partners had:

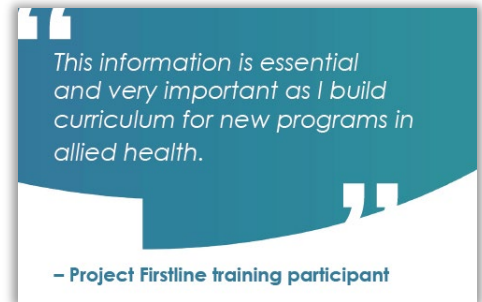
- Developed more than 900 resources, including those translated into Spanish and Asian languages.
- Hosted more than 2,300 educational events reaching approximately 153,000 healthcare workers, with 23% of public health partner trainings occurring in Spanish.
- Received more than 1.4 million website views and 116 million impressions through organic and paid digital media, including syndication in major Spanish-language news outlets such as the LA Times (En Español).

*\*The findings and conclusions are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the Department of Health and Human Services*



## Conclusion

The formative research conducted by PFL is an essential first step in providing frontline healthcare workers with the information and resources they need to practice infection control consistently and effectively. Using these research findings aided in the development of educational and communication resources that are tailored for a diverse healthcare workforce. The resources are engaging, grounded in infection control science, culturally and linguistically appropriate, and built upon lived experiences. As a result, they can be easily integrated into the busy workday and delivered through a variety of trusted mediums and platforms to reach frontline healthcare workers with critical infection control information.



## Disclosures

This study has no disclosures to mention.

## References

No applicable references.