MESSAGE MAPPING
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SAMPLE MESSAGE MAP – SMALLPOX (WITH KEYWORDS IN ITALICS)

Stakeholder: Public
Question or Concern: How contagious is smallpox?

Key Message 1	Key Message 2	Key Message 3
Smallpox *spreads slowly* compared to other diseases.	**The slow spread of smallpox allows *time to find* those Infected.**	**People infected with smallpox *can be vaccinated* to prevent illness.**
Supporting Information 1-1	**Supporting Information 2-1**	**Supporting Information 3-1**
People are only infectious when the rash appears.	The time period before smallpox symptoms appear is 10–14 days	People who have never been vaccinated are the most important to vaccinate.
Supporting Information 1-2	**Supporting Information t 2-2**	**Supporting Information 3-2**
Smallpox typically requires hours of face-to-face contact.	Resources are available for Finding people who may have become infected with smallpox.	Adults who were vaccinated for smallpox as children may still have some immunity.
Supporting Information 1-3	**Supporting Information 2-3**	**Supporting Information 3-3**
There are no smallpox carriers without symptoms.	Finding people who have been exposed to smallpox and vaccinating them has proved successful in the past.	Adequate smallpox vaccine is on hand.

Nine Principles of Message Mapping

1) Limiting the number of key messages to a maximum of three using no more than 9 seconds or 27 words to express the necessary information.
2) Constructing messages that can be easily understood by an adult with a 6th to 8th grade education. This can be tested using the "readability" utility contained in a number of word-processing programs.
3) Adhering to the "primacy/recency" or "first/last" principle. This principle states that the most important messages should occupy the first and last position in a list.
4) Citing third parties or sources that would be perceived as credible by the receiving audience.

5) Providing a preamble to the message map that indicates genuine empathy, listening, caring and compassion – crucial factors in establishing trust in high-concern, high-stress situations.
6) Using graphics, visual aids, analogies and narratives (such as personal stories) can increase an individual's ability to hear, understand and recall a message by more than 50%.
7) Constructing messages while recognizing the dominant role of negative thinking in high-concern situations. Examples include: avoiding unnecessary, indefensible or non-productive uses of absolutes, and of the words "no", "not", "never", "nothing" and "none"; balancing or countering a negative key message with positive, constructive or solution-oriented key messages; and providing three or more positive points to counter a single negative point or bad news.
8) Presenting the full message map using the repetitive structure found in the "Tell me, Tell me more, Tell me again model" (the "Triple T Model"):
Tell people the information in summary form (i.e., the three key messages; Tell them more (i.e., the supporting information); and Tell people again what was told in summary form (i.e., repeat the three key messages).

9) Developing key messages and supporting information that address important risk perception, outrage and fear factors such as trust, benefits, control, voluntariness, dread, fairness, reversibility, catastrophic potential, effects on children, morality, origin and familiarity.