

Mapping communications capacity in Greater Minnesota: Lessons and Discussion

Partners in Public Health Conference
November 13-15, 2024



Meet MDH's rural communications team

Rural communications specialists

- Part of the MDH's communications team.
- New roles created in 2023 to advise, assist, and support MDH in reaching and working with people in Greater Minnesota.
- Support capacity building with local public health and tribal health partners in Greater Minnesota.
- Strengthen Minnesota's public health infrastructure.
- Identify needs and gaps and work together to refine strategies.



**Karen
Grasmon**



Cory Couillard

Communications support/technical assistance

Current areas of support include:

- Strategic communications planning – Helping to develop/update plans, strategies, and activities.
- Communications and community outreach through strengthening coordination mechanisms and partnerships.
- Contributing to content and materials.
- Developing tools and resources.
- Conducting trainings and capacity building initiatives.



Trainings and capacity building initiatives

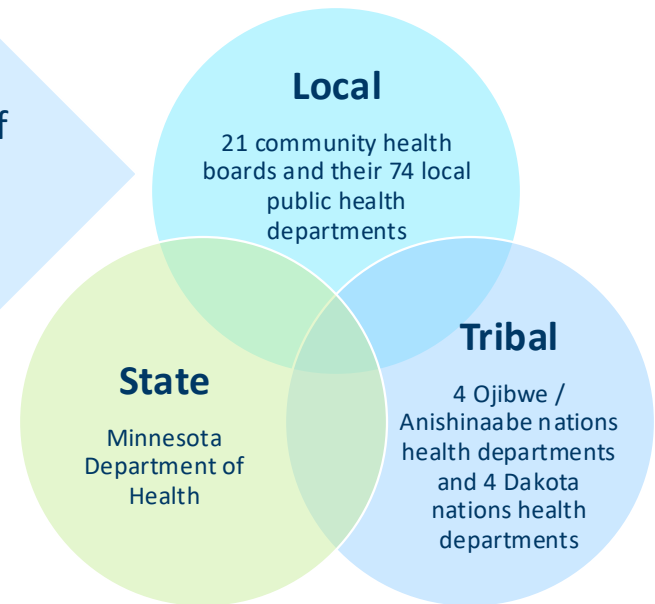
Topics include:

- Crisis and risk communications (CERC)
- Managing rumors and misinformation
- Communications and community outreach
- Effective partnerships and relationship-building
- Others upon request



Strengthening partnerships

Minnesota's community health services system relies upon a strong partnership to assure efficient delivery of services. Minnesota's Local Public Health Act outlines the shared public health responsibilities between Minnesota's state and local governments.



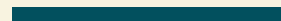
Assessment objectives

Top-line objectives

1. Understand and capture the current state of communications messengers, messages and channels available to promote public health information in Greater Minnesota.
2. Assess the current capacities of local public health (LPH), with a specific goal of mapping capacities and strengths across the public health system, broadly. Summary should specifically name challenges and opportunities for MDH to build capacity and support local communication in Greater Minnesota.
3. Recommend strategies and approaches to make progress toward addressing any identified challenges or build on identified opportunities.



Key Themes: Greater Minnesota Communications Landscape



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Methods + Sources

Literature Review

- MDH reports
- Reports on health and media communications

Media Behavior Review

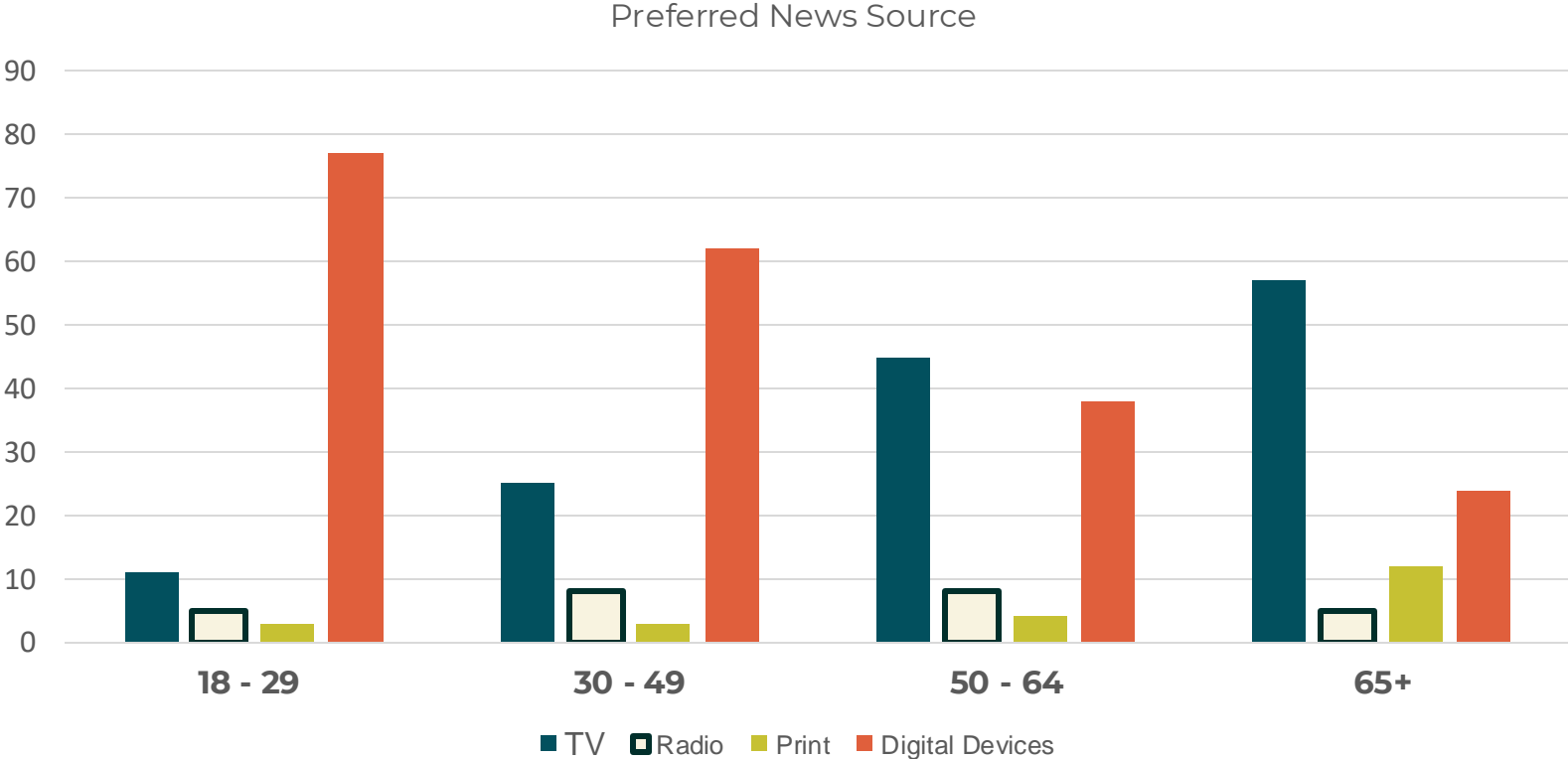
- National surveys
- Reports on media consumption

Media Outlet Mapping

- Newspapers
- Radio
- Television

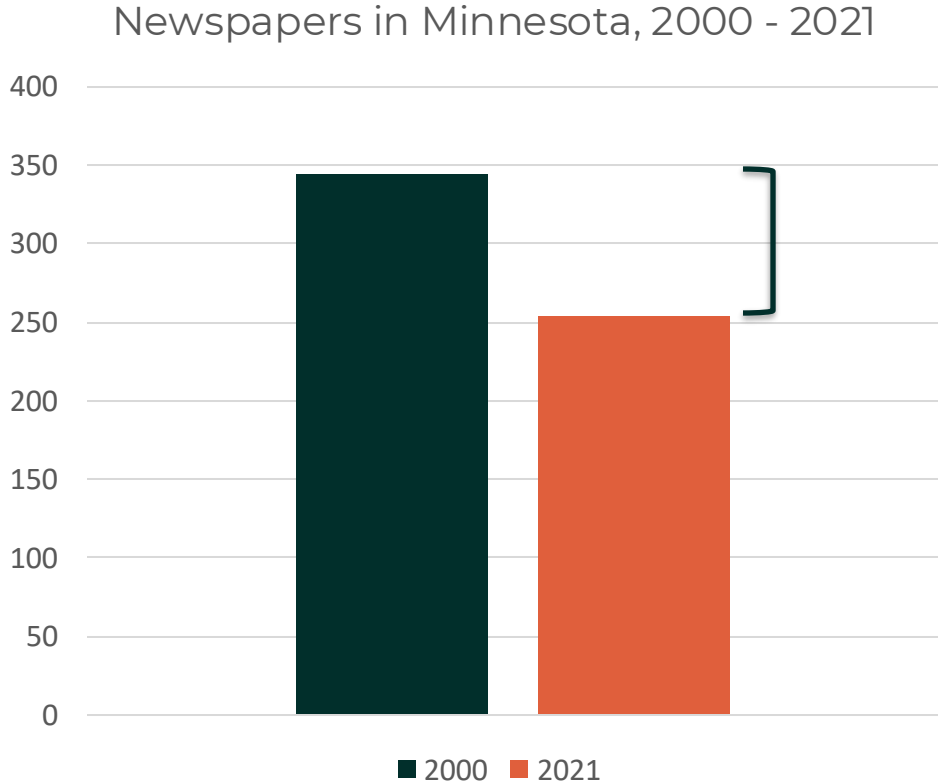
Theme 1: Communications Channels are Narrowing and Changing

Generational Divides in where and how people get information:



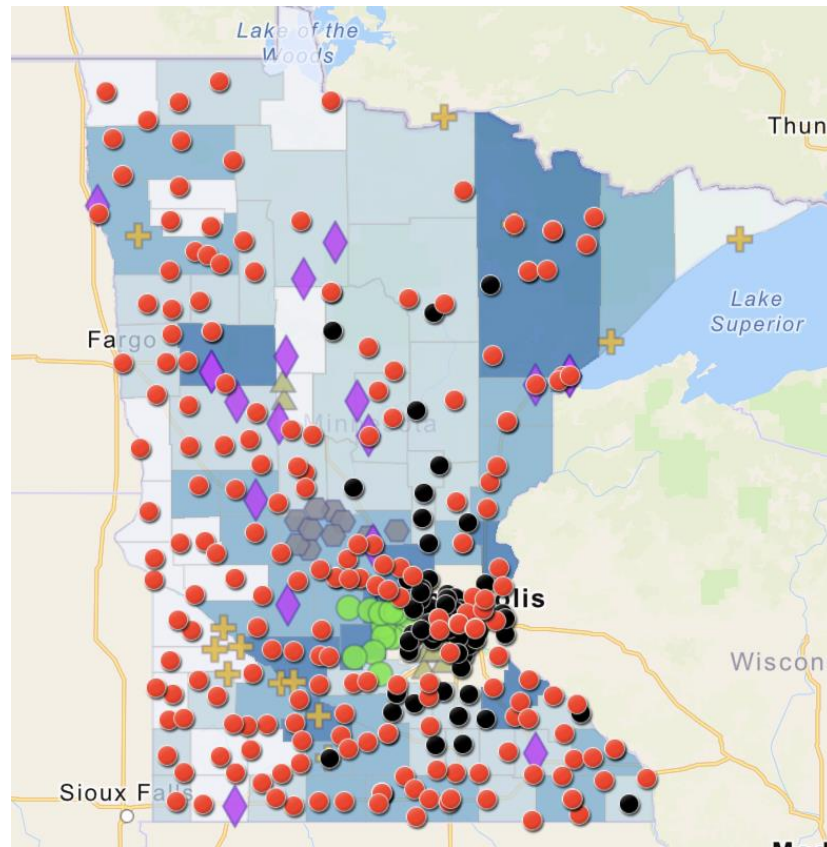
Theme 1: Communications Channels are Narrowing and Changing

Local media outlets continue to close



Theme 1: Communications Channels are Narrowing and Changing

Even where local media exists, publishers are consolidating content



Theme 1: Communications Channels are Narrowing and Changing

Other information sources are growing exponentially

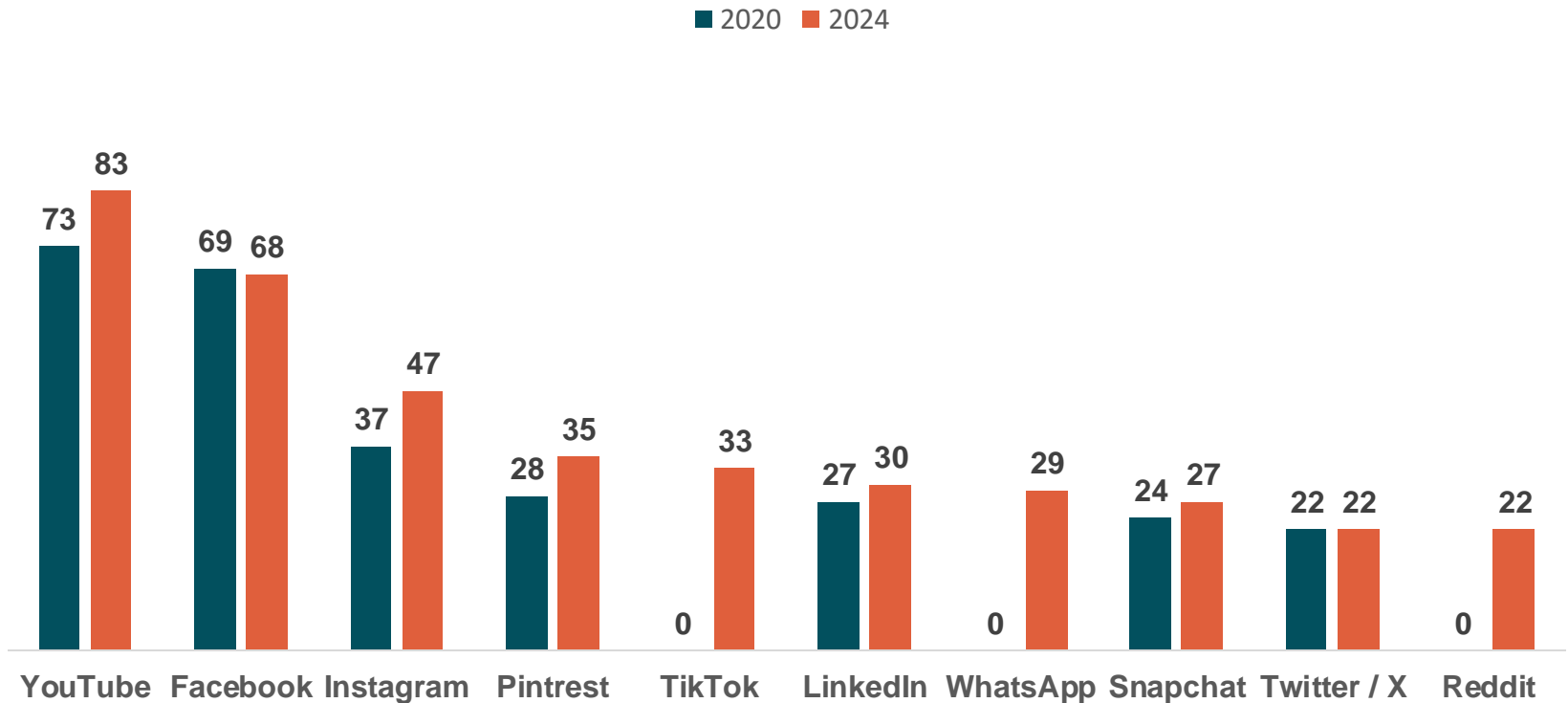


In 2010, Eric Schmidt (then CEO, Google) observed:

“Every two days, we generate as much information as we did up to 2003.”

Theme 2: Messengers and Channels are Blurring

Online, community-based and relationship-based channels are common

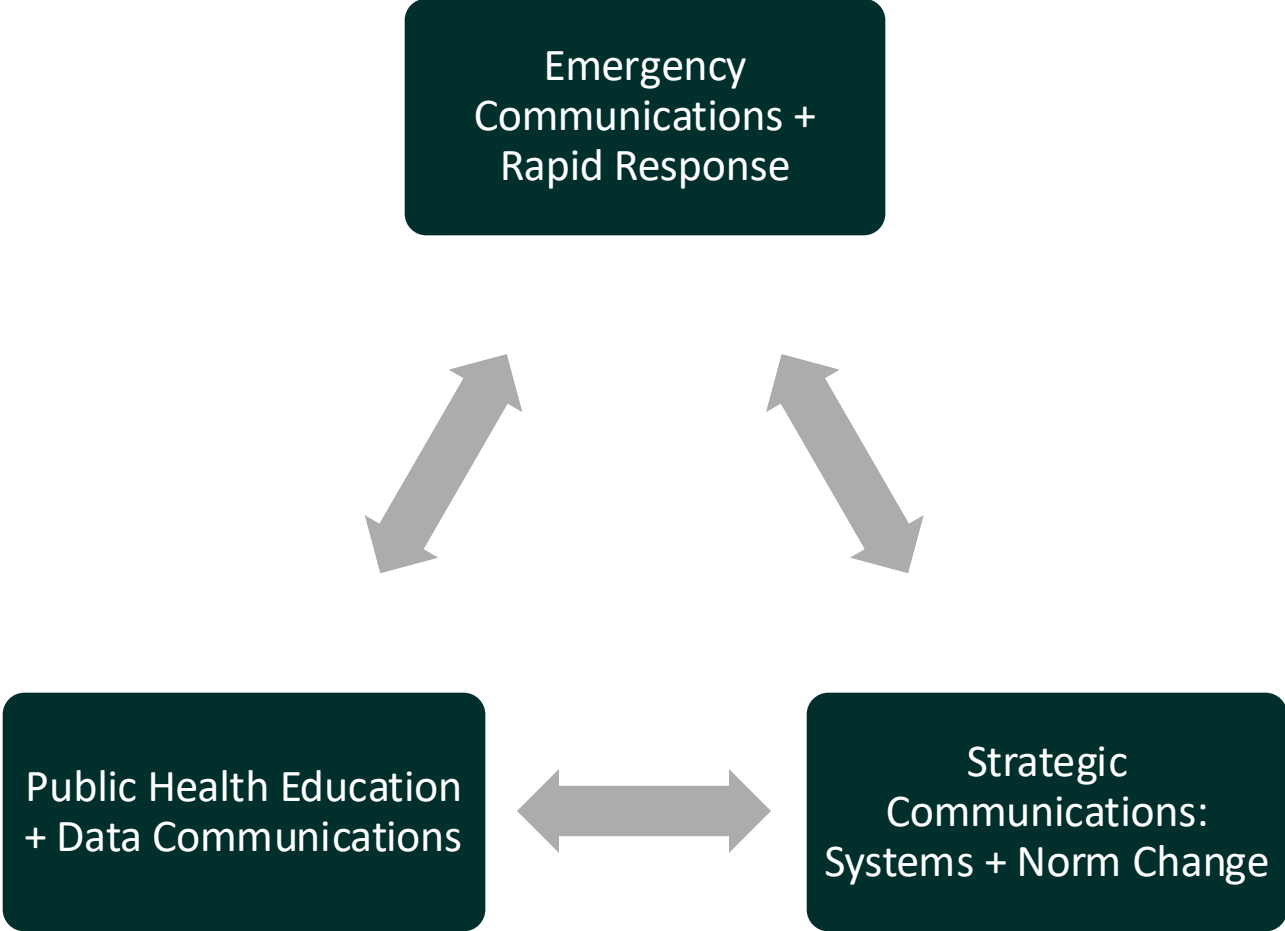


Theme 3: “Ethnic Media” has a growing reach by identity

45 outlets speak to specific racial, ethnic, or identity communities

Examples:
Access Press,
Latino American Today

Theme 4: Public Health Communications Needs to Cover an Important Range of Capacities



Theme 5: Topics Impacting Greater Minnesota Include All Types of Health Communications

Emergency Communications + Rapid Response

- H5N1
- Green algae
- Water quality

Public Health Education + Data

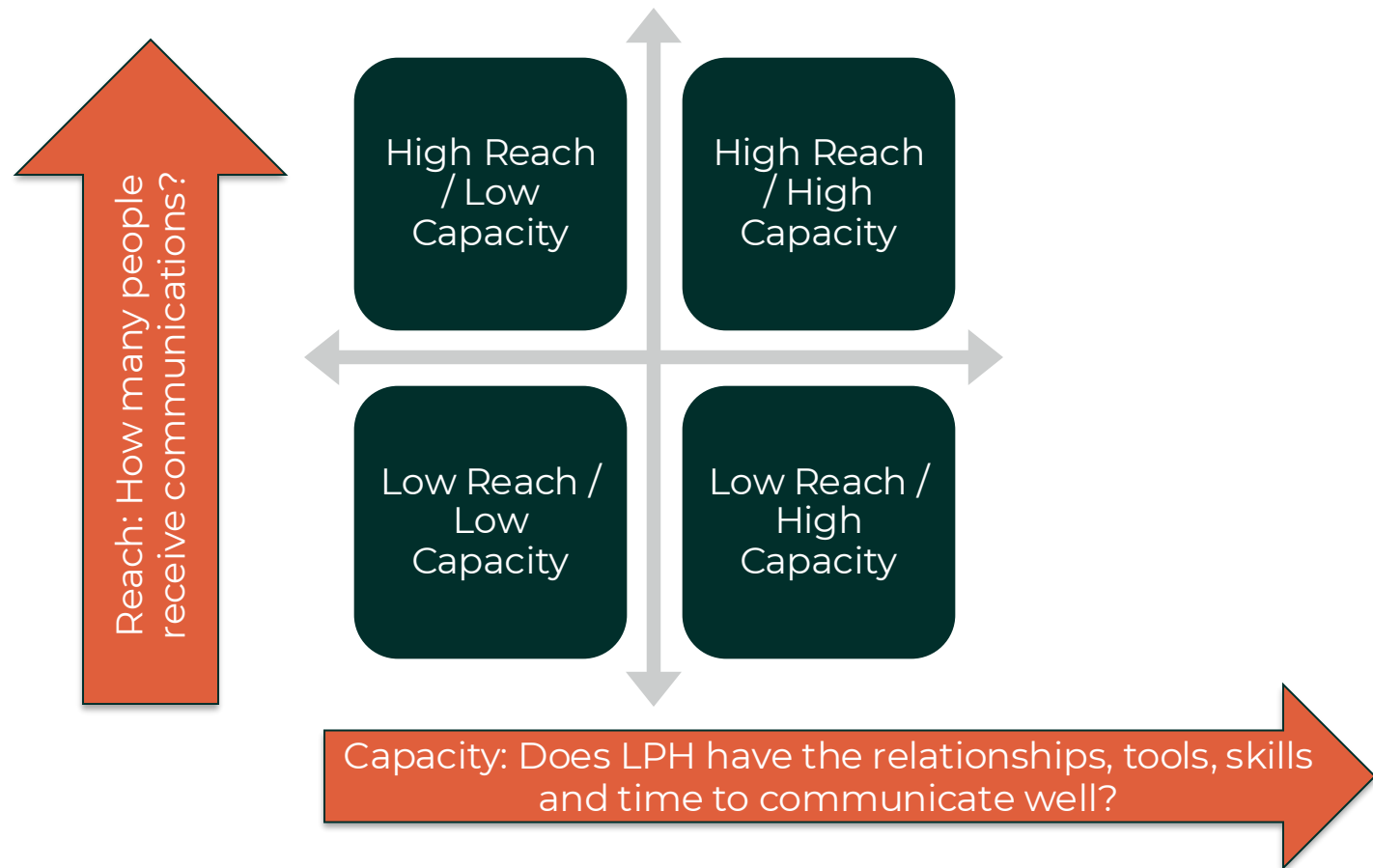
- Healthcare workforce shortage
- Mental health care provider shortages
- Diabetes education

Strategic Communications: Systems + Norm Change

- Mindfulness and mental wellbeing

Mapping Communications

A Draft Typology for Focusing Capacity-Building Support



Looking Ahead

