

## RELATED TERMS

- Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
- Sanitation
- Disease Education



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# LESSON LEARNED

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## Quarantine and Isolation: Public Awareness Campaigns

### SUMMARY

During an infectious disease outbreak, public awareness campaigns are essential for averting panic, promoting good sanitary practices, and limiting discrimination. Public health officials should improve public awareness about an epidemic by developing a strategy for communicating essential disease information and steps to protect against infection.

### DESCRIPTION

During the 2003 Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak, Singapore was one of the most heavily infected countries in Asia. To combat further spread of the disease, the Singaporean government implemented a 24-hour SARS television channel, which offered news and updates about the outbreak in all local dialects. Health officials also employed numerous educational outreach programs that targeted minority and isolated populations. These programs included multilingual posters and leaflets on food hygiene, techniques for self-diagnosis, and stories discouraging discrimination against individuals infected with the disease.

By implementing a concerted public awareness campaign, health officials in Singapore informed individuals about the SARS risk and prevention, and potentially helped limit the spread of SARS. By offering all sectors of the public a range of materials, government officials effectively promoted public safety while dissuading discrimination against groups suspected of carrying the disease.

### CITATION

- University of Louisville School of Medicine. *Quarantine and Isolation: Lessons Learned from SARS: A Report to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*. November 2003.  
([LLIS.gov ID# 9189](#))

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