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Completed Projects

SPARS Pandemic Scenario

This is a training exercise, based on a fictional scenario. It is a teaching and training resource for public health and government officials so that they can practice responses and better protect the public's health. [Read more.](#)

The Center's SPARS Pandemic exercise narrative comprises a futuristic scenario that illustrates communication dilemmas concerning medical countermeasures (MCMs) that could plausibly emerge in the not-so-distant future. Its purpose is to prompt users, both individually and in discussion with others, to imagine the dynamic and oftentimes conflicted circumstances in which communication around emergency MCM development, distribution, and uptake takes place. While engaged with a rigorous simulated health emergency, scenario readers have the opportunity to mentally "rehearse" responses while also weighing the implications of their actions. At the same time, readers have a chance to consider what potential measures implemented in today's environment might avert comparable communication dilemmas or classes of dilemmas in the future.

The self-guided exercise scenario for public health communicators and risk communication researchers covers a raft of themes and associated dilemmas in risk communications, rumor control, interagency message coordination and consistency, issue management, proactive and reactive media relations, cultural competency, and ethical concerns. To ensure that the scenario accounts for rapid technological innovation and exceeds the expectations of participants, the Center's project team gleaned information from subject matter experts, historical accounts of past medical countermeasure crises, contemporary media reports, and scholarly literature in sociology, emergency preparedness, health education, and risk and crisis communication.

The scenario is hypothetical; the infectious pathogen, medical countermeasures, characters, news media excerpts, social media posts, and government agency responses are entirely fictional.

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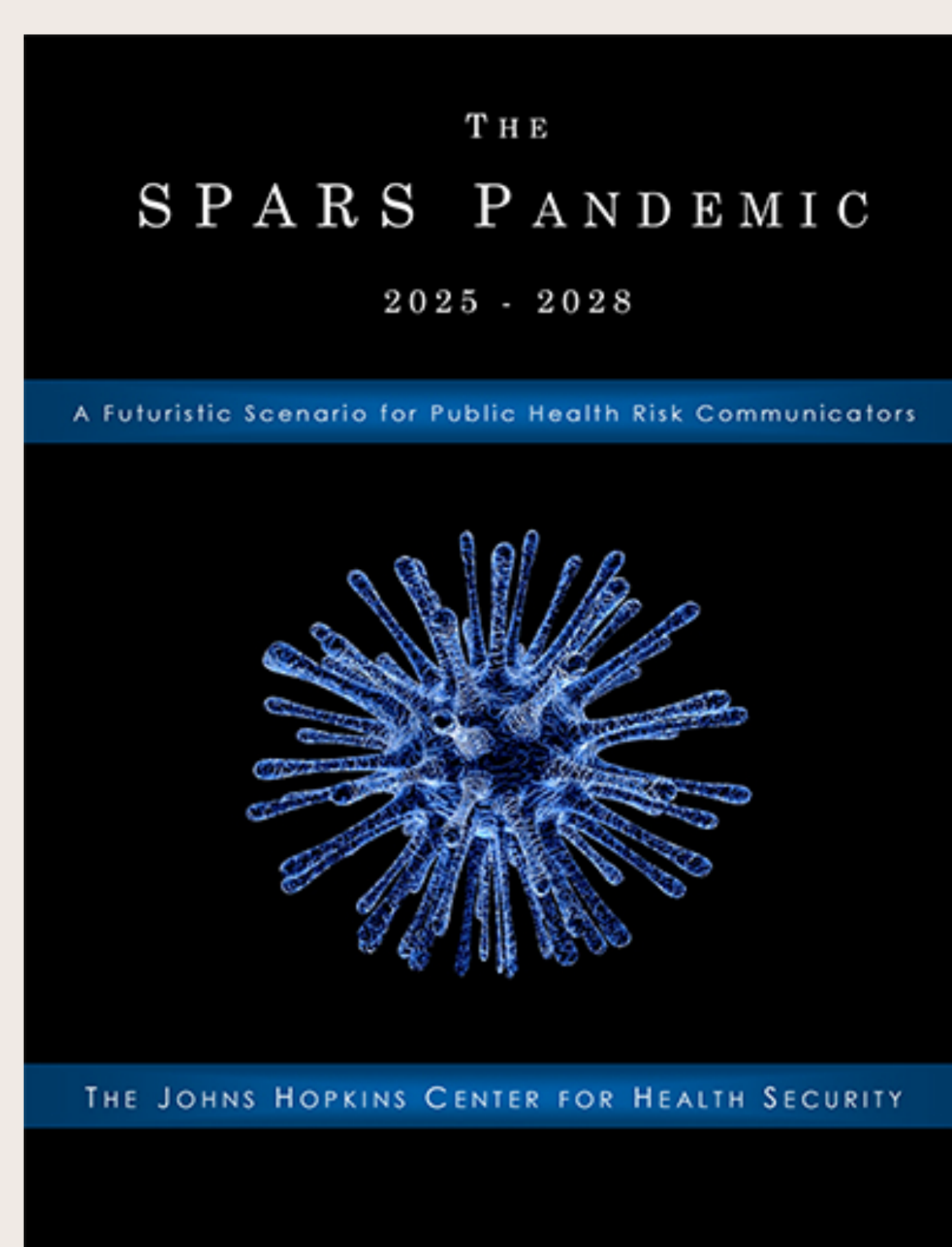
Date completed: October 2017

Resources:

- [SPARS Pandemic scenario book](#)
- [SPARS announcement from the Center](#)
- [SPARS Pandemic scenario book listing in the HHS Disaster Information Management Research Center's resource library](#)

Focus area:

Emerging Infectious Diseases and Epidemics



[SPARS Pandemic scenario book](#) (PDF)

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