

**NATIONAL CONVERSATION ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND CHEMICAL EXPOSURES
EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION WORK GROUP**

**Meeting No. 1 Summary
Teleconference
October 2, 2009**

Meeting Objectives:

- Welcome and introduce members of the Work Group
- Reach shared understanding of vision and purpose of the *National Conversation* and the Work Group's role
- Review and refine the Work Group charge
- Decide on next steps and assignments

Upcoming Meeting/Call	When & Where	Suggested Agenda Items
First in-person work group meeting	Thursday, 11.12.2009 10:00 am – 4:00 pm CDC-W Office 395 E Street, SW Suite 9100 Washington, DC	TBD via member survey

I. Action Items

Work Group Charge	Who	Completed by
1. Revise draft charge to reflect points raised on this call and distribute to full work group	Kathy Rest	Mon. 10.19.09
2. Respond to Kathy and Dana with comments on the revised charge	All members	Mon. 10.26.09

Scheduling Regular Calls	Who	Completed by
3. Contact Dana Goodson (dgoodson@resolv.org) with any recurring scheduling conflicts so she can propose an alternating monthly work group call schedule	All members	Fri. 10.23.09
4. Share proposed regular work group call schedule with group	Dana Goodson	Fri. 11.06.09

November Agenda Planning and Survey	Who	Completed by
5. Reply to Jenny Van Skiver (jvanskiver@cdc.gov) to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSVP for November 12 meeting, • request travel support, if necessary, • indicate whether you are a U.S. citizen to help with security procedures for our in-person meeting 	All members	Wed. 10.07.09
6. Create and share a survey to gather information from the group prior to our first in-person meeting	Work Group leadership team (Kathy Rest, Jana Telfer, Jenny Van Skiver, Dana Goodson)	Fri. 10.16.09
7. Provide work group with additional information on travel support and meeting logistics	Jenny Van Skiver	Fri. 10.16.09
8. Respond to survey on Work Group next steps	All members	Thurs. 10.22.09

II. Call Summary

Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review

The call commenced with brief introductory remarks by Dr. Kathleen Rest (Kathy), work group chair, who expressed delight in the group’s collective experience and breadth of knowledge. Dana Goodson, RESOLVE facilitator, provided an overview of call procedures and reviewed the conference call agenda. Members approved the agenda and participated in a round of introductions led by Dana.

Overview of *National Conversation* and the Work Group’s Role

Kathy shared the vision of the *National Conversation* and stated that the project’s purpose is to develop an action agenda that can be used to meet the public health goals outlined in the *National Conversation* overview document. She explained that each work group will propose actionable recommendations in its area of work.

A member asked how the action agenda recommendations from various work groups will be used, and who will act on them. NCEH/ATSDR project staff responded that NCEH/ATSDR has committed to moving forward on recommendations related to its own work, but recognizes that some recommendations will require action by other agencies and/or stakeholders outside of NCEH/ATSDR. NCEH/ATSDR staff noted that the *National Conversation* project has been successful in obtaining partnerships with many actors in this arena from its earliest stages; they are hopeful that partners will choose to act on recommendations relevant to their work.

A member asked if the group should start with a focus on impacted communities. Another member suggested that “protecting all communities from chemical exposure” be the first bullet point in the overall charge to the National Conversation. NCEH/ATSDR staff confirmed that addressing disproportionate health impacts from chemical exposures is a key theme throughout

the project, and noted that the Education and Communication work group and the Serving Communities work group might address many of the same concerns.

A member asked about funding and wondered whether the group should be considering resource needs as they prepare actionable recommendations. Kathy suggested the question be addressed in the context of the work group charge.

Discussion of Work Group Charge

Overview of Draft Charge and Intersection with Other Work Groups

Kathy called the group's attention to the general charge given for all work groups – specifically that each workgroup address the following questions:

- What are the major components of the U.S. approach in this area?
- What have been the major successes in this area over the last 40 years?
- What are the major shortcomings, gaps, and redundancies, and emerging priorities?
- What solutions could help improve the system?
- What can be done quickly (1-2 years)?
- What recent or ongoing initiatives might impact this area?
- Which parties can take specific action?

She suggested that the groups think about resource considerations as they recommend improvements that could be implemented in one or two years.

Kathy then reviewed the previously circulated draft charge to the Education and Communication work group, noting it falls into two “big buckets” – ensuring a well-informed public and ensuring a competent network of health care providers.

Q&A and Discussion of Key Questions on Charge

Kathy asked the group the following questions about the draft charge:

- Does the charge have the right focus?
- Is it do-able?
- Is anything missing?
- Will it result in actionable recommendations?

A member asked whether the group might expand its charge beyond “health care providers” to include “health care professionals.” Several members echoed this suggestion, and none of the members objected to this suggested change to the charge.

A member asked how much of this group's work is dependent upon the work of other project work groups. Another member commented that our group should be able to charge ahead, while staying informed about what other groups are doing.

A member suggested that the group target specific audiences instead of the public writ large in pursuit of a “well-informed public” – with a focus on those who could truly benefit from the information. These targets could include, for example local government officials, the media, teachers, consumers, workers, disproportionately burdened communities, health care professionals and providers, etc. Several members supported this idea, with one member noting the value of a more broad-based focus on the general public. A member proposed that the group identify target audiences beyond those already informed about public health and chemical exposure issues.

Final Document

In looking at the draft charge, one member suggested we “describe” the characteristics of a well-informed public rather than “define” it. Another suggested the charge be divided into three sub-groups: the public, health care professionals, and health care providers specifically. A member supported the need for a specific focus on health care providers – urging they not get lost in this discussion.

One member noted the common assumption of a uni-directional flow of information, i.e., from government or other institutions and health care professionals to the general public. This member suggested the group consider addressing information channels that flow in other directions, i.e., , from the ground up – from the public to government agencies and to the medical/environmental/public health communities. Several members endorsed the importance of this idea, and suggested we consider it as part of our charge. It was noted that at some point we will need to define “legitimate information.”

Finally, a member noted that personal stories and narratives are often the most powerful levers of change. It was suggested that there may be value in having work group members write up any personal experiences they’ve had of what worked well or poorly re: communication and education.

Next Steps and Assignments

Update on Method for Identifying Regular Conference Call Times

Dana discussed how the group might develop a schedule for conference calls. She requested all members send her any recurring scheduling conflicts so that she can identify alternating dates and times that will work best for the group.

First Meeting Logistics

Jenny Van Skiver, NCEH/ATSDR project staff, provided information on logistics for the first in-person Education and Communication work group meeting. The meeting will be held Thursday, November 12, 2009 in Washington, DC. NCEH/ATSDR does have a limited amount of funding to support work group member travel to the meeting. They are not able to fund travel for federal employees. Others are encouraged to request funding if necessary. In the event that more members request support than NCEH/ASTDR is able to fund, the NCEH/ATSDR project staff will prioritize travel support awards, starting with members representing community groups and NGOs, with industry lower down the list.

Jenny indicated that she would be contacting members following the call to confirm whether or not they will be attending the meeting and if so, whether they are requesting travel support. She explained that NCEH/ATSDR is currently putting a travel process in place for work group meetings, and members can expect to receive more information on meeting logistics by Friday, October 16.

Length of First Meeting

Dana posed the question of meeting length for the group’s November 12 meeting. Kathy suggested 10:00 am to 4:00 pm to maximize productivity while allowing for same day travel for east coast members. Several people expressed support for this timing and there were no objections to it.

Survey

Kathy stated that she would like members’ opinions on a number of issues prior to the in-person meeting. Members can expect a brief web-based survey shortly.

Wrap-Up and Adjourn

Kathy thanked members for their participation and adjourned the call.

III. Participation

Members Present

Rosemary Ahtuanguak, Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope
Alan Bookman, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
Julia Brody, Silent Spring Institute
Alison Cohen, Brown University
Diana Degen, The Cadmus Group, Inc.
Peter Dooley, Laborsafe
Elizabeth Grossman, freelance journalist
Jeffrey Jenkins, Oregon State University
Lena Jones, Jackson Roadmap to Health Equity Project
Yanna Lambrinidou, Parents for Nontoxic Alternatives
Mary Lamielle, National Center for Environmental Health Strategies
Amy Liebman, Migrant Clinicians Network
Leyla McCurdy, National Environmental Education Foundation
Karen Miller, Huntington Breast Cancer Coalition / Prevention Is The Cure, Inc.
Anne Rolfes, Louisiana Bucket Brigade
Matthew Stefanak, Mahoning County District Board of Health
John Stine, Minnesota Department of Health
John Sullivan, University of Texas Medical Branch / NIEHS Center in Environmental Toxicology
Debra Waldron, University of Iowa & Iowa Dept Public Health
Susan Waldron, Oklahoma State Dept of Health
Cynthia Warrick, Elizabeth City State University
Robert Washam, Martin County Health Department
Philip Wexler, National Institutes of Health, National Library of Medicine

Facilitation & Staff Team Members Present

Jana Telfer, NCEH/ATSDR *senior liaison*
Ben Gerhardstein, NCEH/ATSDR *project staff*
Dana Goodson, RESOLVE *facilitator*
Kathleen Rest, Union of Concerned Scientists, *chair*
Jenny Van Skiver, NCEH/ATSDR *project staff*