

**NATIONAL CONVERSATION ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND CHEMICAL EXPOSURES  
SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING WORK GROUP**

**Meeting No. 4 Summary  
Teleconference  
March 22, 2010**

**Call Objectives:**

- Provide updates and discuss subgroup activity and deliberations to date.
- Discuss how to enhance use of the shared collaborative work space and development of the draft report.
- Determine goals and outcomes for the April 22–23 *National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposures* Scientific Understanding Work Group (Scientific Understanding Work Group) meeting.
- Determine preparation for the April 22–23 Scientific Understanding Work Group meeting.
- Decide on the next steps and assignments.

<b>Upcoming Meeting</b>	<b>When and Where</b>	<b>Suggested Agenda Items</b>
Scientific Understanding Work Group in-person meeting	April 22–23, 2010 Washington, D.C.	Subgroup meeting time, review input from public engagement mechanisms and discuss draft recommendations

**I. Action Items**

<b>Wrap Up and Next Steps for Scientific Understanding Work Group</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>By When</b>
1. Send any ideas for presentations at our in-person meeting to Abby Dilley	Any work group members with ideas to share	ASAP
2. Continue work on subgroup reports and send updated drafts to Kim DeFeo	Subgroups	April 19, 2010

**II. Call Summary**

**Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review**

Kevin Teichman, Scientific Understanding Work Group chair and a staff member with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), welcomed the group. Abby Dilley, RESOLVE staff member and Scientific Understanding Work Group facilitator, reviewed the call agenda.

**Updates on the *National Conversation***

Dr. Teichman said no replacement has been named for Dr. Howard Frumkin. He noted that he has been working with Dr. Henry Falk to coordinate the federal agencies involved in the

*National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposures (National Conversation)*. He thanked members who have been using the project management site to coordinate with members of other work groups.

Ms. DeFeo reminded the group that the *National Conversation* Web dialogues are scheduled for April 5–7 and encouraged everyone to log in and participate. The Web dialogues will be a venue for people from across the country to weigh in on issues related to public health and chemical exposures.

Ms. DeFeo also urged people to call her if they have questions about using the project management site. It was suggested she give an overview of how to use the site at the upcoming in-person meeting, and Ms. DeFeo agreed.

### **Brief Updates by Subgroup Leaders**

Dr. Teichman framed the issues under discussion and asked each subgroup to provide a brief update on its work to ensure that we are on track to identify and finalize recommendations at the April meeting.

#### ***Individuals Subgroup***

Claudia Miller provided an overview of the *National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposures* Scientific Understanding Work Group Individuals Subgroup (Individuals Subgroup)'s work to date. She discussed the interests of the Individuals Subgroup and encouraged members to put their ideas into a format that answers the five questions the group has discussed. She stressed that the Scientific Understanding Work Group needs to clarify which issues pertain to the Individuals Subgroup and which to the *National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposures* Scientific Understanding Work Group Communities Subgroup (Communities Subgroup). For example, she asked if concerns about certain groups (Hispanics, women, tribes, etc.) are more appropriate for the Communities Subgroup or the Individuals Subgroup. Dr. Teichman suggested that communities that are geographically close or united by a common practice (e.g., subsistence fishing) should be considered by the Communities Subgroup. Issues like gene-environment interaction or the idea of environmental medical units should be considered by the Individuals Subgroup.

#### ***Communities Subgroup***

Doris Cellarius reported that members of the Communities Subgroup have been actively participating and are focusing on their top areas for recommendations. Some of the topics that are of most interest include vulnerable groups, communities partnering in conducting research, 5-year reviews of Superfund sites, and a trichloroethylene pollution registry. In response to a group member's question, Ms. Cellarius clarified that the Communities Subgroup should focus on developing recommendations that will contribute to the science needed to improve serving communities. Dr. Teichman agreed and noted that while communities definitely need more funding to assist them in protecting their health, this issue should fall to the *National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposures* Serving Communities Work Group.

#### ***Frameworks Subgroup***

Jeff Jacobs reported on the *National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposures* Scientific Understanding Work Group Frameworks Subgroup's (Framework Subgroup) progress. This subgroup has tried to narrow its focus to three areas: 1) the risk assessment process, 2) ATSDR and its work on public health assessments and consultations, and 3) the evaluation and regulation of chemicals (e.g., TSCA, community right to know, green chemistry, precautionary principle). The Frameworks Subgroup has discussed that risk assessment is best

used as a tool rather than an overarching paradigm and has discussed the benefits of the precautionary approach. Dr. Jacobs recognized that they are considering many policy-related ideas, thus they will work to focus in on scientific needs that could help advance policy. Dr. Teichman suggested the Frameworks Subgroup think about what research is needed to help us reduce the uncertainty that is involved in the risk assessment process. He also suggested the group focus on data gaps in information on chemicals. A member mentioned that while EPA cannot do this research directly, the agency can nominate a chemical to be studied by the National Toxicology Program. Another member mentioned the inconsistency in EPA's approach to risk assessment: some parts of EPA base risk assessment on epidemiological data and other parts on toxicological data.

### **Databases Subgroup**

Mark Buczek reported on the work of the *National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposures Scientific Understanding Work Group Databases Subgroup*. He mentioned that there is significant overlap with the *National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposures Monitoring Work Group (Monitoring Work Group)* as both groups are looking at database needs. Mr. Buczek has communicated with the *Monitoring Work Group* and learned that this group has already begun creating a list of relevant databases. He reported that the Databases Subgroup would evaluate this list, determine where gaps may exist, and proceed with making recommendations. Ms. DeFeo offered to assist with coordination between the groups.

### **Technologies Subgroup**

Jean Harry reported that the *National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposures Scientific Understanding Work Group Technologies Subgroup* will have a report ready by the April in-person meeting. It was suggested that it would be important for the Subgroup to consider the lifecycle of chemicals and green chemistry. The development of technologies to measure nanomaterials was also discussed. Dr. Teichman mentioned that much of the current focus has been on occupational exposure to nanomaterials but expressed interest in the fate and transport of nanomaterials that get into environment at large.

Dr. Teichman asked each subgroup to develop no more than five recommendations. Members discussed the benefits of coordinating with other work groups that might be working on similar topic areas. Ms. DeFeo offered to help group members connect with other work groups if that would be helpful.

### **Goals, Outcomes and Preparations for the April 22–23 Meeting**

Ms. Dilley facilitated a discussion in preparation for the upcoming in-person meeting. The work group members agreed to allot time on the agenda for the subgroups to meet face-to-face. People also requested time on the agenda for an overview of how to use the project management site. In addition, it was suggested that time be set aside to talk about which criteria to use in prioritizing the work group's recommendations. It was asked if presentations could be made at this meeting. Dr. Teichman responded that it might be possible to have short presentations on overlapping issues. The group agreed to start at 10:00 a.m. on April 22, 2010 and end between 2:00–4:00 p.m. on April 23, 2010.

### **Wrap Up and Next Steps for Work Group**

Ms. Dilley agreed to ask the group about using the project management site and solicit ideas about how to make it easier to use. People were asked to send in any additional thoughts about presentations, and Ms. Dilley said that she would send a draft agenda for the meeting soon.

### **III. Participation**

#### **Members Present**

George Alexeeff, California EPA  
Cherri Baysinger, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services  
Nancy Beck, Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine  
Frank Bove, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry  
Mark Buczek, Suprestra—Retired  
Doris Cellarius, citizen  
Bob Hamilton, Amway Corporation  
Susan Hanson, Shoshone-Bannock Tribe  
Jean Harry, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences  
Wade Hill, Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments  
Jeff Jacobs, American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine  
Kristi Jacobs, Food and Drug Administration  
Stephen Lester, Center for Health, Environment, and Justice  
Claudia Miller, University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio  
Fred Miller, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences  
Frank Mirer, Hunter College Urban Public Health Program  
Lisa Nagy, The Preventive and Environmental Health Alliance  
Richard Niemeier, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health  
Melissa Perry, Harvard University  
Stuart Schmitz, Iowa Department of Public Health  
Rich Sedlack, The Soap and Detergent Association  
Margaret Shield, Local Hazardous Waste Management Program, King County  
Russell White, American Petroleum Institute

#### **Regrets**

Richard Becker, American Chemistry Council  
Janice Chambers, Mississippi State University  
Jeff Fisher, University of Georgia  
Rebecca Head, APHA Environment Section Chair and Monroe County Health Department  
Jim Klaunig, Indiana University Center for Environmental Health  
Ed Murray, ATSDR  
Deirdre Murphy, US Environmental Protection Agency  
Megan Schwarzman, University of California, Berkeley

#### **Facilitation and Staff Team Members Present**

Kevin Teichman, Chair, EPA  
Abby Dilley, RESOLVE facilitator  
Kim DeFeo, NCEH/ATSDR staff