

**NATIONAL CONVERSATION ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND CHEMICAL EXPOSURES
POLICIES AND PRACTICES WORK GROUP**

**Meeting No. 9 Summary
Teleconference
August 24, 2010**

Call Objectives:

- Review edited draft work group report of the *National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposures* Policies and Practices Work Group (Policies and Practices Work Group)
- Plan next steps to ensure the draft report is completed by August 31, 2010

Upcoming Meeting/Call	When and Where	Suggested Agenda Items
Tenth Policies and Practices Work Group meeting	October, 2010 By teleconference Time and date TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of any public comment and feedback from the Leadership Council • Finalize workgroup report for submission to the Leadership Council by October 31, 2010.

I. Action Items

	By Whom	By When
Incorporate all indicated changes into Final Draft Work Group Report	Montrece Ransom	August 29, 2010
Submit any final language changes to Montrece for incorporation into final Draft report	Policies and Practices Work Group Members	August 29, 2010
Send information on affiliations for inclusion in the membership roster in the Final Draft Work Group Report	Policies and Practices Work Group Members	August 29, 2010
Submit final Draft Work Group Report to the Leadership Council	Abby Dilley	August 29, 2010
Schedule last Policies and Practices Work Group call	Abby Dilley	August 29, 2010

II. Meeting Summary

1) Welcome, Review of Meeting Goals, Outcomes, Ground Rules, and Agenda

Richard Jackson, Policies and Practices Work Group Chair, opened the meeting by thanking work group members for their work to date. He also noted that he thinks we have a nearly complete document that is very constructive and thoughtful. Abby Dilley, RESOLVE facilitator, reviewed the objectives and agenda for the call, and led a roll call. Ms. Dilley reminded the group that the purpose of the call is to conduct a final review of the draft work group report. The draft for review today has the most recent round of edits and comments integrated with some still outstanding and requiring further input before being resolved. She noted that Work Group members should focus on changing only content that is wrong, contradictory, or highly confusing, and that at this point we do not want to spend

time with editing. Editing of the Final Work Group Report will take place after the comments come back from the Leadership Council and the Public Comment period.

2) Discussion of Work Group Report

a. Introduction

Work group members had no substantive changes to make to the introduction section. Ms. Dilley mentioned that under *Work Group Process and Methods*, it should be noted that while the work group charge was finalized in January 2010, the work group agreed to slightly modify to better distinguish between primary and secondary prevention. This is noted with a footnote. In this same area of the draft report, it states that the report presents recommendations developed and agreed to by the full work group. Ms. Dilley pointed out that this statement is contingent upon all members “signing-on” in agreement.

Work group members discussed the term “exposure-risk control model” which is listed under *Caveats, Terms, and Definitions*, and agreed to the following definition: “This model focuses on minimizing exposures or the effects of exposures, by interventions that reduce, but do not eliminate chemicals produced, used, or disposed of in industrial and agricultural activities. The model contrasts with primary prevention which eliminates potential exposures by eliminating the problematic chemicals in production and use at the source.” Work group members agreed to ensure that the definition of “tertiary prevention” takes into consideration harm caused by historic *and/or continuing* practices.

b. Current status of issues under consideration

The work group agreed to ensure that the first sentence reads as follows:

“Fundamental to public health are the principles of primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention, with an emphasis on primary prevention—i.e. preventing and/or eliminating problems at the source before harm occurs.”

Work group members also agreed that the draft report should note that the Pollution Prevention Act of 1990 established a primary prevention preference as a matter of federal policy.

At least one work group member noted that the use of the word “fragmentation,” in the *Strengths and Weaknesses* section, sounds too much like jargon. Work group members noted that in this instance fragmentation means disaggregated authority across multiple agencies. Fragmentation is the opposite of a holistic approach as it deconstructs an issue into its separate, individual parts. The work group agreed that, while jargon should be avoided, the word is being used according to its definition, and should not be changed.

Work group members agreed to add “legal authorities” to the first sentence of the *Strengths and Weaknesses* section, per a suggestion offered by work group member Nick Ashford.

Work group members also agreed that following sentence was critically and should be included in the Executive Summary:

“The greatest strength of the current approach is that prevention is at the legislative core of public health. While there has been an overarching inability to translate that mandate into a successful regulatory regime, the fundamental principles remain in place.”

Work group members discussed the use of the term “improvement” in the following sentence:

“In the absence of a comprehensive public health approach, a patchwork of agency oversight where each agency is focused on and invested in its own specific mission, the result – which is what is now apparent – is all too often the failure to see the whole picture and to appreciate how pieces relate to each other so as to achieve real and sustainable *improvement*.”

The original word choice was ‘change,’ and work group members agreed that this is more accurate, and was a major focus of all of the Policies and Practices deliberations. The work group agreed to replace ‘improvement’ with ‘change.’

Work group members agreed that the following language should be incorporated in the Executive Summary:

“The reality is that public health principles as the foundation for regulatory action currently is neither a default condition nor statutorily driven; the implications of this are evident in the inability of current policies to protect adequately the public from exposures to hazardous chemicals on a number of fronts. The continued absence to embed primary prevention as a critical cornerstone of all public policy initiatives and regulation will remain not only a barrier to achieving the goals of agencies such as ATSDR, EPA, and others, but to assuring that Americans are truly protected from the public health impacts of *preventable* chemical exposures.”

c. Vision of a successful system

No substantive changes.

d. Action recommendations

RECOMMENDATION #1: Integrate a prevention focus into chemical regulation and practices at all levels of government to ensure the phase-out of hazardous chemicals and processes where viable, safer alternative technologies and approaches exist or could be developed.

No substantive changes.

RECOMMENDATION #2 Identify and evaluate hazards of chemicals and their potential alternatives more quickly through increased development and use of predictive toxicology methods, including, but not limited to, structure activity relationships (SARs), computational toxicology, and high-throughput test methods (HTP).

No substantive changes.

RECOMMENDATION #3: Create and support a network of government-supported centers for the development, commercialization, and diffusion of safer alternatives.

No substantive changes.

RECOMMENDATION #4: Reform the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) to facilitate prompt action to eliminate or reduce harmful exposures to toxic chemicals.

Discussion around this sentence: Existing PBT chemicals registered under TSCA should be prioritized for phase-out and replaced with proven safer substitutes.

Work group members noted that currently, TSCA does not register chemicals, but PBT characteristics, along with other factors, would clearly be important for prioritization. Work group members agreed to remove the word 'registered.'

RECOMMENDATION #5: Improve public availability and clarity of chemical information on all products through the supply chain, from initial chemical manufacturer and/or formulator to final article/ consumer product.

Work group members decided to remove reference to the National Nanotechnology Initiative. The work group also agreed to remove the following sentence:

“Amending the CPSA to require that chemicals identified by EPA as presenting a potential hazard be disclosed on consumer product labels would greatly improve the information available to consumers seeking to know what chemicals are included in the products they use.”

And, replace it with the following:

“The work group suggests that efforts be undertaken to amend consumer protection legislation to require dissemination of information to consumers on chemicals presenting potential hazards contained in consumer products.”

Work group members also noted that there is a difference between 'potential' and 'unreasonable.' Potential implies some degree of uncertainty, along with some degree of concern. 'Unreasonable' is a value judgment which some work group members find to be inappropriate in this context. Work group members agreed that the intent here is to put the consumer in a more educated position to decide whether or not the risk is reasonable or unreasonable. The group agreed to reword as follows:

“CPSA to require that chemicals that remain in sufficient quantities to be disclosed on consumer product labels...”

RECOMMENDATION #6: Improve worker protection from chemical exposures by strengthening health standards, improving hazard communication, and encouraging adoption of a chemicals management systems approach to purchasing, using, and disposing of chemicals.

Work group members agreed to add the word 'reduction' as follows:

We recommend that the 8-hour chemical exposure standard be reassessed as it is questionable this metric continues to reflect current worker exposure *reduction* opportunities.

Work group members discussed the importance of recognizing that workers must be protected at least at the same levels as others who are protected from the very same chemicals. Work group members discussed that it is demonstrable that the permissible exposure limits (PELs) and threshold limit values (TVLs) do not reflect real occupational exposures, and agreed that there should be language added that states that workers need to be protected, at the minimum, at the highest environmental standards, and that exposure standards for workers should be higher, not lower, than non-occupational settings.

RECOMMENDATION #7: Develop and implement strong chemical policy reform that will address the issues disproportionately-exposed communities face.

No substantive changes.

RECOMMENDATION #8: Use population-based biomonitoring data as a tool to set priority strategies to reduce the level of harmful environmental chemicals identified in people.

No substantive changes.

RECOMMENDATION #9: Revise ATSDR policies and procedures with a broader public health focus to more effectively investigate and address community toxic hazard exposures.

No substantive changes.

RECOMMENDATION #10: Direct resources available at ATSDR/CDC to help identify best practices, provide training and/or increased consultation for local public health improvement, broaden the scope of monitoring environmental contamination and establish a threshold that triggers appropriate public health protective actions.

No substantive changes.

RECOMMENDATION #11: Establish an independent National Superfund Task Force to advise the agencies on improving the design and implementation of Superfund site activities.

At least one work group member asked if it was intentional to leave industry out of this recommendation, noting that it seems unlikely that government agencies would initiate a stakeholder/advisory group without attempting a balance in membership. Work group members agreed to add industry as a stakeholder in the task force recommended here.

RECOMMENDATION #12: Create agency-tribal partnerships focused on population health monitoring, tribal capacity building, improved access to state and federal data sources.

No substantive changes.

RECOMMENDATION #13: Issue an Executive Order directing increased emphasis on public health principles and on coordinated health infrastructure across federal agencies.

No substantive changes.

e. Conclusion

Work group members agreed to slight language changes to clarify intent and strengthen the focus on prevention.

3) Next Steps

Dilley noted that the work group roster will accompany the report, along with names and affiliations. She noted that we would like to include the affiliations as they were at the beginning of the project – when the work groups were comprised – along with current affiliations – if they have changed, and asked that any corrections be sent to her as soon as possible. Dilley also noted that she would like to identify dates for the final Policies and Practices Work Group call. She asked that Work Group members fill out the doodle poll upon receipt.

III. Participation

Members Present:

Brenda Afzal, University of Maryland School of Nursing
Laura Anderko, Georgetown University

Final Document

Patricia Beattie, Arcalis Scientific
Lynn Bergeson, Bergeson and Campbell, PC
Kerry Dearfield, USDA Food Safety Inspection Service
Catherine Dodd, City and County of San Francisco
Doug Farquhar, National Council of State Legislatures
Kristin Hill, Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Epidemiology Center
Richard Jackson, UCLA School of Public Health, *chair*
Timothy Malloy, UCLA School of Law
John McLeod, Cuyahoga County Board of Health
Kristin Ryan, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
Gail Shibley, Oregon Department of Human Services
Brian Symmes, EPA
Kristen Welker-Hood, Physicians for Social Responsibility

Regrets:

Beth Anderson, NIEHS
Nick Ashford, MIT
Arlene Blum, Green Science Policy Institute
Linda Bruemmer, Minnesota Department of Health
Sascha Chaney, CDC/NCEH/ATSDR
Ken Cook, Environmental Working Group
Pamela Eliason, Toxic Use Reduction Institute
Lin Kaatz Chary, Gary Care Partnership
Rick Hackman, Procter and Gamble
Robert Harrison, University of California, San Francisco
Andrew Dennis McBride, City of Milford Health Department
Anne Rabe, Community Concerned About NL Industries, CHEJ

Facilitation and Staff Team Members Present:

Abby Dilley, RESOLVE facilitator
Montrece Ransom, NCEH/ATSDR staff