

**Notes and action items from CSTE OH Subcommittee meeting  
November 16, 2010, Austin Texas**

*We have not included copies of slide with these minutes. If you want copies of the slides, please contact [Erin.Simms@cste.org](mailto:Erin.Simms@cste.org)*

- Tish Davis gave a brief overview of the history of the CSTE Occupational Health Subcommittee (formerly known as the CSTE OH Work Group) and the difference between the COSS and the CSTE Subcommittee. (Slide on request)
- Martha Stanbury gave a brief overview of the recently submitted CSTE Cooperative Agreement proposal to NIOSH to continue CSTE efforts to build capacity in the states over the next four years. (July 2011 – June, 2015). NIOSH will be reviewing this proposal in the coming months. (Slides on request.)
- Erin Simms gave an overview of the status of the ongoing effort to develop both a hard copy document and a CSTE web-page on state success stories. A draft of the hard copy document was included in everyone's folders for review. States were encouraged to submit additional success stories for inclusion on the web page.

**Action items:**

- Erin will forward the electronic document to meeting participants. States with stories in the hard copy document should review the document and their stories, in particular, and provide comments electronically to Erin Simms ([esimms@cste.org](mailto:esimms@cste.org)) using track changes. Comments from any states on the document are welcome.
- All states should submit new success stories to CSTE for inclusion on the success story web page that CSTE will be developing.

*Outstanding issue: We will need to develop a process to deciding which stories should be included on the web-page. Should we include all or should they be reviewed?*

**Occupational Health Disparities**

Tish Davis provided a brief overview of occupational health disparities (OHDs) including some findings from Massachusetts that were presented to Commissioner John Auerbach of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. (Slides on request.) Commissioner Auerbach, the newly elected ASTHO president, has subsequently underscored the importance of addressing OHDs in his presidential challenge to health commissioners throughout the country: "To promote health equity" i.e. reduce health disparities, with a special focus on racial and ethnic disparities." The group then discussed activities state health departments could do to address OHDs and what CSTE OH Subcommittee might work on to support these efforts. This issue is important to address, regardless of the ASHTO challenge. The possibility of providing guidance to states about how to do an employment profile by race and ethnicity was discussed. Michigan is doing a model state occupational health disparities report that it will share with other states.

Several states that have very small minority populations asked the question as to whether the challenge included other disparities, e.g. disparities among income groups. Tish said that she thought the challenge was broadly defined but would confirm with Commissioner Auerbach. NY reported that they had begun some work looking a distribution of lowest income jobs in upper state New York. Martha explained that in the last ASTHO presidential challenge focusing on injury prevention, state health commissioners were asked to make a commitment to doing at least one thing to address the problem. If Commissioners are being asked to commit to specific products, occupational health

programs could offer a product –e.g. a workforce profile or disparities report. Others raised the importance of coordinating efforts with those of the environmental justice community and other health disparities work in their own agencies, and the long range goal of getting occupational information into health records.

Tish also raised the possibility of holding the fall 2011 COSS/CSTE meeting in conjunction with a NIOSH conference on Occupational Health Disparities that will be held in Chicago on September 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. The group agreed to do so.

#### **Action items**

- Tish will follow-up with her Commissioner to confirm the scope of the ASTHO presidential challenge and ASTHO's plans for moving forward.  
*Follow-up: the ASTHO Presidential challenge to promote health equity is broadly defined to include other issues beyond racial and ethnic disparities such as poverty. Plans to help states address the challenge will be further addressed at their December policy meeting.*
- Contact Tish or Erin if you are interested in helping develop guidelines for generating a state employment report by race/ethnicity or for generating any of the indicators by race and ethnicity.
- We will need some help from John Meyers in adapting indicator 14 from NAICS to Census codes, in order to be able to look up % minorities within high risk industry groups.
- Share with the group ideas about strategies for looking at OHDs by income/poverty.
- If states have looked at disparities using certain datasets, please think about providing best practices.
- States should take a look at the occupational health publications clearinghouse and respond to John Sestito ([jps4@cdc.gov](mailto:jps4@cdc.gov)) with comments on ease of use when searching for documents in other languages.
- It was suggested that the Subcommittee work to provide guidance for how to consider the existing indicators by race and ethnicity. If you are interested in this, please email Erin.

#### **Collaboration with Environmental Public Health Tracking (EPHT)**

Cliff Mitchell, who is PI on both the Occupational Health Cooperative Agreement and the EPHT Cooperative Agreement for the state of Maryland, provided an overview of EPHT and raised possibilities for including several occupational health outcomes in this web-based query system. (Slides on request.) Key candidates for inclusion that were discussed were: occupational asthma, adult lead poisoning, mesothelioma and pesticide related disease. The general sense was that asthma would be difficult but that the others would be possible. Cliff also reported that EPHT will be working to include county level data. NY state reported that they have already included where possible county level occupational health indicators on their Department's website. The following states that have both OH and EPHT cooperative agreements agreed to work with Cliff on moving this issue forward: CT, FL, NC, NH, IA, NM, NY, OR, MA, CA, MO (lead only), WI, ME, and PA. The importance of states that have EPHT programs advocating for inclusion of occupational health information from the state level was underscored.

#### **Action item**

- Erin work with Cliff to schedule a conference call with those who volunteered to discuss next steps.

#### **Spring CSTE-OSHA meeting**

The spring CSTE OH Subcommittee is scheduled to be held on March 9 and 10, 2011 in Washington D.C. and will be held in conjunction with representatives from the OSHA national, state and state plan OSHA offices. The overall purpose of the meeting and ideas for agenda items in addition to those forwarded before the meeting were discussed. A number of key issues to be considered in planning the meeting were raised:

- The importance of including collaboration with OSHA consultation on the agenda.
- The fact that some of the newer states have very little knowledge about OSHA. *After the meeting, several raised the possibility of a pre-meeting webinar "OSHA 101"*
- The importance of making sure that the meeting is viewed as a two way street – not just the states helping OSHA but OSHA helping the states.
- This is a short meeting so important to be modest and as specific as possible in what we aim to accomplish. Should consider framing it as the beginning of a process or meeting on a regular basis.
- Should we consider focusing on either just health or safety?
- What are the products we expect as a result of this meeting? Ideas included: a regular meeting with OSHA, recommended guidelines for OSHA referrals, or a communication plan for emerging hazards or the OHS program in general.
- Include discussion on what states can learn from OSHA data
- How has the recent increase in fines impacting things at OSHA?

Barbara Materna and Terry Bunn agreed to be on the planning team with Tish and Ken. A draft agenda will be prepared by mid-December and circulated for comment. CSTE will have funds to support one person from each of the 23 funded states and two additional states to attend the meeting in March.

#### **Action items:**

- Submit further thoughts about the meeting purpose, agenda, and process to Tish and Ken. If you have ideas about specific presentations regarding successful collaborations with OSHA in your state, please include these.
- If there are OSHA people in your state that you think should attend the meeting, let Tish and Ken know and consider talking directly to them about the meeting as well.
- Tish will prepare an initial draft for dissemination to the planning team and work with Erin to arrange a conference call to discuss.

#### **CSTE Position Statements**

Ideas included:

- Corporate sponsorship with health agencies on public health messages: Elise and Ken
- Public health recommendation of cleaning products: Brienne and Ken
- Pesticide exposure funding in states: Brienne and Geoff Calvert

#### **Miscellaneous**

In our discussion of community level occupational health indicators and integrating state occupational health surveillance data into other statewide public health surveillance reports, Kitty from New York mentioned that they could provide examples of their community level indicators and how they have integrated with other departments in their health department. (Handout provided as an attachment in addition to these meeting notes).