

NATIONAL FORUM FOR HEART DISEASE AND STROKE PREVENTION

DECEMBER 2007 ACTION UPDATE



SEASON'S GREETING

The leadership and staff of the National Forum send holiday greetings to all the National Forum members, partners and stakeholder organizations. We wish you all the happiness and peace of the holiday season and look forward to a productive, heart-healthy and stroke free 2008. We also send you our thanks for all your service to the National Forum over this past year. Working to create a "heart healthy and stroke free society" is an ambitious goal and would not be attainable without the work and support of each and every one of you. Happy holidays!

SAVE THE DATE!

MARK YOUR
CALENDARS FOR THE
**6TH NATIONAL
FORUM, MARCH 25-
28, 2008** IN
WASHINGTON DC, AT
GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY.

LOOK FORWARD TO
TRAVEL AND
PARTICIPATION

FDA TO REVIEW POLICIES ON SALT AND SODIUM IN FOOD

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is presently considering revising its current guidelines regarding salt and sodium in food. On Thursday, November 29, 2007, the FDA held a public hearing at its headquarters in Washington, DC, to consider a petition from the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CPSI) requesting that the FDA:

1. Make changes to the regulatory status of salt
2. Require limits on salt in processed foods
3. Require health messages (on food) related to salt and sodium.

In addition to the public hearing, the FDA is also seeking comment from the scientific and medical communities and the general public. The comment period on this issue will be held open until March 28, 2008. The FDA will post a transcript of the November 29 hearing approximately 30 days after the hearing date at <http://www.fda.gov/ohrms/dockets>.

"Because excessive sodium has been cited by the scientific

“THE APIG WILL BE REVIEWING THE CSPI PETITION AND ALL THE ACCOMPANYING INFORMATION AND DETERMINE IF IT IS APPROPRIATE TO SUGGEST THAT THE NATIONAL FORUM CONSIDER ENDORSING THE CSPI POSITION,”

DR. WILLIAM CAPLAN

community as a contributing factor in the development of hypertension, hearts disease and stroke; the issue of salt and sodium in food is one of great interest to the members of the **National Forum**,” said William Caplan, MD, chair of the Forum’s Action Priorities Implementation Group (APIG). “The APIG will be reviewing the CSPI petition and all the accompanying information and determine if it is appropriate to suggest that the **National Forum** consider endorsing the CSPI position,” said Caplan. “Of course, we also encourage all of the National Forum organizational and individual members to review the information and consider

making comment,” he said. The APIG held its first discussion on the FDA proposed rulemaking during its December 18 phone conference.

At present, the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2005, report that approximately seventy-five percent of total salt intake is derived from salt added to processed food. The Guidelines recommend that the general population consume no more than 2,300 mg/day of sodium and that persons with hypertension, African Americans and middle aged and older adults consume no more than 1,500 mg/day. The Dietary Guidelines also report that, on average, the natural salt content of food accounts for

about 10 percent of total intake, while discretionary salt use (salt added at the table or while cooking) provides another 5 to 10 percent. For more information on the FDA proposed rule making on sodium please go to <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~comm/regist7.html>

To submit electronic comments on the proposed rules, please go to:

<http://www.fda.gov/dockets/ecomments>.

STATES STILL FUND TOBACCO PREVENTION AT HALF CDC RECOMMENDATIONS

Last week the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, American Heart Association, American Lung Association and American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network released their annual report assessing whether the states are keeping their promise to use their tobacco settlement funds for tobacco prevention and cessation programs. This year, the report finds that the states have increased funding for tobacco prevention and cessation programs by 20 percent to \$717.2 million, the highest level in six years. However, most states still fail to fund these programs at

minimum levels recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the states combined are providing less than half what the CDC has recommended. (The report uses the CDC's 1999 funding recommendations. Next year, it will begin to use the CDC's 2007 recommendations that were issued in October). Materials available on the web that may be of interest to **National Forum** members include:

Full report:
www.tobaccofreekids.org/reports/settlements/

Chart ranking the states:

www.tobaccofreekids.org/reports/settlements/2008/staterankings.pdf

State-specific press releases:

www.tobaccofreekids.org/reports/settlements/2008/embargoed_releases/

NATIONAL FORUM ACTIVITIES

Executive Committee (EC)

The EC met on October 12 and December 14, 2007. The October meeting included approval of the National Forum key messages and action on project proposals and planning for the 6th National Forum.

The December meeting included endorsement of the Organizational Capacity IG recommendations on competencies, planning for the 6th National Forum, and action on Resource Committee funding requests and Coordinating Board Operating Principles, Strategic Direction, and Bylaws.

Membership Committee (MC)

The MC is working on the following: New member and Coordinating Board member orientation to be held at the 6th National Forum; welcome/orientation materials for new members; an informational brochure; outgoing Coordinating Board member recognition; and new member recruitment efforts.

Resource Committee (RC)

The RC distributed a funding request to identify resources among the National Forum membership for the Health Economics and Cardiovascular Dis-

ease Expert Symposium and post conference transcript conversion for the "State of the Science Conference: Evaluation of Policy and Environmental Change for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention" (Watershed Conference) and future approved projects. The RC is also working on sponsorship for the 6th National Forum.

Action Priorities Implementation Group (APIG)

The APIG created two Project Teams to focus on the development of a Policy Forum and a process for the National Forum to make policy statements. The Policy Forum will be an information exchange among National Forum members and partners on their policy priorities and activities for emerging and advancing issues. It will also serve to highlight successful policies for heart disease and stroke prevention. The Policy Statements team is charged with creating a process for the National Forum to articulate its stance on heart disease and stroke issues.

Communication Implementation Group (CIG)

The CIG completed work on the National Forum's key messages.

The key messages will serve as a common language to use in describing the National Forum in press releases, newsletters, brochures, fact sheets, website and other communications. The CIG is continuing to work on content for the website. In addition, CIG is working with a designer to create a logo and look for the National Forum. The CIG will send images to the Coordinating Board for their selection in January.

Monitoring and Evaluation Implementation Group (MEIG)

The MEIG is developing strategies to engage key partners in the implementation of the twelve recommendations related to the development of a comprehensive national surveillance system for heart disease and stroke prevention. The MEIG identified recommendations that will receive immediate attention, and assigned individual MEIG members to identify key partners for each priority recommendation.

The MEIG is taking next steps relative to the "Watershed Conference" on evaluation. A summary report is being developed. The summary will be used by the MEIG and its partners to develop a consensus paper on the importance and need for effective program evaluation in heart

disease and stroke prevention, and individual manuscripts that, together, will comprise a journal article which will be published in a high-profile journal related to evaluation methods. Dr. Wayne Rosamond, MEIG Vice-Chair and chair of the planning committee for the Watershed Conference, conducted a "brown bag" lunch session for CDC/DHDSP staff to discuss the conference and its implications for the work of that Division.

Organizational Capacity Implementation Group (OCIG)

The OCIG has developed new action steps and expected outcomes for the supplement/update to *A Public Health Action Plan to Prevent Heart Disease and Stroke*. While reviewing the original language in the *Action Plan*, the OCIG and the MEIG discovered a shared role in addressing the recommendation related to improving professional competencies among public health professionals working to prevent heart disease and stroke. These IGs have developed linkages to facilitate coordination of their efforts relative to this recommendation. In addition, the OCIG requested that the National Forum endorse the Com-

petencies Assessment Tool developed by the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors, and promote its use among National Forum member organizations and other partners. The OCIG continues work on its white paper on organizational capacity, competencies, and voluntary accreditation.

Policy Research Implementation Group (PRIG)

PRIG has begun the planning and preparation process for a spring 2009 symposium on the Health Economics of Cardiovascular Disease. The symposium will evaluate the economic and public health implications of heart disease and stroke prevention, detection and treatment efforts. Approximately thirty experts in heart disease, stroke, public health, health economics, ethics and business will participate in the symposium to develop a list of prioritized recommendations including research gaps. In collaboration with the Resource

Committee, PRIG sent a funding request to all members of the Forum asking for both in-kind and financial support for this endeavor.

Public Health Leadership and Partnerships Implementation Group (PHLPIG)

The PHLPIG surveyed a number of practitioners working in state-based heart disease and stroke prevention and control programs to determine whether they felt a draft heart disease and stroke prevention (HDSP) state health index document would be valuable in developing a new or updated state plan and in engaging partners in doing so. Respondents indicated that the current draft state health index was too long, and prescriptive in nature. They also indicated that this document would not be particularly helpful in engaging partners. Based on this feedback, the PHLPIG now plans to develop a more user-friendly checklist for use in developing HDSP

plans. The checklist will include much of the information currently included in the state plan index. The PHLPIG is also in the process of defining public health "leadership" as it relates to HDSP. This Group will identify HDSP program managers and staff who have demonstrated effective, exemplary leadership in HDSP, interview them to determine how and why they have been effective and successful, and involve these individuals in developing and implementing activities designed to enhance public health leadership among state-based HDSP programs.

Regional and Global Collaborations Implementation Group (RGCIG)

To advance two of the six RGCIG strategies (providing global leadership, partnerships, and organizations and establishing and supporting global policies) the RGCIG is finalizing an inventory of global partners who work on heart disease and stroke prevention and a policy framework statement.

During November the RGCIG circulated the policy framework statement, which provides recommendations for US policies on global cardiovascular health, to the National Forum membership for review and comment. The RGCIG will be presenting it to the Coordinating Board at their January meeting.

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