



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH &amp; HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

Centers for Disease Control  
and Prevention (CDC)  
Atlanta GA 30341-3724

June 9, 2004

Patrick McConnon, M.P.H.  
Executive Director  
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE)  
2872 Woodcock Boulevard, Suite 303  
Atlanta, Georgia 30341

Dear Mr. McConnon:

Thank you for sending forward the position statement submitted on February 13, 2004, entitled "Implementation of the Recommendations in the Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Capacity Assessment". We are pleased to see CSTE taking leadership to address a very important issue for women and children.

We support the recommendations put forth by CSTE to build capacity and promote Maternal and Child Health (MCH) data related activities at the state level. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) works with national partners to provide services on many levels by developing evaluation tools, providing surveillance, and building capacity in states. Specifically we:

- Assign Senior MCH Epidemiologists to states
- Support the CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowships
- Assist in defining infrastructure by supporting the National Assessment of Epidemiologic Capacity in Maternal and Child Health
- Fund Emory University, Health Resources and Services Administration, and Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs to offer continuing education opportunities for state employees
- Partner with universities and other national organizations, including CSTE, to define best practices for the field

In addition, I am pleased that CSTE agrees that there is an important leadership role for states to play in building capacity. Each state needs to consider the recommendations put forth by CSTE to 1) have at least one senior level employee working on these efforts, 2) offer adequate support within the state, and 3) establish a career track for employees within the organization. All are necessary to accomplish the goal of capacity building.

Page 2 - Patrick McConnon

The CDC will continue to work with state and national partners to support the efforts of building MCH surveillance, epidemiology, and program evaluation capacity by providing resources to state and local public health agencies. We look to CSTE and other partners for feedback on how well these initiatives are working and align with your recommendations. It is also equally important for us to hear from our partners on how we can continue to work together to implement these goals and address this important public health issue.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Mensah', written over a horizontal line.

George A. Mensah, M.D., F.A.C.P., F.A.C.C., F.E.S.C.  
Acting Director  
National Center for Chronic Disease  
Prevention and Health Promotion

cc:

John Lehnherr, NCCDPHP/DRH