



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Substance Abuse and Mental
Health Services Administration

Center for Mental Health Services
Center for Substance Abuse
Prevention
Center for Substance Abuse
Treatment
Rockville MD 20857

AUG 27 2008

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Patrick J. McConnon, MPH
Executive Director
Council for State and Territorial Epidemiologists
2872 Woodcock Boulevard, Suite 303
Atlanta, GA 30341-4015

Dear Mr. McConnon:

Thank you for your July 1 letter on behalf of the Executive Committee for the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE). I applaud the Committee's recent efforts in developing a position statement on "Criteria State-level Substance Abuse Epidemiology Capacity."

As you know, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) recognizes the importance of state-level epidemiologic work in substance abuse, and has been supporting such work through the allocation of funds within SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework activities. Pending Congressional support, these activities will remain a priority within SAMHSA.

The CSTE position statement outlines potential areas of collaboration among your organization and relevant Federal agencies. The current realities of limited Federal funding underscore even more strongly the importance of considering such collaborations in order to maximize these resources. SAMHSA welcomes the opportunity to participate with our Federal partners and others in discussions of these and other potential priorities.

Thank you sharing the CSTE position statement.

Sincerely,

Terry L. Cline, Ph.D.
Administrator



RECEIVED OCT 10 2008

Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)
Atlanta GA 30333

OCT 7 2008

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

Dear Mr. McConnon:

Thank you for sharing a copy of the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists' (CSTE) position statement 08-EC-03 entitled "Criteria State-level Substance Abuse Epidemiology Capacity." Please excuse the delay of this response.

Substance abuse is an important public health issue that has a great impact on our nation's health and safety. Efforts to address this broad issue span across the research and practice of several programs within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). As an agency, we support efforts to build capacity to work on substance abuse surveillance and other epidemiology issues in state health agencies.

Specifically, CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control is dedicated to reducing the number and severity of unintentional injuries related to substance abuse through a science-based public health approach. Currently, in addition to ongoing research and surveillance activities, efforts are underway to develop a broad strategy to address unintentional drug overdoses by building state capacity.

We welcome the opportunity to further discuss and coordinate ways to enhance the ability of states to address substance abuse. For further information, please contact Dr. Robert D. Brewer, Alcohol Team Leader at CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, at (770) 488-5920, or Ms. Sara Schmit, Office of Planning, Policy, and Evaluation, at (770) 488-1429.

I thank you and CSTE for your commitment and national leadership to the field of epidemiology. We look forward to continued collaboration with CSTE regarding public health issues of mutual concern.

Sincerely,

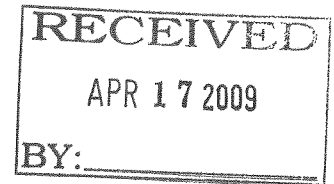

Julie Louise Gerberding, M.D., M.P.H.
Director



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH
LANSING

JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR



JANET OLSZEWSKI
DIRECTOR

April 6, 2009

LaKesha Robinson, Deputy Director
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
2872 Woodcock Boulevard, Suite 303
Atlanta, GA 30341

Dear Ms. Robinson:

This is in response to progress related to the 2008 position statement 08-EC-03 entitled "State-level Substance Abuse Epidemiology Capacity."

There have been positive actions since the resolution was passed. CSTE members have formed three new substance abuse subcommittees: alcohol, drug overdoses and substance abuse indicators. These are in addition to the overarching substance abuse subcommittee that is focused on building collaborations and epidemiology capacity in states. These subcommittees have brought new members to CSTE as well as re-engaged members whose membership had lapsed. To develop a baseline measure of substance abuse epidemiology capacity, questions on substance abuse epidemiology have been added to the new CSTE epidemiology capacity assessment.

Mr. Ed Chao of CSTE was assigned as staff support to the substance abuse subcommittees. Substance abuse has been added to the forum area of the CSTE Website and currently two of the three subcommittees have posted work plans to their respective areas. The overdose subcommittee has actively planned for presentations at the 2009 CSTE meeting in Buffalo, New York. The alcohol and indicator subcommittees recently held organizational discussions and will be seeking ways to promote their work.

Initial funding for a CSTE substance abuse fellow was received from CDC for proof of concept. This position is based at the Georgia's public health agency under the guidance of Dr. John Horan, Georgia's State Epidemiologist. In addition, at least two other states have submitted billets for a substance abuse epidemiology CSTE fellow from the incoming class.

CSTE members continue to promote collaborations with CDC and SAMHSA. A member of the CSTE Executive Committee visited SAMHSA to advocate for the continued focus SAMHSA has had on public health methods that relate to surveillance and public health practice. Other members have promoted CSTE at SAMHSA-sponsored meetings over the past year, particularly those meetings that are focused on population-level data and data methods.

Members involved with the substance abuse epidemiology subcommittees appreciate CSTE's support in the assignment of staff support to the subcommittees and the support for CSTE fellows interested in substance abuse epidemiology.

LaKesha Robinson, Deputy Director

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April 6, 2009

National attention is being focused on the surveillance of alcohol and other drugs. The rising morbidity and mortality related to overdoses from prescription drugs has raised considerable awareness among substance abuse agencies, law enforcement and public health agencies. Journal articles by CSTE members and others have also highlighted the continuing problem of alcohol misuse and abuse including youth and college-age binge drinking. The need for substance abuse data that is reliable, routinely collected, and disseminated has become very clear to policy makers as well.

In summary, the interest in substance abuse epidemiology is growing. The CSTE effort has attracted individuals from state public health agencies as well as those working in the substance abuse field. Students are recognizing it as an area of interest due to the scope of the problem and its multi-disciplinary nature.

CSTE is well poised to bring cohesion to the practice of substance abuse epidemiology nationally, due to its relationship with federal agencies, its leadership in the area of state-based surveillance and its collaborations with public health training programs in academia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Corinne Miller".

Corinne Miller, Ph.D.
State Epidemiologist and Director,
Bureau of Epidemiology

CM

cc: Dr. Steve Ostroff