

Epidemiology Society Leadership Conference Call, April 11, 2002

I sat in on this conference call arranged by Prof Betsy Foxman of U Michigan, of SER and the AES. It was attended by representatives of a number of epidemiology-associated societies including ACE (Kaslow), SER, Intl Soc Pharmacoepi, APHA, CSEBS (the Canadians), the AES, etc including Sara Patrick.

The discussion was roughly as follows:

a) There is a lot of interest in following up the apparently very successful International Congress of Epi of June 2001 with another in maybe 2005 or so. This was to discuss who would be interested in organizing and other issues below. Remember that, perhaps because we had not been involved in planning, that Congress' dates overlapped with our CSTE/APHL/NASPHV/SENMSOR etc meeting. I am told that it also seriously under-represented the practice of public health epidemiology.

b) THE 2001 CONGRESS: This was attended by 1700 persons and made a "very substantial profit", which was shared among the set of organizations who were full-time sponsors, only. It was said that one reason it was such a success was that a number of major epi organizations made it their own annual meeting, so that they did not compete with it....e.g. SER, ACE.

To be a sponsor you had to put up \$2000 up front (APHA paid for the conf calls, many of them) and share in the risk if the hotel blocks had not been filled. But in fact they were over-subscribed. Toronto was a terrific venue, with low costs and a nice setting.

c) However, the planning was a laborious process because each different organization wanted its own members' needs to be included, and because for organizations for which it was their annual meeting, they expected their specific activities to happen. On the other hand, the simultaneous meeting of so many different groups yielded unique and perhaps synergistic benefits.

d) A minor issue was whether to invite Mexico next time. Apparently including Spanish language was not an issue...would be in English still?

e) Big issue was how many different organizations should be on the core planning/sponsor group. Too many was felt to make planning unworkable. But not being a core sponsor meant no profits. Some said not more than 3. An org. could be a sponsor of a session without being a core sponsor. The SER rep said that they could only sponsor (if it was held in 2005) if it was in Toronto, because they are already committed to hotels there.

f) Web site: go to www.acepidemiology.org and then to "Directory of Epidemiology Societies."

Recommendation: I think we should stay involved in this process and at least assure it does not conflict with our own meeting time the next time. Also sponsor a session there at least, to get some real world epi in this Congress. Consider seriously being a sponsor....it was cheap last time! Jerry

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