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A Letter from Our President

The 1996 CSTE Annual Meeting is literally days away. I hope all CSTE members have an opportunity to come to Portland and participate in our organization's flagship event. The agenda is first rate and promises to provide the forum for information exchange, thoughtful discussion and debate, and policy or position formulation. President-elect David Fleming has done a superb job of arranging for the meeting. Don't miss it!

As is the case with most other newsletters that I read, at least a brief reflection seems in order being that this newsletter will be the last during my year as president.

It has been a year of great growth for the organization. CSTE membership is now more than 320 epidemiologists who work in a wide variety of subject areas. The CSTE National Headquarters Office now includes more staff to serve the needs of the members and technical staff, working with our partners at CDC, to improve the practice of public health epidemiology in all the states and territories. The budget of the cooperative agreement with CDC now exceeds \$2 million dollars and funds a variety of exciting and important projects...epidemiologic capacity assessment, pandemic influenza preparedness, special consultations, and yes, surveys, surveys, surveys.

Your Executive Committee works on an enormous amount and variety of issues each week. We include the participation of the CSTE consultants in many areas and deal with requests for new items to be added to national surveillance (always an interesting discussion), obtaining the latest from colleagues at CDC for dissemination to states and territories, and providing input to our partners at CDC, ASTHO, and other groups. I have never seen a more vocal and determined group of advocates in my life, and I consider it a personal honor to work with them and to be a part of an organization that is so respected and valued across the nation.

The operation of the CSTE national office has been superlative under the direction of Willis and the great staff in place. The volume of work that comes across the desks in our national office is astounding, and the quality that goes out makes me wonder how we ever got anything done in the days before a national office. Hats off to all the staff.

Finally, I'd like to restate something I mentioned in a previous newsletter. The work of CSTE is truly important. And to be truly reflective of its membership, more members need to be involved at all stages. There is a huge amount of work to get done and many opportunities for all of us to make a difference. Get involved with the organization.

The meeting in Portland will bring a great year for me to a close. And it will open a new year of exciting growth and challenges for the organization. I wish David Fleming and all of us a great 1996-97 year.

Dennis M. Perrotta, Texas

CSTE/CDC Cooperative Agreement

The CSTE National Office continues to serve as a focal point in communicating with the membership, responding to requests for consultations, assisting the Officers and members of the Executive Committee, and interacting with the CDC Centers, Institutes, and Offices and other national agencies and organizations. Some highlights include:

- Experienced a 26 percent increase in CSTE membership from 254 members in 1995 to 320 as of April 20, 1996;
- Managed recruitment and selection activities for program-

specific positions. Mr. John F. Hybarger, CSTE Special Projects Officer, identified over 80 candidates for six positions, arranged for interviews with CDC staff for over 15 of these, and facilitated the selection of five since mid-September, 1995;

Issued a request for contract for the "Development of Guidelines and Model State Plans for Influenza Pandemic Preparedness" with a contractor, Mr. Wayne Brown, selected by the CDC/FDA/CSTE/NACCHO project work group;

Collaborated with the National Tuberculosis Controllers Association to establish their office and staff in Atlanta;

Continued a contract with the National Public Health Information Coalition. The agreement facilitates a national office and 50 percent time of Ms. Kathy Getz, CSTE Office Manager, for their organization;

Prepared for four meetings of the CSTE Executive Committee (September 19-20, 1995; January 17-18, 1996; March 19-20, 1996 and April 24, 1996). These meetings continue to provide important opportunities for discussion with CDC staff and other issues important to CSTE; and

Submitted eight concept proposals for the 1996-97 cooperative agreement application for which there was interest from CDC in one.

CSTE is pleased to collaborate with CDC programs and state health departments on a broad range of individual projects. Brief descriptions and progress of currently funded projects follow:

Specialized Consultations: CSTE epidemiologists have provided approximately 50 consultations to CDC and other Federal programs and non-governmental organizations. These consultations have been in areas such as: adolescent immunizations; tobacco use prevention programs; HIV/AIDS surveillance and prevention activities, including syringe exchange issues; STD patient interview instruments; drug resistant *Streptococcus pneumoniae*; spousal abuse; food safety issues with the U.S. Department of Agriculture; control plans for pertussis; Vancomycin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*; national immunization research planning; child-care health guidelines; environmental health workshops; public health manuals for local area use directed to the prevention of waterborne outbreaks of cryptosporidiosis; use of national immunization data; surveillance issues, including human subjects in public health (public health research and public health surveillance); electronic laboratory surveillance; health care workers; the National Coalition for Adult Immunizations; National Occupational Research Agenda; tick-borne diseases; invasive Group A Streptococcal infections; antimicrobial resistance among *Salmonella typhimurium*; national comprehensive cancer control;

resistant infections and inappropriate use of antibiotics; and others;

- **Provide a Forum for the Exchange of Information:** This project assists CSTE in providing scholarships for individuals to attend the CSTE annual meeting which will be held June 2-6, 1996 in Portland, Oregon. Twenty thousand dollars has been provided, with priority for the scholarships directed to persons serving in environmental and chronic disease public health programs. To date, 11 scholarships have been awarded;
- **State Epidemiologic Capacity Development:** This project, being conducted under contract with Mr. Wayne Brown, is to develop an assessment instrument that states can use to independently determine their capacity to respond to a broad range of epidemiologic functions such as monitoring and assessing the health status of the constituency, managing health crises by responding to emergencies and outbreaks, and providing science for policy decisions related to public health. A protocol has been developed and pilot tested by CSTE/CDC teams in the states of Iowa, Kansas, New Mexico, and Missouri. Information from these tests has helped refine the protocol and led to the development of draft guidelines for the self-assessment of infectious and chronic disease capacities. Currently, efforts are underway to identify an appropriate state to pilot test the guidelines. Originally envisioned as development of a protocol which public health areas would use independently of CSTE, thirteen states have indicated they endorse the concept of an outside team which would visit the area and actually conduct the assessment. Since few states can divert program and top level officials to work through the assessment process, an outside team can bring some aspects such as greater objectivity, expertise, and credentials to the process. CSTE has recently requested and received CDC funding release approval to conduct assessment in approximately ten additional states;
- **Building Capacity for Occupational Disease and Injury Surveillance in State Health Departments:** This project enables CSTE and the National Institutes of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) to collaborate on the planning and holding of meetings for state health departments and other interested state agencies on target-condition specific state-based occupational health surveillance. An annual meeting of the Sentinel Event Notification System for Occupational Risks (SENSOR) and the Adult Blood Lead Epidemiology and Surveillance Program (ABLES) took place April 30 - May 2, 1996 in Boston, Massachusetts. The goal of the meeting was to facilitate development of state-based occupational disease and injury surveillance;
- **Developing Chronic Disease Epidemiologic Capacity at the State Level:** This project is to award funds to states to use in establishing chronic disease epidemiologic capacity at the state level. Funding will provide up to 80 percent funding for a position during the first year, with declining funding in subsequent years so that a position would be fully funded by the state after five years. CSTE, in collaboration with CDC

program staff and chronic disease program directors, convened a work group in December to review available information about state chronic disease epidemiologic capacity. The group prioritized all areas of chronic disease epidemiologic capacity need from low to high as a way to begin the process of making funds available to three to four states during this initial period. Contingent upon future funding, additional states will receive awards. CSTE prepared a Request for Proposal (RFP) for all states and territories with a request for an "Intent to Apply" for financial assistance notice by April 15, 1996. Eighteen areas have indicated they plan to submit a full request which will be due to CSTE by June 3, 1996.

Reorganization at the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

In order to address the priorities and bring some visibility to promoting health and preventing chronic diseases for the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) conducted an assessment of its structure and is implementing its reorganization. The Division of Adolescent and School Health, Reproductive Health, Cancer Prevention and Control, Diabetes Translation and Office on Smoking and Health, will remain unchanged. New divisions include the Division of Community Health and the Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity. The Division of Community Health will include the following areas: (Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), Community Health Promotion, Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) Health Program Leader, CVD Health Epidemiology and Intervention, Managed Care, State CDC Epidemiology Assignees, Aging Statistics, Epilepsy, Preventive Health and Human Services (PHHS) Block Grant, Prevention Centers, and Training Development, the Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity Communications Team (NuPAC). Oral Health will also be included in the Center but a final decision as to its location has not been announced as of this writing. A newly created, critical position in the Center is the Associate Director of Health Promotion who will report to the Center Director. Specific responsibilities of this position have not yet been announced.

Executive Committee Meetings

The CSTE Executive Committee has met two times--March 19 - 20, 1996 and April 24, 1996 since the February newsletter. The meetings have been productive and have included discussions with partners on a wide range of topics including possible collaboration with the Association for Vital Records and Health Statistics; the National TB Controllers Association; Center to Prevent Handgun Violence;

Environmental Public Health Surveillance Workshop; CSTE Terms of Employment and Pension Plan; Annual Meeting Agenda and Travel Scholarships; Performance Partnerships Grants; and Emerging Infectious Diseases Epidemiology Meeting; Epi Info Demonstration; the Surveillance Blueprint; Cooperative Agreement Application for 1996-97; Public Health Practice and Public Health Research; and the Future of Public Health - opportunities for collaboration with the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University.

The next CSTE Executive Committee meeting will be held in Portland, Oregon during the annual meeting. If you have topics that you would like the Executive Committee members to address, please contact one of the Executive Committee members listed below.

President: Dennis M. Perrotta, TX (512-458-7268)
Vice-President: Richard E. Hoffman, CO (303-692-2262)
President-Elect: David W. Fleming, OR (503-731-4023)
Sec/Treasurer: Kathleen F. Gensheimer, ME (207-287-5301)
Rebecca A. Meriwether, LA (504-568-7210)
Nancy E. Stroup, GA (404-657-6448)
Patricia Quinlisk, IA (515-281-4941)
Henry Anderson, WI (608-266-1253)
Guthrie S. Birkhead, NY (518-473-7542)
James L. Hadler, CT (203-566-7995)

EIS Pizza Party

CSTE sponsored a pizza party on the evening of Thursday, April 25, 1996, which has become a traditional feature of the EIS Conference week. This year's affair was successful in that there was plenty of pizza and beer and that it provided an opportunity for representatives from states recruiting to meet graduating EIS officers and Preventive Medicine Residents for available positions in the field. It is estimated that in excess of 150 people attended this event.

CSTE Members E-Mail Group

The CSTE national headquarters office is establishing an email group for the entire CSTE membership. Ms. June Miller, CSTE secretary, will be the administrator of the group. Individuals wishing to send messages to the membership will send the message to June to forward to the membership. If you have a new WONDER or Internet address, please call June at 770-458-3811. We hope to have this new group established by early July, 1996.

Positions Available/Wanted

- Seeking senior level state or local health department position, physician epidemiologist retires from CDC August 30, 1996 after 26 years of varied state, federal, and international experience. Positions held include state epidemiologist, state

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health officer, as well as resident consultant to the World Bank. Will happily consider all possibilities. Avid fly fisherman with new family and high school age daughter. Contact Stan Music via Internet Email at CDC@ACCESS.SANET.GE or send letter c/o American Embassy, Tbilisi, Department of State, Washington, DC 20521-7060.

- Experienced, published physician epidemiologist, board certified in infectious diseases and general preventive medicine, seeks epidemiologist or health officer position. Contact William S. Berg, M.D., M.P.H., at 804-363-5511 (w) or 804-523-6315 (h).
- Position available as Director for the HIV/STD Epidemiology Division, Texas Department of Health. Applications for the position, posting number 96-TDH-0872, will be accepted until May 23, 1996. Resumes will not be accepted in lieu of an application, but may be provided to the interview panel, if selected for an interview. Questions regarding this position, should be directed to Cathy Wells, Assistant Director, Epidemiology Division at 512-490-2545.

Managed Care and the Implications for Public Health Officials Videoconference

A public health training network satellite videoconference has been scheduled for June 28, 1996 from 11:30 - 4:00 p.m. EST. This interactive distance learning program will present managed care principles and business practices followed by a discussion of public health challenges and opportunities in a managed care environment. It will consist of didactic segments, group activities, and opportunities for questions and answers. The course will provide a foundation and working knowledge necessary in today's growing managed care environment. Theodore J. Weinberg, a former Chief Financial Officer for a major managed care organization, and now a nationally recognized Managed Care Consultant for Towers Perrin and Paul W. Nannis, a former Health Commissioner in Milwaukee, now a Senior Program Officer with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, will be conducting the course.

Participation requires a satellite downlink site that has a steerable antenna which can receive either Ku- or C-band channels. Also, the site should offer enough seating capacity to meet your organizational needs. A telephone in the viewing room would allow for interaction with the presenters. Most schools, hospitals, community colleges, universities, and county extension offices have the required equipment.

This program will be carried by HSTN and Internet subscribers. Please refer to their program guides for alternate viewing times. To receive program materials and continuing

education credit, each attendee must register. Registration procedures and contact organization will be announced soon. The enrollment fee is \$45.00 per participant payable by credit card, check, or purchase order. A participant packet, which includes continuing education credit enrollment forms, will be mailed directly to registered participants. For more information, please contact Keith Ring, Public Health Program Planning Office, CDC at 404-639-3707.

CSTE Membership

Do you want to join CSTE? All epidemiologists at the state or territorial public health level can be a member and participate. You do not have to be the State Epidemiologist to be a member.

As a CSTE member, you will have the opportunity to participate in influencing important current public health issues as a CSTE consultant, to attend the CSTE annual meeting where there is lively discussion and debate on a wide variety of public health topics.

If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a CSTE member, please contact the CSTE national office at 2872 Woodcock Boulevard, Suite 303, Atlanta, Georgia 30341, telephone: 770-458-3811 to receive a brochure and membership application. Annual membership dues are \$15.00.



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