

Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation Advisory Committee

Minutes

April 25, 2006

Oklahoma State Department of Health

1000 N.E. 10th, Room 806

Oklahoma City, OK 73117

Members Present: Dr. James Crutcher, Dr. Stephen Glenn, Sarah Houk, Gayle Jones (designee for State Superintendent Sandy Garrett), Andrea LaFazia (designee for Dr. Terry Cline), Sarah Maple, Erika Pasley, Frosty Peak, H.T. Scott (designee for Keith Burt), Dr. Sheila Simpson, Janet Spradlin, and Dr. Francene Weatherby.

Visitors: Wes Glinsmann of Oklahoma Alliance on Health or Tobacco, Amber Theinert of Capitol Network News, Jonas Matas and Tracey Strader of the Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust, and Tammy Randazzo of Pittsburg County Health Department.

Tobacco Use Prevention Service Staff: Linda Eakers, Cessation System Coordinator; Program Director, Doug Matheny, Service Chief; Bob Miner, Clean Indoor Air Coordinator, Celestine McCleave, Administrative Assistant, Dr. Joyce Morris, Assessment and Disparities Coordinator; Karolyn Motte, Training Coordinator; Dave Wattenbarger, Consultant/School Programs; and Jennifer Wilson, Program Consultant & State SWAT Coordinator.

Dr. Crutcher called the meeting to order. He welcomed all to the meeting and asked for introductions of members, staff and visitors

A motion was made and seconded to approve the January 24, 2006 minutes as drafted. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Bob Miner, Clean Indoor Air Coordinator for the Tobacco Use Prevention Service, offered a brief slide presentation on the March 1, 2006 implementation of the “restaurant provisions” of the 2003 Oklahoma Smoking in Public Places and Indoor Workplaces Act. Based on a survey conducted by county sanitarians, about two-thirds of the state’s 7,000 restaurants were smokefree in 2004, including most of the state’s fast food restaurants. It had been estimated that 97 percent of all restaurants would be 100 percent smokefree by March 1 and that only three percent would choose to build smoking rooms. At this time, it appears that only two percent have opted to build smoking rooms, and many have not yet passed inspection. Of the 119 restaurants seeking to provide smoking rooms, 43 have been inspected and approved, 45 have been inspected and disapproved and 31 were still awaiting inspection by sanitarians. A few restaurants that had blatantly defied the law had been ordered closed for several days until they came into compliance. Prior to 2003, about one-third of the state’s 1.1 to 1.2 million indoor workers were subject to secondhand smoke in their workplace. After March 1, the number of state workers exposed to secondhand smoke in the workplace is estimated to have dropped to just 10 percent of the total workforce.

Mr. Miner thanked the Advisory Committee for having adopted a resolution in January encouraging all restaurants to become 100 percent smoke free. He states that the State Board of Health had recently propagated administrative rules to help fully implement the law. These rules are awaiting approval by the Governor's office and should take effect in mid-summer 2006. There has been good cooperation with the Oklahoma Restaurant Association throughout the implementation and rulemaking process. Mr. Miner also noted that there is an ongoing need for adoption and enforcement of local ordinances that mirror the state law.

Linda Wright Eakers, Cessation Systems Coordinator for the OSDH Tobacco Use Prevention Service, offered a presentation on "The Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline and Systems-Level Change to Promote Cessation." The Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline is funded by earnings of the Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust and a combination of tobacco tax proceeds and federal funds made available through the Oklahoma State Department of Health. The program is evaluated by the College of Public Health of the University of Oklahoma. The Helpline is considered an integral part of the state's cessation system that provides free telephone-based counseling services for help in quitting any type of tobacco use. The counseling, also referred to as coaching, involves a cognitive behavioral approach. Callers interact with a live counselor for up to five sessions. Ms. Eakers showed a video that included a recording of an actual call to the Helpline. Health care professionals can submit referrals for Helpline counselors to contact their patients who want to quit. The number for the Helpline is 1 866 QUIT NOW, but the "old" number – 1 866 PITCH EM – will remain active indefinitely. The Helpline's hours of operation are 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. seven days a week, and will any messages left after hours are returned promptly. Helpline services are also available in Spanish and for the hearing impaired.

Several updates from Advisory Committee Action Teams were then offered.

Prevention Team – Frosty Peak reported that the Team met earlier that day to review and update the Prevention component of the Strategic Plan and expect to have some good ideas to bring forth soon. The primary focus of the review has been in the area of youth access to tobacco, including strengthening of enforcement activity and developing positive retailer support. The Team is scheduled to meet again before the next meeting of the Advisory Committee.

Cessation – No report.

Protection – No report.

Disparities – Dr. Joyce Morris of the OSDH Tobacco Use Prevention Service reported that the Team had met twice since the last report. The Team is currently benefiting from a supplemental funding disparities award from CDC; Oklahoma is one of only 11 states that succeeded in the competitive process to secure this funding. The CDC project requires evaluation services, being provided by Oklahoma State University and facilitation services, being provided by the Tobacco Technical Assistance Consortium (TTAC) at Emory University. In addition, Latricia Morgan of the Tobacco Use Prevention Service is serving as the coordinator of recruitment efforts. Oklahoma's efforts to identify and address tobacco-related disparities appear to be far ahead of those of other states. In particular, CDC has praised Oklahoma's efforts towards fully integrating disparities activities into the state strategic plan.

Evaluation - Dr. Morris reported that significant evaluation efforts are ongoing. Among other resources, we have access to the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, the Oklahoma Adult Tobacco Survey and the Oklahoma Youth Tobacco Survey data. All Advisory Committee members are invited to serve on the formal Evaluation Team to review all findings.

Communications – Janet Love of the OSDH Tobacco Use Prevention Service announced that all Advisory Committee members interested in serving on the Communications Team are invited to attend two important upcoming trainings to be held in Oklahoma City. The first of these is a Social Marketing in Public Health Training/Concept and Message Testing Training scheduled for February 28 - March 2 and a Communications Planning Workshop scheduled for April 21. In addition, regional Communication Team Meetings have been scheduled for June 8 and June 29.

Frosty Peak then presented a draft resolution proposed by the Prevention Team entitled “Reminder of Public Health Benefits of Tobacco Tax Increase.” He said it’s important to remind legislators that state voters approved state Question 713 to benefit the public’s health. He added that such resolutions often mean a lot to politicians and can help foster positive actions and support. Dr. Crutcher stated that while there has been a lot of media coverage on the controversy surrounding the tobacco tax compacts and revenue collections, the challenge is to try to ensure that the economic issues don’t override the health issues. There is no question that by increasing the cost of cigarettes, the number of cigarettes sold has decreased. After further discussion, a motion was made and seconded to adopt the resolution as drafted. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Wes Glinsmann, Chair of the Oklahoma Alliance on Health or Tobacco, then offered an update on current tobacco policy issues. He said that at the time of his last report to the Committee, there had been numerous tobacco tax reform bills proposed. At this time, there are only two bills remaining and they are almost identical. The most controversial provision in the bills would allow a non-tribal retailer operating within 25 miles of a tribal retailer to pay the lesser of ten percent or ten cents more in state taxes than what the tribal competitor is paying. This provision, if enacted, would result in a substantial drop in the price of tobacco statewide. It’s important to remember that the tobacco tax has been a huge success from a public health standpoint. Mr. Glinsmann added that in recent years, Oklahoma has been progressive on tobacco policy issues when compared to the other states in our region and that these other states are beginning to take notice. Both Colorado and Arkansas have recently approved statewide clean indoor air laws and both Texas and Missouri are considering substantial increases in their state tobacco tax rates.

Ms. Tracey Strader, Executive Director of the Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust (TSET), then offered a Partnership Update. Ms. Strader reported on the progress of Senate Bill 1091. The bill would place a statutory cap on administrative expenses as a percentage of certified earnings, rather than a specific dollar amount, and would provide an exemption from the Central Purchasing Act for TSET's grant-making initiatives to allow the establishment of “user-friendly” funding protocols that are more accessible to the community. She reported that the bill had recently been approved the House of Representatives by a vote of 95 to 0.

Ms. Strader also reported that the TSET Board of Directors had engaged in a strategic planning process in March 2006 to “stay ahead” of the steady annual growth of the endowment. The Board had decided to form a Study Group to gather information regarding a new program

funding area of research with the goal of beginning to offer grants in this new program area by the year 2010. She added that this anticipated new area of program funding would not prevent TSET from continuing to provide increases in funding for tobacco control programs.

Doug Matheny then offered a brief update on current activities of the Tobacco Use Prevention Service. The “Communities of Excellence” programs will soon have their strategic planning “reverse site visits” to receive technical assistance as they prepare for next year’s applications. He also reported that the two open Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) Regional Coordinator positions had been filled. Mr. Matheny also introduced the preliminary findings of the 2005 Oklahoma Youth Tobacco Survey.

There were no comments from the public. The meeting was adjourned.