

**Department of Health and Human Services  
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences  
National Cancer Institute**

**Minutes of the Research Process Subcommittee of the Interagency Breast Cancer and  
Environmental Research Coordinating Committee**

**October 26, 2011**

The Research Process Subcommittee of the Interagency Breast Cancer and Environmental Research Coordinating Committee was convened for a meeting on October 26, 2011 at 1:00 p.m. via conference call. The Chair of the subcommittee is Michael Gould, PhD of the University of Wisconsin.

**Subcommittee Members Present**

Michael Gould, PhD  
Gayle Vaday, PhD  
Laura Nikolaidis, MS

**NIH Staff Present**

Jennifer Collins, MR

**Others**

Kathy Huamani

**I. Background**

The Interagency Breast Cancer and Environmental Research Coordinating Committee (IBCERCC) is a congressionally mandated body established by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), in collaboration with the National Cancer Institute (NCI). This Committee is comprised of 19 voting members, including representatives of Federal agencies; non-federal scientists, physicians, and other health professionals from clinical, basic, and public health sciences; and advocates for individuals with breast cancer.

The Committee's primary mission is to facilitate the efficient and effective exchange of information on breast cancer research activities among the member agencies, and to advise the NIH and other Federal agencies in the solicitation of proposals for collaborative, multidisciplinary research, including proposals to further evaluate environmental and genomic factors that may be related to the etiology of breast cancer. The Committee serves as a forum and assists in increasing public understanding of the member agencies' activities, programs, policies, and research, and in bringing important matters of interest forward for discussion.

The objectives of the Research Process (RP) Subcommittee of the IBCERCC are integrated and dependent on the objectives and activities of the other Subcommittees of the IBCERCC and include the following: to set research priorities (based on work of the State-of-the-Science Subcommittee), to decrease redundancies across federal and non-governmental organizations, to develop a process for soliciting research, to foster collaborations (based on the work of the Research Translation,

Dissemination, and Policy Implications Subcommittee), to highlight peer review issues, and to identify most appropriate models for agencies to work together.

The IBCERCC RP Subcommittee held its ninth meeting, hosted by NIEHS and the NCI, via conference call on October 26, 2011 beginning at 1:00 p.m. Attendees of the meeting included Subcommittee members and NIH staff. The meeting agenda included progress updates on the two chapters currently being drafted by the group and review of the minutes from the in-person meeting in September.

## **II. Discussion**

Michael welcomed everyone to the call.

Michael asked Jenny to provide an overview of the edits made to RP-1, the chapter reviewing federally funded research. She explained that the major changes included the addition of text regarding breast cancer research funding at both the CDC and the U.S. EPA. In addition, she created place holders for inter and intra-agency models that were not included in the last iteration of this chapter.

Jenny also updated the group on progress made in determining the CSO subcategories covered by category 2 (etiology) and 3 (prevention). She noted that Nonye was able to send her the subcategory assignments for NCI grants in these two major categories. Jenny is currently going back through grants funded by the other NIH ICs and breaking down into subcategories. In addition, Ken is still working on conducting text mining on the grant abstracts that fell into these two major subcategories. Both of the analyses will add more substance regarding funding of breast cancer and the environment research.

Jenny asked the group how this would tie into the work that the SOS group is conducting. She reminded the group of comments made by Cheryl during the recent in-person meeting. In particular, Cheryl felt that with the work of the two committees (SOS and RP), there was a good opportunity to align the research and knowledge gaps with the cataloguing of where money was being spent. She said that might be a good way to determine whether progress is not being made because money is not being expended in certain areas, or whether much money is being spent with little progress to show for it. Michael proposed that the group select a few illustrative examples to address this. Jenny suggested possibility using something regarding windows of susceptibility since Sue expressed a desire to see life stage and prevention covered more prominently in the RP chapters.

Jenny also informed the group that she is still working on getting information regarding all of the RFAs that were released in the 90s for breast cancer. Gwen and Debbie had volunteered at the meeting to help with this. Jenny will continue to follow-up with them on this.

Jenny also wondered if we will be asked to add FY11 to the report since it won't be published until spring of 2012. The group agreed to deal with this possibility later and wanted to focus instead on getting RP-1 finished and sent to the contractor. Michael asked the group working on this chapter to get a fairly complete draft of this chapter to Kathy before the next call. He also asked that the data for each of the figures be sent to her as each one is ready so that they can start preparing them. Jenny will incorporate a table covering the RFAs released for breast cancer beginning in the 90s to provide at least qualitative coverage of federal investments before 2008.

Next, the group went through the draft meeting report focusing on the sections related to the presentation made by this group at the in-person meeting. Prior to the meeting, Jenny highlighted all of the comments made by the Committee that this group needed to discuss.

Dale Sandler felt that some of the other relevant interagency programs (e.g., exposure measurement technologies) should be captured to arrive at a comprehensive qualitative assessment of current research in the area, without necessarily broadening the quantitative portfolio analysis. Linda Birnbaum agreed, and recommended that some other federal agencies such as the USGS, USDA, and NOAA be included in the analysis. The group considered these suggestions and agreed that other agencies mentioned by Linda Birnbaum at the meeting could be covered in the appendix. Jenny will search the web to see what information she can find for these agencies.

Ysabel Duron suggested inclusion of an analysis of what percentage of the funding and how much money altogether had gone to research on women of color and ethnic populations, as well as a similar analysis of funding levels for minority researchers. With regard to the latter point, Jenny send a link to the article published in August in Science regarding this topic. The group generally agreed that both points were somewhat out of the scope for this report, agreeing with comments made by Gayle in the latest version of the draft Executive Summary.

Michele Forman asked about the review process. Gayle said that she could provide some information regarding the DOD process. Michael asked her to draft this and then send around to the group. He said that he would be willing to draft similar text regarding the NIH review process.

Cheryl commented at the meeting that she felt that infrastructure-building efforts needed to be added back to the chapter, along with material leveraging The Cancer Genome Atlas (TCGA). Jenny will ask Cheryl to draft some text around this idea.

Next the group discussed the PowerPoint presentation that Ken developed at the in person meeting to summarize this particular subcommittee's recommendations. Gayle noted that the current draft is missing the recommendation for multidisciplinary teams. Michael asked Jenny to get comments on the current list of 7 recommendations from the group. She agreed to put these into a Word document with space to indicate whether each subcommittee member agrees or disagrees with each of the recommendations. He requested that everyone provide comments before the next conference call. Jenny will then make slides for each recommendation and then we can review during the call (webinar will be used).

### **III. Action Items**

- Jenny will add a table covering relevant RFAs to provide coverage of the funding efforts in the 90s.
- Jenny, Gayle, and Nonye will continue to edit RP-1 and send to the contractor for her comments ahead of the next call. This includes sending the data for all figures that are ready.
- Jenny will research breast cancer research funding by some of the other agencies in the federal government mentioned by Linda Birnbaum and included in the appendices.
- Gayle will draft some text regarding the DOD review process.
- Michael will draft some text regarding the NIH review process.
- Jenny will ask Cheryl to draft some text regarding infrastructure.
- Jenny will re-circulate Ken's recommendation slides in Word with a place to indicate agreement with the recommendation.

### **IV. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 p.m. on October 26, 2011.

## **CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing minutes and attachments are accurate and complete.

/Michael Gould/

Michael Gould, PhD

Chairperson

Research Process Subcommittee

Interagency Breast Cancer & Environmental Research Coordinating Committee

/Gwen W. Collman/

Gwen W. Collman, PhD

Executive Secretary

Research Process Subcommittee

Interagency Breast Cancer & Environmental Research Coordinating Committee

Proper signatures

Treat as signed, § 1.4(d)(2)