

USDA-NIFA: Nutrition and Health Committee for Planning and Guidance

Our Mission: *Provide expert opinion to NIFA National Program Leaders regarding national health and nutrition policies and programs to strategically position the Cooperative Extension System for the future.*

Annual Subcommittee Report for the Evaluation and Public Value Sub-Committee August 2016-December 2017

Committee Membership

Chairperson: Deborah John, PhD, Oregon State University
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Continuing Members:

Novella J Ruffin NRuffin@vsu.edu
Lisa Franzen-Castle lfranzen2@unl.edu
Soghra Jarvandi sjarvand@utk.edu

Newer Member:

Laura Balis lbalis@uwyo.edu (Jan 2017)
Michele E Walsh mwalsh@email.arizona.edu
(May, 2017)

Subcommittee mission: Provide expert opinion to NIFA National Program Leaders regarding evaluation and public value of national health and nutrition policies and programs to strategically position the Cooperative Extension System (CES) for the future.

Subcommittee goals: We had two primary goals during this reporting. **The first goal** was to explore evaluation within the context of NIFA broadly and within the work of the Nutrition and Health Committee for Planning and Guidance in order to be a resource for planning and evaluation. **The second goal** was to gather evidence about the proposed CES-RWJF national partnership in order to provide guidance for Culture of Health program planning through the lens of evaluation and public value. **An emerging goal** is to explore how to enhance the public value of CES as an organizational partner in advancing the health of U.S. residential populations as outlined our National Framework for Health and Wellness.

EPV Subcommittee achievements are organized in alignment with stated goals:

Goal One: *Explore program-related metrics/indicators and develop a resource for program planning and evaluation.* Members participated in and shared the National Extension Education Evaluation Resources: Discussion hosted by NIFA on January 11-12, 2017. We reviewed national “performance indicators” for (possible) indicators of population health outcomes for CES. We considered the difference between “program performance indicators/metrics” and “program outcome/impact indicators/measures.” We discussed what would be useful for our CES colleagues to help with program planning for evaluation? We proposed a demonstration project using participatory impact pathway analysis aimed at a single primary outcome: obesity – preventing an increase in obesity prevalence in priority subpopulations, i.e. high obesity prevalence by group. ***This project is ongoing.***

Next steps related to Goal One will be to consider developing informational and/or educational resources, such as online trainings and technologies (e.g. evaluation tools, indicator inventory), presentations at meetings/conferences, etc. that can be accessed by all states and programs, including evaluation of products.

Goal Two: *Provide guidance for Culture of Health program planning through the lens of evaluation and public value.* Endorsed by NHCPG Chair, S. Harden, and in alignment with the committee responsibilities to inform national planning and provide guidance related to nutrition and health, our subcommittee drafted a response to the CES-RWJF RFA to share with NIFA National Program Leaders. There was shared concern that the proposed collaboration to advance the RWJ Culture of Health framework through the CES was planned without representation/input from the Nutrition and Health Committee for Planning and Guidance. Steps were outlined for subcommittee members to independently review the RFA and provide an initial evaluation of the opportunity, aggregate individual reviews into one EPV subcommittee response to the RFA. Participate in the April 6 informational webinar and draft a fully-informed, EPV subcommittee response to inform NIFA and CES leadership. Soghra, Lisa and Deborah developed recommendations to accompany our response and concerns. ***The EPV subcommittee response and recommendations were shared with NIFA NHCPG and Program Leaders, Ahlshia Shipley and Jane Clary Loveless, and presented to CES-RWJF leadership via written report and discussed via phone conference on April 26, 2017.***

Some committee members convened in May at the NHOC (Soghra, Deborah, Michele). After summer break, our committee resumed meeting October 2017. A discussion of the definition and/or target of “health” within the NHCPG, considering the recent communications specific to emerging rural health concerns, such as the “U.S. opioid epidemic.” Jane Clary clarified that our committee is specific to nutrition and health concerns. We began an idea mapping activity to develop our focus, work plan, timeline, and product for the upcoming year. Thus an ***emerging goal*** is to explore how to enhance the public value of CES as an organizational partner in advancing the health of U.S. residential populations as outlined our National Framework for Health and Wellness. We are considering a publication, e.g. “Health Impact Evaluation: A Strategy for Improving the Public Value of Extension’s 21st Century Goal of Improving Health in America.”

Our meeting frequency is consistent. Barring unforeseen (or scheduled) barriers, we meet regularly on the second Tuesday of each month at 1pm PST, 2pm MST, 3pm CST, 4pm EST using Zoom.

Upcoming Call Schedule: We will continue to follow this meeting schedule through June 2018.