

Oregon Environmental Public Health Tracking Program

Environmental and Occupational Epidemiology • Office of Environmental Public Health



Data Use and Network Content Briefing Document

Most of the work of the Oregon Technical Advisory Group (OTAG) is accomplished by two workgroups that meet to discuss developing network content and building the technical infrastructure of the network. The two OTAG workgroups promote resource sharing, provide topic area consultation on standards and methods, evaluate AVR tools, and review the technical development of the Oregon and National EPHT Networks.

The Data Use and Network Content (DUNC) workgroup met monthly between December 2006 and October 2007 and worked on the following tasks:

- Evaluated existing data systems that have AVR functionality, such as VistaPHw
- Examined the indicator work done by the State Environmental Health Indicators Collaborative (SEHIC), discussed the implications of adopting currently known standards for indicators, and critiqued the preliminary indicators developed by the National EPHT Content Workgroup teams
- Explored the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for visualizing environmental public health data
- Discussed data sharing, privacy rules, and best practices for mapping health and environmental data
- Reviewed the draft version of the EPHT 101 training, which is now available on the National Environmental Health Association's website:
www.nehacert.org/catalog/index.php?cPath=28&main_page=index
- Updated and prioritized the *EPHT Database Inventory* to guide the creation of PHIN-EPHT standard metadata

Example of a product from DUNC: *EPHT Database Inventory*

An example of a product of the DUNC workgroup was updating and prioritizing the *EPHT Database Inventory*. During the planning phase of the EPHT program, Oregon EPHT compiled a comprehensive inventory of databases and data systems available in Oregon. However, many entries in this inventory were of unknown quality and status.

DUNC reviewed, updated, and ranked the 86 entries in the inventory during three one-hour meetings. The purpose of ranking the inventory was to guide Oregon EPHT with creation of metadata. Ranking factors included spatial extent, temporal stability, relation to environmental public health, and data quality. Databases were ranked into high, medium, or low priority. If an entry was found to be unsuitable for EPHT, it was removed from the database.

Using the ranks assigned by the DUNC workgroup, Oregon EPHT staff will create metadata records to describe the data systems that were ranked as high priority, and later, for those with lower ranks. The metadata for these databases will be posted to the existing metadata registry, available on the Oregon EPHT website at www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/epht/Metadata_AZ.shtml.