

Commission to Study Environmentally-Triggered Chronic Illness

HB 511

RSA Chapter: 126-A: 73

11-13-17

- I. Meeting was called to order at 10:06 am by Chairman Pearson.
In attendance were: Reps. Salloway, Pearson, Messmer, Ohm and Guthrie; Sen Fuller Clark, Mr. Dumond, Ms. Cappiello and Ms. Costello.

A: Rep. Pearson reported on the overlap with the Seacoast Cancer Cluster Commission and the potential for joint session.

B: Rep. Olm has recommended that Rep Pearson visit with DHHS to discuss data needs.

1. This is an ongoing discussion.

C: Mr. Bates is out ill.

D: Next meeting is Dec. 8 and may be a joint meeting.

II. Rep. Salloway introduced Professor Robert Woodward retired health economist from UNH.

A: Dr. Woodward reviewed his methodology for assessing cost-effectiveness of risk mitigations vs. the benefit of risk reduction.

1. One problem is assessing the cost paid by the reinsured. Costs include hospital costs, physician costs and then last days at work, caregiving; it becomes quite complex.
 - a. He compared the value of risk vs. a value such as housing accessible to a beach.
 - b. He cited the need for small scale analysis; small geographical units.

B: Mr. Dumond noted the difficulty measuring the cost of lead abatement vs. increases in rent.

1. Dr. Woodward posed an alternative approach to lead: rent only to older residents.

C: Rep. Olm asked about direct and indirect costs.

1. Dr. Woodward discussed air pollution and asthma as indirect costs.

D: Rep. Pearson noted the argument of cost-effectiveness vs. compassion.

1. He asked for links to literature on cost effectiveness.
2. Dr. Woodward indicated that this literature is risk-specific. There is the potential for a map of chronic illnesses and some data on cost. He would be willing to collaborate with DHHS, Ms. Costello and Rep. Salloway.

E. Rep. Messmer asked for Dr. Woodward's publications.

F: Rep. Olm asked if there were confidence levels on predictions of cost effectiveness.

G: Rep. Messmer noted the need to generate data.

H: Rep. Salloway noted a study on air pollution and asthma. It was difficult to demonstrate a relationship. He noted the precautionary principle.

1. Dr. Woodward reviewed the tension between this precautionary principle and cost effectiveness.
- I. Ms. Costello noted the need for analysis of attributional risk.
1. Dr. Woodward described his own work on indirect costs of air pollution in Maine.

J: Rep. Pearson thanked Dr. Woodward and threatened further contact!

III. Sen. Fuller Clark asked for a definition of chronic disease.

A: Rep. Salloway identified cancers, metabolic and neurologic disease.

1. Mr. Dumond and Dr. Bush discussed what is available as coded data.

B: Ms. Costello provided a list which Dr. Wold had offered.

1. She noted the public health tracking grant and the possible convergence with the work of the commission.
2. Dr. Bush listed the diseases she is tracking on her grant.
3. Mr. Dumond described the resource limitations on DHHS and the tracking grant.

C: Dr. Woodward advised the use of correlation coefficients rather than map points.

1. Dr. Bush agreed.

D: Rep. Olm asked about spurious correlations.

1. Dr. Woodward replied that this is an arcane art.
2. Rep. Salloway discussed the problem of multi-collinearity in data.

E: Sen. Fuller Clark questioned how the commission might move forward to identify specific threats.

F: Mr. Dumond documented the risk factors already being identified by DPHS.

IV. Meeting adjourned by 11:25 am.

Respectfully Submitted:

J.C. Salloway, Clerk

