

TORONTO CANCER PREVENTION COALITION

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Joan Smith
Title
Organization
Address
City
Postal Code

November 12, 1999

Dear Ms. Smith,

The Toronto Cancer Prevention Coalition Dietary Risk Factors Working Group is currently undertaking an environmental scan of activities and resources in Toronto to address dietary risk factors and cancer. You have been identified as a key stakeholder in initiatives around diet and cancer. **I am writing to you on behalf of the Dietary Risk Factors Working Group to invite you to participate in this initiative.** Your input to this environmental scan is very important and, of course, strict confidentiality will be maintained regarding the source of any information you provide.

The framework for the environmental scan is the Report of the Ontario Task Force on the Primary Prevention of Cancer *Recommendations for the Primary Prevention of Cancer* (1995). The *Recommendations for the Primary Prevention of Cancer* (1995) are divided into two main groupings:

1. Public Policies Promoting Healthy Diets (10 recommendations)
2. Education/Public Awareness Initiatives (7 recommendations)

The recommendations are listed in the enclosed chart.

We are asking that you provide the following information:

1. For each recommendation that you are comfortable addressing we are interested in receiving information regarding:
 - a) Activities and resources (written or programs) that you are aware of both within and, if possible, outside of your organization that address the recommendation (who is doing what?)
 - b) The gaps in activities/resources in addressing the recommendation (what needs to be done?)
2. We are also interested in your opinion on the *Recommendations for the Primary Prevention of Cancer* (1995). Do you feel that there are recommendations that should be added or deleted? If so, what are they?
3. Finally, we are asking if you could identify any other key stakeholders who could provide information to this process.

The information gathered will be used to develop a report for submission to the Toronto Cancer Prevention Coalition Interim Steering Committee and will be presented at their Policy and Planning Conference. The desired outcome of this environmental scan is to identify gaps in policy, services and programming around diet and cancer. These gaps will ultimately become recommendations that the Working Group will make regarding policy change and program development.

Recognizing that you are very busy, we are hoping that you would agree to share your valuable information in one of the three following ways:

1. Through a telephone interview to complete the enclosed chart at a time that suits your schedule.
2. Completing the enclosed chart independently and returning it by fax.
3. Receiving the chart by Email and returning your comments by Email.

Unfortunately, we are working under very tight timelines and, if at all possible, would like to receive information from you before **Tuesday November 30, 1999**. I will contact you within the next few days to discuss your interest in participating and the manner in which you would like to do so. If you have any questions, please free to contact me by telephone or fax at (416)785-0548 or Email: pamb@the-wire.com.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,



Pam Bensimon, RD
Contract Researcher, Toronto Cancer Prevention Coalition Dietary Risk Factors
Working Group

**Review of Dietary Risk Factors Recommendations
Environmental Scan-Public Policies Promoting Healthy Diets**

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS	WHO'S DOING WHAT?	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?	COMMENTS
<p>1. The Task Force recommends that the government promote intersectoral collaboration between government and industry, including the agri-food industry, food retailers, and food services, to ensure the concerted implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies promoting healthy eating habits.</p>			
<p>2. The Task Force recommends that the provincial government review its policies governing the production, storage and distribution of food products to ensure that all Ontario residents have access to a high-quality supply of nutritious food.</p>			
<p>3. The Task Force recommends that government should seek collaboration with the food industry, in order to ensure the acceptance of policies ensuring access to a healthy food supply.</p>			

**Review of Dietary Risk Factors Recommendations
Environmental Scan-Public Policies Promoting Healthy Diets**

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS	WHO'S DOING WHAT?	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?	COMMENTS
<p>4. To encourage the adoption of policies and practices promoting healthy eating, the Task Force recommends that the Ontario government should work with, and support the development of, community-based healthy eating coalitions and local food policy councils</p>			

**Review of Dietary Risk Factors Recommendations
Environmental Scan-Public Policies Promoting Healthy Diets**

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS	WHO'S DOING WHAT?	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?	COMMENTS
<p>5. The Task Force recommends that the Ontario Ministry of Health work with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and other relevant ministries to develop an adequate nutrition labelling system that enables Ontario consumers to determine the nutritional value of all food products and to make informed, healthy choices. Educational efforts should also be undertaken to familiarize consumers with this new system.</p>			

**Review of Dietary Risk Factors Recommendations
Environmental Scan-Public Policies Promoting Healthy Diets**

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS	WHO'S DOING WHAT?	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?	COMMENTS
<p>6. Task Force recommends that the following measures be considered by the Ontario government to reduce socio-economic inequities in nutritional status:</p> <p>6.1 expand alternative distribution channels such as community kitchens, food buying clubs, field- to-table programs and community gardens to increase access to food;</p>			

**Review of Dietary Risk Factors Recommendations
Environmental Scan-Public Policies Promoting Healthy Diets**

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS	WHO'S DOING WHAT?	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?	COMMENTS
<p>6.2 encourage the food industry to donate all fresh produce (fruits and vegetables) and other nutritional food products that do not meet aesthetic grading criteria to food banks or community kitchens</p> <p>6.3 work with local school boards and community organizations to ensure that school breakfast and/or lunch programs are available to all children who need them;</p> <p>6.4 design communities with consideration to access to food stores that provide dequate choices of nutritious and inexpensive foods, and the means for residents to grow their own food if they wish to do so, as in community gardens.</p>			
<p>7. Task Force recommends that the practices of all Ontario's marketing boards and producer associations encourage the greater production and availability of low-fat foods.</p>			

**Review of Dietary Risk Factors Recommendations
Environmental Scan-Public Policies Promoting Healthy Diets**

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS	WHO'S DOING WHAT?	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?	COMMENTS
<p>8. The Task Force encourages the Ontario government to recognize the importance that the application of differential taxation levels has on healthy food consumption. The Task Force further recommends that differential taxation systems be investigated as a means of promoting consumption of lower-fat foods and fruit and vegetables and discouraging consumption of high-fat foods.</p>			
<p>9. To minimize the health risks associated with the consumption of popular, high-fat food products, healthier alternative food preparation practices should be promoted. The provincial government should work with the food industry to facilitate the adoption of healthy food production and manufacturing practices.</p>			
<p>10. All community institutions (schools, hospitals, etc.) and workplaces that currently provide food products should be required to provide healthy food choices on their premises and post nutritional information about the foods served</p>			

**Review of Dietary Risk Factors Recommendations
Environmental Scan-Education/Public Awareness Initiatives**

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS	WHO'S DOING WHAT?	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?	COMMENTS
<p>11. The Task Force recommends that educational efforts undertaken by the government to raise public awareness of the importance of a healthy diet emphasize Canada's Guide to Healthy Eating.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy a variety of foods. • Emphasize cereals, breads, other grain products, vegetables and fruits. • Choose lower-fat dairy products, leaner meats and foods prepared with little or no fat. • Achieve and maintain a healthy body weight by enjoying regular physical activity and healthy eating. • Limit salt, alcohol, and caffeine. 			
<p>12. The Task Force recommends that educational initiatives promoting healthy diets should be population-based, focusing on the promotion of healthy habits among all Ontario residents.</p>			

**Review of Dietary Risk Factors Recommendations
Environmental Scan-Education/Public Awareness Initiatives**

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS	WHO'S DOING WHAT?	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?	COMMENTS
<p>13. The Task Force recommends the increased provision of healthy food preparation and shopping classes at the community level.</p>			
<p>14. The Task Force recommends that all Educational initiatives promoting healthy diets – brochures, media appeals, etc. – should use simple, easy-to-understand language (Grade 6 reading level). Special efforts should be undertaken to convey nutrition information to people with low literacy levels.</p>			

**Review of Dietary Risk Factors Recommendations
Environmental Scan-Education/Public Awareness Initiatives**

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS	WHO'S DOING WHAT?	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?	COMMENTS
<p>15. Educational initiatives encouraging the consumption of healthy diets need to recognize the ethno-racial diversity of the province. Where numbers warrant, educational materials and/or healthy food preparation classes should be geared towards cultural preferences.</p>			
<p>16. The Task Force recommends that the Ministry of Health work with the Ministry of Education to create school food policy and ensure that nutrition education be a mandatory component of comprehensive school health programs starting at the primary grades.</p>			
<p>17. The Task Force suggests that community mobilization efforts with parents be undertaken to encourage the provision of healthier food alternatives in the school. The Ministry of Health should also work with the Ministry of Community and Social Services to provide nutrition education for children in day-care settings.</p>			