

**ASN Advisory Committee on Ensuring Trust in Nutrition Science**  
**CALL NOTES**  
**Wednesday, August 9, 2017**

Bert Garza, Chair  
Sylvia Rowe  
Ed Cooney  
Patrick Stover  
Catherine Bertini  
Robert Steinbrook  
Martha Field

Sarah Ohlhorst, staff

Dr. Garza reviewed the agenda for the call: to discuss comments or concerns related to Sections 1, 2, and 3 initially, followed by Section 4. The committee was reminded to bring up more substantive issues (gaps, redundancy, etc.) on the call and to email all copy editing issues using track changes. The committee will discuss the format of the sample recommendation, as well as where recommendations should be placed within the report: following the appropriate section in Section 4, or in a separate section at the end of the report. Finally, the Committee will review the draft proposed case studies if time allows.

Committee members recommended that an Executive Summary be included since the document has become longer than anticipated. Garza noted that the report will be shared with a copy editor to potentially reduce the length of the report. Garza also noted that the desire is to include less than ten recommendations.

Committee Review of Draft Report

***Section 1***

When mentioning non-communicable diseases (NCDs) the term diet-related is key to include prior to use of this term. To leave out “diet-related” may leave readers with the wrong impression of importance of these two terms. The target audience for the report was clarified – primarily it will be ASN and will be published in an ASN journal. Producing a lay document (which should be closer to a 10-page or less document) has also been discussed to reach a larger audience.

***Section 2***

The writing team will clarify the inclusion of the IFIC Foundation as a source of information on the public’s perception of nutrition research. The IFIC Foundation conducts consumer surveys related to the public’s perception of nutrition-related issues (e.g., consumer behavior), but not necessarily to nutrition research.

***Section 3***

It was suggested that the term “reliable” be removed from the sentence: These stakeholders rely on a steady stream of **reliable** food and nutrition research findings to support their work, and many conduct and/or otherwise support food and nutrition investigations.

It was also suggested that text similar to “a joint venture of USDA and HHS”, follow use of the term “Dietary Guidelines for Americans”.

The [African Development Bank](#) has been active in nutrition and would be a good international organization to include within the section on international agencies.

Committee members suggested including the specific names of universities within the academic section that conduct nutrition research, but others felt the report would invariably omit certain universities, which would upset portions of the ASN membership. The committee agreed to include a sentence on where nutrition research occurs within the academic community, similar to the following: Nutrition research occurs at clinical centers, schools of public health, land-grant and other public universities, and at certain private universities.

Overall committee members felt Sections 1, 2, and 3 flowed well and are appropriate for an ASN member audience.

#### ***Section 4***

Committee members mentioned they liked many portions within Section 4.

The writing team was asked to clarify if the following sentence means ASN and its members, or ASN the organization: “For purposes of this report the accountability of ASN is of primary interest.” This sentence will be recast to note that it is all components of ASN – the members and the organization.

The writing team was also asked to clarify if equity is primarily an international issue. In the U.S. equity is more about the lack of representation by women in clinical research/ trials, although they are included in most public surveys.

The text should make a better case for why some content is included (gender equity; GMOs) rather than solely focusing on the primary issues related to the committee’s charge. The text of the document reflects what was found in literature searches for the primary issues related to the committee’s charge. Using these as examples may bring the key topics of the report closer to home for some readers, and it may eliminate trust if key pieces of the population are eliminated from the report (since these topics are sources of distrust). However, GMOs are included throughout the document and it may divert readers’ attention - perhaps copy editing will find one or two of those examples are gratuitous.

#### ***DRAFT Sample Recommendation***

The draft sample recommendation sent to the committee is an example to show the current format. The committee need not worry about the content of the draft sample recommendation at this time.

It was suggested that the format state the specific recommendation first, then go into the problem being addressed, repeat the recommendation, and discuss how the recommendation will address the problem. Anticipated outcomes could be included within this rationale. If implementation is

tightly tied to the recommendation, it should be included within the rationale. Who will implement the recommendation may also need to be included within the rationale.

Committee members were asked to suggest 1-2 topics from the report that recommendations be drafted for. Transparency was suggested – can we trust this information and whether the scientist is biased? This should include both financial and intellectual conflict of interest. Conflict of interest was also suggested as a topic for a recommendation – how ASN should define, manage, and avoid COI. The “elephant in the room” is industry support for nutrition research. What are the ground rules if professional societies are to accept industry funds? How should research be structured if it is supported by industry? Draft recommendations touch on these topics, as well as a code of conduct for ASN members, and the following: Should ASN develop standards for the inclusion of evidence-based conclusions for publications, news stories, etc.? Should ASN become more involved with helping the public develop scientific literacy?

The drafting group will share draft recommendations with the committee and let them react and use the document as a discussion starter on the next call. Not every recommendation may have a single solution, although the committee can likely come to consensus on several solutions to move those issues forward. The committee also considered the likelihood of consensus regarding topics of concern but not on respective recommendations. For those instances (if any) the group discussed the possibility of forwarding several options for the ASN Board’s consideration.

#### Next Steps

Draft recommendations will be shared with the committee ten days before the next call (by September 16<sup>th</sup>).

The draft report will move forward to a copy editor *so please send copy editing suggestions in track changes to Sarah in the next ten days, by August 19<sup>th</sup>*. Reminders will be sent to committee members prior to the 19<sup>th</sup>.

The next call will be held on **Tuesday, September 26<sup>th</sup>**. An email will be sent confirming the call date/time in the near future.

The call adjourned at 1:59 PM.