

Tobacco Technical Assistance Consortium



Tobacco Control Network

Orientation Manual 2009

TCN Orientation Manual

I. Background Information

A. History and Purpose of the TCN

The Tobacco Control Network (TCN) was initially created in 1994 to facilitate information sharing between the National Cancer Institute-funded ASSIST Program, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)-funded IMPACT Program and other national partners. With the creation of the National Tobacco Control Program in 1999, in which the CDC provided funding to all state health departments for tobacco control programs, the TCN reorganized, placing priority on raising the primacy of tobacco control in all state and territorial health agencies, fostering collaboration, and improving communication among State programs.

The TCN represents a coordinated effort to learn about best practices, strategies, barriers, and complex issues from peers in tobacco control so that states and partners can work together. The TCN seeks to institutionalize tobacco use prevention and control within public health agencies in order to assure that both state/territorial and federal Healthy People 2010 tobacco goals are met.

The mission of the TCN is to improve the public's health by providing education and state-based expertise for tobacco prevention and control at the state/territorial and national levels. To achieve its mission, the TCN works to:

- 1) Raise the priority and primacy of tobacco use prevention and control at the state/territorial and national levels.
- 2) Support the needs of state/territorial tobacco control program managers and staff by promoting information-sharing, coordination, and cooperation.
- 3) Foster collaboration between state/territorial tobacco control programs and national partners.

The TCN comprises tobacco control program managers and additional staff from each state, territory, and the District of Columbia. This wide representation allows the network to access a wealth of expertise from across the country.

The TCN gives state/territorial tobacco control staff an opportunity to network with their colleagues, learn about national happenings, and share policy and programming strategies. The network allows members to keep informed on current strategies and activities within the tobacco control world through various mechanisms, including a listserv, a monthly newsletter, and an e-mail alert system. In addition, the TCN allows state/territorial tobacco control to provide feedback and serve as a resource for the CDC's Office on Smoking and Health and national partners (e.g. the American Legacy Foundation, the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, and the Tobacco Technical Assistance Consortium) on state needs and perspectives.

B. TCN Operations and Administration

The TCN is managed and administered by the Tobacco Technical Assistance Consortium (TTAC) through funding from the CDC's Office on Smoking and

Health. TTAC engages in activities to facilitate information sharing between state/territorial tobacco control programs, represents the TCN's interests with national partners, provides technical assistance to all state/territorial program managers and staff, and cultivates leadership opportunities for network members. TTAC is an independent project dedicated to assisting state and local partners in building and growing highly effective tobacco control programs.

II. TCN Resources

A. Web site

The TCN Web site serves as a resource for TCN members and individuals interested in state tobacco control efforts. The Web site contains a description of the history and purpose of the TCN and up-to-date rosters of all current officers and members. Links to the Web sites of state tobacco control programs are also available.

The TCN Web site houses archives of past issues of the Tobacco Free Press newsletter and responses to questions asked via the Help Your Peers listserv. The site contains TCN documents, such as needs assessment and strategic planning reports, and materials from conference calls and programs. The site also contains a section for posting job opportunities.

The TCN Web site can be accessed at <http://www.ttac.org/TCN/index.html>.

B. Help Your Peers Listserv

The Help Your Peers Listserv is an e-mail resource that allows members to obtain feedback from colleagues. TCN members may submit a question to the TCN Manager at tcn@sph.emory.edu. The TCN Manager will format the question and send it out to the entire network membership. Answers to the questions are compiled and archived on the TCN Web site for future reference and further discussion.

Archived questions and responses can be found at <http://www.ttac.org/TCN/peers/index.html>.

C. Tobacco Free Press Newsletter

The Tobacco Free Press is a monthly newsletter that summarizes pertinent tobacco control news, lists tobacco control resources, provides dates for upcoming conferences, and posts job announcements and Requests for Proposals. News items are grouped into different categories, including Secondhand Smoke, Youth Prevention, Disparities, Cessation, Policy, Legal, and Excise Taxes. Issues of the Tobacco Free Press are sent via e-mail to a distribution list consisting of both TCN members and national and local level partners.

To subscribe to the Tobacco Free Press, email tcn@sph.emory.edu.

Archived issues of the newsletter can be accessed on the TCN Web site at <http://www.ttac.org/TCN/TFP/index.html>.

D. Committees

Executive Committee – The Executive Committee consists of the TCN’s Chair, Chair-Elect, Immediate Past Chair, Secretary/Treasurer, Policy and Programming Committee Chairs, and Regional Representatives.

Standing Committees – The TCN offers leadership opportunities through additional standing committees, including:

- Policy Committee – The TCN’s Policy Committee monitors and reviews legislation relating to tobacco prevention and control programs, and determines, with approval from the Executive Committee, the policy agenda for the TCN. The committee works closely with national partners to promote effective tobacco control policy on the state and national level.
- Programming Committee – The TCN’s Programming Committee works to identify technical assistance needs among TCN members and to develop and implement programs to meet these needs. Activities include, but are not limited to, development and administration of a mentoring program for new tobacco control program staff, conference calls, and business meetings.

E. Conference Calls

Informational – These calls feature speakers who address hot-button policy topics, emerging issues, new resources, and other issues relevant to network members.

Regional – TCN regional groups meet on a quarterly basis to network and discuss issues in a small-group setting. TCN regions include:

- **Regions 1-3:** CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT, NJ, NY, PR, VI, DE, DC, MD, PA
- **Region 4:** AL, GA, FL, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV
- **Region 5:** IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI
- **Regions 6-8:** AR, LA, NM, OK, TX, IA, KS, MO, NE, CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY
- **Regions 9-10:** AZ, CA, NV, HI, AK, ID, OR, WA, Mariana Islands, Micronesia, Palau, American Samoa, Guam

Committee – Each of the TCN’s committees meet via conference call on an as-needed basis to carry out planning and business activities.

Symposium – These calls are designed for Program Managers to address tobacco- or management-related issues.

F. Mentoring Program

The mentoring program is designed to develop an informal interpersonal relationship between a more experienced program manager (i.e., the mentor) and a new program manager (i.e., the mentee). Mentors provide support, encouragement, and feedback to their mentees and serve to enhance their

professional development as program managers. E-mail the TCN Manager at tcn@sph.emory.edu for more information on becoming a mentor or mentee.

G. Business Meeting

The TCN Annual Business Meeting occurs in conjunction with the National/World Conference on Tobacco or Health. At the meeting, new officers are elected and TCN members have the opportunity to network and learn about pressing issues.