

Community Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)  
For the Cancer Cluster Investigation  
February 16, 2011, 7:00pm-9:00pm  
Frederick County Health Department

**TAC Purpose:** **a).** To provide assistance in determining what questions should be examined regarding cancer numbers – geographic region, time period, types of cancers, etc. and then **b).** To identify options for how to answer the question(s)/hypothesis(es).

**Working Hypothesis:** There is an increased rate of cancers (gather data on all, possibly narrow down later based on confirmed exposures) within a ¼ mile radius around Ft. Detrick (Area A and B).

- I. Introductions  
Members present included: J. Bee; D. Blank; B. Brookmyer; J. Hahn; K. Harbaugh; E. Kruse; G. Pauly; B. Roberson; J. Sawitzke and R. Watkins. New Guests/Members: Rachel Pisani (Kristen Renee Foundation), George Rudy (private citizen); Dr. Adel Shirmohammadi, PhD (University of Maryland).
- II. Review of Notes from January 19 meeting  
Did not occur. Will review at next meeting.
- III. Update on Ed Kruse's Research Proposal
  - a. Research interests reviewed by E. Kruse and Dr. Shirmohammadi. Not political interest.
  - b. Research proposal defense – to occur shortly.
  - c. Objective or research is to build on prior work of Dr. Nancy Thorpe.
  - d. Proposed geographic area of analysis to include Frederick as a pilot site.
  - e. Proposed types of cancer to be analyzed are childhood cancers and possible a couple of adult cancers. Benefit of focus on childhood cancers is that there are fewer confounding variables that may have impacted their health and the location of exposure, e.g. children on average have not lived in as many areas and do not have occupational risk factors as adults.
  - f. Methodology – not finalized yet
  - g. Considerations – need to determine sample size needed to permit a determination of statistical significance
- IV. Update on KRF Data Collection and Analysis
  - a. Rachel Pisani discussed data collection efforts to date – survey households in 21702 (12,000 mailings) and more recently 21701 and 21703 (22,000 mailings)
  - b. Reviewed map of cancer cases plotted with one-mile band markings radiating out from Ft. Detrick – greater than 800 reported in all bands combined
  - c. Reviewed efforts to improve data completeness and quality
- V. Updates on Other Cancer Cluster Research Initiatives
  - a. National Academy of Science announcement – no new information available
  - b. George Rudy – discussed study he is considering conducting – 3 areas with one of them in proximity of a bio-laboratory
- VI. Review of Sources to Answer Hypothesis

- a. Any new sources?
  - i. Annual Frederick News Post listings of student names by grade – could be used to identify graduates of Yellow Springs Elementary School and Waverly Elementary School [and possibly a control population or non-exposed population school]
  - ii. Facebook could serve as a tool to find self reported health status and other information

VII. Next Steps

- a. Next Meeting: March 9
- b. Homework: The same 😊