

In Change There Is Opportunity
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President elect Barack Obama as signaled increased emphasis on prevention as a key component of his health services package. This change offers the opportunity to garner increased support for environmental health and protection, the most basic component of the health services continuum. But this will happen only if the Administration and the Congress are made aware of the importance, the scope, the need and the comprehensive benefits of environmental health and protection.

Environmental health and protection has not received its proper emphasis as a basic component of the health services continuum. The time is ripe for promoting major improvements in environmental health and protection by those environmental health and protection practitioners who have:

- Developed a comprehensive vision,
- Demonstrated leadership to, and are known to, public policy leaders,
- Practiced consistent and effective program marketing,

The vision should embrace benefits that contribute substantially to reduced disease and disability, lower health care costs, enhanced community economic vitality, enhanced productivity, enhanced community educational achievement, fewer social problems, and enhanced quality of life in a more livable environment.

Lobbying efforts should best be conducted by individual practitioners who have good relations with members of the appropriate House and/or Senate Committees, specific members of the new administration transition team, and key appointees in the new administration.

Support should be specific and justified, rather than just a generalization that environmental health and protection is desirable.

Particular support should be given to those components of environmental health and protection acknowledged to be federal responsibilities. These components include, but are not limited to, workforce development, air quality, safe drinking water, hazardous wastes,

solid wastes, water pollution control, alternative energy production, pure food control, toxics, radiation, food irradiation, industrial hygiene, and global environmental degradation. Of the foregoing, food irradiation offers major possibilities for disease prevention and reduction in health care costs.

Practitioners must not wait for someone else to lead in this effort. Practitioners have the choice of leading or observing.

Now is the time for action by those who have the right vision, the right information and the right leadership.

“Proactive people rise to success, reactive people get second best.” Oscar Levant

(See Health Services Continuum on following page)

Health Services Continuum

ENVIRONMENTAL
HEALTH AND
PROTECTION

HEALTH
PROMOTION

DISEASE
PREVENTION

HEALTH CARE

Examples of
Issues

Examples of
Issues

Examples of
Issues

Examples of
Issues

Clean Air	Substance Abuse	Infectious Diseases	Diagnosis
Clean Water	Family Planning	Clinical Prevention	Primary Care
Toxic Chemicals	Nutrition	PKU Screening	Case Management
Safe Food	Health Education	Glaucoma	Outpatient Services
Radiation	Violence	Diabetes	Clinics
Solid Wastes	Obesity	Osteoporosis	Treatment
Occupational Health	Tobacco	Cancer	Surgery
Hazardous Wastes	Mental Health	Suicides	Long Term Care
Risk Assessment	Physical Activity and Fitness	Oral Health	Acute Care
Risk Communication	Access	Heart Disease and Stroke	Rehabilitation
Risk Management		Maternal and Child Health	Cost Containment
Global Degradation		Access	Health Insurance
Land Use			Mental Health and Treatment
Noise			Developmental Disabilities
Disease Vectors			Alcohol and Drug Treatment
Housing			Access
Ecological Dysfunction			
Unintentional Injuries			
Access			