

Managing the Process and Needs of Cluster Investigations

NCEH's Health Studies Section: Role in Providing Technical Assistance and Tool Development

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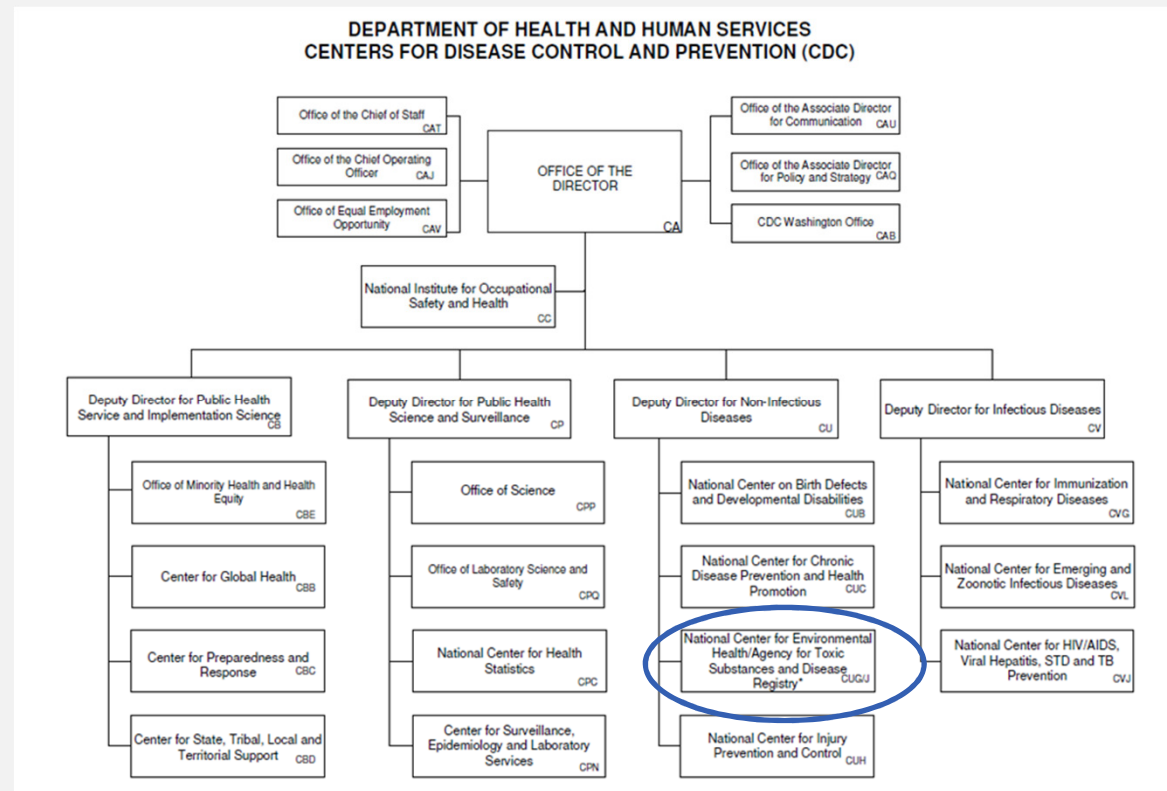
Team Lead (Acting), Health Studies Section, Tracking, Radiation, Chemical,
and Environmental Epidemiology Branch (proposed)

April 25, 2019

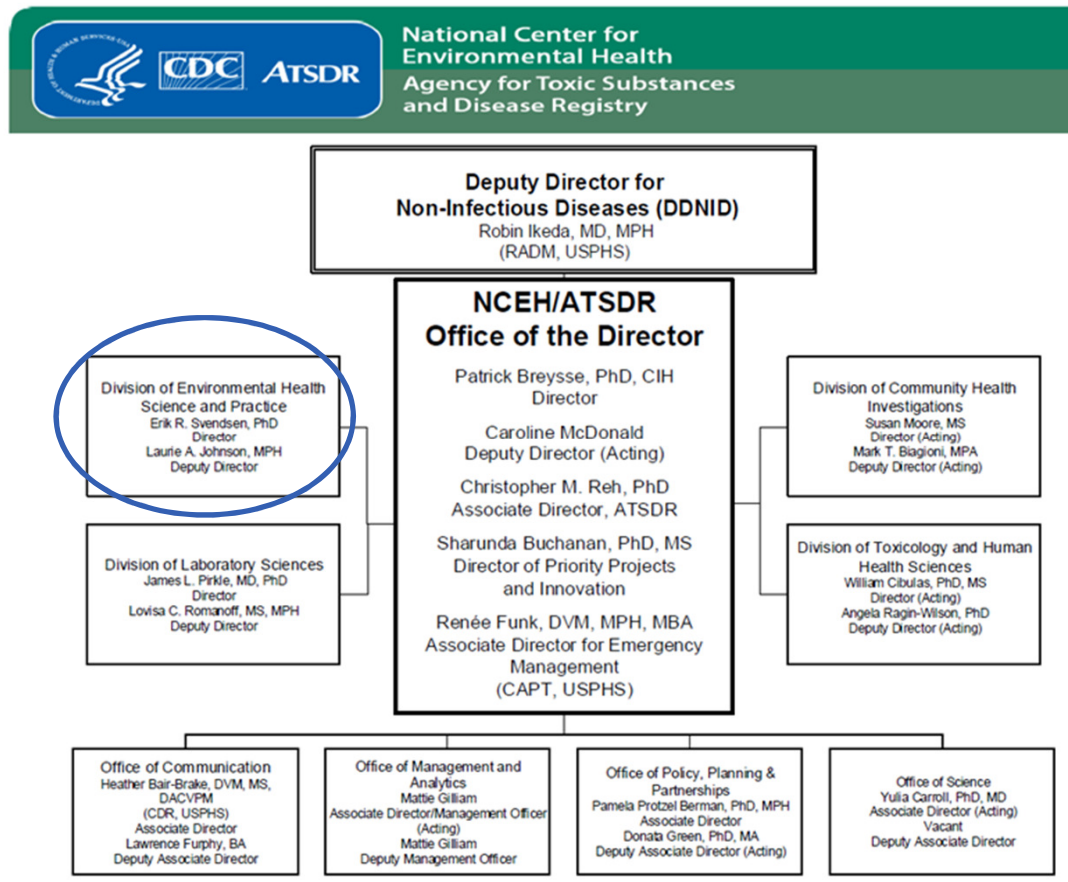
National Center for Environmental Health
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry



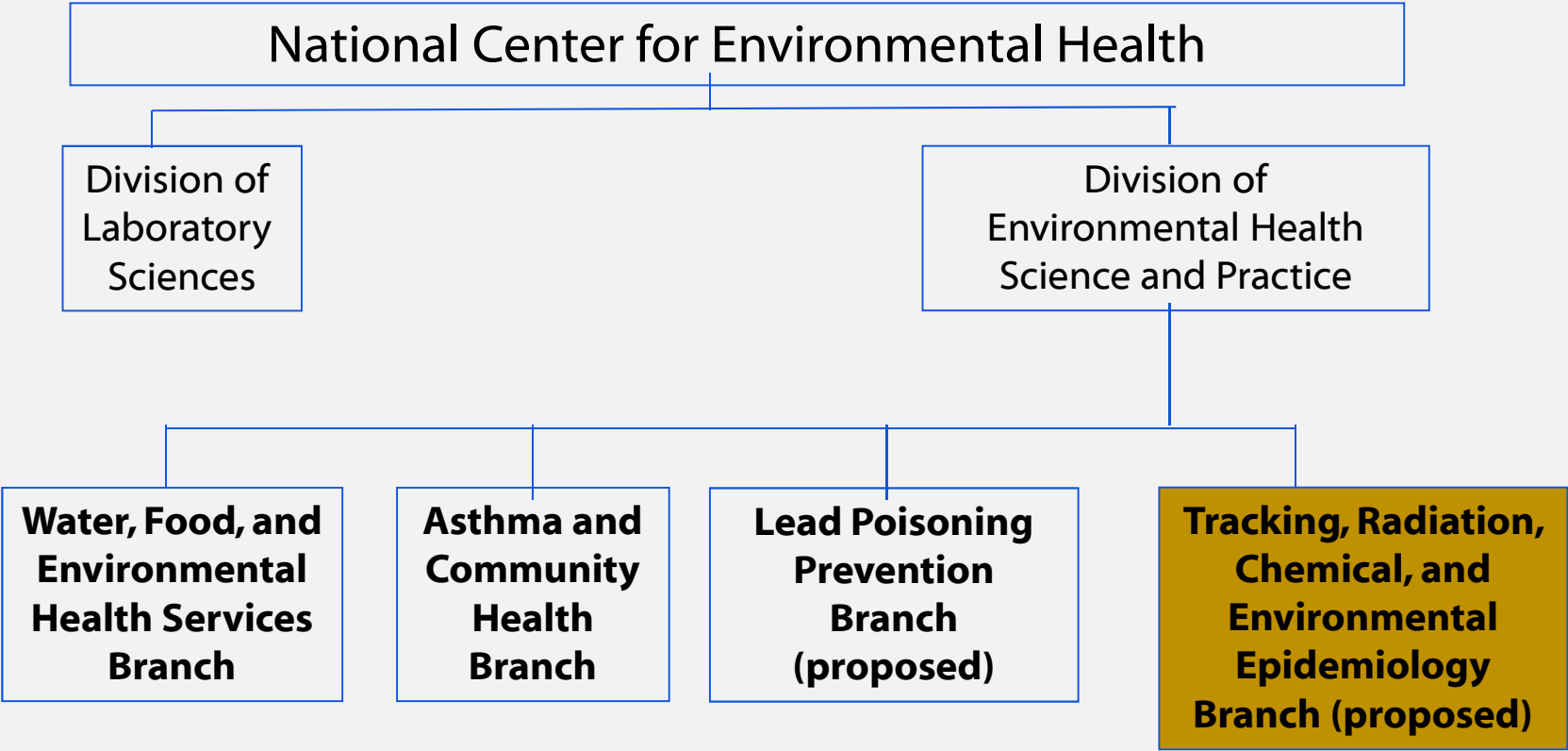
Organization Chart – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



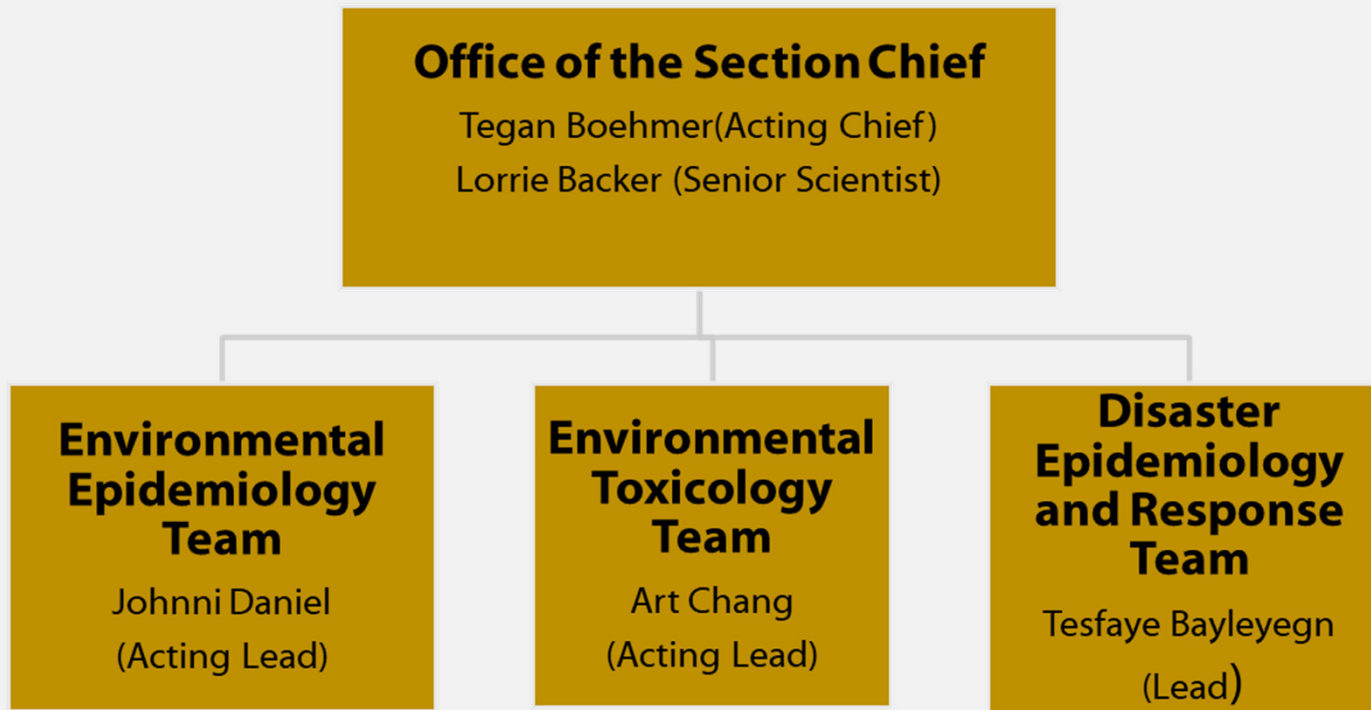
Organization Chart – Deputy Director for Non-Infectious Diseases (DDNID)



Organization Chart – National Center for Environmental Health



Health Studies Section – How we are organized



Health Studies Section – Who we are

- **Broad range of skills and expertise**
 - Epidemiology
 - Medical Toxicology
 - Environmental Health
 - Disaster Preparedness and Response



Health Studies Section – What we do

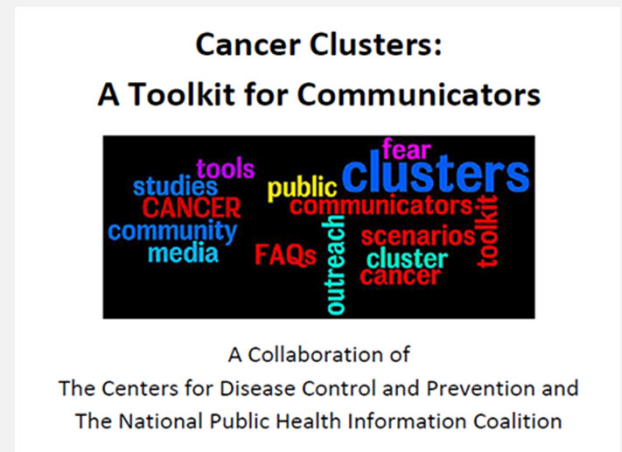
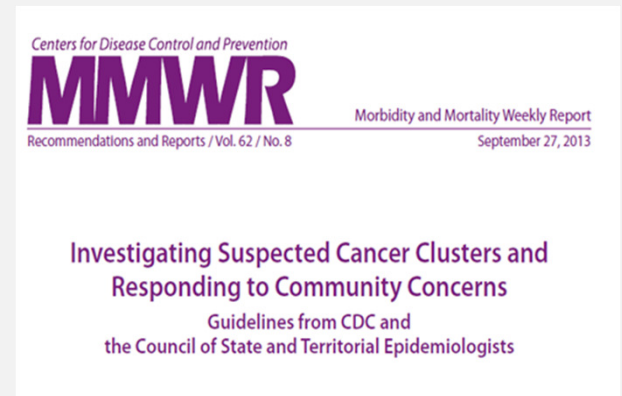
- **Environmental epidemiology research**
 - Characterize exposure and health effects of chemical contaminants
 - Characterize emerging threats – surveillance of clusters of poisoning using the National Poison Data System (NPDS)
 - Identify risk and protective factors for morbidity and mortality related to disasters
- **Prepare for and respond to environmental public health emergencies**
 - Provide technical assistance with outbreak investigations of suspected non-infectious etiology
 - Respond to natural, chemical, and radiological disasters
- **Build environmental epidemiology capacity**
 - Technical assistance to STLTs
 - Develop tools and training

Health Studies Section – What we do

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NCEH Role in Cancer Cluster Tools Development

- **2013 MMWR: Investigating Suspected Cancer Clusters and Responding to Community Concerns**
 - Collaboration with CSTE, ATSDR, other CDC CIOs, and state health departments
 - Guidance for state and local health departments on addressing cancer cluster concerns in communities
- **Cancer Clusters: A toolkit for Communicators**
 - Partnership with National Public Health Information Coalition (NPHIC)
 - Tools for state and local communicators to use when talking with communities about potential cancer clusters and cancer cluster investigations



NCEH Response to Inquiries Related to Cancer Clusters

Inquiry Source	Response
Public	Standard response or provide a contact at state/local health department
State Representative	Contact state and obtain background info and input prior to responding
State/Local Health Department	Response depends on ask from the state/local health department

Common Requests from State/Local Health Departments

- **Review state investigation protocols**
 - Analysis of SIR calculations
 - Data collection tools
 - When to stop investigation
 - *NCEH Epidemiologists review for adherence to 2013 CDC/CSTE Guidelines*
- **Communications Support**
 - Review communications plan
 - Discuss talking points
 - *NCEH Risk Communication experts provide assistance in developing communication messages*

Moving Forward: CDC/ATSDR Cancer Cluster Guideline Update

- In FY 2016, Congress passed “Trevor’s Law” as part of Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act
- In FY 2019, Congress appropriated \$1M to CDC/NCEH to implement a portion of Trevor’s Law pertaining to updating guidelines for investigating potential cancer clusters

Goals of update:

- To incorporate technical and scientific advancements since 2013 guidelines
- To ensure STLT public health agencies have access to current scientific tools and approaches

CDC/ATSDR Cancer Cluster Guideline Update — Next Steps

- **Publish Federal Register Notice for public input**
 - Estimated time frame: May, 2019
 - Open for 60 days
- **Convene SMEs via Cancer Cluster Guidelines Workgroup under NCEH/ATSDR Board of Scientific Counselors**
- **Obtain input from state HDs through**
 - Survey of all 50 states and territories
 - Multi-disciplinary focus groups with representative sample of states
- **Expect to publish updated guidelines in 2021**

Questions?

For more information, contact NCEH/ATSDR
1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)
TTY: 1-888-232-6348 www.atsdr.cdc.gov www.cdc.gov
Follow us on Twitter @CDCEnvironment

The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry.



Trevor's Law

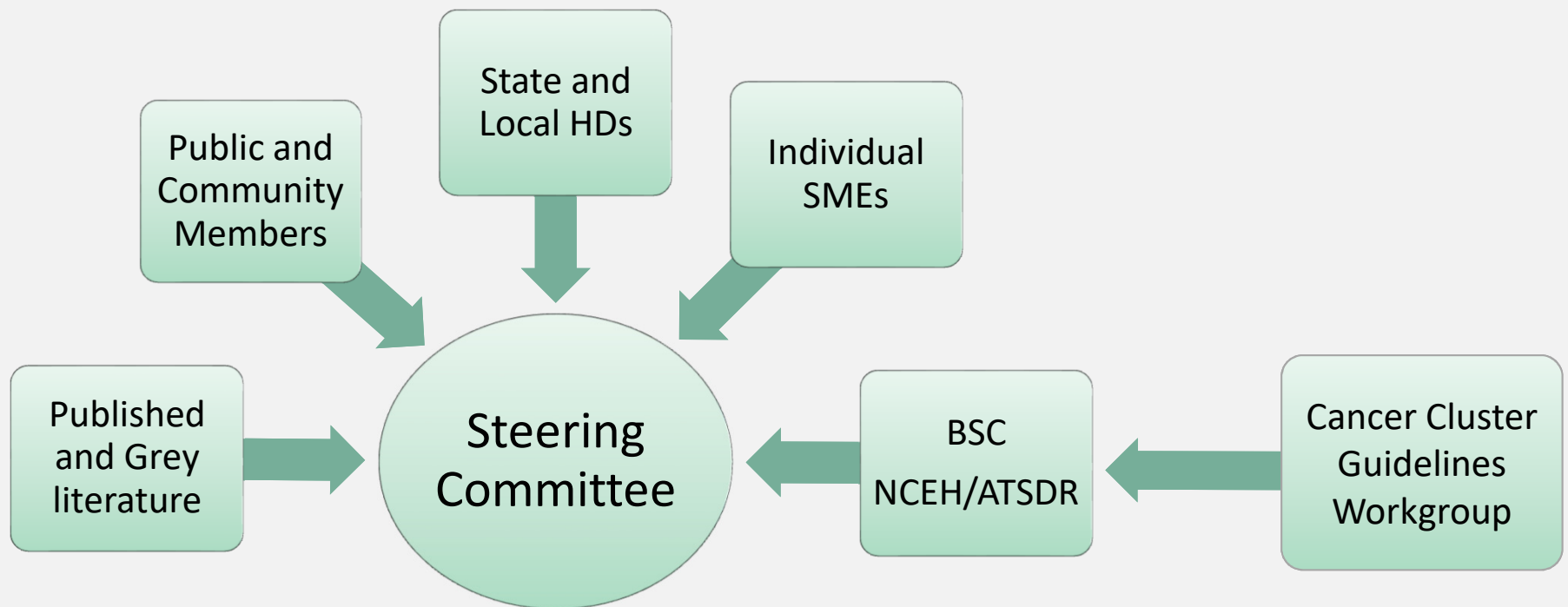
- **Requires HHS to**
 1. Develop criteria for designation of potential cancer clusters
 2. **Develop, publish, and periodically update guidelines for investigating potential cancer clusters**
 3. Coordinate investigation of potential cancer clusters
 4. Conduct other duties such as provide technical assistance, maintain staff expertise, consult with community members, and disseminate reports
- **FY19 appropriations provide \$1 million to CDC/NCEH to update cancer cluster guidelines**

CDC/ATSDR Cancer Cluster Guideline Update — Process*

- **Follow CDC's official Guidelines Development Process**
- **Form internal CDC/ATSDR Steering committee**
 - Members from ATSDR, NCEH, NIOSH, NCCDPHP
 - Expertise in cancer, communications, epidemiology, geospatial science, policy
- **Establish Cancer Cluster Guidelines Workgroup under Board of Scientific Counselors, NCEH/ATSDR**
- **Gather input from multiple sources**

*Proposed

CDC/ATSDR Cancer Cluster Guideline Update — Inputs*



*Proposed