

ASN Advisory Committee on Ensuring Trust in Nutrition Science
CALL NOTES
Thursday, December 14, 2017

Bert Garza, Chair
Carol Tucker-Foreman
Sylvia Rowe
Ed Cooney
Catherine Bertini
Robert Steinbrook
Eric Campbell
Martha Field
Cathie Woteki

Sarah Ohlhorst, staff

Dr. Bert Garza welcomed the committee and reviewed the agenda. There were no additions to the agenda. The call will focus on the recommended practices, with time at the end to discuss timeframe. Dr. Garza noted that while the report process has taken longer than anticipated, it should be wrapped up by January 2018.

Dr. Garza noted that all questions, concerns and additional suggested edits should be sent to Sarah at sohlhorst@nutrition.org

Committee Review of Recommendations

It was suggested that discussion on recommendation 1AB be held till the end, with focus first on the other recommendations beginning with recommendation 2.

Committee members noted that clarity is needed on who these recommendations are for – ASN and its members, while other nutrition-related stakeholders will certainly find them useful. A preamble is forthcoming to help clarify who the recommendations are directed at. Committee members suggested that each recommendation should be able to be read and put into context without reading the preamble first.

Recommendation 2

Committee members agreed that this recommendation needed no edits.

Recommendation 3

An addition was suggested - ASN should be even more proactive and use modern technologies such as social media to be even more upfront on these issues.

ASN should increase its engagement and dialogue with the public and media. Clarity is needed in the recommendation to distinguish between media directed towards scientific vs lay audiences.

Recommendation 4

Clarify scope - that this recommendation is specific to nutrition research and those conducting nutrition research.

This recommendation is closely tied to Recommendation 1AB and therefore formal endorsement by the Committee was held until first discussing Recommendation 1AB.

Recommendation 5

Committee members agreed that this recommendation needed no edits.

Recommendation 6

It was suggested that this recommendation and its intent be broken down more. Part of the recommendation deals with individuals who are leaders of ASN, beyond regular members, while the other part deals with nutrition researchers and scientists in general. Clarification of audience is needed.

It was suggested that the following language should be removed from the bolded section: e.g., participants' financial, scientific positions, and employer policies related to promotions and salary increases. It was noted that this is institution-specific language, completely separate from ASN, and goes too far beyond the scope of ASN. The parenthetical examples would fit better in the explanatory paragraph below the bolded. However, some examples go beyond conflict of interest and fit into the category of bias, which should be noted.

Emphasis should be on financial incentives first, with non-financial incentives secondary to this recommendation. Non-financial incentives can be referenced, but should not be a focus of this recommendation. It is an important topic of debate, but conflict of interest disclosures should be kept to financial.

A recent article in JAMA on non-financial disclosures was mentioned, which will be circulated to the Committee.

Recommendation 1AB

Both Option #1 and A within Recommendation 1 are very similar and either could be used moving forward.

Preference was stated for Option #2 over Option B within Recommendation 1 with 5 votes for #2; 1 vote for B, 1 abstained. Two voting Committee members were not present on the call.

The Committee will now focus on improving the language in #2 of Recommendation 1. Conflict of interest should be used without the terms *actual and potential* prior to use of the term conflict of interest. Within the recommendation conflict of interest should be defined, as well as entities of interest. There are many non-profit organizations that should also be considered within entities of interest. There is a sentence within the National Academies report that could be used to define conflict of interest in this report.

The Committee will be able to revote on option #1 vs #2 after revision of the text of #2.

Next Steps

The writing team will make the changes discussed on the call, and get revisions to the Committee as soon as possible along with the final report, with the added preamble and some case studies. We will seek final approval of all on the January call. Committee members requested the materials 7-10 days prior to the call. The next call was scheduled for Friday, January 5th at 1:00pm Eastern. Sarah will send out a new poll to reschedule that call for later in the month.

The call adjourned at 3:06 PM.