



# NATIONAL COALITION FOR SEXUAL HEALTH

## Communications Action Group Summary of August 8, 2014 Conference Call

### Participants

Deb Arrindell – American Sexual Health Association  
Lynn Barclay – American Sexual Health Association  
Jennnifer Bass – Kinsey Institute  
Tom Beall – individual member  
Heather Eastman-Mueller – University of Missouri  
Jacky Fontanella – Partnership for Prevention  
Susan Gilbert – Partnership for Prevention  
Jennifer Grove – National Sexual Violence Resource Center  
Lisa Guiterman – Ogilvy Public Relations  
Deb Hauser – Advocates for Youth  
Kate Heyer -- National Association of County and City Health Officials  
Jennifer Johnsen – Planned Parenthood  
Alyson Kristensen – Partnership for Prevention  
Penny Loosier – CDC  
Jenelle Marie – The STD Project  
Daryl Presgraves – Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network  
Ksenia Shepelev – Partnership for Prevention  
Dana Van Gorder – Project Inform  
Beverly Whipple -- individual member

## **1. Update on Current Activities**

The call started with an update on media outreach, the media training workshop to be held at the NCSH annual meeting on September 22<sup>nd</sup>, and NCSH plans for social/digital media.

**Media outreach:** Lisa Guiterman, of Ogilvy Public Relations, provided an update on new media placements relating to the sexual health guide. Since May 20<sup>th</sup>, ten stories have been published or are pending to be published. Stories were placed in: Sirius XM's Doctor Radio/Sexual Health show, WebMd, Youth Radio, GirlZone, "Everyone is Gay" blog, while stories are pending in Prevention.com, Shape (in-book), Women's eNews/Teen Voices, and Women's Health (in-book). A launch report is currently being prepared, and will be shared with NCSH members at the annual meeting.

Lisa also highlighted new content partnerships established with YourTango and GirlZone. NCSH now has the opportunity to write sexual health stories, and place them at no cost on these outlets. GirlZone has also requested that NCSH review its existing sexual health content and provide feedback to improve the overall quality.

We discussed potential outreach to Laci Green, who has a large following among teens and young adults through her popular uTube show and website. Jennifer Johnsen said that a Planned Parenthood affiliate had worked with Laci, and that she would be happy to have a follow-up call with us to discuss.

**Media training workshop:** Susan Gilbert provided an overview of the two-hour "Media Training 201: sexual health sound bites and interview techniques," which will be held at the annual NCSH meeting. The workshop is designed to share the new media message box and proof points with the entire coalition; role model good and bad interview techniques; and build the skills of NCSH members in delivering sexual health sound bites and messages. The workshop will feature several interactive elements, including a one-hour small group session where participants will act as reporters, interviewees and observers. The workshop will be led by Kellie Mullen, Global Media and Presentation Coach of Ogilvy Public Relations, along with other Ogilvy staff.

Jennifer Bass reminded us to review the materials and report Kinsey developed for a sex researchers and journalist's workshop that they held a few years ago. Deb Hauser suggested that we include controversial and difficult questions as part of the role-playing media interviews.

**Social/Digital Media Plan:** Jacky Fontanella provided an overview of NCSH's plans to use Facebook and Twitter to promote our core messages and materials, which will begin in October 2014. Jenelle also suggested that we consider using instagram and pinterest to disseminate small videos and photos.

## **2. Brainstorm: future CAG priorities and activities**

The goals of this session were to review our original CAG goals to ensure that they are still relevant and to brainstorm our future content areas and activities. The results of this

discussion will serve as the foundation for our CAG session on September 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**A. CAG goals:** Originally set about 18 months ago (in February 2013), the group agreed that these goals are still relevant and appropriate. While they are ambitious, the group believes they complement the work of NCSH members and advance sexual health overall. The goals include:

- **Promote awareness and acceptance of sexual health as a core element of overall health and well-being**, along with action steps the public can take to achieve it and the related benefits.
- **Provide a solid foundation and tools** to help organizations create effective sexual health communications.
- **Encourage a wide variety of organizations, particularly the media** and commercial outlets, to include sexual health on their agendas and to take action.
- **Promote and normalize conversations** around sexual health among partners, parents and children, and patients and health care groups.

Overall the group agreed that goals number 2 and 3 help us achieve numbers 1 and 4.

**B. Our content focus over next two years:** Framed by a discussion guide, the following options were considered:

- operationalize the four other action steps;
- continue to promote the guide and “make sexual health part of your healthcare routine;”
- promote the NCSH definition of sexual health and action steps, along with a call-to-action (CTA) to improve sexual health;
- give special emphasis to “building positive relationships;”
- increase our support of current efforts to influence media standards and practices relating to sexual health content.

***Operationalizing all of the action steps:*** The group agreed that we should primarily focus our work on fleshing out the four other action steps to good sexual health that the CAG developed in 2013. Over the past year, through the release of the guide and the national media initiative, we’ve largely focused our efforts on one action step: “make sexual health part of your health care routine.” Members of the group said this was very important, and agreed that we should also continue to promote this step.

We agreed that we should now turn our primary attention to giving arms and legs to the other action steps, which include:

- Value yourself and decide what’s right for you.
- Build positive relationships.
- Get smart about your body and protect it.
- Treat your partners well, and expect them to treat you well

For example, when we say, “value yourself and decide what’s right for you?” what does that mean, and what practical advice can we give? We can use our existing message strategy, which does include specific advice with each action step, as the starting point for this work.

As we flesh out each action step, we need to consider how we might need to segment the advice by audience – by age, gender, etc. And, how to bring this advice to life in an appealing way. CAG members suggested we try to use testimonials, personal stories, videos, and photos to make the steps relevant and practical.

Building positive relationships was identified by the public as the biggest challenge to achieving good sexual health. The group considered whether we should give special emphasis to this action step. The group agreed that a lot of relationship content exists, and that we need to be careful not to reinvent the wheel. We could, however, do a quick review of relationship advice/resources, provide any content that is missing, and link the public to existing resources. We will explore options on September 22<sup>nd</sup>.

One CAG member suggested that we also provide these news tools to health care providers, who can share them with patients. The first place to start is with promotion of the new NCSH brochure, “What is sexual health? Five action steps to help you achieve it.”

The group agreed that we can develop the content by relying upon the expertise of the CAG and others. A lengthy message development process should not be required for these action steps. Limited pre-testing might be considered by the CAG.

***Advancing systems change to promote balanced and comprehensive sexual health content.*** One member suggested that this could be one of the lasting legacies of the coalition since it is a broad-based, overarching initiative. Systems change could be aimed at social media, entertainment media, and other media outlets. A CAG member suggested that we look at the Norman Mailer model. One member suggested that we work with producers and directors, and provide important sexual health information and possible story lines.

The group agreed that we should devote time to discussing this potential initiative during the September 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting. Currently, two CAG members – Larry Swiader and Deb Levine -- are leading a media standards and practices initiative that is aimed at social media, and would welcome the involvement of more CAG members.

**C. Our activities over the next two years:** Framed by the discussion guide, several options for CAG activities were presented, including:

- Content development and story placement through media partnerships and websites
- Ongoing media outreach
- Message development and pre-testing
- Development of technical assistance tools

- Media Standards and Practices Initiative

Over the next two years, the CAG decided that it would like to focus on operationalizing the action steps, content development and story placement with leading websites/media outlets, media outreach to traditional and social media, and the systems change/media standards initiative.

***Operationalizing the action steps.*** As mentioned earlier, the group does not believe that extensive message development is needed to operationalize the action steps. Instead, we can rely upon the expertise of coalition members and existing resources. During the September 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting, we will brainstorm a process for conducting this work, which will require significant CAG involvement.

***Content development with media outlets/websites:*** Several CAG members agreed to author content. During the September 22<sup>nd</sup> session, we will brainstorm story ideas and a content calendar, and seek volunteers to develop pieces for Your Tango and GirlZone. We could also discuss forming partnerships with other channels that have significant reach to the public.

***Ongoing media outreach.*** The group discussed opportunities for generating ongoing media coverage, which included:

- Continue to promote the guide to sexual health services to media outlets, with particular emphasis on those that reach teens, African Americans, and Latinos. To do so, the media materials will be tailored, and relevant spokespeople will be recruited and briefed. Targeted media outreach will be conducted.
- We will also continue to respond to media inquiries, and identify opportunities to link sexual health messages with special events/observances (e.g. World Sexual Health Day, STD Awareness month, back to school, off to college). This often requires advance planning, up to 3 to 6 months ahead of time.
- We will consider issuing an NCSH Call-to-Action around the state of sexual health in America and launch our definition/action steps. We will promote our new tools along with personal stories. We could increase the news value of the pitch by including new data and/or survey results relating to attitudes towards sexual health. This media push is likely to be conducted after the action steps have been operationalized, and tools have been created. We will continue to feature NCSH members in media outreach.
- If resources are available, conduct a survey or add questions to an existing survey. Write questions that allow you to tell the story that you want to. However, the survey should be a random, nationally representative and

statistically significant sample, in order for the media to use it.

**Technical assistance tools.** The group did not discuss this area in detail, but could revisit the topic on September 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Media Standards and Practices.** Please see description on page 3.

### **3. CAG Structure and Governance**

Susan Gilbert suggested that it would be very helpful if the CAG had a chair or co-chairs, in line with the HCAG model. Three individuals volunteered to tri chair, including Tom Beall, Jenelle Marie (The STD Project), and a representative from ASHA. Following the call, Deb Arrindell (ASHA) agreed to tri-chair. Thanks to all of you! These chairs will help lead the CAG, brainstorm ideas with NCSH staff, and assist with meeting agendas.

The CAG also agreed that it would be helpful and necessary to establish some subcommittees to help us accomplish our ambitious agenda. Options for standing subcommittees could include media standards and practices/systems change; action steps; content and story development; and media outreach. We will discuss on September 22<sup>nd</sup>.

### **4. HCAG and NCSH Update**

The HCAG is developing a companion guide for health care providers relating to sexual health care services. The guide will include top three questions a provider should ask their patients about sexual health, detailed follow-up questions based on patient responses/demographics, and standard responses to questions that patients might ask. The guide will be pre-tested, and will be completed in 2015.

Given Alana Ward's departure from Partnership for Prevention, Alyson Kristensen has now become co-director of the NCSH. Alyson has led the HCAG over the past two years, and is a great addition to the leadership.

NCSH has brought on board an independent evaluation consultant, Karen Horsch, to design the coalition's evaluation and monitoring tools. Karen is creating a brief survey of NCSH members about coalition communications, priorities, and hours donated, which will be administered in advance of annual meeting.

The annual NCSH meeting will be held on September 22, 2014 in Washington, D.C. In addition to a variety of sessions, the CAG will have two hours to meet together. In advance of the meeting, CAG members will receive an agenda and background materials.