

## **Minutes from ERS4 Quarterly Teleconference April 7, 2004**

Approximately 35 participants

Sylvia Montgomery gave an update on the additional behavior checklist questions. Four questions were submitted from Massachusetts that addressed physical activity, serving sizes, and low-fat diet. The responses to the questions are worded as stages of change. The deadline to receive all questions was March 18, 2004. The new master question database file will be accessible via the ERS4 Web site, once the remaining files are transferred to the new Web site.

Wells addressed some of the questions that are not being used to a great extent. The database has more than 180 questions; some are used extensively. While there is value in having the additional questions available, we will be looking at how questions are used and whether or not some of them need to be removed.

Question: Will we be able to ask if states will be using questions for some other programs?

Answer: We do want to capture other uses of the questions; want them to be used for a broader audience.

Question: Will we reconsider the 10 core questions?

Answer: The questions have not changed in a while. One area not captured very well is food safety beyond time and temperature abuse. We may want to expand beyond these. Before we look at change, we want to look at what needs to be added; however, this is not an immediate step.

Sylvia addressed the problem of federal filters not being imported when there are computer upgrades at the state or county level. Filters are relevant to data collection. Please remember to import them after system upgrades. Most states didn't have federal filters imported with the submission of the '03 data, and had to resubmit.

Question: How can we tell if filters have been imported?

Answer: From subgroup click on view/edit filters to view filters. Federal filters are EFNEP RC1, EFNEP RC2, EFNEP RC3, EFNEP RC4, and EFNEP RC5. If you don't see them, this means they are not imported.

Jill Murray, OR, announced they have a way of checking county computers by using NetMeeting. This allows them to look at county computers to see what data is there. Will send some instructions to Sylvia to share with other states. [Look for info in separate email]

Question: If installing from the computer, would you still need to install the filters?

Answer: You will still need to install the filters as well as the behavior questions.

Question: Had a problem with receiving zip files. What should I do?

Answer: Changing the security settings in Outlook Express will help zip files come through. Have to adjust the settings. Check with your university technical support about how they want these types of files handled.

Question: Some counties have been renaming their zip files and receiving 3 different extensions. What should they do?

Answer: Need to rename the zip file back to the appropriate name.

Oregon announced a fix to Outlook that they can share to fix this problem as well. Will send to Sylvia. [Look for info in separate e-mail.]

Sylvia addressed the naming of databases. Recommends using a name you can identify with, such as county name and fiscal year of data. Can have multiple years' data on one system. Can easily pull up database you want to work with at any time.

Jim Ryan, AL, brought to our attention a glitch in ERS4 where it won't automatically go to next year during reporting year change. Has this been addressed in the new release?

This is not something the federal office was aware of.

Michigan announced they had also experienced this. To solve the problem, they took out the previous year's digits (02) and added the new fiscal year to the end of the database name.

Sylvia announced they are still reviewing '03 reports. About 50% through the process prior to 35th anniversary celebration. Will be finishing up those reviews.

The agency has redesigned the Web site and will be launching April 15. There will be new URL for EFNEP and ERS4. Will be a universal look across the agency, and there will be some transition even after the launch. Encouraging feedback from states as to how it's working. The quick link for EFNEP is: [www.csrees.usda.gov/efnep](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/efnep)

#### Open Questions About ERS4

Question from VT: Noticed inconsistencies in the landscape C report for enrollment data for each PP. EFNEP help is checked with no referrals marked.

Response from OR: Experience this every year. Most of the time there is the assumption that the data is the same as entry. This needs to be revisited at the end of the year for validation.

VT suggested there may be confusion on the part of the person who enters the data in how he or she is interpreting the question.

Wells expressed the importance for ongoing training throughout the year on the system and the interpretation of the questions. This question is beneficial to the federal office to identify how EFNEP is assisting participants in finding other sources of help.

ERS5 Efforts:

Wells announced that Ruby Cox and Donna Vandergraff have been pilot testing ERS5. Earl just released an update to address some concerns from the testers.

The youth module received increased energy at the Coordinators Conference in D.C. in March. Small group work sessions were formed. The database will exist within ERS5, and it will also exist as a stand alone for other programs that don't need the whole system.

The Interactive Healthy Eating Index database has been pulled in to the dietary analysis component. Need to draw closure to all the various decisions related to report formats, optional nutrients, and data fields soon so the work can be finished for the launch of ERS5.

In reference to training, the first time ERS was released (in 1992), regional training programs were conducted. With ERS4, the videotape lesson series by Univ. of FL was made available. Now need to look at strategies for the release of ERS5. Will need assistance – looking for volunteers to assist with this effort.

There will be the user's manual that Earl develops to walk users through, but there is a need for expanded dialogue beyond those screens. Such as how to do a 24-hour recall and how to manage databases, etc. This is outside of the scope of Earl's responsibility and should be from the user's perspective.

Idaho suggested the use of 8th grade English in the writing of the manuals – nothing too technical. They are willing to send copies of various screens they created to help users in their state.

Question: What is the time commitment of this project?

Answer: We do have former product that can be used as a guide, but unsure at this point how long it will take to create the training modules.

Response from State: Webcasting is something new they are trying for training purposes. Can sit at the computer and still have interactive discussion.

Sylvia announced they had just been introduced to Centra. Can share documents such as Web sites, PowerPoint, with other viewers at the same time.

Response from State: Webcasting can be done in real time. Can be recorded and set up for others to see at their own time. Not interactive.

Jim in AL announced they were developing an ERS 101 lesson by reviewing material over the Web and doing pre- and post-tests.

Wells confirmed there were a lot of different opportunities to begin thinking about. Knowing what other training has been done beyond videos is valuable for us to know. Will need to be tailored to the new software.

Jim Ryan volunteered to help with this effort.

Question: Will ERS5 be in this fiscal year or the next year?

Answer: Will not be in this fiscal year.

Question: Do we know any more about the budget process for EFNEP?

Answer: There are questions about the distribution given the size of the cut. They have not been able to make a determination as to how the funds will be distributed. '05 budget hearings took place in early March. There was a good response to the budget request. Testimony was introduced in House and Senate to restore cuts from '04. Continuing to provide all information we can to boost support for increased funding. Hopeful it will result in a positive outcome.

Robin Orr of IL announced that sign-on letter that was sent out by Debra Reed can be sent out by the end of April.

Wells announced that as soon as we receive information, we will send it out to everyone and will continue to keep you posted.

Question: What is the availability of the videos from the 35th anniversary?

Answer: Just completed closed captioning. Have to be in compliance. Identifying the number of videos and form of distribution. Should be ready in about a month.

Jim in AL: FSNEP is developing its own software for compatibility. Has there been any discussion about their using ERS5?

Robin in IL: FSNEP group will meet next week in D.C. Will look at 4 areas and 5 valid questions in each area. Questions are in a checklist-like manner. Will bring up since she represents both groups.

Jim suggested it would make life easier if we had one reporting system instead of two.

Sylvia announced the next conference call will be scheduled for July 14. Wells encouraged coordinators to share date of next call with other colleagues.

End of Conference Call