

NOPREN Food Service Guidelines Work Group

This charter outlines the purpose, structure, and overall approach for the work to be completed by the NOPREN Food Service Guidelines Work Group. It should be the single point of reference on the Work Group for background, purpose, and member expectations.

Background

Food service guidelines (FSG) are standards for foods sold, served, or given away that are used to increase healthy food options in settings such as government facilities and programs, worksites, colleges and universities, food pantries/food banks, and healthcare facilities. FSG can be adopted through a formal policy or implemented voluntarily, depending on the needs and interests of the adopting institution. Specific standards used vary, and may encompass behavioral design, food safety, environmental sustainability, valued workforce, animal welfare, and other goals in addition to nutrition.

CDC funds many states and localities to implement FSG within their jurisdictions across a variety of settings. However, FSG is a relatively novel concept and is not well established as a traditional public health discipline in practice, policy, and research. Thus, relevant FSG expertise is dispersed among those working in healthy food retail, behavioral design, school health, food insecurity, food policy, and other topics.

About NOPREN

The Nutrition and Obesity Policy Research and Evaluation Network (NOPREN) is a thematic research network of the Prevention Research Centers Program. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity (DNPAO) created NOPREN to foster understanding of the effectiveness of policies to prevent childhood obesity through improved access to affordable, healthier foods and beverages in childcare, schools, worksites, and other community settings.

The mission of NOPREN is to conduct transdisciplinary practice-based policy research and evaluation along the continuum of policy identification, development, and implementation by:

- Identifying relevant policies that foster or inhibit healthier lifestyles;
- Describing the process of developing and implementing policies;
- Evaluating adopted policy content, intent, and enforcement;
- Evaluating outcomes, co-benefits, and consequences of policies; and
- Translating and disseminating research findings and lessons learned to diverse audiences.

About the FSG Work Group

The FSG Work Group is comprised of diverse public health practitioners, scientists, and advocates from non-profit organizations, government, academia, and other stakeholders. It is hosted by the CDC.

Members of the FSG Work Group convene to share timely research and evaluation methods and results, case studies, and evidence-based best practices in FSG adoption and implementation. Additionally, they seek opportunities to foster and collaborate on needed FSG-related research and research translation products.

Mission

The FSG Work Group aims to leverage the collective skills and resources of its members to increase the quantity and quality of, and disseminate, evidence that benefits nutrition-related health, with a specific focus on understanding:

1. Best practices to facilitate effective FSG adoption and implementation, including use of behavioral design principles;
2. The FSG policy landscape and policy best practices;
3. Evaluation methods and data sources;
4. Impacts of FSG on:
 - a. Availability and promotion of healthier foods;
 - b. Food service operations and profits;
 - c. The food supply chain;
 - d. Customer knowledge and behavior (*i.e.*, selection and purchase of healthier foods); and
 - e. Diet quality as part of improved health and health-related outcomes

Key Functions and Activities

Key Function:

Facilitate coordination and information-sharing to 1) accelerate progress in effective implementation of FSG and 2) identify related gaps in knowledge and research.

Related Activities:

- Build a network of diverse researchers and leaders with expertise in nutrition standards, FSG research, behavioral design, evaluation, facility operations, and business models
- Convene regular meetings to provide updates on FSG research, implementation, and evaluation activities around the US and circulate records from meetings
- Develop collaborative projects that leverage our skills and experiences in support of our mission

Key Function:

Foster research and evaluation efforts to study concepts of interest under “Mission” above.

Related Activities:

- Link public health practitioners with researchers to improve implementation and evaluation efforts
- Identify research priorities to fill critical gaps as options for researchers and funders, including by conducting literature reviews
- Develop measures and evaluation guides for FSG in various settings, drawing upon members’ research and experiences
- Develop case studies and success stories to provide qualitative information that can be used to help future efforts to implement FSG
- Elevate FSG visibility by collaborating to organize cross-disciplinary symposia, panels, and sessions at national conferences

Member Selection and Expectations

Membership in the Work Group is open to researchers and practitioners with an interest in collaborating to advance our mission. Membership is granted upon request by one of the co-chairs or fellow.

Members of the Work Group join with a willingness to:

- Attend and participate in all Work Group meetings by actively listening to presentations and discussions and contributing relevant information and perspective to discussions.
- Share information, evidence, opinions, and resources that support the mission and objectives of specific projects through occasional presentations during workgroup meetings and dissemination of relevant reports and documents.
- Participate in time-bound projects that serve the mission and evolving priorities collectively identified by the membership.

Meeting Logistics

The FSG Work Group meets once per month via web conference. The meetings alternate between lecture-style webinars to facilitate learning about a topic of interest to the members and interactive sessions to plan and advance projects and share relevant announcements between members.

Leadership

Two to four Work Group co-chairs guide the activities of the workgroup to support our mission. They are responsible for scheduling and facilitating meetings, soliciting and responding to feedback from members on desired topics for information-sharing and projects, and overseeing project development and completion. Co-chairs commit to serve for one year at minimum, with the option to continue if so desired. If an individual resigns as co-chair, an invitation to apply for the open position will be disseminated to the membership. The incumbent co-chairs, in consultation with NOPREN leadership, will select from among the applicants.

The Work Group Fellow is a student or early-career professional who supports project planning and provides administrative and technical support to the co-chairs and membership. The Fellow commits to serve one year. There is a formal invitation process for new fellows, and NOPREN leadership and the incumbent co-chairs will select from among the applicants.

Current Work Group Chairs and Contact Information:

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