

Environmental Health and Impact on Cancer: Evidence-Informed Interventions

Webinar Report – February 15, 2022

Prepared by:

Leslie Best, BSW

Paula Clayton, MS, RDN, LD

Ann Marie Shields, MSW



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CHRONIC DISEASE DIRECTORS**

Promoting Health. Preventing Disease.

Background

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Division of Cancer Prevention and Control collaborated with the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD) to plan and convene a series of webinars with a focus on actions available to state health departments to address environmental health issues and their impact on cancer prevention and policy. The first webinar, convened on October 20, 2021, provided a public health perspective and background about how environmental chemicals are regulated (or not) and how they may contribute to the development of cancer. This report summarizes the second webinar, Environmental Health and Impact on Cancer: Evidence-Informed Interventions, convened on February 15, 2022. Subsequent webinars will focus on policy/partnership development and environmental justice.

How We Worked

This report documents the three phases of the project's primary focus to convene national experts to discuss issues of environmental health related to cancer prevention and control programs. The three phases consisted of an initial survey of state health departments, planning and convening the webinars and completing a summary report of each webinar and a final summary report.

Phase 1 – Survey of state health departments

A twenty-eight-question survey was developed using Qualtrics software and distributed to State Cancer Screening Program Directors and state Chronic Disease Directors in all fifty states and the District of Columbia (DC) in late 2020, with follow up to state chronic disease directors in early 2021. The majority of the survey focused on questions about federal and state policies that impact cancer screening; six questions focused on how the state may have addressed environmental health in its state cancer plan.

Respondents indicated that radon, air pollution and indoor air quality were the topics of greatest interest. The overwhelming majority (74%) said environmental health was addressed in the state cancer plan, those who responded no cited a lack of capacity to implement recommendations, lack of data to identify priority topics and evidence-based interventions. Additional reasons included lack of support and not a priority for partners. Improved knowledge of evidence-based interventions” was the most-cited resource needed to include a focus on prevention of environmental risks.

Phase 2 – Planning and convening the webinars

Discussions were convened with the Lowell Center for Sustainable Production, UMass Lowell, to develop a series of webinars with content based upon the findings of the previously described surveys. A tentative schedule of webinars was established:

- **October 2021:** Webinar #1: Environmental Chemicals and Impact on Cancer: A Public Health Perspective
- **February 2022:** Webinar #2: Environmental Health and Impact on Cancer: Evidence-Informed Interventions
- **April 2022:** Webinar #3: Environmental Health and Impact on Cancer: Policy and Partnership Development
- **July 2022:** Webinar #4: Environmental Health and Impact on Cancer: Social Justice/Health Equity

The first webinar may be viewed at: <https://chronicdisease.org/page/cancerprograms/cancer-prevention-across-the-lifespan/>

The second webinar was held on February 15, 2022, with 209 registrants and 126 attendees (excluding 1 host and 4 panelists). We received 38 responses to the environmental health section of the survey, producing a 30% response rate.

The speakers were Molly Jacobs, Senior Research Associate and Project Director at the Lowell Center for Sustainable Production at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell; Robin Dodson, research scientist with the Silent Spring Institute; Pam Eliason, Senior Associate Director and Training Manager at the Toxics Use Reduction Institute at the University of Massachusetts Lowell and Veena Singla, Senior Scientist at the Natural Resources Defense Council.

Participant Demographics

Figure 1: Most participants are from the Public Health Practitioner Discipline.

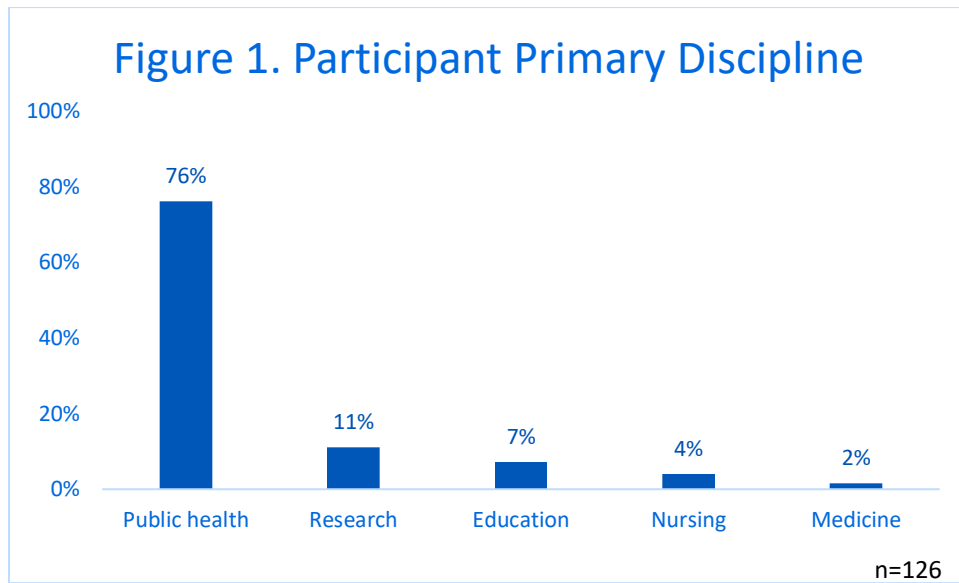


Figure 2. About one-third of participants indicated that their industry is a "State health department".

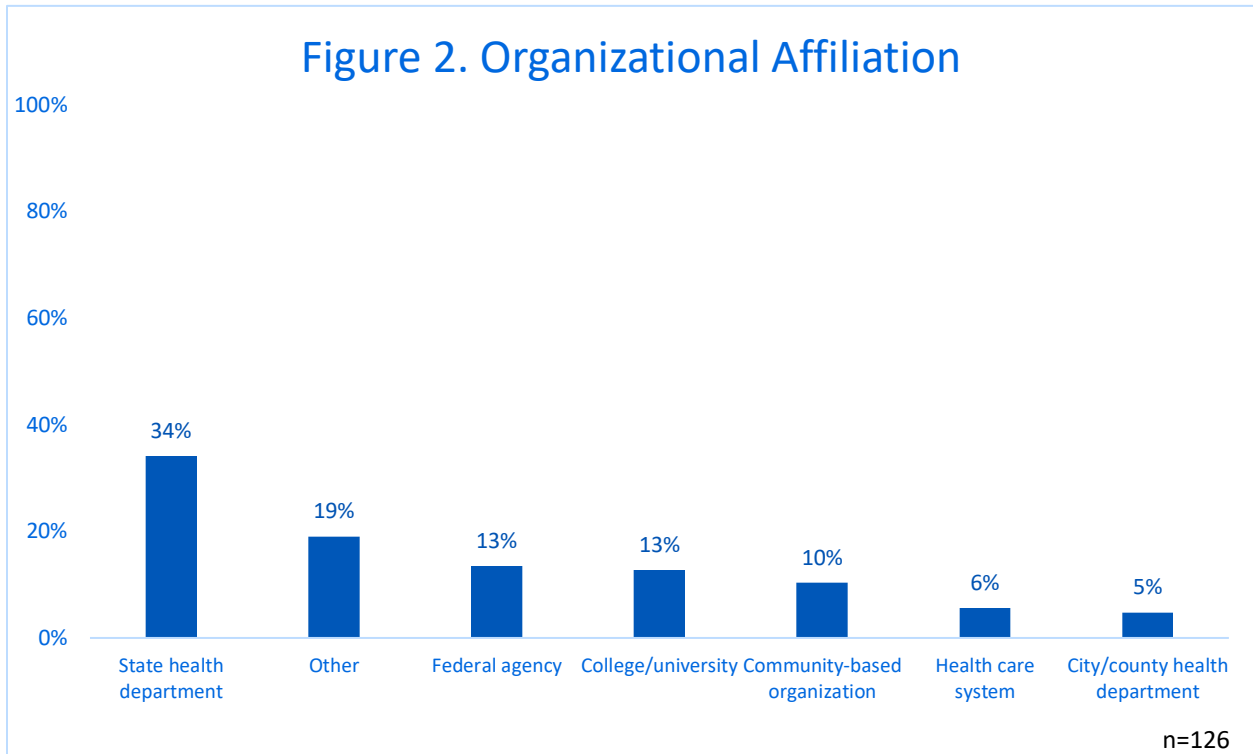
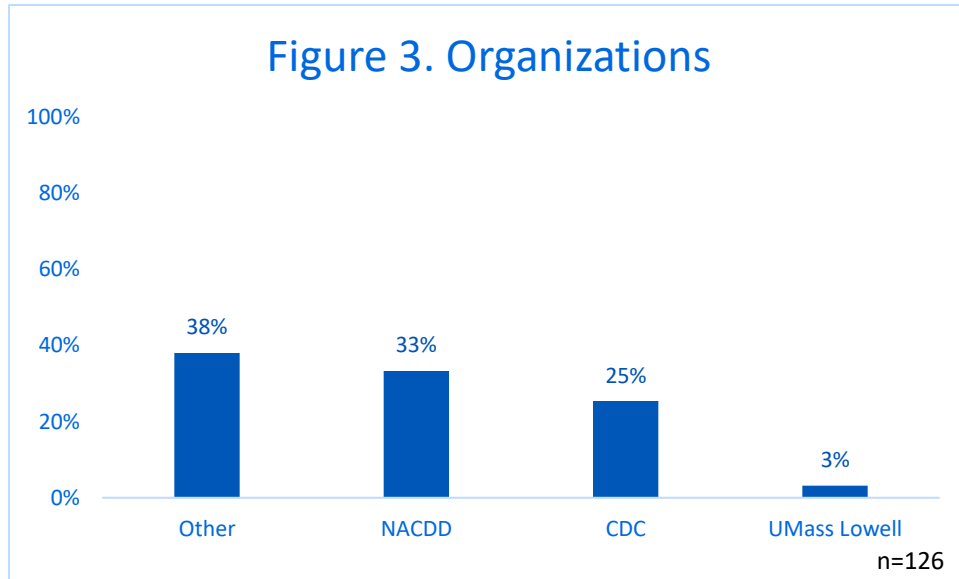


Figure 3. Just over one-third of participants indicated that their Organization as “Other”.



Attendees were from the US, Canada, Dominican Republic, Portugal, and Spain.

Phase 3 – Evaluation

A total of 38 people completed the webinar survey. Most respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they could implement the evidence-informed examples discussed, the webinar improved their understanding of topic, and that they learned something they could use at work. Also, most respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the speakers were effective, and the introductory background presentation was useful.

Respondents were provided a 4-point scale of agreement (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree). Due to rounding, some charts equal more than 100%.

Figure 4. Most respondents (almost 95%) strongly agree or agreed that they can implement the evidence-informed examples discussed.

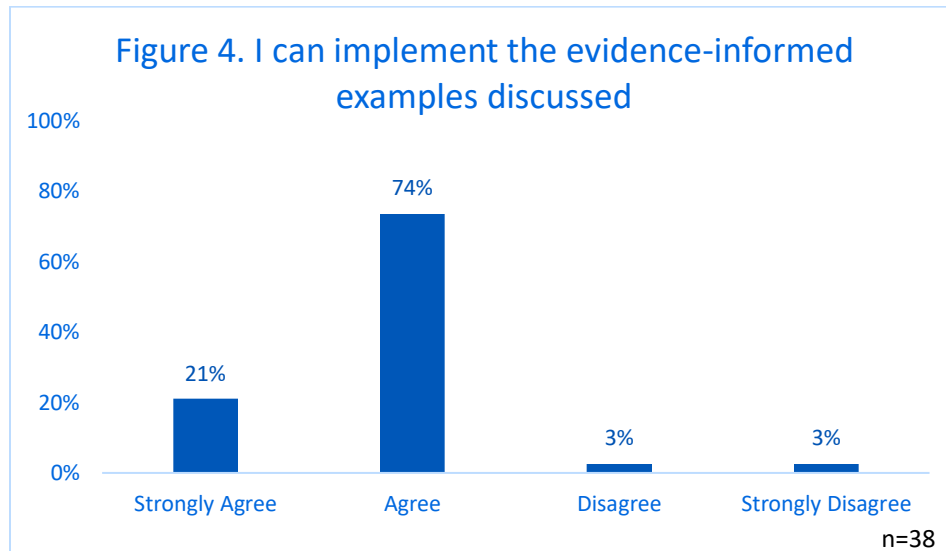


Figure 5. Most respondents (almost 98%) strongly agreed or agreed that the webinar improved their understanding of the link between environmental health and cancer.

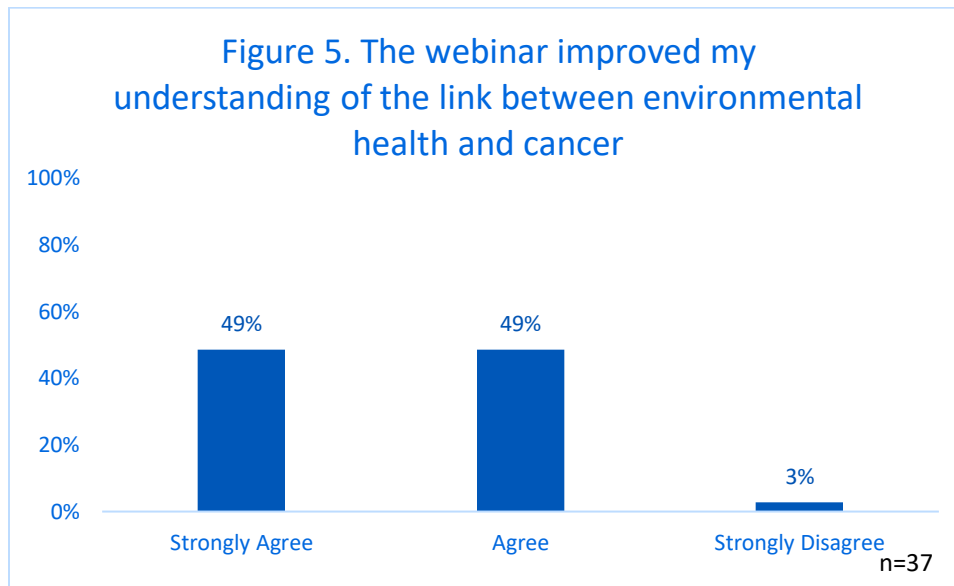


Figure 6. Most respondents (97%) strongly agreed or agreed that they learned something they will use in their work.

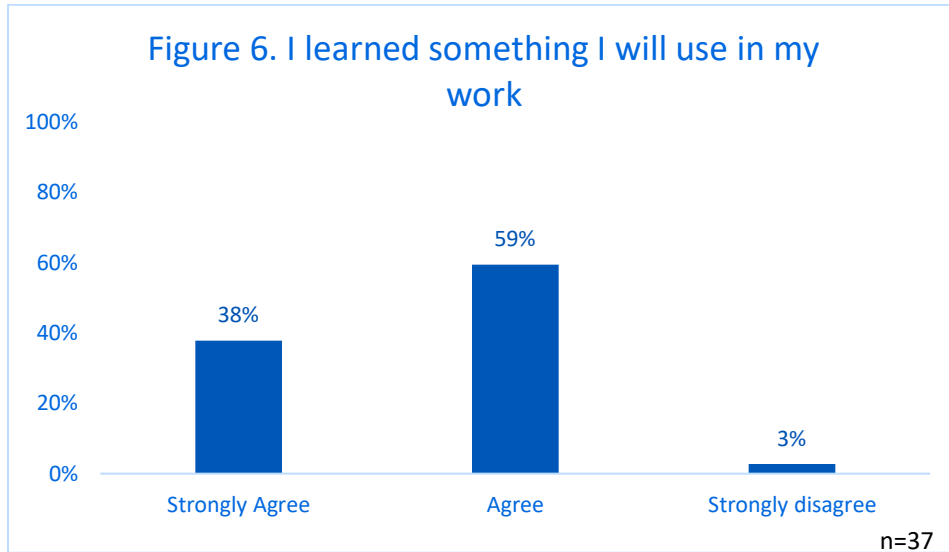


Figure 7. Most respondents (almost 98%) strongly agreed or agreed that the speakers were effective.

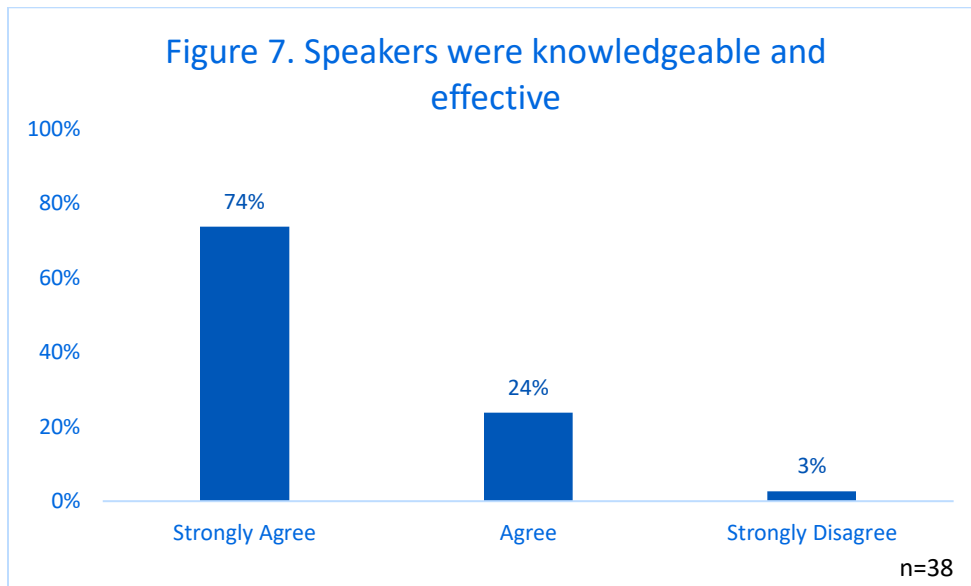
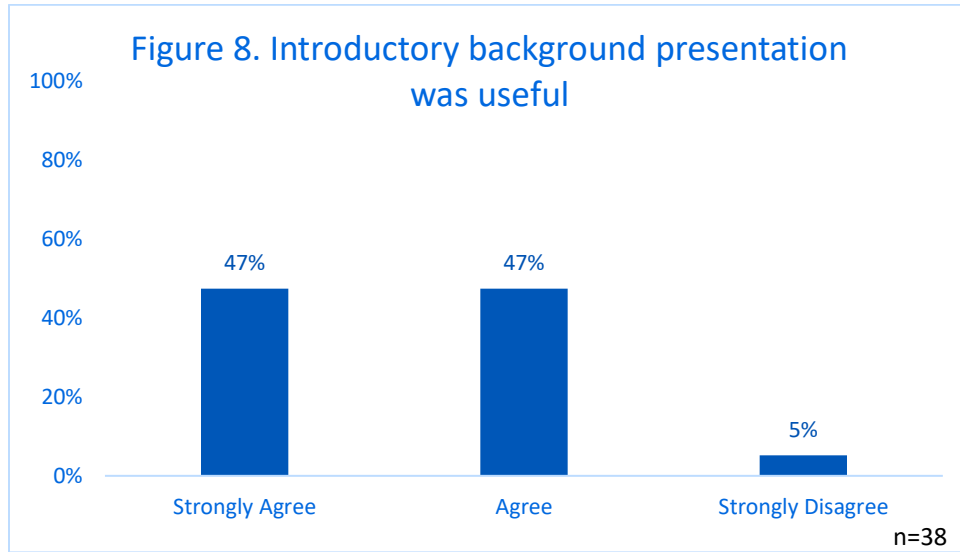


Figure 8. Most respondents (about 94%) strongly agreed or agreed that they found the introductory background presentation useful.



When asked how respondents plan to use the webinar, most indicated for resources or research, personal use, their work, or sharing with others.

Please indicate how you plan to use the information provided in the webinar.
Personal safety; Environmental EBIs that could assist awardees for the CDC Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan. Please send the slide sets or the recording for reference.
I found the air pollution information including geographical analysis & studies linking to cancer very useful and education of nursing students.
Please send articles or any guide for implementation of precautionary measures.
Public environmental health advocacy.
We are planning to incorporate environmental health into the 2023-2027 Iowa Cancer Plan. Currently, our environmental health section mainly focuses on radon.
Plan to use information to reduce exposures on a personal level and share that information with others.
For the prevention and management of chronic disease.
I'm going to reach out to the Environmental Justice folks in Dept of Environmental Protection to see if there are any ways to collaborate.
I plan to share the information I learned in the webinar with grassroots partners to influence state cancer prevention and include environmental cancer prevention and exposure reduction measures.
I will use the straightforward approaches suggested by the panelists to help reduce the amount of toxic chemicals in the industry through my OH work in PA engaging with manufacturing plants.
To be honest, I'm not sure. This was a lot more technical than I was anticipating.
Will not use in my work at this time.
Add the additional knowledge to my "toolkit".
For research.
Share with our environmental protection agency and encourage them to advocate the alternate or safer methods among various industries.
As I explore the intersections of Public Health, architecture, and green chemistry i will refer to this knowledge and research/keep up to date with news from the institutions mentioned.
I do not work in a clinical setting or directly with clients.
Planning outreach strategies to the public about cancer screening and prevention.
I will look for ways to reduce chemical exposures for myself and my family.
I think we will definitely consider how we can help our comprehensive cancer control programs further their work on environmental health interventions.
Share with cancer program directors.
For improvement of self-knowledge about chemicals and relation with cancer.
Great suggestions during discussion about importance of including community members/orgs when planning an intervention.
Inform research and raising awareness.
Disseminate this widely and work to integrate the goals of effective interventions to reduce carcinogens into state plans.
To start - will review the DetoxMe recommendations from a personal perspective. Will share links to presentation with organizations with colleagues working in cancer prevention and control.

Please indicate how you plan to use the information provided in the webinar.

1) To incorporate in graduate school research and 2) Minimize individual level exposures

I will use this information in planning the next webinar. :-)

In teaching MPH students. Outlining strategies for identifying viable alternatives is critical for envtl health.

Sharing with others.

Within the advocacy committee at the Breast Cancer Coalition.

Reference material and rationale for addressing environmental carcinogens in my state.

Will be using information to emphasize policy, systems, and environmental change in comprehensive cancer o

Context provided for improved communication between Environmental Public Health and State Cancer Registr

I plan to use the information provided in the webinar as a resource.

Include information in our reports.

In my work with Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester. Also, in my home to make sure I'm not getting exposed chemicals.