Dragon, Karen E. (CDC/NIOSH/EID)

From: William B. Grant [
Sent: Sunday, August 12, 2007 7:16 PM
To: NIOSH Docket Office (CDC)
Subject: 103 - Endicott Project Comments

Draft Document for Public Review and Comment:
An Assessment of the Feasibility of a Study of Cancer among Former Employees of the IBM Facility in Endicott, New York Docket #NIOSH-103

I would like to suggest that it would be most appropriate to compare cancer rates for those former employees of the IBM Facility in Endicott, NY with controls living in the same place as the subjects. The reason is that cancer rates in the United States vary considerably by location due to such factors as solar ultraviolet-B radiation and vitamin D production. I have submitted comments along this line (Grant, 2006). Other support for this point is found in papers such as Grant and Garland (2006) and Boscoe and Schymura (2006). However, some care would have to be taken for those who moved from NY to sunnier locations such as Florida. There may be some effect of solar UVB in reducing the risk of cancer being detected which would have to be considered. There are many more papers on vitamin D and cancer, which can be found readily at www.pubmed.gov.

As for the effects of smoking on cancer risk, in my ecological studies I use lung cancer incidence or mortality rates with reasonably good success. From what I recall about the earlier IBM study, lung cancer rates were lower than average at IBM facilities, suggesting both that IBM employees do not smoke as much as the rest of the population, and that air pollution that would lead to lung cancer is also low in the plants.

Please contact me if you want more information related to my comments.

Boscoe FP, Schymura MJ. Solar ultraviolet-B exposure and cancer incidence and mortality in the United States, 1993-2000. BMC Cancer. 2006;6:264

Grant WB. Cancer mortality rates at IBM may be related to low solar UVB/vitamin D. Environmental Health: A Global Access Science Source. Electronic posting, Oct. 24, 2006.
http://www.ehjournal.net/content/5/1/30/comments#243537

Grant WB, Garland CF. The association of solar ultraviolet B (UVB) with reducing risk of cancer: multifactorial ecologic analysis of geographic variation in age-adjusted cancer mortality rates. Anticancer Res. 2006 Jul-Aug;26(4A):2687-99.

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