

## **Writing Process for North Carolina's Plan to Prevent Overweight and Obesity**

*North Carolina's Plan to Prevent Overweight and Obesity: Balance How We Eat, Drink, and Move (Plan)* was created under the guidance of the Eat Smart, Move More North Carolina Executive Committee during 2018-2019 and was released in December 2019.

The planning process began in the summer of 2018. From July to November 2018, the Executive Committee determined the timeline, process, and leadership for writing a new guidance document for the Eat Smart, Move More NC movement. The Executive Committee appointed Carolyn Dunn, PhD, RDN, LDN, to lead the Writing Team.

In addition, the Executive Committee recognized the need for an updated Eat Smart, Move More NC website to house all the Eat Smart, Move More NC resources, including toolkits, guides, data, and recommendations. The Executive Committee saw the value of developing a Plan and website that complement each other and thus established a Website Review Team to overhaul the website in 2019. The Executive Committee specified the importance of collaboration between the website development and writing process for the Plan. The urgent need for structural updates to the website was a key determining factor in the selection of December 2019 as the release date for both the new website and new Plan.

The Executive Committee and the Writing Team Lead, Dr. Dunn, worked collaboratively to select Writing Team members. At the quarterly meeting of Eat Smart, Move More NC on December 6, 2018, the Chair of the Executive Committee announced the decision to develop a new Plan in 2019. She shared the Writing Team job description and estimated time commitment and specified the process for applying, with an aim to finalize the Writing Team by the end of January 2019.

The Executive Committee also announced this opportunity to apply to serve on the Writing Team via Constant Contact to the Eat Smart, Move More NC membership on December 16 and again a couple days prior to the application deadline of January 4, 2019. Dr. Dunn reached out to key partners who would be particularly helpful as Writing Team members.

The Executive Committee met with the Dr. Dunn on January 14, 2019 to select Writing Team members. Eat Smart, Move More NC members were also chosen to be First-Line Reviewers to give feedback on the first draft. The Executive Committee Chair notified Writing Team members and First-Line Reviewers via email in late January. These team members were announced in the April 2019 quarterly electronic newsletter disseminated to all Eat Smart, Move More NC members.

From March 2019 to July 2019 the Writing Team drafted the Plan. The Writing Team used the previous plan, *North Carolina's Plan to Address Obesity: Healthy Weight and Healthy Communities 2013-2020*, as a starting point for the new Plan. The Writing Team met once each month from March through July and completed writing assignments between meetings. The

Website Team Lead was also a member of the Writing Team which allowed for seamless collaboration between projects.

The Writing Team effort began by reviewing references from the previous 2013-2020 Eat Smart, Move More NC Plan. The Writing Team searched for more recent versions of these guiding documents and utilized updated resources when available. The Writing Team searched for any new guiding documents promoted or referenced by leading national organizations in the areas of healthy eating, physical activity, weight management, and chronic disease prevention. The Writing Team searched the last five years of literature for articles on obesity and related chronic disease, policy/systems/environmental changes for obesity prevention, and core behaviors for obesity prevention.

The Writing Team decided against putting a date on the Plan as was done for the past two plans. This will give future ESMMNC leadership flexibility in deciding when the next update is needed.

The content of the draft Plan was finalized by the end of June. This first draft of the Plan was graphically designed in July, with an initial review by the Writing Team and First-Line Reviewers. Writing Team lead, Dr. Dunn, shared the draft Plan with the Executive Committee in early August 2019 and then joined the Executive Committee on an August 12, 2019 phone call to answer questions about the Plan and to discuss the process of seeking input from the members of Eat Smart, Move More NC.

At the September 12, 2019 quarterly meeting of Eat Smart, Move More NC in Raleigh, NC, Dr. Dunn presented highlights of the draft Plan and summarized the development process. Following this meeting, Dr. Dunn created a short “walk-through” narrated PowerPoint of the draft Plan. This video was disseminated via email to all members of Eat Smart, Move More NC along with a draft of the Plan on September 23, 2019. Members were instructed to email feedback directly to Dr. Dunn, who assured all members that the Writing Team was “happy to take any and all comments, from specific line edits to overall reaction.” Feedback was requested by October 11, 2019.

During September-October 2019, the Writing Team also shared the draft Plan with key national leaders for review, which included representatives of CDC and USDA. The Writing Team met on October 16, 2019 to review all feedback and discuss how to incorporate it into the Plan. On October 23, 2019, a smaller group of the Writing Team met to finish editing the Plan. The final draft was then graphically designed and reviewed by Writing Team members before release.

At the December 5, 2019 quarterly meeting of Eat Smart, Move More NC the website and *North Carolina’s Plan to Prevent Overweight and Obesity: Balance How We Eat, Drink, and Move* were unveiled.