

Interim Report 1 (July 1, 1995)

Update of Mortality Among Vinyl Chloride Workers

I. Study Staffing

At CMA's request, and in anticipation of a February 1, 1995 study start date, Applied Epidemiology, Inc., retained the data management services (50%) of Mr. Noess of SoftWhere, Inc., and recruited and hired (50%) another epidemiologist, Rose Luippold, M.S.

II. Data Acquisition

Applied Epidemiology, Inc. received 81 boxes from ENSR in early May. Because no inventory list accompanied any of the boxes, we examined the contents of all boxes, consolidated and transferred records to new boxes, created an inventory of contents, and moved the boxes to our storage facility. A copy of the inventory of the boxes we are currently storing is attached.

Nineteen of the 81 boxes contained data from an unrelated study. These will be shipped back to ENSR in the near future.

No data tapes, disks or files have been received by Applied Epidemiology, Inc. as of the date of this report. This has prevented us from making any progress toward construction of the relational database for the study, conducting the cohort verification, and replication of the results obtained by the previous contractor.

No death certificates have been received from ENSR as of the date of this report.

III. NDI Application

Application for search services by the National Center for Health Statistics, National Death Index, has been prepared by Dr. Ramlow, with minor assistance from Applied Epidemiology, Inc., and submitted on behalf of CMA.

IV. State Confidentiality Agreements

Applied Epidemiology, Inc., has completed confidentiality agreement forms for several states, either sent directly to us by the states or via CMA. In May and June, we completed confidentiality agreements with state departments of vital statistics for Alabama, Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, Maine, Montana, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island. All requests received have been processed within 1 to 3 days of receipt.

V. Communication With Vinyl Panel

In May, we sent letters to the members of the CMA Vinyl Chloride Research Panel. The letter explained that, once we have identified study subjects who were known to be alive at completion of the previous update (i.e., as of 12/31/82), we will be asking for their assistance in identifying the employment and vital status of study participants. We are unable to proceed further with this step until the data needed to prepare lists of employees by plant are made available to us.

VI. Protocol Development and Review

A detailed protocol for the study has been drafted according to the Guidelines for Good Epidemiology Practices. Copies of this draft protocol have been sent to our external reviewers, Drs. Harvey Checkoway and Kathy Hammond, for comments. We expect to receive their comments, revise the document, and submit an updated protocol to CMA by August 1, 1995, for review and comment.

VII. Development of Rate-Weighting Program

Applied Epidemiology, Inc., in conjunction with SoftWhere, Inc., has begun developing a rate-weighting computer program called ProRate. At this stage we are capturing national rates from vital status records (books) for the earliest study years, and have applied for approval to purchase the Compressed Mortality Files (CMF) from the National Center for Health Statistics (cause-specific mortality rates from 1968 through 1993).