
From: ncp@iupui.edu
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2020 7:00 PM
Subject: NCPH 2020 In-Person Meeting in Atlanta Cancelled; Alternative Plans Afoot



Dear NCPH 2020 Attendees,

After careful deliberation and consideration of the best information available at this time, given the unfolding outbreak of COVID-19, the NCPH Board of Directors and staff have concluded, with regret, that we cannot proceed with holding the in-person 2020 NCPH annual meeting in Atlanta, Georgia as planned. This decision, as participants surely understand, was not made lightly. We made this decision with the health and physical safety of our attendees, staff, volunteers, and vendors foremost in our minds.

Here is what you need to know right now:

1. NCPH's annual meeting will be held virtually to the greatest extent possible. More information will be provided over the coming days as we consult with presenters.
2. We recommend that you *do not* initiate your travel to Atlanta. If you are already en route to Atlanta, you should plan to return to your home.
3. Cancel your hotel reservations today, directly with your hotel, to avoid possible penalties.
4. We are following up with presenters via a separate email that will come from a board member.
5. The decision carries with it significant financial consequences for the organization, some of which will be discussed below. We will be considering the implications of a partial refund policy in the coming weeks. No decisions can be made about refunds until the total financial impacts of this decision can be assessed; please do not query the office on this point at this time.

In this unprecedented context, the NCPH board and staff are making every effort to nevertheless deliver the high-quality content and engagement that are the hallmark of our organization's annual meeting. We are planning on moving as much of our programming as possible to a virtual meeting format. We have been considering this possibility, and are confident that, with presenter agreement, we will still be able to have sessions in virtual, asynchronous spaces. Workshops, working groups, sessions, and other panels all have different requirements, and we will work with our presenters to respond appropriately to those needs. Some content might migrate to Zoom or similar platforms; other content may be available via Twitter, as in our popular Twitter conference and chats. When possible and advantageous we may engage other platforms as well.

Given the extremely short timeline in which we are making these arrangements, it is impossible for the entire virtual meeting to unfold during the same four-day window in which we had scheduled our in-person meeting, but we intend to make content available in the weeks to come. We ask for your patience and understanding as we work through very difficult logistical issues in creating a virtual program in a few short days. Presenters should expect an email soon from a board member to begin coordinating alternatives, and all registrants will receive an email from NCPH with information about the virtual meeting in the coming days.

In addition to outlining these logistical details, we also want to share with you some of the specific consequences and implications of this decision for the organization moving forward. Cancellation at this point has real financial implications for our organization. In addition to lost revenues, we face substantial penalties associated with contractual obligations to the conference hotel and other vendors. These costs will necessitate hard decisions concerning our endowment, reserve funds, and operating budget, as well as the potential assumption of debt, all of which will have long-standing

consequences for the organization moving forward. The NCPH board chose to cancel the in-person meeting because, despite the severity of the financial consequences, the health and well-being of our conference participants and their communities outweighed these concerns. We hope you will bear with us as the impacts of the cancelation become more clear and we consider how best to ensure the financial health of NCPH.

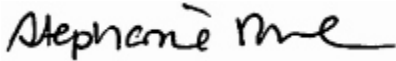
The program and local arrangements committees approached their work with creativity, enthusiasm, and skill, and they crafted an inclusive and intellectually stimulating program for NCPH 2020. We recognize that there are other, intangible consequences associated with changing our meeting format. We will all deeply miss the opportunity to reconnect with longtime friends and colleagues at the in-person meeting and to make new ones as well. But it is our hope that our virtual, asynchronous offerings will have some benefits that the live meeting does not, including the potential to preserve and disseminate our conference content beyond the ephemeral moment of the live gathering. This alternate format may allow an extended conversation to occur over a longer period of time, expanding opportunities to connect with the content and presenters.

We recognize that many of you will have questions, but if possible, please hold your calls and emails to the NCPH office for a few days until we have further clarity on our steps moving forward. We hope to address your questions and concerns in forthcoming communication.

Sincerely,



Marla Miller, NCPH President



Stephanie Rowe, NCPH Executive Director



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