

Statement of Dia Taylor
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
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Chairman Lankford, Ranking Member Heitkamp, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today regarding CDC's efforts to reform our hiring practices.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is the nation's health protection agency. Our workforce of over 12,000 civil service and U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps employees, located in over 60 countries, is critical to mission achievement. We must be nimble in recruiting and retaining the right people with the right skills to protect Americans from health and safety threats, both foreign and domestic.

We know that hiring is a challenge across the federal government and even in many parts of the private sector. We've been able to make real changes in hiring at CDC by consulting with outside experts like the National Academy of Public Administration and other federal HR executives, and by increasing collaboration between CDC's Human Resources Office and our program offices.

We call our model to transform recruitment and hiring Partnering to Win or P2W.

We initially rolled out P2W in 2015 as a pilot project with three main goals:

- Improve applicant quality, measured by reducing the number of hiring actions returned with no selection due to poor applicant quality to less than 5 percent;
- Reduce the time-to-hire from the then current 107-day hiring cycle to an average of 80 days, while maintaining the highest quality of associated work products; and
- Increase customer satisfaction.

I'm glad to report that P2W has paid off. The pilot results showed that:

- No hiring actions were returned with no selection due to poor applicant quality;
- It took 72 days on average to fill a position; and
- All stakeholders were pleased with the pilot results.

Fueled by this success, CDC and Human Resource Office senior leadership agreed to implement the recruitment and hiring transformation process agency-wide in 2016.

P2W's goals remain the same as in the pilot, with four enhancements that will ensure we select new hires based on their validated core technical competencies and experiences. This includes:

1. Customized workforce analysis;
2. Early and more robust engagement of subject matter experts, selecting officials, management officials, and administrative support staff;
3. A new competency-based applicant assessment rating method; and
4. A strengthened collaborative process.

Each recruitment action now involves three initial activities designed to enhance cooperation, collaboration, trust, and communication between the Human Resources Office and CDC's program offices, as well as among different parts of the agency:

1. A pre-consultation meeting with the selecting official to assist hiring managers in thinking through their staffing and recruitment needs.
2. A workbook review meeting, which serves to validate the major duties, tasks, and competencies used to assess applicants for the position.
3. Greater emphasis on training and engaging subject matter experts during the assessment phase of recruitment to support effective and efficient employment practices, by partnering with human resources to recruit, rate, interview, and/or recommend the most qualified candidates to fill a position.

Since implementation agency wide, we've improved customer satisfaction, reduced the time-to-hire from 107 days to 85 days on average, and reduced the number of hiring actions returned with no selection due to poor applicant quality to under 2 percent. In fact, applicant quality has improved so much that we have increased certificate sharing and multiple selections from one certificate. CDC's hiring process is now much more efficient and cost-effective. As the nation's health security agency, we are better prepared to bring highly qualified new employees on board to protect Americans' health and safety around the world.

CDC's Partnering to Win Recruitment and Hiring Transformation Initiative is a new way of doing business that requires partnership and collaboration from all stakeholders, increases transparency in the hiring process, and promotes shared responsibility for hiring outcomes. Taking advantage of what the system can offer today, as CDC has done, and implementing reform and efficiencies within existing OPM guidelines will enable agencies to recruit and retain a high performing workforce and earn a competitive edge in today's race for mission critical talent.

Thank you again for having me here today and I look forward to answering any questions you may have.