Interphone 2.0

October 3, 2007

Interphone 2.0 is underway. This second phase of the Interphone project is investigating the possible link between brain tumors and occupational exposures to various types of EMFs —not just those from mobile phones— as well as to chemicals.

Like its predecessor, the new Interphone study is being run by Elisabeth Cardis, who heads the radiation group at the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) in Lyon, France. This time, however, the U.S. is participating. In fact, the U.S. National Institutes of Health is paying for the entire $1.4 million, three-year project.

Joe Bowman at NIOSH in Cincinnati is leading the American contingent. Bowman has developed a job-exposure matrix, which can help translate the job histories collected in the Interphone questionnaires into indices of exposure to chemicals and EMFs, at both power-line and RF frequencies. Bowman, together with collaborators at the University of Washington, Seattle, recently published a detailed description of the exposure matrix. (An earlier version was applied in a study of neurodegenerative diseases.) A second job-exposure matrix developed in Finland will also be used.

While 13 countries are participating in the original Interphone study —which got underway in 2000 and is still not completed— only nine of them are working on the occupational study: Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, New Zealand, Sweden and the U.K. Because the U.S. was not part of the original project, none of the cases or controls in the new study is American.

Interphone 2.0 is the largest study of brain tumors and occupational exposures to EMFs and chemicals ever undertaken.

Interphone, IARC, NIOSH, Joe Bowman, Elisabeth Cardis, INTEROCC,

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